



A Comprehensive Review of Impacts of Social Media and Information Technology on Decision Making of General People

Jisan Hossain Hera 

Bachelor of Business Administration, Mohammadpur Kendriya College, Bangladesh

Israt Gafur 

Department of Finance (MBA) Professional, Jagannath University, Bangladesh

Moriom Akter  

Bachelor of Business Administration, Dhaka University, Bangladesh

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Abstract:

Social media platforms and information technology have revolutionized the way individuals obtain, use, and share information in the digital age. This has affected people's decision-making processes in a variety of fields. This thorough analysis investigates the complex effects of information technology and social media on the way the public makes decisions. The impact of social media and information technology on decision-making in domains like politics, healthcare, education, consumer behavior, and interpersonal relationships is examined in this review, which draws on an extensive array of scholarly literature, empirical investigations, and theoretical

frameworks. According to the research, information technology and social media can influence decisions in both favorable and unfavorable ways. On the one hand, these platforms give users access to a multitude of information, empowering them to take part in social movements, activism, and civic engagement with greater knowledge and understanding. Social media platforms also enable peer-to-peer communication, cooperation, and knowledge sharing, giving people the confidence to ask their social networks for guidance, affirmation, and support. In the digital age, the review emphasizes how psychological variables, cognitive biases, and sociocultural influences shape decision-making processes. In online environments, people's information processing, judgment-making, and decision-making processes are greatly influenced by social comparison, confirmation bias, FOMO, and social validation, among other factors. This thorough analysis advances our knowledge of the intricate interactions among decision-making, information technology, and social media. Informed decision making, digital literacy, and the moral application of social media and information technology in society are all goals of this review, which synthesizes the literature and highlights new trends to guide future research, legislative efforts, and hands-on interventions.

Keywords: *Information Technology, Decision Making, Social Media, Challenges, Impacts.*

Introduction

The concepts of information technology and social media are intertwined and have drastically

changed how people engage with one another, communicate, and obtain information. In virtual communities and networks, social media refers



to online platforms and technology that make it easier for users to create, share, and exchange user-generated material, ideas, and interactions (Olaniyi, Okunleye, & Olabanji, 2023). With the help of these platforms, people can interact with friends, family, coworkers, and complete strangers; have real-time conversations; share multimedia files like images and videos; and take part in online groups based on common affiliations, interests, or values. Social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and TikTok are a few examples (Yenduri, et al., 2023). The term "information technology" refers to a wide range of devices, platforms, and software that are used to process, store, retrieve, transfer, and organize data in different formats. IT consists of digital technologies for data processing, analysis, and communication in addition to software applications, databases, and hardware elements including computers, servers, networks, and storage devices. The development, sharing, and application of information in a variety of fields, including business, education, healthcare, government, and entertainment, is made possible in large part by information technology. The term "information technology" refers to a wide range of devices, platforms, and software that are used to process, store, retrieve, transfer, and organize data in different formats (Ray, 2023). IT consists of digital technologies for data processing, analysis, and communication in addition to software applications, databases, and hardware elements including computers, servers, networks, and storage devices. The development, sharing, and application of information in a variety of fields, including business, education, healthcare, government, and entertainment, is made possible in large part by information technology (Suratnoaji, et al., 2024).

The extensive use of social media platforms and information technology breakthroughs in recent years have completely changed how individuals interact, access, and consume information. Beyond communication and entertainment, social media and information technology have a ubiquitous influence on many parts of people's lives, including how they make decisions. The

goal of this thorough analysis is to investigate the various ways that social media and information technologies influence how people make decisions in general. With the introduction of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, people can now access information more easily and participate in online groups, have real-time conversations, and exchange opinions (Bhanye, Shayamunda, & Tavirai, 2023). In addition, the widespread use of tablets, smartphones, and other digital devices has made it possible for people to have ubiquitous connectivity and access information from anywhere at any time. Consequently, social media and information technology have permeated every aspect of daily life, impacting people's decision-making in a variety of fields. This review will look at the various ways that social media and information technology affect how people make decisions in a variety of settings, such as healthcare, education, politics, consumer behavior, and interpersonal relationships. Our goal is to present a thorough knowledge of the intricate relationship between social media, information technology, and decision making by synthesizing a broad range of scholarly literature, empirical investigations, and theoretical frameworks (Fatawu, Fuseinii, & Khalid, 2023).

This review will also look at the advantages and disadvantages of information technology and social media for decision-making. On the one hand, these platforms provide users with unprecedented access to information, empowering them to participate in civic life, make better decisions, and inspire group action. Social media also encourages peer-to-peer cooperation, communication, and knowledge exchange, giving people the confidence to ask their social networks for guidance, affirmation, and support. Information technology and social media, however, also pose problems for decision-making. People may experience information overload because of the wealth of information available online, making it challenging for them to distinguish reliable sources from false information and fake news. Furthermore, filter bubbles, echo chambers, and algorithmic biases may be produced by the

algorithms and recommendation systems used by social media platforms, which would serve to reinforce users' already opinions and preferences. This review will consider not only cognitive elements but also psychological, social, and cultural influences that impact decision-making in the digital age. Social comparison, FOMO, and social validation are just a few of the factors that greatly influence how people view and react to content on social media platforms. The overall goal of this thorough review is to increase our knowledge of how social media and information technology affect people's ability to make decisions in general (Kanellopoulos, et al., 2023). This analysis attempts to influence future research, policy initiatives, and practical interventions targeted at encouraging informed decision making, digital literacy, and responsible use of social media and information technology in society by highlighting important trends, difficulties, and opportunities.

Information Technology

Information technology (IT) is the term for the different ways that data can be stored, retrieved, sent, and altered using computers, software, networks, and other digital technologies (Fatawu, Fuseinii, & Khalid, 2023). Information technology (IT) includes a wide range of devices, programs, and frameworks that make it easier to handle, analyze, and share data in both private and professional settings. Hardware components for computers, servers, storage, networking, and peripherals are all included in information technology. These tangible components serve as the basis for IT systems and offer the processing power, storage space, and networking required to facilitate digital activities. Programs, applications, and operating systems that operate on computer hardware and let users do activities like word processing, data analysis, and multimedia editing are referred to as software. Software comprises both commercially available items and specially designed programs that are adapted to meet the demands of individuals and institutions. Information technology uses networks to link

computers, systems, and other devices so they may exchange data and communicate with one another (Berardi, et al., 2023). The internet, wide area networks (WANs), and local area networks (LANs) are examples of networks that can be wired or wireless. Devices may transmit data more easily when they use network technologies like switches, routers, and protocols. Data management in information technology includes gathering, storing, organizing, retrieving, and analyzing data. Large volumes of organized and unstructured data may be processed, stored, and used by companies to gain insights thanks to data management technology including databases, data warehouses, and data analytics tools. Information technology includes cybersecurity procedures and policies that guard against cyberattacks, illegal access, and data breaches for digital assets, systems, and networks (Tarigan, et al., 2023). Cybersecurity solutions guarantee the integrity and confidentiality of digital assets and protect sensitive data using features including intrusion detection systems, firewalls, antivirus software, and encryption.



Figure 1. Information Technology

The provision of computing services via the internet, such as infrastructure as a service (IaaS), platform as a service (PaaS), and software as a service (SaaS), is known as cloud computing. Without requiring a significant infrastructure investment, cloud computing gives businesses on-demand access to scalable computing resources, storage, and apps (Ahangama, 2023).

Initiatives to leverage digital technologies to improve corporate operations, improve consumer experiences, and spur innovation are driven by information technology. Initiatives that use information technology to generate value and competitive advantage, including digitization, automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT), are together referred to as digital transformation. Modern society depends heavily on information technology, which powers digital economies, permits worldwide communication, and spurs innovation in a wide range of businesses. It covers an extensive variety of tools and methods that influence how people, groups, and communities get, employ, and profit from digital data and assets.

Social Media

The term "social media" describes online tools and platforms that let people engage with one other in virtual communities and networks and produce, share, and interact with information. These platforms enable users to participate in social networking, real-time communication, and collaboration as well as the exchange of user-generated material in the form of text, photos, videos, and audio (Moghadas, et al., 2023). For billions of people globally, social media has become an essential aspect of daily life, impacting social interactions, communication styles, and cultural dynamics. Social media systems facilitate the generation and dissemination of content among users, encompassing posts, images, videos, and status updates. Through content production, users can demonstrate their hobbies and experiences, as well as express themselves and their thoughts and opinions. Social media links users with friends, family, coworkers, and acquaintances, facilitating social networking. Users can participate in online communities based on common interests, affiliations, or geographic regions, follow and connect with others, and establish and sustain social relationships. Social media platforms facilitate instantaneous communication and engagement between users by incorporating functionalities like messaging,

comments, likes, shares, and reactions. Conversations, debates, and discussions on a variety of subjects are available to users, encouraging involvement and interaction. Social media algorithms make content discovery and curation easier by tailoring users' feeds according to their interests, actions, and interactions. Visitors can explore popular subjects, find fresh information, and get recommendations based on their tastes and interests (Lyngdoh, El-Manstrly, & Jeesha, 2023).

Multimedia content, such as images, movies, audio files, and live streaming, can be shared via social media. Users can express themselves, tell tales, and interact more deeply and interactively with their audience by sharing visually and multimedia-rich content. Social media platforms function as online communities where people may connect, work together, and support one another who have similar identities, interests, or experiences. Users can promote a sense of community and belonging by getting involved in events, joining organizations, and leading community-driven projects (Nunkoo, Gursay, & Dwivedi, 2023). Social media features like likes, shares, retweets, and hashtags help to increase the impact and reach of information. Viral content has the potential to spread widely, influencing social movements, cultural trends, and public opinion. Data security, privacy, and online safety are issues that are brought up by social media. Social media businesses monitor, retain, and evaluate users' interactions, personal data, and activities; this raises concerns about data privacy, surveillance, and the improper use of personal data. All things considered, in the digital age, social media is crucial in determining how people communicate, connect with one another, and understand cultural dynamics. Social media has many advantages, such as fostering community, expression, and connectivity, but it also has drawbacks, such as concerns about online conduct, false information, and privacy, which call for careful use (Abbasi, et al., 2023).

Impacts of Social Media on Decision Making of General People

Social media has a wide range of complex effects on people's decision-making in general, which affects many facets of peoples' life. Social media gives people access to a wealth of information on a variety of subjects, including news, current affairs, entertainment, and personal hobbies. With so much information available, people can become more knowledgeable and conscious and be able to make better decisions in many areas of their lives (Ji, et al., 2023).

Social media platforms facilitate peer-to-peer opinion, review, and recommendation sharing. Social media recommendations have a big impact on people's decision-making, especially when it comes to things like what to buy, where to eat, where to go on vacation, and what movies or books to read. People are exposed to a broad variety of viewpoints, beliefs, and ideologies from various sources through social media. People's views, attitudes, and perceptions can be shaped by this exposure, which can affect how they make decisions about social, political, and cultural issues.

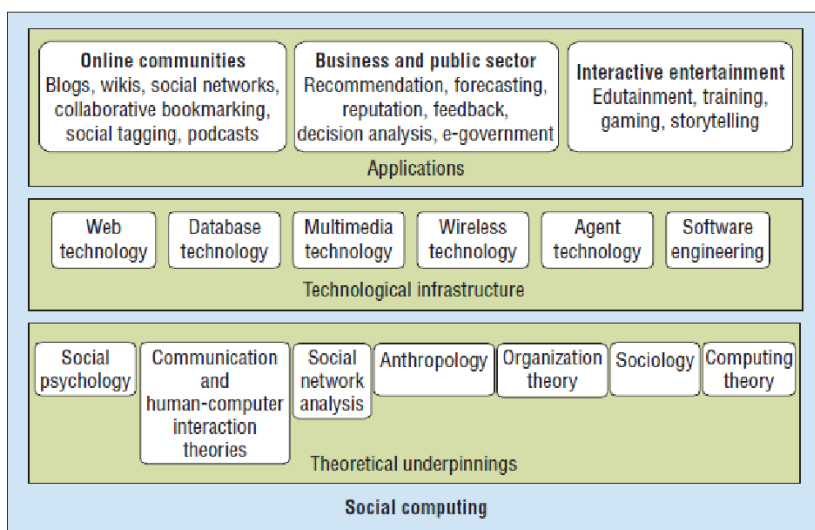


Figure 2. The Impact of Social Media on the Human Decision-Making

The need for social affirmation and social comparison are frequently facilitated by social media platforms. People may make decisions based on the expectations or acceptance of others because they feel pressured to follow the social norms, trends, and behaviors that they see in their online social networks. Social media algorithms produce echo chambers and filter bubbles by tailoring users' content streams according to their past usage and preferences (Arnot, et al., 2024). These algorithmic biases have the ability to reinforce preexisting ideas and decision-making biases by limiting people's exposure to a variety of perspectives and different points of view.

People may experience information overload and cognitive overload as a result of the constant barrage of information on social media, which makes it difficult for them to adequately absorb and assess information. Moreover, people may become sidetracked from making careful, considered decisions due to the addictive nature of social networking networks. The use of social media can have an impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, which can then have an impact on how they make decisions (Saini, et al., 2024). Unfavorable events like cyberbullying, social comparison, and FOMO can cause worry, anxiety, and despair, which may make it more

difficult for people to make logical judgments. Social media platforms have developed into significant avenues for political conversation, civic engagement, and group activism. Social media is a tool that people use to influence their political decisions by expressing their thoughts, participating in activism, rallying support for causes, and staying up to date on political matters. In conclusion, social media has a significant effect on people's decision-making processes in a variety of spheres of life, impacting decisions, viewpoints, actions, and attitudes. With the ability to access information and make social connections, social media can empower people, but it also has drawbacks including filter bubbles, information overload, and unfavorable social influences that can have a positive or negative impact on decision-making.

Impacts of IT on Decision Making of General People

The decision-making processes of the general public have been profoundly impacted by

information technology (IT) in a number of ways. People may now easily access, store, and exchange large volumes of data because to information technology, which has democratized access to knowledge (Yu, et al., 2023). With fast access to information on almost any issue thanks to the internet, search engines, and online databases, people are better equipped to make decisions about their personal interests, healthcare, education, and finances. People can use information technology to evaluate data and get insights to help in decision-making. People can evaluate large, complex data sets, find patterns, and make data-driven decisions in a variety of fields, such as business, research, and public policy, with the use of data visualization tools, analytics software, and decision support systems. No matter where someone lives, information technology makes it easier for them to collaborate and communicate with one another. Decision-making in social, academic, and corporate contexts is influenced by real-time communication, information sharing, and project collaboration made possible via email, instant messaging, video conferencing, and collaboration platforms (McCallum, 2023).

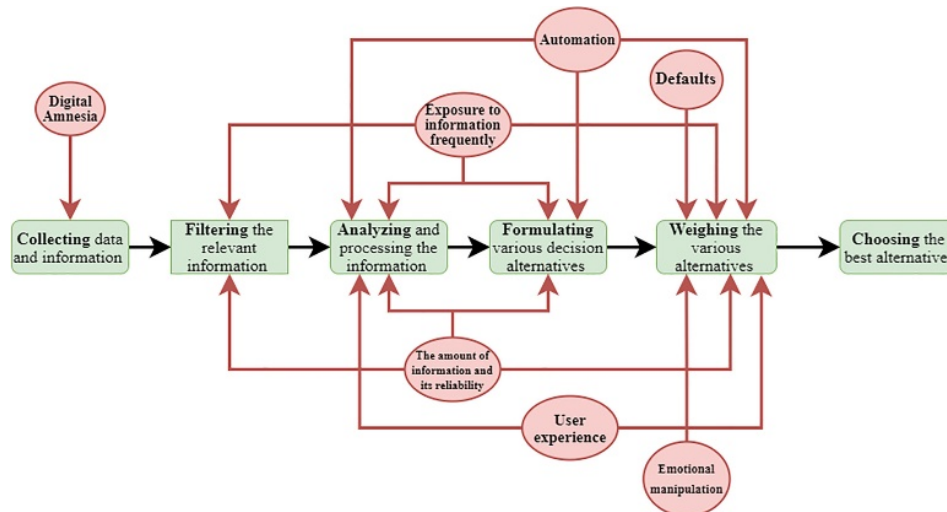


Figure 3. The impact of Information Technology on the Human Decision-Making

Automating repetitive procedures and optimizing workflows with information technology boosts productivity and efficiency. Automation technologies, including robotics,

AI, and machine learning, accelerate decision-making, minimize human error, and optimize resource allocation in industries including manufacturing, shipping, and services.

Experiences may be individualized and modified to meet the requirements and tastes of each person thanks to information technology (Cheng, Tian, & Chiu, 2024). In order to influence users' decisions in areas like entertainment, shopping, and content consumption, recommendation systems, personalized ads, and content curation algorithms offer tailored material and recommendations based on users' historical behavior. By removing obstacles from the way, information technology fosters inclusivity and accessibility for people from different backgrounds and with disabilities. Accessibility features, inclusive design principles, and assistive technology guarantee that information and services are available to everyone, improving their capacity to use digital technologies and take part in decision-making processes. Information technology gives rise to worries about security, privacy, and data protection, which can affect how people make decisions. People may decide to emphasize their privacy and security by

changing privacy settings, utilizing encryption software, or limiting their online activities due to worries about data breaches, identity theft, spying, and online privacy violations. Digital literacy and socioeconomic inequality are made worse by information technology, which affects decision-making in those who have restricted access to it. Individuals may not be able to fully engage in decision-making processes or take advantage of information technology's benefits if they lack equal access to technology, internet connectivity, and digital skills. To sum up, information technology has a significant impact on how people make decisions across the board. It affects things like socioeconomic disparities, efficiency, productivity, personalization, accessibility, privacy, and security. Information technology comes with a lot of advantages, but there are drawbacks as well, including ethical issues that must be carefully considered to make sure the technology meets the requirements and interests of everyone in society (Rane, 2023).

Table 1. Comparative Table Outlining the Differences Between the Impacts of Social Media and Information Technology (IT) on Decision Making Among the General Population

Aspect	Social Media	Information Technology (IT)
Nature of Interaction	Facilitates social interactions, content sharing, and networking within online communities.	Enables data processing, analysis, communication, and automation of tasks.
Content Consumption	Users primarily consume and engage with user-generated content such as posts, photos, and videos.	Users access and analyze data, information, and insights to inform decision making.
Influence Mechanisms	Influences decision making through peer recommendations, social validation, and social norms.	Aids decision making through data analysis, automation, and decision support tools.
Social vs. Functional Aspects	Emphasizes social interactions, community engagement, and relationship building.	Focuses on functional aspects such as data management, communication, and efficiency.
Privacy and Security Concerns	Raises concerns about privacy, data security, and online surveillance due to personal information sharing.	Also raises privacy and security concerns, but in broader contexts beyond social interactions.
Examples	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat	Data analytics software, communication tools, automation systems

Discussion

An in-depth analysis of the ways in which social media and information technology (IT) affect people's decisions, actions, and attitudes requires examining a number of different facets of these

technologies' effects. People now have unprecedented access to information from a variety of sources because to social media and IT. Because there is so much information available, people may make better decisions because they have more options and a wider

viewpoint. But because users have to filter through a ton of data to discover pertinent and trustworthy information, it also raises questions about information overload and the quality of information. Through social media platforms, consumers can ask their social networks for suggestions, validation, and guidance. People's decisions can be greatly influenced by peer recommendations, reviews, and social endorsements, especially when it comes to trip destinations, restaurant selections, and product purchases. On the other hand, the need for social approval can also cause people to base their decisions more on conformity or popularity than on impartial standards (Aldboush, & Ferdous, 2023).

Based on their prior interactions, tastes, and behavior, social media algorithms personalize users' content streams. People who are exposed to content that mostly supports their preexisting opinions and tastes are put in filter bubbles and echo chambers, even though this personalization can improve user experience and relevancy. Due to the reinforcement of biases and assumptions, this may limit people's exposure to a variety of perspectives and ideas, which could effect decision-making. IT and social media give rise to worries about online surveillance, data security, and privacy. Technology corporations monitor, retain, and analyze user interactions, personal data, and behavior, which raises concerns about data privacy, surveillance, and misuse of personal data. People's decisions about their online activity, privacy settings, and use of digital services may be influenced by these worries (Roslan, & Ahmad, 2023). IT and social media use affect decision-making via cognitive and psychological processes. In online environments, people's information processing, judgment-making, and decision-making processes are greatly influenced by concepts like social comparison, FOMO, and social validation. Furthermore, cognitive biases that skew perceptions and judgments, such as availability heuristic and confirmation bias, might impair decision-making processes.

IT and social media are a part of larger sociocultural environments that influence people's decision-making. People's perceptions

and reactions to information on social media platforms are influenced by peer pressure, cultural norms, and social conventions. Additionally, socioeconomic variables that affect people's digital literacy, online activity, and ability to make decisions include education, income, and access to technology. A thorough analysis of how social media and information technology affect decision-making reveals the intricate interactions that exist between technology, psychology, culture, and society. While there are many advantages to these technologies, such as ease of use, social connectivity, and information access, there are drawbacks as well, including algorithmic prejudice, information overload, privacy issues, and cognitive biases that may influence judgment calls. Promoting digital literacy, responsible technology use in society, and informed decision making all depend on an understanding of these effects.

Conclusion

An extensive analysis of the effects of information technology (IT) and social media on public decision-making highlights the profound influence of these technologies on people's decisions, actions, and attitudes. Throughout this examination, a number of significant discoveries have surfaced that provide insight into the intricate interactions of technology, psychology, culture, and society. People can now obtain information from a wide range of sources with unprecedented ease thanks to social media and IT, which improves decision-making by giving them more options and a wider viewpoint.

People use social media platforms to ask their social networks for guidance, approval, and advice. This helps them make decisions about things like what to buy and where to go on vacation.

Social media algorithms that generate personalized content feeds have the potential to produce echo chambers and filter bubbles, which can limit people's exposure to opposing ideas and hence affect how they make decisions

by confirming preconceived notions and biases. People's decisions about their online behavior, privacy settings, and use of digital services may be influenced by worries about privacy, data security, and online surveillance that are brought up by social media and IT.

Social comparison, FOMO (fear of missing out), and availability heuristic are just a few of the psychological and cognitive processes that social media and IT use to affect decision-making. Social media and information technology are part of larger socio-cultural contexts, such as peer pressure, cultural standards, and social norms, that influence people's decision-making.

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Conflict of Interests

There is no conflict of interest.

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