

Media and Elderly: The Role of Media in Handling Post Retirement Syndrome

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Abstract

Purpose: This research investigates how media--especially social media and artificial intelligence (AI)--help older adults overcome psychological and social challenges associated with Post Retirement Syndrome. It aims to understand how digital platforms address communication difficulties in retirement. By examining media usage and AI-assisted interactions, the study explores how technology enhances emotional well-being and promotes social integration in the post-retirement phase of life.

Methods: This research employed a qualitative method to analyze the media behavior of retirees through interviews and field observations. Older adults in Bandung were selected using a maximum variation sampling strategy to reflect diverse occupational backgrounds. Bandung was chosen due to its demographic makeup, which includes a growing population of retirees with varying levels of digital engagement, making it an ideal setting to examine the relationship between media use, aging, and retirement experiences.

Findings: The findings indicate that social media--particularly Facebook and WhatsApp--has become a transformative tool in addressing Post-Retirement Syndrome. These platforms help older adults maintain social connections, share experiences, and engage with supportive communities. With the help of AI, seniors can more effectively identify and interact with relevant groups, tailoring digital experiences to personal needs and fostering meaningful relationships.

Originality: Although much research focuses on interpersonal communication in the elderly, few studies explore how media and AI act as bridges for retirees to reconstruct self-concept and build resilience through social media.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Digital Engagement, Elderly Communication, Post-Retirement Syndrome, Social Media.

Introduction

One of the most critical periods faced by individuals is the retirement phase, a transition that often triggers profound fear and anxiety. This fear stems primarily from uncertainties regarding their future roles, identities, and social interactions. Such anxiety frequently translates into severe psychological and physical health issues, notably manifesting as communication difficulties. The issues stemming from accelerated aging and an increasingly large elderly population have posed significant challenges for society as a whole (He et al., 2020). The retirement period creates a condition of fear for everyone who experiences it. This fear causes serious psychological and physical problems for many people, especially communication problems. The main thing is that there is a fear

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of communicating with their environment; this problem occurs protractedly, as if older people are trapped in a new world that they cannot accept quickly. Communication problems in elderly individuals experiencing retirement often arise due to a profound fear of isolation, rejection, or diminished relevance in their social circles. This condition may persist over extended periods, leaving seniors feeling trapped in an unfamiliar environment characterized by perceived alienation or detachment from their previous active lives. This is the driving factor for the emergence of post-retirement syndrome (Khodijah, 2018).

Post-retirement syndrome itself involves various psychological challenges, including depression, anxiety, reduced self-worth, and impaired interpersonal relationships. Individuals facing this syndrome may show decreased motivation, emotional instability, and reduced engagement in social activities. The transition from an active work life to retirement disrupts daily routines, often resulting in an identity crisis and loss of self-confidence, further complicating social interactions and communication effectiveness. One promising strategy to mitigate the negative impacts of post-retirement syndrome involves enhancing social support mechanisms. Family members, close relatives, and the immediate social environment play essential roles in providing emotional reassurance, companionship, and validation to retirees (Hidayat et al., 2020). Active and supportive communication from these groups helps retirees maintain a sense of belonging, contributing positively to their mental well-being and reducing feelings of emptiness and isolation. This can cause tension in the relationship between the elderly and their environment, as well as complicate the recovery process for individuals experiencing post-retirement syndrome. There is a negative relationship between self-concept and post-retirement syndrome. The more positive the self-concept, the lower a retiree's tendency to experience post-power syndrome.

Nevertheless, when social support is inadequate or misaligned with retirees' emotional needs, tension and misunderstandings may emerge, further complicating the recovery process. Therefore, it is crucial for family members and society to be sensitized to the unique psychological needs of the elderly during the retirement phase. Awareness programs and family counseling can provide practical guidance on recognizing early signs of post-retirement syndrome and applying effective communication strategies to address them. On the other hand, retirees who have a negative self-concept have a higher tendency to experience post-retirement syndrome (Nurhayati & Indriana, 2015). Environmental sensitivity to these conditions makes the elderly look for a solution and escape to overcome the communication problems. Conversely, those with negative self-concepts frequently perceive retirement as a substantial loss, significantly increasing their susceptibility to developing emotional and psychological distress. Given this, cultivating a positive self-concept among older adults becomes essential. Initiatives such as retirement preparation programs, hobby clubs, community volunteering opportunities, and lifelong learning activities can help retirees maintain meaningful roles, build self-esteem, and facilitate smoother transitions into retirement life. Ultimately, environmental sensitivity and active community involvement are key to addressing communication barriers and supporting elderly individuals in navigating the complex landscape of post-retirement life. By recognizing and proactively addressing these challenges, societies can foster environments that enable older adults to lead fulfilling, communicatively vibrant, and emotionally healthy lives post-retirement.

Media as a communication bridge between older people and the outside world has answered the challenges of the elderly who experience fear in terms of communication.

Technology acceptance among older adults has become a hot topic in the international academic community, involving the integration of knowledge across multiple disciplines (Shang et al., 2024). Encouraging older adults to embrace and comfortably adopt technology requires specific attention to user-centered design principles that mitigate intimidation and barriers associated with unfamiliar digital interfaces. Consequently, technologies intended for senior users should be thoughtfully crafted, prioritizing simplicity, intuitive interfaces, accessibility, and features explicitly adapted to suit their physical capabilities, cognitive abilities, and psychological comfort levels. When technologies are designed with sensitivity to older adults' conditions and experiences, their willingness and ability to integrate these technologies into their everyday lives significantly increase. Communication theory continues to evolve in response to technological and social changes (Utari & Pramana, 2025). To encourage seniors to embrace technology, technology needs to be designed not to intimidate them. This can be done by designing technology that suits their conditions and abilities. Media usage is a significant and personal aspect of contemporary daily life. When examining how individuals engage with different media types, their personal characteristics become a critical factor to observe (Li et al., 2022).

Understanding these individual differences, including factors such as cognitive ability, educational background, health status, and socioeconomic conditions, provides essential insights into how older adults engage with digital platforms and media. Such insights can inform targeted interventions to facilitate meaningful digital engagement, ultimately reducing feelings of isolation, loneliness, and disconnection experienced by the elderly. Nevertheless, older adults remain particularly vulnerable in digital environments, often becoming prime targets for online crime, including identity theft, fraud, scams, and phishing attacks. Moreover, they are notably susceptible to consuming, believing, and inadvertently spreading misinformation or fake news due to limited digital literacy and critical information evaluation skills. The pervasive phenomenon of ageism further exacerbates these vulnerabilities. Subtle, often overlooked manifestations of age-related prejudice--termed micro-ageism--regularly permeate online interactions, media portrayals, and technology design, negatively influencing older adults' self-perception, engagement, and overall well-being (Marcos, 2025). Addressing these critical issues requires coordinated strategies, including promoting digital literacy education tailored explicitly to older populations, raising societal awareness to counteract ageist stereotypes, and advocating inclusive and age-sensitive technology design. By systematically addressing digital vulnerabilities and promoting empowering technological environments, media and technology can effectively fulfill their potential as essential tools for enhancing the quality of life, social integration, and overall communication efficacy among older adults.

In some cases, individuals experiencing post-retirement syndrome face significant challenges in expressing themselves and communicating clearly and effectively. Media can play a pivotal role in mitigating these difficulties by disseminating educational content specifically targeting awareness and understanding of Post-Retirement Syndrome. Such educational programs may include televised talk shows featuring experts, public discussion forums, and informative articles designed to increase general knowledge and sensitivity about the syndrome within the broader community. Additionally, media platforms can deliver interactive content, such as quizzes, self-assessment tools, and online mental health screenings, that assist older adults in recognizing early symptoms and understanding their emotional and psychological

conditions. Media has an essential role in assisting older adults to cultivate new interests and activities throughout their retirement period. These activities help them stay active and productive, thereby reducing the risk of Post Retirement Syndrome.

Technology-based interventions can reduce loneliness and depression while enhancing life satisfaction among older adults. Beyond raising awareness, media also serves as an essential resource for encouraging older adults to discover and pursue new interests and activities during retirement. By promoting various recreational, educational, and volunteer opportunities, media helps retirees remain active, engaged, and socially connected, significantly reducing the risks associated with Post-Retirement Syndrome. Forsman indicate that technology-based interventions effectively alleviate feelings of loneliness and depression among the elderly, enhancing their overall life satisfaction. Such interventions leverage the benefits of digital platforms and online communities to foster meaningful social interactions (Forsman et al., 2018). Many older adults report that digital communication tools increase their contact with family and friends by making communication easier and more frequent (Karaoglu et al., 2021). In this context, social media can reduce isolation and improve older adults' well-being by supporting social relationships regardless of time and place (Coto et al., 2017).

Furthermore, social technology use is associated with better health and well-being, mediated by reduced loneliness (Chopik, 2016). Media can also foster engagement by broadcasting programs focused on sports, arts, or social activities and by providing information about communities and organizations that support senior participation. Moreover, the media can proactively foster engagement among the elderly population by regularly broadcasting programs related to sports, arts, cultural activities, and other socially enriching pursuits. These broadcasts not only entertain but also stimulate cognitive and physical activity among retirees. Additionally, media outlets can actively promote information regarding local communities, clubs, associations, and non-profit organizations dedicated to supporting older adult participation, enabling seniors to more easily find opportunities that resonate with their interests, capabilities, and aspirations. Through these comprehensive approaches, media acts as a catalyst for maintaining and enhancing older adults' quality of life and ensuring sustained communication effectiveness and social integration post-retirement.

Media describes the needs of older people, while Artificial Intelligence (AI) responds directly to those needs. Mapping the daily media behavior of older adults by forming interaction circles suited to their preferences is one of the advantages of new media in addressing post-retirement syndrome. The fear of communicating with the environment has shifted significantly, as older adults' media behavior is increasingly supported by AI. Digital engagement can reinforce existing social relationships and strengthen older people's sense of autonomy and control (Damant et al., 2017). Virtual assistants and AI-driven technologies offer substantial benefits by supporting seniors who wish to age in place, promoting everyday functioning and reducing feelings of social isolation and loneliness. Virtual assistants can support ageing in place by promoting daily functioning and reducing social isolation (Marston & Samuels, 2019). These technologies offer practical support for daily tasks like medication reminders, scheduling, and communication, thus improving the independence and self-confidence of older adults. In addition, various studies suggest that social media can positively affect the physical health and emotional well-being of older adults. For instance, platforms like Facebook have been linked to improved emotional connection and psychological benefits. New media such as Facebook and WhatsApp also help reestablish and strengthen previously distant

relationships. Moreover, numerous studies highlight how social media can positively influence seniors' health, emotional well-being, and overall quality of life.

Platforms such as Facebook have demonstrated significant psychological benefits by facilitating emotional connectivity, social interaction, and reducing feelings of isolation. New media applications like Facebook, WhatsApp, and similar digital platforms enable older adults to reestablish and strengthen previously distant or dormant relationships, thereby revitalizing their social networks and emotional support systems. The successful integration of older adults into digital social networks relies heavily on the availability of communities with similar communication patterns, interests, and preferences. Establishing or identifying such communities creates environments where older adults can comfortably interact, share experiences, and mutually support one another. Moreover, assistive technologies designed specifically for older adults have been shown to considerably enhance their everyday experiences and contribute positively to their overall quality of life (Khosravi & Ghapanchi, 2015). These technologies not only address immediate practical needs but also support seniors' long-term psychological resilience and social connectedness.

Addressing communication difficulties among older adults experiencing post-retirement syndrome requires facilitating connections with peers who share similar experiences and circumstances. Media platforms offer unique opportunities and capabilities for older adults to establish meaningful relationships and interact without being constrained by geographical or temporal limitations. Artificial Intelligence (AI) significantly enhances this connectivity by functioning as a facilitator in social interactions; for example, through friend recommendations on social media platforms like Facebook, which utilize algorithms that identify and filter potential connections based on shared interests, backgrounds, or common life situations. This problem requires older adults to connect with individuals 'in the same boat' to find comfort in communication. Media offers facilities that allow older people to build relationships and communicate without spatial or temporal limitations. Artificial Intelligence (AI) serves as a bridge in this process--suggesting friends on social media platforms like Facebook and filtering connections based on shared backgrounds and interests. Investigating how social media can help reduce older adults' fear of communication is particularly significant, especially regarding their comfort in opening up and interacting more naturally within their social environment.

AI-supported systems can further enhance the comfort level of older adults by proactively offering tailored retirement-related information, such as financial planning advice, healthcare insights, lifestyle management tips, and opportunities for social engagement. By providing personalized and easily accessible information, these technologies help retirees navigate the uncertainties of retirement life with greater confidence and reduced anxiety. However, the increasing use of AI-driven media tools to mitigate post-retirement syndrome must be balanced with rigorous attention to privacy, ethical considerations, and data security. Privacy is particularly important to older adults, who often perceive it not merely as a fundamental right, but also as a crucial factor in preserving autonomy, dignity, and personal identity (Berridge et al., 2019). Therefore, the development and implementation of AI technologies intended for older adults must prioritize robust privacy protections and transparency about data collection practices. Furthermore, despite the benefits offered by advanced technological solutions, it is vital that these tools complement rather than replace genuine human interaction. AI applications must be thoughtfully designed to support authentic interpersonal

connections, respecting the emotional and psychological needs of retirees. Thus, technology should act as an aid rather than a substitute, enhancing human contact and facilitating deeper, more meaningful communication among older adults and their communities.

This article will first discuss symptoms in older people due to changes in conditions in older adults who have retired from work. Identifying anxiety and loneliness in communication with the elderly is the first step. Then, analyze the importance of a good quality of life for the elderly with good communication, and then explain how the media, especially new media, plays an important role in overcoming post-retirement syndrome. So, how media behavior in the elderly is constructed along with their journey to finding a comfort zone in their communication. Further, the discussion will examine how media--particularly new media platforms and digital technologies--can significantly mitigate communication difficulties experienced by retirees. It highlights the various roles of media as an essential facilitator that supports older adults in navigating and overcoming post-retirement syndrome by reducing social isolation and fostering stronger social connections. Finally, the article will analyze how media behavior among older adults is constructed and reshaped throughout their journey toward establishing comfort and confidence in their communication practices. This includes understanding how older adults adapt to media technology, utilize digital interactions to enhance their social connections, and ultimately discover new comfort zones that contribute positively to their post-retirement lives.

Methods

The research method employed in this study is qualitative, utilizing a case study approach. This involves identifying existing phenomena, clearly defining research objectives, planning systematic approaches, and collecting data for reporting purposes. Qualitative research explores participants' perspectives using interactive and adaptable strategies, as will be implemented by the researchers in this study. Qualitative research seeks to comprehend social phenomena through the participants' viewpoints, aligning with Molleong's explanation in *Qualitative Research Methodology*, which emphasizes 'the views, feelings, and behaviors of individuals or groups' (Moleong, 2017). The object of this research is retirees in Bandung, representing various occupational and socio-economic backgrounds. Bandung was chosen because it has a growing elderly population with increasing digital media engagement, making it a relevant setting for studying post-retirement communication patterns. Data collection was conducted using in-depth interviews and field observation. Informants were purposively selected to reflect diversity in their pre-retirement professions and levels of digital engagement.

Table 1. Informant Demographic

No.	Informant Code	Gender	Occupational Background	Age (Years)
1.	Informant 1	Male	Retired Civil Servant (Lawyer)	65
2.	Informant 2	Male	Retired Civil Servant (Protocol Officer)	68
3.	Informant 3	Female	Retired State-Owned Enterprise Employee	56
4.	Informant 4	Male	Retired Police Officer	59
5.	Informant 5	Female	Retired Civil Servant (Elementary Teacher)	70
6.	Informant 6	Female	Retired Bank Manager	58
7.	Informant 7	Male	Retired Junior High School Teacher	61
8.	Informant 8	Male	Retired Bank Employee	60

9. Informant 9 Male Retired Civil Servant (Lecturer) 66

Note: There are a total of 9 informants in this study, consisting of 6 male and 3 female informants

These methods provided a comprehensive understanding of retirees' experiences in adapting to post-retirement life, particularly in relation to their use of digital media. The combination of interviews and observations allowed the researchers to explore not only what the participants expressed, but also how they behaved in their daily communication practices. The findings generated from this qualitative inquiry are elaborated in the next section, highlighting key themes and patterns that emerged from the data.

Results

Communication research investigates how individuals, organizations, media systems, and governments question and explain resilience, allowing us to understand better societal and systems perspectives on the resilience (Houston & Buzzanell, 2018). Social interventions and appropriate communication methods can help older people cope with the psychological impact of retirement, taking into account their personality traits (Choi et al., 2023). Communication disorders vary in type, severity, and occurrence, with other symptoms limiting physical and cognitive functioning. The burden of communication disorders increases with age and has significant implications for health services. Communication disorders in the elderly can be related to general health and social problems. It is important for everyone, especially healthcare professionals, to recognize and address the communication challenges experienced by older adults (Cingi et al., 2015).

Working people will reach a stage or situation where they must stop working. This situation will affect all workers, both men and women. Retirement can be interpreted as a situation where a person stops working, which has become a habit or activity that must be carried out daily. Retirement is when a person stops formal work as they age, followed by physical decline. Post-retirement syndrome is a change in circumstances experienced by retired individuals, followed by various physical and psychological symptoms due to their status from working to not working. Post-retirement syndrome usually occurs in individuals who have become retirees or retirees or have been laid off because the individual concerned is no longer working, retiring, not serving or no longer in power. Post-retirement syndrome occurs not because of retirement or unemployment but because of how the individual appreciates and feels this new situation.

Retirement is often considered a life stage that many people dream of. After years of hard work, retirement is a time to relax, enjoy life, and pursue personal interests. However, for some people, retirement can be a surprising challenge and lead to feelings of loss, confusion, and even depression. Post Retirement Syndrome is a term used to describe a series of physical, emotional, and social challenges that may arise after retirement. This can include feelings of loss, boredom, social isolation, changes in identity, and even physical and mental health problems. Retirement can also affect physical and mental health. Some retirees may experience increased stress, difficulty sleeping, and even health problems related to a lack of physical activity and lifestyle changes.

Retirement, although a long-awaited time for a few workers, can be emotionally difficult for many. Feelings of sadness, anxiety, loss of interest and even depression are emotional impacts that can occur after retirement. Feeling sad is a natural reaction to major life changes, such as retirement. Retirees may feel sad about leaving a job integral

to their lives for many years. In addition, they may also feel sad because they feel like they are missing the daily structure and social interactions they have at work. Many retirees experience a decrease in interest in daily activities. They may feel less motivated or enthusiastic about doing things they used to enjoy. Loneliness affects the physical and mental health of older people. Increased stress can cause older adults to become anxious, sad, lonely, and withdraw from their environment (Crewdson, 2016). Loneliness is also a risk factor for anxiety in older people (Domènech-Abella et al., 2019). This can lead to feelings of emptiness and lack of purpose. The peak of post-retirement problems is depression; depression is a more serious emotional reaction that can appear after retirement. Several studies suggest that social media helps reduce loneliness and improves emotional well-being in older adults. However, longitudinal evidence indicates that social media use does not increase or decrease older adults' depressive symptoms over time (Cotten et al., 2023).

In some cases, persistent feelings of sadness and anxiety can develop into clinical depression. Depression after retirement can have a serious impact on quality of life and requires professional treatment. *"I rarely go out of the house because I don't feel like I have much in common with the people around me. I used to be busy with work and have a professional environment, but now, at home, I prefer to keep quiet because the neighbours' chats feel less relevant to me"* (Interview with Informant 5, January 7, 2024).

On the other hand, risk factors for anxiety disorders in the elderly are usually female gender, low education, living alone, financial dependence on others, and at least one chronic disease (Cengiz Özyurt et al., 2018). Post Retirement Syndrome is a collection of symptoms that arise after retirement, such as a sense of loss, loneliness, depression, and anxiety. Anyone can experience post-retirement syndrome, but it is more common in older adults with important positions or roles during their working years. Post Retirement Syndrome is a psychological condition experienced by someone after retiring from work. This can affect a person's mental and physical health. Some of the symptoms that someone experiencing post-retirement syndrome may experience are anxiety, depression, loss of self-confidence, and loss of purpose in life. Emotional regulation and an individual's ability to control their emotions can influence the occurrence of post-retirement syndrome. The syndrome that occurs in post-retirement older adults has different characteristics for each older adult. (Osborne, 2012) explains that during the transition from pre-retirement to retirement, individuals need to develop a positive view of their retirement lifestyle, especially if their current view of life is pessimistic.

The symptoms of Post Retirement Syndrome are different for everyone. The fear of being alone in retirement haunts retirees' minds. The interview results show that the sense of loss of identity and status as an active worker means that the instructional communication process that used to be carried out optimally is now limited to the family environment and tends to be less able to quell this strong desire.

"I used to often interact with people who had an open mind in the office. But after retirement, the conversation in the home environment was more about gossip or things that I thought were less interesting. In the end, I prefer to stay at home and spend time alone" (Interview with Informant 8, January 19, 2025).

The appearance of depression is the beginning of Post Retirement Syndrome. Depression causes feelings of confusion and uncertainty. Seniors need clarification about what to do after retirement and are still determining the future. Anxiety arises about the communication that must be carried out with the environment.

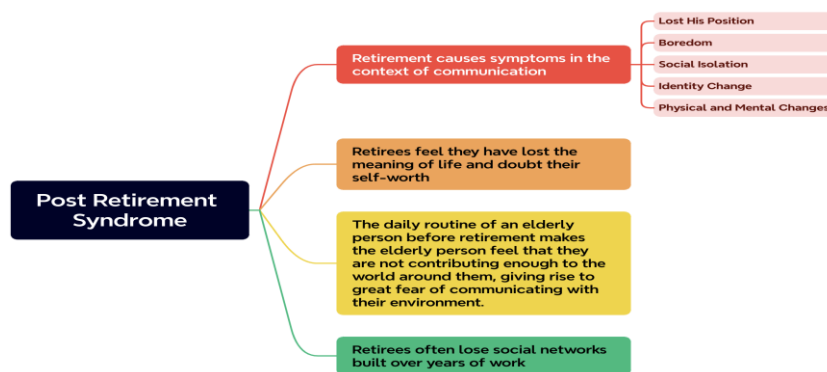


Figure 1. Post Retirement Syndrome Symptom (Source: Processed by Researchers)

At the same time, media use in everyday life, especially digital media, is attracting increasing attention as today's media-rich environment provides increasing opportunities to encourage social participation. Traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio provide retirees with news and information about social connectedness and participation (Pan et al., 2019). However, further research shows that older people who watch TV more than three hours a day have a higher risk of chronic decline in kidney function than those who watch less than two hours a day (Hawkins et al., 2015). Various studies have demonstrated that internet-based new media serves as an effective digital platform for social engagement, particularly in facilitating connections between older adults and their family and friends. (Barbosa Neves et al., 2019).

Media is a commonplace means for every individual to communicate. New media is emerging as a new trend and a more complex communication bridge. Social media is a suitable platform for dealing with post-retirement syndrome. Social media has succeeded in changing the practice of direct communication with broadcast media from one media institution to many audiences (one to many) to the practice of dialogic communication between many people or audiences (many to many).

"In the past, after retirement, I felt that I had lost a lot of friends because I rarely met. But since learning to use social media, I have been able to reconnect with old friends. Now we often share stories in WhatsApp or Facebook groups" (Interview with Informant 2, April 12, 2024).

This implies how the role of media changes the communication process quickly. Social media are online websites enabling user communication, collaboration, and content sharing. Social media can support communication with other people in a virtual environment by creating new relationships and improving existing ones. Social capital is defined as the strength of a person's ties to others; this is known to impact older people's well-being positively. Social media can also help strengthen ties and bridge the social capital of participants (Antheunis et al., 2015). *"I feel closer to my peers because of the WhatsApp group. We often share stories, exchange news, and even plan meetings. Social media helps me stay connected and not feel alone after retirement"* (Interview with Informant 9, March 25, 2025).

The media is important in handling Post Retirement Syndrome in the elderly. Media can be used to provide information and education about Post Retirement Syndrome, as well as to support older adults in developing new activities and interests in retirement. This information can help seniors understand the symptoms of Post Retirement Syndrome and how to overcome them. The mass media has an important role because it must provide correct information about the coping resources available for the elderly. Mass media can prepare society to face disasters, provide warnings and information about coping

strategies, provide forums for public reaction, and provide news about events. The immense stress resulting from ‘information overload’ can lead to paranoia and distrust of health services, which can cause a person to avoid quarantine, which can have serious consequences for public health (Sargu et al., 2023). Media use is an important component of modern daily life and is personal. When focusing on how individuals use each media type, personal characteristics are an important observational factor (Li et al., 2022). Recently, older people have shown a special interest in using social media daily. Social media allows older adults to interact with a larger network of contacts, observe friends and family status updates, and express themselves online to others (Hutto et al., 2015). The impact of this online behavior is likely to increase their skills and opportunities to communicate and participate in social activities (Quinn, 2018).

Social media and online platforms play an important role in creating a support network for those suffering from Post Retirement Syndrome. Widespread online-based social services can enable elderly mobile phone users to get interesting, funny, or useful information and news from others to pass the time and relax (Yang & Lin, 2019). *"WhatsApp groups are the main place for me to communicate with old friends. We often share photos, remember the good old days, and support each other when someone is sick or having difficulties. It feels like having a second family"* (Interview with Informant 9, March 25, 2025).

Apart from the urge to socialize, another main reason for users to use social networking services is to fill their time and relax their minds by making new friends and maintaining good relationships with others (Hsiao et al., 2016). Retirement groups, online forums, and social media communities that focus on retirement-related topics can be places where individuals can share experiences, seek advice, and receive support from others facing similar challenges. Social media also allows individuals to stay in touch with retirees and maintain meaningful social interactions. Media also functions as a source of inspiration and knowledge about new interests and hobbies. *"I feel more connected to my peers through WhatsApp groups. In the past, after retirement, I used to feel lonely, but since this group existed, there is something to be discussed every day, from family news to nostalgic chats"* (Interview with Informant 6, January 8, 2025).

YouTube channels that focus on topics such as art, travel, food, or other activities a person is interested in can provide ideas, suggestions, and inspiration to explore. Media provides a window to the outside world and helps individuals find activities that provide satisfaction and happiness in retirement. In general, the media experience of retirees plays an important role in educating and increasing public awareness about Post Retirement Syndrome. The media helps remove the negative stigma and increase understanding of new retirees' challenges. This can encourage society to provide better support and create an inclusive retirement environment.

Discursive patterns mirror those in traditional media, suggesting that Twitter also reproduces similar views. This highlights the importance of understanding how social media discourse influences perceptions of older people and can provide important insights for research on post-retirement syndrome (Makita et al., 2021). Findings from the Health and Retirement Study indicate that communication through social media is linked to reduced feelings of loneliness, facilitated by enhanced social support and increased social interaction. *"Facebook is a place for me to share stories and memories. I often write about my experiences while still working, and then my friends comment and share their stories as well. This makes me feel connected even though I haven't met in person"* (Interview with Informant 5, January 7, 2024).

These results highlight the potential of social media communication to reduce loneliness in older adults by increasing social support and relationships (Zhang et al., 2021). Social media provides social support in difficult situations without the limitations of space and time and can expand health knowledge. Although social media use has positive impacts, such as overcoming loneliness and increasing a sense of control, social media use can also pose risks, such as misuse of personal data and the dissemination of potentially harmful information. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have been shown to increase feelings of social connectedness and reduce loneliness in younger age groups. However, this research found social media, such as social capital, loneliness, social relationships, and social support (Quinn, 2021). *"Youtube and TikTok are now loyal friends in their spare time. I often spend time watching cooking recipes, light news, and other entertainment. This platform really makes me feel less lonely after retirement"* (Interview with Informant 8, January 19, 2024).

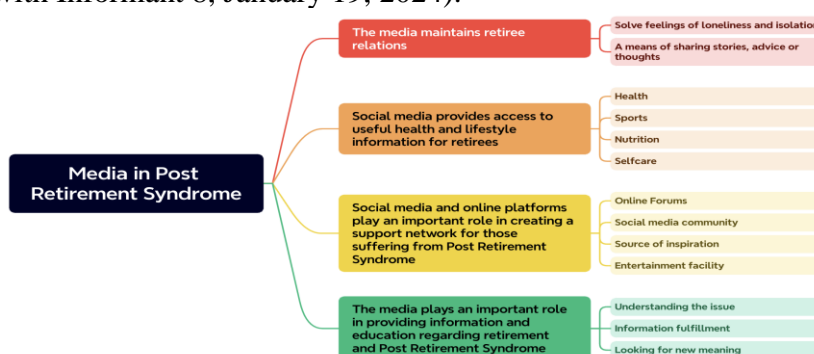


Figure 2. The Role of Media In Handling Post-Retirement Syndrome
(Source: Processed by Researchers)

Health issues are important for the elderly, and social media provides access to health and lifestyle information that can be useful for them. With a very high penetration rate, social media offers many opportunities for healthcare. Studies have reported several uses of social media by healthcare providers, such as disseminating health information (Huo et al., 2019). *"We have a WhatsApp group dedicated to old friends, and one of the most frequently discussed topics is health. If someone is sick, there must be someone who shares their experiences about the treatment or therapy they have undergone. I myself have told me about my knee pain, and it turns out that many people have given helpful advice"* (Interview with Informant 8, January 19, 2024).

More and more seniors are using social media sites such as Facebook, Wikipedia, Twitter, and YouTube to get information about disease forecasts, symptoms, and treatment options. Although the benefits of technology, such as social media, for older individuals are enormous, they tend to adopt it slowly. Older adults often face various health problems, and social media can be an important access door to vital information that allows them to remain active in seeking health-related information (Parida & Oghazi, 2016). They can learn about health, exercise, nutrition, or self-care through content shared by related health organizations, experts, or communities. *"I wasn't very open about my health at first, but after seeing friends in WhatsApp groups sharing stories about their illnesses, I started to share stories. I have had high blood pressure, and it turns out that many people experience the same thing. We often exchange tips and remind each other about diet and medicine"* (Interview with Informant 3, December 18, 2024).

They can also benefit from support and understanding from similar senior living communities. One of the purposes of communication is to entertain; social media offers

a variety of entertaining content, such as funny videos, music, pictures or games, which can entertain and improve the mental health of the elderly. They can enjoy the content, interact with comments, or share content that interests them, strengthening social connections and providing a positive experience.

Over the next few years, we will see artificial intelligence technology development to create and identify information. In simple terms, artificial intelligence is the ability of computers to perform tasks that previously required the human brain to work, such as speech recognition or visual identification, et al. et al. (Claire & Hossein, 2017). Social media has become a crucial aspect of daily life, and artificial intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed the way we interact with social media platforms. In this modern era, the social media ecosystem inhabited by hundreds of millions of people makes real contributions in all fields, including communication in designing algorithms that exhibit human-like behavior. Such ecosystems also increase challenges because they introduce new dimensions that must be imitated in addition to content, including social networks, temporal activity, diffusion patterns, and sentiment expression (Ferrara et al., 2016).

Online technology promises to help parents maintain social connections, but they have concerns about the time required to participate, loss of deeper communication, inappropriate content, and privacy. However, some social practices can be supported by online social technologies (Hope et al., 2014). The role of Artificial Intelligence on social media is to help extract insights from data inputted by users. The task of Artificial Intelligence is to analyze data through predetermined algorithms by systematically combining and analyzing people's statements, attitudes and intentions in the social media (Balamurugan et al., 2022). Artificial Intelligence analyses user behavior on social media and provides customized content. Powerful Artificial Intelligence algorithms collect data from posts, likes, comments, and user actions to determine everyone's most relevant and interesting content. For example, platforms like Facebook and Instagram use Artificial Intelligence to design customized news feeds and show ads that match users' interests.

Artificial Intelligence also significantly contributes to the identification and filtering of content that breaches community guidelines on social media platforms. Artificial Intelligence algorithms can monitor and remove content that violates platform rules to combat cyberbullying, discrimination, and the spread of false information. This technology can process millions of posts in seconds, which is impossible for humans. Artificial Intelligence is used to analyze sentiment on social media. By understanding how users feel about a particular topic or brand, companies can better respond to customer feedback. Additionally, Artificial Intelligence can predict user behavior, including how they might interact with content and advertising in the future. This provides valuable insights to companies and advertisers.

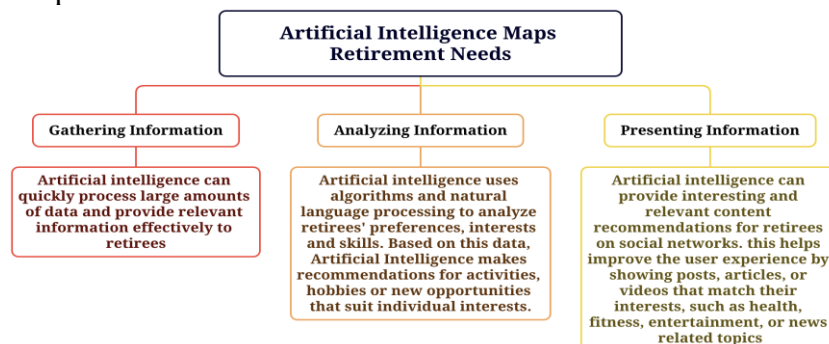


Figure 3. Artificial intelligence maps retirement needs
(Source: Processed by Researchers)

Based on user preferences and interests analysis, Artificial Intelligence can provide interesting and relevant content recommendations for seniors on social networks. This helps improve the user experience by showing posts, articles, or videos that match their interests, such as health, fitness, entertainment, or news topics. Artificial Intelligence monitors user activity and behavior on social networks to identify health or physical signs. For example, Artificial Intelligence analyses language patterns or keywords that indicate depression, anxiety, or loneliness. If there are any worrying signs, Artificial Intelligence warns the user or sends relevant help information. The analysis reveals that artificial intelligence can play a role in emotional and social support for the elderly on social networks. What is highlighted is that digital technologies should focus not only on medical care or assistive technologies but also on technologies that can facilitate social interactions and reduce feelings of loneliness (Vošner et al., 2016). Artificial Intelligence chatbots can answer questions, provide suggestions, or listen empathetically when users want to share their experiences or feelings. This can provide important social support and connection for seniors experiencing isolation or loneliness. Seniors can overcome loneliness by interacting in online social networks compared to conventional online social networks (Liang et al., 2023).

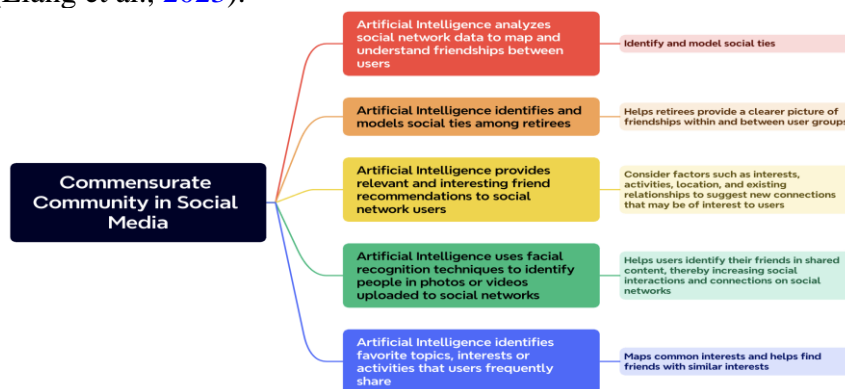


Figure 4. Commensurate Community in Social Media
(Source: Processed by Researchers)

Relationship networks are the main purpose of older adults using social media. Artificial Intelligence analyses social network data to map and understand friendships between users. By analyzing interactions, connections, and communication patterns between users, Artificial Intelligence identifies and models the social ties between them. This helps seniors provide a clearer picture of friendships within and between user groups. Artificial Intelligence becomes a reference for Artificial Intelligence in mapping friendships. Based on user data analysis, Artificial Intelligence provides relevant and interesting friend recommendations to social network users. Artificial Intelligence algorithms can consider factors such as interests, activities, location, and existing relationships to suggest new connections that may interest users. This can help seniors expand their network of friends and improve their social media experience.

Considering the risky media behavior of the elderly in the virtual world, Artificial Intelligence plays a role in detecting and preventing fraud, criminal activity, or other abusive behavior on social media platforms. Artificial intelligence algorithms monitor user activity, identify suspicious behavior, and report it to the platform provider for further action. This helps ensure safety and protection for older users when interacting on social networks. The free content on social media makes the world feel wide open and as if it were without limits. Artificial intelligence is used to filter inappropriate or dangerous content for older adults. Using natural language processing and image recognition

techniques, Artificial Intelligence identifies content that contains violent, abusive or misleading information. This helps create a safer and friendlier social media environment for seniors.

Discussion

Discussions held with retirees aimed to explore the real-life situations experienced by older adults after retirement. One of the most significant psychological challenges they face is a profound sense of loss. This loss is not limited to income or routine, but extends to identity and social function. For many retirees, their professional roles are closely tied to their self-worth and purpose in life. When that role disappears, it often leaves behind emotional instability and, in some cases, depression. Structural activities in the workplace, such as schedules, tasks, and interactions, provide a framework that shapes their daily lives. Once this structure is gone, many retirees feel a void. Boredom becomes common, as they struggle to fill their time with meaningful activities. This lack of direction can significantly impact both mental and emotional health, leading to uncertainty and internal conflict. Some retirees even begin to question their position in society and within their own families.

This existential doubt often manifests as a difficulty in communication. Many older adults feel hesitant or even fearful when attempting to engage with others, especially beyond the family circle. The predictable routine of work once gave them a sense of contribution and belonging; in its absence, they may feel invisible or disconnected. This hesitation in communication is not just emotional—it becomes a behavioral pattern that reinforces isolation. The loss of social networks built over decades of work exacerbates this issue, as those regular, informal exchanges with colleagues are no longer present. As a result, many retirees find themselves gradually withdrawing from social life. This isolation poses serious risks to their mental health, increasing the likelihood of depression, anxiety, and reduced motivation to adapt to the changes retirement brings. Therefore, understanding the post-retirement communication landscape is essential in providing targeted interventions for this vulnerable population.

The work environment makes seniors accustomed to a supportive environment by having colleagues with whom they frequently interact. Daily chats, team meetings, and even simple chats in the office all provide a valuable sense of inclusion and connection. After retirement, these interactions often decrease significantly, and retirees may feel like they have lost the social networks they once had. As a result, retirement can also make someone feel isolated from the world of work, which they consider an important part of their identity. No longer holding a job and not participating in company dynamics can create feelings of emptiness and doubt about one's self-worth. This makes the feeling of isolation after retirement continue to emerge by itself. Feeling alone, there is no certainty in communication, and the anxiety that arises makes emotions more sensitive and heightened. Social interaction is a very important need for the elderly. Lack of social contact can lead to isolation and relative loneliness. However, older adults experience social isolation when family members and relatives do not have time to care for them, or their closest friends have died (Buakanok et al., 2022).

To date, media use and social participation in older adults are two important topics that have attracted significant research interest from various scientific disciplines. For example, researchers in geriatrics and public health are interested in the possible health benefits of social participation in the field of old age (Ang, 2018). The role of media has had a significant impact in helping individuals find meaning and happiness in retirement.

The media is important in providing information and education regarding retirement and Post Retirement Syndrome. Individuals can better understand the physical, emotional, and social changes after retirement through articles, books, television shows, and online resources. This information helps individuals understand that post-retirement syndrome is a common phenomenon that can be overcome with the right approach. Media can also inspire and motivate people with Post Retirement Syndrome. Success stories of people who find new meaning in life after retirement can bring hope and confidence to those facing similar challenges. The media can convey inspiring stories through books, films or interviews that motivate individuals to change and pursue their interests.

The current literature shows that social media has the potential to make positive contributions in various fields, such as health communication, disease prevention, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles (Cao et al., 2022). Social media allows older adults to connect with their family, friends and communities. They can communicate via SMS, video calls, or share updates about daily life. This helps overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation that some older people may feel. On the other hand, seniors have valuable life experiences and knowledge to share with others. They can share their stories, advice or thoughts with others through social media. This provides an opportunity for inspiration and strengthens the sense of relevance and social engagement. Digital media use among older adults has become a growing concern due to digital media's potential to improve the quality of life in old age. However, new internet-based media such as personal computers, tablets, smartphones, and social media have yet to receive adequate research in the aging (Holmstrom et al., 2015).

The role of Artificial Intelligence can also be relevant in helping overcome Post Retirement Syndrome. Artificial intelligence collects, analyses, and presents relevant information about retirement and post-retirement syndrome and strategies to overcome these challenges. Artificial Intelligence can quickly process large amounts of data and effectively provide relevant information to those needing it. This can help individuals better understand the changes after retirement and develop effective strategies to overcome them. Artificial Intelligence uses algorithms and natural language processing to analyze new retirees' preferences, interests and skills. Based on this data, Artificial Intelligence recommends activities, hobbies or new learning opportunities that suit individual interests. This can help fill free time with meaningful and enjoyable activities, which can ultimately increase life satisfaction and help overcome post-retirement syndrome. Technology use by older adults is complex, dynamic, and influenced by emotional, practical, and social factors (Peek et al., 2019).

Artificial intelligence can also group individual identities based on the faces of each user. Artificial Intelligence uses facial recognition techniques to identify people in photos or videos uploaded to social networks. Thanks to this, artificial intelligence helps users identify their friends through shared content, thereby increasing interaction and social connections on social networks. Artificial Intelligence can also analyze content shared by users on social networks, including statuses, comments or other posts, to understand their emotions and interests. Through natural language analysis, Artificial Intelligence identifies favorite topics, interests or activities users frequently share. This information can be used to map common interests and help find friends with similar interests. The main role of Artificial Intelligence in solving problems in the elderly is to detect patterns and community groups in social networks. Artificial Intelligence can identify groups with similar interests or goals by analyzing user interactions and connections. This can help users discover and connect with relevant communities and expand their network of

friends.

This study has several notable limitations. Firstly, it concentrates specifically on retirees residing in an urban area (Bandung), limiting its scope and potentially affecting representativeness. Consequently, the findings may not fully reflect the media behavior and communication patterns of older adults living in rural areas or other urban settings that have different levels of media accessibility, digital infrastructure, and distinct cultural contexts. Urban retirees might have greater access to technology, infrastructure, and digital literacy resources compared to their rural counterparts, resulting in differing patterns of media usage and communication. Furthermore, the qualitative nature of the research inherently restricts generalizability, as qualitative methodologies prioritize depth and detailed exploration over breadth. While qualitative approaches effectively capture rich, context-specific insights into older adults' media behavior, their results cannot be generalized broadly to all elderly populations. Thus, future research employing quantitative methods or mixed-method approaches across diverse geographical locations and cultural contexts is recommended to validate and complement these findings, enabling more comprehensive understanding and broader applicability.

Conclusion

Retirement is a major transition in a person's life, and post-retirement syndrome presents significant psychological and social challenges. However, with the right strategies and adequate support, individuals can overcome these challenges and find renewed meaning and happiness after leaving formal work. Each retirement experience is unique, requiring personalized approaches to support and adaptation. This study highlights the important role of media--particularly social media--in addressing Post-Retirement Syndrome by providing access to information, emotional support, and opportunities for social engagement. Media platforms can help retirees maintain mental health, rediscover purpose, and foster social connection, especially when enhanced by Artificial Intelligence (AI) features that improve accessibility and personalization. Nonetheless, the use of digital media by older adults also presents potential risks, such as data privacy concerns, misinformation, and feelings of exclusion from fast-evolving online environments. Therefore, it is essential that older adults and their families understand how to use social media safely and wisely. Future research could examine more deeply how various forms of media and AI applications affect the psychological resilience and communication behaviors of retirees across different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, future studies may explore the long-term impacts of digital engagement on emotional well-being among older adults. The findings of this study contribute to the development of communication theory in the context of aging by emphasizing the role of AI-enhanced media in identity reconstruction. These insights also offer practical implications for expanding digital inclusion strategies among elderly populations in both urban and rural settings.

Conflict of Interest

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organizations related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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