



Social Media User Behaviour from the Perspectives of Malay Politeness and Islamic Ethics: A Conceptual Analysis

Mohamad Murad Mahyudin Muheji (Ph.D.)

Universiti Malaya Centre for Continuing Education (UMCCed), Universiti Malaya

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ABSTRACT: Social media has transformed the way people communicate, interact and share personal experiences within increasingly open digital environments. Although previous studies have examined social media from the perspectives of communication practices, platform use and online behaviour, limited attention has been given to the relationship between changes in communication, life-sharing culture, public responses and politeness challenges. This article aims to analyse social media user behaviour from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics using a qualitative conceptual approach. The study employs document analysis to synthesise theories, concepts and relevant literature on digital communication, politeness and Islamic ethical principles. The analysis indicates that social media user behaviour evolves through changes in communication spaces, user roles and interactional practices, which gradually foster the development of a life-sharing culture. This culture encourages diverse public interpretations and responses, increasing the likelihood of politeness-related conflicts in digital communication. The analysis further demonstrates that Malay politeness provides a cultural framework for respectful communication, while the Islamic principles of *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann* offer ethical guidance for receiving information, interpreting online content and responding responsibly. By integrating these perspectives, the article offers a conceptual explanation of the relationship between communication practices, life-sharing culture, public responses and politeness challenges in contemporary digital environments.

Corresponding Author

Mohamad Murad Mahyudin Muheji (Ph.D.)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has evolved into a major space where people share various aspects of their everyday lives with a wide audience. Daily activities, family life, travel experiences, personal achievements and opinions are routinely displayed across digital platforms. This phenomenon transcends age, profession and social background, reflecting the evolution of social media from a communication channel into a social environment that influences contemporary patterns of interaction and everyday life (boyd & Ellison, 2007; van Dijck, 2013).

The growing influence of social media has fundamentally reshaped human communication. Interactions once confined to family members, close friends or local communities now take place within open digital environments that encourage broader public participation. As a result, communication increasingly extends beyond private networks and influences social relationships and behavioural patterns across different societies. Similar trends have also been observed in Malaysia, where widespread social media use has transformed communication practices and social interaction (Hamed Mohd Adnan & Rahimah Abdul Aziz, 2011; Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman, 2022; Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024).

In this article, *life-sharing culture* refers to the tendency of social media users to publicly disclose personal experiences, everyday activities and aspects of their identities through digital platforms. Rather than remaining passive recipients of information, users actively create content, respond to others and influence public opinion. These practices are driven by various motivations, including

maintaining social relationships, documenting personal experiences, sharing achievements and constructing digital identities (Petronio, 2002; Marwick, 2013). Consequently, personal experiences become increasingly accessible to audiences far beyond their originally intended recipients.

The openness of digital communication allows shared content to spread rapidly across diverse audiences. Differences in social background, personal experience and individual viewpoints often result in contrasting interpretations of the same content. Some users receive encouragement and appreciation, whereas others become targets of criticism, ridicule, misinformation or premature judgement. As content circulates beyond the control of its original creator, public reactions also become more extensive and unpredictable (Suler, 2004; Brady et al., 2017). This situation raises important questions about the relationship between life-sharing culture and public responses in digital communication.

Previous studies have examined social media from the perspectives of communication practices, platform use and user behaviour (boyd & Ellison, 2007; van Dijck, 2013). Other research has focused on language use and linguistic politeness in online communication (Ainal Akmar Ahmad et al., 2016; Mohd Khaidir Abdul Wahab et al., 2021; Nursyafieqa 'Ifwat Mohmod Rofik & Maizura Osman, 2024). However, the relationship between changing communication spaces, life-sharing culture, public responses and politeness challenges has rarely been examined within a single conceptual framework, particularly from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics. This gap highlights the need for a broader conceptual analysis of how these elements interact in contemporary digital communication.

Examining this phenomenon requires a value-based framework that explains how individuals receive information, interpret online content and respond within digital environments. In the Malay tradition, politeness represents a fundamental principle that promotes harmonious communication through respect, dignity and proper conduct (Awang Sariyan, 2007). Islamic ethics likewise emphasises *tabayyun* (verification), *husn al-zann* (positive presumption) and the responsibility to preserve personal and social dignity. The Qur'an instructs believers to verify information before accepting or acting upon it and to avoid negative assumptions and backbiting (Surah al-Hujurat, verses 6 and 11–12) (Abdullah Basmeih, 2000). These principles are particularly relevant because they guide the processes of receiving information, forming interpretations and responding to content shared through social media. Together, they provide an appropriate ethical foundation for understanding user behaviour in contemporary digital communication.

Accordingly, this article analyses the relationship between changes in communication spaces, the emergence of life-sharing culture, public responses and politeness challenges from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics. It adopts a conceptual approach based on scholarly literature to explain how these elements interact within contemporary social media communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Changes in User Behaviour in the Social Media Era

The rapid expansion of social media has significantly transformed user behaviour in contemporary society. These changes extend beyond the increasing use of digital platforms to include new ways of communicating, maintaining relationships and participating in social interaction. Previous studies suggest that this transformation has developed progressively through changes in communication spaces, user roles and patterns of interaction. Together, these interconnected developments have reshaped user behaviour and distinguished contemporary digital communication from earlier forms of interpersonal communication (boyd & Ellison, 2007; van Dijck, 2013).

This transformation began as communication spaces became increasingly open and accessible. Interactions that were once largely confined to family members, friends or local communities now extend across geographical and temporal boundaries through various social media platforms (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Similar developments have been observed in many societies, including Malaysia, where the rapid growth of internet and social media use has made digital communication an integral part of everyday life (Hamedi Mohd Adnan & Rahimah Abdul Aziz, 2011; Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2024). These developments further demonstrate the expanding role of social media as a dominant communication environment that increasingly influences social relationships and everyday practices (Mohd Hamizi & Hamzah, 2023).

The growing openness of communication has also transformed the role of users within the communication process. Social media users no longer function merely as recipients of information. Instead, they actively create content, express opinions, share information and influence the perspectives of others. Van Dijck (2013) argues that social media fosters a participatory culture in which users become active contributors to the creation and circulation of digital content. Consequently, users have become integral participants in communication rather than passive audiences.

Changes in user roles have subsequently reshaped patterns of interaction within digital environments. As users increasingly create and distribute their own content, communication no longer follows a one-way process. Every post invites responses, discussion and continuing participation from other users. These interactions allow users not only to respond to information but also to shape interpretations, influence public discussion and contribute to the continuous circulation of digital content. As a result, digital communication has evolved from passive information exchange into an increasingly participatory form of social interaction.

Taken together, these developments form an interconnected process rather than a series of isolated changes. The expansion of communication spaces has transformed user roles, while changing user roles have reshaped patterns of interaction in digital

environments. As users become more actively involved in creating, managing and disseminating their own content, sharing everyday experiences gradually becomes a routine communication practice. This transformation provides the foundation for the emergence of a culture of sharing everyday life, one of the defining manifestations of contemporary social media user behaviour.

2.2 The Culture of Sharing Everyday Life as a Manifestation of User Behaviour

The transformation of user behaviour in social media has contributed to the emergence of a culture of sharing everyday life as an increasingly prominent form of digital communication. In the context of this article, the culture of sharing everyday life refers to the tendency of users to publicly share personal experiences, daily activities, opinions and aspects of their identities through social media. This practice demonstrates that users no longer rely on social media solely to maintain social connections but also use it to construct particular impressions of themselves before a wider audience (Petronio, 2002; Marwick, 2013).

This tendency is closely associated with the way users manage self-presentation in digital environments. Goffman (1959) argues that individuals continuously attempt to project particular images of themselves during social interaction. Within social media, however, this process is rarely spontaneous. Hogan (2010) explains that users deliberately filter, select and organise content before making it visible to others. These perspectives complement one another by explaining both the purpose of self-presentation and the mechanisms through which it is achieved in digital environments. Together, they suggest that the culture of sharing everyday life involves not only the willingness to share but also the conscious management of personal image.

The selection of content also shapes the construction of digital identity. According to Marwick (2013), content shared through social media does more than communicate information. It also establishes social presence and influences how users are perceived by others. Consequently, the culture of sharing everyday life extends beyond the simple act of sharing personal experiences. It also reflects an ongoing process through which users construct desired impressions by carefully selecting the content they disclose. Digital identity therefore develops through the continuous interaction between self-presentation and selective content sharing.

These developments have also reshaped the boundary between private and public life. Petronio (2002) argues that individuals establish personal boundaries when deciding what information should be shared with others. Within social media, however, these boundaries become increasingly flexible as users continuously redefine what is considered appropriate for public disclosure. This transformation does not imply that privacy has disappeared altogether. Rather, it reflects changing approaches to managing personal boundaries within digital communication environments.

Taken together, self-presentation, selective content sharing, identity construction and privacy boundary management represent interconnected dimensions of the culture of sharing everyday life. Collectively, these perspectives indicate that sharing everyday life is more than the public display of personal experiences. It represents a broader manifestation of changing user behaviour in managing one's presence within digital environments. At the same time, greater visibility exposes shared content to public observation, interpretation and evaluation, making questions of politeness and ethical communication increasingly significant in social media interactions.

2.3 Politeness as a Framework for Understanding User Behaviour

Changes in social media user behaviour have not only transformed the way people communicate but have also raised important questions about the boundaries of appropriate communication in digital environments. The culture of sharing everyday life allows personal content to become visible to wider audiences, inviting diverse interpretations and responses. These developments suggest that user behaviour cannot be understood solely from the perspectives of technology or interaction patterns. Instead, it requires a framework that explains how communication can take place without undermining personal dignity and social relationships. From this perspective, politeness provides an important foundation for understanding user behaviour in social media.

Brown and Levinson (1987) argue that politeness functions to preserve the face, or social dignity, of those involved in communication. Their theory explains how individuals minimise threats to the dignity of others through appropriate communicative strategies. Within social media, this perspective highlights that the freedom to express opinions and respond to online content should be accompanied by an awareness of its potential consequences for others. Politeness theory therefore offers a useful framework for examining the relationship between freedom of expression and social responsibility in digital communication.

Within the Malay cultural tradition, politeness extends beyond the use of courteous language. Asmah Haji Omar (2000) and Awang Sariyan (2007) describe politeness as encompassing respect, proper conduct, moral values and the preservation of personal dignity in social relationships. Hashim Musa (2008) further emphasises that *hati budi* forms the ethical foundation of courteous behaviour in Malay society. Together, these perspectives suggest that user behaviour is shaped not only by the way communication takes place but also by the cultural values that guide communicative practices.

Evidence from Malaysia also indicates that changes in user behaviour have been accompanied by increasing forms of impoliteness in digital communication. Online interactions are frequently characterised by abusive language, ridicule, insults and hostile expressions directed at other users (Ainal Akmar Ahmad et al., 2016; Mohd Khaidir Abdul Wahab et al., 2021; Nursyafieqa Ifwat Mohmod Rofik & Maizura Osman, 2024). These findings suggest that users have become more inclined to respond openly without consistently considering the consequences of their words for the dignity of others or for social relationships. The challenge of digital communication therefore lies not merely in the technology itself but in the way users regulate their language and responses during online interaction.

Taken together, these perspectives position politeness as an important framework for understanding changes in social media user behaviour. Politeness theory explains the communicative mechanisms that shape interaction, whereas Malay politeness highlights the cultural values that guide their application. However, these perspectives alone do not fully explain how users should receive information, interpret online content and formulate appropriate responses. Addressing these questions requires an ethical framework that extends beyond communication practices, leading to the discussion of the Islamic perspective in the following section.

2.4 The Islamic Perspective on User Behaviour in Digital Communication

Changes in social media user behaviour involve more than communication practices alone. They also reflect the values that shape how individuals receive information, interpret online content and respond to what they encounter. While the politeness frameworks discussed in the previous section explain appropriate communication from linguistic and cultural perspectives, understanding user behaviour also requires an ethical foundation that guides judgement before a response is made. In this article, the Islamic perspective is adopted because it provides principles that directly address the processes of receiving information, forming interpretations and responding to digital content.

The principle of *tabayyun* serves as an important foundation for evaluating user behaviour when encountering information on social media. The Qur'an instructs believers to verify information before accepting it or acting upon it (Surah al-Hujurat, verse 6) (Abdullah Basmeih, 2000). This principle emphasises that information should be examined carefully before it is believed or shared with others. Within digital communication, *tabayyun* extends beyond fact-checking. It also encourages users to avoid forming premature judgements or responding hastily to online content.

The principle of *husn al-zann* offers further guidance on how users should interpret the information they receive. Islam encourages believers to maintain positive assumptions and to avoid conclusions that are not supported by evidence (Surah al-Hujurat, verses 11–12) (Abdullah Basmeih, 2000). Social media content often presents only fragments of an individual's life rather than its full reality. Consequently, drawing conclusions from incomplete information may lead to misunderstanding, prejudice and unfair judgement. This principle reminds users to approach online content with fairness and restraint before evaluating others.

Islam also emphasises the responsibility to protect the dignity of others in communication. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught that those who believe in Allah and the Last Day should either speak good words or remain silent (Al-Bukhari, 2002). This teaching highlights that communication should always consider its potential impact on others. In the context of social media, this responsibility extends beyond the careful choice of words to include comments, responses and other forms of online engagement that may affect another person's dignity and reputation. Ethical communication therefore concerns not only what is expressed but also the consequences it may have for others.

From this perspective, Islamic principles complement the politeness frameworks discussed earlier in a distinctive way. Politeness theory and Malay politeness primarily explain how appropriate behaviour should be expressed through communication, whereas *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann* focus on the judgement and reflection that should precede communication itself. Together, these perspectives suggest that ethical digital communication depends not only on the manner in which people speak but also on how they receive information, interpret online content and form judgements about others. Collectively, they provide the ethical foundation for understanding the relationship between user behaviour, the culture of sharing everyday life and politeness in digital communication.

2.5 Summary of the Literature Review

The literature reviewed indicates that changes in social media user behaviour have evolved through several interconnected dimensions. The expansion of social media has transformed communication spaces, reshaped user roles and altered patterns of interaction within digital environments. Together, these developments have given rise to communication practices that differ from conventional forms of interaction while encouraging users to share various aspects of their everyday lives more openly.

The culture of sharing everyday life cannot be adequately explained from a single theoretical perspective. Self-presentation, selective content sharing, identity construction and privacy boundary management each illuminate different aspects of how users manage their presence on social media. Considered collectively, these perspectives provide a more comprehensive understanding of the behavioural changes that characterise contemporary digital communication.

The literature further suggests that changes in user behaviour are closely associated with questions of politeness and ethical communication. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory explains the communicative mechanisms through which interpersonal dignity is maintained during interaction. Malay politeness extends this understanding by emphasising the cultural values that guide appropriate communication within society. The Islamic perspective further complements these frameworks by providing ethical guidance on how users should receive information, interpret online content and formulate appropriate responses. Together, these perspectives demonstrate that changes in user behaviour should be understood through the interconnected dimensions of communication, culture and values.

Although these dimensions have been examined in previous studies, they have largely been discussed within separate theoretical and disciplinary frameworks. The relationship between changes in user behaviour, the culture of sharing everyday life, politeness and Islamic ethical principles has yet to be explored through an integrated conceptual perspective. This gap provides the basis for the methodological approach adopted in the following section.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative conceptual approach to examine social media user behaviour from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics. The approach is appropriate because the study seeks to explain the relationships among changes in user behaviour, the culture of sharing everyday life, politeness and Islamic ethical principles. Exploring these relationships requires a critical engagement with existing concepts, theories and scholarly arguments instead of collecting or statistically analysing empirical data. A conceptual design therefore provides the most suitable foundation for developing an integrated explanation through the synthesis of existing scholarship.

Data were obtained through document analysis. The sources consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, official reports and Islamic sources comprising the Qur'an and Hadith. Literature was selected according to its relevance to the objectives of the study and its contribution to explaining concepts, theoretical perspectives and scholarly discussions concerning social media user behaviour. Drawing on evidence from different academic disciplines also enabled a broader understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Priority was given to authoritative sources published in recognised scholarly outlets. Most references were drawn from works published during the past two decades to ensure that the discussion reflects contemporary developments in social media. Seminal publications were also included because they provide the theoretical and conceptual foundations that continue to inform current scholarship. This combination of classical and recent sources links established theoretical perspectives with contemporary developments in digital communication.

The collected materials were examined using interpretative content analysis. The process began with the identification of concepts, themes and principal arguments relevant to the objectives of the study. Similar themes were subsequently compared to identify points of convergence, divergence and conceptual relationships across the literature. The interpretations were then synthesised into a coherent conceptual explanation of the relationships among changes in user behaviour, the culture of sharing everyday life, politeness and Islamic ethical principles. This procedure ensured that the discussion was developed systematically from recurring patterns identified in the literature instead of empirical observations.

The findings presented in this article are conceptual in nature and derive from the analysis and synthesis of existing scholarly literature. They are intended to provide an integrated conceptual explanation of social media user behaviour from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics rather than to establish empirical generalisations.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Changes in User Behaviour in the Social Media Era

The literature shows that changes in social media user behaviour develop through a gradual process rather than as isolated events. This process begins with changes in communication spaces, followed by evolving user roles and changing patterns of interaction. Each stage creates the conditions for the next, producing a continuous transformation in the way users communicate and participate in digital environments. Social media user behaviour should therefore be understood as the outcome of a progressive process rather than a series of unrelated changes.

The process begins with the expansion of communication spaces created by social media. Unlike conventional forms of communication, digital platforms allow participation across geographical boundaries, time zones and social groups (boyd & Ellison, 2007; van Dijck, 2013). Similar trends have been observed in Malaysia, where the rapid growth of internet and social media use has accelerated the integration of digital communication into everyday life (Hamed Mohd Adnan & Rahimah Abdul Aziz, 2011). This transformation not only broadens opportunities for communication but also encourages users to move from passive recipients of information to active participants in digital interaction.

As communication spaces expand, the role of users also changes. Users no longer simply receive information but actively create content, express opinions and influence the circulation of information within digital environments. This shift also changes how individuals manage their personal lives online. Content that was previously kept within private settings is now shared more openly, while the boundary between private and public life becomes increasingly flexible (Petronio, 2002; Trepte, 2021). These changes indicate that the practice of sharing everyday life arises primarily from evolving user roles rather than from technological advancement alone.

The changing role of users also reshapes patterns of interaction on social media. Every piece of shared content invites comments, discussions, reposts and other forms of participation. Digital communication consequently becomes an interactive process in which users continuously influence public discussion, shape interpretations and generate new responses. Communication is no longer limited to the exchange of information but also becomes a process through which meanings are negotiated and reproduced within digital communities.

These developments explain why the culture of sharing everyday life has become increasingly prominent in social media. As personal experiences, opinions and everyday activities are shared more openly, digital platforms create greater opportunities for public interpretation and response. This progression provides the conceptual basis for understanding how the culture of sharing everyday life shapes user responses in digital communication.

4.2 The Emergence of the Culture of Sharing Everyday Life

The changes in user behaviour discussed in the previous section provide the foundation for the emergence of the culture of sharing everyday life on social media. This culture develops through the interaction of changing communication spaces, evolving user roles and new patterns of interaction. As users become more actively involved in creating content and engaging with wider audiences, sharing personal experiences gradually becomes part of everyday communication. The culture of sharing everyday life therefore reflects changing patterns of social communication rather than simply increased use of digital technologies.

The development of this culture depends on users' deliberate decisions about what they choose to reveal online. Goffman (1959) argues that individuals continually attempt to present particular images of themselves during social interaction. Hogan (2010) extends this argument by explaining that digital self-presentation involves selecting, organising and presenting content before making it visible to an audience. These perspectives show that sharing on social media is a deliberate activity through which users manage how they wish to be perceived.

Such decisions also shape the construction of digital identity. Marwick (2013) argues that social media content does more than communicate information because it also establishes users' social presence before others. As digital platforms become central to everyday interaction, users become increasingly selective in presenting content that reinforces preferred impressions of themselves. The culture of sharing everyday life therefore reflects not only personal experiences but also the identities that users intentionally project.

This process gradually reshapes the boundary between private and public life. As sharing becomes a routine communication practice, information once regarded as private becomes visible to wider audiences. Omarzu (2000) explains that self-disclosure is influenced by the expected benefits of sharing personal information, while Mehdizadeh (2010) shows that the pursuit of attention and social recognition may encourage greater self-disclosure on social media. These perspectives explain that changing privacy boundaries represent a natural extension of evolving user roles within digital communication.

The culture of sharing everyday life ultimately creates a communication environment that differs from conventional communication. Shared content serves not only as information but also as the basis for interpretation, evaluation and public response. This development explains why the culture of sharing everyday life has become central to understanding contemporary social media user behaviour. It is within this environment that users and audiences continuously interact through interpretation, evaluation and response, providing the foundation for the discussion of politeness in the following section.

4.3 Politeness Crisis in Digital Communication

The literature indicates that the politeness crisis in digital communication has emerged as the culture of sharing everyday life increasingly exposes users to diverse interpretations and public responses within open communication environments. Although social media enables users to respond more freely to online content, it also weakens the influence of dignity, respect and social responsibility in communication. The resulting challenges reflect broader changes in the way people interact within digital environments rather than the use of social media itself.

This phenomenon can be explained through Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, which argues that communication is fundamentally intended to preserve the face, or social dignity, of those involved in interaction. In face-to-face communication, the physical presence of others naturally discourages expressions that may threaten another person's dignity. In digital environments, these constraints are reduced because users often communicate without physical presence and frequently interact with people they do not know personally. This situation helps explain why ridicule, insults and hostile criticism are more readily expressed on social media.

Suler's (2004) online disinhibition effect further explains the weakening of social constraints. Physical distance, anonymity and the absence of immediate interpersonal feedback reduce the psychological barriers that normally regulate communication. This perspective complements Brown and Levinson's theory by showing how digital environments influence users' ability to regulate both language and behaviour during online interaction.

Comparable patterns have also been reported in Malaysia. Nursyafieqa 'Ifwat Mohmod Rofik and Maizura Osman (2024) found that social media discussions during election periods were frequently characterised by ridicule, harsh criticism and offensive expressions that threatened the dignity of others. Norazilah Buhari et al. (2023) likewise observed that communication practices on social media increasingly challenge established norms of politeness within Malaysian society. Although these findings originate from a specific national context, they reflect wider concerns about maintaining respectful communication in digital environments.

Public responses rarely remain confined to the original content creator. Brady et al. (2017) demonstrate that content expressing moral emotions spreads more rapidly after receiving early support from other users. At the same time, online content is interpreted through different personal experiences, values and expectations. Posts about personal achievements, family life, wealth or lifestyle may therefore generate contrasting reactions. What some audiences regard as inspiring may be viewed by others as attention-seeking or self-promotional. These differences in interpretation, combined with the rapid spread of online responses, increase the likelihood of politeness-related conflicts.

An Islamic perspective offers a further explanation of this phenomenon. Responding hastily is inconsistent with the principle of *tabayyun*, which requires information to be verified before it is accepted or shared (Surah al-Hujurat, verse 6) (Abdullah Basmeih,

2000). Likewise, judging others on the basis of incomplete information contradicts the principle of *husn al-zann*, which encourages positive assumptions and discourages prejudice (Surah al-Hujurat, verses 11–12) (Abdullah Basmeih, 2000). These principles highlight that responses to digital content are influenced not only by the information available but also by the judgement exercised before any reaction is expressed.

Malay politeness and Islamic ethics explain this issue from complementary perspectives. Malay politeness emphasises respectful speech, the preservation of personal dignity and careful language use during communication (Asmah Haji Omar, 2000; Awang Sariyan, 2007). Islamic ethics, meanwhile, focuses on the reflective judgement that precedes communication through the principles of *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann*. Viewed together, these perspectives show that ethical communication depends not only on what users say but also on how they interpret information before responding. This understanding provides the conceptual basis for explaining how the culture of sharing everyday life contributes to politeness challenges in digital communication.

4.4 Social Media User Behaviour from the Perspectives of Malay Politeness and Islamic Ethics

The overall analysis demonstrates that social media user behaviour is best understood as the outcome of a gradual process rather than a single causal factor. User behaviour develops through successive changes that begin with the transformation of communication spaces, continue through evolving user roles and culminate in changing patterns of interaction. As users assume increasingly active roles, the boundary between private and public life becomes more flexible, creating conditions that foster the culture of sharing everyday life. This progression shows that changes in user behaviour unfold through a continuous process in which each stage shapes the next.

The analysis also identifies the culture of sharing everyday life as the central link between changes in digital communication and the development of politeness challenges. The expansion of communication spaces and the changing role of users do not directly generate communication conflicts. Instead, these changes encourage individuals to share personal experiences, opinions and everyday activities with increasingly wider audiences. Once personal content enters public digital spaces, it becomes subject to interpretation, evaluation and response from others. Through this process, changes in communication practices gradually reshape user behaviour within digital environments.

Malay politeness and Islamic ethics also provide more than general ethical guidance for digital communication. They explain two complementary dimensions of user behaviour. Malay politeness emphasises respectful language, the preservation of personal dignity and proper conduct in communication. Islamic ethics, meanwhile, highlights the reflective judgement that should precede communication through the principles of *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann*. Viewed together, these perspectives show that responsible participation in social media depends not only on appropriate communicative behaviour but also on careful consideration before interpreting information and responding to others.

Building on these perspectives, this article offers a conceptual explanation of the relationship between changes in user behaviour, the culture of sharing everyday life, public responses and politeness challenges from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics. The analysis demonstrates that changes in communication practices do not inevitably lead to declining politeness. Politeness challenges arise when the culture of sharing everyday life is accompanied by public responses that are no longer guided by respect, responsibility and ethical judgement. This explanation is developed through the synthesis of existing scholarship, bringing together multiple theoretical perspectives within a coherent conceptual framework without relying on empirical testing.

5. CONCLUSION

This article examined social media user behaviour from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics through a qualitative conceptual approach based on document analysis. The analysis shows that user behaviour develops through a progressive sequence of changes rather than a single causal factor. This process begins with the transformation of communication spaces, continues through evolving user roles and changing patterns of interaction, and ultimately contributes to politeness challenges in digital communication. The discussion also identifies the culture of sharing everyday life as the key link between changing communication practices and the diverse public responses found on social media. At the same time, the principles of *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann* provide an ethical basis for understanding why these responses may depart from the values of respectful communication.

This article presents a conceptual explanation that integrates Western politeness theory, perspectives on digital communication and Islamic ethical principles to explain social media user behaviour. This integration provides a broader understanding of politeness challenges than approaches based on a single theoretical perspective. It also shows that developments in digital communication are shaped not only by technological change but also by the values that influence how users receive information, interpret online content and respond to others.

The conceptual explanation developed in this study also has practical implications. For educators and parents, the principles of *tabayyun* and *husn al-zann* can be incorporated into digital communication education to encourage thoughtful judgement before responding to online content. For policymakers and social media platform providers, promoting respectful communication requires more than content moderation. It also calls for initiatives that strengthen ethical awareness and users' sense of responsibility within digital environments.

This article is based on a conceptual analysis of existing literature and does not involve field data collection or empirical testing. The discussion should therefore be understood within the scope of the conceptual approach adopted and its focus on social media user behaviour from the perspectives of Malay politeness and Islamic ethics. Future research may examine the conceptual relationships proposed in this article across different user groups, social media platforms and socio-cultural contexts. Empirical studies may also evaluate the relationships among the culture of sharing everyday life, public responses and politeness challenges identified in this analysis. In doing so, future research can further extend understanding of digital communication by examining how these conceptual relationships operate in different social and cultural settings.

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