DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AMONG UZBEK PEOPLE.

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Annotation. *Digital communication in Uzbekistan has rapidly evolved due to the expansion of internet access, mobile networks, and the increasing popularity of social media platforms such as Telegram, Instagram, and YouTube. While digital services and e-commerce have gained prominence, challenges like rural connectivity, internet censorship, and digital literacy disparities persist. The growth of e-government services, digital payment systems, and content creation by local influencers has reshaped communication patterns. As infrastructure improves, Uzbekistan's digital landscape is expected to further develop, fostering greater connectivity and innovation.*

Annotatsiya. *O'zbekistonda raqamli muloqot internetga kirish, mobil tarmoqlar va Telegram, Instagram, YouTube kabi ijtimoiy tarmoqlarning ommalashuvi tufayli tez rivojlanmoqda. Raqamli xizmatlar va elektron tijoratning rivojlanishi bilan birga, qishloq joylarda internetga ulanish, internet senzurasining mavjudligi va raqamli savodxonlikdagi tafovutlar hali ham dolzarb masalalardan hisoblanadi. Davlat xizmatlarining raqamlashtirilishi, to'lov tizimlarining kengayishi va mahalliy kontent yaratuvchilarning faoliyati muloqot shakllarini o'zgartirmoqda. Infratuzilmaning rivojlanishi bilan O'zbekistonning raqamli muhiti yanada kengayib, yangi imkoniyatlar yaratishi kutilmoqda.*

Key Words: *Digital communication, social media, internet access, e-government, e-commerce, digital payment systems.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Raqamli muloqot, ijtimoiy tarmoqlar, elektron hukumat, elektron*

tijorat, to'lov tizimlari.

Digital communication among Uzbek people has grown significantly, especially over the past decade. The increasing availability of the internet, mobile devices, and social media has transformed how Uzbeks communicate, access information, and conduct business. Below is a detailed analysis of the current state of digital communication in Uzbekistan:

Internet Penetration and Access

- *Internet Growth:* Uzbekistan has experienced rapid growth in internet usage, largely driven by government initiatives to improve infrastructure. According to reports from the early 2020s, internet penetration reached around 65-70% of the population. However, connectivity remains uneven, with urban areas like Tashkent having better access compared to rural regions.

- *Mobile Internet:* Mobile internet has become the primary means of accessing the web for many Uzbeks, particularly in areas with limited broadband availability. The development of 4G services, and ongoing efforts to introduce 5G, are enhancing mobile internet speeds and availability.

Social Media Platforms

- *Popular Platforms:* Social media plays a crucial role in digital communication in Uzbekistan. The most popular platforms include:

- *Telegram:* Telegram is one of the most widely used messaging apps in Uzbekistan. Its popularity is driven by its functionality, privacy features, and ability to work with slower internet speeds.

- *Facebook and Instagram:* Facebook and Instagram are popular among younger generations and businesses for social interaction, brand building, and marketing. Instagram, in particular, is used heavily for visual content sharing and small business marketing.

- *TikTok:* TikTok has grown in popularity, especially among younger users. It has become a platform for entertainment, education, and personal expression.

- *YouTube:* Video content is widely consumed on YouTube, especially

tutorials, music videos, entertainment, and news. Many local content creators have also gained traction on the platform.

- *WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger*: While less popular than Telegram, WhatsApp and Messenger are still widely used for communication, particularly for personal and group messaging.

- *Local Social Networks:* There are also some local social platforms like Muloqot.uz, designed specifically for Uzbek users, although they have less influence than global platforms.

Language and Cultural Adaptation

- *Uzbek Language Dominance:* The Uzbek language dominates digital communication within the country. While many Uzbeks are bilingual (with Russian often being the second language), social media posts, news, and websites are increasingly focused on Uzbek content.

- *Cultural Sensitivity:* Content shared on social media often reflects cultural norms, with many users emphasizing traditional values. Issues related to religion, family, and cultural practices are frequently discussed. Moreover, there is increasing scrutiny of online content by both government and society to ensure it aligns with local values.

E-Government and Online Services

The Uzbek government has made considerable efforts to digitize public services. Platforms like the My.gov.uz portal allow citizens to access various government services, including paying utility bills, applying for permits, and accessing public records. This is part of a broader initiative to modernize governance and make it more accessible to the public.

- *COVID-19 Impact:* The pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital services, especially in areas like online education and e-commerce, as more people were forced to rely on the internet for work and daily activities.

E-Commerce and Digital Payment Systems

- *E-Commerce Growth:* The e-commerce sector in Uzbekistan is growing rapidly. Many small businesses have shifted online, using platforms like Instagram,

Telegram, and Facebook to sell products. Dedicated e-commerce websites, such as Uzum, Oson, Suli, and Zoodmall, are also gaining traction.

- Digital Payments: Digital payment systems like Click, PayMe, and Apelsin have become popular for mobile payments, transferring money, and paying for utilities. The use of these services has increased due to convenience, especially in urban areas.

Digital Education and Learning

- Online Education: The adoption of digital learning platforms surged during the COVID-19 pandemic, with schools and universities moving to online learning. Platforms like IbratFarzandlari, EduMarket and UzTEA have helped facilitate this transition. Additionally, international platforms such as Coursera and Khan Academy offer Uzbek students opportunities to access global educational content.

- Language Learning: Many Uzbeks use digital tools for language learning, with apps like Duolingo and Memrise offering courses in Uzbek or for learning other languages, such as English and Russian.

Challenges in Digital Communication

- Internet Censorship: The government exercises some control over internet content, with occasional blocks or restrictions on access to certain websites or social media platforms. This has raised concerns about freedom of speech and privacy online. While Telegram is widely used for communication, its encrypted messaging has led to debates over surveillance and security.

- Rural Access: Although internet access has improved, there are still disparities between urban and rural areas. Many rural communities have slower internet speeds, and in some cases, limited access to reliable mobile networks.

- Digital Literacy: While the younger generation is adept at using digital platforms, digital literacy varies across different demographics, especially among older adults or those in rural areas.

Digital Content Creation

- Influencers and Bloggers: A new generation of Uzbek influencers and content creators has emerged, particularly on platforms like Instagram, YouTube,

and TikTok. These individuals create content around topics like fashion, beauty, cooking, fitness, and social commentary. Some have gained significant followings both locally and in the broader Central Asian region.

- *Online Media:* Digital news outlets such as Gazeta.uz and Kun.uz provide up-to-date information on domestic and international affairs. Social media platforms have become crucial for news dissemination, as traditional media outlets are often viewed as being under state control.

- *Cultural Content:* Platforms like YouTube have given rise to a vibrant digital content ecosystem, where local musicians, filmmakers, and comedians share their work with a broad audience. The platform is increasingly being used to highlight Uzbek traditions, folk music, and historical documentaries.

Regulatory Environment

- *Government Initiatives:* The Uzbek government has been working on expanding its digital infrastructure and has adopted policies to support digital innovation. However, concerns remain over privacy laws, censorship, and surveillance.

- *Cybersecurity and Data Privacy:* With the rise of digital communication, issues related to cybersecurity and data privacy have come to the fore. The government has implemented some measures to ensure the security of digital transactions and communication but faces challenges in maintaining global standards of data protection.

The Future of Digital Communication in Uzbekistan

- *Technological Growth*: As the Uzbek government continues to modernize its IT infrastructure, improvements in internet speed, the adoption of 5G, and the expansion of digital services are expected. More people will likely move online as connectivity becomes more affordable and accessible.

- *Integration of AI and Smart Services*: In the near future, the Uzbek government and private sectors are expected to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) in areas like customer service, healthcare, and education, enhancing digital communication capabilities.

- Youth-Centric Platforms: As younger generations become the dominant internet users, platforms like TikTok and Instagram may continue to grow in influence, leading to further diversification of content creation and digital communication styles.

Conclusion

Digital communication in Uzbekistan has evolved rapidly, with internet access becoming widespread and social media platforms playing a central role in daily interactions. While challenges like internet censorship and rural access remain, the increasing availability of digital services and online platforms offers significant opportunities for social, economic, and educational advancement. The future of digital communication in Uzbekistan is promising, as infrastructure improves and the population becomes more digitally literate.

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