


Chapter 3

Assessment of Social Media From the Perspective of Digital Ethics and Human Rights

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ABSTRACT

The impact of social media on our lives is significant and extends to a wide audience. However, this impact can sometimes lead to negative consequences. Despite spending a large part of our daily lives on social media platforms, it is observed that a structure to regulate these platforms and protect the fundamental rights of users has not been fully established. Although social media platforms have developed various rules within themselves and made regulations accordingly, the vague nature of these rules can sometimes become a hindrance to establishing order. Consequently, there is a necessity for the establishment of more general and transparent regulations to govern the operations of social media platforms. In this study, the concept of social media, the relationship between social media and privacy, freedom of expression in the context of human rights and communication freedoms are discussed. Subsequently, ethical statements of various social media platforms are examined while maintaining a general perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication has been a fundamental human need since the dawn of humanity. Primitive societies communicated through cave paintings, while modern society now uses social media accounts. The most significant change in communication practices occurred in the 1990s with the invention and widespread adoption of the internet, followed by the integration of mobile devices into our lives, which sparked a communication revolution. Since the 1990s, people have increasingly engaged in instant communication. These tools have also changed individuals' natural environments. Through these tools, individuals can communicate with people they may never have met otherwise. Smartphones, which have become a significant part of our lives since the 2000s, have opened up a completely different window to our communication practices. One significant innovation brought about by smartphones is the proliferation of social media platforms. The ability to download social media applications to smartphones has increased the frequency of individuals' use of these platforms. Social media platforms have enabled individuals to become active participants in the communication process, allowing them to express themselves and gain followers and likes. Social media platforms have enabled individuals to participate actively in the communication process, expressing themselves and gaining followers and likes. However, the rapid changes of the last 30 years have resulted in disparities due to the inability of the entire world to keep up with this pace simultaneously, resulting in a lack of access between societies. In fact, even variables within the same society, such as age, economic level, or education level, have led to an imbalance of access among individuals. Due to these imbalances, while some individuals quickly adapt to developments, others have found solutions by maintaining their traditional lifestyles. However, after the pandemic period, the world has begun to change again, and even segments of the population resistant to innovation for various reasons have started to accept the inevitability of this process and become part of the system.

The widespread use of new generation media tools, especially social media, affects both the time individuals allocate to these tools and the significance they attribute to them. Nowadays, social media and other new media tools are not just seen as sources of entertainment or leisure, but are also valued for their wider significance. However, the full acceptance of general rules or ethical principles that regulate the use of these essential platforms in our lives has not yet been achieved. Throughout history, humanity has used communication tools that were popular in their respective eras, and various rules and ethical values have been established for these tools. Especially in modern communication practices such as radio, television, and newspapers, broadcasting principles, legal regulations, and many ethical rules have been utilized. Despite the introduction of new ethical principles and values

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