

Political Communication Using New Media: A Comparative Study of Indian and Iranian experiences

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Abstract

This study will argue about the Political Communication Using New Media. This is a comparative analysis between Indians and Iranians politicians. As media can change the people and bring new ideas, even make people united for social issues, studying about the advantages and disadvantages of social media is very important. In the age of digital world, popular social network sites like Facebook and Twitter are believed to have the potential for increasing political participation. Politicians have begun to use Facebook pages for the purpose of entering into direct dialogs with citizens and encouraging more political discussions. India is one of the largest countries with a large population that bring good opportunities for people to get access to Internet by software and companies as the largest democratic county in the world. Iran also can be a sample of an independence country that passed revolution same as India and have chosen to play an important role on politic because of its strategic condition on the Middle East. The main objective of this study will be examination of Indian and Iranian Political Communication on New Media. The researcher will use multi-method research design combining qualitative and quantitative methods which were exploratory and experimental. Data collection will be mostly based on observing, interview-schedule.

Keywords: Social Media, Facebook, Twitter, Online political communication, politicians in Iran and India

1. Introduction

Social Media

Suminas (2010) argues the term social media came into wider use in the middle of 2006 and still has no generally accepted and unambiguous definition. Some researchers use this term in parallel with the term Web 2.0 which describes specific way of communication among the users of World Wide Web when service and content control is assigned to the users. Which is allows them to easily create and share information and data, sometimes even change the structure of the information system.

Kaplan and Haenlein represent this approach and describe social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of emphasizing the dimension of keeping social relations where the main object is social relations among people, reciprocity and intercommunion.

John Blossom puts stress on the aspects of social interaction and describes social media as any highly scalable and accessible communications technology or technique that enables any individual to influence groups of other individuals easily. Social media can be of various forms including text, sound, photo and video material, various content links and interfaces. Great diversity of forms of social media means allows every Internet user to choose the most acceptable forms and channels of communication.

Moreover, the audience of World Wide Web can choose whether to use interactive means of communication of a general nature that are designed for the general public with no exceptional

needs or specialized means of social media that are designed for the societies of individuals with specific needs. When speaking about the changes of information publication on the Internet Dave Evans states that by courtesy of social media the democratization of knowledge and information spread takes place when people become active creators instead of passive users of content.

The roles of participants of communication through social media are not fixed and strictly determined. Any user of social media can easily change its role, i. e. be messenger and then become a part of the audience whereas in the case of traditional media, the roles of participants of communication are always clearly determined and fixed. More importantly, information and news in social media are presented more interactively and much faster.

2. Political Communication

Rodney Benson (2004) among contemporary social theorists, Manuel Castells and Jürgen Habermas have done a great deal to bring the media back in to the study of political communication. From another direction, social problems “constructionism,” the work of William Gamson and collaborators has also been especially influential. Yet with all three models, the conceptualizations of media (and the forces that shape them) are underspecified, minimizing their usefulness for systematic research.

But the logic and the organization of electronic media frame and structure politics (p.312) what does this mean for Castells? He cites the usual litany of ills tied to the news media: news as entertainment, lack of context, simplification, personalization. Fair enough. Castells does an admirable job in documenting changes in political communication that are increasingly evident around the world (see also Moog & Sluyter-Beltrao, 2001).

Here, at least, is a clear hypothesis. But Castells is closer to the truth in acknowledging the multiple facets and aspects of media systems. William Gamson and his various collaborators (e.g., Gamson, 1988; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, 1989) offer a third important attempt to incorporate media into political communication research.

In this model, “media practices” are generally identified as one of three major factors, along with culturally available symbols and themes (“cultural resonances”) and strategic political communication (“sponsor activities”) in shaping public (media) discourse about social problems.

(Wikipedia 09/03/2015) has explained the study and practice of political communication focuses on the ways and means of expression of a political nature. Robert E. Denton and Gary C. Woodward, two important contributors to the field, in *Political Communication in America* characterize it as the ways and intentions of message senders to influence the political environment.

David L. Swanson and Dan Nimmo, also key members of this sub-discipline, define political communication as "the strategic use of communication to influence public knowledge, beliefs, and action on political matters." They emphasize the strategic nature of political communication, highlighting the role of persuasion in political discourse. Brian McNair provides a similar definition when he writes that political communication is "purposeful communication about politics."

Reflecting on the relationship between political communication and contemporary agenda-building, VianBakir defines Strategic Political Communication (SPC) as comprising 'political communication that is manipulative in intent, that utilises social scientific techniques and heuristic

devices to understand human motivation, human behavior and the media environment, to inform effectively what should be communicated – encompassing its detail and overall direction – and what should be withheld, with the aim of taking into account and influencing public opinion, and creating strategic alliances and an enabling environment for government policies – both at home and abroad'.

3. Political Communication in Social Media

In Andrius Suminas's point of view (2010) when speaking about the role of social media in political communication, Internet means broadened the usual communication channels, provided much wider possibilities for the politicians to reach society and decreased the role of media as intermediate in the processes of political communication.

Unlike traditional media where journalists pick out the pieces of information for publishing, Internet provides politicians with the possibility to reach their electors directly. Furthermore, means of social media drastically reduced expenditure for the action of political communication because now Internet helps to spread information with minimum costs and this information reaches very high number of individuals. Most importantly, Internet provides possibilities for the two-way communication between the politicians and members of the society when politicians can have direct reversible connection and citizens can freely create.

Different communities of social media and groups in those communities represent different and specific parts of electorate. Social media allows the politicians to segment personalize messages at the maximum; therefore, they can customize and transmit their messages directly to the target audience through reasonable forms and channels. This creates a sense of personal communication with the electors.

Through social media politicians can reach such audiences that would never search for any information about politicians or politics. One of these audiences that get more difficult to reach is young people. The means of social media are visited by thousands of young and open to innovations people every day. Virtual communication for such people is extremely important; therefore, social media enables the politicians to reach youth through the most acceptable communication channel.

The content of communication of politicians interacting with the Internet users through social media is not only of political nature. Frequently the politicians share their personal remarks, funny experiences from their daily life, travel impressions, opinions on the books they have read or movies they have seen. This creates immediate and friendly atmosphere where no distance is left between the politicians and the audience and this lets the participants of the process of communication to feel more confident with each other.

It is important for the politicians to not only spread their beliefs and ideas as widely as possible but also to influence the potential electors for them to become loyal supporters. Blogs, microblogs, social networks, portals for photo and video sharing provides the politicians with the new possibilities to involve and mobilize their supporters.

However, these means decentralize the process of political communication and information spread as the politicians lose the possibility to control and influence the further process of message spread. The diversity and number of easily accessible channels of social media make it difficult for the politicians to form and keep their positive image.

Nowadays the politicians can be filmed or photographed at any place at any time and then the movies or pictures can be rapidly spread through the channels of social media. Therefore, as several researchers of politics assume, the interactive means will encourage the politicians to be more honest, behave themselves in public and try not to entangle in ambiguous situations.

The main disadvantage of the use of social media in political communication is that the older electors, who usually are the most active part of the electorate, use the Internet distantly, do not take part in the discussions in social media, and do not look through the content published in social media. Due to this reason, the politicians cannot totally reject the usual communication through the means of traditional media or direct meetings but interactive means have now become the place where politicians have to be otherwise they lose the possibility to communicate with the active and still increasing audience of social media.

Nowadays with the help of social media politicians can present huge amounts of miscellaneous information and receive direct feedback from the audience by pressing one button. Social media link the possibilities of mass accessibility and personal communication. With this, the efficiency of the process of political communication increases.

Now the users of social media start to select the messages they receive; therefore, the mass audience gets more fragmentary and the connection between the sender and the receiver is strengthened. This personal nature of communication allows for stronger interconnection as politicians and the users of social media in a way become friends, start to trust each other more.

However, social media not only opens the new horizons of communication for the politicians but also changes the rules of the process of communication. Politicians and their advisers have to understand that they cannot dominate and control the process of virtual communication.

VijaykumarMeti (2014) Social media is playing a considerable new role in Indian democracy. With the changing politics of India, political parties and politicians have found a new ways of reaching out to a younger and aspiration population are also changing. At present, political parties are increasingly embracing social media to encourage the people.

It is really a long leap from the times when politicians were relied mainly on posters, cardboard, cutouts, graffiti, banners and personal canvassing to win over voters. However, all of these are still in trend but increasingly, in the urban India, political parties are becoming tech savvy by understanding this is the only way to reach out the eloquent youths.

Among the major political parties in India, the Bharatiya Janata Party, (BJP) has the biggest charisma in social media. The BJP started using the social media even before the 2009 general election, which it lost. But in recent years, the party has dig deeper, several senior leaders such as Sushma Swaraj, Rajnath Singh, Arun Jaitley, Narendra Modi and many are on Twitter.

Some politicians have been accused of boosting their apparent popularity on social networking sites with legions of followers who don't exist and of using social media to smear their opponents. Worse, social media have been used to fan violence against religious and ethnic groups. Meanwhile, the Indian government has used the 2008 Information Technology (Amendment) Act to increase monitoring and censorship of social media.

Most Active Indian Politicians on Social Networking Sites With more than half of India's young population, our politicians have now resorted to the social media to reach out to their young voters. Now, few politicians update their Facebook accounts almost on a daily basis, and also access

Twitter and YouTube regularly. Narendra Modi is one of the most famous politicians on social media with approximately 1.3 million followers on his Facebook page.

We also will consider how the government and people were connected through the social media? For coming to an answer, the Tweets of Dr. Rouhani in the first hundred days of his presidency will be analysed to see what he has posted and what has received. This study is the first in the political and in the case of President Rohani in Iran.

Social media are familiar for most of the people universally. Today online population visit social media almost every day. By their potential to promote political engagement Social Media can take scholarly attention (Castells, 2007). Mobile also is a reason of the increasing usage of social media. Social networking transform personal, social and public relationship; it is an opportunity for people to express their ideas about different issues.

Microblogging is a type of blogging that allows users to post news less than a second. Active control, two-way communication, and synchronization are characteristics of the social media. Twitter can provide the notice of what users write, read and think in the global village. In this situation political institutes try to use such opportunity too as the internet and social media can be useful for democracy today.

Political Internet activity can happens on social media, Internet resources, and online expression. Young people are more interested in attending political campaign to express their opinions, discuss issues, and share information through social media. Use these sites to communicate with public figures, to find out about and respond to events in the news, and share their views on a range of topics, politicians and political parties in both end of the ideological spectrum have begun using them to organize and communicate with their supporters and the general public.

Political tweets often will increase in number and content by users who is near to an event politicians use social media because they understand Facebook and Twitter are most effective way of interaction rather than tradition media. Twitter can create transparency in the political system. Gerardine De Sanctis' and Marshall Scott Poole (1994) Implied importance influential social exchange of information between politicians and users of social networking sites by some tenants Adaptive Structuration Theory (AST).

AST core premise the idea that advanced technology, like social networking sites, enable multi-party and organizational activities through the exchange of complex information management (De Sanctis and Poole, 1994). Pew research study in 2012 announced that nearly 45% of Indian web users connect on social media to discuss politics. Internet and Social media played important role in Anna Hazare's anticorruption movement in 2011 Social media.

Social media emerged more strongly in 2013 public protests against the rapes in India. In India there are more than 18 million users of Twitter, which makes India one of the most active Twitter users. one of the first Indian politician who often referred as the Twitter Minister was Shashi Tharoor. He adapt to the social media revolution. while Shashi Tharoor is at 13th place Narendra Modi, prime minister of india is at 10th place worldwide; social networks and the mass media both affect individual behaviour and in the aggregate.

Elite by using social media can reduce the effects of bias as the media has the advantage of promoting prejudice against the status quo. The use of social media tools - text messaging, email, photo sharing, social networks, is not predetermined unit so trying to plan their effects on political action is too often just a duel stories decreases.

4. Literature Review

Social scientists concept of "social networking" Since the early 20th century have used implicit references to a complex set of relationships between social systems at all scales from individual to international. Social exchange theory, social psychological and sociological perspective that explains social change and stability as a process of negotiation exchanges between the parties.

Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action by individuals is the basis of mutual deliberation and reasoning. Focus on the foundations of democracy established in this work to study the theory of communicative action in further democratization and reducing the barriers to participation in public discourse can be made to an open form of social action.

The popularity of computer-mediated communication (CMC) as a means of task-oriented and community-based interactions is to have the ability of CMC to fulfill many of the same functions traditional form of interaction, especially face-to-face (FTF) interaction. Social information processing (SIP) theory by Joseph Walter (1992), which discusses how people get to know one another online, without non-verbal cues, and how they develop and manage relationships in computer-mediated environment there.

Social influence occurs when feelings, opinions, and behavior affect others. Social influence takes many forms and can adapt to social, peer pressure, obedience, leadership, persuasion, sales and marketing can be seen. In 1958, Harvard psychologist, Herbert Coleman three varieties of social influence is wide. Accept that people seem to agree with others, but in fact dissenting opinions keep them private.

Identify the people with the one who loved and respected, like a famous celebrity affected. Identify social model DEINDIVIDUATION effects (toxicity) by Reicher, Brittany, and Postmes (1995) explains that anonymity and identifiability effects on group behavior, referring to computer-mediated communication. DeSanctis adaptive structure theory and Money (1994) criticized technocentric terms of technology (determinism and technology) and social aspects.

Groups and organizations using information technology to its work dynamically perceptions about the role and use of technology, created and how it can be applied to their activities Social exchange theory shows that we choose to communicate through a bed of rewards and costs. Georg Simmel and Emile Durkheim wrote about the importance of studying patterns of social relationships that the actors connection.

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international. Social exchange theory, social psychological and sociological perspective that explains social change and stability as a process of negotiation exchanges between the parties.

Social exchange theory argues that human relationship is made by using subjective and comparative cost-benefit analysis of alternatives. Social information processing explains that nature of online interaction is a field of study that is both negative and positive media environment experience. Various explanations for the differences between theory electronic media, computer-mediated communication (CMC) and face-to-face communication exist including social theories presence, media richness theory, and no sign of the social fabric to offer.

Social presence theory suggests that CMC user disadvantaged in the sense that another person is engaged. So that we end up feeling like no one is there, our relationship impersonal, individualistic and is task-oriented. Media richness theory any communication medium due to the complexity of the message it can efficiently handle classified. CMC claims that the bandwidth is too narrow to convey the message about the rich.

The last theory is no sign of the social fabric in online communications, focused. The theory claims that CMC users have no clue as to their relative status, and norms for engagement are not clear, so that people tend to become more self-centered and less inhibited. Resulting in increased flaming - language that is hostile to their goals and zings toxic climate for the growth of the relationship on the Internet.

More recent theories increasingly optimistic views of online communication have developed, explaining how people who interact online are greatly able to create and preserve the harvest and communicate with others online.

Previous Studies : There has been a considerable amount of previous academic research in this field. Academicians, activists, researchers and others have realized the need and importance of social media in political communication. Jamie Bartlett, Sid Bennett, Rutger Birnie and Simon Wibberley (2013) argue that it increasingly is apparent that online social media is gaining popularity as a public forum for both public and personal political discussions. These growing numbers of Internet uses for political communication contrast with reports of decline in political participation (Newman, 1986; Putnam, 1995; Schudson, 1998).

VijaykumarMeti (2014) In the last few years social media have become an important political communication channel in India and globally. It enables political parties and voters to directly interact with each other. Therefore, political activities might gain more transparency and citizens might be more involved into political decision-making processes. However, until now the potentials of political discussions in social media involving political parties could not be exploited sufficiently.

One reason for that is a lack of knowledge of politicians about current topics and discourses on different social media platforms. Based on an extensive literature review, we could observe the increasing relevance and the need for analyzing political discussions on different social media platforms. The political parties, which have exploited the benefits of promoting their image and political messages by means of the social networks, have enjoyed the active participation of their supporters on Facebook.

S. Arulchelvan (2014) The study revealed surprising facts. Every major political party has tried to use all the available new media tools. According to the Diffusion of Innovation theory the new media communication and technologies usage trend is increasing here from innovators to an early

majority. Parties have used various tools to propagate their messages, policies, manifesto, plans, etc.

The findings show that almost all parties today are using new media. India is today in the stage of Early Majority adopters. Despite many parties accepting that new media has a role to play, only some parties are fully capitalising on the benefits of the new media. This can be seen in the quality of the message communicated or the effectiveness of the reach of the campaigns of various political parties.

On the whole the study reveals that, though new media technologies, especially Internet and mobile are good means of election campaigns, mobile phone campaigns will have a good reach among all class of people. Political parties feel the use of mobile phones is cheap and effective way to reach the people. Usage of Internet is common with youth and upper middle class.

Specifically, I take up some of the recent research findings in how deliberation proceeds in the online public sphere in the current destabilized environment of political communication. I find the notion of deliberative democracy useful, though its rationalist biases, particularly in the context of extra-parliamentarian politics, do limit its utility.

Stefan Stieglitz, Tobias Brockmann and Linh Dang Xuan (2012) contribution a paper as follows. First, this paper provides an extensive literature review on the relevance of social media for political communication. In particular, we identify a number of recent empirical studies related to public social media platforms such as SNSs, microblogging and weblogs.

Second, based on our empirical results, we show an increasing interest of German citizens in social media based communication of political parties. We also observe a strong growth of social media usage by German politicians in the last few years, especially left-leaning parties.

Furthermore, this study reveals that the majority of politicians are willing to engage more in social media and have the need to stay updated about current political discussions and about their own reputation in social media as well as to detect new trends and identify influential users within different social networks.

Finally, we derive implications for information systems research regarding the need for social media monitoring and analysis in political context as well as design and functionality of social media platforms and services to enhance “e- participation.” As a limitation, our study focuses on German politicians only. Moreover, the surveys were based on online questionnaires, which typically encourage more IT-savvy individuals to participate.

Aaron Smith (2011) in a study entitled “22% of online Americans used social networking or Twitter for politics in 2010 campaign Republicans catch up to Democrats in social media use for politics” found political social media users stand out for their overall use of the technology. They are significantly more likely than other Internet users go online wirelessly from a mobile phone or laptop rather than the owner of a laptop computer. Social media users are somewhat younger and more educated than other Internet users.

The use of social media for politicians on its own cannot create a good reputation. It is essential that politicians and policy reform work began unique and useful. Julian Ausserhofer & Axel Maireder (2013) in a study titled “NATIONAL POLITICS ON TWITTER Structures and topics of a networked public sphere” clarified in general, famous journalists, politicians, experts and key

players in the political Twitter sphere in Austria and shape, dense subnets and influence in the broader area.

In order to gain and maintain influence, users need to keep great personal involvement. Cristian Vaccari and el. (2013) on “Social Media and Political Communication A survey of Twitter users during the 2013 Italian general Election” showed that many Italians who talk about politics on Twitter dissatisfied with the performance of the system, but their level of interest and frequency of political talk shows that they are willing to respond to the perceived crisis of legitimacy through voice expression instead of leaving or loyalty.

A large number of counts suggest that people actively engage with organizations through the use of social media. Souman Hong and el. (2012) on study about “Which candidates do the public discuss online in an election campaign?: The use of social media by 2012 presidential candidates and its impact on candidate salience “have strong evidence of a positive relationship between the number of times that a popular politician mentioned by traditional media with the number which he mentioned on Twitter.

Souman Hong (2013) in a study on “Who benefits from Twitter?” Claimed new media such as the Internet, is still significantly increasing a "selected" audience as opposed to "inadvertent" in the heyday of the network's audience. The findings show that significantly increased financial assistance and social media adopted after politicians.

Himanshu Rajput claimed as the Internet is proliferating among the masses, no politician can undermine the power of social media. India is going into the general election in 2014, the importance of social media increases many times. After some initial skepticism and opposition Social media is parallel to the mainstream media.

Use Twitter in the political world, India is in the process of pregnancy and is a long way for politicians. In particular, the left is not active in social media so far. Julia Caplan (2013) “Social Media and Politics: Twitter Use in the Second Congressional District of Virginia” Twitter is a social networking device, and Rigell and Hirschbiel are used it as a means of attracting voters in a social structure.

5. Methodology

Objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the popularity of social media in India and Iran.
2. To find out the power of social media in India and Iran.
3. To study about advantages and disadvantages of social media for society.

- The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To study media convergence and communication features of social media of politicians in the context of the concept of democratization of communication.
2. To analyse the social media use pattern by users for political information.
3. To know the political impacts of social media.

4. To find out the relationship between demographic factors and social media use by politicians and these impacts on users
5. To analyse the gap in effective utility of the social media as information source by users for improved political knowledge.
6. To find out the better future extension strategies through social media for users.

Scope of the Study

The importance of the research is limited to political communication in social media. The study focuses on field work specifically Facebook and Tweeter of Indian and Iranian politicians.

7. Research Method

The researcher will use multi-method research design combining qualitative and quantitative methods which were exploratory and experimental. The researcher will conduct experiments in an uncontrolled experiment by conducting a survey online in qualitative as well as quantitative data. The researcher will adopt a combination of the Qualitative and Quantitative methods.

For the purpose of data collection, questionnaire, interview, observation method and review of library archives will use. The chief tool of data collection is Interview Schedule. Current affairs will observe and record.

A detailed report, which constitutes the study of this individual case, will analyze. SPSS will use for analysing data. Considering the nature of this study, as there are no scopes for personal assistants, personal interviews will provide qualitative inputs in the form of the various observations

Sampling: Sampling is the main important part of the research; According to the Wimmer Dominik (2011) if you are a beginner researcher if sampling is conducted correctly, a sample of adequate size 400-500 will usually represent the characteristics of that population. The most important part of the sampling procedure is to avoid bias of any kind each respondent should have equal chance of being selected. In this research researcher will use Non- probability purposive sample, as wimmer and dominik said “Purposive are used frequently in Mass media Research” Respondents will be heterogeneous. It will be based on Survey, Interview, focus Group discussion and case Study.

8. Limitation of the Study

As with any survey-based study involving self-reports of socially acceptable behaviour, this study perhaps suffers from inflated reports of political participation, political interests, and media exposure. However, because the emphasis was to examine patterns among these variables, rather than making univariate generalizations to any population, this phenomenon is of limited concern (see Vavreck, 2007 for a review of these concerns).

While the online spaces they addressed in the survey are frequently mentioned by popular media, it is possible that some items deal with activities that may not be understood by people who are not regular users of the Internet. Initially the researcher hoped to conduct the eye-tracking experiment (as explained in the literature review) on the websites to see how visitors interacted with the websites.

However, lack of equipment and resources did not permit him to do so. Because of the several important political related issues, the study is limited for the experiments, the researcher has used students of the Department of Communication and Journalism. It is not practically possible to enjoy the benefits of accessibility of data to all of the Facebook users because of shortage of time and the lack of the resources.

The usual limitations of the survey method such as time, human inadequacies, resource constraints, recollection and communication will be encountered by the researcher. A satisfactory sampling method will follow in selecting the area for the observation. Though much attention will be taken to collect the primary data, the memory bias on the part of the samples cannot be completely ruled out.

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