

Original Article

Reshaping Social Culture in the Digital Age: A Statistical-Analytical Study of the Role of Social Media Between Positive Impacts and Value-Based Challenges

AHMED SHAKER ALALAQ

University of Kufa, Iraq.

ABSTRACT: This study examines how social media reshapes social and cultural reality in the digital age. Results show that digital platforms enhance cross-border communication, broaden knowledge networks, and create wider spaces for self-expression and public participation, reinforcing values of openness and community engagement. However, statistics reveal rising value-based challenges, including privacy risks, misinformation, and the erosion of certain traditional norms within a rapidly shifting digital environment. The study concludes that social culture is undergoing a dual transformation: expanding individual horizons and enabling new forms of interaction, while also generating value challenges that require regulatory, cultural, and educational measures to maintain balance and preserve core societal authenticity.

KEYWORDS: Social networks, Statistical analysis, Traditions, Digital age, Value-Based influences.

1. INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has fundamentally transformed modern societies by reshaping social structures, communication methods, and value systems. This transformation is driven by the integration of digital technologies into all aspects of life, leading to significant changes in how individuals, businesses, and governments operate. The digital age has not only facilitated scientific and economic progress but has also introduced new ethical, moral, and legal challenges. These changes are profound and multifaceted, affecting various dimensions of society.

On the social and interactional level, the digital revolution has altered traditional social structures, giving rise to a more diverse society characterized by individual awareness and new forms of tribalism, where relatively closed and self-sufficient communities emerge based on shared interests or identities (Grishaeva 2020). As these new structures evolve, communication methods have become increasingly dependent on digital media, with online platforms becoming central to social interaction, radically transforming the way individuals connect and engage with one another (Zeller & Atherton 2024).

Alongside social transformations, digitalization has had a major impact on economies and institutions. It has improved communication, expanded access to information, and fostered innovation and economic growth. This has led to a reshaping of business processes and enhanced economic stability, as evidenced by the relationship between digitalization indicators and social progress in Europe (Cetulean et al. 2024). However, these changes also compel institutions including legal systems to adapt to the new digital environment to address disputes and challenges arising from technological developments (Zeller & Atherton 2024).

The effects of the digital revolution extend beyond social and economic domains to encompass value systems and ethical principles. The digital era has brought about a shift in societal values, including changes in moral concepts, aesthetics, and social norms. Digital technology functions as a key driver of change, influencing the construction of social values and the understanding of human relationships (Nasution et al. 2024). Yet, the information revolution has simultaneously raised growing concerns regarding misinformation and the ethical implications of using digital media as tools in hybrid conflicts that affect human cognitive systems (Marsili & Wróblewska-Jachna 2024).

1.1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

To what extent have social networking platforms contributed to reshaping social culture, and what are the boundaries of their impact between positive influence and negative consequences?

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Within the framework of this study, the following scientific questions are addressed:

1. What is the nature of the relationship between social networks and cultural transformations in contemporary societies?
2. What are the main positive contributions of these networks in enhancing communication and cultural openness?

3. What value-based and behavioral challenges have they imposed on social customs and traditions?

1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To analyze the role of social networks in reshaping social values and customs.
2. To identify the positive and negative impacts of these networks on the cultural structure.
3. To determine the value-based challenges resulting from digital interaction.

1.4. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the role of social media in shaping social culture in the digital age. The research identifies positive impacts, including enhanced cross-border communication, expanded knowledge networks, and facilitation of self-expression and public participation. Conversely, it highlights value-based challenges such as privacy threats, the spread of misinformation, the decline of certain traditional values, and the emergence of addictive behaviors. The study concludes that social culture in the digital age is undergoing a dual reshaping process: it expands opportunities for interaction and learning, while also imposing challenges that require regulatory, cultural, and educational frameworks to balance the benefits of the digital era with the preservation of core societal values.

1.5. PREVIOUS STUDIES

This study relies on a broad range of peer-reviewed research, scholarly studies, and case studies to examine the impact of the digital revolution on how societies and individuals interact with social media, as well as their patterns of reception, response, or resistance. Among the key studies considered are:

- Ray, M. (2025, February 4). *Social Network*. Encyclopedia Britannica.
- Samanta, P., Sarkar, D., Jana, P., & Kole, D. K. (2022). *A Study on Behavior Analysis in Social Network*. In *Advanced Data Mining Tools and Methods for Social Computing*.
- Wu, P., Feng, R., & Zhang, J. *The Relationship between Loneliness and Problematic Social Media Usage in Chinese University Students*.
- Xu, S. (2024). *The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Psychology and Behavior*.

2. THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN CHANGING SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

2.1. CONCEPTUAL INTRODUCTION TO CULTURE, CUSTOMS, AND TRADITIONS

Social customs and traditions encompass the established practices and beliefs that are transmitted across generations within a society. These customs often reflect societal values and influence social behavior and identity. While some traditions may enhance social cohesion, others may perpetuate harmful practices. The following sections explore definitions and examples of social customs and traditions.

The term “tradition” originates from the Latin word “tradere,” meaning “to hand over or deliver,” and refers to practices passed down through generations, often embodying cultural values and norms (Salgado 2022). Others argue that traditions are an integral part of cultural identity, representing collective memory and a sense of belonging within the community (Mustafaevich & Sirazhuddinovna 2016).

Social customs and traditions consist of behaviors and practices inherited across generations in a given society and are a fundamental part of cultural identity and family cohesion. These customs vary widely from one society to another and can even differ within regions of the same community. Some examples include early or forced marriage (Maluleke 2012), holiday celebrations, rituals, and culinary practices, which reflect the society’s heritage and values. While these may contrast with modernity, they evoke a sense of continuity and authenticity (Salgado 2022). Traditions also include ceremonies, festivals, and family gatherings that facilitate social self-definition and the transmission of cultural values across generations, especially in multicultural regions (Mustafaevich & Sirazhuddinovna 2016).

Although social customs and traditions can strengthen societal continuity, they may also sustain outdated or harmful practices that require critical examination and potential reform. Some scholars define social customs as entrenched behavioral patterns and traditions that characterize a particular community or group. These customs include practices, habits, and norms transmitted from one generation to the next, typically reinforced by social standards and cultural expectations. Social customs can influence various aspects of life, including clothing, food, celebrations, communication styles, and social interactions, functioning as unwritten rules guiding acceptable behavior and maintaining social cohesion (Quickonomics 2024). They represent widely accepted and practiced behaviors within a given society or culture.

These customs shape individuals' daily lives, reflect societal values, beliefs, and norms, and serve as a means of social cohesion and identity, forming a crucial part of the cultural and social fabric of communities. Understanding these customs is essential for comprehending how societies function, ensuring continuity, and adapting to change (Mr. Edwards 2024).

Cultural identity, in turn, is the complex amalgam of memories, impressions, ideologies, images, expressions, inventions, and aspirations that preserves human civilizational identity while allowing for adaptation to ongoing developments due to internal dynamics and the capacity for communication, exchange, and interaction (Radwan 2022).

2.2. DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are websites and applications that enable users and organizations to connect, communicate, share information, and form relationships. Individuals can interact with others in the same region, with family and friends, or with people who share similar interests. Today, social networks are among the most significant uses of the Internet. Some scholars define them as online communities consisting of individuals who exchange messages, share information, and, in some cases, collaborate on joint activities. Social networks and social media are overlapping concepts; however, social networks are typically understood as users building communities among themselves, whereas social media is more related to using social networking sites and related platforms to build an audience (Ray 2024).

Social networking platforms are also defined as online digital platforms that allow individuals to communicate and interact within virtual communities. These platforms enable users to build communication networks for sharing different types of online content, including information, ideas, images, videos, and messages (Ray 2025). Social networks are characterized as digital environments where users can create profiles containing personal data, preferences, and photos, allowing them to construct a self-image, interact with friends and colleagues, and connect with other users who share similar interests (Khabrani 2023).

Social media networks have witnessed significant development since their inception, evolving from a mere peripheral technology into a fundamental pillar of modern communication. The growth of social networks has been substantial since their creation, driven by advancements in information and communication technology. Social networks initially appeared in the 1930s through social surveys and gained momentum with the advent of the Internet in the late 20th century. This evolution has transformed communication, enabling diverse interactions among individuals, organizations, and governments. The following sections highlight the key milestones in this development.

- **Early Origins:** The roots of the social network concept date back to the 18th century in sociology, with its definition clarified in the early 20th century. The emergence of social networks in their modern online form dates to the mid-1990s (Howard 2024).
- The concept of social networks began with early social studies, notably by Moreno in the 1930s, who conducted the first sociometric survey (Muhamad n.d.). Theoretical frameworks, such as the “six degrees of separation” theory, also emerged, laying the foundation for understanding social connections (Dobrelia 2023).

The earliest online social networks appeared once technology could support them. Email and chat programs first emerged in the early 1970s, but persistent communities did not appear until the creation of USENET in 1979. USENET began as a messaging system between Duke University and the University of North Carolina but quickly expanded to other U.S. universities and government agencies. It allowed users to post and receive messages within topic-specific areas called newsgroups. Initially, there was no standardized convention for naming newsgroups, which caused confusion as the number of newsgroups grew throughout the 1980s (Ray 2024).

In 1995, Classmates.com emerged to connect former classmates (Telefónica 2025). In 1997, SixDegrees.com was launched, focusing on direct connections between people, allowing users to create profiles and send private messages. Between 1999 and 2001, several other social networks emerged but achieved limited success. The launch of Friendster in 2002 marked another turning point. Friendster aimed to combine features of dating sites with social networking, enabling users to connect with friends and friends of friends. Its innovative approach quickly attracted users, though technical issues and scaling challenges hindered its long-term success (Howard 2024).

- **Emergence of Social Media Giants:** (Mamonova & Starina 2024)
- Social media truly began to emerge in 2005 with platforms like Facebook, which became one of the most famous.
- Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram evolved over time while maintaining their primary purpose of facilitating communication and interaction (Al-Saou 2020).
- This evolution included the addition of features such as vertical video, filters, stickers, and augmented reality (AR) effects, enhancing users' creative expression (Bessarab et al. 2021).
- These platforms became heavily reliant on advanced algorithms that analyze user behavior and preferences to deliver personalized content, thereby increasing engagement (Howard, 2024).

Social media became popular in the early 21st century, allowing family members, friends, and acquaintances to connect online. Eventually, these platforms were largely supplanted by Facebook, which became one of the most well-known social media sites in the world, with billions of users globally. Other forms of social media emerged to share specific types of content. For example, YouTube allows users to share videos, TikTok was specifically designed for sharing short videos, and LinkedIn focuses on users' professional relationships, where users create pages structured similarly to a résumé (Britannica 2024).

3. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THOUGHT

The concept of networks is an integral part of contemporary life, making it difficult to imagine a world without them. The term "network" is widely used, which often leads to confusion regarding its precise meaning among researchers, practitioners, and the general public. Social networks play a key role in social innovation, as they provide access to resources, knowledge, and opportunities. The diversity and strength of social networks affect the effectiveness of social innovation, and social networks evolve over time, shifting from a focus on personal ties to professional connections. Intermediaries can help strengthen social networks within the social innovation system (Vyas 2023).

Socio-cultural changes involve shifts in cultural functions and human behavior in society from one set of conditions to another. This means that the changes occurring include both social and cultural transformations that create new circumstances for humans. Culture should be understood in terms of three layers: the technological layer at the base, the social layer in the middle, and the philosophical layer at the top. Another significant influence is the emergence of a culture of over-sharing and self-exposure in cyberspace. This culture has partially emerged and been shaped by social media, which allows anyone to upload content via devices. Social media is no longer merely a channel or medium; it has become a lifestyle in the relationship between users and technology (Matondang 2023).

The role of social networks in changing habits and traditions within society is multifaceted, affecting cultural identity, communication, and the preservation of traditional values. Social media platforms act as catalysts for cultural change and as tools for maintaining local customs, leading to a dynamic interaction between global influences and local traditions. The impact on cultural identity is particularly pronounced, especially among younger generations. For instance, the adoption of English terms and global fashion trends has become widespread, blending traditional and modern styles. Studies indicate the dominant role of social media in shaping the cultural identity of entire generations. Social media is not just a communication tool but also a major influencer of norms and traditions.

Moreover, social media affects individuals' communication patterns and the adoption of new linguistic terms, often leading to the use of languages other than one's native tongue. It also influences global fashion trends, widely disseminated through social media, resulting in a blend of traditional and modern clothing styles and highlighting the influence of global culture on local fashion practices. Additionally, social media affects social values, such as freedom of expression and gender equality, which are increasingly accepted and embraced. This shift indicates a broader acceptance of progressive values facilitated by exposure to diverse perspectives on social media (Maydiyan 2024).

Among the most notable outcomes of social media use is the transformation of traditional cultures, which have undergone significant changes due to widespread social media usage. Online discussions play a crucial role in shaping how individuals perceive and engage with cultural practices (Communication and Influence of Traditional Culture Based on Social Network Analysis 2024).

The modern global social and cultural space has been entirely constructed on the principle of networks, with various network structures dominating society. Their spread is attributed to the development of digital technologies, which in turn emerged from society's and individuals' need to overcome spatial and communicational constraints and to access information. At the same time, each network structure has its own cultural dimension. It has been emphasized that the influence of social networks on culture is evident not only have social networks changed how people interact, build relationships, consume information, and make decisions, but they have also shaped the reciprocal influence between social networks and culture. Social networks alter cultural values and norms, which is reflected in intercultural and international communication, how people relate to one another, and how individuals perceive themselves and their relationships with others. Conversely, cultural values influence social networks by imposing the need to conform to certain social standards (Oleh 2023). In short, the significance of social networks in driving major social changes highlights the need for diverse theoretical approaches to fully understand their impact on various macro-historical processes (Emily 2017).

Excessive use of social networks has also led to new forms of self-expression and creativity, allowing individuals to share their stories, art, and perspectives with a global audience. However, this has also given rise to the culture of influencers, where individuals gain fame and influence through their online presence, sometimes blurring the lines between authenticity and performance (Mj Writes 2024).

Modern technological development has produced new arenas for virtual interaction, manifested in social networks that have transformed reality into circles filled with daily developments. These networks provide opportunities for wide-ranging and complex communication despite physical distances, resulting in a culture distinct from traditional societies based on customs and traditions. Communication and information transfer technologies have become a crucial pillar in constructing human social, economic, political, and cultural systems, evolving through stages from agricultural and industrial to informational eras (Radwan 2022).

4. POSITIVE IMPACTS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA

In the modern era, social media has become an integral part of daily life, playing a prominent role in bridging distances between individuals and facilitating communication and information exchange. These networks contribute to strengthening social relationships, providing platforms for expressing opinions and ideas, and offering opportunities for learning, marketing, and positively influencing society. This section explores the key benefits of using social media and its impact on various aspects of life.

4.1. ENHANCING COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

Social media contributes to enhancing global communication and expanding social networks. These platforms allow individuals to interact with people from diverse backgrounds and broaden their social circles, while also facilitating the creation of virtual communities and providing platforms for creative expression (Aritonang et al. 2024). Friends and family living in different geographic regions can communicate remotely and share information, updates, photos, and videos. Social networks also enable individuals to meet others with similar interests or expand their existing social networks (Ikhsan et al. 2024).

Social networks enhance user interaction by breaking down barriers of time and distance. Thanks to cloud-based visual communication technologies such as WhatsApp or Instagram Live, people can communicate face-to-face with anyone worldwide (Testbook 2024). They also allow individuals to maintain contact with family and friends, establish new relationships with previously unknown individuals, and provide businesses with opportunities to connect with both new and existing customers (Will 2024).

4.2. LEARNING

Social media serves as an excellent platform for learning. Users can receive instant news updates, stay informed about friends and family, or learn about developments in their communities (Gulzar & Ahmad 2024). Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter facilitate real-time interaction, enabling students and teachers to ask questions and participate in group discussions (Ansari et al., 2020). Social media also promotes collaborative learning by fostering teamwork through joint projects and problem-solving activities (Perez et al. 2023) and building strong educational networks (Shuai et al. 2022). Platforms like LinkedIn allow students to interact with experts in various fields to receive professional guidance (Bruguera et al. 2019).

4.3. INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Companies can leverage social media to enhance brand awareness among platform users, improve customer retention and conversion rates, and promote brand identity and voice (Gavin & Kinza n.d.). In the age of social media, the boundaries between digital and real spaces have blurred, transforming personal networks, communication patterns, and collaboration methods. As a result, consumer psychology and behavior have changed significantly. Increased user interaction and control over social media enhance consumers' social awareness and strengthen social influence. During social interactions, consumers observe and learn from others' behaviors, shaping their purchasing motivations and relying on opinions and recommendations to make buying decisions. Interactive processes facilitated by social media, characterized by rapid information exchange and feedback mechanisms, make consumers more susceptible to the influence of others (Xu 2024; Chaimae 2020).

4.4. PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE

Social media plays a dual role in preserving and transforming culture. These platforms enable the preservation of local cultures through online communities focused on specific traditions. They help disseminate and reinforce traditional culture by providing spaces for direct exchange of information, opinions, and experiences (Pangesti et al. 2024; Alfiansyah et al. 2024). Social media has become increasingly popular in people's daily activities and routines with the rise of internet users. While it provides a shared way to connect people through knowledge, behavior, and attitudes, it also fosters a sense of belonging to a broader social network beyond an individual's local community. Social media effectively links diverse people, traditions, opinions, and locations worldwide without the constraints of time or distance (Hsu Thiri Zaw 2018).

5. VALUE AND BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Despite their numerous benefits, social media platforms have also introduced a range of challenges and controversies. Issues such as online harassment, cyberbullying, misinformation, and algorithmic bias have raised concerns about the darker side of

social media. Furthermore, the addictive nature of these platforms has prompted questions regarding their impact on mental health and well-being, particularly among younger users (Mj Writes 2024).

Concerns about social media's effects on children's brains often intersect with alarming narratives about predatory hackers, child molesters, online stalkers, identity theft, phishing scams, trojans, viruses, and worms. The Internet serves as a metaphor through which broader social and cultural fears are projected, and for this reason, its impact on offline culture is often viewed very negatively by many critics (Frank 2017).

Anything on social media can go viral quickly, exposing both content and associated individuals to ongoing bullying and phishing attacks. Phishing is a serious issue that can cause significant psychological and mental trauma to victims, severely affecting their behavior and daily lives; in extreme cases, it can even lead to suicide. Social media can also make people feel isolated from the real world, as individuals may spend so much time interacting online that they neglect their offline relationships (Testbook 2024).

5.1. EROSION OF TRADITIONAL VALUES

Studies indicate that traditional cultural values, such as face-to-face communication and deep personal bonds, have declined in priority, while digital communication and social networking have become more dominant. This shift leads to changes in social norms, as exposure to personal information on social media has blurred the boundaries between private and public life (Anista 2023).

5.2. SPREAD OF MISINFORMATION

The rapid dissemination of information on social media contributes to the spread of misinformation, influencing public opinion and potentially affecting political outcomes. This creates challenges in distinguishing between reliable and unreliable information (Wani et al. 2024). Content on social media can provoke controversy and division, leading people to attack and criticize one another while disregarding mutual understanding and respect. For instance, political and religious disputes on social media often result in polarization and hostility among individuals. Social media content can also negatively affect young people, especially when it includes violence, pornography, or inappropriate behavior, potentially fostering unhealthy values and behavioral patterns among youth, which can have a broader negative impact on society (Oho O. 2023).

5.3. IMPACT ON SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Social media affects the quality of social relationships, as it can lead to social isolation and unhealthy comparisons. At the same time, it facilitates the formation of new relationships and the expansion of social networks (Azzaakiyyah 2023). Current research indicates a correlational relationship between feelings of loneliness and problematic social media use, though there is debate regarding the direction of this relationship. Three main perspectives have emerged: the first suggests that loneliness positively predicts problematic social media use; the second proposes that problematic social media use positively predicts loneliness; and the third indicates a bidirectional relationship between loneliness and problematic social media use (Wu et al. 2024).

Recent studies show a strong association between social media use and feelings of loneliness among university students. Research suggests that interventions targeting both loneliness and excessive social media use can effectively reduce these issues, providing dual benefits for mental health in this age group (Targetinternet n.d.). The phenomenon of social comparison is particularly relevant, as individuals tend to compare their lives with curated images presented online, which can increase feelings of inadequacy and social isolation (Gioltzidou et al. 2024).

5.4. IMPACT ON LOCAL AND GLOBAL CULTURES

Social media plays a complex role in shaping both local and global cultures. On one hand, it contributes to cultural homogenization by spreading global values and practices, which can lead to the erosion of local cultural privacy and the loss of distinctive community identities in favor of transnational cultural phenomena. This homogenization is evident in the tendency of some youth to adopt Western values and practices due to extensive exposure to foreign content on these platforms, highlighting Western culture as a prominent influential force in the digital space (Ang et al. 2020).

Despite this unifying influence, social media also serves as a tool for preserving cultural diversity. It provides spaces for local communities to express and share their cultures with the world, helping to document and transmit cultural values and norms to future generations. Social media contributes to organizing and consolidating cultural identities while fostering a sense of belonging among different groups. In this way, it functions as a dual-impact platform: on one hand, it threatens local cultural privacy, while on the other, it supports the continuity and development of culture in a global context (Pangesti et al. 2024).

5.5. IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

A detailed descriptive study was conducted at two of the most prestigious universities in Chennai, involving a sample of 90 participants. The study included questions related to demographic data, social media usage patterns, social relationships, and

impacts on mental health and well-being. The results revealed a statistically significant relationship between the amount of time spent on social media and the number of social media platforms used. A positive correlation was also found between feelings of anxiety and extended time spent on social media, indicating that individuals were more active online than in their real-life interactions (Ul Ain et al. 2024).

It can be concluded that excessive social media use, along with the use of multiple platforms and prolonged time spent online, negatively affects students' mental health, making them more susceptible to anxiety, stress, and depression. Social media also plays a significant role in influencing individuals' health practices and dietary habits.

To analyze the relationship between social media use and eating concerns among a large sample of young adults, a cross-sectional study was conducted involving 1,765 randomly selected participants aged 19 to 32 from a national probability-based online panel, rather than volunteer sampling. Eating concerns were measured using two validated instruments: the SCOFF questionnaire and the Primary Care Eating Disorders Screening Tool. Social media usage—including Facebook, Twitter, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Vine, Snapchat, and Reddit—was assessed in terms of volume (daily time spent) and frequency (number of visits per week).

5.6. GRADUAL EROSION OF KNOWLEDGE

Social media may affect individuals' reading habits, as users tend to read short articles and posts rather than books or long-form content. This can reduce their ability to concentrate and engage in critical thinking (Samanta et al. 2022). Key manifestations of this erosion include:

- Mental Distraction: Students spend extended periods scrolling and browsing without a clear purpose, weakening their ability to focus during study sessions. The overabundance of information, including texts, images, and videos, makes it difficult for learners to identify reliable sources and retain important information, leading to conflicting viewpoints. Rapid memes often compete with serious educational content, reducing the opportunity to grasp complex ideas (Betsy Sparrow et al. 2011).
- Platform Addiction: A constant desire to check updates can lead to procrastination on academic tasks and assignments. One study found that 66% of students feel a stronger pull toward social media than studying (Montag & Markett 2023).

6. DIGITAL REALITY IN NUMBERS: A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

Social media continues to grow worldwide, with the latest official statistics indicating that 5.24 billion people use social media globally, representing 63.9% of the world's population. Data show that this number is expected to reach 5.41 billion users by July 2025, accounting for 65.7% of the global population (Backlinko Team 2025).

- In 2011, only 12% of people over 65 had social media accounts.
- By 2018, this figure rose to 37%.
- 41% of people over 65 use Facebook.
- 9% of people over 65 use LinkedIn.

Age group 50–64:

- Approximately 65% have a Facebook profile.
- 24% have a LinkedIn profile.
- 21% have an Instagram profile.

Age group 30–49:

- 40% use social media as a source of news.
- 26% of the 50–64 age group use social media as a news source.
- 25% of the 18–29 age group use social media as a news source.
- 45% of Facebook users browse news through the platform (Targetinternet n.d.).

TABLE 1 Presents the Latest Official Figures (2025) For The Use of The Most Prominent Social Media Platforms Globally, Based On Recent Analytical Reports (Onyango 2025; Crowd analyzer 2025; Chou 2025; Wearesocial 2024; Dixon 2025; Backlinko Team 2025)

Platforms	Monthly Active Users (2025)	Male %	Female %	Key Notes
Facebook	3.05 billion	56%	44%	Still the most widely used platform globally, with relatively slow growth.
YouTube	2.7 billion	54%	46%	Second largest platform, with strong dominance in video content.
WhatsApp	2.5 billion	52%	48%	The most widely used instant messaging application globally.
Instagram	2.35 billion	48%	52%	Continuous growth driven by short videos

				(Reels).
TikTok	1.7 billion	46%	54%	Fastest-growing platform, particularly among younger age groups.
Twitter (X)	650 million	63%	37%	Underwent significant changes following its rebranding to "X".

The data presented represents a sample of six major social media platforms in 2025, including Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter (X). This analysis is based on a quantitative and statistical approach to examine usage patterns and demographic distribution, applying market-focused metrics and correlational analysis to draw objective conclusions.

6.1. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS 2025

Total Users and Distribution: The total number of monthly active users across six major platforms is 12.95 billion, with an average of 2.16 billion users per platform. The data show significant variation in platform sizes:

- Level 1 (>2.5 billion): Facebook (3.05), YouTube (2.7), WhatsApp (2.5)
- Level 2 (1.5–2.5 billion): Instagram (2.35), TikTok (1.7)
- Level 3 (<1 billion): Twitter (0.65)

Market Concentration: Market share distribution is as follows: Facebook 23.55%, YouTube 20.85%, WhatsApp 19.31%, Instagram 18.15%, TikTok 13.13%, Twitter 5.02%. The HHI index is 1889, indicating moderate concentration (oligopoly) with relative dominance by the top four platforms.

Gender Demographics: The average male-to-female ratio is 53.17% to 46.83%, with a gap ranging from 4% (WhatsApp) to 26% (Twitter). Political and news-oriented platforms tend to be male-dominated (Twitter, Facebook), whereas visually-oriented platforms lean female (Instagram, TikTok). Larger platforms tend to have a more balanced gender distribution, consistent with Mass Adoption Theory.

Qualitative Dynamics and Growth:

- Facebook: slow growth, mature stage
- TikTok: fastest growth, driven by short videos and young users
- Instagram: steady growth thanks to innovations (Reels)
- Twitter: major changes after rebranding
- YouTube: dominance in long-form video content
- WhatsApp: leader in instant messaging

The market shows moderate concentration with four platforms controlling over 80% of users, raising potential regulatory concerns. Gender distribution reflects content type, usage culture, and target age groups. There is a shift from text/interactive platforms to visual/short-video platforms, reflecting changing consumer preferences toward fast-consumption visual content. Gender gaps persist, especially on political and news platforms, highlighting the need for deeper sociocultural studies.

7. CONCLUSION

The reshaping of social culture in the digital age is not merely a reflection of rapid technological development; it is a profound historical process that reconfigures patterns of thinking, value systems, and forms of social interaction in unprecedented ways. The statistical-analytical study shows that social media today constitutes a central space for cultural reproduction, where cognitive, symbolic, economic, political, individual, and collective dimensions intersect. On one hand, social media empowers individuals, expands participation, and promotes cross-border cultural exchange; on the other hand, it presents value-based challenges related to knowledge reliability, the disintegration of traditional references, and the rise of individualistic and consumerist tendencies.

This reality demands that we approach digital culture as a constantly evolving structure, one that cannot be reduced to a simple "positive/negative" dichotomy. Rather, it should be understood as a dialectical process in which potential benefits interact with risks. Digital culture is not merely a medium; it is an active force in reshaping collective consciousness and redefining concepts such as identity, belonging, and the public sphere.

7.1. FUTURE PROSPECTS

- Digital Ethics: Establish value codes to balance freedom and social protection.
- Digital Literacy: Focus on critical thinking, values, and information verification in education.
- AI & Culture: Use algorithms to track value shifts and predict trends.
- Collective Identity: Emergence of hybrid identities based on shared interests and virtual networks.
- Participatory Governance: Involve governments, organizations, and civil society to balance innovation and values.

- Digital Public Sphere: Complex interactions of politics, culture, economy, and knowledge require transparency mechanisms.
- Digital Citizenship: Expand to include rights, responsibilities, and active shaping of digital culture.

In conclusion, social culture in the digital age is not lost or fragmented but continuously reshaping, as traditional values interact with digital innovations to produce new forms of communal life. Anticipating the future requires a multidisciplinary approach, combining statistical analysis, sociological understanding, and philosophical and ethical perspectives, to ensure that digital transformation enhances human dignity rather than undermines it.

REFERENCES

- [1] T.E. Britannica, of Encyclopaedia, Social Media, Encyclopedia Britannica, November 1 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/social-media>
- [2] Maxim Cetulean, Laurentiu-Mihai Tănase, and Norina Popovici, "The Social Impact of Digital Transformation at the European Level," Ovidius University Annals: Economic Sciences Series, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://doaj.org/article/034cd6caf7e34b5e8e889ef6788367c5>
- [3] C. Chou, Amazing social media statistics: What you need to know, Leeline Sourcing, 2025.
- [4] "Communication and Influence of Traditional Culture Based on Social Network Analysis," Deleted Journal, vol. 20, pp. 450–461, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://journal.esrgroups.org/jes/article/view/2670>
- [5] Crowd Analyzer, Annual report 2025: The state of social media, 2025. [Online]: Available: <https://crowdanalyzer.com/annual-report-25-ar/>
- [6] M. Edwards, "The significance of customs in society: Shaping behavior, order, and cultural identity," Easy Sociology, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://easysociology.com/sociology-of-culture/the-significance-of-customs-in-society-shaping-behavior-order-and-cultural-identity/>
- [7] Emily Erikson, and Nicholas Occhiuto, "Social Networks and Macrosocial Change, Review of Sociology, vol. 43, pp. 229–248, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-060116-053633>
- [8] Frank Furedi, "How the Internet and Social Media are Changing Culture," Aspen Institute Central Europe, 2017. [Online]: Available: <https://www.aspeninstitutece.org/article/2017/internet-social-media-changing-culture/>
- [9] Oleg Gavrylyuk, "Social Networks as a Factor of the Formation of Cultural Values and Norms," no. 3, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.32461/2226-3209.3.2023.289783>
- [10] S. A. Grishaeva, "Specifics of social stratification in digital society," Management of the Personnel and Intellectual Resources in Russia, vol. 2, pp. 10–14, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.12737/2305-7807-2020-10-14>
- [11] Intan Alisa Nasution et al., "Aksiologi Dalam era Society 5.0: Menyikapi Perubahan Nilai dalam Masyarakat Digital," Mutiara: Jurnal Penelitian dan Karya Ilmiah, vol. 2, no. 6, pp. 165–178, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.59059/mutiara.v2i6.1882>
- [12] Will Kenton, What is social networking? Investopedia, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-networking.asp>
- [13] Marco Marsili, and Joanna Wróblewska-Jachna, "Digital Revolution and Artificial Intelligence as Challenges for Today / Rewolucja cyfrowa i sztuczna inteligencja jako wyzwania współczesności. Media i Społeczeństwo, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 19–30, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0054.6506>
- [14] Amelia Rizal Matondang, and Tia Husnul Zarriyati, "Basic Socio-Cultural Science: Social and Cultural Change Due to Social Media," International Journal of Students Education, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 44–53. 2023. [Online]: Available: <https://journal.berpusi.co.id/index.php/IJoSE/article/view/352>
- [15] Pangesti Maydiyan et al., "The Influence of Social Media on the Cultural Identity of the Millennial Generation: Indonesian Case Study," Pubmedia Social Sciences and Humanities, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 7, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.47134/pssh.v2i1.241>
- [16] MJ Writes, "The evolution of social media," Medium, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://medium.com/@mujtabamehboob4/the-evolution-of-social-media-d7e6af5f7b7b>
- [17] O. Oho, The impact of social media on culture and values, Vocal Media, 2013.
- [18] Francis OnyangoBy, "Social media statistics - users and revenue," Tridens Technology, 2025, February 10. [Online]: Available: <https://tridenstechnology.com/ar/%D8%A5%D8%AD%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%8A/>
- [19] Quickonomics, Social custom, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://quickonomics.com/terms/social-custom/>
- [20] Mostafa Radwan, "Effect of Social Media Usage on the Cultural Identity of Rural People: A Case Study of Bamha Village, Egypt," Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, vol. 9, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01268-4>
- [21] Michael Ray, Social network, Encyclopedia Britannica, 2024, October 1. [Online]: Available: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/social-network>
- [22] Dave Roos, "How online social networks work," HowStuffWorks. [Online]: Available: <https://computer.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/information/how-online-social-networks-work.htm>

- [23] "Social network analysis in organizations," Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.228>
- [24] Testbook, Social media and its impact on society – Positive & negative impact, 2024. [Online]: Available: <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/social-media-and-its-impact-on-society>
- [25] Vyas Lina Sonne, Social networks and social innovation, 2023. [Online]: Available: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800373358.ch36>
- [26] Katie Terrell Hanna, Gavin Wright, and Kinza Yasar, Social networking, TechTarget, 2025. [Online]: Available: <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/social-networking>
- [27] Hsu Tthiri Zaw, "The Impact of Social Media on Cultural Adaptation Process: Study on Chinese Government Scholarship Students," 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajc.2018.63007>
- [28] Bruno Zeller, and Mirella Atherton, Preliminary material (pp. i-xii), 2024. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004702691_001