The Effect Of Social Media On Global And Social Issues

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Social media is a powerful platform that allows people to connect digitally and share information. Social networking and content communities allow users to create online profiles and output media and information (Austin, 2016). These platforms are mediums for users to connect with friends and family, shop, and even find soulmates. Despite its limitless capabilities in the 21st century, social media has evolved. This phenomenon began in the 1970s as Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs). These BBS operators were created by computer enthusiasts solely to exchange information and files about collaborated projects (Driscoll, 2016). The small-scale systems that allowed technical development professionals to upload articles and messages functioned in similar ways to bulletin boards in libraries today. This type of community content platform paved the way for other platforms like YouTube in 2005. As media content communities have become more popular over time, information begins to travel at a quicker speed.

Today, within a few seconds of posting a tweet on Twitter, I can transfer information around the world, allowing people to communicate without being in the same location. Furthermore, an increasing number of individuals that have access to the internet leads to more visibility of global and social issues. The growth important because it creates the opportunity for individuals to gain knowledge concerning social issues that did not occur in their specific location.

Throughout this paper I plan to discuss the effect of social media on social issues and whether or not social media can be used to bring about awareness. Through research, I will answer the question: Is social media an effective means for implementing change in global and social issues?

Discussion

Social media have enhanced global connectivity due to its ability to make distance irrelevant. As a result, it is possible to reach a greater audience across the globe using social media platforms. It is possible to establish social connections that are beyond the previously emergent capacities. With social media, people of different nationalities, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses can come together and form transnational social capital (Gladwell, 2010). The transnational social capital is of critical importance in enhancing social policies. For the first time, social media has created platforms that can be used to discuss important social issues that affect people from various cultures. The transnational social capital translates into diverse and innovative ideas that can be used to drive social change (Rotman et al., 2011). For this reason, social change agents can utilize social media platforms to influence people from various cultures. Transnational social capital is needed by the global society to shape policies that can positively improve the lives of people. For instance, social media have been used to challenge gender stereotypes that represent critical issues that affect the modern day society. As a result, people have used social media to share petitions that challenges the most dominant social stereotypes that prevent women from having equal opportunities as men.

There have been various cases of community sponsored activities that have gained attention on different social media platforms. Many of these activities represent symbols of activism that inspire people to implement certain changes in their local communities. Such activities become viral subjects shared by millions of social media users. In such instances, the transformative stories of different communities communicate a deeper message to the global society (Bennett, 2003). These stories make it clear that social media platforms represent important tools in creating

awareness of the need for change. Policymakers and politicians, aswell as activists, have recognized the potential of social media in enlightening people and creating greater awareness on the need for change in different sectors. Prior to the development of social media, it was impossible to impact a large part of the population using other media forms. Moreover, using social media to implement change brings on board people from different ages and backgrounds who get to appreciate simple ways in which they can transform their lives. For example, social media has been successful in spreading an important message concerning the need to address climate change. Activists have been using the various platforms to create an interconnected approach of highlighting the personal responsibility in addressing climate change (Gladwell, 2010). As a result, there is a greater awareness of the adverse effects associated with climate change, and people have a better understanding of how they can contribute positively in mitigating the adverse effects.

During the Global Youth Anti-Corruption Forum in 2012, the youth recognized that social media serves as a critical force in the implementation of change. Specifically, the youth highlighted the potential ways in which they could use social media to communicate important messages concerning the fight against corruption. In different democracies, government transparency has been one of the critical issues limiting the effectiveness of the governance (Rotman et al., 2011). However, it is possible to use social media to hold the government accountable by informing the members of the public concerning the manner in which leaders use public services. Social media platforms can be used to share critical information regarding government activities and operations. Unlike in the past, social media creates a public sphere of active participants who can demand more from the government. For the first time, it is possible to discuss significant issues that affect the well-being of the society by ensuring that the government is responsive to the

concerns of the people. Specifically, social media can be highly powerful in discrediting corrupt leaders for their lack of integrity. The social media serves as a limitless platform that influences people to express their concerns regarding the government and to voice out the grievances of members of the public who are the taxpayers (Bennett, 2003). In the fight against corruption, social media has been influential in enhancing transparency and integrity in leadership.

Social change agents have recognized the need to rely on social media when delivering important messages concerning the need for community development. These activists can share real-time messages and enhanced engagement with people on social media platforms. Notably, many of the social media platforms create an opportunity for active engagement. There is evidence that people who are less likely to be active participants in projects are likely to express their views on social media platforms freely (Gladwell, 2010). Social media platforms empower people to express their ideas without fear due to the potential to hide one's identity. Unlike the care with real-time conversations, people are likely to exhibit high levels of disclosure when using various social media platforms. Such levels of disclosure make it possible to share important messages concerning community projects. Social activists have relied on social media to generate important data used to determine the preferences of people at the local level (Rotman et al., 2011). The multiple forms of data generated from social media platforms can be used to make critical decisions regarding social policies. The metadata from various surveys on social media platforms has been the target of many social change agencies so that they can understand persistent social trends.

Unlike in the past, social media has created an important public platform that enhances social interactions. Through strategic planning, it is possible to transform social media conversations into action-oriented

approaches. Many people use social media to stir critical debates surrounding morality or social obligations. In the modern day, change agencies have the potential to transform social media conversations as starters of important discussions in the society(Bennett, 2003). In the past, it was impossible to engage various members of the society because they were not reachable. Social media offers the opportunity to reach people from various backgrounds and to persuade them towards the engagement in positive discussions that will enhance the well-being of the society. In marginalized communities, social activists need to develop strategic approaches to using the social media platforms to express the voice of the marginalized people. In these marginalized societies, social media may be less influential because it does not present a direct network that the activists can use. The most challenging aspect when using the social media platforms to drive social change is the ability to foster long-term forms of engagement as well as deeper levels of engagement (Rotman et al., 2011). For social change to occur, participants in a society should be able to register higher levels of engagement over prolonged periods. Through strategic planning, social activists can overcome this challenge and use social media to transform conversations into actions.

There is evidence that social media represents a new form of media power that can influence people's perspectives. Recognizing the power of social media can enhance advocacy efforts at various levels. Activists can focus on establishing the coordinated efforts of encouraging people to recognize some of the inevitable challenges that the modern society faces (Gladwell, 2010). Although social media cannot deliver the expected outcomes in advocacy on its own, it serves to enhance the levels of awareness. For this reason, it is possible to integrate traditional approaches to enhancing advocacy with the use of social media platforms and viral messages. When social media is a tool for advocacy, it can register desirable outcomes if the advocates utilize different forms of

appeals (Bennett, 2003). The first step is to establish a remarkable social network that can participate in critical issues that affect the society. Social media advocates can then develop appropriate content that can appeal to the people on the importance of participation.

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Conclusion

It is evident that social media can be used to register positive outcomes in enhancing social policies and creating awareness about important topics that affect the modern society. Social change agents can use social media to enhance the public participation in different topics that are of relevance to the society's wellbeing. The transnational social capital created on social media platforms serves as an opportunity to enhance global activism. However, the social change agents should be able to develop effective strategies for leveraging all the benefits that social media offers. Activists must integrate traditional approaches with the use of social media platforms as a way of enhancing the impact of social change initiatives.

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Summary

The development of social media platforms has created a new opportunity for implementing advocacy and creating awareness concerning social issues. With the increasing number of social media users, it is possible to establish important networks and relationships that can lead to better discussions concerning public issues. The potential of social media in enhancing the levels of engagement makes it an important tool in enhancing community advocacy. There have been cases whereby different groups have utilized social media to deliver an important message to the people and to appeal to different groups to participate in public discussions. Social media represents a transnational approach to establishing social capital that is needed to address persistent social problems such as the existence of gender stereotypes. Additionally, social media gives people the power to engage in different activities and to hold the government accountable by demanding more transparency and accountability.

Using social media to implement change requires critical considerations. The activists must be able to leverage all the benefits and integrative tools of social media in ensuring that there are positive outcomes. It is possible to exploit the advantages of social media platforms by ensuring that users of the different platforms gain the power to participate in public discussions and shape public policies. It is impossible to achieve all the positive outcomes when using social media. For this reason, adopting an integrative approach that combines social media and other traditional initiatives can lead to positive outcomes. Social change agents who rely on social media to create awareness must demonstrate radically distinctive competencies in developing critical content that is appealing to people from various backgrounds. The content posted on social media and the appeals used to determine the

effectiveness of social media in promoting change.

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