Social Media in Governance: Public and Political Reform

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Abstract: Social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value. Communications produced by industrial media can be long compared to social media capable of instantaneous responses. However, because the industrial media start adopting aspects of production normally associated with social media tools, this feature may not prove distinctive over time. Industrial media, once created, cannot be altered, whereas social media almost instantaneously by comments or editing..Yochai Benkler analyzed many of these distinctions and their implications in terms of both economics and political liberty. Benkler. used the neologism network economy or "network information economy" to illustrate the underlying economic, social, and technological characteristics ot "social media". Andrew Keen criticised social media in The Cult of the Amateuris that Out of this anarchy, it suddenly became clear that what was governing the infinite monkeys now inputting away on the Internet was the law of digital Darwinism, the survival of the loudest and most opinionated. Under these rules, the only way to intellectually prevail is by infinite filibustering.

I.   Introduction

Social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value. social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Social media are different from industrial or traditional media, such as newspapers, television, and film; relatively inexpensive and accessible to enable anyone to publish or access information, compared to industrial media, which require significant resources to publish information. Both social and industrial media have the capability to reach small or large audiences; one characteristic shared by both.

The differences between social media and industrial media can be described based on reach, accessibility usability, immediately and permanence. Both industrial and social media technologies scale and are capable of reaching a global audience. Industrial media use a centralized framework for functioning, whereas social media are by their very nature more decentralized, less hierarchical, and distinguished by multiple points or production and utility.

The means of production for industrial media are government and or privately owned; social media tools are generally available to the public at little or no cost.

Industrial media production typically requires specialised skills and training whereas social media does not require specialised skills and training. In theory, anyone with access can operate the means of social media production.

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II.   Online media: Social and Effective

The Dutch man Ramon Stoppelenburg created his own necessary network online which offered accomodations to stay. This made Stoppelenburg one of the first people online who used the online media on a social and effective manner. Social media culminate into many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. According to Kaplan and Heinlein there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects, blogs and micro blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual communities. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, weblogs, wall- postings, e-mail, instant messaging, music-sharing, and crowd-sourcing[1].

Social Media, Government, Public and Politics

For few years, many technophiles, activists, and political observers have been lauding the power of social media platforms such as Facebook, SMS, Twitter, and YouTube to enhance governance and to meet political change.

Today, we have largely anecdotal data on the impact of new media and technologies on political reform. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have played critical roles in promoting the recent protests in Egypt, Iran, Moldova, and Tunisia. Moreover, cell phone technologies can play an instrument farcing electoral fraud by enhancing election monitoring and reporting techniques. Yet, in spite of the anecdotal evidence that approves of these developments and their use in specific instances, there is a want o empirical analysis on the subject. We lack studies that trace the causal impact of these technologies on political reform and improved governance.[2]

Some areas that mandate more serious inquiry are the following:

Evidence of Political Change

Social media can impart an important role in publicising political activities such as protests. But we have not much evidence that such actions have led to substantive political change. ls there any possibility to develop a set of indicators to more effectively gauge the impact on litical new technologies and media on questions of political change?

Technology and Governance

Is there any evidence that these technologies can help to improve day-to-day governance and improve political accountability? Further as a transparency instrument how citizens can be persuaded to adopt such technology. What incentives do citizens contribute in mobile governance, and how can new technologies be deployed to advocacy efforts already underway?

Social Media and Good Governance

Thailand has embraced the idea of good governance has been a key concept for democratic development in many countries around the World during the past few decades.

The 'good governance' was not understood at its inception, not people, at the grass root level, understood what it meant. However, attempts were made to explain this concept to the public by community leaders and scholars with the hope it easier to understand[3].

One of various explanations widely accepted, focuses on the ability of the state to perform its key functions in the needs of its citizens, and to be accountable for its doings. Emphasis has been placed on the needs of the people, public interest, transparency, accountability and responsibility of the policy-makers; central to establishing sustainable development. The public, or even the government officials in possession of information, could adequately comprehend the need of information dissemination. To perform the monitoring duty as a mirror of the society, the media have been playing an important role in educating the people about good governance.

The news and investigative reports on state performances need insightful information. Whether such classification of information was correct had rarely been questioned in the past. Accurate and sufficient information makes the people better enjoy their freedom of speech, attributing to rational decisions and right course of action beneficial to them[4].

Social Media and Political Reforms

Civil unrest in the African countries of Tunisia and Egypt began with citizens publicly lighting themselves on fire to display their displeasure towards the corrupt leaders.

The first protester to sacrifice was a greengrocer by occupation, f Mohamed Bouazizi. His economic woes made him publicly fuel massive protests in the country of Tunisia. Bouazizi's exam le has been followed by dozens of protesters in nearby Egypt, who have also immolated themselves to motivate others to take action against high food prices and acute unemployment rates. The betterment and fame of social networking sites make them centre for various types of communication. The question remains is there too much freedom on Facebook and other sites? If ordinary citizens can organise a rally and protest on these sites, it is hard to cheak it because of the right to assemble and the right of free speech.

Social Media and Democracy

Saudi Islamists and opposition activists have launched a political party in a rare challenge to the absolute monarchy, asking King Abdullah for a voice in the Gulf Arab state's governance, its organizers said Thursday. The move was apparently prompted by popular revolts in the Arab World that toppled Tunisia's president last month and have loosened the grip of Egypt's autocratic leader.

But it was more an act of protest than an effective start-up of a political party since Saudi Arabia has no elected parliament and parties and public dissent are banned by the Al-Saud monarchy, which rules the World's No. 1 oil exporting country in alliance with Sunni Muslim clerics.

There have been other attempts to form parties but analysts said the new "Islamic Umma" group appeared to be the first to be revealed publicly. They said members included Islamist intellectuals and lecturers, human rights activists and lawyers.[5]

"You know well that big political development and improvement of freedom and human rights is currently happening in the Islamic world," the group of ten activists said in a letter to King Abdullah, obtained by Reuters and also posted on their website. "It's time to bring this development to the kingdom,"[6] they told the king, who is about 87 and now recuperating in Morocco after medical treatment in the United States. Islamists and liberals both seek more political freedoms in Saudi Arabia and, While differing on details such as the rights of women, say that reform is their overriding goal. Six Principles of Social Media in Building Public Perception and Ten core

principles underlie the value of social-media solutions, and, in combination, serve as the defining characteristics that set social media apart from other forms of communication and collaboration.[7]

Participation

Successful social-media solutions tap into the power of mass collaboration through user participation. The only way to attain substantial benefits from social media is by motivatingthe community to contribute. To obtain the "wisdom of the crowds", participation is mondatory.

Collective

Varied definitions and applications of the term "collective" abound and attains a wide spectrum of meanings. Here, as a core principle of social media, the use of the term "collective" is tightly aligned with its root origins "to collect." With social media, participants "collect" around a unifying entity.

People gather around the Facebook social graph to contribute their profile information. People collect on Wikipedia to add encyclopaedic articles. People gather on YouTube to share videos. In social media, people collect around the content to contribute rather than individually create the content and distribute it.

Transparency

A social-media solution provides transparency, participants are privy to each other's participation. They get to see use reuse augment, validate, critique and rate each other's contributions. In absence of transparency community improves content, unifies information, self-governs, self corrects, evolves, creates emergence and otherwise propels its own advancement.

Independence

The principle of independence counotes that any participant can assist completely independent of any other participant. This is also called anytime—anyplace collaboration. Generally, there is no workflow or document check-in check-out that can check collaboration and effect the scalability needed for mass collaboration. No coordination between collaborators is needed.

Persistence

It differentiates social media from synchronous conversational interactions, where much of the information exchanged is either lost or captured, most often only in part, as an extra scribing activity.

Emergence

It is the recognition that one benefit of social media is as an environment for social structures to emerge. These symmetyries may be hidden organisational structures, expertise, work processes, content organisation, information taxonomies, etc.. Social media are best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics:

Openness

Most social media services are exposed to feedback and participation. They assist voting, comments and the sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content — password-protected content is frowned on.

Conversation

Whereas traditional media are about "broadcast" (content transmitted or distributed to an audience) social media is better seen as a two-wav conversation. there is no participant collaboration on content. Due to transparency, the

Community

Social media allow communities to form quickly and communicate effectively. Communities share common interests, such as a love of photography, a political issue or a favourite TV show.

Connectedness

Most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, making use of links to other sites, resources and people.

III.   Conclusion

There are various statistical findings that account for social media usage and effectiveness for individuals worldwide. Some of the most recent statistics are as follows:

Social networking now accounts for 22% of all time spent online in the US. A total of 234 million people aged 13 and older in the US. Used mobile devices in December Z009. Twitter processed more than one billion tweets in December 2009 and averages almost 40 million tweets

'per day. Over 25% of US. internet page views occurred at one of the top social networking sites in December 2009, up from 13.8% a year before. Australia has some of the highest social media usage statistics in the world. In terms of Facebook use Australia ranks highest with almost 9 hours per month from over 9 million users. The number of social media users ag;65 and older grew 100 percent throughout 2010, so that one in four, people in that age group are now part of a social networking site.

The statistics itself suggests the penetration of Social Media among public. The numbers signifies the role of social media in building the public perception and its effect in good governance in a politically active society. In this new world, peoples' sins can be broadcast from the rooftops quickly, and political leaders can be compelled to follow higher standards in their personal and career actions or be forced to resign by the people.

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