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The Impact of Social Media on Self-Esteem: Communication, Comparison, and Digital Identity

Ionut Petru Balea, Călin Oprea, Mădălin George Matei,
Victoria Bololoi, Anka Roxana Pascariu

UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES "KING MIHAI I" FROM TIMISOARA

Abstract: *This paper examines the relationship between social media usage and self-esteem, focusing on the psychological and communicative mechanisms underlying this connection. Drawing on theories of social comparison, digital self-presentation, and identity management, the study explores how constant exposure to idealized images, validation metrics, and peer interactions can influence one's self-perception and emotional wellbeing.*

• Introduction

The rise of social media has reshaped the way individuals communicate, perceive themselves, and construct their social identity.

Material and method

Through an interdisciplinary approach combining heritage studies, urban semiotics, and communication theory, the study emphasizes how architectural heritage can transmit values, evoke emotional responses, and foster civic engagement in contemporary society.

• Results and discussions

The analysis highlights both the positive and negative outcomes of social media engagement: while it fosters social connection, creativity, and self-expression, it can also generate pressure for perfection, fear of judgment, and feelings of inadequacy. Through an interdisciplinary lens that combines psychology and communication studies, the paper argues that digital literacy and conscious media consumption are essential for maintaining a healthy balance between online identity and real-world self-esteem. Ultimately, understanding the communicative dynamics of social media can help individuals and communities develop more authentic, supportive, and empowering digital spaces.

Conclusions: *Social media impacts self-esteem through communication, comparison, and digital identity, often negatively by creating a cycle of comparison and the need for validation through likes and comments. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and depression, particularly when users present a distorted digital self-image or spend excessive time online. While social media can provide a sense of connection and identity, it also presents risks, making a balanced approach and critical awareness crucial for maintaining mental well-being.*

