

The Use of Social Media in Terms of Public Law Psychosocial Effects

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Article History: Received: 08/06/2025; Accepted: 19/06/2025; Published: 22/06/2025

Abstract: This study examines the transformations caused by digitalization in the social level from the perspective of public law, and discusses the effects of social media platforms on individual identity construction and digital public space. In particular, the identity presentations of the individual through social media within the framework of the concept of “digital persona” Psychodynamic processes have been evaluated in the context of social acceptance mechanisms and legal limits. Theoretical approaches such as Jung, Goffman, Freud, Adler and Habermas have provided an analytical ground to understand what kind of effects of digital representations have on the individual and collective level. Within the scope of the study, it was found that the personnel structured in digital environments shaped not only the psychological existence of the individual, but also the public visibility and legal responsibility. How these representations intersect with constitutional principles such as freedom of expression, hate speech, personality rights, privacy and disinformation; The Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye was examined in the light of national arrangements such as KVKK and TPC and the case -law of the ECtHR and the Constitutional Court. However, in the study, how digital personnel can direct public policies through social media -based mass reactions were analyzed through current exemplary events.

Keywords: *Social media, disinformation, privacy, public law, psychosocial analysis, cyber security.*

Cite this article: SENSES, E. S., (2025). The Use of Social Media in Terms of Public Law Psychosocial Effects. *MRS Journal of Arts, Humanities and Literature*, 2 (6)59-63.

Introduction

With the influence of digitalization, social media has become the decisive actor of political participation, mass movements and public opinion by going beyond individual communication. Virtual platforms are digital public spaces in which individuals gain visibility through their digital identities, interact and intervene in public policies by transforming the classical public space understanding. As of 2025, the number of social media users in Turkey has reached 58.5 million, most of these users are actively involved in platforms such as Instagram, especially Facebook, X (Old Twitter) and Tiktok. Social media is not only an area where the individual expresses himself; At the same time, it has become a medium where social norms, values, political tendencies and legal sensitivities are reproduced. With this transformation, the digital identity that the individual exhibits in social media environments or the term “digital persona” with the term “digital persona” public order, freedom of expression, the privacy of private life and hate speech have become a direct relationship with basic legal concepts. Digital persona is not only an individual form of representation; At the same time, it is a psychodynamically shaped structure where the desires of social acceptance, belonging and recognition of the individual are visualized. The functioning of this structure on social media intersects not only with individual psychology, but also with the formation of the public opinion and the control mechanisms of the state. In recent years, the fact that social media came to the agenda with exemplary events affecting public policies in Turkey and

around the world shows the public influence power of digital personnel. In this context, social media has become an area where the boundaries between the legal system and the individual are re - negotiated. This study examines the legal reflections of the transformation of social media platforms both in the inner world and in the social level. It was analyzed in the light of individual forms of representation, psychodynamic theories and constitutional norms; The relationship between digital personnel with concepts such as freedom of expression, data safety and public order has been discussed in the context of public law.

Aim

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the psychosocial effects of social media platforms that have become one of the most common means of communication of the digital age and the reflections of these effects in the context of public law. In particular, it is wanted to reveal how the identity of the individual built by the individual on social media through the concept of digital persona, both in terms of individual freedoms and public order. In the study, the following questions are sought:

- What kind of consequences do digital persona produce in terms of the psychological structure and social representation of the individual?
- What is the relationship with these forms of representation with fundamental rights such as freedom

of expression guaranteed in the Constitution, the privacy of private life and the freedom of communication?

- What is the capacity of digital identities exhibited on social media to influence legal and political decision-making processes through public pressure?
- How should public law establish the balance between digitalized public space and individual freedoms?

For this purpose, the study presents a multi-layered analysis of social media platforms in the light of both psychodynamic theories and constitutional principles, and argues that digital personnel should be re-evaluated not only as an individual identity presentation, but also as a constitutional and public phenomenon.

Method

This study is based on a theoretical and qualitative analysis method that deals with the use of social media and the effects of digital persona phenomenon on public law. In the study, no quantitative data collection process was carried out, but a multi-layered analysis was made over literature screening, high court decisions, platform policies, psychodynamic theories and current social events. In this context, both the forms of self-representing of the individual on social media and the reflections of these representations on the constitutional rights and public order. As a method:

- Theoretical analysis: Digital persona is conceptualized by the perspectives of thinkers such as Goffman, Jung, Freud, Adler and Habermas.
- Normative Assessment: The Constitution, KVKK, Turkish Penal Code and Constitutional Court decisions have been examined by the approach of public law to these digital representations.
- Comparative Approach: Different social media platforms such as Instagram, X (Old Twitter) and Tiktok are compared in terms of psychosocial structure and legal limits.
- Event-Based Sampling: Current events affecting the field of law and politics with the influence of public opinion on social media in Turkey have been analyzed.

With this method, the structure of the digital public sphere, the tension between individual rights and public security and the process of harmony of this new reality are discussed.

Findings

In this study, the effects of social media platforms on individual and public law are examined by qualitative analysis methods. The findings are collected in three basic planes: psychodynamic structure, public visibility and legal conflict areas.

Psychodynamic Dimensions of Digital Person

In this study, it was found that digital personnel created on social media reshape the psychological structure of the individual, based on the perspectives of theorists such as Goffman, Jung, Freud and Adler. Especially on visual-based platforms such as Instagram: users offer idealized self-representation, the number of followers and appreciation rates are directly associated with the self-value of the individual, Freud's defense mechanisms (exaltation, reflection, denial) are widely observed in digital interactions, and the search for digital superiority overlapping with the concept of inferiority. These findings show that digital

personnel has become a permanent structure in individual psychology.

The impact of digital personnel in the public sphere

The second dimension of the findings reveals that digital personnel not only affects the individual identity but also the form of public representation. In the light of Habermas's public space theory: it has been determined that digital personnel were used not only for personal visibility but also for social and political representation, especially during social events, individuals are involved in collective movements with their digital identities, and social media contents are not only communication but a means of public intervention. In this context, digital persona has become both the subject and the styling actor of the digital public space.

Tense areas between public law and digital persona

In the third level, it was found that digital persona, built on social media, intersected with constitutional principles such as freedom of expression, privacy of private life, fighting hate speech and protection of public order.

In the Constitutional Court and the ECtHR decisions, it is stated that the shares on digital platforms are protected within the scope of freedom of expression, but the call for violence, hate speech and content that threatens public security may be limited.

In visual-based platforms such as Instagram, the risk of attacking personality rights, disclosure and privacy violations was found to have a higher risk of violations.

Due to the dissemination of disinformation and algorithmic manipulations, it has been seen that the state's control reflex on social media has increased and this situation brought new legal intervention tools to the agenda. These findings indicate that public law should develop new balance mechanisms in order to protect the rights of the individual in the social media age and to provide public order.

Legal Borders of Social Media Platforms

With digitalization, the behavior of individuals on social media platforms has become public actions that directly concern not only personal preferences, but also the limits of law. Platforms such as Instagram, X (Old Twitter), Tiktok and Facebook become digital scenes in which the individual expresses their views, identity and lifestyle; These shares brought about a wide range of legal debates from the privacy of private life to public security. The privacy of private life, which is guaranteed by Article 20 of the Constitution, is seriously threatened by personal data, photographs and life habits disclosed through social media. In this context, the Law on the Protection of Personal Data No. 6698 (KVKK) provides a protective framework on how to collect, process and share data on the digital personnel of the individual. However, the center of the platforms abroad brings national legal authority problems. With the Social Media Law (Amendments in Law No. 5651), which came into force in 2020, Türkiye has been obliged to have representatives in Turkey, localization of data servers and lifting content. However, a sensitive balance should be established between freedom of expression and constitutional values such as hate speech, disinformation and personality rights. Article 26 of the Constitution gives individuals the freedom to explain and disseminate thought. However, this freedom can be limited for reasons such as public order, general morality and rights of others, as stated in Article 13 of the Constitution. The limits of the shares

made in the social media environment are determined not only by personal ethics, but also by legal responsibility. In particular, the Constitutional Court and the Court's case-law have been guiding in establishing this balance. The AYM's "M.Y. decision" (B. No: 2018/11255) stated that social media shares should be evaluated within the scope of freedom of expression; However, the call for violence can be limited if the call for violence threatens hate speech or public security. Similarly, the ECHR, *Delfi As V. In the Estonia case*, he pointed out the responsibility of platforms on user comments and evaluated the abolition of content containing hate speech outside the limits of freedom of expression. Differences between platforms are also important at this point. While Instagram focuses on individuals' personal lives with their visual-oriented structure, X is at the center of more news flow and political interpretations. While the desire for visibility and aesthetic representations in Instagram are in the forefront, sudden reactions, discussions and mass movements about the agenda in X are often seen. These differences affect the expression of users' expressions and therefore the quality of legal problems that may arise. Finally, the Law on the Amendment of the Press Law dated 2022 and the amendment of some laws ("disinformation law") issued in order to combat disinformation and brought a new regulation on the social media by taking the act of "spreading the public misleading information". This regulation has led to the more controversial line between content control and freedom of expression. Social media platforms are no longer not only technological channels; It must also be considered as areas where legal responsibility, constitutional rights and public visibility intersect. For this reason, the field of activity of digital personnel is an area where the legal system plays an active role in the individual's will.

Psychosocial effects and individualization

The relationship established by individuals with social media platforms in digitalized communication environments is not limited to information sharing or interaction. These platforms have also turned into psychosocial spaces in which the individual reshapes the self-perception, sense of belonging and social identity. In this context, digital persona is not only a technical user profile, but also an extension of the individual's psychotic form of existence. Digital Persona is not only the way of offering the individual's digital identity; It is also a self-strategy maintained at consciousness and unconscious level. The Jungian individualization process aims to confront the persona and the shadow and ultimately the formation of a holistic self. Social media has a function that either supports or postpones this process. On high visual-oriented platforms such as Instagram and Tiktok, individuals try to cover the unconscious sense of worthlessness or fear of social exclusion by developing remarkable and idealized personas. This leads to mind filling, search for approval and superficial self-construction rather than individualization. Platforms such as Youtube and LinkedIn offer the user a more deep and content-based representation area. In this way, the individual finds the opportunity to express his own world of meaning. On platforms such as Facebook and X, collective persona formation is more dominant through sociopolitical identities. Considering Freud's ego-prosecution mechanisms, social media personnel often becomes idealized representative of repressed impulses. When Adler is read through the inferiority-and-over complex, visibility effort can be interpreted as a compensation behavior. All these psychological processes are not the individualization of digital personnel; It shows that it evolves into false self forms that postpone individualization. In this context,

identity performances in digital environments are not only psychological; At the same time, sociologically, belonging is shaped to satisfy the need for recognition within the community. Social media serves as a scene in which the individual re-established, organizes and exhibits the identities experienced in daily life. In this scene, the individual acts with the motivation of social approval, appreciation, visibility and digital impact. However, this desire for visibility can prepare the ground for psychological problems such as approval dependence in the individual, narcissistic tendencies, self-alienation, breakage of reality and social comparison. Within the framework of Jung's theory of individualization, digital persona leads to the deterioration of internal integrity in cases where the self is limited to a superficial mask. In social media platforms, individuals often offer the kişi the person they want to be, and the "person they are in suppresses. This causes a break between the internal consistency of the individual and the external presentation. This rupture may manifest itself in the form of identity confusion, self-confidence problems and digital anxiety, especially among young users. From the point of view of Freud's ego defense mechanisms, social media turns into a defense medium organized by the individual in the digital field. Mechanisms such as exaggerating its own success through exaltation, directing social criticism through reflection to external enemies or ignoring traumatic realities through denial are functional in the construction of digital personnel. In the perspective of the adlerist psychology, digital platforms have become a arena of competition and superiority in which individuals compensate for the sense of inferiority. "Excellent Life" representations, aestheticized superficial happiness images and emphasis on success are the product of the attempt to cover the inner gaps of the individual with visibility. This may result in digital loneliness, sense of worthlessness and social isolation as a result of comparison of individuals with other users, especially on platforms such as Instagram. From a sociological point of view, individualization is not the classical sense; On the contrary, it has become a struggle for visibility formed by digital networks, shaped by algorithms. Instead of the original individual, digital persona produces the "acceptable user ıyla compatible with trends. In this context, digital individualization contains a paradox in itself: the individual thinks that it is original and becomes homogeneous with its desire to be massively acceptable. All these psychological and sociological interactions make the individual's visibility in digital platforms a digital being that intervenes in the public sphere rather than a special choice. This Asset Can Be Controlled, Responsible and Even Decor and Both in Terms of Boths Own Psycho-Dinamics and Public Law.

Public Policies and Digital Platforms

Social media is not only a platform in which individuals express themselves, but also a digital public sphere with the power to shape public policies, where social demands gain visibility. This transformation has brought about the debates of participating digital democracy by pushing the limits of classical representation democracy. Some of the world-wide events show that social media pressure directly affects legal decisions, administrative practices and public policies.

Example Event: Psychosocial and Legal Dimensions of Marmaray case and digital lynching culture

In today's digital society, social media is not only used as a means of establishing social pressure on individuals, not only for the purpose of sharing information or agenda follow-up. In this

context, an event on the Istanbul Marmaray line in the beginning of 2025 is remarkable in terms of showing the social visibility of digital personnel and its effects on public opinion reflex. In the incident, one father was traveling with two little children, and he was subjected to the physical attack of another passenger and was targeted by the university student who intervened, and the university student who intervened was targeted by social media users. Following the reflection of the event on social media, Aktan's images, identity information and home address were shared on various platforms; As a result of the target, both himself and his family have come under serious psychological pressure. The threats, false accusations and privacy violations exposed in this process have turned into a public problem not only for an individual problem of reputation, but also by overcoming legal limits. This example shows how the ties of digital personnel with the real identity of the individual are instrumentalized and that social media users move with emotional reflexes and tend to punish individuals through judicial execution. No criminal obligations have been identified in the prosecutor's office after the incident, but the impact of digital lynching culture on the individual caused serious debate in the public. From a legal point of view, the Law on the Protection of Personal Data (KVKK), the provisions of the Turkish Penal Code protecting personal rights, and the Article 20 of the Constitution, which guarantees the privacy of private life. The disclosure and threats posed for Aktan's personal information are not only unethical behavior, but also to require criminal sanctions. When the psychosocial is evaluated, the event coincides with the effects of the self -dispersion, social isolation and loss of trust created by the rapid variability of digital persona in the eyes of the society. The fact that digital visibility is a psychological target, even if not physical with short -term mass reactions, reveals the risk of transforming into "virtual execution" practice of the modern digital age. As a result, the Marmaray case that digital platforms have become not only communication, but also have become a field of guidance and punishment; It shows that public reflexes can turn into a means of pressure that limit individual freedoms. In this context, public law should analyze the impact of mass reactions on social media more carefully and establish a more sensitive balance between digital control and freedom.

Example Event: Digital Violence over the Body - The Example Of The Football Player

In today's digital culture, body representations and physical appearance have become a decisive element in the structuring of individuals' digital personnel. In particular, situations in which women are evaluated according to social criteria become open to intensive external control and critical intervention in social media platforms. In this context, an event that took place at the beginning of 2025 and reflected to the public reveals how digital violence carries a threat to both individual psychology and public law. The wife of a professional footballer has been targeted through body dimensions in sharing on social media; It has been digitally attacked by users with sexist, discriminatory and dignity expressions such as "overweight", "overweight", "neglected", "does not suit your wife". The unauthorized circulation of the images of women's private life and the interpretation of the appearance in a cynical language shows that a collective control mechanism for the female body emerges on digital platforms. When it is evaluated from a psychosocial point of view, it is seen that such attacks cause breaks in self -perception in the individual, social comparison pressure and inward tendencies. In the context

of Freud's ego defense mechanisms, this is trying to protect himself by developing reactions such as denial or glorification against external assessments; In the process of individualization, Jungcu indicates that the internal integrity is sacrificed for the sake of social approval. From the perspective of Adler, it can be expected to trigger inferior feelings if the person is not socially accepted and to develop compensation strategies in digital environments against it. From a legal point of view, this event brings the crime of insulting in Article 125 of the Turkish Penal Code no. Such digital interventions on personality rights mean not only social norms, but also legal limits. The systematic state of such attacks through social media shows that digital media deviates from the field of freedom of expression and forms the ground for the violation of individual rights. This example is not only a representation of digital personnel; It also shows that social norms can be transformed into an object of surveillance in which sexist judgments, sexist judgments and physical criteria are imposed. In this context, public law, physical policy and digital violence should be considered more comprehensively; In social media platforms, it should be directed to more effective arrangements for the protection of personality rights.

Indirect impact of digital platforms on law

Social media not only makes public demands visible; At the same time, the legislature organizes a collective audit function that puts pressure on the judiciary and the administration. The Social Media Law enacted in Turkey in 2020 (Amendments in Law No. 5651) caused controversy in the public opinion and the obligation to open representative offices to social media companies emerged as a result of these discussions. The "disinformation law çıkan, which entered into force in 2022, has expanded the possibility of legal intervention in digital content, citing the effects of news spread over social media on public order. These examples are not only technical infrastructures of digital platforms; It reveals that public order has become an active role in terms of fundamental rights and democratic functioning. The fact that public law considers social media phenomenon not only in the context of freedom of communication, but also as a new field of participation and supervision has become a necessity in terms of legal theory and implementation.

Conclusion and Evaluation

Social media platforms are beyond being digital channels where individuals express themselves only; It has become dynamic areas where public reflexes emerged, norms are rebuilt and the legal system is tested. The current sample events analyzed within the scope of this study are not only an individual identity presentation of digital personnel; It also clearly shows that social judgments, mass orientations and legal interventions have become the subject. In the case of an individual attacked by his children on the Istanbul Marmaray line, the lynching of the parties on social media separately and the fact that a footballer's spouse was subjected to criticisms reached by sexist, humiliating and infringement of privacy due to the physical appearance of his wife. In these events, not only the digital representations of individuals; His security, psychological integrity and social status in their real lives have also been damaged. These events show that although the identities built in the digital field are rights to protect freedom of expression, public opinion oppression causes new legal problems with the forms of digital violence transformed. While the protection of personal data, the privacy of private life, the hate

speech and insults, the need to control digital content; The question of expression is one of the current examinations of public law. Digital Persona has turned into a form of representation between the desire to make the individual's self visible through social media and social values and algorithmic orientations. The social mask, expressed by Goffman's stage metaphor, evolved not only an aesthetic presentation in this context, but also to a digital being that can be tried and even punished. Jung's individualization process is interrupted with this visibility pressure; The psychodynamic processes of Freud and Adler produce intense defense and compensation mechanisms in digital environment. For public law, this transformation requires not only the protection of individual rights, but also to redefine the public order in the digital field. The fact that digital personnel became a target as a result of misunderstandings, manipulative campaigns or sudden social reactions requires the state to develop a legal policy that protects the freedom of expression and prevents digital violence. At this point, the balance that the judicial bodies should establish between personality rights and public interest stands out as one of the most sensitive legal issues of today's digital society.

As a result, social media is a tool that transforms public law; However, this transformation does not produce positive effects, but also has serious risks in terms of individual privacy, personal rights and psychological integrity. For this reason, public law should redefine the concept of digital persona both as a subject of rights and as a field of responsibility; it should re -edit the boundaries between freedom of expression and public control in accordance with current digital realities. That the digitalized public sphere requires redefining the balance between individual rights and freedoms and public order; It is thought that public law should consider digital personnel not only a special field of identity, but also as a legal subject with a constitutional and public responsibility.

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