MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSPARENCY AND PRIVACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE THROUGH PUBLIC SOCIAL MEDIA

[1]DR. STEPHANIE BILDERBACK, [2]KADE TJAARDA, [3]DAVID ROBBE

[1,2,3]Austin Peay State University
E-mail: bilderbacks@apsu.edu

Abstract - Public social media has become a transformative force within modern organizations, reshaping communication systems, managerial oversight, and employee engagement. As firms strive to strike a balance between transparency and privacy, social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter) present both strategic opportunities and new challenges for organizational leaders. Drawing on Communication Privacy Management theory, Media Richness theory, and Social Information Processing perspectives, this conceptual study examines how social media visibility influences managerial decision-making, professional boundary negotiations, and evolving expectations of digital participation in the workforce. Drawing on insights synthesized from Pew Research Center data and recent organizational behavior literature, this analysis reveals that public social media facilitates faster communication, enhances knowledge sharing, and democratizes interactions across hierarchical levels. However, these benefits coexist with risks related to privacy erosion, impression management pressures, employee surveillance concerns, and blurred boundaries between personal and professional identities. The study further highlights how social media cues influence employee perceptions of autonomy and organizational culture, thereby affecting job satisfaction, engagement, and trust. To address these tensions, this paper proposes a strategic social media governance framework that emphasizes transparent monitoring policies, privacy-aligned communication standards, tailored training programs for managers and employees, the ethical use of digital oversight tools, and clear guidelines for professional online conduct. These recommendations demonstrate how organizations can leverage public social media to strengthen internal communication, enhance brand presence, and support a healthy digital culture while minimizing risks associated with privacy breaches and information overload. By offering actionable strategies grounded in contemporary digital behavior research, this paper contributes to the field of business management by providing a practical roadmap for navigating the complexities of public social media in today's increasingly digital workplace.