

# The Impact of Emerging Social Media on Individuals and Society

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## Abstract

**With the continuous progress and development of science and technology, people use social media more and more, and the status of it in daily life is getting higher and higher. This paper first analyzes the three elements of individual, the communication mode and collective memory, and then analyzes the impact of emerging social media on daily life. Then it studies the development trend of social media and its role in daily life, so as to promote the positive role of emerging social media and promote the development of individuals and society.**

## Keywords

**emerging social media; individual; society; influence.**

## 1. Introduction

Generally speaking, social media refers to the platform and technology for individuals or groups to express, write, analyze and discuss. With the continuous development of technology, the definition and form of social media have changed a lot compared with the past. As people's requirements for material life continue to decrease, correspondingly, the requirements for communication and enjoyment at the ideological level increase, and the forms of social media emerge in endlessly. Taking WeChat as an example, since its launch on January 21, 2011, according to statistics, the daily growth rate of users has reached 1.6 million. And in February 2018, there are more than 1 billion WeChat users globally. By 2019, the number of monthly active accounts exceeded 1.1 billion. WeChat has become an indispensable communication tool in people's daily life.

It can be seen from this that the main characteristics of emerging social media are the following two points. The first one is the large number of users. And the second one is that the dissemination is spontaneous and not subject to human command according to the habits of current users. In the face of the power of science and technology, social media provides us with a different platform for communication and discussion, which is not limited by time and place, and has the characteristics of fast transmission, wide range of audiences and indifference of individual communication.

## 2. The Impact of Social Media on Individuals

### 2.1. The Impact of Social Media on Personal Behavior

Nowadays, in the subway or on the bus, you can see people browse webpages, watching videos, etc. with their mobile phones, people can enjoy the convenience brought by social media in the limited time on the bus. But at the same time, their attentions to the surrounding environment and people are greatly reduced. Why do people spend most of their free time on mobile devices? It's because of the diversity of social media that people are attracted by the content and the way they use it. They prefer to immerse their spare time in the network world, but they pay scant attention to the real world, social news and other major events. When we use social media, we should not only take advantage of its advantages, but also avoid using it excessively or doing something harmful to our growth and development.

## **2.2. The Impact of Social Media on Personal Reading**

"The way we perceive and understand the world basically depends on what kind of tools we are holding." In 2019, the rate of comprehensive reading of China's adult citizens is 81.1%, which is 0.3% higher than 80.8% in 2018, and the contact rate of digital reading is 79.3%, which is 3.1% higher than 76.2% in 2018. The average daily mobile phone contact time of adult citizens was the longest, which was 100.41 minutes, an increase of 15.54 minutes compared with 84.87 minutes in 2018. And the average daily Internet contact time per capita was 66.05 minutes, 0.93 minutes higher than 65.12 minutes in 2018. While mobile reading liberates people from the reading time, the shortcomings of entertainment and fragmentation are also widely criticized. Some studies have shown that people who read paper books would be more likely to recall specific details than those who read on the screen, and the feel and structure of printed books are among the reasons for the differences. Compared with paper books, reading of social media has less space for marking, especially for mobile phones. It is difficult to provide a reference point for people to associate and recall the contents they have read. However, paper books can be achieved through the marks in books.

## **2.3. Promotion of Social Media on Individual Participation in Political Activities**

In the past, people's enthusiasm to participate in political activities was not strong, and the ways and channels of participation were also restricted. And public information will be affected by the noise and human factors in the process of dissemination. Also information dissemination is hindered and the real-time transparency of information is not high. After the emergence of social media, it is not difficult to find that the channels for the public to obtain government information are more diversified and transparent. And public feedback, complaints and suggestions are more convenient and unobstructed, also are not affected by time and place. Thus, social media can effectively promote people's political participation and strengthen political supervision.

## **3. The Impact of New Social Media on the Communication Mode**

The view of information of social media shows that the information form of social media itself is important, and the content and carriers should be inseparable. And the attraction of social media itself is convenience, diversity and comfort. The appeal of social media makes it unnecessary for information to be transmitted layer by layer. Instead, people can browse relevant information and express their opinions through the Internet. This is very important for individuals. When they express their views, they can no longer communicate verbally as before, but also communicate after expressing their views. They can communicate on the same platform with individuals who are also concerned about this issue. It means that they have been respected. Everyone is an independent individual, who can live for themselves or express their own opinions.

## **4. The Impact of New Social Media on Collective Memory**

People are affected by social media for a long time, and they will be infected by memory. Daniel, a psychologist at Harvard University, believes that through social software such as Facebook and Instagram, memories can be shared among groups in a new way, blurring the boundaries between individual memory and collective memory. Psychologists in the study of the basic process of memory formation have shown that social networks are powerfully shaping memory, and people do not need much hint to follow the rules of mainstream memory even if it is wrong. The empowerment attributes offer enough space for communication and interaction among people, within groups and between groups. So social media makes the producer of collective

memory, which is also worthy of our caution. Once the cohesion of social network makes the group form a consensus on the events that have happened and form the same memory, then it will resist the opposite views and information. And collective memory makes the relationships between people become closer, and the identity of the group will shape the collective memory in turns.

## 5. The Influence of Social Media on Social Knowledge Dissemination

Nowadays, social media has become the main form of knowledge dissemination. Social media improves people's writing, expression and reading abilities. People have changed from the previous mode of watching TV news and reading newspapers to official account and sending tweets, etc. in everyday life and work, all aspects of knowledge have come to us.

For teenagers, their psychology is immature, and they place a strong curiosity on external things. They have no resistance to social media with various forms and rich contents. In the process of spreading knowledge, the influence of social media on teenagers is mainly reflected in the following three aspects. Firstly, it not only increases the probability of young people's access to various kinds of knowledge, but also broadens their access to knowledge. Secondly, the rich content of social media enables young people to contact with more knowledge, so that they can constantly understand their interests and lay a foundation for their future development. Thirdly, social media provides convenience for teenagers who encounter problems. Teenagers can ask teachers, classmates and relevant professionals through social media to seek answers to their questions.

Changes in social media are generally irreversible. Although sometimes there is the phenomenon of errors of knowledge transmission in social media, some of the information is harmful to teenagers, we can not stop or restrict people's use of social media because of this phenomenon. Since everything has two sides, and social media is no exception. For social media, the state should formulate corresponding laws and regulations to regulate people's behavior of using social media, so as to avoid illegal elements using social media to engage in illegal activities. At the same time, we should recognize the facts, enhance our ability to distinguish right from wrong, and make good use of WeChat and other social media to provide services for our study, work and life.

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