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Social Communication and its Development in the Knowledge Society in Times of the Digital Age

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SUMMARY

To speak of social communication means to refer to man himself. Its origin is as old as the human being. Hence, communication is based on signs and sounds. However, language is its main characteristic. An element that has evolved throughout the history of the individual.

Therefore, in the twentieth century, social communication takes on academic importance, after establishing itself as a discipline and emerging as a science. Not in vain the evolution of technology has made the communication channels used a few decades ago, are almost obsolete compared to broadband communication that allows to establish contact in real time with good image and sound quality.

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Social Communication and its Development in the Knowledge Society in Times of the Digital Age

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SUMMARY

To speak of social communication means to refer to man himself. Its origin is as old as the human being. Hence, communication is based on signs and sounds. However, language is its main characteristic. An element that has evolved throughout the history of the individual.

Therefore, in the twentieth century, social communication takes on academic importance, after establishing itself as a discipline and emerging as a science. Not in vain the evolution of technology has made the communication channels used a few decades ago, are almost obsolete compared to broadband communication that allows to establish contact in real time with good image and sound quality.

In the society of knowledge and technology, the development of society is closely linked to social communication, if we take into account that it is of utmost importance for human growth.

Although the digital age facilitates communication between humans, it brings as a consequence a challenge of equal magnitude: although mobile devices were invented so that man could communicate with other individuals, this has caused a large part of humanity to lose the tradition of talking to other people, while communicating, more and more, through the different digital platforms.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The present study entitled: Social communication and the development of society in times of the digital age, which aims to expose the importance of social communication in the development of the human being, presents a methodological design where the study of the problem is exposed.

The first part of the research development, Social communication, exposes the background of communication from the appearance of man, how it has evolved through history, until reaching our days, in the digital age.

Social communication in recent years has gained strong growth, especially in digital publications, together with the prominence and growing increase of social networks, which combined constitute a powerful media element and good support as long as they are used properly.

In the professional and scientific field, social communication has an ally in journalism, through which it is used to disseminate content and captivate public opinion. Therefore, the future of journalism is digital. An example of this are social networks that have become a hotbed of information, which in many cases end up being news.

Likewise, this study analyzes the challenges of social communication in a technological context compared to traditional communication, through radio, television and the press, conventional channels of dissemination of the message.

After the presentation of the first part of the research, the analysis is moved on to interpretation, which takes into account the evolution of technology that has caused some

communication channels to be outdated, in favor of digital communication.

In the second part of the investigation, Development in society, human development is weighted as a key factor in today's society, where social communication becomes important to achieve political, economic, educational goals, among others.

In the twentieth century, the concept of communication for development appeared, which addresses a series of communication strategies that are applied to the so-called Third World countries with the aim of improving their living conditions. This concept was based on the fact that the media had important effects that could lead to the economic development of nations and, as a consequence, bring about social change.

Not surprisingly, communication for development refers to the type of communication that must be intentionally directed and systematically planned to changes in society, institutions and individuals. Meanwhile, development communication is linked to the media, because they have the capacity to create a favorable public atmosphere for social change, an important factor for the modernization of societies.

The research also provides a graphic cake where the results of the study are exposed, and closes with an analysis of results and discussion, a conclusion and bibliographic references.

II. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN OF THE STUDY

2.1 Problem Statement

In the digital age, social communication, as a key factor for social development, becomes important, but the debate also arises about what is the correct way to communicate: should communication continue to be expressed through its traditional channels such as speech or should it be virtual, giving way to technology?;

Is traditional communication compatible with technological communication?; Is virtual

communication adequate for today's social development?

This research is focused on the study of this problem, which covers social communication from its dawn, with the appearance of man, to the present, in the digital age.

2.2 Justification

The importance of carrying out this research entitled: Social communication and the development of society in times of the digital age, lies in contributing to the clarification of how to communicate, regardless of the channel used: traditional or virtual, taking into account the impact on social development. In other words, social communication is of paramount importance for the knowledge and technology society.

2.3 Objectives

2.3.1 General objectives

Know the importance of social communication in human development.

2.3.2 Specific objectives

- Explain what traditional communication and virtual communication consist of.
- Describe the most important consequences of the use and abuse of virtual communication.
- Analyze social development in a context of virtual communication.

2.4 Scope of the Study

Through this research, Social communication and the development of society in times of the digital age, the scope of social communication is explored, from the traditional to its technological expression.

Consequently, this study is linked to the debate on the different forms of social communication that human beings have experienced throughout history.

2.5 Limitations

The scheduled period for the collection of information on the study topic is one month, from May 1 to 31, 2019. Also, the lack of research on the subject to establish a comparison and thus measure its consequences, is another factor that limits this research.

2.6 Methodology

To carry out this research, a survey was used as an instrument for searching and collecting information, with five (5) questions, formulated with the aim of inquiring about social communication and the development of society in the digital age.

In addition, to present the theoretical framework, books, articles on the Internet and publications of newspapers and magazines were consulted.

2.7 Social Communication

Social communication has existed since the appearance of man on earth. Despite this, several theories have been recorded about the origins of communication and how language has evolved throughout history.¹

Since its inception, "communication has always been based on sounds and signs, but language is the most obvious characteristic that distinguishes man from other animals."²

There is no doubt that the development of written communication was in the invention of the printing press of the German Johannes Gutenberg (1440). It was thus that from the fifteenth century the knowledge was registered so that it reached the whole world massively. Meanwhile, communication as a science emerged

For the sophists what was important was the power of the word in society, while Plato suggested a rhetoric based on true knowledge and not on argumentative tricks, since he considered language as an imperfect means of expression, because it distorted reality. Aristotle, for his part, offered an alternative position: true knowledge as a product of analysis and reasoning.⁴

In the seventeenth century, the celebrated English philosopher Francis Bacon offered the framework for a "new science" based on inductive reasoning and empirical observations. Scientific studies of communication during this century initiated the speaker movement, which became the hotbed of communication study in America in the late 1800s.⁵

In the twentieth century, communication was established as a discipline and emerged as a science, product of the union of oratory and the field of language, also supported by rhetoric, which intensified his research.⁶

During the last half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty- first century, communication studies have consolidated a debate in the scientific and professional field. The institutionalization of communication knowledge has important implications. For example, the evident transformations in terms of communicators in today's society; the integration of social communicators in work teams for very diverse areas beyond traditional mass media; the current debates and innovations

¹ Wright, A. Background to Communication. Antecedentes.org. Retrieved from: <https://antecedentes.org/comunicacion/>

² Wright, A. (1)

³ Wright, A. (2)

⁴ Villanueva, R. Theory of mass communication: stages of the development of human communication. Retrieved from: <https://rociovillanuevamollo.wordpress.com/2009/01/26/el-desarrollo-historico-de-la-comunicacion-como-ciencia/>

⁵ Villanueva, R. (1)

⁶ Villanueva, R. (2)

on communication regulations and policies in Latin America.⁷

In the 30s the first classical school dedicated exclusively to the study of social communication was created. Since then, the systems with which people communicate have evolved in recent decades with the development of technologies and the internet. An example of this is that, today, traditional media such as radio, television and the written press have joined instant messaging services such as the WhatsApp or video calls that allow people to connect from different locations on the planet, not only with voice, but also through the image at low cost.

Therefore, the evolution of technology has made some communication channels widely used a few decades ago, are outdated in favor of broadband communication that allows real-time contact with good image and sound quality, unthinkable just a few years ago. Not in vain human communication has been transformed throughout humanity in parallel with technological development.⁸

Although the digital age facilitates communication between humans, it brings as a consequence a challenge of equal magnitude: although mobile devices were invented so that man could communicate with other individuals, this has caused a large part of humanity to lose the tradition of talking to other people, while communicating, more and more, through the different digital platforms.⁹

The problem arises as a result of the amount and speed of information to which people are exposed today. Information saturation. Publications such as Forbes magazine warn that

the excess of information leads to the "automation of our feelings, which causes us to lose sensitivity to people and what surrounds us. Today it is very common to see in any boardroom, in any company, people who do not communicate, and while everyone arrives and starts the meeting, the participants are immersed in their phones and nobody pays attention."

On the other hand, the multiplication of the supply of new media leads to the fragmentation of audiences and new media consumers, who devote less time to television and more to the internet, for example.

Currently, one of the forms of social communication is through journalism. The Spanish newspaper El País, in its edition of April 20, 2016, mentions that "in a highly globalized world and subject to the changes that new technologies bring about, it is a reality that for some time journalism has been undergoing a strong reconversion. Digital journalism has been in the media landscape for just over a decade, but in a short time it has managed to overshadow its biggest competitor: the giant of the written press on paper, which enjoyed a considerable audience and dissemination."¹⁰

This is how social communication in recent years has gained strong growth, especially in digital publications, "together with the prominence and growing increase of social networks, which combined constitute a powerful media element and good support as long as we use them properly".¹¹

2.8 Development in Society

Today, it is common to associate the idea of social development with that society that enjoys access to diverse goods and services, which is democratic and participatory, egalitarian and equitable. A society in which its inhabitants have

⁷ Massoni, S. Communication as a scientific discipline. Trends21. Retrieved from: https://www.tendencias21.net/fluido/La-comunicacion-com-o-disciplina-cientifica_a183.html

⁸ Herrera, M. (2017). Human communication in the digital age. Forbes. Mexico. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com.mx/la-comunicacion-humana-en-la-era-digital/>

⁹ Herrera, M. (1)

¹⁰ Pérez Blanco, P. (2016). Journalism in the digital age. The Country. Spain. Retrieved from: https://elpais.com/elpais/2016/04/13/opinion/1460540302_620130.html

¹¹ Perez Blanco, P. (1)

equal opportunities and where there is a certain homogeneity in their living conditions.¹²

As for the knowledge society, development in society has come to occupy a central place in the current discussion of the social sciences, since it summarizes the social transformations that occur in modern society, while offering a vision of the future. Proof of this is Latin America, where significant efforts have been made to increase educational opportunities, which has led to coverage rates in primary education, on average, being very high, above 90%, similar to the level of the most economically developed countries, such as those that make up the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).¹³

One of the keys to social development is social communication, if one takes into account that it has a decisive importance in human growth. Thanks to rapid advances in technology and communication techniques, it can be said that, today, the world is in the era of telecommunications at the service of social development.¹⁴

Social communication, in a technological context, allows people belonging to different social groups within a community to exchange information and ideas in a positive and productive way. In this sense, social communication becomes more important when it is linked to the development of society.¹⁵

In the twentieth century, the concept of communication for development appeared, which addresses a series of communication strategies that are applied to the so-called Third World countries with the aim of improving their living conditions. This concept was based on the

fact that the media had important effects that could lead to the economic development of nations and, as a consequence, bring about social change.¹⁶

From the 50s, the media began to be used systematically to promote social development. After the Second World War, new independent nations appeared that became targets of the expansionist policies of the world powers in the economic field. The countries of the Third World were the fundamental objectives of the development plans that began to be developed from international organizations such as the UN, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, FAO, among others, where the key tool was the media.¹⁷

Not surprisingly, communication for development refers to the type of communication that must be intentionally directed and systematically planned to changes in society, institutions and individuals. Meanwhile, Bolivian journalist Luis Ramiro Beltrán believes that development communication is linked to the media, because they have the ability to create a favorable public atmosphere for social change, an important factor for the modernization of societies.

In Latin America there are three fundamental models of communication for social development, whose approach varies depending on the conception of development on which it is based and, of course, the role that the media should have in this process, which are: Liberal-Causal model, Marxist-Socialist model and Monistic emancipatory model.¹⁸

¹² Márquez Jiménez, A. (2017). Education and development in the knowledge society. Scielo. Mexico. Recovered from: http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=So185-26982017000400003

¹³ Marquez Jiménes, To. (1)

¹⁴ Marquez Jiménes, To. (2)

¹⁵ Marquez Jimenez, To. (3)

¹⁶ Ferrer, A. (2002). Science journalism and development: A view from Latin America. Dissertation.

¹⁷ Ferrer, To. (1)

¹⁸ Sedano, V. (2007). Causes of citizen absenteeism in the municipal Participatory Budget from a communication for development approach. Bachelor Thesis. UAP. Lima, Peru.

The Liberal-Causal model establishes a cause-effect relationship between communication and development. That is, it argues that the introduction of technology and the issuance of certain messages would have an effect on economic growth, thus creating a motivation for change and innovation, leading to the transformation of traditional society to modern one. The proposal of this model points towards a westernized and capitalist society.¹⁹

Meanwhile, the Marxita-Socialist model maintains a direct relationship between communication and development, while differing from the previous model in the role given to the media in the process. Therefore, the media are considered key elements in the dissemination of ideology, being used for political propaganda and the mobilization of the masses.²⁰

The emancipatory Monistic model demonstrates that social media and technology are necessary tools for social development, but not sufficient to bring about social change. This model focuses more on the specific needs of the target populations, encouraging their participation in the development projects themselves. On the other hand, in addition to favoring economic and political development, it aims towards autonomy and identity to nations, promoting their social and cultural development.²¹

Rafael Obregón, professor of communication and social development at Ohio University, argues that "communication and development is a young discipline, but at the same time full of profound transformations in its definition and application. For those who begin to explore the relationship of communication with social development, it is essential to understand its background and conceptual evolution, to know the criticisms, successes and advances, as well as to explore the most recent trends and debates.

Obregón asserts that development is not an exclusive element of politics, economies or modernity. "Social development is proper to all the internal and external actions that humans undertake daily with the aim of achieving a standard of living that satisfies their ideals of existence."²²

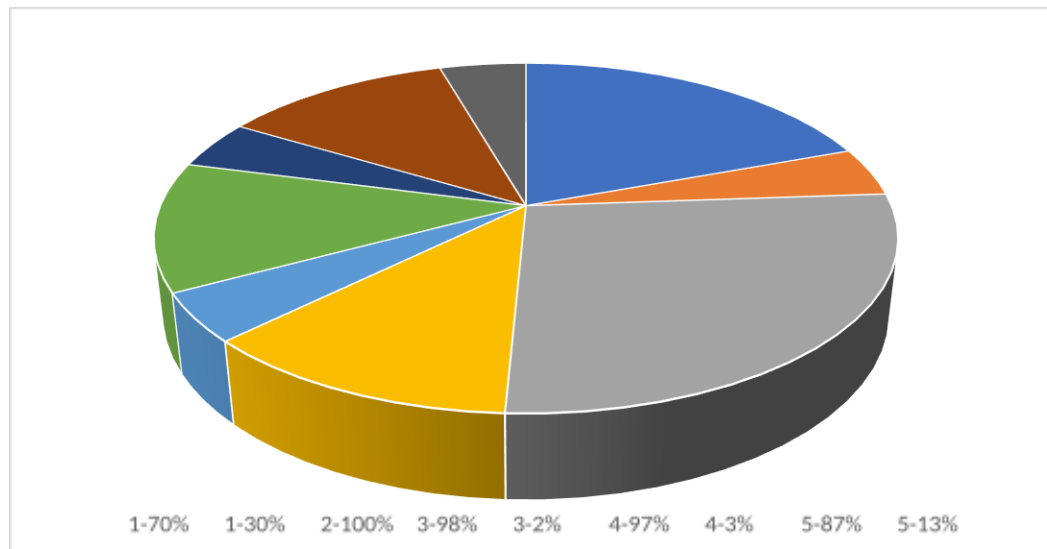
¹⁹ Sedano, V. (1)

²⁰ Sedano, V. (2)

²¹ Sedano, V. (3)

²² Obregón, R. (2007). Communication, development and social change. Communication Portal. Retrieved from: http://www.portalcomunicacion.com/lecciones_det.asp?id=49

III. RESEARCH RESULTS SURVEY



1. Is social communication developed through journalism?
Yes: 70% No: 30%
2. Is social communication essential for the development of society?
Yes: 100%
3. Has social communication, in times of the digital age, evolved?
Yes: 98% No: 2%
4. In times of the digital age, does social communication shorten distances, but isolate individuals?
Yes: 97% No: 3%
5. Is it positive that while there is more communication in the digital age, real-time social contact is lost?
Yes: 87% No: 13%

As explained in the study, social communication is developed through journalism as one of its most widespread channels. 70% of the students said they agreed with this argument, while 30% said no.

On the other hand, social communication is essential for the development of society. Without social communication, human beings simply could not communicate. Faced with this approach, 100% of respondents said they agreed.

Undoubtedly, in times of the digital era, social communication has had a remarkable evolution, if we take into account that we currently talk about traditional communication and digital communication. 98% of respondents considered that social communication has indeed developed in recent decades, while 2% thought it has not.

In the context of digital communication, distances are shortened, however, individuals are isolated. 97% of respondents acknowledged that they did. Meanwhile, 3% said no.

After the presentation of the study, it has been made clear that it is not positive that while there is more communication in the technology society, social contact is lost in real time. 87% of students agreed with this position, while 13% said no.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After completing the research entitled: Social communication and the development of society in times of the digital age, We present the results and discussion based on the survey carried out among the students of the School of Journalism of the University of Panama.

V. CONCLUSION

Currently, in the XXI century, there are differences with classical communication: sender-receiver. One of the modifications that we can observe is that the channel as a means of communication has changed considerably.

Today, we communicate much more through social media than in person. This causes the communication between the sender and the receiver to be modified. With the use of technology, facial expressions, body expressions, intonation, silences or many other factors that influence communication cannot be observed. In that sense, is communication through social networks poorer?

Yes. However, through social media we feel much freer and less intimidated as we would be in front of someone. In this type of communication also enters the factor about what is true and what is not, since perhaps the receiver, who is behind a profile, is not who he claims to be in reality.

Undoubtedly, in the twenty-first century there is no longer talk of traditional social communication. In the digital age, the type of communication we face is indirect, informal. And, in some cases, it could become dangerous, if you take into account that, many times, we are not prepared for all the dangers that may occur in a social network.

New ways of communicating have a strong impact on the development of society. In this regard, whether we like it or not, social development today revolves around the digital age. New technologies are carrying out profound changes and transformations of a society that moves in a globalized world.

These changes represent a real revolution that we have to live, despite the fact that many people have not realized what we have on top. The digital age is here to stay. Meanwhile, social development is manifested through a technological revolution: internet, computers, devices, chat, forums, blogs, digital media, that is, the language, life, customs of many people have been transformed to give way to a digital culture.

After the technological flood, the social challenge is to assimilate the change in relation to knowledge, attitudes and skills. It is necessary to take advantage of the digital world, where education plays an important role.

In this context of communication, the receiver has mutated from using the media to living in it. What we used to do was sit and watch TV, turn on the radio or read the newspaper. But now using the media is like using an object. Therefore, much of our lives happen in the media, especially those that are mobile and intelligent.

We are permanently connected. It is no longer a discreet activity, but something that happens at all times, in all places. The digital world has become a third environment in people's lives.

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