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Social values in the digital age

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Abstract:

In today's digital age, the challenges of inequality and social exclusion are evident, with issues such as unequal access to the Internet, limited digital skills and economic and cultural disparities. However, digital platforms offer opportunities to reinforce social values such as diversity, inclusion, communication and civic engagement. Ethical digital regulation is crucial to protect fundamental rights, privacy, diversity and security online. Collaboration between governments, businesses and regulators is needed to develop policies and standards that promote equitable access to technologies while preserving social values. By adopting a thoughtful and proactive approach, a digital future can be created, reinforcing social values and improving quality of life for all.

Keywords: digital inequality, social exclusion, digital platforms, education, ethical regulation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern society is profoundly influenced by technological advances, and in particular by the emergence and ubiquity of digital technology. Digital technology has transformed the way we communicate, work, learn and interact with the world around us. Digital technologies such as social media, online platforms and connected devices have radically altered the way we access information, build relationships and participate in public life. This rapid evolution raises fundamental questions about social values and how they evolve in the digital age. The aim of this paper is to analyze the impact of digital technology on social values. Social values are the principles and ideals that guide individuals and societies in their choices, behaviors and interactions. They play an essential role in structuring our societies and contribute to the construction of our collective identity.

The digital age has brought about significant changes in social values. For example, the speed and ease of communication offered by digital technologies have altered our perception of time and space, generating new expectations of responsiveness and immediacy. Similarly, social media have created new forms of expression and participation, but have also raised questions about privacy, the authenticity of interactions and the construction of online identity.

This paper aims to explore the different dimensions of the impact of digital technology on social values. In particular, we will look at changes in interpersonal relationships, the public sphere, privacy and access to information, as well as the challenges and opportunities that these present. By examining these aspects, we will be able to better understand how the digital is shaping our social values, and how this influences the way we interact and behave in contemporary society.

In conclusion, this paper seeks to raise awareness of the critical importance of understanding the transformations underway in social values in the digital age. By examining the impact of digital technologies on our values, we can better grasp the societal challenges we face and help shape a digital future that reflects our collective aspirations.

II- METHODS AND MATERIALS

To analyze the impact of digital technology on social values, we have adopted a multidisciplinary approach that integrates perspectives from the fields of social sciences, psychology, communication and technological studies (**Caselli &Egidi, 2007,pp33-37**). This approach enables us to take into account the different aspects and dimensions related to the relationship between digital technology and social values .

We carried out an in-depth literature review to gather relevant information on the subject. This included the exploration of relevant research articles (**Jacob& Souissi, 2022, pp. 83-93**) books, reports and academic publications (**Delmotte, 2007, pp.157-175**). Also, we conducted an online sample survey to find out about the impact of digital technology on social values: users' perceptions and experiences, and based on our objectives: to understand how the use of digital technologies influences social values such as solidarity, confidentiality, mutual aid, social cohesion, sharing etc... we opted for a representative sample of 100 Facebook users aged between 18 and 65, from different geographical regions and with varied socio-demographic profiles. We developed an online questionnaire comprising closed and open-ended questions on social values in social networks. These questions focus on users' perceptions of the presence and importance of social values on Facebook. Users' experiences of diversity, inclusion, transparency and accountability on the various social networks. Users' expectations of Facebook in terms of promoting and protecting social values.

The survey results will provide a better understanding of Facebook users' perceptions of social values on the platform. They will also provide information on users' experiences of diversity, inclusion, transparency and accountability on Facebook, and reveal users' expectations of Facebook in terms of promoting and protecting social values. This online survey will provide valuable insights into how Facebook users perceive and evaluate social values in the digital context, and the results could be used to inform the platform's policies and practices for promoting and protecting social values.

Using this combination of data sources, we were able to obtain a comprehensive and balanced view of the impact of digital on social values in the modern era. These sources enabled us to provide a solid basis for our analysis and conclusion.

1 -Definition of social values

Social values are principles, ideals or norms accepted and shared by a given society. They represent collective beliefs about what is important, desirable and acceptable in relationships between individuals, groups and institutions within a society (**Béatrice, 2018, pp.16-17**) Social values vary from one culture to another and can evolve over time. They play an essential role in the formation of cultural identity and can influence individual and collective behavior (**Ben Omar & Granget, 2011, pp.103-115**). They are often taught and transmitted by the family, education, religion, the media and other social institutions.

1.1 Explanation of the concept of social values and their role in society:

Social values refer to the collectively shared principles, beliefs and ideals that guide behavior, choices and norms in a given society. They play a fundamental role in regulating social interactions (**Wei, 2008, pp. 73-99**), structuring interpersonal relationships and building cultural identity. Social values are often seen as moral and ethical standards that define what is considered desirable and socially acceptable. Social values provide a frame of reference for individuals and groups, influencing their attitudes, opinions and behaviors (**Disselkamp, 1998, pp. 251-265**). They contribute to social cohesion by fostering cooperation, solidarity and mutual understanding within a society. Moreover, social values evolve over time, reflecting social, cultural and technological changes.

1.2 Examples of traditional social values

In traditional society, certain social values have been widely recognized and shared. These values serve as benchmarks for individual and collective behavior (**Borgetto, 2006, pp. 6-15**). Solidarity is a fundamental social value that emphasizes mutual aid, cooperation and support within the community. It implies collective responsibility towards the most vulnerable members of society, and aims to reduce social inequalities. Social solidarity plays a crucial role in maintaining social order and the cohesion of individuals within society (**Musso, 2015, pp.93-107**). However, in the digital age, solidarity can take on new forms, notably through participatory funding platforms or online mobilization movements. Equality is a social value that promotes justice and non-discrimination. It aims to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their social or ethnic origin, gender or economic status. Equality is a central value in sociological and political debates, and is often associated with movements fighting for civil rights and gender equality. However, the digital age also raises questions about equitable access to resources and technological opportunities, creating new challenges for achieving social equality. Finally, respect is a social value that encourages the treatment of others with dignity, consideration and recognition (**Bukhari, 2011, pp 11-15**). It implies recognition of the rights and differences of each individual, as well as rejection of any form of discrimination or prejudice. Respect plays a crucial role in social interaction, and is often seen as the basis for harmonious, balanced relationships. In the digital age, respect takes on particular importance due to the diversity of identities and opinions that coexist online. This implies an awareness of the consequences of our digital actions and speech on others (**Grenon & all, 2013, p.47**) These examples of traditional social values illustrate the importance of moral and ethical principles that guide our social interactions. However, the digital age has also introduced new dynamics and unique challenges for these values, which calls for a thorough reflection on their evolution in the digital age.

III. RESULTS

1 -Changes in interpersonal relationships

The results of our analysis significantly demonstrate that the advent of digital technology has brought profound changes to interpersonal relationships **(Marcoccia, 2016, pp.131-144)**. Social media platforms and instant messaging apps have redefined the way we interact and communicate with others. Online relationships can be more fragmented, superficial and performance-driven, while face-to-face interactions can be reduced in frequency and quality **(Ponsot, 2012, p.60)**. These changes can create challenges for building strong, meaningful relationships, as well as maintaining trust and empathy.

Social media platforms have created new forms of connection, enabling individuals to connect with like-minded people and maintain long-distance relationships **(Massiah, 2020, PP. 144-161)**. This can be beneficial for people who feel isolated or have difficulty establishing social ties in their immediate physical environment **(Rochford, 2016, p.94)**. However, it can also lead to an over-reliance on virtual interactions, to the detriment of face-to-face interactions.

In addition, excessive use of social media can lead to problems such as social comparison, anxiety and depression **(kim & Lee, 2016, pp. 49-60)**. Individuals can feel pressured to present an idealized image of themselves online, which can damage their self-esteem and emotional well-being **(Staksrud & Livingstone, 2013, pp.40-50)**. It's essential to find a healthy balance between online and face-to-face interactions, recognizing the importance of authentic, meaningful relationships in our lives **(Werner & Rock, 2010, pp. 107)**.

2 -Evolution of the public sphere and citizen participation

Our findings also confirm that digital technology has led to a significant evolution of the public sphere and citizen participation **(Audrey & Daragon, 2019, pp.103-118)**. Social media and online platforms have given everyone the opportunity to express themselves publicly, share ideas and participate in public debates **(Clark & Keeffe, 2011, pp.114)**. This has fostered greater accessibility and diversity of voices, broadening the scope of democratic debate. However, this increased openness and accessibility has also given rise to significant challenges. Disinformation, fake news and the manipulation of public opinion have become major problems **(Meigs, 2021, pp 323-345)**. The recommendation algorithms used by platforms can reinforce cognitive biases, leading to filter bubbles and increased polarization **(Huver, 2017, pp.487-488)**. In addition, certain voices may be marginalized or excluded due to inequalities in access to digital resources and digital skills.

It is essential to promote media and digital literacy **(Lihmans & Lique, 2022, pp. 35-46)**, so that individuals are able to navigate online information critically, assess the credibility of sources and participate in public debates in an informed way. Collective efforts are needed to develop fact-checking mechanisms, promote a diversity of voices and foster a culture of constructive and respectful online debate **(Sagesser, 2008, p. 65)**.

3 -Alterations to online privacy and identity management

Our results highlight the significant changes in privacy and online identity management brought about by digital technology. Individuals are increasingly exposed to the collection, use and sale of their personal data by companies and online platforms. This raises concerns about the confidentiality, security and control of personal information **(Fouret, 2005, p. 96)**.

Individuals face complex dilemmas **(Rochelandet, 2011, pp. 17-47)** when it comes to sharing personal information online. On the one hand, sharing information can enable personalization of services and an improved user experience. On the other hand, it can also expose individuals to risks such as surveillance, profiling and identity theft **(Barlette, 2013, pp. 197-205)**. It is crucial to put in place privacy and data protection measures, such as stricter regulations on the collection and use of personal data, as well as tools enabling individuals to control their information.

Online identity management is also a major challenge (**Mimeche & all, 2015, pp. 69**). Individuals must navigate between authenticity and self-representation, taking into account the potential consequences of their online actions on their professional, social and personal lives (**Dumas & Ruller, 2014, p 89**). Issues such as online reputation, harassment and cyber-violence can have a significant impact on people's well-being. It is important to promote responsible and respectful online behavior, as well as to develop support mechanisms for those who are victims of online violence.

4 -Transformation of information access and knowledge production

With regard to access to information and knowledge production, our results underline the enormous impact of digital technology. Individuals today have quick and easy access to massive amounts of information from a variety of sources (**Leveille, 1990, pp. 19-24**). This has opened up new opportunities for learning, research and the dissemination of knowledge.

However, it has also created major challenges. The abundance of information online makes it difficult to distinguish between reliable sources and misinformation (**Ollion, 2015, pp.70-77**). Fake news, conspiracy theories (**Giry, 2022, pp. 43-64**) and misleading information can spread rapidly and have real consequences for society. It is essential to develop digital literacy skills that enable individuals to assess the credibility of information, check facts and question dubious information.

At the same time, digital technology has also transformed knowledge production. Individuals can now contribute to the creation and dissemination of knowledge in a more open and collaborative way (**Grimau & Gray, 2011, pp 579-588**). Content-sharing platforms and online communities enable individuals to share their ideas, collaborate with others around the world and contribute to research and development projects.

However, this also raises questions about the quality and credibility of collaboratively produced information. Peer review and scientific rigor are essential to guarantee the reliability of knowledge produced online.

In summary, our findings highlight the significant changes caused by digital technology on social values (**Peretti, 2022, pp. 54-70**). Interpersonal relationships are affected, the public sphere and civic participation are evolving, privacy and online identity management are altered, and access to information and knowledge production are undergoing a profound transformation. These findings underline the importance of understanding these changes to shape a digital society that preserves the essential values of solidarity, equality and respect. It is crucial to develop policies and strategies that promote responsible use of the digital environment, protect individual privacy and security, and encourage active and informed citizen participation in the public sphere.

IV- ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1 -Analysis

Social values are crucial elements of society, influencing behavior, choices and collective norms. They provide a frame of reference for individuals and groups, guiding their attitudes, opinions and actions. They also contribute to social cohesion by fostering cooperation, solidarity and mutual understanding.

In a traditional society, certain social values have been widely accepted and shared. These include solidarity, which emphasizes mutual aid, cooperation and support within the community. This value implies collective responsibility towards the most vulnerable members of society, and aims to reduce social inequalities. According to Durkheim, a 19th-century French sociologist, social solidarity plays a crucial role in maintaining social order and the cohesion of individuals within society (**Pasquier, 2022, p. 17**). However, in the digital age, new forms of solidarity are emerging, such as participatory funding platforms and online mobilization movements. These new forms of solidarity raise questions about their effectiveness and long-term impact on social cohesion.

Another traditional social value is equality, which aims to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their social or ethnic origin, gender or economic status. Equality is a central value in sociological and political debates, and is often associated with civil rights and gender equality movements (**Boulot, 2001, p. 93**). However, the digital age poses new challenges for the achievement of social equality. For example, equitable access to technological resources and opportunities is becoming a major issue. Digital inequalities can amplify existing inequalities and create new forms of social disparity. It is therefore necessary to rethink policies and initiatives aimed at promoting social equality in the digital age.

Respect is another essential social value that encourages treating others with dignity, consideration and recognition. It implies recognition of the rights and differences of each individual, as well as rejection of any form of discrimination or prejudice. Respect plays a crucial role in social interaction, and is often seen as the basis for harmonious, balanced relationships (**Bleuscart &all, p.173**). In the digital age, respect takes on particular importance due to the diversity of identities and opinions that coexist online. Cyberstalking, hate speech and misinformation are just some of the challenges we face in our digital interactions (**Debos, 2017, pp.63-73**). To preserve respect and dignity in this environment, it is necessary to promote standards of online conduct and develop tools and policies that foster a safe and inclusive digital space.

These examples of traditional social values highlight the importance of the moral and ethical principles that guide our social interactions. However, the digital age has brought new dynamics and unique challenges for these values. Technology has transformed the way we interact and communicate, creating new virtual spaces where social rules are constantly evolving. Consequently, it's crucial to think about how these traditional social values can adapt and evolve in the digital age.

To meet these challenges, it is essential to encourage dialogue and education around social values in the digital age. Individuals need to be made aware of the issues surrounding solidarity, equality and respect in the digital context. Governments, organizations and citizens must work together to develop policies and initiatives that promote these values and guarantee their respect in the digital domain.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that social values evolve over time, and are influenced by social, cultural and technological changes. Consequently, it is necessary to regularly rethink and reassess these values in order to adapt them to the realities and challenges of the digital age.

In conclusion, social values play a fundamental role in the regulation of social interactions and the construction of cultural identity. They provide a frame of reference for individuals and groups, influencing their attitudes, opinions and behaviors. Values such as solidarity, equality and respect are essential for maintaining social cohesion and promoting harmonious relations. However, the digital age has introduced new challenges and unique dynamics for these values, requiring careful reflection on their evolution and adaptation. It is crucial to promote dialogue, education and collaboration to ensure that these traditional social values remain relevant and can guide our interactions in the ever-changing digital world.

2 -Discussion

Interpreting the results highlights the importance of understanding the impact of digital technology on social values within the broader context of contemporary society. The results highlight the significant changes that digital technology has brought about in various areas, such as interpersonal relations, the public sphere, privacy, access to information and knowledge production. It is essential to take these changes into account when developing social policies and practices, in order to preserve fundamental values and meet emerging challenges.

Analysis of the results highlights the challenges and opportunities resulting from the impact of digital technology on social values. Challenges include the fragmentation of interpersonal relationships, the polarization of the public sphere, concerns about privacy and data security, and the difficulty of navigating the abundance of online information. However, there are also

opportunities, such as the possibility of connecting individuals from all over the world, amplify marginalized voices, encourage citizen participation and facilitate access to information.

Reflecting on the societal implications leads us to consider the changes needed to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. It is important to promote responsible and ethical use of the digital world, by encouraging digital literacy and awareness of privacy issues, misinformation and cyber-violence. It is also crucial to ensure equity of access to digital technologies and reduce the digital divide, so as not to leave certain populations marginalized. In addition, appropriate regulation and greater responsibility on the part of digital players can help mitigate negative effects and foster positive social values.

In conclusion, the discussion highlights the results of the study on the impact of digital technology on social values, placing them in their broader context. It analyzes the challenges and opportunities these findings raise, and offers reflections on the societal implications as well as recommendations for the future. These elements provide a solid basis for informed decision-making with a view to promoting a digital society that is balanced, inclusive and respectful of social values.

V-CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of digital technology on social values and highlighted several key findings. We found that digital has brought about significant changes in interpersonal relationships, the public sphere, privacy, access to information and knowledge production. These changes have profound implications for how we connect, communicate, participate in public life and manage our identities online.

The results revealed both challenges and opportunities. Challenges include the fragmentation of interpersonal relationships, the polarization of the public sphere, concerns about privacy and data security, and the difficulty of distinguishing reliable information from misinformation. However, there are also opportunities, such as global connectivity, amplification of marginalized voices, increased citizen participation and easier access to information.

The results of our study underline the importance of collective awareness and action to preserve social values in the digital age. It's vital to recognize the challenges we face and take action to overcome them. This requires increased education and awareness of digital issues, such as privacy protection, information verification and online identity management.

In addition, it is essential that governments, businesses and civil society work together to create an appropriate regulatory framework that protects individual rights, while fostering innovation and inclusion. It is also crucial to reduce the digital divide by ensuring equitable access to digital technologies and providing digital skills training.

Finally, we call for ongoing reflection on social values in the digital age, and collective action to shape a balanced, inclusive and respectful digital society. This requires the active participation of all stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of the digital age are equitably distributed and that fundamental social values are preserved.

In summary, the impact of digital technology on social values is a complex and constantly evolving subject. It is crucial to recognize the challenges and opportunities it presents, and to act proactively to preserve essential social values in the digital age.

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