

The Influence of Social Media on Interpersonal Relationships

Shipan Yu^{1,a,*}

¹College of Radio, Film and Television, Liaoning University, Shenyang, Liaoning, 110000, China
a. 20150235633@mail.sdufe.edu.cn

*corresponding author

Abstract: With the rapid popularization and development of social media, the way people socialize in the new digital society is changing. The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of social media on interpersonal relationships, and to explore in depth the relationship dependent on network social platforms, new media, social media and short video social media. While providing diversified communication channels, social media also brings negative effects, such as loneliness and anxiety caused by lack of face-to-face communication. Different types of social media, such as network social platforms, new media and social media, have different influences on interpersonal relationships. The influence of social media on interpersonal relationship is also influenced by individual's social media dependence, usage habits and other factors. The author observes the connection of the social media and interpersonal relationship to have some analyzes and give some advice which may decrease the negative effects and increase the positive effects.

Keywords: social media, interpersonal relationship

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

In today's digital society, social media has become one of the important ways for people to communicate with each other and build interpersonal relationships. Different from traditional face-to-face communication, social media provides more convenient and diversified communication channels and social communication methods. However, the relationship between social media and interpersonal relationship is not simple, and its influence on interpersonal relationship also has two sides.

1.2. Research Objectives

Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of social media on interpersonal relationships, and further explore the relationship between the dependence of network social platforms, new media, social media and short video social media. For the research in related fields, this study can provide certain theoretical guidance and practical reference basis. At the same time, policy makers and industry practitioners should also assume more social responsibilities, strengthen the supervision and guidance of social media, and promote the healthy development of social media.

1.3. Structure of the Paper

This paper based on the review of the definition and type of interpersonal relationship, it analyzes the ways in which social media affects interpersonal relationship. Moreover, it explores the positive and negative effects of social media on interpersonal relationships through literature analysis and case discussion. The final section presents policy recommendations and industry guidelines to promote healthy social media development.

2. The Impact of Social Media on Interpersonal Relationships

2.1. Overview of the Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationship refers to all kinds of relationships between people, including kinship, friendship, love relationship, colleague relationships, etc. Relationships are an integral part of people's lives, for an individual's physical and mental health and quality of life.

It has an important impact. According to the theory of social penetration proposed by Altman and Taylor, whether an interpersonal relationship can develop to a more intimate level depends on the breadth and depth of self-disclosure by the partners in the relationship [1]. With the rise of social media, people's way of socializing has changed, which has a new impact on interpersonal relations. In the era of new media, social networks connect users and content (UGC), social media has become the amplifier of individuals and communities, and social platforms have become the home field of public opinion communication. Wang Song, Wang Hui and Yang Genfu believe that network communication cannot be separated from the interaction of technology, information, audience and public opinion environment [2]. The rise of social media provides people with more ways and opportunities to socialize, but also brings new social problems and challenges. Therefore, it is of great significance to explore the influence of social media on interpersonal relations to promote the healthy development of social media and promote the positive interaction of interpersonal relations.

2.2. The Ways of Social Media's Influence of Interpersonal Relationships

The ways in which social media influences interpersonal relationships can be divided into the following aspects.

2.2.1. Provide Diversified Social Channels

Social media provides people with a very convenient, open and diversified social channel through the Internet and other digital platforms. People can communicate and interact with friends, family and colleagues anytime and anywhere through social networks, online communities, chat applications, etc., which is very beneficial to expanding interpersonal relationships.

2.2.2. Enhance the Social Range and Communication Depth

Social media can be free from the restrictions of region and time, making the communication between people more flexible and in-depth. Through online interaction, people can expand their social circle and communicate with people from different cultures, occupations and backgrounds, which is conducive to eliminating misunderstanding and prejudice between each other and promoting the development of interpersonal relationship.

2.2.3. Increase Dependence on Social Media

The convenience and speed of social media make people more likely to rely on them, and excessive reliance on social media in daily life will reduce people's real face-to-face communication opportunities, further aggravate the alienation and loneliness between people, and have a negative impact on interpersonal relationships.

2.2.4. Reduce Real Physical Interaction

The development and popularization of social media make people more inclined to use online social communication, while ignoring real social interaction. People use a more game-like approach to interpersonal interactions on the web when dealing with phony items, not at all. Treat everyone with compassion [3]. The substitution of social media reduces people's need for physical interaction, which reduces real physical interaction and leads to the lack of real communication and emotional transmission of interpersonal relationships.

2.3. The Impact of Social Media on Interpersonal Relationships

Social Media refers to websites and technologies that allow people to write, share, rate, discuss, and communicate with each other.

Social media is a tool and platform for sharing opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with each other [4]. It is an indispensable part of People's Daily life. It has greatly changed the way people socialize. And it is a new channel for spreading information. In the past, relationships between strangers often needed a bridge -- a go-between, a middleman. If an intermediary has a relationship with two unknown people, then there is a potential relationship between these two unknown people, and whether they can eventually establish a relationship between them, in many cases it needs events to activate [5]. Therefore, social media has become an important social tool in People's Daily life, which greatly expands people's social range.

2.3.1. Positive Effects of Social Media

On the positive side, social media provides people with diversified communication channels and promotes the expansion and enhancement of interpersonal relationship.

Through social media, people can stay in touch with people far away from them and are therefore more likely to have richer social networks.

In addition, people can share their thoughts, feelings and experiences through social media to enhance mutual understanding and trust, which can make the interpersonal relationship closer. Firstly, social media connects more people and narrows the distance between people. Through social media, people can communicate with people all over the world and build new interpersonal relationships. The establishment of these interpersonal relationships can meet people's social needs and reduce people's sense of loneliness.

Secondly, social media strengthens people's social support network. Social media makes it easier for people to access information and resources, providing a platform for mutual support. People share their lives and experiences with each other through social media, making social media a place for psychological counseling and support.

In addition, social media also facilitates the deepening and strengthening of interpersonal relationships. Through social media, people can keep in touch with each other more frequently and share the details of their lives in a timely manner. This is especially important for maintaining long-distance relationships.

2.3.2. Negative Effects of Social Media

However, the negative effects of social media on relationships cannot be ignored. Media not only shapes people's perceptions, values, and actions through its content, but also alters people's personalities through its appearance, use, and popularity, as well as the media tool environment itself [6].

First, the absence of real face-to-face communication on social media may lead people to become lonelier and more anxious, reducing real physical interaction.

Secondly, social media has problems such as false information and cyber violence, which will have a negative impact on interpersonal relationships. In addition, too much on social media can also cause people to neglect their close relationships and even lead to the breakdown of interpersonal relationships.

According to the market survey, nearly 90 percent of the respondents have wechat accounts. Those who don't have accounts are mostly older people over 60 years old, who don't have a strong demand for wechat because smartphones are not very important in their social networks. After analyzing wechat user groups, it is found that users between 18- and 40-years old account for the majority, which reflects that wechat is most important to young and middle-aged groups. The survey shows that in the aspect of interpersonal relationship on wechat, acquaintances such as relatives and friends dominate, with "close friends" and "parents and relatives" accounting for 63%, while work communication and social contact with strangers also account for a certain proportion, which reflects the comprehensiveness of wechat interpersonal network, covering strong communication and weak communication and other social relationships of different nature [7]. Therefore, policy makers should strengthen the supervision and guidance of social media, especially the use of minors. At the same time, practitioners in the social media industry should also assume more social responsibilities, raise users' awareness, strengthen content supervision, and promote the healthy development of social media. When using social media, people need to consciously control the frequency and time of their use, and get more involved in face-to-face activities to avoid negative effects of social media on interpersonal relationships.

2.3.3. The Impact of the Social Media Dependence

The rapid popularity and wide application of social media make people increasingly dependent on social media. Wechat is one of the social media applications with the largest number of users and the highest degree of user activity. Wechat has changed the way people communicate and brought convenience to the contact between people. However, people have also come to rely heavily on wechat. Statistics show that 25 percent of wechat users open wechat more than 30 times a day, and 55.2 percent open wechat more than 10 times a day [8]. With the development of social media, there has been the phenomenon of social media abuse and dependence. Social media abuse refers to the behavior of excessive use of social media, while social media dependence refers to a strong reliance on social media use and an unwillingness to disconnect from social media.

The impact of social media dependence is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

- Mental health effects. Jiang Wei et al. found that the anxiety level of the high self-concordance group was lower than the social anxiety level of the low self-concordance group, and the disharmony between self and experience, self-stereotyping and overall self-concordance were significantly positively correlated with social anxiety [9]. Social media-dependent people tend to suffer from anxiety, depression, loneliness and other psychological problems, because they are overly dependent on social media and difficult to get away from social media, which leads to their alienation from interpersonal relationships in real life and decline in social skills.

- Time management problems. Social media dependents tend to spend a lot of time on social media, resulting in a lack of ability to manage their time effectively, which has a negative impact on work and study.

- Health problems. Social media dependents tend to spend a lot of time on social media, lack of exercise and outdoor activities, leading to physical health problems.

- Social issues. Social media dependents tend to maintain relationships through social media, but this virtual socializing is not as real and effective as face-to-face socializing. In real life, they may lack networking skills and network resources.

To sum up, social media dependence has a negative impact on interpersonal relationships. As scholar Bai Yanli said, media cannot close people's spiritual distance, much less stop the alienation and isolation between people brought about by modernity [10]. Therefore, people should make reasonable use of social media and learn to manage their time on social media. Meanwhile, social media platforms should also regulate and remind people of social media abuse, so as to increase users' awareness and sense of responsibility and promote the development of a healthy social media environment.

3. Strategic Suggestions on Social Media and Interpersonal Relationships

3.1. Supervision and Guidance of Social Media

In view of the positive and negative effects of social media on interpersonal relationships, in order to promote the healthy development of social media and protect the rights and interests of users, the author proposes the following suggestions on social media regulation and guidance.

First of all, government departments should strengthen the supervision of social media, establish relevant laws and regulations to prevent the spread of false information, rumors, pornography, violence and other content on social media platforms, focusing on the use of minors. The government can ensure the safety, health and sustainable development of social media platforms by strengthening supervision.

Secondly, social media enterprises and practitioners should shoulder more social responsibilities and guide users to use social media platforms properly. For example, more reporting mechanisms should be added to make it easier for users to report problems and complaints, while more attention should also be paid to the protection of users' personal information. In addition, social media companies can enhance the social benefits of social media platforms by launching quality content and guiding users to pay attention to spiritual and cultural life.

Finally, social media users should consciously abide by social media-related codes of conduct and strictly control their words and actions to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings, disputes and adverse effects. At the same time, they should be aware of the limitations of social media, adjust their way of social communication in time, increase the chance of face-to-face communication, and maintain the real interpersonal relationship and social circle.

Therefore, the author suggests that the government, social media enterprises, practitioners and the majority of social media users work together to create a safe, healthy and positive social media environment to promote the harmonious development of society and positive interaction of interpersonal relations.

3.2. Users Awareness and Responsibility of Industry Practitioners

In order to promote healthy social media development, both users and industry practitioners have to take some responsibility. Users need to strengthen their awareness of self-protection and improve their awareness and ability to use social media to avoid falling into a state of overuse or losing control.

Industry practitioners should shoulder more social responsibilities and strengthen self-discipline in content supervision and service quality to promote the healthy development of social media.

For users, they should establish the correct concept and mentality of using social media, treat social media rationally, and grasp the appropriate time and method of using it. At the same time, they should strengthen self-protection, pay attention to personal privacy and information security, and avoid being cheated or cyber attacks.

For industry practitioners, they should take more social responsibilities and make efforts in content supervision and service quality to protect users' rights and security. To be specific, perfect user privacy protection policies and information security management systems should be formulated to provide safe, reliable, considerate and high-quality services. At the same time, user education and training should be strengthened to improve users' ability and accomplishment in using social media, and prevent the infringement of bad information and bad behavior. Most importantly, industry practitioners should fulfill their social responsibilities and promote the healthy development of social media based on society and users.

3.3. Promote Health Social Media Development

Industry practitioners should shoulder more social responsibilities, raise user awareness, strengthen content regulation and promote healthy social media development. To be specific, industry practitioners can take the following measures: 1) Formulate industry guidelines and actively implement them to ensure that content quality and user privacy are protected; 2) Promote a healthy and positive online culture and encourage users to participate in civilized discussion and communication; 3) Strengthen user education to improve users' safety awareness and information literacy level on social media; 4) Establish a social media complaint and supervision mechanism to deal with violations and malicious information in a timely manner; 5) Actively cooperate with government departments, academia and public interest organizations to jointly promote the healthy development of social media. These measures can effectively promote the healthy development of social media and provide a safer, healthy and positive social environment for interpersonal communication and expansion.

3.4. Further Prospects

As social media continues to grow and grow in popularity, the relationship between social media and human relationships is becoming increasingly close. In the future, social media will continue to exert an important influence on interpersonal relationships. Therefore, further research and exploration are needed to further improve the relationship between social media and interpersonal relationships.

First of all, supervision of social media dependence, especially for teenagers, needs to be strengthened. The excessive use of social media may have a bad effect on teenagers' physical and mental health. Therefore, the government and enterprises need to strengthen supervision and establish scientific standards and guidance to guide teenagers to use social media rationally.

Secondly, it is necessary to promote the technological development of social media, improve user experience, and protect users' privacy and security. Social media needs to adopt technical means to solve the breeding and spreading of junk information and prevent user information from being leaked and abused.

Finally, the integration between social media and traditional ways of socializing needs to be actively explored. Both social media and traditional social ways have their own advantages and disadvantages. They can complement each other and form a more complete social way. In the future, social media can learn from the advantages of traditional social communication to promote real social

interaction and enhance the quality and depth of interpersonal communication through offline activities and other means.

In conclusion, the relationship between social media and interpersonal relationships is a dynamic and complex topic that needs constant research and exploration. In the future, in terms of strengthening regulation, promoting technological innovation and exploring integration, we can better address the challenges between social media and interpersonal relationships, better leverage the potential of social media, and provide more support and help for the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Main Conclusion Results

In this study, the author discusses the influence of social media on interpersonal relationship. Through in-depth analysis of network social platforms, new media, social media and short video social media dependence, the author finds that social media promotes the development and expansion of interpersonal relationship to a certain extent, and provides people with diversified communication channels. However, it also faces some negative effects, such as the absence of real face-to-face communication, causing people to become lonelier and more anxious.

In conclusion, the author believes that the influence of social media on interpersonal relationship is a comprehensive issue, which needs to be analyzed by integrating multiple factors. Policy makers and industry practitioners should strengthen the supervision and guidance of social media, especially the use of minors. At the same time, users also need to improve their self-awareness, use social media properly, avoid over-dependence and maintain real physical interactions.

The research in this paper provides certain theoretical guidance and practical reference basis for related fields. The author hopes that this study will arouse more people's attention, further explore the impact of social media, and promote a healthier and more balanced development of social media.

Based on the above research results, this paper puts forward some strategic suggestions, such as establishing reasonable norms for social media use, strengthening social media supervision, enhancing user awareness, and improving content supervision. These suggestions are expected to promote the healthy development of social media, at the same time make up for the shortcomings of social media in daily communication, and provide a certain theoretical guidance and practical reference basis.

4.2. Research Limitations and Deficiencies

This study mainly adopts the method of literature analysis and case discussion, so there may be some subjectivity and limitations. In addition, the sample scope of this study is relatively limited, which fails to cover all social media users. In addition, the conclusions of this study may change over time due to the rapid development and constant changes of social media. In addition, when exploring the impact of social media on interpersonal relationships, the study failed to gain insight into the differences among different populations, such as age, gender, cultural background and other factors, which may have some influence on the findings. Therefore, future studies can take these aspects into account to gain insight into the impact of social media on interpersonal relationships.

4.3. Future Research Directions

Future research can be explored in depth from the following directions.

While most current studies focus on the short-term effects, the long-term effects of social media on interpersonal relationships can be explored through cross-cultural and cross-generational studies

in the future. Future studies can explore the relationship between social media and personal health from the perspectives of physical health, mental health and other aspects. Social media has profoundly affected people's social ways and behaviors, and future research can further explore the mechanism of social media's influence on social behavior, as well as its influence on social scenes and ways. With the rapid development of science and technology, social media is also constantly innovating and developing. Future research can study the future development trend of social media from the perspective of technology, business model, etc.

References

- [1] ALTMANI, TAYLOR, D.A. (1973) *Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships*[M]. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston,
- [2] Wang Song, Wang Hui, Yang Genfu. (2017) *Media Ecological Innovation in the Internet Era: Content, Group and Public Opinion EM-1*. Shanghai: Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press, 133.
- [3] Li Yan. (2014) *An Analysis of the Alienation of Chinese Interpersonal Relationship by We Media p*]. Guangzhou: South China University of Technology.
- [4] *Social media* [EB/OL]. Baidu Encyclopedia <http://baike.baidu.com/view/2169907.htm>.
- [5] Luo Feng. (2017) *Industrialization development of industrial design under the background of creative industry: A case study of Ningbo* [J]. *Science and Technology Outlook*, (10): 284.
- [6] Guo Qingguang. *Communication studies course*. Beijing: People's Studies Publishing House, 1999, 151.
- [7] Cong Wenhua, Liu Ying, Wang Rongrong, et al. (2020) *The Influence of wechat Social Communication on College Students' Interpersonal Relationship* [J]. *Journal of Liaoning University of Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 22 (2): 113-116.
- [8] *WeChat user data report 2015*. 36 kr. 2015.
- [9] Jiang Wei, Cheng Lei, Liao Yikai. (2009) *A study on self-harmony and social Anxiety in college students*. *Mental Health*, 6 (1): 25 -27.
- [10] Bai Yanli. (2016) *On the Crisis of Social Media and Interpersonal Communication: A Case Study of wechat Moments* [J]. *Journal of Northwest University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, (5): 183-188.