

THE ROLE OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE INTERNET

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Abstract

This article provides a comprehensive philosophical analysis of the ontological, epistemological, and social status of human beings within the context of Internet philosophy. It examines the interrelation between human consciousness, identity, and the information environment in the conditions of digital civilization. In addition, the study investigates transformations of human identity in virtual reality, the influence of information flows, and issues of human freedom in the digital environment.

Keywords: Philosophy of the internet, human being, information society, virtual reality, identity, digital civilization, consciousness.

Introduction

The 21st century is widely recognized as a period of profound transformations in human civilization. One of its most significant features is the rapid development of the Internet and information and communication technologies. The Internet is not merely a technical tool but has also emerged as a social, cultural, economic, and philosophical phenomenon. It has become a global system shaping a new stage of human civilization.

The Internet has deeply penetrated all spheres of human life, significantly transforming human consciousness, thinking patterns, value systems, and social relations. Therefore, it is essential to study the Internet not only as a technical infrastructure or medium of information exchange but also as a new philosophical environment reshaping human existence.

Throughout the history of philosophy, the human being has always been considered a central problem. From antiquity to modern philosophy, questions

concerning human nature, consciousness, freedom, social position, and spiritual life have remained fundamental. However, with the rise of digital technologies and global informatization, traditional understandings of human beings are undergoing significant transformation.

The emergence of the Internet has raised new philosophical questions: Who is a human being? Where is the true “self” located—in real life or in virtual space? To what extent does a virtual identity represent the authentic identity of a person? Furthermore, whether online freedom is genuine freedom or an illusion controlled by technological systems has become a crucial philosophical issue.

The Internet is not only a medium of information exchange but also a complex informational environment shaping human consciousness and behavior. It expands opportunities for knowledge acquisition, communication, and creative activity. At the same time, it influences human thinking through information overload, manipulation, and digital dependency.

In addition, new forms of social relations emerging in the Internet environment are transforming traditional societal models. Concepts such as “digital person,” “online identity,” and “virtual community” have become key objects of philosophical inquiry. The boundaries between real and virtual worlds are becoming increasingly blurred.

Therefore, the study of the human position in Internet philosophy represents one of the most relevant directions in contemporary philosophical research. It contributes to rethinking human nature, consciousness, and social existence in the digital age and is crucial for understanding the intellectual and moral foundations of future society.

2. Methods

This study employs a complex set of scientific, philosophical, and methodological approaches. Since the aim is to conduct a deep philosophical analysis of the interaction between humans and the Internet environment, multiple complementary methods were applied.

First, the analytical method was used to examine the structure of the Internet-human relationship, the mechanisms of digital environment influence, and its impact on human cognition. This method allowed for the analysis of information flow effects on thinking processes, decision-making in virtual environments, and psychological aspects of media influence. It also enabled the identification of

underlying cognitive patterns shaped by continuous exposure to digital content. Furthermore, the method contributed to understanding how attention, perception, and interpretation are reorganized in the context of information overload.

On the one hand, humans act as free-thinking, creative, and knowledge-producing subjects in the digital environment. The Internet expands global communication and intellectual opportunities. It also enables individuals to actively participate in the creation and dissemination of information on a global scale. Furthermore, it supports collaborative forms of knowledge production that transcend geographical boundaries. In addition, digital platforms foster innovation by providing accessible tools for creative expression and learning. As a result, the Internet significantly enhances human intellectual potential in the modern era.

Third, the comparative method was used to analyze and compare human identity, activity, and status in real and virtual environments. This analysis revealed both similarities (social interaction, communication forms) and differences (identity fluidity, anonymity, digital traceability), allowing a philosophical reassessment of human existence between two worlds. It also highlighted how digital environments reshape traditional concepts of individuality and social presence. Moreover, the findings emphasize the need to reconsider the stability of identity in the context of continuous technological transformation.

Fourth, a systemic approach was employed, considering the Internet as a complex global system in which humans function both as active subjects and objects of influence. This approach helped reveal the interdependence between system components such as information flow, platforms, users, and algorithms. It further demonstrated that changes in one component of the system inevitably affect the others. Consequently, this approach provides a holistic understanding of the Internet as an interconnected socio-technical structure.

Finally, the **phenomenological method** was used to analyze subjective human experiences in the Internet environment, including perception, emotional responses, and consciousness processes. It allowed for the study of how individuals experience virtual space and construct their digital sense of self.

Overall, these methodological approaches collectively enabled a comprehensive philosophical, social, and psychological analysis of human-Internet interaction.

3. Results

The results of the study demonstrate that the role of human beings in Internet philosophy is complex, multidimensional, and dynamic. The findings confirm that the Internet is not only a technical phenomenon but also a profound ontological and anthropological reality.

First, the Internet has been identified as a **new ontological environment**, where information becomes the primary form of existence. Human activity increasingly takes place within informational structures, and social interactions are mediated through digital systems.

Second, human cognition is significantly transformed under digital influence. While information processing speed increases, cognitive abilities such as deep analysis, sustained attention, and critical thinking may weaken. This reflects the dual nature of digital influence.

Third, the phenomenon of **virtual identity** is emerging. Individuals construct an “online self” that often differs from their real identity, leading to multi-layered and dynamic identity structures and blurring the boundary between real and virtual selves.

Fourth, information flows in the Internet environment strongly influence decision-making processes. Algorithms, recommendation systems, and media content shape human choices, raising philosophical questions about free will and autonomy.

Fifth, humans are no longer merely consumers of information but also active producers and distributors of content. This confirms the rise of the “prosumer” concept in the digital society.

Overall, the findings confirm that the Internet is a complex philosophical environment deeply influencing human consciousness, identity, and social position.

4. Discussion

The analysis of human existence in Internet philosophy leads to several important philosophical and socio-anthropological conclusions. The impact of the Internet on human life is dual in nature, involving both opportunities and risks.

On the one hand, the Internet provides vast opportunities for knowledge acquisition, global communication, and creative expression. It enhances

intellectual and social capacities and promotes open access to information and public discourse.

On the other hand, it generates cognitive and systemic risks. Information overload fragments attention and weakens long-term thinking abilities. Rapid content consumption encourages superficial understanding and may lead to digital addiction, affecting real-life social activity.

One of the key philosophical issues is the contradiction between real and virtual identity. Individuals often construct idealized online representations that differ from their real selves, leading to identity fragmentation and psychological imbalance.

Furthermore, ethical responsibility in the Internet environment is a critical issue. While information freedom is expanding, questions of truthfulness, social impact, and accountability become increasingly important, requiring the development of digital ethics and media culture.

From this perspective, humans should not be seen merely as users of the Internet but as active creators who shape and give meaning to the digital environment. Thus, the Internet is not a passive medium but a dynamic system in dialectical interaction with human beings.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, human beings occupy a central but complex and ambivalent position in Internet philosophy. This position is shaped by the continuous interaction between technological systems and human consciousness in the digital age. As a result, understanding this relationship is essential for critically addressing the philosophical challenges of contemporary digital civilization.

On the one hand, humans act as free-thinking, creative, and knowledge-producing subjects in the digital environment. The Internet expands global communication and intellectual opportunities. It also enables individuals to actively participate in the creation and dissemination of information on a global scale.

On the other hand, individuals are subject to strong informational influence, algorithmic control, and digital manipulation, which may affect independent thinking and decision-making. This condition raises serious concerns about the autonomy of human cognition in digital environments. Consequently, it becomes increasingly important to develop critical thinking skills and digital literacy to preserve intellectual independence.

Therefore, in the conditions of a digital society, it is essential to develop a deep philosophical understanding of human status, enhance information culture, and promote responsible behavior in virtual environments. Media literacy, critical thinking, and ethical norms play a crucial role in this process.

Overall, the study of human existence in Internet philosophy is not only of theoretical significance but also of practical importance, contributing to the sustainable, secure, and morally balanced development of future digital society.

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