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PERSONAL FREEDOM AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

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ЛИЧНАЯ СВОБОДА И ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЛАГОПОЛУЧИЕ В ЭПОХУ ЦИФРОВЫХ КОММУНИКАЦИЙ

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Abstract. The rapid development of digital communication technologies has fundamentally transformed interpersonal relationships, creating new opportunities for self-expression, social interaction, and personal development while simultaneously generating challenges related to autonomy, privacy, emotional well-being, and psychological resilience. This study examines the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the context of contemporary digital communication. The paper analyzes philosophical approaches to the concept of freedom, psychological theories of subjective well-being, and the influence of digital environments on interpersonal interactions. Particular attention is given to the impact of social media, virtual communication, information overload, and digital dependence on individuals' perceptions of autonomy, emotional stability, and life satisfaction. The study argues that genuine personal freedom in the digital era requires not only unrestricted access to communication technologies but also the capacity for conscious decision-making, critical thinking, digital self-regulation, and responsible interpersonal interaction. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the interdependence between freedom and emotional well-being and may serve as a theoretical foundation for further interdisciplinary research in philosophy, psychology, communication studies, and digital society.

Аннотация. Быстрое развитие цифровых коммуникационных технологий коренным образом изменило межличностные отношения, создав новые возможности для самовыражения, социального взаимодействия и личностного развития, одновременно породив проблемы, связанные с автономией, конфиденциальностью, эмоциональным благополучием и психологической устойчивостью. В данном исследовании рассматривается взаимосвязь между личной свободой и эмоциональным благополучием в контексте современной цифровой коммуникации. В работе анализируются философские подходы к концепции свободы, психологические теории субъективного благополучия и влияние цифровой среды на межличностные взаимодействия. Особое внимание уделяется влиянию социальных сетей, виртуальной коммуникации, информационной перегрузки и цифровой зависимости на восприятие людьми автономии, эмоциональной стабильности и удовлетворенности жизнью. В исследовании утверждается, что подлинная личная свобода в цифровую эпоху требует не только неограниченного доступа к коммуникационным технологиям, но и способности к осознанному принятию решений, критическому мышлению, цифровой саморегуляции и ответственному межличностному взаимодействию. Полученные результаты способствуют лучшему пониманию взаимозависимости между свободой и эмоциональным благополучием и

могут служить теоретической основой для дальнейших междисциплинарных исследований в области философии, психологии, коммуникационных исследований и проблем цифрового общества.

Keywords: personal freedom; emotional well-being; digital communication; interpersonal relationships; autonomy; psychological well-being; digital society; social media; subjective well-being; digital self-regulation.

Ключевые слова: личная свобода; эмоциональное благополучие; цифровая коммуникация; межличностные отношения; автономия; психологическое благополучие; цифровое общество; социальные сети; субъективное благополучие; цифровая саморегуляция.

The rapid development of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the nature of interpersonal communication, creating unprecedented opportunities for social interaction, self-expression, and personal development. Digital communication platforms have become an integral part of everyday life, enabling individuals to maintain relationships regardless of geographical boundaries while simultaneously reshaping patterns of human interaction and emotional experience [1].

Personal freedom has long been regarded as one of the fundamental values in philosophy, psychology, and social sciences. Classical philosophical traditions define freedom as the capacity for autonomous decision-making and responsible self-determination, whereas contemporary psychological research emphasizes autonomy as a basic psychological need essential for optimal functioning and well-being [7]. Within the framework of Self-Determination Theory, autonomy, competence, and relatedness are considered universal psychological needs whose satisfaction contributes to higher levels of subjective well-being and psychological flourishing [8].

The digital environment has significantly expanded opportunities for exercising personal freedom by providing unrestricted access to information, facilitating participation in online communities, and enabling diverse forms of identity construction. However, these opportunities are accompanied by emerging challenges, including algorithmic influence, digital surveillance, information overload, online social comparison, and excessive dependence on social networking platforms. These factors may constrain individuals' perceived autonomy and negatively affect their emotional well-being [2].

Emotional well-being refers to a person's ability to experience positive emotions, maintain psychological balance, cope effectively with stress, and achieve life satisfaction. Recent empirical studies demonstrate that digital communication exerts both beneficial and detrimental effects on emotional well-being. While online interaction can strengthen social connectedness and provide emotional support, excessive or maladaptive use of digital media has been associated with increased anxiety, loneliness, emotional exhaustion, and reduced life satisfaction [3, 12].

Despite the growing body of research on digital well-being, relatively limited attention has been devoted to the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being within the context of digital communication. Existing studies tend to examine either psychological well-being or digital behavior separately, leaving the interaction between autonomy, interpersonal relationships, and emotional health insufficiently explored. This gap highlights the need for an interdisciplinary analysis integrating philosophical, psychological, and communication perspectives.

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the era of digital communication and to identify the key digital factors influencing autonomy, interpersonal relationships, and individuals' subjective well-being.

This study employs an interdisciplinary qualitative research design integrating philosophical, psychological, and communication approaches to examine the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the era of digital communication. The research is grounded in the understanding that freedom and emotional well-being are multidimensional constructs whose interaction can only be adequately explained through the combination of theoretical and empirical perspectives. The theoretical framework is primarily based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Ryan and Deci [7; 8], which conceptualizes autonomy as one of the three fundamental psychological needs underlying well-being and human flourishing. In addition, the study draws upon philosophical theories of freedom proposed by Berlin [1], who distinguished between negative and positive liberty, and Sen's [9], emphasizing individuals' real opportunities to achieve valued ways of living.

The research applies a qualitative content analysis of contemporary scholarly literature published between 2018 and 2025 in the fields of philosophy, psychology, communication studies, and digital sociology. Peer-reviewed articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, together with authoritative academic books, were selected according to the following inclusion criteria: 1. Relevance to personal freedom, autonomy, emotional well-being, or digital communication; 2. Publication in English; 3. Methodological transparency; 4. Significant contribution to interdisciplinary research.

The analytical procedure consisted of four stages. First, conceptual analysis was conducted to clarify the theoretical meanings of personal freedom and emotional well-being. Second, a comparative analysis of contemporary theoretical approaches was performed to identify similarities and differences in their interpretation across philosophical, psychological, and communication research. Third, thematic analysis was employed to classify the principal digital factors influencing autonomy, interpersonal relationships, and emotional well-being. Finally, synthesis was used to integrate the findings into a comprehensive conceptual framework explaining the interaction between freedom and emotional well-being within digital communication environments.

To enhance the reliability of the analysis, evidence from multiple disciplines was compared through methodological triangulation. This approach enabled the identification of recurring theoretical patterns while minimizing disciplinary bias. Rather than testing causal hypotheses statistically, the study aims to develop an integrative conceptual model that explains how digital communication simultaneously expands opportunities for personal autonomy and introduces new psychological and social constraints affecting emotional well-being.

The methodological approach adopted in this research provides a comprehensive basis for understanding the complex interdependence between personal freedom and emotional well-being and contributes to the growing interdisciplinary discourse on digital society and human flourishing.

The analysis of theoretical and empirical studies revealed that personal freedom and emotional well-being in the digital communication era are closely interconnected and influenced by multiple social, psychological, and technological factors. The findings indicate that digital communication environments simultaneously expand opportunities for individual autonomy while creating new forms of psychological pressure and limitations.

The conceptual analysis demonstrated that digital technologies have significantly transformed traditional understandings of personal freedom by changing the conditions under which individuals make choices, express themselves, establish relationships, and participate in social life. In classical philosophical approaches, freedom has traditionally been associated with autonomy, self-determination, and the ability of individuals to act according to their own intentions without external coercion [1]. However, in the contemporary digital environment, freedom has acquired additional

dimensions related to technological access, informational independence, digital identity, and the ability to control one's own online presence.

The findings indicate that digital communication platforms have expanded the sphere of individual freedom by creating new opportunities for self-expression, participation, and interpersonal interaction. Social networks, online communities, and digital platforms enable individuals to present their opinions, construct personal identities, engage in public discussions, and maintain relationships beyond geographical limitations. Unlike traditional forms of communication, digital environments provide individuals with greater flexibility in selecting communication partners, accessing diverse sources of knowledge, and participating in various social and cultural contexts [3].

One of the most significant contributions of digital communication to personal freedom is the expansion of freedom of expression. Digital platforms have democratized communication by allowing individuals who previously had limited access to public discourse to share their views and participate in collective discussions. The Internet has become a space where personal narratives, cultural identities, and social initiatives can be represented and promoted. According to [4], digital networks create new forms of social interaction in which individuals are not only passive recipients of information but also active participants in the production and dissemination of knowledge.

At the same time, the analysis revealed that digital freedom is accompanied by new forms of restriction. Although digital platforms appear to provide unlimited opportunities for self-expression, individual behavior is increasingly influenced by technological systems, platform regulations, algorithms, and social expectations. Algorithmic personalization may shape users' information environments by prioritizing certain content and limiting exposure to alternative perspectives. Consequently, the individual's freedom of choice may become indirectly influenced by invisible technological mechanisms [14].

Another important finding concerns the relationship between digital communication and personal autonomy. In the digital era, autonomy is no longer limited to the ability to make independent decisions but also includes the ability to control personal information, manage online identity, and regulate patterns of digital engagement. Research on digital well-being suggests that excessive dependence on digital platforms may weaken perceived autonomy by creating psychological pressure to remain constantly connected, respond immediately to messages, and seek social validation through online interactions [2].

Furthermore, digital communication has transformed the concept of social participation. Digital platforms provide opportunities for global interaction, social activism, professional networking, and cultural exchange. However, these advantages may coexist with new forms of social pressure, including expectations of permanent availability, comparison with others, and dependence on online recognition. Such processes may negatively influence emotional stability and reduce individuals' perception of control over their social lives [12].

Therefore, the results demonstrate that personal freedom in digital society represents a complex and dynamic phenomenon. It cannot be interpreted solely as unrestricted access to digital technologies; rather, it involves the individual's capacity for conscious choice, critical evaluation of information, digital self-regulation, and preservation of personal autonomy within technologically mediated environments [8]. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 1.

The findings support the argument that digital freedom should not be understood merely as technological accessibility or unlimited online participation. Instead, it should be conceptualized as an individual's ability to consciously regulate digital behavior, maintain control over personal choices, and preserve autonomy within technologically mediated social environments [8; 9].

The analysis revealed a complex and multidimensional relationship between digital communication and emotional well-being. Contemporary digital environments have become an

essential component of human interaction, influencing how individuals establish social connections, receive emotional support, express feelings, and construct their sense of belonging. The results indicate that digital communication cannot be considered exclusively as either a positive or negative factor affecting psychological health. Instead, its influence depends on the purposes of digital engagement, the quality of online interactions, individual characteristics, and the level of self-regulation demonstrated by users.

Table 1

THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION ON PERSONAL FREEDOM

Dimensions of personal freedom	Positive effects of digital communication	Potential limitations and risks
Freedom of expression	— Expansion of opportunities for self-presentation; — Participation in online discussions; — Representation of personal, cultural, and social identities; — Access to global audiences.	— Online censorship; — Moderation restrictions; — Cyberbullying; — Fear of negative evaluation; — Self-censorship caused by social pressure.
Freedom of choice	— Access to diverse information sources; — Opportunity to compare perspectives; — Increased awareness of social, cultural, and educational opportunities.	— Algorithmic filtering; — Personalized content manipulation; — Information overload; — Formation of restricted information environments ("filter bubbles").
Personal autonomy	— Ability to manage digital identity; — Control communication networks; — Choose forms and intensity of interaction.	— Digital dependency; — Loss of privacy; — Reduced control over personal data; — External influence of platforms and technological systems.
Social participation	— Expansion of interpersonal relationships beyond geographical boundaries; — Participation in online communities; — Opportunities for collective action and social engagement.	— Pressure for constant online presence; — Dependence on digital approval; — Superficial relationships; — Reduced quality of face-to-face interaction.
Self-development and identity formation	— Opportunities for learning, professional growth, creativity, and exploration of personal interests.	— Social comparison; — Pressure to construct an idealized online identity; — Emotional stress caused by unrealistic standards.
Information independence	— Immediate access to knowledge and educational resources; — Increased opportunities for independent learning.	— Manipulation of information flows; — Misinformation; — Difficulty distinguishing reliable and unreliable sources.

One of the significant findings of the analysis is that digital communication can contribute to emotional well-being by expanding opportunities for social connectedness. Online platforms allow individuals to maintain relationships despite geographical distance, receive psychological support from social networks, and participate in communities based on shared interests and experiences. These opportunities are particularly important for individuals who experience social isolation or limited access to traditional forms of interpersonal interaction. According to the Social Compensation Hypothesis, digital communication may provide additional resources for individuals who experience difficulties in offline communication by creating alternative spaces for social participation and emotional exchange [11].

Furthermore, digital communication contributes to emotional well-being through increased opportunities for self-expression and identity development. Social networking platforms enable individuals to share personal experiences, communicate emotions, present aspects of their identity, and receive feedback from others. Such forms of online interaction may strengthen feelings of recognition and belonging, which are essential components of psychological well-being. From the perspective of Self-Determination Theory, digital environments may support the psychological needs of relatedness and competence when online interactions provide meaningful connections and opportunities for personal development [8].

However, the analysis also demonstrated that digital communication may create significant challenges for emotional well-being. One of the most widely discussed risks is excessive involvement in digital environments, which may lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced attention, and psychological dependence. Continuous exposure to online information, frequent notifications, and expectations of immediate responses can create a state of permanent connectivity, limiting opportunities for psychological recovery and emotional regulation [2].

A particularly important factor influencing emotional well-being is the phenomenon of social comparison in digital environments. Social media platforms often encourage individuals to compare their personal lives, achievements, and appearance with carefully selected representations of others. Such comparisons may contribute to feelings of inadequacy, dissatisfaction, anxiety, and decreased self-esteem. Research demonstrates that passive consumption of social media content is frequently associated with lower levels of subjective well-being, especially when users perceive a discrepancy between their own lives and idealized online images [13].

Another significant challenge is the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which refers to anxiety arising from the perception that others are experiencing more rewarding social events or opportunities. The constant availability of online updates may increase feelings of social insecurity and encourage excessive checking of digital platforms [6]. demonstrated that FOMO is closely related to lower psychological well-being and increased problematic digital engagement.

The findings also emphasize that the relationship between digital communication and emotional well-being depends not only on the duration of technology use but also on the quality and purpose of digital activities. Active engagement, such as meaningful conversations, participation in supportive communities, and creative expression, tends to produce more positive psychological outcomes than passive consumption of online content. Therefore, digital well-being requires not complete avoidance of technology but the development of conscious and balanced patterns of digital behavior [5].

The main factors influencing emotional well-being are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

DIGITAL FACTORS AFFECTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

<i>Digital factors</i>	<i>Positive impact on emotional well-being</i>	<i>Negative impact on emotional well-being</i>
Online social interaction	— Strengthening interpersonal connections; — Emotional support; — Maintaining relationships across geographical distances; — Reduction of social isolation.	— Superficial communication; — Reduced quality of interpersonal relationships; — Social comparison; — Emotional dependence on online interactions.
Social media usage	— Self-expression; — Identity development; — Community building; — Opportunities for social participation and recognition.	— Anxiety; — Fear of Missing Out (FOMO); — Pressure to present an idealized identity; — Emotional stress and reduced self-esteem.

Digital accessibility	— Immediate communication; — Access to educational and psychological resources; — Increased opportunities for information exchange.	— Information overload; — Cognitive fatigue; — Difficulty disconnecting from digital environments; — Reduced attention capacity.
Virtual communities	— Sense of belonging; — Shared interests and values; — Support networks; — Development of collective identities.	— Dependence on online approval; — Echo chambers; — Exclusion from certain communities; — Emotional vulnerability.
Digital self-expression	— Creativity; — Personal reflection; — Development of confidence and communication skills.	— Negative feedback; — Cyberbullying; — Online criticism; — Increased emotional sensitivity.
Constant connectivity	— Availability of social support and rapid communication during important situations.	— Psychological pressure to remain available; — Reduced personal boundaries; — Digital exhaustion.

The results demonstrate that digital communication has a dual effect on emotional well-being. While digital environments can serve as valuable resources for social connection, emotional support, and personal development, they may also generate psychological risks when individuals lose control over their digital practices. These findings correspond with previous studies demonstrating that the psychological consequences of digital communication depend not only on the amount of technology use but also on the quality, purpose, and individual regulation of digital behavior [5; 6].

Therefore, emotional well-being in the digital era requires the development of digital self-regulation skills, critical awareness, and the ability to maintain a balance between online engagement and offline interpersonal experiences. The synthesis of previous theoretical and empirical research indicates that personal autonomy functions as a significant mediating factor between digital communication and emotional well-being. The findings demonstrate that the impact of digital environments on psychological states is not direct but depends largely on individuals' ability to exercise control over their digital experiences, regulate online behavior, and maintain a sense of personal agency. The analysis revealed that individuals with a higher level of digital self-regulation are more likely to experience positive psychological outcomes, including greater emotional stability, higher life satisfaction, and stronger feelings of personal control. Digital self-regulation includes the ability to consciously manage the time spent online, critically evaluate information, establish personal boundaries in digital interactions, and maintain a balance between virtual and offline communication. These abilities contribute to preserving autonomy and reducing the negative psychological consequences associated with excessive digital engagement [2; 8].

The results further demonstrate that digital communication influences emotional well-being through two interconnected pathways. The first pathway is associated with the positive potential of digital environments. Digital platforms can strengthen personal freedom by expanding opportunities for self-expression, providing access to diverse information sources, facilitating social support, and enabling participation in virtual communities. Through these mechanisms, digital communication can contribute to a greater sense of belonging, identity development, and emotional support. The second pathway reflects potential risks associated with digital environments. Excessive dependence on digital platforms, constant exposure to information flows, algorithmic influence, and surveillance practices may reduce individuals' perceived autonomy. When users feel unable to control their digital activities or personal data, they may experience psychological stress, reduced emotional security, and a diminished sense of freedom [14].

The findings suggest that personal freedom in digital society should be understood as a dynamic construct that involves not only access to digital resources but also the ability to make conscious choices within digital environments. In this context, autonomy becomes a central mechanism connecting freedom and emotional well-being. Individuals who possess sufficient digital competence and self-regulation skills are better able to benefit from digital communication while minimizing its potential negative consequences.

This interpretation corresponds with the principles of Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes that autonomy is one of the fundamental psychological needs necessary for human flourishing and sustainable well-being. According to [7], individuals experience higher levels of psychological well-being when they perceive themselves as active agents capable of making meaningful choices and controlling important aspects of their lives.

Therefore, the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the digital era can be characterized as a complex interaction in which technology functions both as a facilitator of autonomy and as a potential source of psychological constraints. The quality of this relationship depends on the individual's ability to consciously manage digital experiences and maintain a balance between technological engagement and personal psychological needs.

The results of the study allow identifying three major conclusions regarding the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in digital communication environments.

First, digital communication expands the boundaries of personal freedom by providing individuals with new opportunities for self-expression, interpersonal interaction, access to information, and participation in social life. Digital platforms have transformed traditional forms of communication by allowing individuals to construct identities, develop social connections, and engage in global networks.

Second, digital environments create new challenges to personal autonomy. Algorithmic influence, data surveillance, information overload, and social expectations related to permanent connectivity may limit individuals' perceived control over their digital experiences. These factors demonstrate that technological accessibility alone does not guarantee genuine digital freedom.

Third, emotional well-being in the digital era depends on the balance between technological engagement and personal self-regulation. Autonomy functions as a central mechanism that determines whether digital communication becomes a source of psychological support or a factor contributing to emotional stress. Individuals who are capable of consciously managing their digital behavior are more likely to maintain emotional stability and develop meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Thus, the findings confirm that personal freedom in contemporary digital society should be understood as a dynamic capacity to consciously manage one's digital presence, preserve autonomy, and maintain emotional balance within technologically mediated social environments. Digital freedom is therefore not merely the absence of restrictions but the ability to make informed choices and sustain psychological well-being in the context of continuous digital transformation.

The findings of this study contribute to the broader understanding of the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the context of digital communication. The results demonstrate that digital technologies represent a complex social phenomenon that simultaneously expands opportunities for individual autonomy and creates new forms of psychological and social constraints. This dual nature of digital communication challenges traditional interpretations of freedom by requiring a reconsideration of autonomy within technologically mediated environments.

The results confirm the relevance of the concept of autonomy as a central component of personal freedom and psychological well-being. Consistent with Self-Determination Theory, the findings indicate that individuals experience higher levels of emotional well-being when they

perceive themselves as autonomous agents capable of making meaningful choices and controlling important aspects of their lives [7; 8].

In digital environments, autonomy is expressed not only through freedom of access and participation but also through the ability to regulate online behavior, manage personal information, and critically evaluate digital content.

The findings support previous research suggesting that digital communication has both empowering and restrictive dimensions. On the positive side, digital platforms provide individuals with new opportunities for self-expression, identity construction, social participation, and access to supportive communities. These results correspond with concept of the network society, according to which digital networks transform the structure of social interaction by increasing individuals' capacity for communication and collective participation [3].

However, the findings also demonstrate that digital freedom cannot be understood solely as unlimited technological access. The presence of algorithmic systems, data collection mechanisms, and platform-based influence introduces new forms of invisible control that may affect individual decision-making and perceived autonomy. This observation is consistent with theory of surveillance capitalism, which emphasizes that digital platforms increasingly collect and analyze personal data in order to predict and influence user behavior [14].

Therefore, the contemporary understanding of freedom requires consideration of not only external restrictions but also technological mechanisms that shape individual choices. The relationship between digital communication and emotional well-being identified in this study also confirms the importance of distinguishing between different forms of digital engagement. The results indicate that active and meaningful digital participation, such as maintaining supportive relationships, exchanging knowledge, and participating in communities, may enhance psychological well-being. In contrast, passive consumption of online content, excessive comparison with others, and dependence on external validation may negatively influence emotional states. These findings correspond with previous research demonstrating that the psychological effects of social media depend more on the quality and purpose of use rather than on the amount of time spent online [5; 13].

An important implication of the study concerns the role of digital self-regulation as a mechanism connecting personal freedom and emotional well-being. The findings suggest that individuals with stronger digital literacy and self-regulatory abilities are better equipped to benefit from digital technologies while minimizing associated psychological risks. This supports the perspective that digital well-being should not be achieved through technological avoidance but through conscious and balanced interaction with digital environments [2].

The findings also contribute to discussions on interpersonal relationships in the digital era. While digital communication enables individuals to maintain relationships across geographical boundaries and provides additional forms of social support, it may also transform the quality of human interaction. The increasing dependence on online communication can create situations where individuals remain socially connected while experiencing emotional distance or reduced depth of interpersonal relationships. This reflects broader concerns regarding the difference between quantitative expansion of social networks and qualitative development of meaningful relationships [10].

From a philosophical perspective, the results support a broader interpretation of freedom as a capability rather than merely the absence of external limitations. Sen's [9] Capability Approach emphasizes that genuine freedom depends on individuals' real opportunities to achieve valued forms of life. Applied to digital communication, this perspective suggests that digital freedom requires not only access to technologies but also the knowledge, skills, and psychological resources necessary for their meaningful use.

The study has several theoretical implications. First, it demonstrates that personal freedom and emotional well-being should be examined as interconnected rather than independent concepts within digital society. Second, it highlights the importance of integrating philosophical perspectives on freedom with psychological theories of autonomy and contemporary research on digital communication. Third, it suggests that future research should further explore how cultural, social, and individual differences influence perceptions of digital freedom and emotional well-being.

Despite these contributions, the study has certain limitations. As a conceptual and qualitative analysis, it does not provide statistical measurements of the relationship between digital behavior, autonomy, and emotional outcomes. Future empirical research may include cross-cultural surveys, longitudinal studies, and psychological assessments to examine how different patterns of digital communication influence personal freedom and emotional well-being over time.

Overall, the discussion confirms that digital communication should not be viewed as either a source of liberation or a threat to human autonomy. Rather, it represents a transformative environment in which freedom and well-being depend on individuals' ability to consciously navigate technological opportunities and challenges. In the digital era, personal freedom becomes closely connected with digital competence, self-regulation, and the preservation of meaningful human relationships.

The present study examined the relationship between personal freedom and emotional well-being in the era of digital communication, emphasizing the complex interaction between technological opportunities, individual autonomy, and psychological experiences. The findings demonstrate that digital transformation has significantly reshaped the meaning of personal freedom by introducing new forms of self-expression, social participation, information accessibility, and interpersonal interaction.

The analysis revealed that digital communication has a dual influence on emotional well-being. On the one hand, digital platforms contribute to psychological resources by strengthening social connections, providing emotional support, facilitating identity development, and creating opportunities for participation in virtual communities. On the other hand, excessive digital engagement, algorithmic influence, surveillance practices, information overload, and social comparison may weaken perceived autonomy and negatively affect emotional stability.

The study confirms that personal freedom in contemporary digital society should not be understood merely as unrestricted access to technologies or unlimited participation in online environments. Rather, digital freedom represents an individual's ability to make conscious choices, regulate digital behavior, protect personal boundaries, and maintain control over one's online presence. In this context, autonomy and digital self-regulation function as essential mechanisms connecting personal freedom with emotional well-being.

The findings contribute to interdisciplinary discussions by integrating philosophical perspectives on freedom with psychological approaches to well-being and contemporary theories of digital communication. The study demonstrates that the quality of individuals' digital experiences depends not only on technological development but also on their capacity for critical thinking, digital literacy, and responsible interaction. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of developing strategies aimed at promoting digital well-being. Educational initiatives focused on digital literacy, emotional regulation, and responsible technology use may help individuals maximize the benefits of digital communication while reducing its potential psychological risks.

Although the study provides a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between freedom and well-being in digital environments, further empirical research is needed to investigate these relationships across different cultural, social, and demographic contexts. Future studies may employ quantitative methods, longitudinal approaches, and cross-cultural comparisons

to examine how digital communication practices influence individual autonomy and emotional health over time.

In conclusion, personal freedom and emotional well-being in the digital era are interconnected and mutually influential phenomena. Digital technologies do not inherently guarantee either greater freedom or reduced well-being; their impact depends on how individuals, communities, and societies integrate these technologies into human relationships and everyday life. Sustainable emotional well-being in contemporary society requires not only technological advancement but also the preservation of autonomy, meaningful interpersonal connections, and conscious engagement with digital environments.

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