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# Digital Dialogue and Emotions: A Study of Online Communication among Journalism Students in Delhi

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### ABSTRACT :

Digital platforms are everywhere now, and they've changed the way students talk, learn, and connect with each other. This study looks at how journalism students in Delhi use these online spaces—how they talk, how they show emotion, and what that means for their training, friendships, and ability to navigate the digital world. We gathered survey responses and sat down for in-depth interviews with journalism students from Delhi colleges. We dug into which platforms they use, the emotional tone of their messages, how these tools shape their conversations, and why handling emotions online matters for their growth as journalists. What we found: online platforms make it easy to reach out and get support from peers, but they also bring their own set of emotional headaches—like figuring out the right tone, dealing with misunderstandings, and just feeling tired from being online all the time. This paper argues that journalism education needs to take this emotional side of online conversations more seriously, and lays out some practical ideas for teachers and students.

**Keywords:** Digital dialogue; online communication; emotions; journalism students; Delhi; digital literacy; peer communication.

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### Introduction

Online communication has become part of daily life in higher education, and journalism students feel this more than most. Communication, media smarts, and digital skills are at the core of their future jobs, so how they talk online really matters. In Delhi—a big center for Indian media—students use all kinds of digital platforms. WhatsApp groups, Telegram, social media forums, learning apps. They use these for everything: chatting with classmates, swapping reporting tips, or just venting after class.

Most research zeroes in on the learning side: teamwork, sharing info, grades. But what about how students feel during all this online chatter? How do they show frustration, excitement, or anxiety in a text? Do they use emojis, send voice notes, write in all-caps when they're stressed? And how do these emotional signals shape friendships, group work, and their sense of belonging as future journalists? This paper dives into those questions, looking at how digital communication and emotion mix for journalism students in Delhi.

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### Literature Review

#### *Online Communication and Dialogue in Education*

Studies say online platforms give students more freedom—they can talk anytime, connect with more people, and join in when it suits them. Email, forums, group chats—they all open doors. But, let's be real, they also make things tricky: it's easy to misread someone when you can't see their face, and people can lose interest fast.

#### *Emotions in Digital Communication*

Researchers have explored emotions in online spaces like social media, office chats, and school forums. They've noticed people use emojis, weird punctuation, or ALL CAPS to make up for not being face-to-face. Still, negative feelings like frustration or confusion pop up a lot in online learning. Managing these emotions—knowing how to keep your cool, handle criticism, or clear up a misunderstanding—has become a skill all its own.

#### *Journalism Education, Digital Literacy and Peer Communication Journalism*

students today are figuring out how to survive in a media world that's always online. They need to master digital tools, network with classmates, and keep the conversation going—even when it gets tough. Emotional stuff—like giving and getting feedback, cheering each other on, or stressing over deadlines—shapes how they talk and how they see themselves as journalists.

### ***Gap and Research Questions***

There's plenty of research on digital learning and emotions, but not much that zooms in on how Indian journalism students actually handle their feelings during online chats with peers. So, this study asks:

- Which digital platforms and formats do journalism students in Delhi use most to talk with each other?
- How do they show emotion online—through tone, emojis, language, or voice notes?
- What emotional ups and downs do they face in these digital conversations?
- And what do these emotional twists mean for journalism education and digital skills?

### ***Indian context: important things to think about***

Large television networks, established print brands, and a quickly expanding digital news industry are all part of India's media landscape. Key characteristics include:

Many outlets rely heavily on advertising revenue.

Industrial conglomerates and billionaire owners with interests outside of the media are becoming more prevalent.

Complicated laws and uneven enforcement (e.g., cross-ownership and broadcast licensing).

Regional diversity: States and languages have different political economies and ownership systems.

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## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

This research takes a mixed approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to get a complete understanding. First, I conducted a survey to find out how students use various online platforms, how frequently they communicate with their peers, their feelings about these interactions, and how comfortable they feel expressing themselves. After that, I did in-depth interviews with selected students, exploring how they actually express and manage their emotions online, and their personal perspectives on these experiences.

### ***Sample and Setting***

The sample consisted of 120 journalism students—both undergraduates and postgraduates— from three major colleges in Delhi that offer journalism or mass communication courses. From this group, I selected 15 students for interviews, ensuring diversity in gender, year of study, and frequency of platform usage.

### ***Instruments***

The survey included basic demographic questions such as age and gender, which platforms they use (WhatsApp, Telegram, Slack, LMS forums, other social groups), how often they interact with classmates, and how frequently they express emotions online (with options from 1, “rarely,” to 5, “all the time”). For the interviews, the guide focused on real-life situations, such as asking, “Can you describe a time you felt frustrated in a class group chat?” I also asked about using emojis, sending voice notes, handling misunderstandings, receiving support from classmates, and how these experiences impact their academic work.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

I distributed the survey online during Semester X. Afterwards, I analyzed the data, looking at trends like which platforms are used and how often emotions are shared. For the interviews, I recorded and transcribed each session, then used NVivo to identify recurring themes—factors that help, obstacles faced, and the emotional dynamics involved.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

All participants provided informed consent. Identities were kept confidential, and pseudonyms were used for any direct quotes. The research received full institutional approval.

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## **Findings**

### ***Platform Usage and Frequency Survey results showed:-***

WhatsApp group chats: almost all students (95%) used them. - Telegram groups: 35%. - LMS forums: 80%. - Social media group chats (Facebook or Instagram): 60%. About 72% of students reported talking to peers online at least a few times each week. Those who used multiple platforms tended to express their emotions more regularly.

### ***Emotional Expression in Online Dialogue***

On average, students rated their emotional expression at 3.4 out of 5. Most reported that they “sometimes” or “often” expressed emotions such as excitement (like after doing well on assignments), frustration (mainly about deadlines), confusion (especially with difficult topics), and support (encouraging classmates)..

#### ***From the interviews:***

One student summed it up: “In our WhatsApp group, when we get assignment marks back and I’m like ‘Yess!’ I send a GIF and a party emoji, and everyone jumps in.” Many students talked about using emojis, GIFs, and voice notes to share how they’re feeling. But it isn’t always easy—some said things can easily get misinterpreted online. One student said, “I typed ‘OK’ and someone thought I was being rude—then I had to explain.” There’s a real concern about seeming cold or unfriendly when you’re just typing. Emotionally, being online can be draining. The constant notifications, endless messages, and seeing what classmates are posting all the time—it gets tiring. Some students called it “digital fatigue.” Still, lots of students found genuine support in these groups. When someone struggled, others responded quickly with messages, voice notes, or useful links. These moments made the online space feel more connected, and people bonded over shared challenges.

#### ***Emotional Challenges and Affordances What helps: -***

Quick feedback from peers and plenty of encouragement. - Emojis, GIFs, and voice messages bring feeling into the chat. - Flexibility—students can reply when it suits them, instead of having to answer right away. What gets in the way: - No body language or tone—so texts can be misunderstood. - Too many notifications interrupt studying or rest. - It’s hard not to compare yourself when everyone’s sharing their successes. - Journalism students sometimes feel pressure to act professionally, even in casual chats.

#### ***Implications for Journalism Education and Digital Literacy***

Digital literacy isn’t just about knowing the tools—it’s about reading and showing emotion online.

Students need to understand how tone works in digital spaces, both expressing and interpreting feelings. Teachers can help by setting some guidelines for chat groups: what kind of tone to use, how to support each other, and where to set boundaries. Schools should consider making peer-support networks official, using group chats for both academic and emotional support. Training on managing notifications and taking breaks can help. Journalism courses should also cover online communication ethics, digital tone, and emotional intelligence—future journalists will be working in these digital spaces.

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## **Discussion**

This study shows that online peer chats for journalism students in Delhi are full of emotion and connection, but come with their own challenges. Emojis, GIFs, and voice notes help add feeling, but misunderstandings and overwhelm are still risks. For journalism students, getting used to these emotional dynamics is not just helpful—it’s a key part of their training. They’re learning to manage tone, give feedback, and regulate themselves online. It’s becoming part of who they are as future journalists. Delhi adds another layer. Classrooms spill over into WhatsApp and other chats, blurring the lines between friends talking, group work, and professional networking. Students have to switch between these roles quickly. That takes emotional flexibility.

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## **Limitations**

The study focused only on three Delhi institutions, so the results may not apply elsewhere or to other subjects. Since students described their own experiences, some might exaggerate or downplay how they show emotions. The study looked at peer dialogue—other kinds of online talk, like with teachers, weren’t included. Also, it was just a snapshot in time; following students over a longer period might show how their habits change.

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## **Conclusion**

Digital chats among journalism students aren’t just about sharing notes—they’re a space where emotions, tone, and peer relationships play out in real time. For educators, understanding this emotional layer is important. Teaching students how to manage their feelings and tone online, along with regular media skills, will prepare them for a digital media world that’s always changing.