

## Dialogic Strategies and Social Media Integration: A Systematic Review of Digital Dialogue in Modern Communication

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** This study aimed to systematically examine the evolution of dialogic communication across major social media platforms from 2015 to 2024, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok, and WeChat, identifying key trends in theories, methodologies, and technological influences across interdisciplinary research fields. These platforms were chosen because of research relevance and features that support two-way interaction, making them suitable for analysing dialogic communication.

**Methods:** A systematic literature review was conducted on 199 peer-reviewed journal articles published in the Scopus database focus on studies on dialogic communication and social media. Articles were analyzed according to theoretical frameworks, research methodologies, social media platforms, and interdisciplinary contributions.

**Findings:** The results showed that Dialogic Communication Theory continues to dominate but is increasingly integrated with complementary frameworks such as Social Presence Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and Algorithmic Engagement Models. Quantitative methods, especially content analysis and survey research, remain prevalent, though computational and mixed methods are gaining prominence. Further findings revealed that AI-driven tools, chatbots, and interactive media features significantly shape digital engagement, offering new opportunities for audience interaction while presenting ethical challenges regarding authenticity and transparency.

**Originality:** This study offers research novelty by providing the first interdisciplinary synthesis of dialogic communication studies that integrates theoretical trends, methodological developments, and platform evolution. It also introduces a new perspective on how AI technologies and platform affordances reshape dialogic communication, highlighting emerging challenges and opportunities for ethical, transparent, and adaptive digital engagement. This integrated approach has not been comprehensively addressed in prior reviews.

**Keywords:** Dialogic Strategy, Social Media Platforms, Digital Engagement, Digital Dialog.

### Introduction

The rise of social media has significantly transformed the field of public relations (PR), enabling organizations to engage with stakeholders across diverse sectors, including business, healthcare, education, and crisis communication. Social media platforms serve as dynamic tools for two-way communication, allowing PR professionals to move beyond traditional, one-directional dissemination of information and foster deeper, more

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interactive relationships with their audiences (Kent, 2023; Murtarelli et al., 2022). A 2019 study by the Global Communication Report found that 38% of CEOs in the United States plan to prioritize social media and content creators or online influencers in their future communication strategies, further emphasizing the importance of social media-driven PR approaches (Annenberg Center for Public Relations, n.d.).

Dialogic communication emphasizes openness, mutual understanding, and reciprocity, and is crucial for effective social media engagement in the digital era. First conceptualized in the context of public relations theory (Kent & Taylor, 1998). Dialogic strategies have gained renewed scholarly attention in social media-driven stakeholder engagement (Macnamara, 2024). While social media offers the potential for real-time, interactive communication and participatory dialogue, past study indicates that many organizations continue to adopt a broadcast-style approach, missing opportunities for deeper engagement with their stakeholders (Sommerfeldt & Yang, 2018).

Research has studied the utilization of dialogic principles in managerial communication by managers in organizations and non-profit organizations (Francelino et al., 2021), and the role of social presence strategies in fostering public trust (B. Yang et al., 2023), and the effectiveness of dialogic loops in government crisis communication (Shi & Medina, 2021). While the literature on dialogic strategies in social media is expanding, there are still gaps in our knowledge of sector-specific variations, such as the fact that non-profit organizations place more emphasis on social advocacy and relationship-building than corporate leaders do on information dissemination (Kent & Taylor, 2021; M. P. Taylor, 2023). Similarly, government agencies have challenges in integrating interactive engagement, particularly in crisis management scenarios (Coombs & Laufer, 2018).

Further studies have examined how commenting and sharing features, AI-driven chatbots, and interactive multimedia impact social media engagement (Cheng & Lee, 2023; Murtarelli et al., 2022), but there is a need for comparative analysis across platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok). While (Ye & Ki, 2012) provided an early quantitative review of internet-based PR research (1992-2009) and (Wang et al., 2021) expanded on social media PR studies from 2006 to 2020, there is a need for an updated, comprehensive synthesis covering the past decade (2015-2024).

To bridge these gaps, this study presents a systematic literature review of 199 studies published in 10 interdisciplinary journals between 2015 and 2024. This review examines theoretical developments, research methodologies, and application trends in dialogic communication within social media contexts (Ean Lee et al., 2020). Furthermore, it provides a comparative analysis of publication trends across key domains, including public relations, media studies, digital communication, and crisis management.

The study's findings establish the fields of mass communication and public relations by providing a trend analysis of recent theoretical and methodological developments, enhancing scholarly discourse on the advancement of social media, and examining how digital platforms have transformed PR practices (Singh Bedi & Gordon, n.d.). Additionally, this study contributes practical insights for communication professionals, presenting best practices for social media strategy, audience engagement, and dialogic communication approaches (Abid & Harrigan, 2020).

Social media's rapid growth has completely changed people's communication today and offers organizations the opportunity to connect with stakeholders in both directions (Nevradakis, 2024). In the digital age, dialogic communication emphasizes transparency, reciprocity, and mutual engagement or understanding, and has become a key component

of strategic communication and established public relations (Kent & Taylor, 2021; Vural et al., 2022). However, past studies overlooked a lot of unanswered questions on the application of dialogic methods across social media platforms, the theoretical framework, and the evolution of dialogic research.

Aspects of dialogic communication, including AI-driven interactions, crisis communication, and stakeholder participation, have been examined in previous research (Khang et al., 2023; Wang & Yang, 2020). However, these studies do not provide a thorough synthesis that charts the development of research techniques, platform-specific applications, and methodological trends over time (Wang et al., 2021; Ye & Ki, 2012). Furthermore, the advent of new technologies, such as AI Chatbots and algorithmic governance, has caused drawbacks and raised questions about dialogic paradigms, posing issues with ethics, transparency, and authenticity (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Vuong et al., 2021). Past studies widely concentrated on social media like Facebook and Twitter, while platforms such as LinkedIn, Reddit, and TikTok, which are now emerging in professional and political discourse, have gained limited systematic attention. Further, dialogic communication has received attention in the realm of public relations and social media, but existing scholarship remains fragmented across platforms, sectors, and theoretical frameworks. Moreover, while dialogic theory (Kent & Taylor, 1998) continues to be presented as a foundational model, its function has often been limited in its integration with evolving algorithmic personalization, real-time engagement technologies, and AI-driven communication, which increasingly shape the dynamics of online dialogue.

There is also a lack of attention in research distribution, in interdisciplinary synthesis required to evaluate. Furthermore, while content analysis dominates as a methodological tool, few studies employ mixed-method approaches or computational techniques to examine the real-time dialogic patterns on social media (Disseldorp & Bouko, 2025). Ethical challenges such as AI transparency, algorithmic bias, and privacy in automated dialogue are also understudied in the literature, despite their growing significance (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Tufekci, 2008). This systematic literature review addresses these gaps by analyzing 199 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2024. By examining theoretical developments, methodological trends, and interdisciplinary contributions, this study provides a holistic understanding of how dialogic communication is practiced and researched in social media contexts. The findings will strengthen existing knowledge, highlight emerging trends (e.g., AI-driven engagement), and identify future research directions to guide scholars and practitioners in optimizing digital communication strategies (Macnamara, 2024).

This study was guided by four main research questions and corresponding objectives designed to explore the evolution and dynamics of dialogic communication within social media. Specifically, it sought to determine how research topics, theories, hypotheses, platforms, and methodologies differ across various journal areas; to identify the primary research themes in digital dialogic communication studies; to examine dominant theories and methodological trends in this field; and to investigate which social media platforms are most frequently studied and how they have evolved. To address these questions, the study aimed to analyze interdisciplinary contributions by comparing publication trends across public relations, media studies, digital communication, and other social science disciplines from 2015 to 2024. Additionally, it sought to identify and map the evolution of key theories applied in dialogic communication research, examine methodological approaches used in studying dialogic engagement, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, and explore how technological affordances such as

commenting features, AI-driven chatbots, and multimedia interactivity shape dialogic engagement within social media environments.

Social media is now changing the way of public shares information, creates identities, contents, and communicates, and has a significant influence on modern culture. A wide range of research endeavors exploring the complex aspects of these platforms is included in the emerging discipline of social media studies (Dixon, 2022). Past study given an overview of the major issues and trends in social media studies and explore the effects of digital engagement on communication, relationships, society, and the wider cultural environment (Ean Lee et al., 2020). Social media has transformed public relations (PR) by enabling two-way communication between organizations and stakeholders, and real-time communication (Smith et al., 2023). Traditionally, PR was based on one-way information dissemination (Grunig & Grunig, 1989), but with social media established, it has shifted toward relationship-building and engagement (Etter et al., 2021). Hence, the dialogic communication framework, which emphasizes reciprocity and openness, has become central to this shift (Kent & Taylor, 2021).

Social media's interactive features facilitate direct audience engagement, widespread distribution of information to a large audience, making it a more efficient PR tool than traditional media (Asomah, 2025; Lagrange et al., 2024). Social networking sites (SNSs) enable corporations to build relationships with consumers through user-generated content and participatory communication (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Previous study emphasizes the importance of engagement, shared experiences, and feedback in strengthening organizational-public relationships (Navarro et al., 2018).

Organizations adopted social media platforms to establish meaningful connections with their audiences and stakeholders. Studies indicate that organizations using relational messaging and interactive engagement tactics experience higher levels of audience trust and loyalty (Men & Muralidharan, 2017; Peña-Ramos et al., 2021). Additionally, SNS uplifts public engagement and gives them more influence over organizational messaging and reputation (Ma & Bentley, 2022). As a result, stakeholders can shape organizations' objectives and brand perception through social media interactions (Watts et al., 2019). Organizations mainly use social media for brand management and marketing, while non-profit organizations focus on advocacy and community engagement (M. P. Taylor, 2023). Government agencies, particularly in crisis communication, handle effectively integrating dialogic strategies into their social media practices (Shi & Medina, 2021).

Dialogic communication refers to a negotiated interchange of thoughts and opinions (Kent & Taylor, 1998). Five fundamental principles guided these dialogic strategies, such as risk (commitment to open communication), empathy (support for public concerns), mutuality (realizing the interdependence between organizations and stakeholders), proximity (real-time and spontaneous engagement), and commitment (long-term dialogue and understanding) (J. R. Taylor et al., 2001). While dialogic communication has been criticized for its limited practical application in PR (Sommerfeldt & Yang, 2018), some studies show that organizations employing dialogic strategies build higher trust, transparency, and public responsiveness (Soon & Soh, 2014; Q. Yang, 2017).

Prior studies have explored how dialogic communication is utilized across different sectors. Profit and non-profit organizations integrate dialogic strategies to strengthen brand loyalty and consumer engagement (Men & Stacks, 2014). Government agencies utilised dialogic communication during the crisis response and delivered public safety messaging, particularly during outbreaks such as the Covid-19 pandemic (Zhang et al., 2022). Social media enhances public diplomacy initiatives by improving transparency

and international relations (Chen & Cheng, 2020). However, the strategic use of dialogic communication remains inconsistent. (Chen, 2020) found that while organizations often employ dialogic communication to enhance engagement with the public, they rarely use it for strategic decision-making, and continuous engagement has been limited by censorship and government regulations (Yang, 2013). Due to regulatory constraints and shifting public discourse trends, Brand-consumer interactions on social media tend to decline quickly (Jiang & Luo, 2024).

Scholars have examined dialogic strategies across various digital platforms, including corporate websites (Sundstrom & Levenshus, 2017), blogs (Rybalko & Seltzer, 2010), and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Sundstrom & Levenshus, 2017). A study by (Uysal, 2022) On environmental responsibility campaigns found that organizations employing dialogic communication strategies experienced higher audience interaction and support levels. Similarly, (Gálvez and Rodríguez, 2016) demonstrated that non-profit organizations leveraging Facebook's dialogic features build greater public participation and trust.

The scope of dialogic communication has greatly increased with the development of digital technology, incorporating new tools like interactive multimedia, AI-driven chatbots, and real-time analytics to improve engagement (Murtarelli et al., 2022). Social media platforms have become crucial spaces for dialogic interactions, with features such as likes, shares, comments, and live streaming fostering significant audience participation (D. M. Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Research on digital technology and online communities highlights the role of digital spaces in facilitating public discourse, activism, and knowledge-sharing, shaping political, social, and corporate narratives (D. Boyd, 2010). Additionally, the role of digital technologies in political discourse reveals that social media have been highlighted in a study and have been noted as a platform for public debate, grassroots mobilization, and activism (Bimber, 2000). However, despite these developments, some challenges have been identified in digital dialogic communication, including the spread of misinformation, fake statements, and cyberbullying, which can hinder meaningful public engagement (Tufekci, 2008). In addition, these technologies create a new path to increase global connectedness, diversity, and collaboration, which helps build closer bonds with stakeholder and their audiences. AI-driven communication, including the growing usage of chatbots and virtual assistants in brand-consumer interactions, is the subject of another new field of study. Although new tools increase productivity and participation, they also bring up issues with transparency, authenticity, and the moral implications of online discussions (Marwick & Lewis, 2017).

The ethical issues of privacy, misinformation, data security, and transparency have become crucial topics of conversation as digital dialogic communication develops further (Pitt & Holland, 2025). Concerns regarding accountability and authenticity in digital interactions are raised by the growing usage of AI-driven communication tools, such as chatbots and automated messaging systems (Vuong et al., 2021). Organizations must ensure a balance of efficiency with ethical responsibility, ensuring that automated communication maintains honesty, user trust, and accessibility. Furthermore, organizations must implement fact-checking procedures and ethical communication tactics because the extensive distribution of false information and fake news on social media jeopardizes the integrity of public discourse (Dhiman, 2023).

Privacy concerns also play a significant role in digital dialogic communication. Many organizations collect and analyse large amounts of user data to personalize interactions, but the lack of transparency regarding data usage raises ethical questions

(Osch et al., 2023). Issues such as informed consent, data protection, and algorithmic bias require stricter regulatory oversight to ensure that digital engagement remains ethical and inclusive. Scholars argue that algorithm-driven content curation can reinforce filter bubbles and echo chambers, limiting exposure to diverse viewpoints and ultimately reducing the quality of public dialogue (D. Boyd & Crawford, 2012).

To address these challenges, organizations must establish clear ethical guidelines for digital communication, emphasizing transparency, inclusivity, and data protection. Regulatory frameworks, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Vlahou et al., 2021), provide legal protections for user privacy, but there remains a need for industry-wide standards to uphold ethical dialogic practices across digital platforms (Murtarelli et al., 2022). To ensure that new technologies and communication tactics foster trust, accountability, and meaningful participation in the digital public realm, ethical considerations must remain at the forefront of digital dialogic research.

## Methods

This study employs a systematic literature review approach to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize research on dialogic communication in social media. A systematic literature review is recognized as a rigorous and replicable method that enhances knowledge development and theory-building in a given field (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2015). The systematic literature review methodology adopted in this study follows a three-stage process, ensuring a structured approach to data collection, screening, and analysis for a comprehensive understanding of research trends in digital dialogic communication. The planning stage involved defining the research objectives, scope, and inclusion criteria to ensure methodological rigor (Ferré-Pavia & Bajjouk, 2025). Following guidelines from (Boell, 2015), a review protocol was developed to establish clear selection criteria, search strategies, and databases for literature retrieval. The protocol included defining keywords and Boolean operators, specifying inclusion and exclusion criteria, and ensuring a structured approach to literature selection. This step was essential to minimize research bias and enhance transparency in the review process.

The conducting stage involved systematically retrieving and screening relevant literature to ensure that only high-quality and relevant studies were included in the final analysis. Scopus served as the primary database for the literature search, one of the largest multidisciplinary academic databases, to obtain peer-reviewed journal articles related to dialogic communication in social media. The search process covered publications from 2015 to 2024 to focus on the most recent and relevant research. To identify pertinent studies, the search query applied was ('social media' OR 'digital platforms') AND ('dialogic communication' OR 'two-way communication'), targeting titles and keywords provided by the authors.

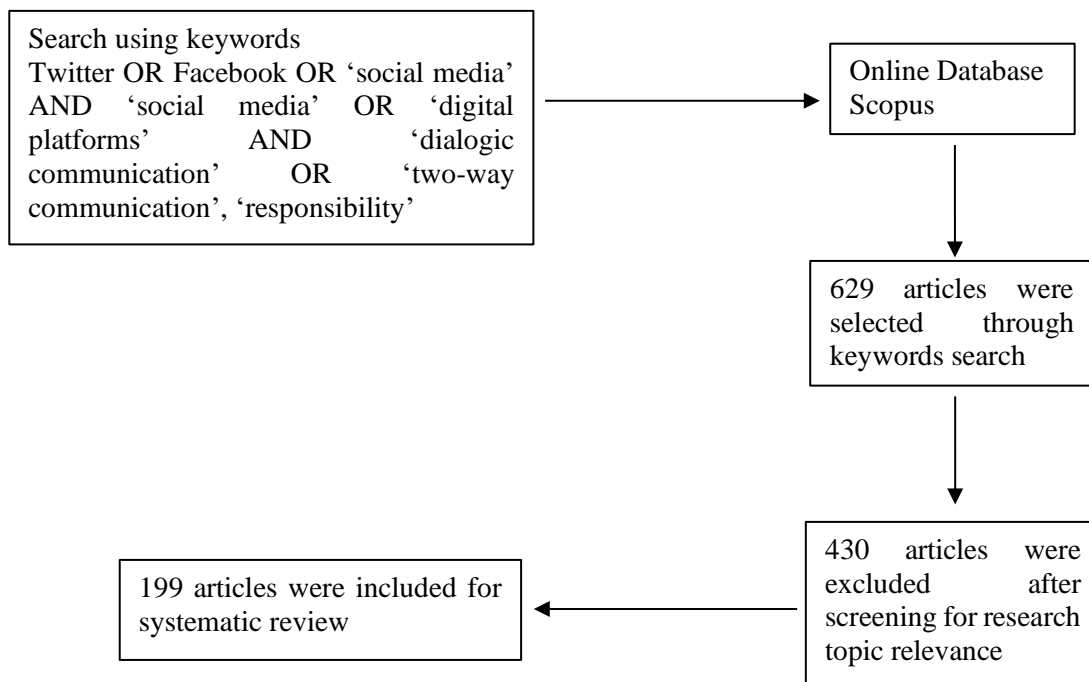


Figure 1, shows the elimination process for this study (source: [Jedynak \(2020\)](#))

### Results

A total of 629 articles were initially retrieved. To refine the dataset, a rigorous screening process was implemented using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Only peer-reviewed journal articles published in English between 2015 and 2024 were considered, while conference papers, book chapters, and non-academic sources were excluded. Studies were required to focus explicitly on dialogic communication in social media, either conceptually or empirically. No restrictions were placed on country, discipline, or journal scope, ensuring an interdisciplinary perspective in the review process. Following an initial screening of titles and abstracts, 430 articles were excluded for reasons such as irrelevance to dialogic communication, duplication, or failure to meet methodological standards. If the title and abstract did not provide sufficient clarity, the full article was reviewed to determine its inclusion. After the elimination process, 199 articles were systematically selected for in-depth analysis. This structured selection ensured that only the most relevant and high-quality studies contributed to the final synthesis, providing a comprehensive and reliable foundation for understanding digital dialogic communication trends. The elimination process is illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

The analysis, interpretation, and discussion of findings section present the findings from the 199 studies reviewed in the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on digital dialogic communication in social media. The analysis addresses key research trends, theoretical development, methodologies, and platform evolution. The discussion integrates verified references and visual representations to enhance comprehension.

The findings from this study provide an in-depth analysis of research trends, theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and the evolution of digital dialogic communication across different social media platforms. The results also highlight emerging themes in AI-driven engagement, public relations, and ethical considerations in digital communication. This section presents the key findings, statistical insights, and comparative analyses supported by tables and a chart.

**Table 1** presents the distribution of digital dialogic communication research across different journal categories, highlighting the primary focus areas and dominant themes in each field. The analysis of published studies reveals that Communication and Media Studies journals remain the most dominant, accounting for 43% of all research. These studies primarily highlighted audience engagement, social media affordances, and platform interactivity, emphasizing the core interests of the field in understanding the user's interaction with digital media. Public Relations and Corporate Communication journals contribute 28% of the research, with a robust focus on stakeholder engagement, corporate transparency, crisis communication, and reflecting the practical concerns of organizations in managing their reputation. Political and Government Communication research, comprising 16% of the studies, has notably gained attention, particularly in areas such as misinformation regulation, digital diplomacy, and AI-driven public messaging, underscoring the increasing importance of social media in political processes and governance.

Additionally, interdisciplinary research, which marked 13% of the total, is expanding rapidly, drawing from fields such as computer science, business, and psychology. The studies strongly focus on critical issues like algorithmic bias, AI-driven trust models, and advanced sentiment analysis techniques, reflecting a growing recognition of the complex technological and psychological dimensions of social media communication (Lewis et al., 2025). This trend demonstrates that dialogic communication is no longer limited to public relations but has become a central theme in understanding broader digital, political, and technological phenomena.

Table 1. Research Trends Across Different Journals (N=199)

Journal Category	Studies Published (%)	Key Research Focus	Emerging Trends
Communication & Media Studies	43%	Social media engagement, audience interactivity, and platform affordances.	AI-driven engagement, algorithmic content curation.
Public Relations & Corporate Communication	28%	Crisis communication, stakeholder relations, and brand transparency.	AI-powered PR strategies, chatbot-mediated engagement.
Political & Government Communication	16%	Digital diplomacy, political engagement, and misinformation regulation.	AI-driven policy messaging, trust in automated communication.
Interdisciplinary (Technology, Business, Psychology)	13%	AI ethics, algorithmic engagement, computational social science.	Deep learning sentiment analysis, predictive engagement modelling.

Note: AI=Artificial Intelligence, PR=Public Relations, N=Total number of studies

Table 2 confirms that the basic framework is still the Dialogic Communication Theory, applied in 52% of the reviewed studies, especially within public relations and communication contexts. Social Presence Theory (21%) was widely used in research to investigate online relationship-building and engagement incentives, focusing on AI-mediated engagement and chatbots, helping to assess perceived authenticity and trust in virtual interactions. As the digital landscape evolved, additional theories were increasingly incorporated to provide more comprehensive insights. In conjunction with multidisciplinary models, Uses and Gratifications Theory (18%) provided a user-centred perspective, explaining motivations for platform engagement and content sharing. Furthermore, emerging models like algorithmic engagement frameworks (9%) were applied to investigate personalization, AI bias, and trust in content curation. This expansion reflects an evolution from the use of static, discipline-specific theories to integrated models that reflect the complexities of AI, automation, and user interaction in modern digital environments.

A development of comprehensive theoretical models that incorporate algorithmic bias, sentiment analysis based on deep learning, and ethical AI frameworks is necessary for AI-driven engagement. The application of Social Presence Theory to chatbots and AI-mediated communication is expanding, with a particular focus on research examining automated responses on social media platforms used by organizations and governments.

Table 2. Theoretical Frameworks in Digital Dialogic Research

Theory	Studies Utilizing (%)	Key Research Focus
Dialogic Communication Theory	52%	Organizational transparency, stakeholder trust.
Social Presence Theory	21%	AI-driven engagement, chatbot interactions.
Uses & Gratifications Theory	18%	User motivations, platform preferences.
Algorithmic Engagement Models	9%	AI-driven content personalization, trust issues.

Note: AI=Artificial Intelligence technologies used in the reviewed studies, including automated algorithms, chatbots, and personalization systems that shape online dialogic interactions

Table 3 presents the dominance of quantitative methods (67%) in the 199 analysed studies extends a focus on survey-based studies, content analysis, and engagement metrics to analyse user behaviour and stakeholder interactions. Researchers predominantly applied this approach to investigate patterns of user engagement, stakeholder trust, and message effectiveness using measurable indicators. Qualitative methods (24%), including in-depth interviews and case studies, are commonly used in crisis communication and public trust studies (Taylor & Kent, 2023). This approach was often employed to explore deeper insights into communication behaviours, perceptions, and ethical considerations, particularly in contexts such as crisis communication or AI-mediated engagement. A growing 9% of studies utilize computational techniques, such as machine learning, sentiment analysis, and predictive modelling, to assess AI-driven engagement and misinformation trends (Chen & Cheng, 2020).

Mixed-method approaches are emerging, combining quantitative insights with qualitative depth to study AI-human interaction and chatbot engagement. Past studies

have suggested adopting mixed methods to achieve significant findings in studies related to dialogic communication. While traditional methods remain dominant, the field is shifting towards AI-assisted analytics, ethical AI assessment, and real-time engagement models, requiring new methodological frameworks to evaluate automation, trust, and human-AI interactions in public communication (Wang & Yang, 2020).

Table 3. Methodology Approaches in Digital Dialogic Studies

Research Method	Percentage (%)	Common Applications
Quantitative Methods	67%	Survey-based studies, content analysis, engagement metrics, user behavior, stakeholder interactions.
Qualitative Methods	24%	In-depth interviews, case studies, crisis communication, and public trust studies.
Computational Techniques	9%	Machine learning, sentiment analysis, predictive modeling, AI-driven engagement, and misinformation trends.

Note: AI=Artificial Intelligence technologies used in the reviewed studies, including automated algorithms, chatbots, and personalization systems that shape online dialogic interactions

Refer to Table 4, the study findings indicate that content analysis is the most commonly used method, accounting for 38% of studies, strongly focusing on social media posts and engagement metrics. This method was particularly effective for analysing social media content, user comments, engagement metrics, and dialogic elements across platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Survey methods represent 29% of the research, emphasizing stakeholder perceptions and trust metrics. In-depth interviews, representing 17%, were predominantly applied in qualitative studies to examine strategic communication choices, AI ethics, and stakeholder experiences. Sentiment analysis using AI accounts for 9% of the studies, concentrating on chatbot communication and issues related to algorithmic bias. Experimental designs made up 7%, used to test the impact of dialogic features or AI-driven interactions on user trust and engagement levels. These findings highlight a trend toward integrating advanced technological tools and real-time data processing with traditional research designs to capture the evolving dynamics of dialogic communication in the digital age. AI-based sentiment analysis is a growing area, though concerns about algorithmic bias in engagement predictions highlight the need for further research (Abid & Harrigan, 2020). Additionally, qualitative studies provide valuable insights into stakeholder concerns regarding automated and algorithm-driven public relations strategies.

Table 4. Research Methods Used in Digital Dialogic Studies

Research Method	Percentage (%)	Common Applications
Content Analysis	38%	Social media posts, engagement metrics.
Surveys	29%	Stakeholder perceptions, trust metrics.

In-depth Interviews	17%	AI-PR ethics, brand engagement.
Sentiment Analysis (AI)	9%	Chatbot communication, algorithmic bias.
Experimental Studies	7%	Testing AI engagement effects, misinformation.

Note: AI=Artificial Intelligence technologies used in the reviewed studies, including automated algorithms, chatbots, and personalization systems that shape online dialogic interactions

Table 5 outlines the chronological social media platforms of internet-based social research from 2015 to 2024, detailing relevant periods and areas of research focus, along with pivotal social media platforms. From 2010 to 2014, the findings revealed research focusing on Facebook and Twitter about public participation and crisis management communication. During the subsequent periods of 2015 to 2018, scholarly attention shifted to Instagram and YouTube and emphasized brand visuals, storytelling, and multimedia corporate engagement. The 2019 to 2021 period witnessed a rapid escalation in TikTok's popularity and its short, content-skewed videos, significantly impacting social media engagement trends among the youth. Most recently, from 2022 to 2024, there has been an increase in attention directed toward LinkedIn and Reddit, analyzing the capabilities of these platforms concerning professional social networking, professional discourse, and communities. This evolution demonstrates the changing patterns of social media and the corresponding shifts in research focus.

Table 5. Social Media Platform Evolution in Dialogic Research (2015-2024)

Period	Key Platforms	Research Focus Areas
2015-2018	Instagram, YouTube Facebook, Twitter	Visual storytelling, brand engagement, public engagement, and crisis communication.
2019-2021	TikTok	Short-form video, viral trends, and youth engagement.
2022-2024	LinkedIn, Reddit	Professional networking discussion, community discussions.

Note: Social Media Platform Evolution

Facebook remains the most extensively researched social media site. However, recent studies focus more on the adoption of artificial intelligence to automate brand interaction and reasoning behaviour to improve content personalization. Advanced AI systems now perform user behavioural analysis and content delivery on the platform to enhance brand engagement, which fundamentally alters user experience and content delivery on the platform. On the other hand, researchers have focused more on misinformation containment strategies after Twitter (X) became an influential communication platform for political and crisis communication. In the realm of government public relations, WeChat is becoming a popular platform, particularly concerning studying digital diplomacy and the employment of AI in public service for enhanced service delivery and emphasis on dialogic strategies in the platform. The development in research focus indicates the increasing impact on the current body of knowledge of AI and automation on primary social platforms, interfaces, and communication with institutional users.

The role of technological affordances has become central in shaping dialogic communication strategies. Commenting systems, live streams, polls, and interactive

multimedia elements were consistently identified as drivers of higher audience engagement and two-way communication. Features like visual storytelling on Instagram and TikTok, along with professional discussions on LinkedIn and Reddit, have opened new dialogic spaces for brands, governments, and communities. A prominent strategy involves integrating AI-driven chatbots to simulate dialogue and provide real-time responses, though concerns about authenticity and transparency persist (Abid & Harrigan, 2020; Kennedy & Sommerfeldt, 2015).

Studies showed that while AI tools enhance efficiency, they raise ethical challenges such as algorithmic bias, loss of human touch, and trust erosion. Platforms such as Facebook and WeChat were frequently cited for their adoption of AI-powered tools in public service and brand communication (see Table 6). Overall, technological affordances are reshaping how dialogue is initiated, sustained, and perceived, underscoring the need for organizations to balance automation with ethical responsibility and relational depth.

Table 6. Key Research Focus Based on Platform

Social Media Platform	Key Research Focus
Facebook	Corporate PR, government engagement, AI chatbots.
Twitter/X	Political communication, digital activism.
LinkedIn	Professional networking, corporate reputation.
TikTok	Influencer communication, youth engagement in social media.
WeChat (China)	Government transparency, AI-driven public service.

Note: AI=Artificial Intelligence, PR=Public Relations

## Discussion

This study presents a comprehensive review of dialogic communication research across social media platforms from 2015 to 2024, revealing significant transformations in theoretical grounding, methodological innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and technological mediation. This discussion reflects how dialogic strategies have evolved in response to the convergence of public expectations, platform capabilities, and algorithmic governance through a systematic review of 199 peer-reviewed articles.

A key insight from this review is the highlight of the interdisciplinary nature of dialogic communication research. While early contributions were rooted in public relations and media studies (Kent & Taylor, 1998), the last decade has seen a growing scope to include fields such as political science (Muniandy & Muniandy, 2013), business (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018), and computer science (Vuong et al., 2021). This expansion recognized that dialogic engagement is not limited to organizational communication but extends to other areas such as misinformation regulation, civic activism, and AI ethics. Studies focusing on digital diplomacy (Chen & Cheng, 2020), health communication (Lee et al., 2023) and crisis communication (Zhang et al., 2022) discovered that dialogic communication is fundamental in molding contemporary discourse across various institutional domains.

The evolution of theoretical frameworks within the field has mirrored interdisciplinary growth. Dialogic Communication Theory (Kent & Taylor, 2021) remains a central pillar in the field of studies, particularly in PR-related research examining trust, transparency, and long-term stakeholder engagement (Ji et al., 2017).

However, scholars have increasingly adopted supplementary frameworks to explain technological and psychological factors. Social Presence Theory has provided a significant lens for understanding interactions involving AI and chatbot-mediated communication (Chen & Cheng, 2020; Littau & Jahng, 2016), emphasizing users' perceptions of intimacy (Lin et al., 2016), authenticity (Song & Hollenbeck, 2015) trust (Song & Hollenbeck, 2015). Uses and Gratifications Theory has been employed to analyse audience motivations and platform preferences (Kujur & Singh, 2020). Meanwhile, algorithmic communication models (Wang & Yang, 2020) and deep learning approaches (Vuong et al., 2021) are increasingly used to study how content creation and engagement personalization influence digital dialogues. These evolving frameworks indicate a shift from one-size-fits-all models toward hybrid theoretical approaches capable of explaining both human and automated interaction patterns.

In terms of methodological developments, the field remains dominated by quantitative approaches, particularly content analysis and surveys (Khang et al., 2023). These methods offer valuable insights into user behaviour, engagement levels, and communication effectiveness, but often fall short in exploring complex dialogic processes in AI-mediated and algorithmically governed environments. Meanwhile, Qualitative methodologies, specifically interview-based research and case study methodologies have significantly proven essential in exploring emotional responses, trust dynamics, and ethical implications of dialogic strategies (Men & Muralidharan, 2017; M. P. Taylor, 2023). Computational techniques such as machine learning, predictive modelling, and sentiment analysis have recently emerged as powerful tools for analysing large-scale, real-time engagement (Wu, 2023). For example, sentiment analysis has been used to discover chatbot tone and trustworthiness (Cheng & Lee, 2023), network analysis has provided insights into influencer communication (Smith et al., 2023) and digital activism (Bimber, 2000; Gálvez-Rodríguez et al., 2016). This methodological diversification reflects a field that is becoming more responsive to the data-rich and dynamic nature of digital interaction.

Social media platforms now offer entirely new technical possibilities and have shifted the way dialogic communication is enacted. Interactive tools such as comments, likes, live streaming, polls, and story features have enabled more participatory forms of communication, supporting Kent and Taylor's (1998) dialogic principles of mutuality, openness, and risk. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok promote visual storytelling, while LinkedIn and Reddit have emerged as important grounds for professional dialogue and community discourse (Starinsky, 2021). The integration of AI-driven features such as chatbots, automated responses, and virtual assistants has further transformed dialogic engagement by enabling constant and scalable interaction (Murtarelli et al., 2022). However, this automation introduces new ethical challenges to the organizations. Concerns around transparency, algorithmic bias, and the lack of authenticity have been widely discussed (Marwick & Lewis, 2017; Tufekci, 2008; Vlahou et al., 2021). The growing presence of AI raises questions about the balance between personalization and manipulation, especially in politically or socially sensitive contexts (Dos Santos & Lopes, 2024). These challenges underscore the requirement for dialogic ethics frameworks that focus not just on content but also on the systems and incentives behind its delivery.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that dialogic communication is no longer merely a theory of public relations; it has evolved into a multidisciplinary, multidimensional practice embedded in platform architecture, user behavior, and institutional strategy. The emergence of AI, real-time analytics, and algorithmic

governance demands that scholars rethink how dialogue is conceptualized, measured, and ethically sustained. Practitioners must adapt communication strategies to balance automation with authenticity, ensuring that engagement remains transparent and inclusive. For scholars, there is a need to develop robust theoretical models that integrate human and non-human actors in dialogic processes and to employ advanced methodologies that reflect the real-time, data-intensive nature of online interaction (Lagrange et al., 2024; Nevradakis, 2024).

In conclusion, dialogic communication in the digital era presents both opportunities and ethical dilemmas. While technological advancements provide new tools for interactive engagement, they also pose risks that must be managed through critical scholarship and responsible practice. As social media platforms continue to evolve and AI becomes more deeply embedded in communication infrastructures, the core values of dialogue reciprocity, transparency, and mutual respect must be reaffirmed and adapted to guide future research and application (Carr & Hayes, 2015).

The research development in digital dialogic communication has undergone significant transformations over the past decade. Early studies (2010-2015) strongly focused on corporate social media adoption, examining organizations' integration in digital platforms for crisis communication, stakeholder engagement, and brand reputation management (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Research during this phase was heavily influenced by dialogic communication theory, transformed from one-way corporate messaging to interactive, two-way engagement models (M. Taylor & Kent, 2014). From 2016 to 2020, research extended to encompass influencer communication, digital activism, and AI-driven content engagement (Khang et al., 2023). Social media platforms evolved beyond corporate communication tools, digital narratives, and consumer behavior shaped by influencers, activists, and public figures (Men et al., 2018). During this phase, Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory (Phua et al., 2017) became prominent in providing insights to understand the users engage with social media platforms and how organizations leverage these motivations to foster deeper connections.

In the post-2020 era, the research priorities have shifted with the rise of algorithmic engagement, AI-driven personalization, and misinformation regulation has shifted research priorities. Scholars now explore AI-moderated interactions, automated crisis communication, and ethical considerations in digital engagement (Dos Santos & Lopes, 2024). The increasing use of AI chatbots and machine-learning algorithms in social media communication has introduced new challenges related to authenticity, transparency, and public trust (Wang & Yang, 2020). These findings suggest a transition from traditional PR-focused studies to multidisciplinary research integrating communication studies, artificial intelligence, and computational social science. Future research should further explore the ethical implications of AI-driven engagement, data privacy concerns, and the role of automation in developing public discourse.

The findings of this systematic review reveal significant theoretical advancements in the study of dialogic communication, addressing several longstanding gaps in the literature. Historically, the field has been anchored in Dialogic Communication Theory (Kent & Taylor, 1998), which emphasizes mutuality, openness (Abdulkareem et al., 2022) and responsiveness in building organizational–public relationships. While this theory remains foundational, especially in public relations, stakeholder engagement, and crisis communication, it has traditionally been applied in static, organization-centric models, often without sufficient attention to platform-specific dynamics or emerging technologies (Lagrange et al., 2024). This review discovered that the theory, while

enduring, has been increasingly extended, adapted, and integrated with complementary frameworks, thus beginning to address these theoretical limitations.

One of the major theoretical contributions of this review is the identification of a shift from mono-theoretical to hybrid theoretical applications. The integration of Social Presence Theory (Cheng & Lee, 2023; Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018) has expanded the dialogic framework into AI-mediated environments, particularly in research involving chatbots and automated messaging. This adaptation helps give clear direction to the previously under-theorized area of how users perceive authenticity and trust in machine-led dialogue. Similarly, the inclusion of Uses and Gratifications Theory (Kujur & Singh, 2020; Sweetser & Kelleher, 2016) fills the gap in understanding user motivations and expectations in dialogic encounters on different social platforms. These integrations broaden the conceptualization of dialogue from an organizational perspective to include user-centric and technology-mediated views, which have been largely overlooked in earlier models or frameworks.

Another key theoretical advancement is the emergence of algorithmic engagement models and AI ethics frameworks as lenses to study dialogic interaction in algorithm-driven spaces. This shift fills a critical gap in prior literature, which rarely accounted for how platform algorithms mediate engagement, filter visibility, or personalize dialogic exchanges (Obasi & Gurah, 2024). As digital communication becomes increasingly governed by artificial intelligence, these new frameworks allow scholars to explore the intersection of automation, personalization, and public discourse, a domain inadequately theorized within the original dialogic paradigm (Ferré-Pavia & Bajjouk, 2025). The application of algorithmic theories also introduces ethical dimensions such as fairness, transparency, and accountability in communication systems, which are essential in evaluating the legitimacy and trustworthiness of AI-led engagement strategies.

Furthermore, the findings highlight a contextual expansion of dialogic theory across sectors (e.g., public health, political communication, digital diplomacy) and platforms (e.g., TikTok, LinkedIn, Reddit), offering empirical evidence that dialogic principles are being applied more broadly than originally proposed. This diversification responds to earlier critiques that dialogic theory (Kim et al., 2025) was too narrowly focused on corporate or non-profit communication and not sufficiently adaptable to other communication contexts (Sommerfeldt & Yang, 2018). By mapping the theory's evolution across different domains and digital environments, this study demonstrates its adaptability and enduring relevance, while simultaneously encouraging further theoretical refinement to accommodate platform-specific affordances and cultural nuances.

In summary, this review presents the theoretical advancement of dialogic communication by demonstrating how foundational models are being reinterpreted and extended in light of technological change and user behaviour. It fills existing gaps by (1) integrating underutilized but highly relevant theories like social presence and U&G; (2) introducing frameworks that account for algorithmic governance and AI-mediated interaction; and (3) showing that dialogic principles apply across an increasingly diverse set of platforms and communicative contexts. Future theoretical development should focus on creating integrative models that merge human-to-human and human-to-AI dialogic experiences, accounting for emotional, relational, and algorithmic dimensions of modern digital communication (Disseldorp & Bouko, 2025).

The review indicates that quantitative research methods dominate digital dialogic communication studies, with content analysis and surveys being the most frequently used

approaches (Vural et al., 2022). These methodologies are effective in measuring engagement metrics, sentiment analysis, and content trends, but they often lack depth in understanding the motivations, emotions, and ethical concerns behind digital interactions (Asomah, 2025). Qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews and case studies, have been widely applied in stakeholder engagement and crisis communication research, offering deeper insights into organizational strategies and public perceptions (M. P. Taylor, 2023). However, qualitative studies face challenges related to small sample sizes and generalizability, limiting their applicability in broader digital engagement studies. An emerging trend in digital dialogic communication research is the integration of computational methods, such as machine learning, sentiment analysis, and network analysis. These approaches enable researchers to examine large-scale social media interactions, automated responses, and trends (Chen & Cheng, 2020). However, the reliance on algorithm-driven content analysis raises concerns about data bias, interpretability, and ethical transparency, requiring future researchers to develop ethical guidelines for AI-assisted analysis.

The findings have important practical implications for organizations, policymakers, and communication professionals. Businesses and public relations practitioners must adapt to AI-driven engagement strategies, ensuring that digital interactions maintain authenticity, transparency, and ethical responsibility. The increasing prevalence of AI chatbots and automated customer service interactions highlights the need for clear disclosure policies regarding AI-assisted communication (Khang et al., 2023). Policymakers should focus on regulating algorithmic communication, ensuring that automated social media platforms do not contribute to misinformation, echo chambers, or bias in content distribution. Established standards for data privacy and security, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), provide a baseline for user data protection, but further policies are needed to govern AI-driven recommendation systems and automated public engagement tools (Murtarelli et al., 2022). For social media platforms, the challenge lies in balancing engagement algorithms with ethical responsibilities, particularly in managing content visibility, misinformation, and digital persuasion tactics. Future research should explore how algorithmic governance influences user interactions, public discourse, and corporate reputation management.

Several key areas require further exploration in digital dialogic communication research. Future research on dialogic communication should prioritize several emerging directions to address the developments in the digital sphere. With the rapid integration of AI chatbots and machine-learning algorithms, scholars need to investigate how these technologies influence public trust, engagement strategies, and the overall effectiveness of crisis communication, especially as AI-driven interactions become more prevalent across platforms.

Comparative studies are also needed to move beyond the corporate sector, examining how non-profit organizations, government agencies, and media industries confront distinct engagement challenges and adapt dialogic principles to their unique contexts. As AI-driven communication expands, ethical and policy concerns, such as misinformation governance, algorithmic bias, and privacy, demand closer scrutiny to ensure responsible and transparent use of these technologies (Forgione et al., 2025). Additionally, most dialogic communication research remains focused on Western platforms; future work should explore regional social media ecosystems like WeChat, TikTok, and VKontakte to uncover cross-cultural differences in dialogic practices. Finally, longitudinal studies are essential for tracking how organizations and stakeholders

adapt to the ongoing adoption of AI and automation in engagement, providing a deeper understanding of long-term impacts and shifts in dialogic communication norms.

Provide insights that can guide future research endeavours in the field of dialogic theory and social media. Identify gaps in the literature and propose avenues for further investigation, potentially enhancing existing theoretical frameworks and practice in digital communication strategies. By systematically reviewing the existing literature, this study seeks to consolidate knowledge, highlight trends, and offer a comprehensive understanding of how dialogic theory manifests and influences communication practices within the dynamic landscape of social media. The findings of this review are anticipated to contribute to both theoretical developments and practical insights for organizations seeking to optimize their dialogic communication strategies in the digital age.

## Conclusion

This systematic literature review of 199 studies published between 2015 and 2024 demonstrates that digital dialogic communication has significantly evolved alongside the development of social media platforms and AI technologies. From an initial pool of 629 articles, the final dataset reveals that Communication and Media Studies dominate the field (43%), followed by Public Relations (28%), Political and Government Communication (16%), and interdisciplinary research (13%), reflecting the expanding relevance of dialogic practices across sectors. Theoretical analysis shows that Dialogic Communication Theory remains foundational (52%), yet scholars increasingly integrate Social Presence Theory (21%), Uses and Gratifications Theory (18%), and Algorithmic Engagement Models (9%) to explain AI-driven engagement, personalization, and trust. Methodologically, quantitative approaches predominate (67%), though qualitative (24%) and computational methods (9%) including machine learning and sentiment analysis are steadily rising. Platform evolution indicates shifts from Facebook and Twitter in early years to Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Reddit, mirroring global adoption trends and new dialogic affordances such as short-form video, professional discourse, and community-driven interaction. Across platforms, technological features including commenting systems, chatbots, and algorithmic curation increasingly shape dialogic exchanges, offering efficiency yet raising ethical concerns regarding authenticity, transparency, and algorithmic bias. Overall, the findings highlight a paradigm shift in digital communication, calling for future research on ethical AI engagement, global comparative studies, and long-term effects of automation, while urging practitioners to adopt responsible, transparent, and trust-oriented dialogic strategies in an AI-mediated communication environment.

## Conflict of Interest

We declare no conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, in relation to the submitted manuscript.

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