

Intersection of Social Media and Society: A dynamic duo

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Abstract: *Man is a social animal, he cannot live in isolation, and so all his activities affect not only him but the humanity in general, so society affects a man in so many means. The attempt has been made in the present paper to explore the possible effects of social media on individuals and the society. With a special emphasis on latest trend social media have played a critical role in recent social transformation. The social in social media denotes the services, tools that allow individuals to gather for social interaction. The term social is an umbrella term and has various descriptions. It states to the interaction of one sort of living beings with other living beings for their co-existence on the earth. While media, refers to the focal means of mass communication. Collectively these words make a new word termed social media. Every aspect of our life is affected by social media today. Social media has developed promptly because it assists numerous social necessities and also embraces different technologies. Social media refers to the numerous internet and mobile based applications and platforms that inspire its users to share, spread and construct the information in a social and cybernetic environment. Social media and networking technologies have greatly reformed the means information is communicated and generated. Social media is a technology centered application that constructs on the grounds of web 2.0 and which allows the exchange of consumer generated content. Social media has created enormous social changes in the life style patterns of users. It has also designed the present culture by affecting the way society behave, communicate and learn. In this study, we will attempt to determine the role of social media in a technologically advanced society and to propose ways for its further development in the society.*

Key words: *Social Media, Democracy, Mass communication, Independence, Social Justice, Government.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Social media plays a very crucial role in shaping a healthy democracy social media considered to be the backbone of democracy. It is only the media that always makes us aware about the various economic, political, social activities that are happening around the world. It is only the media which shows ultimate or the bare truth and harsh realities of the life. It is a live mirror which shows all the activities happening around us. Media came to existence in 1780's with the introduction of newspaper. It is only through the social media that exposes the loopholes in democratic system. A democracy without the social media is like the human body without human heart. We all are living in the age of information technology where we get the pulse of each and every event of the word by the clicks of the mouse social media acts like watch dogs in a democracy in order to keep the government active. A famous author Brian Soils defines social media as: "Social Media is the democratization of information transforming people from content readers into publishers. It is the shift from a broadcast mechanism, one too many model, rooted in conversations between authors, people, and peers."(Soils, Brian)

2. A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

The present paper focusses on how social media and social justice are necessary in the society. Social justice is the rational and impartial relation between the individual and humanity. This is measured by the clear and implicit associations for the dissemination of capital, prospects for individual movement and communal human rights. In Western as well as in older Asian humanities, the perception of social justice has frequently indicated to the process of certifying that individuals fulfill their communal roles and receive what was their due from society. In the contemporary international mass movements for social justice, the prominence has been on the transgression of obstacles for social movement, the formation of safety nets and economic justice.

3. A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL JUSTICE:

Social justice allocates privileges and responsibilities in the associations of society, which permits people to receive the basic remunerations and burdens of assistance. The significant organizations often include tax policy, social assurance, public health, public school, communal services, labor

law and regulation of markets, to safeguard unbiased distribution of wealth, equal chance and equality of product. Elucidations that re-count justice to a mutual association to society are facilitated by transformations in social ethnicities, some of which highlight the distinct accountability towards civilization and others the balance between access to power and its responsible use. In the late 20th century, social justice was made fundamental to the philosophy of the social contract, mainly by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (1971). Political philosopher John Rawls lures on the utilitarian perceptions of Bentham and Mill, the social contract ideas of John Locke, and the resounding authoritative ideas of Kant. His initial declaration of principle was made in *A Theory of Justice* where he proposed that, "Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason justice denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others". In the works of most existing political philosophers, social justice is perceived as a distinctive of distributive justice and indeed the two ideas are often used interchangeably. Social justice precisely understood as a exact habit of justice that is "social" in two senses. Firstly, the skills it requires are those of inspirational, working with, and establishing others to complete together a work of justice. These are the fundamental skills of political society, through which free peoples exercise self-government by doing for themselves (that is, without turning to government) what needs to be done.

4. ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF SOCIETY:

The vital resolution of all the assets is to elevate the self-respect and authority of the human person. The uppermost aim of justice is to uplift each person. The roots of social justice lie in the thought progression of Enlightenment. The elementary principle of social justice is the liberation of the deprived, subjugated, and oppressed sections of society. It suggests a social order which can initiate liberty and equal rights to all divisions of civilization. The notion of social justice is strictly related with human rights as envisioned by the United Nations in its 1948 assertion and fundamental rights as provided in the Constitution of India but they are not identical. Fundamental right is the right to freedom and equality, the right against exploitation, and right to constitutional remedies, and are necessary for the free and natural progress of the social behavior and hence are the strength of a just social order but they are subject to control or confines if they unfavorably affect the pattern of social justice in society. 'We must have a Government in which men in power knowing where obedience will end and resistance will begin, will not be afraid to amend the social and economic code of life which the dictates of justice and expediency so urgently call for. This role the British Government will never be able to play. It is only a Government which is of the people, for the people and by the people that will make this possible.

Democracy in general is understood to be a form of government which is subject to popular sovereignty. One of the crowing glories of democratic system is the freedom of expression and the space that is provided to views from different section of the society so democracy and social media are intrinsically related.

"We must... not...be content with mere political democracy. We must make sure our political democracy a social democracy as well" (Ambedkar 1994: 1216). Ambedkar went on to define social democracy as well. In his own words, "What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life. These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not to be treated as separate items of trinity" (Ambedkar 1994: 1216).

5. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN DEMOCRACY:

Another significant contribution of Ambedkar in the process of establishment of social democracy is his explanation of nature of three cardinal principles of democracy i.e. liberty, quality, and fraternity. He opined, "They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity." (Ambedkar 1994: 1216). The social media plays a vital role between those who govern and those who are governed. The social media has an enormous influence on peoples thought and understanding of the world. In a democratic country the people should know, what the three important institutions, namely legislature, the executive and the juridical are doing for the well-being of the people. So, the active role of social media in democracy is to act as a bridge between the people and the government.

Social media in the words of Shankar: “Technology related developments such as the rise of the powerful search engines, advanced mobile devices and interfaces, peer to peer communication vehicles, and online social networks have extended marketers ability to reach shoppers through new tough points” (Shankar et al. 2011, 30).

Today we all are aware of living in the hub of communication revolution. Today’s media revolutions are considered with social networking like blogs, podcasting, wiki, tweeter, Facebook and many more. More aptly social media in the words of Charles Wankel:

“Activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation...microblogs and more” (Charles Wankel, 2010:242).

6. INTERSECTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIETY:

The paper attempts to explore that how the liberty of speech is considered as one of the foremost state of right. It inhabits an significant and favored place in the pyramid of the freedom, It is also said that the liberty of speech is the mother all liberties. Freedom of speech means the right to express one’s own opinions and thoughts spontaneously by verses of mouth, writing, printing, pictures or any other means. In the current era, right to freedom of speech is one of the essence of free society and it must be protected at all time. Liberty to express views and thoughts without any interference, and especially without any fear of punishment plays a significant role in that particular society and ultimately for the state. Democracy is not only a practice of government but also a means of existence. Defined by Abraham Lincoln as the government of people, for the people and by the people, it is a coordination in which the supremacy lies in the hands of the people as their elected legislatures who rule and run the country. Articles 19-22 of our Indian Constitution gives the individuals the Right to Liberty as one of the Fundamental Rights. The right to freedom of communication cherished there in gives the media not only a chief role but also a supreme responsibility of expressing public estimation through a written word. The media has been made the indispensable mechanism for certifying openness in society in an attempt to polish progress and educate it by the process of analysis, conversation and combination. The role of media in a democracy undertakes even greater importance when we know the fact that in a society where an overwhelming bulk of people are silent spectators, to access to a forum that frequently reaches others has to be viewed as a trust on their behalf for their development and opulence. The power of the media has been recognized since many centuries. This is apparent from the fact that there have been efforts to control it from the time of British rule over India. The first Indian newspaper-Hickey’s Bengal Gazette of 1781 was forbidden by Warren Hastings. Fearing that the press may present his conspiracies to the public, the Governor-General imposed government restriction on Indian papers which sustained strictly till 1835 when Lord Metcalf brought some liberation. In the year 1788 Warren Hastings was prosecuted by the British Parliament under the activism of famous political scientist and writer Edmund Burke. Hastings was acquitted in the charge because the judges were British and the victims at the hand of Hastings were Indians the fact that Hastings was ethically immoral and against the liberty of the press climaxes the fact that the media has the authority to encounter and expose the mightiest and they are afraid of it. Antiquity tells us that State intervention with the press did not disappear at any stage of the British rule. During the era of partition of Bengal and Boycott and Swedish Movements there were severe restraints on the media.

The subjugation of the prevalent view and the boundaries on the media, in fact, go together. This is why the vilest form of control of media was found in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. In India too, during the eras of emergency in 1975-77, strict restriction was executed on the media by the government. A lot has been said and written about this pace taken by the government. Without going into its facts we analyze its unadorned facts. During emergency all fundamental rights of the citizen are occupied away by the State. The declaration of emergency was trailed by censorship of the press and other media to rule out the possibility of letting a prevalent opinion against the ruling party and government to be formed.

The authority of media is unparalleled in a democracy and no political leaders accept it. But whosoever has vexed to rheostat it, the independent powers have always understood the malaise intentions, occupied it as a sign of weakness and removed such leaders and parties. It was not a chance that the Congress noticed its first ever downfall in elections in 1977 that is, instantly after emergency and suppression of media. Democracy is in so much love with free media, that it does not pardon any attempt to control or curb it.

The print media has come a long way since the epoch of publication of periodic journals and newspapers to the modern refined technology-based electronic media. But the role of media since commencement till date has been the same that is to uncover the throes of existing period and its systems. The media is the mirror of civilization in an autonomous country as it acts as a vibrant link between the governing and the governed.

As a matter of fact, a bold media is the most important qualification of a country with a democratic set up. Its prominence is not reformed with the fact whether the country is developed or developing. People elect their councils, in a democracy, who make policies for a stable socio-economic development of the country. They also implement numerous strategies for the benefit of the country. It is only through media that people come to know about the programs of different political parties so that the contestants who are best matched to rule the country are elected. After the establishment of governments and allotment of ministries, the media grants an valuation of working of all the agencies at various ranks in their particular fields. The ministries receive valuable feedback and the people's ambitions which work as a future guidance for them to make obligatory changes in their programs wherever required. In a country like India where a large number of people are illiterate, live in extreme poverty and lack the change to voice their problems on some stand which can be taken cognizance of, media itself becomes the voice of the people.

The books, journals, magazines, newspapers come within the domain of print media. As it adores a large leadership, the influence it creates on people's minds has wide effects on the feelings, interpretations and activities of public as well as the ruling classes. In each age there are certain books which are forbidden for some reasons like James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* and Tolima's *Lajpat*. The authorities have to be vigilant that the writer, carried away in his or her sensitive veins may not hurt the sentiments of some segment of people. Some prohibitions are for political reasons also. It can be said that while a writer has peripheral obligations, he also has the duty to portray the factual representation of contemporary society including its unpleasant side. The press is truly privileged as the fourth estate in a democracy.

7. CONCLUSIONS:

In order to conclude it can be rightly said that with the progress of science and technology there has been a valuable accumulation in the range of media the microelectronic media which covers broadcasting, television, Internet, e-mail, video recorder, audios, pictures, stage shows, prints seem to have taken the Centre-stage because of its peppery performance. It also has the resources of reaching every nook and corner of the world and to cover the amazing events like scenes of war, vehemence, natural catastrophes, sports events, inauguration, etc. The authorities linked with this media like photojournalists, correspondents have at times, to put their lives at stake. The significance of media in a democracy cannot be overstated. It has massive power to cheer the concentrations of the people. As such, it has to shoulder the accountability of bestowing what is true, sponsor what is essential and empower the individuals to scrutinize the essence from material. As an instrument of social change, economic progress and ethical improvement it should advocate definite principles and doctrines.

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