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Digital Culture and Its Impact on Knowledge Concealment: A Survey Study from the Perspective of Social Media Users

Lecturer Sahm Hazim Najeeb

College of Administration & Economics, , University of Mosul -Mosul, Iraq

saham_hazem@uomosul.edu.iq

ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the relationship between digital culture and knowledge concealment behavior among social media users, by examining the impact of four key dimensions of digital culture: (access to knowledge and digital content, digital privacy and security, social interaction and engagement, and content control and digital censorship). A quantitative approach was adopted using a structured questionnaire distributed to a random sample of 293 social media users in Mosul . The results of simple regression analysis revealed statistically significant positive effects of all dimensions on knowledge concealment behavior. Notably, digital privacy, security, and content control had the strongest influence, while access to knowledge and social interaction had relatively lesser effects. The study recommends increasing user awareness of their digital rights and fostering safe social media environments that protect freedom of expression and reduce self-censorship practices.

Keywords: Digital Privacy, Digital Culture, Social Media, Knowledge Masking, Digital Security

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الثقافة الرقمية وأثرها على إخفاء المعرفة: دراسة مسحية من وجهة نظر مستخدمي وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

م. سهم حازم نجيب

كلية الإدارة والاقتصاد ، جامعة الموصل ، الموصل ، العراق

saham_hazem@uomosul.edu.iq

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل العلاقة بين الثقافة الرقمية وسلوك إخفاء المعرفة لدى مستخدمي وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، من خلال فحص تأثير أربعة أبعاد رئيسية للثقافة الرقمية: (الوصول إلى المعرفة والمحتوى الرقمي، الخصوصية والأمن الرقمي، التفاعل والمشاركة الاجتماعية، مراقبة المحتوى والرقابة الرقمية). تم اعتماد المنهج الكمي باستخدام أداة الاستبيان التي وُزعت على عينة عشوائية مكونة من (293) مشاركاً من مستخدمي وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في الموصل. أظهرت نتائج تحليل الانحدار البسيط وجود تأثيرات إيجابية ذات دلالة إحصائية لجميع أبعاد الثقافة الرقمية على سلوك إخفاء المعرفة، وكانت الخصوصية والأمن الرقمي، ومراقبة المحتوى أكثر الأبعاد تأثيراً، في حين كان تأثير الوصول إلى المعرفة والتفاعل الاجتماعي أقل نسبياً. وأوصت الدراسة بضرورة توعية المستخدمين بحقوقهم الرقمية، وتعزيز بيئات التواصل الاجتماعي الآمنة التي تضمن حرية التعبير وتحد من ممارسات الرقابة الذاتية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الثقافة الرقمية، إخفاء المعرفة، مستخدمو وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، الأمن السيبراني، الرقابة الذاتية.

Corresponding Author: E-mail: saham_hazem@uomosul.edu.iq

Introduction

Social media is one of the most prominent events seen by the digital world in recent years. Since its establishment, social media has become an essential part of many people all over the world. Through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tikkok and LinkedIn, these media have become an important tool for social networks, information sharing and digital identity. With the significant expansion of the use of these platforms, many challenges related to privacy, security and behavior to individuals have emerged online. (Matnee, Albawi,2024; Böyük,2025)

One of the most important issues raised by the widespread spread of social media is how digital culture affects individuals with online knowledge. In addition to the benefits of access to information and the ability to interact socially, there are fears of negative effects such as the dissolution of resolution, the effect of self -censorship on individuals, and concern for social attacks intentionally hide some knowledge due to concern or concern for Social attack or negative evaluation . (Juncosa et al. ,2024)

The research work had a number of methodological and field-related challenges as it could be undertaken. Most crucial was ensuring the validity and honesty of participants' responses, given the fact that there was a sensitive topic making this research study relevant issues such as digital privacy and knowledge concealment with negative connotation on social as well as political fronts. Additional effort was required for the measure to develop a thorough and contextually informed instrument to account for the multifaceted nature of digital culture within the local environment.

In this context, researchers began to study how digital culture can affect individuals, and their digital behavior (such as hiding knowledge or hiding misinformation) is influenced by many factors such as knowledge, digital security, social contact and digital control material. The purpose of this study is to find out this relationship and its implications in the context of social media..

Theoretical framework

Digital Culture

Digital culture is a concept that expresses a group of knowledge and behavior achieved by individuals as a result of modern technology, especially the use of the Internet and social media. This concept includes all activities that individuals do research, interaction and publishing material, as well as awareness of the risk associated with units such as digital security and privacy. (Van etal.,2021; West,2022).

stated that digital literacy only uses technology, but it includes individuals' belief in how they can interact safely and effectively with these devices. (Jones and Dawson,2014) Digital culture involves individuals to use the Internet that supports the improvement of their personal and business skills, and also allow them to express their opinion in digital space.(Arifin,2024)

According to (Rhodes et al. ,2018), digital culture is not limited to learning technical skills, but also includes a set of social values and practice that controls how technology is used in individuals' lives. In digital societies, individual behavior is affected by many factors such as access to digital security, privacy and knowledge, digital literacy makes an important element to understand how individuals use social media(Fajarwati et al.,2023).

Hide knowledge via social media

Knowledge concentration or self -sensorism is a behavior that individuals perform in the online environment, where the purpose of protecting themselves or avoiding the risk associated with digital interactions. In digital space, individuals may feel the need to edit or hide some information or meaning as a result of fear of social pressure or digital attack. This phenomenon is one of the most negative effects of the use of social media, as self -sensorship affects the quality and amount of information sent online (Saleh, 2020; Caudill, 2024).

(Bourdieu,1990) study refers to the concept of "habitus", which expresses the set of behavior and habits adopted by individuals based on social contexts they are present. On the Internet, this habit can create self -concert behavior, such as hiding or distorting knowledge to avoid criticism or attack. (Siegel,Peterson,2018) also confirmed that people who feel digital unsafe or private may be more to avoid hiding their information or talking online.

Digital culture in this study is operationally defined as the sum total of the reaction of the participants, according to the items measuring four basic dimensions: (1) access to knowledge and digital content, (2) digital privacy and security, (3) social interaction/engagement, and (4) content control and digital censorship. Each dimension is measured through five Likert-scale items indicating participants' perceptions, awareness, and behavioral patterns concerning the use of digital technologies and social media platforms. The total score of these dimensions defines the individual's overall level of digital culture.

The main dimensions of digital culture and its impact on knowledge concealment

Access to knowledge and digital materials: Access to knowledge and digital content refers to individuals' ability to obtain information through the Internet. Although digital content can increase knowledge and allow individuals to learn new skills, there are challenges related to the quality of online information (Niu,et al.,2025). In the (Cohn,Jackson,2015) researchers stated that expansion of access to digital materials can cause misinformation or incorrect spread, making it more difficult to assess the truth. In addition, the pure diversity of content in social media contributes to the emergence of misleading or deformed information, which increases the self -censorship among individuals (Page,et al.,2022 ; Press, 2024).

Privacy and Digital Security: Individuals face increasing risks related to privacy and digital security in the online world. In the (Siegel,Peterson,2018) , it was emphasized that social interaction on social media improves the individual's openness to participate in discussions, but also the reason for hiding knowledge to avoid criticism or social attacks, it is possible those who have great social pressure can be to lose to express their true meaning to avoid confrontation with others (Senthil, et al., 2016 ; Tucker, et al., 2018; Cobbe, 2021).

Material control and digital censorship: Material censorship is a behavior that can be linked to individuals or organizations to control online.. In the (Williams and Wiggs,2016) study, how people survive or manipulate the publication of any information to avoid the role of self -conservation on the Internet and to avoid negative results. Community censorship also plays an important role in the design of individual behavior on social media, where socially acceptable behavior is encouraged and unwanted behavior is punished.. In the study of (Zhao, Srikanthia ,2017), how people survive or manipulate the publication of any information to avoid the role of self -conservation on the Internet and to avoid negative results. Community censorship also plays an important role in the

design of individual behavior on social media, where socially acceptable behavior is encouraged and unwanted behavior is punished...

Previous studies

(Jones and Dawson,2014): This study examined the effect of digital culture on the behavior of individuals in digital space. Researchers found that digital culture includes technical and social practices that affect how individuals interact with social media contribute to the formation of their digital identity.

(Siegel,Peterson,2018) study: This study emphasized the effect of digital security on online behavior in individuals. The results showed that individuals who feel insecure in the online environment may be more likely to hide or change their personal information to avoid exposure to hacking or digital attacks...

(Williams and Wiggs,2016): This study examined the role of social media interaction in the design of individuals. The study concluded that social interaction promotes openness to knowledge, but sometimes it can hide knowledge due to anxiety for negative assessment.

(Bourdieu, 1990) study: In his work, Bourdieu introduced the concept of "habitus", which refers to a group of behavior and habits adopted by individuals based on social contexts they are present. This concept has been used to understand how social pressure affects the social media behavior of individuals, including hiding knowledge or presenting errors.

While the discussed studies have investigated salient dimensions of digital culture, including concepts such as digital privacy (Siegel & Peterson, 2018), social interaction (Williams & Wiggs, 2016), and behavioral adaptations in online environments (Jones & Dawson, 2014; Bourdieu, 1990), none ever explicitly treated knowledge concealment as an independent behavioral construct. The great majority of previous research have rather implicitly linked it through related concepts such as self-censorship, information avoidance, or identity management.

A recent study by (Chang,2025) titled "Safe spaces for feminist activists online: Chinese networked feminists' self-censorship strategies in response to online misogyny and government censorship" thus provides worthwhile insights. The study investigated how feminist activists in China employ intentional self-censorship as a proactive measure against state surveillance and online violence. Qualitative data analysis has suggested that self-censorship can occur through withholding or distorting information selectively-in a conscious manner-directly for the purpose of personal safety or control over one's own digital representation. Knowledge concealment thus becomes interpreted as a strategic behaviour rather than one solely framed as a reactive stance, which very much aligns with how this study conceived of knowledge concealment.

Thus, this project addresses a serious gap by seeking to test empirically the ways specific dimensions of digital culture affect users' intentional knowledge concealment on social media platforms. With this approach, the study further argues for positioning knowledge concealment in the lexicon of measurable behavioral outcomes in order to further extend theoretical and empirical understanding (Lee & Attablayo,2023).

Study problem:

A very recent phenomenon which is emerging in this modern era is that of keeping information concealed or falsified among people at social media networks. This knowledge concealment behavior has several serious challenges regarding the openness and clarity in communication at the integrity of digital discourse, being partly from fear of criticism, anxiety about public judgment, or concern for personal safety. In fact, many users refrain from sharing their personal opinions or factual knowledge due to possible potential out-casting social backlash and the associated reputational damage through exposure to harassment.

This hidden behavior has further connection to broader issues in the online global environment-the absence of awareness concerning digital privacy, lack of confidence in digital security measures, and the imagined presence of content surveillance or censorship. Social networking has been touted to be that space where everyone, including the young and old, could freely express their thoughts and feelings with others. Paradoxically, instead of such benefits, social media has been turned into another channel for self-censorship by user intentions to withhold knowledge for self-protection.

While this area has been increasingly explored by academia, unfortunately, not that much research has been conducted on it concerning the Arab context, particularly on that of Iraq: very few studies have systematically investigated in Arab and local Iraqi contexts how digital cultural factors, such as access to knowledge, digital privacy and security, social interaction, and content control, work in helping or reinforcing such knowledge concealment behavior. Thus, in Mosul, where digital connectivity is developing rapidly, very little is known about the interplay of these factors.

Therefore, this study intends to bridge this gap by investigating the impact of digital culture in its four key dimensions on the knowledge-concealing behavior of social media users. The goal is to discover how digital environments might unintentionally impel individuals into hiding or falsifying knowledge, as would be their role in this behavior, and how cultural, security-related and social variables would be involved therein...

Study Questions:

Main question: Is there a statistically significant impact of digital culture on the concealment of knowledge through social media?

Sub-questions:

First question: Is there a statistically significant impact of access to knowledge and digital content on the concealment of knowledge through social media?

the second question: Is there a statistically significant impact of privacy and digital security on the concealment of knowledge through social media?

Third question: Is there a statistically significant impact of social interaction and engagement on the concealment of knowledge through social media?

Fourth question: Is there a statistically significant impact of content control and digital censorship on the concealment of knowledge through social media?

Objectives of the study:

Main objective: This study aims to analyze the relationship between digital culture in its various dimensions and the behavior of concealing knowledge among social media users..

Sub-objectives:

1. To examine the effect of individuals' access to digital knowledge and content on their tendency to conceal knowledge while using social media.
2. To analyze the impact of concerns related to digital privacy and security on individuals' decisions to withhold or distort information in online interactions.
3. To investigate the influence of social interaction and engagement on the likelihood of individuals concealing knowledge on social media platforms.
4. To assess the role of perceived content control and digital censorship in shaping users' behavior toward knowledge concealment in digital environments.

Importance of the study:

1. **Scientific Importance :** This study offers a novel contribution to the academic understanding of *knowledge concealment* as a distinct behavioral phenomenon in digital environments. While previous research has addressed digital privacy, self-censorship, and social media behavior in general, few have specifically examined how digital culture—across its dimensions—*drives or reinforces the act of intentionally hiding knowledge*. By operationalizing knowledge concealment and linking it to measurable cultural and technological factors, this study enriches behavioral and media studies with a new analytical perspective.

Moreover, the study advances the literature by contextualizing knowledge concealment within the everyday experiences of users in local digital settings, providing empirical evidence from the Iraqi context—an underrepresented city in digital behavior research.

2. **Practical Importance:** The findings of this study offer valuable insights for digital communication specialists, policymakers, and educators. Understanding how users respond to issues such as privacy concerns, surveillance, and content control can help institutions develop safer, more inclusive digital spaces that minimize the psychological and social triggers of knowledge concealment.

Furthermore, the study may inform awareness campaigns and digital literacy programs aimed at helping individuals navigate social media environments with greater confidence, transparency, and ethical responsibility. Recognizing the risks of knowledge concealment—especially in educational, political, and civic contexts—can also support the promotion of open dialogue and constructive knowledge sharing across online communities.

Limitations of the study:

1. **Geographical boundaries:** The study is limited to social media users in city of Mosul, Iraq..
2. **Time limits:** The study was conducted within a specific time period (2024-2025)
3. **Conceptual boundaries:** The study focuses on specific themes related to digital culture and the concealment of knowledge through social media. Thus, it may not address all aspects that may be relevant to users' online behavior, such as psychological or social impacts on a deeper level.. The hypotheses are related to concepts such as privacy and digital security, social interaction, and access to knowledge, so there may be other variables that have not been comprehensively considered in the study..
4. **Methodological limitations:** The study relied on the use of the questionnaire as the main tool for data collection, which means that its results depend heavily on the accuracy and truthfulness of the answers provided by the participants. There may be biases in answers or disparity in understanding

of questions among participants. The study also relies on a random sample of social media users in a Mosul, which may affect the balance in the representation of different groups of society..

Hypotheses of the study:

Main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of digital culture on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

Sub-hypotheses:

First sub-hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of access to knowledge and digital content on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

Second sub-hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of privacy and digital security on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

Third sub-hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of social interaction and engagement on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

Fourth sub-hypothesis: There is a statistically significant impact of content control and digital censorship on the concealment of knowledge through social media

Methodology (method and procedure)

In this section, the feature used to study the impact of digital culture will be hiding knowledge through social media will be reviewed. This research involves designing a questionnaire based on the Likert Five-Bindu scale to collect data from users about their perceptions in the areas of knowledge access, digital privacy, social interaction and material moderation. The data will be analyzed to come to the conclusion of the use of statistical methods that support the understanding or absence of knowledge between digital culture and presence or absence of knowledge in digital space. This research will follow a descriptive approach through a survey based on the perception of real users of social media platforms.

Methodology: Denne studien er basert på en beskrivende analytisk tilnærming ved bruk av spørreskjemaet for å samle inn data. The study was designed with the floating five-point scale, from "fixed" to "firmly disagree", in which participants measure the perceptions of digital culture and knowledge of knowledge through social media as the purpose of hiding is. Spørreskjemaet består av to hovedsegmenter :

Digital Cultural Dimensions: Addresses five questions for each of the four predefined dimensions: access to knowledge and digital content, privacy and digital security, social interaction and sharing, content control and digital censorship..

Knowledge Concealment Pillar: It consists of 16 phrases aimed at measuring the extent to which digital culture affects the concealment or distortion of knowledge in social media platforms, whether at the level of individuals or groups.

The questionnaire is distributed to a sample of social media users, with an appropriate number of participants determined according to statistical criteria. Data will be processed using statistical tools such as SPSS software to analyze distribution and percentages and determine relationships between variables.

Study population:

The target population for this study comprises active social media users residing in city of Mosul, Iraq, aged between 18 and 60 years. This population was selected due to the increasing penetration of social media platforms and the observable diversity in users' age groups, educational backgrounds, and digital behaviors. The inclusion criteria required participants to be active users of at least one social media platform (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, or LinkedIn) for a minimum duration of six months prior to data collection.

To ensure representativeness, a **simple random sampling technique** was employed. The sample size was determined using the **Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula** for a population of unknown size but with a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5%, resulting in a recommended minimum of approximately 280 responses. Accordingly, **320 questionnaires** were distributed, out of which **293 valid responses** were received and included in the final analysis—yielding a **response rate of approximately 91.6%**.

The sample reflected demographic diversity in terms of gender, age groups, and education levels. This methodological approach ensured that the findings of the study are generalizable to the broader population of social media users in Mosul.

Table (1) Distribution of Sample by Demographic Variables:

Variable	Category	Number	Ratio
Sex	Male	188	64.2
	Female	105	35.8
	Total	293	%100
Age	From 20 – less than 30 years old	21	7.2
	From 30 – less than 40 years old	140	47.8
	From 40 – less than 50 years old	101	34.5
	Over 50 years	31	10.6
	Total	293	%100
Education Qualification	Diploma or less	33	11.3
	Bachelor	66	22.5
	Higher Diploma	158	53.9
	Master	29	9.9
	Doctor	7	2.4
	Total	293	100%
Work	Employee	242	82.6
	Unemployed	51	17.4
	Total	293	100%

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample according to demographic variables that the sample is characterized by a remarkable diversity in different categories. In terms of sex, males make up 64.2% of the sample, while females make up 35.8%. As for age, the age group from 30 to less than 40 years occupies the largest percentage, accounting for 47.8% of the sample, followed by the group from 40 to less than 50 years old at 34.5%. As for educational qualification, more than half of the sample (53.9%) hold a high diploma, followed by those with a bachelor's degree at 22.5%. In terms of employment status, employees make up the largest percentage of the sample (82.6%), while the unemployed make up only 17.4%. These distributions contribute to the representation of

different social, professional and age segments of the study population, which enhances the reliability of the research results and their ability to generalize..

Content and virtual honesty:

Apparent (face) validity refers to how appropriate, clear, and relevant the items of a measurement tool appear to be, based on expert judgment and participant feedback. In this study, the questionnaire was carefully constructed to align with the study objectives and reflect the four core dimensions of digital culture (access to digital content, privacy and security, social interaction, and content control), as well as the dependent variable of knowledge concealment. To ensure the apparent validity of the tool, the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of five academic experts specializing in digital media, educational technology, and information behavior, all of whom hold doctoral degrees and have published research related to digital culture or social media usage. Their feedback focused on item clarity, linguistic accuracy, and the logical alignment of items with the constructs being measured. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of 20 participants from the same target population (social media users in Mosul) to assess their understanding of the questions. The pilot results showed that the participants found the questionnaire items clear, comprehensible, and relevant, with no major difficulties reported in interpreting or responding to the items. This feedback confirmed the tool's apparent validity and readiness for full-scale administration.

Tool Stability Test: The stability of the study instrument, the questionnaire, was tested by testing the stability strength of its questions using the stability coefficient, also known as internal consistency, by applying the Cronbach alpha equation. The values of this coefficient were extracted for each axis of the resolution as well as for the entire tool.

Table No. (2) Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient for resolution

Axis	Number of paragraphs	Internal consistency
Access to knowledge and digital content	5	.743
For Digital Privacy and Security	5	.865
Interaction and social engagement	5	.823
Content control and digital censorship	5	.845
Hide knowledge	16	.922
Total	36	.957

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

The results of the Cronbach alpha test indicate that the tool has good stability in all axes. Values range between 0.743 and 0.922 for each axis, indicating that the tool has a high degree of internal consistency. The overall value of internal consistency of the entire instrument was 0.957, which shows that the tool is generally reliable and coherent.

Third: Description of the research axes: First, the description of the axis related to digital culture in its dimensions

The digital culture theme is one of the main themes in this study, as it addresses the different dimensions of digital culture that affect individuals' behaviors in using social media. This pillar consists of several sub-dimensions related to the digital tools available, as well as how individuals deal with them on a daily basis. The theme was measured through questions designed to represent aspects such as access to knowledge and digital content, privacy and digital security, interaction and social sharing, and content control..

Table (3): Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the respondents' answers and the value of the test (t) on the axis of access to knowledge and digital content

figure	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Value (t)	Materiality
	Access to knowledge and digital content	3.6765	.68138	91.102	High
	For Digital Privacy and Security	3.6928	.88029	70.835	High
	Interaction and social engagement	3.5522	.81487	73.568	High
	Content control and digital censorship	3.6580	.80821	76.415	High

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

The results of the analysis of the digital culture pillar showed a marked variation in individuals' assessment of the different dimensions associated with the use of social media in daily life. Four main dimensions were measured: access to knowledge and digital content, privacy and digital security, interaction and social sharing, content control and digital censorship..

To begin with, it can be seen that the arithmetic means of all dimensions range between 3.55 and 3.69, which indicates that the respondents evaluated these dimensions positively. This suggests that there is a high understanding and awareness among participants about the importance of these aspects in their digital lives. For example, the "Access to Knowledge and Digital Content" dimension had the highest arithmetic mean of 3.68, which means that study participants feel very important for the ability to access information and content online..

On the other hand, standard deviations showed relatively low values (ranging from 0.68 to 0.88) in various dimensions. These values reflect a close response among the sample members, which means that there is general agreement among the participants about the importance of digital culture and its impact on their lives. That is, most of the individuals in the sample have a similar view of how these dimensions affect their digital behavior, whether it is in relation to privacy or online social interaction..

Regarding the value of the t-test, all dimensions were of high value, reflecting a strong statistical significance indicating that these dimensions have significant effects on sample members. In particular, the value of the (t) test for the dimensions of "access to knowledge and digital content" was the highest (91.102), indicating that this dimension is the most influential in participants' assessment of digital culture..

In terms of materiality, all dimensions were classified as "of high importance". This suggests that all aspects measured in the survey, whether related to privacy, security, social interaction or digital censorship, are vital topics for the participants in this study..

Based on these findings, we can conclude that digital culture significantly influences the behaviors of social media users in city of Mosul . The increasing use of these means has also enhanced public awareness about the importance of digital literacy, online safety, as well as how to interact and share through social networks..

Axis characterization related to knowledge masking

One of the main themes of the study is "Hiding Knowledge", as it focuses on how the use of social media and digital culture affects individuals' ability to hide or share knowledge in a certain way. This theme aims to measure the practices of individuals in relation to the extent to which they are keen to hide the digital information and opinions they share online, and how this affects their personal and social behavior. The arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the value of the (t) test of the paragraphs of the axis related to concealment of knowledge were analyzed. We will first address the paragraphs representing this axis and explain the most important results drawn from the analysis.

Table (-4): Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the respondents' answers and the value of the test (t) on the axis of knowledge concealment

figure	Paragraph	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Value (t)	Materiality
1	I feel like I avoid sharing some information on social media because of the influence of public opinions..	3.70	.985	63.394	High
2	Sometimes, I choose not to interact with certain topics because I don't want to reveal my opinion..	3.72	.949	66.189	High
3	I think social media may be a place to hide or twist some facts..	3.98	.901	74.739	High
4	Sometimes, I hide my knowledge on certain topics to avoid online disagreements.	3.52	1.106	53.688	High
5	I think people hide some aspects of their knowledge to maintain their image in front of others.	3.84	1.038	62.533	High
6	I think there are situations where hiding knowledge is justified on the internet.	3.57	1.098	54.828	High
7	Sometimes, I avoid publishing some information because I fear it will be exploited against me..	3.47	1.087	53.823	High
8	I think social media platforms encourage people to hide their true opinions..	3.63	1.021	60.063	High
9	Sometimes I find myself choosing to hide certain facts when interacting with others online.	3.58	1.078	55.985	High
10	Sometimes, I notice that people hide their personal information due to fear of being criticized..	3.33	1.245	45.067	High
11	I feel like there's some kind of self-censorship of the knowledge I share on social media..	3.58	1.065	56.725	High

12	I think sometimes people deliberately hide their knowledge to avoid interacting with opposing opinions..	3.63	.937	65.352	High
13	I think social media is an environment where knowledge is frequently hidden for social reasons..	3.64	.982	62.539	High
14	When I don't want others to attack my opinion, sometimes I hide some cognitive information.	3.62	1.048	58.306	High
15	Sometimes, I notice that the content I see online is distorted or incomplete due to self-censorship or community censorship.	3.60	1.044	58.215	High
16	I think hiding knowledge on the internet can lead to the formation of a closed knowledge bubble.	3.67	.681	91.102	High
Hide knowledge		3.63	.704	87.062	High

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

In the study on the knowledge concealment theme, it is shown that the study participants show a high awareness of the challenges related to sharing information and knowledge through social media. The results of the analysis showed that most participants adopt different behaviors to hide or distort the knowledge that is circulating online. All dimensions had high values in terms of arithmetic mean and t-test value, indicating that knowledge concealment behaviors are prevalent among study participants..

One of the paragraphs that stood out in this analysis was paragraph 3: "I think social media may be a place to hide or twist some facts," which scored the highest arithmetic mean of 3.98. This finding clearly reflects that respondents see social media as an environment where facts can be easily concealed or misrepresented, a common feature of digital interactions. Many participants argue that digital platforms may be a convenient place to hide or modify certain information for certain purposes, such as avoiding criticism or maintaining a certain image in front of others. This idea is an indicator of complete distrust of the content that is posted on the Internet..

Another paragraph that scored high was paragraph 1: "I feel like I avoid sharing some information on social media because of the influence of public opinions," which received an arithmetic mean of 3.70. This finding suggests that participants avoid sharing certain information due to the influence of public opinions, reflecting a type of self-censorship that individuals exercise on themselves when interacting online. This paragraph sheds light on the deep awareness of individuals about the influence of public opinion on their digital behavior..

In addition, paragraph 4: "Sometimes, I hide my knowledge on certain topics to avoid conflicts on the Internet" got a mean of 3.52. This finding reveals the tendency of individuals to hide some aspects of their knowledge or opinions to avoid interaction on controversial topics that may lead to online controversies. This shows the urgent need for individuals to maintain their social safety and not engage in confrontations that may affect their reputation in digital environments..

Paragraph 10, which says, "Sometimes, I notice that people hide their personal information because of fear of being criticized," recorded a minimum arithmetic mean of 3.33, indicating that some are reluctant to share personal information online due to fear of criticism or criticism. In fact, this

finding reflects that self-censorship and social concerns remain factors influencing individuals' decision about what to post or hide..

Finally, paragraph 16: "I believe that hiding knowledge on the Internet can lead to the formation of a closed knowledge bubble", recorded the highest value of the test (t) of 91.102, reflecting the growing concern among participants about the impact of hiding knowledge on the Internet in the formation of limited knowledge bubbles. Participants believe that concealing certain information may restrict the range of knowledge available to them, fostering intellectual isolation and limiting individuals' ability to access diverse opinions or information..

The results of the study clearly indicate that social media indirectly encourages the concealment or distortion of knowledge, whether because individuals fear being criticized or because they prefer to avoid disagreements. This behavior refers to the self-censorship practiced by users to preserve their profile image in digital settings. The influence of public opinions and social concerns is also a factor in people's decisions about what to share or hide..

It is clear that the use of social media contributes to the creation of an environment in which knowledge is increasingly hidden for personal or social purposes, distorting the true picture of reality that is circulating online. It may also reflect increased caution and concern about privacy and digital security, making individuals more conservative about sharing their personal information or opinions..

Test the hypotheses of the study

In testing the hypotheses of the study, the researcher will rely on a set of hypotheses that are designed to examine the impact of digital culture on the concealment of knowledge through social media. Among these hypotheses, emphasis will be placed on the main hypothesis that emphasizes a statistically significant impact between digital culture and social media concealment..

Main hypothesis:

"There is a statistically significant impact of digital culture on the concealment of knowledge through social media".

To achieve this hypothesis, sub-hypotheses revolving around the impact of different dimensions of digital culture on knowledge concealment behaviors will be tested..

The first sub-hypothesis:

"There is a statistically significant impact of access to knowledge and digital content on the concealment of knowledge through social media".

To analyze this hypothesis, simple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between access to knowledge and digital content as an independent variable and knowledge concealment as a dependent variable. Simple regression analysis was applied to reach the following results:

Table (5) Analysis of the results of simple regression of the first sub-hypothesis

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.605	.0366	.364	.562		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Access to knowledge and digital content						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Push	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	52.993	1	52.993	167.816	Per Month
	Residual	91.892	291	.316		
	Total	144.885	292			
a. Dependent VariablHide Knowledge Through Social Media						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Access to knowledge and digital content						
Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.334	.180		7.394	.000
	Access to knowledge and digital content	.625	.048	.605	12.954	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Hideknowledge through social media						

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

In the framework of testing the first sub-hypothesis, which states that there is a statistically significant impact of access to knowledge and digital content on the concealment of knowledge through social media, simple regression analysis was used to determine the extent to which access to knowledge affects online knowledge concealment behaviors..

The results obtained indicate a strong positive relationship between the independent variable "access to knowledge and digital content" and the dependent variable "hide knowledge". The R coefficient recorded a value of 0.605, reflecting a strong correlation between the two variables, as this figure expresses an important impact of access to knowledge on social media concealment behaviors.

When analyzing R Square of 0.366, we can say that 36.6% of changes in masking behavior can be explained by the variable "access to knowledge and digital content". Although this percentage may seem average, it shows that access to digital content plays an important role in the influence of individuals' behavior in hiding knowledge..

As for the analysis of variance (ANOVA), the value of F was 167.816, which reflects that the statistical model used in the study explains well the relationship between the variables. The Sig. value of 0.000 is a strong indication that the results are not random and that the effect detected is statistically significant..

We note that the value B of the independent variable "Access to knowledge and digital content" was 0.625, which means that as the amount of access to knowledge through social media increases, the level of knowledge anonymization increases by 0.625. A Beta value of 0.605 indicates the strength of the relationship between the two variables, and reflects a positive and strong effect, which means that people who get more knowledge content online are more likely to hide certain knowledge or opinions that may cause disagreements or criticism..

Finally, a t-value of 12.954 shows that the relationship between access to knowledge, digital content, and concealment of knowledge is a strong statistically significant relationship, as Sig. (probability value) of 0.000 supports this result, which means that the first sub-hypothesis is strongly accepted..

Based on the results obtained, we can conclude that access to knowledge and digital content via social media has a significant impact on the behavior of individuals in hiding knowledge. The results show that individuals with greater access to online information and knowledge tend to hide some aspects of their knowledge or opinions, either to avoid conflict or to preserve their personal image in the digital society..

The Second Sub-hypothesis: "There is a statistically significant effect of privacy and digital security on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

We will calculate the independent privacy and digital security variables and the low-cycle ratio between the dependent variables in the table (6)

Table (6) Analysis of the results of simple regressionof the second sub-hypothesis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.641	.410	.408	.542
a. Predictors: (Constant), for privacy and digital security				

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Push	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.470	1	59.470	202.605	Per Month
	Residual	85.416	291	.294		
	Total	144.885	292			
a. Dependent Variable: Hideknowledge through social media						
b. Predictors: (Constant), for privacy and digital security						
Coefficientsa						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.740	.137		12.724	.000
	Developing the skills and training of	.513	.036	.641	14.234	.000

	employees					
a. Dependent Variable: Hide Knowledge through Social Media						

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

The R coefficient recorded a value of 0.641, demonstrating a strong correlation between privacy and digital security and anonymity. This suggests that individuals who over-care about their privacy and digital security via social media are more likely to hide certain information or opinions.

The R Square value of 0.410 means that 41% of changes in social media anonymity behaviour can be explained by a concern for privacy and digital security. This value suggests that privacy and digital security play a large role in individuals making decisions about anonymity..

For analysis of variance (ANOVA), the value of F was 202.605, which is a high value, indicating that the model chosen for data analysis explains the changes that occur in the behavior of anonymity well. Sig. of 0.000 indicates that the results are statistically significant and cannot be random..

When looking at the Coffee, the value B of the independent variable "Digital Privacy and Security" was 0.513, which means that increasing individuals' interest in privacy and digital security leads to an increase in knowledge anonymity by 0.513. The Beta was also 0.641, a value that indicates that privacy and digital security have a significant impact on individuals' behavior in hiding knowledge. Looking at the t-value of 14.234, the effect is statistically significant. The Sig. value of 0.000 supports this finding and confirms that the relationship between privacy, digital security and knowledge anonymity is strong and significant..

General interpretation:

Based on the findings, we can conclude that privacy and digital security have a significant impact on individuals' behavior in hiding knowledge via social media. Individuals who attach great importance to privacy and digital security feel the need to hide certain information or opinions to avoid exposure to risk or exploitation. Therefore, it is clear that the concept of privacy and digital security is not limited to the protection of personal information, but also extends to the behavior of individuals in their interaction with online knowledge content..

Third sub-hypothesis: "There is a statistically significant effect of interaction, social participation and concealment of knowledge through social media.

We will calculate the regression relationship between the independent variable interaction, social participation, values, and the dependent variable of knowledge concealment, and Table (7) shows that

Table (7) Analysis of the results of simple regression of the third hypothesis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.720 ^K	.518	.517	.490
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction and Sharing				
ANOVA				

Model		Sum of Squares	Push	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	75.119	1	75.119	313.328	Per Month
	Residual	69.766	291	.240		
	Total	144.885	292			
a. Dependent Variable: Hide Knowledge through Social Media						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Interaction and Sharing						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.422	.128		11.095	.000
	Interaction and social engagement	.622	.035	.720	17.701	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Hide Knowledge through Social Media						

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

Within the framework of testing the third sub-hypothesis indicating a statistically significant effect of social interaction and participation on the concealment of knowledge through social media, simple regression analysis was used to measure the relationship between the independent variable "interaction and social participation" and the dependent variable "hide knowledge via social media".

Key findings:

Correlation coefficient (R): The correlation coefficient was recorded as 0.720, which indicates a strong and direct relationship between interaction, social engagement, and social media knowledge concealment behavior. This suggests that increased interaction and social engagement are significantly associated with increased knowledge concealment., R Square: R^2 was 0.518, which means that social interaction and engagement explain about 51.8% of changes in social media concealment behavior. This percentage represents a significant impact of social interaction in individuals' decisions to hide their information or opinions on the Internet..

ANOVA: F value of 313.328 in the analysis of variance, with a value of Sig. of 0.000, showed that the model used in the analysis was statistically significant. That is, interaction and social participation have a real effect on the concealment of knowledge and this relationship cannot be interpreted as a coincidence..

Coefficients: Constant: 1.422, which means that there is a core value from the concealment of knowledge that is recorded even in the absence of interaction and social participation.

Social Interaction and Engagement: The B-coefficient for social interaction and engagement was 0.622, indicating that each one-unit increase in social interaction and engagement leads to a 0.622 increase in social media knowledge concealment.

Beta: The Beta value was 0.720, demonstrating that social interaction and sharing have a strong and direct effect on the concealment of knowledge. The more social interaction, the more likely it is to hide knowledge.

t: t-value of 17.701, a large value indicating that the effect is statistically significant.

Statistical significance (Sig.): The value was 0.000, which means that the relationship between interaction, social participation and social media knowledge concealment is statistically significant and cannot be random.

General interpretation:

These findings show that social interaction and commitment have a strong impact on hiding knowledge through social media. Several social activities on these platforms, whether interacting with others or participating in discussions and groups, are more likely to be hidden by individuals. This may be due to maintaining a certain social image or desire to maintain disputes and conflicts that may arise as a result of a certain meaning or disclosure of individual information.

Thus, this behavior can be interpreted as a response to individuals' need for online social and professional security, which motivates them to take preventive measures such as to hide some personal information or meaning to protect you from criticism or negative conversation ..

Fourth sub-hypothesis: "There is a statistically significant effect of content control and digital censorship on the concealment of knowledge through social media.

We will calculate the regression ratio between independent variable material control, numerical control, value and dependent variables showing that knowledge and table (8)

Table (8) Analysis of the results of simple regression of the fourth sub-hypothesis

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.753	.568	.566	.464		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Content Control and Digital Censorship						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	Push	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	82.257	1	82.257	382.201	Per Month
	Residual	62.629	291	.215		
	Total	144.885	292			
a. Dependent Variable: Hideknowledge through social media						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Content Control and Digital Censorship						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.231	.126		9.779	
	Content control and digital censorship	.657	.034	.753	19.550	
a. Dependent Variable: Hideknowledge through social media						

Source: Analysis of the responses of the research sample on the questionnaire

In testing the fourth sub-hypothesis, which assumes a statistically significant effect of content control and digital censorship on social media concealment, simple regression analysis was used to measure the relationship between the independent variable "content control and digital censorship" and the dependent variable "knowledge masking".

Key findings:

Correlation coefficient (R): The correlation coefficient was recorded as 0.753, reflecting a very strong relationship between content control, digital censorship, and masking behavior. This suggests that increased control over content on social media, whether by individuals or the platforms themselves, leads to an increase in knowledge anonymity by users..

R Square: R^2 was 0.568, which means that content control and digital censorship explain about 56.8% of changes in masking behavior. This ratio shows a strong impact of censorship and content control on how individuals behave in social media environments..

ANOVA: F value of 382.201 with Sig. equal to 0.000 showed that the model used in the analysis is statistically significant, which means that content control and digital censorship significantly affect the concealment of knowledge via social media..

Coefficients:

Constant: 1.231, which means that there is a basic level of knowledge anonymity even in the absence of content control and digital censorship.

Content Control and Digital Censorship: Coefficient B was 0.657, indicating that every one-unit increase in content control and digital censorship leads to a 0.657 increase in social media knowledge masking.

Beta: The Beta value was 0.753, indicating a very strong influence of censorship and content control on masking behavior. Thus, increased censorship leads to a marked increase in concealment of information..

T: The t value was 19.550, which is very high, indicating that the effect is statistically significant.

Statistical significance (Sig.): The value was 0.000, which means that the relationship between content control, digital censorship, and social media knowledge concealment is statistically significant and cannot be random.

General interpretation:

The findings suggest that there is a strong and noticeable impact of content control and digital censorship on social media concealment behavior. By increasing censorship and control of content on these platforms, whether by individuals themselves or by regulators or companies that own the platforms, individuals tend to hide their knowledge or opinions..

This may be because censorship and control of the internet may restrict freedom of expression, and therefore individuals feel obligated to hide certain information or opinions to avoid prosecution or criticism from the digital society or authorities. Social inspection can also help strengthen self-sensors, and motivate individuals to take preventative measures such as hiding some aspects of their knowledge to avoid falling into unwanted situations ..

These findings outline the important role that plays content censorship and control to shape individuals' behavior on social media, especially in the context of hiding knowledge and protecting individuals from social and political consequences .

Through the analysis of the above and sub-mamohan, the following can be reached:

Accept the main hypothesis that suggests: Digital culture has a statistically significant impact on hiding knowledge through social media.

Conclusions:

The findings of this study reveal that knowledge concealment is a conscious behavioral response shaped by multiple dimensions of digital culture. Rather than being a passive or incidental outcome, the act of withholding knowledge on social media emerges as a strategic decision made by individuals in response to perceived risks—such as criticism, surveillance, or social backlash.

One of the core conclusions is that **content control and digital censorship** strongly influence users' willingness to share knowledge. The more individuals perceive that their online content is being monitored or subject to social judgment, the more likely they are to self-censor and withhold information.

Additionally, **digital privacy and security concerns** play a decisive role in shaping online behavior. Individuals with heightened sensitivity to privacy are more prone to filter or conceal their views to protect their identity or reputation, even at the expense of open communication.

Another key insight is the paradoxical effect of **social interaction**: while intended to foster dialogue, social participation may in fact increase the pressure to conform, especially in polarized or judgmental online environments. This leads individuals to strategically avoid controversial topics or suppress divergent opinions.

Furthermore, **easy access to digital knowledge**—though beneficial—can sometimes trigger defensive behaviors, particularly when individuals feel overwhelmed by the volume or sensitivity of content. This highlights the importance of not just digital access, but also digital confidence and contextual awareness.

Finally, the study concludes that **knowledge concealment is an understudied yet growing phenomenon** in the digital age. It intersects with cultural norms, political sensitivities, and personal identity management, making it a relevant area for future interdisciplinary research in digital sociology, media studies, and behavioral psychology.

Recommendations:

1. **Enhance public awareness of digital privacy and online security.** To achieve this, educational campaigns should be developed targeting various user groups. These campaigns should include practical guidance on the safe use of passwords, two-factor authentication, encryption tools, and techniques for minimizing digital footprints.
2. **Provide users with advanced content control tools on social media platforms.** Platforms should integrate features such as customizable audience selection, keyword-based content filtering, and comment moderation settings to give users greater autonomy over what they share and how others interact with their content.
3. **Promote a digital environment that encourages freedom of expression within respectful boundaries.** This requires platforms to implement transparent content moderation policies, foster community guidelines that value respectful discourse, and ensure that censorship practices do not limit access to valuable knowledge or silence diverse voices.
4. **Encourage ethical and responsible use of social media to counteract self-censorship.** Civil society organizations and educational institutions should collaborate to promote digital ethics, emphasizing respectful dialogue, intellectual openness, and the importance of constructive disagreement.
5. **Support empirical research on the impact of digital censorship, especially in politically sensitive contexts.** Future studies should investigate how various forms of censorship—governmental or algorithmic—affect knowledge sharing behaviors, user trust, and democratic participation in online spaces.
6. **Train individuals in managing their digital identities and resisting the negative effects of self-censorship.** Training programs should equip users with strategies to express themselves confidently online without compromising personal privacy or security. These may include modules on privacy literacy, emotional resilience in online discussions, and controlled transparency.

Conclusion: Depending on the above, it can be said that the behavior of hiding knowledge through social media is influenced by many factors associated with digital culture, such as material control, privacy, social interaction and self-sensorship. By improving awareness of these factors, we can promote the use of social media safely and more efficiently, contribute to a healthy and safe digital environment for everyone.

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