

Research Article

Emotional Overload in the Modern Media Environment: The Impact of Information Excess and Artificial Intelligence Algorithms

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Abstract:

This research will examine one of the most pressing issues in the media industry in 2025. Emotional overload is one that has become key to psychological impact in today's media space. The article looks at this problem from two sides: the overabundance of information resources and news, and the impact of artificial intelligence on content creation - and then connects the two parts of these problems into one whole. The article analyzes how the overabundance of digital content: video, news, audio and textual information - affects the human psyche, behavior in life and in the media space. It also considers the impact of AI on content generation, its authenticity and distribution, as well as about personalized recommendation feeds.

Current statistics and data from psychology and media communications are discussed, such as analyzing interviews and statistics that confirm the growing symptoms of emotional exhaustion among Internet users.

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The article talks about the concept of “cliphinking”: its dangers and benefits. The article explains the terms “info noise”, “infodemic”, “doomscrolling” and others. Possible solutions to the problem are given, and the conclusion talks about the development of media literacy, emotional self-control.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, emotional overload, media industry, content creation, info noise, mental health, media problems

Introduction

In 2025, the Internet became part of everyday life for billions of people. They watch educational videos, read articles, read the news feed, communicate with people, publish content themselves and much more. According to statistics, in 2025 the number of Internet users reached 5.56 billion people, or 67.9% of the world’s population. Speaking of social networks, by 2025 there were 5.24 billion users (Churanov, E., 2025). It is also important to understand that the time that a person spends online increases significantly. Thus, according to the «Komsomolskaya Truth» survey, a third of respondents from Russia spend more than six hours a day on the Internet. Some of the respondents spend 6-9 hours, and 15% spend 10 hours a day or more.

With the development of social networks, people were able to watch and upload content, create new ones, communicate. Despite all the advantages, people started to have a problem - emotional overload due to media. This began to manifest in anxiety, irritability, problems with concentration, reduced quality of work and apathy. This is due to the excessive consumption of information from news sites and social networks, which can lead to overloading the emotional system in a person. It’s important to understand what this is and how it can be addressed and reduced. So, Forbes conducted a survey of users of the popular in Russia messenger Telegram about news channels, and most people at the beginning of 2025 have already started to avoid information overload, that is, they subscribe to three news channels and less, only 34% of respondents subscribe to four or more media channels(Arpine, Asatryan, 2025).

Also, with the advent of artificial intelligence, content creation has become much easier and faster for journalists. AI is already able to write news, create videos, copy people’s voices and translate information into different languages in real time. The RAEC and INEM HSE study on artificial intelligence and its role in media and communication says that thanks to AI, routine tasks of journalists

take a back seat and they have more time for creative tasks (Russian Association for Electronic Communications). Despite this, artificial intelligence is already becoming difficult to distinguish from reality, it occupies most of the social networks and media and can also cause emotional overload for users due to deepfakes and possible fake news. This can result in fear and mistrust, as well as panicked thoughts.

Thus, the excess of information and increased use of AI in media can lead to emotional overload for Internet users. It is important to analyze in more detail how this affects people, how it relates to each other, the solutions to the problem and the real cases.

Methodology

In the first place, the main method for writing this article was a qualitative analysis of scientific literature, news articles, expert sources and study of statistics. Both Russian and English language resources were reviewed. The method of analysis of specific cases, such as «infodemic» in coronavirus and fake news in Wired and Business Insider publications was also used. To analyze possible solutions to the problem of emotional overload, an analysis of journalistic materials and opinions of experts in different fields was used: PR, journalism, psychology and AI algorithms.

Information excess as a source of emotional overload

First, we need to understand what information overload is. This term was introduced by the American futurist Alvin Toffler in 1970. In his book, he described a situation where a person is faced with a volume of information that they are unable to effectively process. Now information overload is a state in which the amount of information that a person receives exceeds his ability to perceive and process, resulting in decreased concentration, productivity, as well as a sense of anxiety.

At the moment this is due to continuous access to social networks, news sites and messengers. People try to choose appropriate and truthful information, but it can affect them emotionally. Because of the abundance of information, a person becomes emotionally overloaded and is in a state of constant stress and anxiety.



There are key mechanisms by which a large amount of information becomes emotionally difficult for the person. For example, cognitive load, that is the amount of information exceeds the capacity of the working memory of a person, after the person's concentration deteriorates, the thought process slows down and he begins mental exhaustion. The emotional state can also be influenced by information noise - a cultural phenomenon that arose in the 20th century. This is a useless or distorted flow of information that can make it difficult to understand and prevent an adequate understanding of the main message (Ignashin, A.A., Kotlyarova, V.V., 2019).

Doomscrolling, that is the overload of negative news, affects the emotional state of many users. Thus, according to the study of the American psychological association «Stress in America», which was conducted in 2022, 73 percent of respondents replied that they were overwhelmed by numerous crises in the world. Psychologists called this condition «stress disorder from headlines». They were able to highlight the symptoms that are characteristic of this condition. Before reading the news, a person's muscles strain and heart rate increases. During the day he may have obsessive thoughts that are related to what he has read earlier, as well as irritability. The mental resource, which allows to cope with daily problem, becomes less (Bely, N., 2023).

According to the psychologist, the solution is not the complete exclusion of reading the news. So, a person is able to catastrophe the situation and invent worst-case scenarios. You can not stop completely and immediately consuming news. The way to deal with this can be balance. It is important to limit interaction with news channels and social networks, as well as to listen to yourself and stop feeding anxiety if the information becomes difficult to perceive.

Consider the emotional overload due to excess of information can be through real cases and situations. Thus, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization began to use the term «infodemic», which means an excess of information. This concept includes attempts to deliberately propagate false data in order to disrupt public health responses. This could harm both the physical and mental condition of a person. Researchers have documented the deleterious effect of constantly watching social media in the middle of a prolonged traumatic event, such as coronaviruses. In 2021, a study was conducted in the journal «International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health» where more than 2200 people were interviewed. The conclusion was that



the more people read news sources, the more likely it is that mental problems will occur. It is important to understand that stress itself is not so dangerous, but its property accumulates. If the negative emotions become too many, and they cross the «threshold», it can affect the mental state of the person. From this you can make it important to control the amount of time spent reading the news. It is also important for users to sort the information they read.

In 2025, the mass phenomenon became clip thinking. Clip thinking is a description of the set of cognitive-stylistic features of the human being. It came under the influence of media and new information technologies. This term became used by the society in the 1990s, when TV became an abundance of clips and advertisements with various dynamic clipping. The term is derived from the concept of «clip culture», which was introduced by Alvin Toffler in the book «Third wave» of 1980 (Zuikova, A., 2021).

Features of people with clip thinking: preference for short and visually vivid formats, fragmented perception and rapid change of information. It is also possible to reduce the ability for in-depth analysis and concentration on only one topic.

Media try to use different methods to attract users to interact with their content, as the success and development of platforms and online media depends on the number of page views. So, now on the Internet more and more often you can find the format of short vertical video, click headlines, more photos and videos instead of voluminous text.

Co-founder and CEO of international PR agency Vinci Agency Alexander Izryadnovshared his opinion on the main trends that contribute to the development of climate thinking (Zuikova, A., 2021). The volume of messages sent to messengers has become smaller, also people stopped attracting dry news, it is important that the article feels the author's attitude. This trend has become evident in all spheres of journalism: TV, social networks, radio and media.

This phenomenon became widespread not so long ago, but its beginning could already be seen before the advent of the internet. Thus, in 1882, Nietzsche learned to type blindly on a typewriter, and his friends noticed that the text became more informative and shorter, and its content contained fewer arguments (Zuikova, A., 2021).



Despite all the downsides, people with clip thinking have advantages. This can filter the flow of information and break it down into fragments, thereby protecting the brain from overload. Clip thinking can speed up the reaction. The person is also better at multitasking, that is he can simultaneously listen to music, communicate with a person and read news.

Thus, it can be concluded how the change of formats in the media (vertical short videos, bright covers, fast frame changes and predominance of photo and video content over text) affects the human psyche. The emergence of mass clip thinking shows that a person from the development of media and social networks deteriorates concentration, there are difficulties in learning, such people are more susceptible to manipulation and perceive superficially what they see or read. However, it is this type of thinking that helps the brain cope with too much information and results in an emotional overload.

Thus, the media and social networks can lead a person to an emotional overload through a great flow of information, new formats and technologies. Anxiety and panic can arise due to a lot of news, and people's thinking changes because of different media formats.

Ways to cope with emotional overload

The problem of information overload has become massive and people need to understand how to deal with it correctly. Based on the statistics of the OpenText platform, 80 percent of people around the world have this problem. Also, from the Statista report, we can conclude that the amount of data on the Internet continues to grow and by 2025 its volume will reach 180 zettabytes, that is, 1.8×10^{11} terabytes. For modern journalism, this problem has become a challenge. People are overwhelmed with news, social media posts, and all the information on the internet. Thus, it is journalists who can help the audience understand information and cope with overload and emotional state.

So, it is important for users to know about media hygiene. People can learn how to filter information, select sources, and conduct fact-checking. For example, many Russian online media and media outlets are already publishing articles on how to cope with information overload. For example, Izvestia and Tass published an article on their website about what this problem is and how an ordinary user could cope with it. After analyzing them, you can conclude what steps need to be taken to eliminate the problem.



It is important not to mindlessly watch videos and read the news, but to choose sources of information that a person will trust. People can also unsubscribe from unnecessary mailings, groups and channels and remove notifications. This will help remove unnecessary information and reduce stress and emotional overload, as well as shift your attention to something really meaningful (Sokolov, N., 2025).

It is necessary to specify the request if the person is looking for something in the browser to avoid unnecessary information. Journalists also advise users to systematize data, use special applications to filter information (Sokolov, N., 2025). An excellent solution would also be the practice of mindfulness when consuming information, that is, you need to look at feelings and reactions and analyze how certain actions affect the emotional state and whether they cause overload.

Also, one of the journalistic areas is able to help people with emotional overload from an overabundance of information: slow journalism is aimed at the quality of the material and its elaboration, and not at an endless flow of news. This can reduce information noise and remove anxiety and overload of readers, since articles are aimed at improving the quality of the material, fact-checking and thoughtful reading in the reader.

It is important for journalists to be aware of all the responsibility for the creation of content, its reliability and compliance with ethics. It is necessary not to publish everything in a row, but to select the significant and important.

Artificial Intelligence in Media: Danger and Solutions

Artificial intelligence has become an integral part of people's lives. AI has also become a part of the media and is used by many journalists and internet users to create texts, photos, and videos. Based on Stanford University statistics for 2025, from 2013 to 2023, the number of AI-related scientific publications increased from 102,000 to 242,000 (Kuzminykh, A., 2025). This shows the interest of people and scientists in this topic.

There has also been a breakthrough in the artificial intelligence industry: many AIs have become capable of generating high-quality videos. Deepfakes are increasingly appearing on the Internet, that is, videos where a person's voice, appearance, or actions look realistic, but this is fake and made with the help of AI algorithms. It's very dangerous, so BI. Zone AntiFraud reports that in 2025, the

number of deepfake scams increased by 2.3 times compared to last year (Zagvozdina, K., 2025). The media also create material with famous people. At this point in time, such videos look so believable that it can make a person doubt whether it is true artificial intelligence or reality. This can lead to fear, anxiety and distrust of social networks and media. So, even journalists can believe and insert such videos or voice messages into their material, which as a result can reduce the reputation of the publication.

The solution to this problem is fact-checking for both journalists and ordinary users. Fact-checking will help the reader understand the situation, as well as viewing trusted and selected media will help reduce emotional overload and anxiety.

Also, fake news written by AI has become one of the mass problems in the media. For example, Wired and Business Insider media resources were subjected to the publication of materials with a non-existent author, which were made using AI. These media outlets began to remove such articles. The case of Wired is interesting, as it actively criticizes low-quality content that is created with the help of AI. However, their AI detectors could not recognize the fake and allowed it to be published.

These articles were of excellent quality with interesting topics and collected views and reactions, and the "author" was paid a fee. Despite this, all the material was fake and created with the help of AI (Denisenko, A., 2025).

Such cases can lead to readers' distrust, an overabundance of fake news and information, which can cause emotional overload. The solution to this is also to check the sources for reliability and control the list of media that the user trusts.

So, in order to avoid anxiety, emotional overload and an excess of information, it is necessary to check the unknown material for whether it is true or false. AI is also able to help with an excess of information, there are algorithms that filter news and create a smart feed, and also help fight doomscrolling. Thus, AI is both a danger to humans and journalists, but it can also help improve the situation with an overabundance of information.

Conclusion

In 2025, an overabundance of information has become one of the main causes of emotional overload. Constant notifications, a stream of news, AI-



generated content – all this contributes to the appearance of anxiety and fatigue in a person. Also, the development of clip thinking and the phenomenon of doomscrolling affects how people perceive information on social networks and the media.

This becomes a real challenge for journalism. A possible overcoming of this problem in the future is possible with the help of prioritization: attentiveness, ethics, fact-checking and high quality of the material instead of speed, virality of the material, clickbait and fake for the sake of views and likes. It is also important for users to monitor their mental state, contact a psychologist if necessary, and consciously monitor the material they read and view.

Speaking of AI, it is necessary to control the placement of news, videos, and information generated by artificial intelligence on the Internet. Journalists and news media need to check the information more carefully and analyze the material for the use of AI, as this can lead to fakes.

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