Chapter 3
Opportunities and Threats Analysis Caused by Social Media

Elina Ahmadi
Independent Researcher, Australia

ABSTRACT

With the advent and widespread use of information and communication technologies, the need for information has become part of the daily work of individuals. Recently, social networks are one of the most important topics in cyberspace. This study seeks to identify and rank the opportunities and threats of social media for the society. Three hundred seventy students active in social networks are selected by clustering sampling method. A conceptual model is developed based on the review of theoretical literature and five opportunities of social network including electronic learning, filling leisure time, organizing social groups, getting to know about diverse cultures, possibility of conversation, as well as five threats include sharing anti values, abusing, dissemination of misinformation, internet addiction, and malacious communication have significant effect on the students.

INTRODUCTION

Technological evolution in communication channels has led to the creation of a new system that speaks a universal language. Humans communicate with others by generating and distributing digital codes and tokens in the space of interconnected computer networks, or the Internet. This communication, which is formed in

the moment, is called "virtual communication" due to the lack of face to face communication. The virtual world includes the Internet and the World Wide Web.

According to Toffler (1980), human societies have gone through two periods of revolution: agriculture and industry, and are now in the late post-industrial or information age, based on electronics and computers. An age in which power, wealth and security are created on the basis of knowledge and speed is its characteristic and information is its most valuable commodity. This latest world, which is expanding rapidly and has affected all aspects of life on Earth, is based on modern information technology and communication media and continues to grow and flourish in a non-physical space, which is called cyberspace.

The advent of information and communication technology has opened a new window on the world and its influence in various aspects of human life has caused great changes in society, which is called the information revolution. People try to use it in various ways by increasing their knowledge in this field. With the increasing development of information technology and its use, a new era in the life of societies has begun to be called the information society, and entering this course requires the necessary arrangements and facilities.

At the recent past, information and communication technology is an integral part of human life and the emergence of new forms of communication and large information and communication networks has paved the way for new social spaces as boundless spaces that affect the relationships, dimensions and social skills of individuals. The age of transition from an industry-based society to an information-based society, in other words, the transition from the physical world into the virtual world requires recognizing the characteristics of the virtual world. The information and communication revolution has rapidly transformed the world economy, culture and politics and turned the world into a global village. .

In the information age, changes are taking place in a geometric progression, with speed, knowledge, and creative and dynamic management at the forefront. Therefore, it is necessary to know the new technologies and consequently how to use them correctly, quickly and optimally. Cyberspace is a platform that generates numerous threats and opportunities for human beings and societies. Harms and crimes in cyberspace have capacities and characteristics, including globalization, decentralization, digitalization, and networking, as well as access based on time and virtual work. In this regard, having a system of legislation, policy-making and cybercrime are plays a great role to diminish crimes. Students are the most widely users of cyberspace; therefore, the important issue and challenge in this field is what opportunities and threats cyberspace creates for students.

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