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# A STUDY IN THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOR IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE

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#### Abstract:

As technology and big data algorithms advance, more social media emerge and grow popular, attracting many individuals. Almost everyone relies on social media platforms like Weibo, WeChat, TikTok, and others for communication and socializing, but young people rarely realize how much their communication habits have changed. In our daily lives, communication is vital, and the means of communication are constantly linked to results, therefore they should be given more attention. Some difficulties caused by this new communication have been found. Thus, fixing them appears crucial. This study aims To investigate the improvement of communicative behavior using social media. By exploring how social media change the way of communication from different angles, this research aims to provide valuable insights for educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers seeking to distinguish the advantage and disadvantage brought by social media among people and raise some possible solutions to make full use of this type of platform. The result showed the effective communication, social interaction, and conflict management are the main aspects of communication behavior improvement using social media. This research contributes to both industry and academia by updating theoretical knowledge of the how the use of social media can improve the communication effectiveness to All Walks of Life in social science studies.

#### **Keywords:**

Social Media, Communication, Effective Communication, Social Interaction, Conflict Management



## Introduction

Ahmadi et al. (2023) expressed that nowadays, about one-third of the global population getting involved in social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, from which people can observe that social platforms are becoming more and more popular at present. Also, it has more and more influence on people from all walks of life all over the world, ranging from the young generation to the elder one. People use the platforms for different purposes, such as appreciating the scenery around the world, watching humorous videos, making comments on others' opinions, chatting with others and so on (Lu, et al. 2018). After a while, it can be found that all these purposes cannot stay away from communication. For instance, when scrolling down the screen on one of the short video platforms, each like or comment is regarded as kind of communication. Sometimes, this communication is made unconsciously, so are the influences on our communication and socializing. Currently, some concerns are raised about the effects of those social media on all walks of life. Also, just about the difficulty in observing the problems, social media become far more dangerous than the society imagine, like hidden opponents (Natale, 2021). With the big data algorithms and the online convenience, we are easily tend to use this kind of platforms to socialize with others, which almost becomes the precondition of the phenomenon (Wang, 2022). There is no doubt that after recognizing the hidden logic of how it influences us, both advantage and disadvantage can be distinguished which helps us raise constructive solution to make full use of this kind of product under high technology.

Communication is of great importance in daily life and even in every occasion. However, researches have shown that the use of social media are overwhelming the communicative behavior of global users from different generations today (Lu, et al. 2018; Yang & Zilberg, 2020). Analyzing the improvement using social media in the human communicative behavior in this phenomenon can help us to receive in-depth understanding the usage of social media and at the same time minimizes disadvantage to most extent. Therefore, it is of great importance to get further cognition of social media by understanding what has been improved by using it in people's communicative behavior.

In this case, this paper aims to investigate the communicative behavior changes among the users after the outbreak of pandemic to present times. The rest of paper arranges as follow. Chapter 2 discussed past literature regarding types and use of social media with explanation of the related theories. Chapter 3 interpreted research methodology and Chapter 4 presented the results after discussion and the last chapter summarized the entire paper with recommendation, contribution, and future study directions.

# **Literature Review**

## **Classification of Social Media**

For thousands of years of history, media have existed on the historical stage (Gitelman, 2008). The media is the medium through which information is transmitted. It refers to the tools, channels, carriers, intermediaries or technological means by which a person transmits and acquires information, as well as the tools and means of transmitting information such as text and sound (Xu, et al. 2022). Before, people used message or face-to-face form to communicate with others. Until now, with the rapid development of technology, the form of media has been developed into various types (Vargo, et al. 2021). The following are some specific examples.



One of the types is a pure communication platform, like WeChat, created for keeping constant contact which is also the most direct communication form (Wang & Gu, 2016). It mainly focuses on providing people with communication services and some other functions like WeChat moment as subsidiaries. Although there are lots of new functions about watching friends' game videos or other things else, the original purpose of WeChat has not been changed at all (Wanga, et al. 2020). Anyway, most people use it as a communication tool with work companions or close friend to keep in touch with others through online methods rather than somewhere appreciating others' living condition (Wang, 2022).

The other type is short video platform. The representative apps are YouTube, Twitter and Tiktok (Zhou, 2019). All of them are complex systems which contain both posters and receivers, functions of like and comment. Therefore, they are not just a type of platform for exchanging messages towards familiar friends, but also for people to exchange their opinions, even with strangers (Coates, et al. 2020). For instance, when scrolling down the screen in Tiktok, beautiful scenery, tasty food and laughing videos can be appreciated, especially those we have not met in reality (Yang & Zilberg, 2020). At the same time, likes and comments showing down in each played videos, which consists of another kind of communication by presenting our own preference and opinions. Each short video has a comment section dedicated to them, and in the comment section, users are given most freedom to speak or discuss, forming a kind of comment on the video of the moment (Zeng & Kaye, 2022).

## Use of Social Media

Both the types are featured in online communication, which people are greatly addicted nowadays. As social media usage increases, social media addiction has been an increasingly common problem, affecting 43% of users (Ganguzza, 2019). Here lists two main reasons for the appearance of the addicts. With less and less face-to-face communication to be predicted in the future, people's attitude towards traditional means of communication can be easily changed through the era. Before, people thought it's important to communicate with others offline to strengthen the relationship more fluently. It can be realized that lack of face-to-face communication may lead to lack of sense of family reunion, which seems an important feature in Chinese society, helping maintaining the relationship between family members.

On the one hand, it is the big data algorithms that run the underlying logic behind the app, stimulating our willingness to continue watching the short videos (Yeung, 2019). Driven by multiple forces, short video has become one of the main forms of Internet communication today. With its volume adapted to the audience when using portable tools to watch, its diversified means of expression that allow the audience to resonate with the audience, and its sense of presence and rich experience that utilizes audio-visual, verbal, and voice multidimensional transmission of information, short video has become an increasingly competitive product form (Anantrasirichai & Bull, 2022). What's more, big data algorithms support the video with visual feeling of "slow and fast", which further inspire target people's willingness. Big data algorithms, referring to massive, high growth rate, and complex information assets which require new processing modes to have stronger decision-making power, insight and discovery power, and process optimization ability, which is just satisfied with demand of enjoying entertainment efficiently (Ahmad, et al. 2021). After reflecting on social media, it presents that when scrolling down the screen of mobile phone, it seems like magic which clearly knows our preferences and recommends the following videos in accordance with our hobbies (Katz & Crocker, 2023). Also, the level of high technology makes this technology



Volume 8 Issue 52 (December 2023) PP. 297-309 DOI 10.35631/IJEPC.852023 more mature than before, meaning that it can target at different customer, and satisfy their different taste and demand (Song, et al. 2022).

At present, many domestic and foreign specialists have already done researches on why and how social media have those unconscious influence on our communication with others from the angle of different walks of life. Another investigation aims to test the association between social networking site addiction and employees' performance. This research also looked at the role of information overload as a mediating factor in the link between social networking site addiction and job performance, as well as the role of selfmanagement as a moderating factor. This is a quantitative study based on a survey approach. Data were collected from 466 SMEs' owners and managers. The finding indicated that social networking sites addiction reduces SMEs employees' performance. Information overload mediates the association among social networking sites and employees' performance. The current study also found that self-management moderates the association among social networking sites addiction and workers' performance. (Javed, 2022)

On the other hand, social media, regarded as another kind of communication tool, bring online communication into our daily life, which at the same time bring lots of great convenient (Susanto, et al. 2021). Firstly, online communication may help save our time and energy. Previously, when social media weren't widely spread, people could just make communication with others face-to-face, which means that advanced appointment and the time used to reach the place and something else similar to them are necessary. However, with social media like Wechat and Tencent meeting, people can just chat with others wherever they are willing to (Azad, et al. 2020). As if they are outside, they just need an electronic devices, such as laptop or just mobile phone. Secondly, it can release the nervousness for some of us. Compared with interview face-to-face, online interview seems to relieve the pressure, for it build kind of distance between employers and employees. Therefore, social media help some of people get over the nervousness when communicating with others.

Research also shows that due to the development of modern Internet technology, the environment of social media is an "era where everyone has a microphone" (Bai, 2022). Taking the micro-blog hot list as an example, when a news event breaks out, a variety of public opinions will be formed rapidly in the comment area, which may bury the truth of the event in an instant, and the timing and direction of public opinions are not under the "control" of the public opinion management department (Zipeng, 2021). The timing and direction of public opinion is not under the control of the public opinion management department. Under such circumstances, some highly emotional or inflammatory views can easily lead the public to go to extremes in an instant, and ultimately lead to the polarization of public sentiment, which is often negative, and due to the convenience of network communication, this negative effect will be like the spread of the plague, triggering a series of corresponding seismic effects in society. Nevertheless, there are also some positive influences on communication brought by social media. In research released by Suphunnika (2023), it states that to fight against the impact of of COVID-19, the Thai government recognized the significance effective risk communication via social media as a means of disease control and prevention. However, due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, executing flawless risk communication was challenging, but the results prove the efforts brought by using social media.



## **Related Theories**

One of the investigations done by researcher Mazer (2012) involved testing a theoretical model whereby online communication attitudes (including self-disclosure, social connection, apprehension, convenience, and miscommunication) predict problematic Internet use and, in turn, poor well-being outcomes. The results generally supported the model with self-disclosure and social connection being predictive of compulsive Internet use and excessive Internet use.

Apprehension emerged as a significant predictor of compulsive Internet use, whereas convenience and miscommunication were predictive of excessive Internet use (Bernhold & Rice, 2020). Compulsive, but not excessive, Internet use was predictive of poor well-being outcomes. The data also suggest that compulsive Internet use mediates the relationship between online communication attitude and well-being.

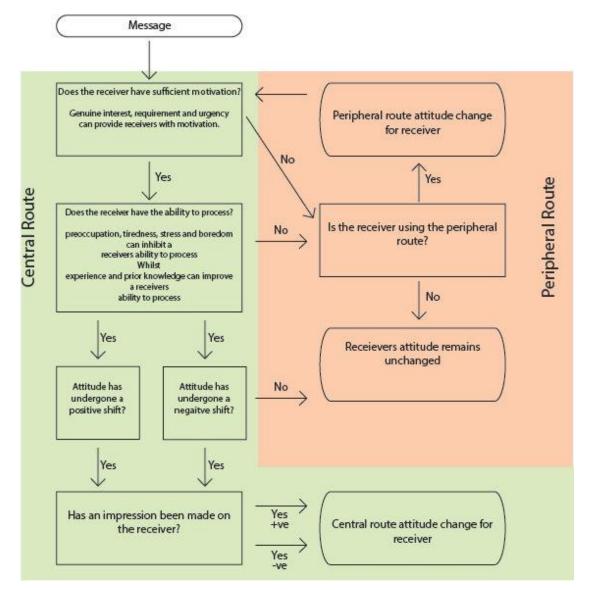


Figure 1: The Presentation of ELM (Shahab, et al. 2021)



The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion (ELM) is a theoretical framework that examines the cognitive processes involved in attempting to modify an individual's attitude through communication (Shahab, et al. 2021). It also explores the varying impacts of specific persuasion variables within these processes, and the subsequent strength of the resulting judgments (refer to Figure 1). In contrast to earlier models that adhere to the concept of a "single effect story," the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) posits that a single variable can have several effects on attitudes and can either enhance or diminish persuasion through multiple processes (Srivastava & Saini, 2022).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) posits that individuals possess varying levels of cognitive elaboration when processing a message and evaluating the advocated viewpoint, item, or behavior. In a given situation, the level of elaboration or cognitive engagement that an individual dedicates to a message or topic can range from low to high on a continuum of elaboration. The extent to which individuals participate in cognitive processing plays a significant role in determining the level of persuasion they may experience in response to a message (Wojdynski & Evans, 2020). The position individuals occupy on this spectrum is ascertained by considering their inclination and capacity to comprehend the sent message. There are various factors that can impact an individual's motivation, including the perceived personal significance of the matter, the overall enjoyment of cognitive activities (as some individuals may have a greater inclination towards thinking), and the sense of personal responsibility in digesting the information (Shahab, et al. 2021).

The term "ability" pertains to an individual's requirement for both the necessary resources and abilities to comprehend and give attention to a message (Shahab, et al. 2021). The ability to comprehend and engage with a message is influenced by various factors, including intelligence, available time, the individual's level of knowledge, the presence of distractions in the communication environment, and the frequency of message repetitions. For instance, individuals are more likely to elaborate and respond to messages that align with their existing knowledge structures. Additionally, a noisy environment can hinder a person's cognitive abilities, while repeated exposure to a message enhances comprehension, scrutiny, and recall of the arguments presented (Chaiken, 2014).

## **Research Methodology**

This study adopted qualitative research approach to investigate the advantages using social media among the online users. The content analysis approach was used, and from the past 5-years' literatures, the authors summarized the behavioral alternation in people's communication behaviors. The thematic analysis was adopted to answer the research questions with the themes and sub-themes identified in the Chapter 4 below.

## **Discussion and Findings**

The following sections are the discussion on the key findings of this study regarding research questions raised in Chapter 1. The influence of social media on communication of all walks of life were identified and discussed in the aspects of means, character, and attitude. In Section D, the advantage and disadvantage of using social media were discussed.

# Effective Communication

Effective and efficient communication necessitates the presence of communicative activity. The ability to communicate enables individuals to effectively express their thoughts, ideas,

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Volume 8 Issue 52 (December 2023) PP. 297-309 DOI 10.35631/IJEPC.852023 emotions, and facts to others, hence fostering comprehension and enhancing clarity (Bhatnagar, 2011).

With the change of socializing habit, extroverts can be easily changed into introverts unconsciously, which further contributes to the lack of face-to-face communication (Jarvinen, 2020). It seems a vicious circle making users be trapped into it. Though it seems that online chat saves time and energy, it speeds up consuming our energy through invisible ways (Crawford, 2021), for we can't easily feel about others' emotion and emotions directly as before, which means that the efforts of their comfort are not as efficient as before. However, after trying the convenience brought by social media, they are likely to give up the original thought and at the same time give up the previous means of communication, which seems to bring disadvantage to their socializing with others.

Instant Communication powered by social media platforms facilitate instantaneous communication. Social media platforms facilitate the expeditious distribution and reception of news, updates, and messages, so serving as a crucial instrument for the rapid exchange of information and prompt response (Murthy, et al. 2021). Machado, et al. (2020) indicated the use of social media provides instant communication channel to the users in global context.

Target Messaging feature in social media platforms provide users with a range of features that enable them to target particular demographics and interests. This enables communicators to customize their messages to successfully target the appropriate audience (Ahmad, 2023). Hayes (2022) pointed out the target messaging facilitates communication in both living and business context indeed which further improves the communication effectiveness in various ways in communication practice.

Virtual Content in the incorporation of visual elements such as photographs, videos, and multimedia inside the realm of social media platforms serves to augment the allure and efficacy of communication. The inclusion of visual content enhances engagement and facilitates better retention compared to the use of text alone (Li, et al. 2021). Dhanesh, et al. (2022) studied the social media engagement with organization-generated content and they found the visualization of information facilitates the information transformation dramatically. Chen, et al. (2020) also found the visual content can improve the citizen engagement to social government issues.

## Social Interaction

Effective communication serves as the fundamental basis for facilitating social interactions (Wong, 2023). This technology facilitates the establishment of connections, cultivation of relationships, and participation in significant exchanges among persons. Effective communication is a crucial factor in fostering strong social relationships and promoting community cohesiveness. As mentioned above, compared with traditional means of communication, modern social media is kind of online communication platform distinguished from the previous face-to-face communication. More and more people start to get accustomed to this new kind of communication, and at the same time give up the means of face-to-face communication to some extent (Rannastu-Avalos & Siiman, 2020). Social media are possibly changing people's characters, as well, which has a great connection with people's communication and socializing habit (Koiranen, et al. 2020).



Social media platforms possess a wide-ranging worldwide outreach, facilitating the connection between individuals and organizations with an extensive and heterogeneous audience (Suarez-Lledo & Alvarez-Galvez, 2021). The extensive scope of this outreach is of utmost importance in the distribution of knowledge to a diverse array of individuals. Bayrakdar, et al. (2020) studied social networks in social media facilitation found the positive influence of the use of social media to widen the social network range of individuals.

In contrast to conventional media, social media platforms offer an interactive experience. Individuals can interact with digital material through many means, such as leaving comments, sharing the content with others, and expressing their appreciation for the content by like it (Stockdale & Coyne, 2020). This interactive feature facilitates bidirectional communication, allowing for dialogues between individuals and organizations. Stockdale & Coyne (2020) found one of the reasons of using social media is due to the social connection improvement in terms of communicative behavior of social media users.

Social media platforms facilitate the establishment of virtual communities and collectives. These communities are well-suited for facilitating the convergence of persons with similar mindsets and promoting active participation in relation to common interests. Xie, et al. (2022) studied the use of social media to build community communication channel amid COVID-19 and found the use of social media is practicable.

## **Conflict Resolution**

Social media has a pivotal role in the resolution of conflicts and the mitigation of misunderstandings. Individuals have the capacity to employ successful communicative behavior as a means of articulating their issues, actively engaging in listening to others, and ultimately discovering mutually accepted solutions (Vannucci & McCauley Ohannessian, 2019). Besides, some of the researches illustrate that introverts have more possibility suffering from mental illness. Meanwhile, there seems to be more conflicts between people from different social classes and cause problems to face-to face communication (Hessels, 2020).

Crisis Communication is one of the problem can be solved by using social media communication (Takke, 2017). During periods of crises or catastrophes, social media emerges as a potent instrument for disseminating vital information, delivering timely updates, and facilitating the coordination of response endeavors (Ahmad, 2023). It facilitates efficient dissemination of crisis-related information to the general audience. In the study by Ahmad (2023), the author proposed a social media based communication method to keep people connected with government and rescuers during the disaster. Also, Bajouk & Ferre-Pavia (2023) indicated the use of social media can keep citizen updated to local government regarding the pandemic cases report.

For feedback and listening purpose, social media platforms offer a means by which individuals can get feedback and engage in active listening to the problems and opinions expressed by their audience (Di Martino, 2020). This input possesses the potential to enhance the quality of products, services, and communication tactics. As indicated by Di Martino (2020), the use of social media can facilitate the government public diplomacy by listening to the voice from social media.



## Summary of Findings

Table 1: The Key Findings		
Research Objective	Theme	Sub-Theme
To investigate the improvement of communicative behavior using social media	Effective Communication	Instant Communication
		Murthy, (2021)
		Machado, et al. (2020)
		Target Messaging
		Hayes (2022)
		Virtual Content
		Chen, et al. (2020)
		Dhanesh, et al. (2022)
	Social Interaction	Social Connections
		Stockdale & Coyne
		(2020)
		Community Building
		Xie, et al. (2022)
		Wide Range
		Suarez-Lledo & Alvarez-
		Galvez (2021)
	Conflict Resolution	Feedback and listening
		Bajouk & Ferre-Pavia
		(2023)
		Crisis Communication
		(Di Martino, 2020)

As shown in Table 1 above, the major improvement happens in effective communication since the use of social media facilitates instant communication, target messaging, and content visualization. Also, the social interaction is also improved via social connections, community building, and global trend and affair shares. Lastly, the use of social media aids to conflict resolution, since it provides channels for feedback and listening, and crisis management. The influence brought by social media bring both strength and weakness at the same time. As mentioned above, the use of social media truly provides us with great amount of convenience. Indeed, it has brought some effects on effective communication, social interaction, and conflict resolution. The recommendations were presented in conclusion.

# Conclusion

The thesis analyzed improvement of communicative behavior using social media. As shown in the previous chapter, the improvement occurs in the aspects of effective communication, social interaction, and conflict management.

Nowadays, more and more people are getting addicted and totally rely on social media, one of the ways of online communication, which is to most extent based on the big data algorithms and the great hidden potential convenience. Then from four aspects, that are means, character, attitude, strength and weakness, the thesis illustrates the influence of social media on people's communication and socializing, with lots of examples and studies supporting. By examining the influence of social media on communication and socializing on all walks of life.



This research helps deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics involved in online interactions and their impact on a variety of aspects in our daily life. Also, this paper contributes to the structural understanding on how the use of social media facilitates the effective communication, social interaction, and conflict management in today's world. The limitation of this paper accentuates the methodology adopted can further consider to use quantitative method with statistical analysis to validate the result of current. The further study will inform interventions and strategies designed to enhance communication skills, foster meaningful connections, and promote positive outcomes of communication and socializing among every person.

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