Social Media: A Study Of Good And Bad Dichotomy Of Change In Society

[1]Dr. Akash Deep Muni, [2]Dr. Manish Gupta,

[1]*Associate Professor, School of Humanities, Lovely Professional University Phagwara, Punjab, India*
[2]*Professor & Additional Registrar, Lovely Professional University Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Abstract: With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is obvious that social media like Facebook, twitter, Skype and others, are used widely for the purpose of mass communication. Online tools and technology have changed the very ways we talk to each other. Social media has the capability and the might to bring a change in our social lives in group and mass level both.
In the myriad milieu of mass communication, the researcher through the study of secondary literature and various social media websites has tried to understand the various facets of social media and how it is bring a change in society. It also focuses on the large scale impact of social media on mainstream journalism.

Keywords: Social media, web 2.0, transparency

1. INTRODUCTION

The term Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. With the world experiencing a social media revolution, its pretty clear that social media like facebook, twitter, whatsapp,skypeand others, are used extensively for the purpose of communication.   This form of communication takes place amongst group and mass communication both. And be it the new or the previous generations, all try to keep in touch with their social lives through SNS.

Social media refers to the usage of internet and mobile technologies that changes communication and makes it interactive. Social media ia s form of communication that surpasses the normal techniques of talking and takes communication to aall new realm.Social media has significantly changed the way organizations, groups, and individuals communicate helped by its amusingly adventurous technologies. Social media takes on many different forms including print and electronic media forms. In their Business Horizons article published in 2010, Kaplan and Haenlein dissected social media with the help of media research. There are six different types of social media according to them: content communities (e.g. Youtube), collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft) and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life).Massively Multiplayer Online game (MMO) is a multiplayer video game which has the capacity to support hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously.

Through social media, today a person can publish any news or/and views on web. Digg is one prime example of such media. It is a social news website. A person can discuss on any issues

on whatsapp, messenger,etc and also there is the option of bulletin boards. Social networking is is a credible way of keeping contacts and sharing information with others. Microblogging is another way of posting messages online.

History of social media
When we think of social media, then we generally think of facebook and twitter. However, in reality it is more than that. The earliest ways to send messages over long distances were print, audio and visual. People interestingly, used to communicate through smoke signals by day and beacon fires by night in ancient Egypt, China, and Greece. Drums were also used to extend the range of the human voice for communication in many parts of the world. For social media, it all started during 550 BC when the regular postal system was established in Iran where horse riders and horse-drawn wagons carried mail.
During the 18th and 19th century, devices like the telegraph (1792), telephone (1890) and radio (1891) marshaled a new period of sending and receiving messages over long distances.And with the invention of telephone and radio, communication went on to an another level .And the 20th century gave us internet.
The 21st century saw a spurt in the growth of social networking sites by the launching of Friendster, Fotolog, Photobucket, Flickr, Orkut, Facebook, Ning, Digg, Twitter, Netlog, Youtube etc.

Role of Social Media
Social media has played a significant role in bringing up protests and revolutions in recent times. It is assumed that social media is making it more difficult to sustain an authoritarian regime even for hardened autocracies like Iran and Chinawhich can bring democracy to the whole world. In a Jan. 27 YouTube interview, U.S. President Barack Obama did compare social networking to universal liberties such as freedom of speech.
The tumultuous situation in Tunisia and Egypt have culminated in usage of social networking media such as Facebook, whatsapp and Twitter to help arrange, communicate and initiate campaigns. The Iranian "Green Revolution" in 2009 did become a media babyfor the Western media with the help of YouTube and Twitter, and Twitter even gave Moldova's 2009 revolution its hallmark name- the "Twitter Revolution."
The Internet delves down onto a revolutionary core to spread the tentacles of its ideological message and also its training program and operational plan. This can well be carried out my email etc but the incoming of whatsapp, bigo live and others have created a communication revolution. YouTube and whatsapp videos enumerating a movement's core principles and tactics facilitate its supporters to send out important information.

Limitations of social media
Social media seems to turn into a precious intelligence-collection tool. Interestingly, this dependence on social media makes any nation vulnerable. In order to obtain an operating license in any country for instance China, social networking websites do make compromises with the government. In many countries like Pakistan where democracy is in questionable level, this involves getting access to user data, locations and network information. Facebook profiles, for example, can be a boon for government intelligence collectors, who can use updates and photos to pinpoint movement locations and activities and identify connections among various individuals, some of whom may be suspect for various activities. Facebook has received fundingfrom In-Q-Tel, the CIA's venture capital firm. A possible quid pro quo can happen in this type of setup. In Egypt, 40 leaders of the April 6 Movement were arrested before the protests even made its mark, and this can be because of them being tracked by agencies on SNS.Beyond monitoring movement websites, governments can also shut them

down. This has been common in Iran, Pakistan and China during times of social unrest. During the Iranian protests in 2009, many foreign-based Green Movement supporters allegedly spread disinformation over Twitter to mislead foreign observers on the condition in the state. China shut down Internet access to all of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, where thereligious-ethnic Uighur riots took place in July 2009.

Clay Shirky in "The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change" says, " The political impact of social media has focused on the power of mass protests to topple governments. In fact, social media's significant role is in supporting civil society, which will produce change." This clearly determines the basic political validity of social media.

It is not only political problems but social media can be a tool for change in eliminating corruption and helping in better governance too. In 'Using ICTs to create a culture of transparency: E-government and social media as openness and anti-corruption tools for societies', John C. Bertot, Paul T. Jaeger, and Justin M. Grimes point out, "many governments have worked to increase openness and transparency in their actions. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are a cost-effective means to promote openness and transparency and to reduce corruption. E-government has been used in many prominent, comprehensive transparency efforts in a number of nations for instance India Bangladesh and others. While some of these individual efforts have received considerable attention, the issue of whether these ICT-enabled efforts have the potential to create a substantive social change in attitudes toward transparency has not been widely considered."

A 2006 study of 14 countries found that countries with dedicated transparency laws were three times more likely to respond to requests for information, with countries lacking transparency laws acknowledged less than half of the requests (Open Society Justice Initiative, 2006).

Social media – an agent of transparency

In the 2007 campaign for Prime Minister of Australia, the Australian media – much of which is owned by Rupert Murdoch – openly supported the Conservative party and its Prime Minister, going so far as to selectively report and distort the results of their own polls, particularly those of the major papers owned by Murdoch (Bruns, 2008). Consequently, blogs, status posts and other online social networks provided contrasting views to balance the media coverage.

The use of social media in combination with open government data has been promoted as a new way of enabling and facilitating transparency (Brito, 2008 and Robinson et al., 2008). This approach is typified by the nascent and ambitious plan by the Obama administration to make vast amounts of government data available through the www.data.gov site (White House, 2010).

Usage of social media- today and tomorrow

Nonprofit organizations are utilizing social media to engage in advocacy work. Chao Guo, and Gregory D. Saxton's paper Tweeting Social Change - How Social Media Are Changing Nonprofit Advocacy explains in how nonprofit organizations are utilizing social media to engage in advocacy work for public good.

Change takes place with the help of social media swiftly and decisively. The best example being in May of 2009, a posthumous video surfaced in which prominent lawyer Rodrigo Rosenberg blamed Guatemalan president Alvaro Colom for murdering him. In a social media retort, this resulted in creation of numerous Facebook pages which called out for Colom's resignation, and for justice for Rosenberg. This study found that the social network site was used to mobilize an online movement that moved offline with the help of interviews and a

content analysis of Facebook comments from the two most-active Facebook groups,. Users' protest-related and motivational comments, in addition to their use of links and other interactive elements of Facebook, helped organize massive protests demanding justice and an end to violence (Harlow, 2011).

The influence and effect of media is not limited to urban areas only. The role of television in rural life, and the influence it has had on various social, economic and political processes that have been revolutionizing the landscape of village India in recent years is huge. In "Media and social change: the modernizing influences of television in rural India" Kirk Johnson takes data from ethnographic fieldwork in two remote villages in the mountains of Western Maharashtra (Danawli and Raj Puri) in the context of development and social change. This article speaks on the framework and rationale for an ethnographic approach to the research and discusses the unique characteristics of television that make it an important agent of cultural change. It also analyzes various social processes like consumerism, urban modeling, restructuring of human relationships, linguistic hegemony, migration and the emergence of an information underclass.

Social media are playing an increasingly important role as information sources for travelers. In "Role of social media in online travel information search" ZhengXianga and Ulrike Gretzelb investigate the extent to which social media appear in search engine results in the context of travel-related searches. The study employed a research design that simulates a traveler's use of a search engine for travel planning by using a set of pre-defined keywords in combination with nine U.S. tourist destination names. The analysis of the search results showed that social media constitute a substantial part of the search results, indicating that search engines likely direct travelers to social media sites. This study confirms the growing importance of social media in the online tourism domain and others. It also provides evidence for challenges faced by traditional providers of travel-related information, which in turn, shows the flipside to a new world of communication driven by search engines. And communication content decided by search engines.

Social media is impacting education too in many ways especially the teaching learning experience. Faculty is big users of and believers in social media. Virtually all higher education teaching faculty is aware of the major social media sites; more than three-quarters visited a social media site within the past month for their personal use; and nearly one-half posted content. Even more impressive is their rate of adoption of social media in their professional lives: over 90% of all faculties are using social media in courses they're teaching or for their professional careers outside the classroom. There are big differences among the patterns of use from one social media site to another. Facebook is both the most visited site and the one with the highest rate of postings. YouTube is the second most visited, but posting rates are low. Facebook is also the most frequently citedwhen faculty report on their uses of social media in support of their professional careers. According to a government study, nearly two-thirds of all faculties have used social media during a class session, and 30% have posted content for students to view or read outside class. Over 40% of faculty has required students to read or view social media as part of a course assignment, and 20% have assigned students to comment on or post to social media sites. Online video is by far the most common type of social media used in class, posted outside class, or assigned to students to view, with 80% of faculty reporting some form of class use of online video. Use of social media is not without its problems; most faculty are concerned with the time it requires.

Since social networking sites, such as twitter and Facebook, began allowing organizations to create profiles and become active members, organizations have started incorporating these strategies into their public relations programming through these too. For-profit organizations have used these sites to help launch products and strengthen their existing brands. In"Engaging stakeholders through social networking: How nonprofit organizations are using

Facebook", Richard D. Watersa, Emily Burnettb, Anna Lammb, and Jessica Lucasb, through a content analysis of 275 nonprofit organization profiles on Facebook, examines how these new social networking sites are being used by the organizations to advance their organization's mission and programs. Just having an account will not being a big change but careful planning and research will greatly benefit nonprofits as they attempt to develop social networking relationships with their stakeholders. This is how it works in social networking sites.

Social media's power has been expressed in terms of toppling governments. . In fact, social media's real potential lies in supporting civil society and the public sphere—which will produce change over years and decades, not weeks or months (Shirky, 2011).

In response, "Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media", by Jan H. Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian P. McCarthy, and Bruno S. Silvestre present a framework that defines "social media by using seven functional building blocks: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups. As different social media activities are defined by the extent to which they focus on some or all of these blocks, we explain the implications that each block can have for how firms should engage with social media." To conclude, it present a number of recommendations regarding how firms should develop strategies for monitoring, understanding, and responding to different social media activities.

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