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'SOCIAL MEDIA: A VIRTUAL GLOBAL COMMUNITY HALL'

NAVEEN KUMAR

Institute of Mass Communication & Media Technology,
Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

Abstract:

'Choupal' in villages is a powerful source of entertainment and information. It is a wonderful gift of Indian culture. Today, in the era of digital technology, discussion, debate, constant flow of information, new ocean of knowledge and every common man has got a powerful medium to express his ideas and opinions which is known as Social Media. Social Media is such a digital platform which, through technical medium, providing important opportunity to people for knowledge-creation, participation and sharing knowledge and this social media is playing a role of such a 'Virtual Global Community Hall' whose boundaries are unlimited. The access of The Virtual Digital Hall is not limited to a particular region rather to every human being who in a way or other using internet. Global village is now converting into a Virtual Global Community Hall, a community hall where people may not be present physically but connected to every sphere of the world with the help of 'Key Board' and 'Computer Monitor'. In seconds, information can be transmitted from one corner of the world to other and we can make the world aware of our ideas. Mean to say that we can share our ideas without any hesitation, discuss the issues with people, can discuss socio-state problems for solution on Virtual Global Community Hall. Social Media began to connect friends; today it has connected the whole in a friendly manner. Social Media has opened the doors to the world for social change and is accessible to every corner of the world. Social Media has opened the door for the social change and Social Media has emerged as a powerful medium of social change worldwide.

KEYWORDS:

Social Media, Digital Technology, Debate, Information.

INTRODUCTION:

'Choupal' is a common word frequent among Indian Village Communities, where elders and people generally assemble and discuss various issues, exchange ideas, discuss social problems frankly, discuss political and social issues, and funny matters are burst into laughter. 'Choupal' in villages is a powerful source of entertainment and information. It is a wonderful gift of Indian culture.

Today, in the era of digital technology, discussion, debate, constant flow of information, new ocean of knowledge and every common man has got a powerful medium to express his ideas and opinions which is known as Social Media.

What is Social Media?

Social media is a group of such web sites that allow people to create online profiles so that they may join themselves to others, ideas and thoughts may be shared. In India Facebook, My Space, LinkedIn,

Orkut, Google Plus etc social networking sites are in vogue.

Social Media is such a digital platform which, through technical medium, providing important opportunity to people for knowledge-creation, participation and sharing knowledge and this social media is playing a role of such a Virtual Global Community Hall whose boundaries are unlimited. The access of The Virtual Digital Hall is not limited to a particular region rather to every human being who in a way or other using internet.

Around two decades ago information to people was being catered through television, radio and newspapers and the reactions and complaints of audience, listeners and readers were able to reach through letters only, today by dint of the wider coverage of internet and expansion of mobile technique Social Media has emerged as a powerful medium

Social Media has provided liberty to people to give voice to their thoughts and share the knowledge without any discrimination. Through Social Media the concept of Marshal Malcolm "Global Village" is emerging as "The Virtual Global Community Hall"

Global village is now converting into a Virtual Global Community Hall, a community hall where people may not be present physically but connected to every sphere of the world with the help of 'Key Board' and 'Computer Monitor'. In seconds, information can be transmitted from one corner of the world to other and we can make the world aware of our ideas. Mean to say that we can share our ideas without any hesitation, discuss the issues with people, can discuss socio-state problems for solution on Virtual Global Community Hall (Social Media).

Social media has spread worldwide at a rapid speed and people have welcomed social media with open arms. One of the key factors of this expansion is decline in the price of mobile phones and internet across the globe. Worldwide demand for multimedia mobile phones and competition among companies has heavily reduced the prices of mobile phones due to which today cell phone has become common in every 'Pocket'.

According to a report out of 7 billion population of the world, 5.9 billion (87%) of people are using cell phones and 30% subscribers of mobile phones of this population live in India and China only. The sale of smart phones was over 63% in 2011 and in the same year out of total pages visited by internet users on mobile phones, 50% were social sites. The numbers of Facebook users alone has multiplied four times. In the year 2009, the number of facebook users was five crores by 2011 this figure beefed up to 20 crores. The world's 1.2 billion cell phones are connected to the internet, which is 17% of the world's total population.

In January 2012, 8.7% internet was used through cell phones, which is two-fold in comparison of previous year. These figures apparently reveal that social media is emerging at rapid speed on cell phones. Among facebook user countries, India occupies third position.

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Today in the world, people are adopting social media at such a speed that it is becoming the medium of social change and its glimpse has been observed in recent years. In 1995, first social networking site 'Classmate' was launched which helped the users to search their old friend and helped them to establish contact with them.

After its tremendous success, many social networking sites worldwide came into being! At that time, anyone hardly would have thought that this change will affect such a wide range of social life and the whole world will gather by the same Community Hall where there is a bottomless ocean of knowledge and ideas, people will have such a platform where they will be able to elevate their voice.

People have started using social media as a medium to bring social change and for a better society. Social media empowers us to approach masses with the social issues and by doing so bolster to change the point of view. The recent revolution in Egypt in a historical way has astonished the whole world. Social media played an active role in this movement. Egypt has 5 million facebook accounts; it means 5 million people are using facebook. Activist used facebook to fix the date for the movement and to contact other activists. People started uploading the picture of demonstration on facebook profile as consequence lacs of people joined this movement. The pivotal movement in Egypt began with a Facebook post on January 14, 2012, which was addressed as a torch to change, and the whole world witnessed this revolution. Many people are calling it Facebook and Twitter revolution.

Before 2008 President's election in United States, Barack Obama had the support of social network for election campaign. America stands at number one position in using Social Media or in other words, use of Social Media in the U.S. is the highest in the world. Barack Obama understood this perfectly. Obama launched a website mybarackobama.com in order to connect with youth, where he campaigned for the policies of the party. Moreover, he created the profile of the state on Myspace. It is also interesting to

mention that the daughter of the Republican candidate Rudy Guiyani supported Barack Obama by joining his group on Facebook 'Barack Obama (One Million Strong for-Barack).

In 2011, an earthquake measuring 8.9 on the Richter scale hit Japan, thereafter tsunami in Japan ruined it drastically, and after this tragedy, most people contacted their concerned families through mobile phones using internet. Google created Person Finder Application, which assisted lost people in tragedy to find their dear ones.

A non-profit organisation Kickstart is putting a venerated and important effort in Tanzania and other African countries. In these countries, Kickstart sells super moneymaker pumps to farmers, because of these irrigation pumps poor farmer producing better crops per season and earning ten times profit, which is playing a positive role in their social, educational upliftment and eradication of poverty.

Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter have played a crucial role in historical political change in Tunisia. Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg would not even think that he is giving a new platform to demonstrate the anger arouse out of hunger, unemployment and corruption of the Arabian protesters. People together raised their voice against 24 years old regime of Jine al Abidain Ben Ali and took assistance of Social Media. During movement, Tunisian people neither exposed their relations nor uploaded their family photos on Facebook.

In addition, they used to upload the information of every moment of demonstration carried out on roads. Social Media became a strong platform for Tunisian activists during the protest. This movement began when a 26 years old unemployed Mohammad Bojjiji immolated himself out side of a government office. This incident took a historical turn and people across the country descended on the streets against unemployment and corruption. Though government television reported this incident as small-scale single incident but Aljajira Channel telecast the pictures around the world uploaded by activists on Facebook, Flickr and YouTube.

Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter also played major role in changes took place in Libya. Then NATO Commander had the knowledge to access Social Media such as Facebook, that is why NATO Commander Admiral James Stawardis on his Facebook account announced the end of the war in Libya.

Similarly, in the U.S. Occupy Wall Street Movement is an outcome of Social Media. This movement began in 2011 at Jookotti Park in New York. A Canadian activist group Adabstars initiated this movement. The main issues of this movement were social and economic inequality, hunger corruption and the increasing influence of government on the economic sector corporation. The slogan of the movement was "We are the 99%", people through this movement wanted to convey that the percentage of wealthiest people is one percent whereas the gap between the 99% is widening because of inequality of income. Occupy the Wall Street movement achieved worldwide cooperation. 95 cities of 82 countries demonstrated against social and economic inequality, hunger, corruption. When in an interview Calle Las co-founder of Adbstars is asked that if the movement is the result of Social Media then he replied that Social Media has played a major role in this movement and Twitter made it more burning.

India is no exception from the influence of Social Media. Though there was no similarity between Anna Hazare and Arab Countries changes but both have one thing common that they were connected to Social Media. Twitter played a major role in the movement took place in Arab, whereas, in Anna Hazare's movement in India Facebook along with Twitter played a vital role. Internet and mobile phones are being used as weapons for social upliftment. Anna Hazare on 27th December 2011 before his hunger strike (fast) on 22nd December launched a website www.jailchalo.com for India against corruption. In just five days 1.54 million people registered themselves to support Anna Hazare and more than 6 lac people liked the page 'India Against Corruption' on Facebook and supported Anna Hazare. In order to help the victims of 2011 Mumbai blast and their family members with information such as blood, accommodation, hospital in the vicinity, blood bank telephone number, police control room, information about missing people etc. Social Media Twitter used Twitter People Hash Tag to provide all such information.

India gained immense success in '60th Earth Hour Campaign' undertaken on international level by Social Media. The worldwide campaign against global warming many countries including India opposed it by turning off electricity. In India alone, 5 million people of 65 cities together switched off lights of their homes and opposed global warming in their own way. In this campaign, Social Media brought people together at macro level.

Social Media is not limited to social change only rather it collected funds worldwide for needy people and their development. A woman named Amanda drove a campaign worldwide on social networking sites such as twestival i.e. Twitter Festival. 'Twestival Global' launched in January 2009 collected 2.5 lac American dollars from 202 cities of the world in order to provide fresh and clean water to water crisis ridden areas of Ethiopia. In year 2010, the same campaign raised 4.5 Lac U.S. dollars for a non-profit organisation 'Concern Worldwide'. Twestival later on called Twestival Local called upon to come forward for social service in their respective countries, 150 cities of the world participated in Twestival

Local 2011 and raised an amount of 5.65 lac U.S dollar on the name of charity and this could be feasible just by dint of potential of Social Media.

Social Media has begun to leave its impression in educational fields also; Prof. Michael Netjale of Singapur Management University utilized Social Media to its optimum. He used Twitter to share text material of his subject among his students. In addition, on Twitter he started providing information regarding class activities to student in advance. This planning started in classroom later on became renowned as "Digital Media Asia Wiki". It is an online source where minute-to-minute information regarding continuous growth and development in digital media can be accessed. Inclusion of technical education with traditional education system is the success of Social Media and reflects the change-taking place in society.

Social Media is proving to be useful for upcoming journalists. Australia's Griffith University made it mandatory for the journalism students to upload their article on Twitter, so that it may brush up their writing skills and may gain worldwide knowledge through new media.

An International Human Right Organisation named Brekthro 'Ring the Bell Campaign' 2008 launched on www.ringthebell.org/blog. According to 'UN Women report on Progress of the World's Women: In Pursuit of Justice, 2011-2012' appealed the males of the nation to stop the domestic violence against women. This issue became prominent on Social Media, males and boys contributed in it brilliantly. According to drive if you see any domestic violence against women in your surrounding then go to that house once and ring the bell and if anyone comes out, request for a cup of sugar and if no one comes out then immediately inform the police. Thousands of people on Facebook recognized this campaign.

Director Onir's film 'I Am' could not be produced for financial constraints. Writing skills may be brushed up and worldwide knowledge may be gained through new media. Here too, Social Media played a new role, 400 people from all around the world collected fund for the film through Facebook, and Twitter and these 400 people became co-sponsor of the film.

On 20th October 2011 a dozen of people attacked Kinn Santos and Fernandes at Andheri West in Mumbai wherein both were badly injured, but Kinn died after some time, Reuben Fernandes was battling between life and death in the hospital. Thanks to Facebook and Twitter, hundreds of people rushed to hospital to donate blood. But Reuben Fernandes also died eight days later. The mainstream media did not pay any heed to this incident earlier. One lac online signatures were collected with zero tolerance campaign and handed over to state home minister on a cloth. By Social Media's initiative, the case was handed over to fast track court.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious through all these incidents worldwide via social media that combination of power of new technique and courage of ordinary people has initiated a new wave of social change. Social Media is a Virtual Global Community Hall for ideas, information, entertainment and change. It has given a new definition of "Expression" to the world. The world is connected and information if available in every corner of the world. This change could be feasible because of increasing interest and experiment of people towards Social Media. The Social Media has brought the whole world before your eyes, you can talk to it, share your ideas, get the solution of the problems. An ordinary man has a platform like Social Media where he can give voice to his socio-political ideas. Social Media has made every 'common' into 'special'. In future in addition, people will keep on contributing to Virtual Global Community Hall and social changes in future will take place at a rapid speed because of technical development. Social media is a medium, which is much faster than any other conventional medium.

Social Media began to connect friends; today it has connected the whole in a friendly manner. Social Media has opened the doors to the world for social change and is accessible to every corner of the world. Social Media has opened the door for the social change and Social Media has emerged as a powerful medium of social change worldwide. People have realized that their voice can reach to masses through Social Media. The governments of the countries should also recognize the importance of Social Media and should be utilized, for the social welfare and social upliftment.

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