



INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MEDIA ON SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT:

Modern life has become completely dependent on digital media. It is continuously changing, and new applications are continually being created. In the years to come, they will continue to play an increasingly significant role in our lives. It is used for a variety of things, including commerce, communication, entertainment and education. It has transformed how people communicate with one another. Digital media is also used to communicate with subject matter experts and learn new things. Digital media can be used by businesses to build websites, advertise their goods and services, and build online relationships with consumers. People can learn new skills at their own speed with the help of online learning sites like Coursera and Udemy, which provide a large selection of courses on various subjects. Companies may offer their goods and services to people all around the world thanks to e-commerce sites like Amazon and eBay. In view of the above, this paper analyses its effects on numerous social spheres.



KEYWORDS: Digital Media, E-Learning, E-commerce etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, there has been a spike in interest in examining the impact that new media technologies play in a variety of fields, including business, media, education, public relations, and others (1, 2). Popularly known as Web 2.0 technologies, contemporary media technologies. In order to reach a wider audience, these advances in technology make use of web tools including social media platforms, blogs, wikis, and online social networking sites. Older kinds of mass communication are rapidly disappearing due to a sharp decline in their use over the past few years, as evidenced by the decline in use of newspapers, radio, television, newspaper, and other conventional outlets in favour of the internet, which has quickly replaced them. Older forms of mass communication are rapidly disappearing due to a sharp decline in their use over the past few years, as evidenced by the decline in use of magazines, television, newspapers, radio, and other traditional media in favour of the internet, which has quickly replaced them. Numerous studies have shown that television has replaced life magazines, emails and telephones have replaced telegraphs, etc. Examples include Lysak et al. (3), Andrus (4), and Boulos et al. (5). These examples demonstrate how contemporary communication methods have supplanted traditional media. In order to suit the demands of various organisations, new media communication technologies were added to the many traditional media formats. Any kind of mass media is now accessible online and in newsstands (5). The viewers of mass media can post comments in real time on blogs and social networking websites. People can take part in public discussions thanks to

developments in new media technology (6). With the most recent technological advancements, the entirety of mass communication technology has transformed. The process of communication has taken on a completely new form as people started to relate to new media on a personal level as opposed to traditional media forms (7). As it will aid people in understanding the significance of new media technologies in building one's own identity in this digital age, many scholars have emphasised the fact that the notion of virtual identity has grown in popularity in recent years (7, 8). The researchers will be able to analyse how people create their own identities through communication on social networking sites with the use of this information. A fascinating aspect of modern media technology is that it enables consumers to take part in public debates on social or political issues. In effect, these technologies give the user a private place in which to comment on the artificially created public arena. Users are now able to create online content with ease thanks to new media technology. The impact of digital media on society is vast and multifaceted, influencing how we communicate, access information, consume culture, participate in the economy, engage in politics, and even receive healthcare. While it has brought about many positive changes and opportunities, it has also raised important challenges related to privacy, security, and the quality of information. Society continues to grapple with these changes and adapt to the evolving digital landscape. The impact of digital media on society has been profound and far-reaching. It has brought about significant changes in various aspects of our lives, including communication, culture, politics, economics, and more. Here are some of the key ways digital media has influenced society:

COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTIVITY:

Global Reach: Digital media has made it possible for people to connect with others around the world instantly, breaking down geographical barriers.

Real-time Communication: Social media, email, messaging apps, and video conferencing have transformed the way we communicate, enabling real-time interactions.

Information Sharing: News and information are disseminated rapidly through digital platforms, allowing people to stay informed about local and global events.

Information Access:

Accessibility: Digital media has made vast amounts of information and knowledge easily accessible to a wide audience. Online encyclopedias, educational resources, and search engines have revolutionized the way we learn.

Culture and Entertainment:

Content Consumption: Digital media has changed the way we consume entertainment and media. Streaming services, online gaming, and social media are now major sources of leisure and culture.

User-Generated Content: Platforms like YouTube and TikTok have empowered individuals to create and share their own content, reshaping the entertainment industry.

Economy:

E-commerce: Online shopping has grown significantly, influencing retail and consumer behavior.

Digital Marketing: The internet and social media have become essential tools for marketing and advertising, allowing for highly targeted campaigns.

Freelance and Gig Economy: Digital platforms have enabled freelancers to find work and created opportunities for the gig economy.

Politics and Activism:

Information Dissemination: Digital media has played a role in political campaigns, enabling candidates to reach voters and constituents more directly.

Social Activism: Social media has been a catalyst for social and political movements, facilitating the spread of information, organizing protests, and raising awareness of issues.

Privacy and Security:

Concerns: The digital age has raised concerns about data privacy, surveillance, and cybersecurity. Protecting personal information has become a critical issue.

Education:

Online Learning: Digital media has expanded access to education through online courses and resources, making learning more flexible and convenient.

Healthcare:

Telemedicine: The digitalization of healthcare has enabled remote consultations and the exchange of medical information, improving healthcare accessibility.

Work and Employment:

Remote Work: Digital media has enabled remote work and flexible work arrangements, especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Skills and Training: Digital media has become a key tool for skill development and professional training.

Filter Bubbles and Echo Chambers: Digital media has raised concerns about the creation of filter bubbles and echo chambers, where individuals are exposed primarily to information and opinions that align with their existing beliefs, potentially polarizing society. Digital media refers to electronic content and data distributed and consumed in digital form. It encompasses various types of media, including text, images, audio, video, and interactive content, all of which can be stored and transmitted as binary code.

Characteristics:

Electronic Format: Digital media is created and stored as electronic files, making it easily shareable, transferable, and reproducible.

Interactivity: Many forms of digital media, such as websites, apps, and games, allow for user interaction, enabling engagement and customization.

Multimodal: Digital media often combines various forms of media, such as text, images, audio, and video, to create rich and immersive experiences.

Accessibility: It can be accessed and distributed through a wide range of digital devices, including computers, smartphones, tablets, and smart TVs.

Dynamic and Adaptive: Digital media can be updated, edited, and adapted in real-time, ensuring content remains current.

Types of Digital Media:

Digital media encompasses a broad spectrum, including text, images, audio, video, social media, web content, e-books, virtual reality, augmented reality, and more. Each type serves specific purposes and engages users differently.

Creation and Production:

Content creation in digital media can be done through various software tools, such as graphic design software, video editing software, content management systems (CMS), and coding languages for web development.

Creation often involves a mix of creativity, technical skills, and understanding user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design.

Distribution and Consumption:

Digital media is shared and consumed through the internet, making it accessible to a global audience.

Social media platforms, streaming services, websites, and mobile apps are common distribution channels.

Users can consume digital media on-demand, often across multiple devices, at their convenience.

Impact on Society:

Digital media has transformed communication, information dissemination, entertainment, education, and many other aspects of society.

It has enabled global connectivity, remote work, e-commerce, online learning, and social activism.

Concerns have arisen regarding privacy, security, misinformation, and digital addiction.

Evolution and Trends:

The digital media landscape continues to evolve, with new technologies like virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and artificial intelligence (AI) shaping the future.

Trends in digital media include personalized content, data-driven marketing, and the integration of digital media with physical environments.

Ethical and Legal Considerations:

Ethical considerations in digital media involve issues like digital privacy, online harassment, fake news, and digital rights.

Legal aspects encompass copyright, intellectual property rights, and regulatory frameworks that govern digital media.

II. Literature Review

Understanding New Media

The phrase "new media" is new and used in many different contexts today. Researchers in the past have made important contributions to the idea of new media and its context in relation to technology and communication (7, 10).

These research found that compared to other aspects, communication practises, the technology or medium used to convey the information, and the social setting in which it is received all play a significant role. To communicate information, the message, channel, and source are crucial. In addition to other cutting-edge practices and technologies like digitization, collaboration, and telecommunication, the majority of the literature concentrated on the aforementioned three features of new media for a longer period of time (7, 10). Netflix, Pluto TV, and Free cable TV are just a few of the many gadgets and software that this digital era has created and brought, allowing users to watch and control the content of television programmes online (Reuters, 2019). For example, a viewer can now fast-forward TV ads and record shows to watch them at a later time when their schedules are hectic (Reuters, 2019). Because it is now so simple and inexpensive to communicate with people throughout the world, digital media has accelerated globalisation. One can now quickly connect with the rest of the world by clicking the bottom of the screen (Reuters, 2019). It might be argued that the rise of digital media technology has affected the education sector just as much (Uskov et al., 2019). Millions of educational resources, such as e-books, are now available to read online, buy, or download for free for scholars and students. Online learning and distance education are two additional initiatives brought forth by digital media. Today, anyone in the globe can access education from the comfort of their own home (UNESCO, 2018). This is corroborated by a research by Adu et al. (2018), who observed that over the past few years, internet and e-learning services have significantly improved in Ghanaian universities.

Five out of ten kids in Ghana have access to the internet, according to the research. According to Lippe et al. (2019), digital media has irrevocably altered the world's fortunes. More individuals today recognise the significance of the internet and think that digital media have a better possibility of influencing and affecting the world now and in the future.

III Opportunities

Digital media presents a wide range of opportunities and advantages for individuals, businesses, and society as a whole. These opportunities span various aspects of life and have transformed the way we communicate, learn, work, entertain, and more. Here are some key opportunities of digital media:

Global Connectivity:

Digital media allows people to connect with others across the globe, fostering international communication, collaboration, and cultural exchange.

Information Accessibility:

The internet and digital media provide easy access to a wealth of information and knowledge, enhancing learning, research, and awareness on a vast scale.

Communication and Networking:

Digital media platforms, including social networks and messaging apps, enable individuals and businesses to build and maintain relationships, share ideas, and collaborate.

Content Creation and Expression:

Digital media empowers individuals to create and share their content, whether it's writing, art, music, or videos, providing a platform for self-expression and creativity.

Education and Online Learning:

Online education and e-learning platforms offer flexible and accessible opportunities for skill development, degree programs, and lifelong learning.

Entertainment and Media Consumption:

Streaming services, video sharing platforms, and interactive media provide an abundance of entertainment options, including movies, music, games, and more.

E-commerce and Online Shopping:

Digital media has revolutionized the way consumers shop, offering convenience and a vast selection of products and services through e-commerce platforms.

Marketing and Advertising:

Digital media has created innovative marketing and advertising opportunities, allowing businesses to reach specific target audiences through digital channels, including social media, email, and search engine marketing.

Remote Work and Telecommuting:

Digital media enables remote work and telecommuting, providing flexibility and opportunities for work-life balance.

Social Activism and Advocacy:

Digital media platforms have been instrumental in raising awareness, organizing movements, and advocating for social and political change.

Innovation and Technological Advancements:

Digital media drives innovation and technological advancements in areas such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality.

Content Monetization and Entrepreneurship:

Individuals and businesses can generate income through digital media, including advertising revenue, paid content, e-commerce, and affiliate marketing.

Access to Health Information and Telemedicine:

Digital media connects individuals to health information and telemedicine services, improving access to medical advice and support.

Community Building:

Digital media facilitates the creation of online communities, forums, and interest-based groups, fostering connections among like-minded individuals.

Data-Driven Insights and Decision-Making:

Businesses and organizations can gather and analyze data from digital media to make informed decisions, improve products and services, and tailor offerings to customer needs.

Environmental Awareness and Sustainable Practices:

Digital media plays a role in raising awareness about environmental issues and promoting sustainable practices, as well as facilitating remote work and reducing the need for physical resources.

Creativity and Innovation:

Digital media provides a platform for creative projects, such as app development, digital art, and interactive storytelling, allowing individuals to explore new avenues for innovation.

Understanding and leveraging these opportunities in digital media can lead to personal, professional, and societal growth. However, it's important to address the challenges and ethical considerations associated with digital media to ensure its responsible and beneficial use.

IV Challenges

Digital media has brought about numerous benefits and opportunities, but it also comes with several challenges. These challenges can impact individuals, businesses, governments, and society as a whole. Here are some of the key challenges associated with digital media:

Privacy and Data Security:

Data breaches and privacy violations have become increasingly common. The collection and misuse of personal data by companies and cybercriminals raise concerns about individuals' privacy and security.

Misinformation and Fake News:

The rapid spread of false or misleading information on digital platforms can have real-world consequences. It can affect public perception, influence elections, and contribute to societal division.

Cybersecurity Threats:

The digital world is vulnerable to cyberattacks, which can target individuals, businesses, and critical infrastructure. Ransomware attacks, data theft, and other cyber threats pose significant risks.

Digital Addiction and Mental Health:

Excessive screen time and digital addiction can have negative effects on mental health, leading to issues like anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances, especially among younger users.

Online Harassment and Cyberbullying:

Digital media provides a platform for online harassment, cyberbullying, and hate speech. Victims can face emotional and psychological harm.

Filter Bubbles and Echo Chambers:

Social media algorithms can create filter bubbles and echo chambers, where users are exposed primarily to information and viewpoints that align with their existing beliefs, potentially contributing to polarization.

Digital Inequality:

Access to digital media and digital literacy is not evenly distributed. This digital divide can exacerbate existing socioeconomic inequalities, limiting opportunities for those with limited access to technology.

Intellectual Property and Copyright:

The ease of copying and sharing digital content has raised complex issues related to intellectual property and copyright infringement. Protecting creators' rights is an ongoing challenge.

Content Moderation and Censorship:

Platforms face the challenge of moderating content, striking a balance between free speech and removing harmful or illegal content. This is a delicate and contentious issue.

Regulation and Compliance:

Governments are grappling with how to regulate digital media, especially in the context of privacy, antitrust, and content moderation. Striking the right balance between regulation and innovation is challenging.

Digital Dependence:

Society's increasing reliance on digital media for various aspects of life, from work to social interaction, raises concerns about what happens when digital services fail or are disrupted.

Sustainability and Environmental Concerns:

The energy consumption of data centers and the electronic waste generated by obsolete devices pose environmental challenges. Sustainable practices in digital technology are essential.

Ethical Dilemmas:

Ethical considerations related to the use of artificial intelligence in digital media, the creation of deepfakes, and the impact of technology on employment and society raise important ethical questions.

Addressing these challenges requires collaboration among individuals, businesses, governments, and technology providers. Striking a balance between the advantages of digital media and the need to mitigate these challenges is an ongoing endeavor to ensure the responsible and beneficial use of digital technology.

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