Online Communication in the Digital Age
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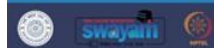**Lecture – 07**
Digital Identity

Good morning dear friends and welcome to this module. Today, we will look into the notion of digital identity. We will be exploring various theoretical frameworks related to the concept of identity. In the 1990s, personal web pages became a platform for self-expression and self-presentation. However, studies pointed out that these platforms framed how users presented themselves and self-presentation on personal web pages was seen as a composite phenomenon that allowed for intrapersonal that is self-narrative, interpersonal that is linking to other pages and dynamic that is updating content and these three aspects were taken in this context. Let us look at different approaches to digital identity.

The first approach we will discuss is the expressive approach. This is the creative process through which individuals use cutting as digital technology to convey and embody their identity. Web 2.0 and SNS contributed to digital expressivism characterized by the construction of subjective personal and original content.

Individuals engage in various online practices from intimate narratives to cultural expressions seeking recognition and identity construction. Digital expressivism encompasses self-expression through personal narratives and the endorsement of individual lifestyle choices as well as through the diverse array of cultural and media creations. This includes sharing amateur endeavors seeking recognition and participating in digital public discourse within identity work individuals engage in various creative online activities as a means to forge their unique identities. These activities revolve around producing content and gaining recognition from an audience ultimately contributing to the formation of their individuality. For example, musicians and composers can create and share their music through digital platforms such as SoundCloud, Spotify or YouTube allowing them to express their emotions and ideas through music.

Another approach we refer to is the technicist approach. Fanny Georges has examined the impact of technical features on the organization of digital identity practices. She has talked about three categories of digital identity that are declarative, active and calculative. Declarative identity encompasses elements that users input and upload themselves such as the information they fill in on their profiles or the blog posts they share on their walls. Active identity pertains to messages and notifications generated by the system regarding as users activities.

For examples, notifications like X and Y are now friends fall under this category. Calculated identity involves aggregating and presenting numerical data recorded by the system such as the number of friends a user has or the number of groups they are a part

of. Quantified self routines involve individuals using digital platforms to monitor and measure various aspects of their life. It serves as a method for self-examination where users leverage the calculated identity matrix to gain insights into their behaviors and progress. The concept of quantified self routines emerges from calculated identity and is exemplified by practices such as the widespread use of wearable fitness gadgets like Fitbit or smart watches which enable individuals to monitor parameters like physical activity or sleep patterns etcetera empowering them to establish daily goals and monitor them as part of their effort to enhance their lifestyle.

- Visibility Approach
  - Dominique Cardon underscores the significance of visibility when it comes to self-expression in the digital realm.
  - He emphasizes that the creation of one's digital identity is a collaborative effort, shaped by both the strategies employed by the platform itself and the tactics employed by the user.
  - He categorizes different modes of online self-visibility.
1. To Hide, To Be Seen:
  - In this mode, individuals actively conceal certain aspects of themselves while consciously presenting others.
  - It's a selective form of self-presentation where users choose what they reveal and what they keep hidden.

Dominique Cardon
Source: www.institutfrancais.com

The third approach is referred to as visibility approach. Dominique Cardon underscores the significance of visibility when it comes to self-expression in the digital realm. He emphasizes that the creation of one's digital identity is a collaborative effort shaped by both these strategies employed by the platform itself and the tactics employed by the user. He categorizes different modes of online self visibility. The first mode he mentions is to hide to be seen.

In this mode, individuals actively conceal certain aspects of their personalities of themselves while consciously presenting other aspects. So, it is a selective form of self presentation where users choose what to reveal and what they want to keep hidden. For this purpose, users may employ filters or image editing tools on their social media photographs to hide blemishes, imperfections or other features they wish to conceal while presenting a curated and more attractive image of themselves. This mode of online self visibility demonstrates the conscious control people exercise over their digital identities. The next mode is termed by him as to be seen hidden.

2. **To Be Seen Hidden**
   - This mode involves individuals who want to maintain a degree of anonymity or secrecy while still being visible in some capacity.
   - They may use pseudonyms or keep certain details concealed, yet they actively engage in online activities.
3. **To Appear Hidden**
   - In this mode, individuals may give the impression of being hidden or anonymous, even though they are, in fact, quite visible.
   - They might use avatars, nicknames, or other methods to create a sense of obscurity.
4. **Everything Shown, Everything Seen**
   - This mode involves complete transparency and openness.
   - Users in this category willingly share all aspects of themselves online, leaving nothing hidden or concealed from the public eye.

Source:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrXfg6ho56E

This mode involves individuals who want to maintain a degree of anonymity or secrecy while still being visible in some capacity. They may use pseudonyms or keep certain details concealed, yet they actively engage in online activities. The third is to appear hidden. In this mode, individuals may give the impression of being hidden or being anonymous even though they are in fact quite visible. They might use avatars, nicknames or other methods to create a sense of obscurity.

Fourth is everything shown, everything seen. So, this mode involves complete transparency and openness. Users in this category willingly share all aspects of their personalities in an online manner leaving nothing hidden or concealed from the public eye. These different modes of online self visibility illustrate how individuals navigate the digital space to express themselves while managing the level of personal information and identity they choose to reveal or to conceal. Cardon's framework sheds light on the complex ways people negotiate their online presence as well as visibility in the digital era.

- Logic of Self-Deprivatization: The concept refers to the process of constructing digital identities on social networking sites by deliberately sharing aspects of oneself that were once considered private.
  - This phenomenon is not haphazard but strategic, as individuals aim to garner an audience and gain recognition.
1. Modest Exposure: Individuals may share some personal information or experiences, but they do so in a reserved and cautious manner.
   - For example, someone might post occasional updates about their hobbies or interests without delving too deeply into their personal life.
2. Playful Exhibitionism: This category involves users who enjoy showcasing themselves in a playful or attention-grabbing manner.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBraSNVrueA

Another concept we refer to at this stage is the logic of self deprivatization. This concept refers to the process of constructing digital identities on social networking sites by deliberately sharing aspects of oneself that were once considered private. This phenomena is not haphazard, but rather strategic as individuals aim to garner an audience and to gain recognition thereby. It can be in the form of a modest exposure where individuals may share some personal information or experiences, but they do so in a cautious and in a rather reserved manner. For example, someone might post occasional updates about their hobbies or interest without disclosing very openly details about their personal lives.

It can also be done in a manner of playful exhibitionism. This category involves users who enjoy showcasing themselves in a playful or in an attention grabbing manner. Other approaches are mainstream exposure, bodily immodesty and trash provocation.

3. **Mainstream Exposure :** users in this category are more inclined to share content and aspects of their lives that align with widely accepted norms and values.
   - They may post about common experiences like travel, food, or family events. This approach is less likely to challenge societal conventions.

4. **Bodily Immodesty:** Some individuals engage in self-deprivatization by sharing intimate or personal aspects related to their bodies, health, or physical appearance.
   - For instance, in certain platforms like OnlyFans etc., some users try to sell or purchase original content with elements of eroticized performances.

5. **Trash Provocation:** Users in this category intentionally challenge social norms and boundaries by sharing content that may be considered shocking, unconventional, or controversial.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTpP PhCV3M

Users who fall in the category of mainstream exposure are more inclined to share content and aspects of their lives that align with widely accepted norms and values. So, they may post about common experiences like food, travel, family etcetera and this approach normally does not challenge societal conventions and norms.

  A bodily immodesty refers to those users who engage in self deprivatization by sharing intimate or overly personal aspects related to their bodies, health or physical appearance etcetera. We can cite the example of platforms like Onlyfans and several others in which some users try to sell or purchase original content with elements of eroticized performances. Trash provocation refers to the users who intentionally challenge social norms and boundaries by sharing content that may be considered shocking, unconventional or controversial. The approach of trash provocation can be polarizing, but it can also attract a dedicated following. In each of these categories, individuals strategically choose the level and type of self deprivatization that aligns with their goals and desired online persona.

  Whether it is maintaining a sense of privacy while engaging with an online audience or deliberately challenging societal norms to gain attention, these practices are calculated efforts to shape and present one's digital identity. Let us now look into some aspects of identity management in the context of digital communication.

Identity Management

- Identity Laboratory: The concept as discussed in Sherry Turkle's perspective, highlights the idea that digital identity is not fixed but is *continually shaped* by technology and the social environments in which individuals interact.
- In this context users often switch between different online tools and platforms, creating a continuous sense of co-presence. This enables them to explore and reinvent themselves in various virtual contexts.
  - Anonymity in virtual worlds like Second Life allows users to construct different identities. Social-digital networks provide a means to discover and test one's identity through avatars, participation in online communities, or content creation.
- However, technology's influence on identity can sometimes lead to validation-seeking behavior, impacting the construction of one's identity.

Sherry Turkle
Source:
www.wikipedia.org

In our discussions of identity management, we would first of all refer to the concept of Sherry Turkle about the identity laboratory. Sherry Turkle suggests that digital identity is not fixed, but is being continually shaped by technology as well as by the social environment in which individuals interact. In this context, users often switch between different online tools and platforms creating a continuous sense of co-presence which enables them to explore and reinvent themselves in various virtual contexts simultaneously.

Anonymity in virtual worlds like second life allows users to construct different identities. Social digital networks provide a means to discover and test one's identity through avatars participation in online communities or content creation. However, the influence of technology on identity can sometimes lead to validation seeking behavior impacting the construction of one's identity. Turkle's idea of identity laboratory emphasize that digital identity is not static, but fluid and dynamic, it is shaped by both the technologies people use and the social context in which they are engaged with each other. Users also have the ability to experiment with and reinvent their identities in virtual spaces, but they are also influenced by the desire for validation and recognition in these online environments.

This view recognizes the intricate interplay between technology and the construction of one's digital identity.

Active Management of Multiple Identities, Demonstration, and Self-Projection:

- The concept of "self-projection" challenges the idea of the identity laboratory and suggests that individuals actively manage their digital identities by sharing varying degrees of personal information with others.
- This perspective emphasizes that people aim to communicate, share, and expose themselves online while actively controlling the information they disclose.
- Cardon notes that internet users often divulge personal information and explore new online communities, reflecting a tension between their real-life attributes and their online projections.
  - Visibility can take different forms, from hiding certain aspects to showcasing everything. The boundary between the real and virtual worlds is porous.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SrXfg6ho56E

9
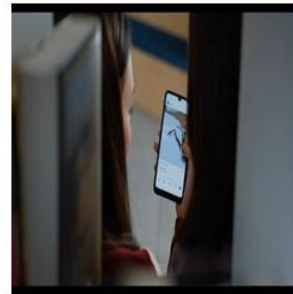
Let us look into the management of multiple identities, demonstration and self-projection. The concept of self-projection challenges the idea of the identity laboratory and suggests that individuals actively manage their digital identities by sharing varying degrees of personal information with others. This perspective emphasizes that people aim to communicate, share and expose themselves online while actively controlling the information they disclose. Cardon notes that internet users often diverge personal information and explore new online communities reflecting a tension between their real life attributes and their online projections.

Visibility can also take different forms from hiding to certain aspects to showcasing everything. The boundary between the real and the virtual world remains to be porous. It remains to be porous as individuals recognize that their online profiles may represent an improved version of themselves, but not necessarily in conflict with their real world identities. Critics argue that the real versus projected access fails to capture the interactive nature of identity processes and the limited control individuals have. They also note that the being versus doing access contradicts existing literature on self-presentation.

Online dating exemplifies the complexities of self-presentation. Some users opt for honesty while others misrepresent themselves due to constraints, desires or preferences. Assessing someone's identity in an online communication involves interpreting conflicting signals. Users should strike an ethical balance between showcasing their best selves and revealing their true identities. Let us look at the interactive loop which exists in the context of self-construction and self-projection.

Interactive Loop: Self-Construction and Self-Projection

- The two approaches discussed earlier are *not necessarily contradictory*, as users navigate between them in a dynamic process of self-construction and self-projection.
  - Users construct their identities through both collective and individual processes.
  - Virtual worlds like Second Life and social networks like Facebook exemplify this interactive loop. Users can choose the level of exposure, from complete anonymity to full disclosure of real-life information.
- Anonymity in virtual environments can paradoxically lead to greater intimacy, as it allows individuals to reveal their true selves without the constraints of the physical world.
  - Users define their identities in relation to their social groups, but active participation in these groups may reduce anonymity.

Source: www. secondlife.com

10

The two approaches which we have discussed earlier are not necessarily contradictory to each other. Users navigate between them in a dynamic process of self-construction and self-projection. For example, users construct their identities through both collective and individual processes. Virtual worlds like Second Life and social networks like Facebook exemplify this interactive loop. Users can choose the level of exposure from complete anonymity to full disclosure of real-life information.

Anonymity in virtual environments can paradoxically lead to greater intimacy as it allows individuals to reveal their true selves without the constraints of the physical world. Users define their identities in relation to their social groups, but active participation in these groups may also reduce anonymity. Tension exists between anonymity and the desire to develop social relationships and construct one's identity in relation to others. The physical world can sometimes limit what people are willing to reveal about themselves and people use platforms like Second Life to meet new individuals, express their ideas and maintain their reputation while navigating a tension between anonymity and the desire to establish social connections and construct their identity in relation to others. Ultimately, the development of the virtual world depends on tolerance and experimentation.

Highlighting the complex interplay between identity, social interaction and the digital realm.

Identity Trial

- Identity trial refers to the process through which individuals test and experiment with different aspects of their identity, often in a safe and anonymous environment, to explore new facets of themselves that they may not express in their everyday lives.
    - In an identity trial, individuals deviate from their established self-concept or social roles to explore potential identities that individuals may wish to incorporate into their actual selves in the future.
    - Online platforms and virtual communities are common spaces where identity trials can take place because they offer a degree of anonymity and distance from one's offline identity.
    - This experimentation allows them to evaluate and experience, leading to self-discovery and self-awareness.

Source: www.abc.net.au

11

The concept of identity trial refers to the process through which individuals test and experiment with different aspects of their identity, often in a safe and anonymous environment to explore new facts of themselves that they may not express in their everyday lives. In an identity trials, individuals deviate from their established self-concept or social roles to explore potential identities that individuals may wish to incorporate into their actual selves in the future. Online platforms in virtual communities are common spaces where identity trials can take place because they offer a degree of anonymity and distance from one's offline identity. The experimentation allows them to evaluate and experience leading to self-discovery and self-awareness.

For example, someone struggling with their gender identity may experiment with different gender expressions and pronouns online, providing them a safe space to explore their feelings and better understand their own inclinations. Similarly, individuals may test out interests or hobbies that they do not usually engage in. Therefore, pseudonyms or anonymous settings can play a crucial role in facilitating identity trials.

- Identity trials highlight the flexible nature of identity. They emphasize that identity is not fixed/rigid, but can adapt and evolve over time as individuals explore/discover new aspects of themselves.
  - Engaging in identity trials can lead to learning experiences and a better understanding of oneself as it can also foster empathy and a greater appreciation for the diverse identities and perspectives of others.
- Individuals often cultivate distinct identities for different online communities, as these virtual spaces provide a unique context for identity creation and offer valuable resources for nurturing and exploring those identities.
- While identity trials can be personally enriching, they also raise ethical questions, especially when they involve deceptive or harmful behavior.

Source: www.recfaces.com

12

Identity trials also highlight the flexible nature of identity. They emphasize that identity can adapt and evolve over time as individuals explore and discover new aspects of and about themselves.

Engaging in identity trials can lead to learning experiences and have a better understanding of oneself. It can also foster empathy and lead to a greater appreciation for the diverse identities and perspectives of other people also. Individuals often cultivate distinct identities for different online communities as these virtual spaces provide a unique context for identity creation and therefore offer valuable resources for nurturing and exploring these identities. While identity trials can be personally enriching, they also raise several ethical questions especially when they involve deceptive or harmful behavior. Ethical considerations for identity trials revolve around principles of honesty, responsibility, respect for others and adherence to community norms.

It is important for individuals engaging in such trials to carefully reflect on the potential consequences of their actions and they should also strive to conduct themselves in a manner that aligns with ethical values and principles of social behavior. Now, we will refer to Goffman in the context of digital identity. Goffman's theory is important in the context of digital communication. We will also take it later on while we shall discuss the idea of digital avatars and impression management as well as subtext in digital information.

Self-Presentation

- Erving Goffman, a prominent sociologist, explores the concept of expressiveness and its impact on how individuals are perceived by others in his book "*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*."
- He identifies two key forms of expressiveness.
- Explicit Expression
  - This refers to the direct and overt ways in which individuals convey information about themselves.
  - It includes the words they use, the information they share verbally, and the explicit messages they communicate.
  - For example, when someone explicitly talks about their interests, experiences, or opinions, they are engaging in explicit expression.

Erving Goffman
(1922-1982)

Source: www.thoughtco.com

13

Irving Goffman is a prominent sociologist and he has explored the concept of expressiveness and its impact on how individuals are perceived by others.

His book, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life is a well-known work. He has identified two key forms of expressiveness, explicit and implicit expression. Explicit expression refers as we can make out to the direct and overt ways in which we convey information about ourselves. It includes the words we use, the information we share verbally and the explicit messages we are communicating on various forums. For example, when someone is specifically talks about their interests, experiences or opinions they are engaging in explicit expression.

Researchers from Temple University, USA have explored identity construction on Facebook and have discovered that users tend to establish their identities implicitly rather than explicitly. This is the finding of a 2008 research work by Zhao, Grasmuck & Martin. Instead of making direct verbal statements, such users reveal their identities through indirect means like posting specific photographs, expressing preferences by liking content, showcasing hobbies, joining particular groups and supporting specific causes. This trend of indirectly shaping identity online has also been mirrored in our offline lives.
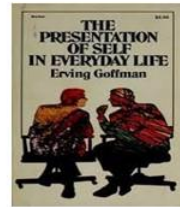
- **Implicit Expression :** In contrast, it involves the subtle, indirect, and non-verbal cues that individuals convey. These cues can include gestures, body language, tone of voice, clothing choices, and facial expressions.
    - Implicit expression often communicates more than the words themselves. For instance, a person's smile, posture, or the way they dress can provide insights into their personality, mood, or attitude.
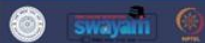- According to Goffman, life is akin to a theatrical performance, and we take on different roles based on the context and the people around us.

    Source: www.archive.org

    - The "front region" is the public aspect of our lives where we present ourselves to others and carefully manage our behavior and appearance to create a specific impression.
    - The "back region" is the private space where we can relax and be ourselves without the need to maintain a particular image or adhere to social norms.

14

So, implicit expression as is clear to us involves the subtle indirect and non-verbal cues that individuals convey.

These cues can also include gestures, body language, tone of voice, clothing choice and facial expressions as well as their digital alternatives. Implicit expression often communicates more than the words themselves. For instance, a person's smile, postures or the way they dress can provide insights into their personality, attitude or mood. According to Goffman, life is akin to a theatrical performance and we take on different roles based on the context and the people around us. The front region is the public aspect of our lives where we present ourselves to others and carefully manage our behaviour and appearance to create a specific impression.

The back region is the private space where we can relax and be ourselves without the need to maintain a particular image or adhere to social norms. Our Facebook profiles have a front region where public messages are posted and a back region also where personal messages reside. When we have to convey different impressions to various audiences, audience segregation becomes essential. While privacy settings offer some control, keeping audiences completely separate on social media platforms is challenging.

Ubiquitous Digitality

- Digital communication tools have become an integral part of everyday life to the extent that they are no longer noticeable or distinct from traditional forms of communication going unnoticed unless they malfunction.
  - Unlike in the past, digital communication is no longer confined to specific moments, spaces, or devices.
  - It has infiltrated every aspect of life, shaping relationships, subjectivities, and self-presentation, with online identities persistently influenced by the data and traces individuals leave on the internet.
- Online identities, formed through traces and contributions on the internet, blur the lines between offline and online identity, representing a shift where identity is consistently present in the digital realm.

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PaoZezdbJ8

15

Digital communication tools have become an integral part of everyday life to the extent that they are no longer noticeable or distinct from traditional forms of communication going unnoticed unless they malfunction.

 Unlike in the past, digital communication is no longer confined to specific moments, spaces or devices. It has now infiltrated every aspect of our life, shaping relationships, subjectivities and self-presentation with online identities persistently influenced by the data and traces we leave on the internet continuously. Online identities formed through traces and contributions on the internet blur the lines between offline and online identity, representing a shift where identity is consistently present in the digital realm. The use of selfies highlights how the act of taking and sharing self-portraits in a digital context has a significant impact on the way people perceive themselves that is subjectively and how they define their sense of self or selfhood. Selfies are a form of self-presentation where individuals intentionally choose how they want to be seen by others.

 They select the angle, they select the expression and context in which they capture the image reflecting their desired image or identity to the online audience.

Identity and Performativity

- The term "identity" primarily refers to how individuals perceive themselves, encompassing elements like self-perception, subjectivity, and selfhood.

- This perception is shaped by identifying with particular categories or labels given by language, media, and culture, including aspects like gender, race, ethnicity, class, and more.

- The way we understand identity can be categorized into two major paradigms.

- Essentialism suggests that identity emerges from within, is innate, and remains relatively stable over time.

  – Essentialist views often assume that our sense of self is influenced by early childhood experiences and relationships.

Essentialism: Assumes that descriptions of ourselves reflect an essential underlying identity Anti-essentialism – Identity is plastic. Identities are discursive constructions which change their meanings according to time, place and usage.

Source: www.medium.com

The term identity primarily refers to how individuals perceive themselves encompassing elements like self-perception, subjectivity and selfhood. This perception is shaped by identifying with particular categories or labels given by language, media and culture including aspects like gender, race, ethnicity, class etc. The way we understand identity can be categorized into two major paradigms. The first is essentialism which suggests that identity emerges from within, is innate and remains relatively stable over time.

  Essentialist views often assume that our sense of self is influenced by early childhood experiences and relationships. For example, genetic theories of identity might attribute certain behaviors to a person's genetic heritage while some perceptions of non-heterosexual identity may rely on the idea of being born that way.

In contrast, constructionist approaches view identity as a product of cultural and social forces that evolve over time and across history. They emphasize that identity is not inherent but constructed through discourse and societal norms. Constructionist perspectives acknowledge that identities change and categories such as racial identities can evolve over time.

Michel Foucault's work challenges the traditional notion of a fixed, rational and self-governing individual subject. Instead, he suggests that identity is not a substance but a form constituted by discourse or languages that represents selfhood. This perspective highlights that identity is not a stable or innate characteristic but is continually produced and maintained by societal discourse. It would also be pertinent to refer to Butler's theory of performativity in this context.

Butler asserts that identity is performative. It is enacted through repetitive actions and behaviors including how we communicate and represent ourselves online, creating the illusion of a fixed inner identity. The understanding of identity is thus complex and multifaceted and compassing essentialist and constructionist perspectives. Identity is not limited to offline experiences but also extends into the digital world where language, discourse and performance continue to shape and redefine how we perceive and then represent ourselves.

The concept of interpellalation developed by Louis Althusser, Phu Quynh Butler, explains how individuals are subjectified by language and societal power. In the context of the selfie, individuals are interpellated into identity positions and categories represented in the image.

Ideology invites subjects to conform to the expectations of their identified category ensuring the performance of a coherent identity. Interpellation involves both active self-recognition as well as external recognition. In the digital age of user-generated content

and consumer culture, identity work is complex. Subjects actively participate in interpellation by responding to invitations to engage with media processes and self-manage their identity within discourses. For instance, a hiking selfie illustrates how selfies function as tools for actively performing one's identity in the digital era.

  It extends beyond being a static image. Instead it serves as an ongoing performance that aligns with cultural norms, seeks acknowledgement and also actively contributes to the construction of one's identity within their online community. These cultural norms often encompass qualities like physical fitness, confidence in a passion for nature and when individuals share such selfies on social media, they continually reaffirm and strengthen this identity.

This process is more complex than a simple linear communication model as subjects contribute to their own subjectification and manage the coherence of their identity through digital practices. Identity work can be labour intensive, requiring individuals to perform and articulate their identity according to societal norms. However, there is also pleasure in this process as individuals find satisfaction in confirming to recognizable identities.
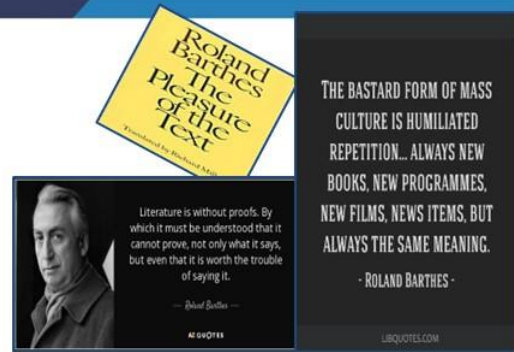
- The pleasure of identity work is akin to Roland Barthes' notion of the "pleasure of the text," where subjects engage in identity practices not solely as a response to authority, but because they derive pleasure from conforming to specific identity categories, even within constraints.

- The selfie, as a form of self-expression, reflects these dynamics, with individuals recognizing themselves within the established categories of identity, even as they hide the authority behind the screen.

The pleasure of identity work is akin to Roland Barthe's notion of the pleasure of the text, where subjects engage in identity practices not solely as a response to authority, but because they derive pleasure from confirming to specific identity categories even within constraints. The selfie is a form of self-expression, reflects these dynamics with individuals recognizing themselves within the established categories of identities even as they hide the authority behind the screen. In the previous example of the selfie, the individual by capturing and sharing it not only portrays herself as someone with a spirit for adventure, but also actively immerses herself in the dialogue of outdoor enthusiasts. She engages proactively in shaping and expressing this identity classification. This process also involves a certain satisfaction and a longing linked to the desire for recognition and a sense of belonging with the circle of outdoor enthusiasts, enhancing the gratification associated with the formation and display of her identity through the means of a selfie.

Conclusion

- Digital identity is no longer a distinct or separable entity from one's offline self but has become an integral part of everyday life.

- The ubiquity of digital communication tools, such as smartphones and social media, has blurred the boundaries between offline and online identity, leading to a continuous online presence.

- In the digital realm, the performative nature of identity is even more pronounced, as individuals continuously participate in the creation and dissemination of their identities through various online activities, including social media interactions, self-presentation, and content sharing.

Source: www.unctad.org

22

To conclude, we can say that the concept of digital identity has undergone significant transformations. In the digital age, it is shaped by a complex interplay of factors including technological advancements, social dynamics and communication practices. So, we have to understand that digital identity is no longer a distinct or separable entity from our offline self, but has become an integral part of everyday life. The ubiquity of digital communication tools such as smartphones and social media has blurred the boundaries between offline and online identity leading to a continuous online presence. In the digital realm, the performative nature of identity is even more pronounced as individuals continuously participate in the creation and dissemination of their identities through various online activities.

It includes social media interactions, self-presentation as well as content sharing. In the next module, we shall look further into theories regarding digital identity with particular focus on identity shift. Thank you. .