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Nikhil Kumar Singhmar
Ph.D., Research Scholar,
Comparative Politics Political
Theory, School of
International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi, India

Corresponding Author:
Nikhil Kumar Singhmar
Ph.D., Research Scholar,
Comparative Politics Political
Theory, School of
International Studies,
Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi, India

Role of social media in empowering tribal community

Nikhil Kumar Singhmar

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Abstract

Social media has become a vital phenomenon in contemporary social science research. It is an online media platform where people can easily share likes and comments on any post. Social media is the product of technological achievement. Social media are web 2.0 internet-based applications that are user-generated content where social media organisations create specific profiles, and their profiles are connected with other individuals and groups. Social Media in the 21st century disseminates from the urban to the local level. The social media platforms enable the peoples of the rural heartland of Adivasi who is getting opportunities to connect themselves to the mainstream world. Through these platforms, they can express their rights, culture and traditional knowledge system to the people.

This paper aims to explore how social media promotes tribal interest. To what extent has social media affected tribal socio-economics and political and technological mobility in everyday life? The present paper attempts to analyse how social media platforms facilitate tribal peoples to disperse their indigenous knowledge system to the world. In this way, this paper deals with the epistemological understanding of tribalism, reiterating their ontological reality through the rapid technological development of social media.

The paper will broadly employ qualitative methods, including analysing social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The analysis would be based on the various public account on social media like the Ministry of tribal affairs tweets and Facebooks post and various tribal groups' accounts that post and comment on tribal culture and their indigenous knowledge system

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, epistemology, social media, technology, tribal

Introduction

Social media is an online platform where people can easily share information and ideas. Social media differs from traditional media like print, mass, or broadcast media. It makes the virtual world through the internet and unites and associates people. Social media plays an essential role in shaping policies and enacting the law. Social media has become a vital phenomenon in contemporary social science research. Social media is the product of technological achievement. Social media are web 2.0 internet-based applications that are user-generated content where social media organisations create specific profiles, and their profiles are connected with other individuals and groups. Social Media in the 21st century disseminates from the urban to the local level. Social Media has become a vital weapon of modern-day communication in daily life. Nowadays, almost everyone is connected to social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter to know about the news and other related information. In short, Social media has become an indispensable part of life. It has touched everyone's life.

According to a report published by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), titled "Internet in India, there are 692 million active Internet users in India, including 351 million from rural India and 341 from urban India. The report estimates that 900 million internet users will be in India by 2025" ^[1]. There are both positive and negative impacts of social media. Nevertheless, due to technological development, those who use social media regularly know how to use and benefit from it. People use it to boost their business, information and for other purposes. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Social Media is a form of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and

¹ India to have around 900 million internet users by 2025: Report. <https://www.livemint.com/news/india-to-have-around-900-million-internet-users-by-2025-report-11659063114684.html>

blogging) through which user creates online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as video)" [2]. The Oxford Dictionary defines "Social Media as websites and applications that enable users to create & share content or to participate in social networking" [3]. In short, social media is mobile or web-based platforms that enable individuals or agencies to communicate. Social media differs from print, mass, or broadcast media. It makes the virtual world through the internet and unites and associates people. Before understanding social media, it is necessary to understand the meaning of media. Media refers to groups that communicate information and news to people. Broadly, there are three types of media: First, print media; is the oldest form of media. It includes; newspapers, magazines, journals, and other printed materials. Second, Mass Media or Broadcast media, which includes radio and television. Third is social or digital media, where people can easily share information and ideas. There are various forms of Social Media. Some of them are described as follows-

Twitter is an online microblogging platform where users post their messages or tweet their statements. Twitter was created in March 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams and launched in July of that year [4]. Twitter limited the length of tweets maximum of up to 144 characters. Only registered users can post tweets with their account, but an unregistered user can view the post quickly. It can be accessed by mobile phone, laptop, or desktop with an internet connection. By using Twitter with the help of smartphones, users or microbloggers can express feelings, thoughts, and events immediately. Politicians, celebrities, and top-level company executives use Twitter to post their thoughts instantly and plan to popularise. Twitter bots can also influence public opinion about culture, products, and political agendas by automatically generating mass tweets by imitating human communication.

YouTube is a new form of social network-oriented online communication; as a content community, users are not required to create a personal profile page. If so, it only includes the date they joined and several videos shared (Kaplan & Haenlein: 2010). It was founded in 2005 by PayPal employees-Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim as a video streaming website where users could view, upload, and share video content. The domain name "YouTube.com" was activated on February 14, 2005, with video upload options being integrated on April 23, 2005. The first YouTube video, Me at the Zoo, was uploaded on April 23, 2005, and shows co-founder Jawed Karim at the San Diego Zoo.

Facebook is a social networking website launched in February 2004, and it is privately operated by Facebook, Inc. Facebook was launched by Mark Zuckerberg and others when he was a student at Harvard [5]. Facebook may be accessed through many desktops, laptops, pill computers, and smartphones over the internet and cell networks. Currently, 491 million Facebook users are in India [6].

Instagram is a mobile, desktop, and net-primarily based photograph-sharing utility and carrier that permits customers to publicly or privately share photographs and movies with pre-accepted followers. Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger launched Instagram in October 2010. Instagram is a portmanteau of instant camera and telegram—currently, 503 million Instagram users in India [7]. Currently, 295 million Twitter users are in India.

WhatsApp is a cross-platform smartphone instant messaging application (Church & Oliveira, 2013). It provides the following features: text, chat, sends & receives images, sends & receives videos, sends & receives audio, Group chat, sharing V-cards & contact information (Mahajan *et al.*, 2013). After being acquired by Facebook in 2014, the concept of WhatsApp web, making calls, sending documents and location was also introduced. WhatsApp was incorporated in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both former employees of Yahoo! Koum, who named the app "WhatsApp" to sound like "what is up. Currently, 534 million WhatsApp users are in India.

LinkedIn is a business and employees oriented social media platform that operates through Internet and mobile-based apps. This platform is mainly used by professionals, including employers, for posting jobs and job seekers searching for suitable jobs. LinkedIn went live on May 5 2003; it is over 11 years old. LinkedIn is among the oldest mainstream social platforms, older than YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

The development of social media technology has given a new dimension to the communication process worldwide. In this technological era, all communities, including tribal communities, have created their website, blogs, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter accounts. They are active on more tech-savvy social media platforms like the dashboard and forum to circulate their rich culture and traditions. Tribal communities regularly keep their eyes on web content and feedback from audiences.

The term tribal is interchangeably used with Adivasi, Schedule Tribe and many others. According to the 2011 census, they are around 8.6% of India's population. They are prominently found in the Northeast, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, etc. They are India's original inhabitants. They have become backward in the civilisation race and, till now, largely remain in forest areas away from the mainstream. In the Indian context, the Britishers exploited them the most. There is no uniformity of social-political and economic conditions of tribal communities in India. The tribes in the northeast are more literate and have greater digital access than the rest of India. This is mainly due to the impact of government intervention and numerical presence in these states. According to Lokur Committee (1965), the essential characteristics of Tribal are Indication of Primitive Traits, Distinctive Culture, shyness of Contact with the Community at Large, Geographical Isolation, and Backwardness.

The constitution of India does not define the term tribes; however, in Article 342, the tribe word was inserted, and it says that the president may specify any group of tribes or tribal communities. The fifth schedule of the constitution deals with scheduled areas. The constitution of India guarantees the education, political, cultural and administrative rights of the tribes.

⁴ Case studies Study Solution — Twitter Inc. Business Model. <https://acasestudy.com/twitter-business-analysis/>

⁵ Facebook Organizational Culture - 1352 Words - Internet Public Library. <https://www.ipl.org/essay/Facebook-Organizational-Culture-FJRCEBP4E6G>

⁶<https://www.theglobalstatistics.com/india-social-media-statistics/>

⁷<https://www.theglobalstatistics.com/india-social-media-statistics/>

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs was founded in 199 by bifurcating the social justice ministry. It focuses on tribal welfare and the socio-economic and political development of Indian tribes. The ministry has launched many schemes and programs whose main aim is to uplift the condition of tribal communities in India. Recently, it has been using social media platforms to reach out to Scheduled Tribes^[8]. Social Media empowers the tribal communities by giving them space and quick information. All Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other platforms also give them information and resources. The Indian government and its ministry also give them information about their food, clothes, house, health, education, Indic knowledge, medicine, employment and related things. Social media is empowering the tribal communities in the following ways; first, Due to technological development, now they have access to technology and social media platforms by which they are becoming aware of their rights and culture. The self and collective consciousness is being created in them. Second, it is a fact that they lack education, but due to technological advancement and social media services; they are getting digital literature; the tribal youth are higher active on social media platforms compared to old generations. Now they demand basic infrastructure in their region and communities, like sanitary pads. Third, with the help of social media, they raise their demands against the unjust, unsustainable development models. They raise the displacement and rehabilitation issues on social media platforms and make trends in social media platforms. Fourth, they also use social media to highlight their health and nutrition problems. We see on social media platforms how due to a lack of basic facilities, they are untouched by the developmental activities of the state. We have many viral social media short videos of tribal women going on in Cot for medical aid. Fifth, they are claiming and reasserting their identity, which was eroding due to conflict with modern institutions. Now they are preserving their tribal dialects and knowledge system.

Literature Work

Studies have shown both positive and negative impacts of social media^[9]. When we talk about the positive impact of social media platforms, they create awareness and consciousness among the masses. Rainie and Wellman (2012) argue that now social media is a crucial news platform for participation work. Social media platforms also fulfil perceived social needs, such as socialising with friends and family.

According to a survey conducted by Common Sense Media in 2020, American adults use social media mainly to get updates about the weather, environment, and health and to stay socially connected. Social media platforms are mainly used for news updates like weather, sports, entertainment, celebrities, etc. According to a report by statista.com, in 2020, over 50% of India's population accessed social networks. It was estimated that by 2025, this penetration of social networks would be 67 per cent of the country's

population^[10]. According to CNN surveys, 75% of Americans use social media posts for news. 37% of people shared the news via Facebook or Twitter^[11].

Sometimes the content of our platforms' social media sites becomes very viral means that it is used and seen by many people on social media; sometimes, in politics for the business field, viral marketing tactics are used for advertising and promoting their products. Organisations and governments also use social media to form their opinion in the message to update the citizens' introduction to foster citizen participation in government to analyse and monitor public opinion. Relative activities to educate the public about their policy using social media platforms; for example, in India, prime minister Modi used social media platforms to popularise his scheme and campaign for his party in an election.

Various state governments also use social media to create awareness of some critical issues during the Covid-19 pandemic; social media spread awareness. Government agencies also use social media platforms for civil and criminal investigations in search of missing persons and the Sting operations visa process to monitor individuals and promote tourism in their country. Almost all countries are using social media platforms to promote themselves are tourist places; businesses are also campaigning to popularise their brand. In India, the tourism ministry also uses social media platforms to expand its tourism sector^[12].

Social media platforms also increase entrepreneurship and innovation because it is new technology and has scope. Social media marketing has also become very important in promoting products and services so buyers can connect with their customers. Facebook, Twitter Instagram are used for social media marketing. Further social media marketing can be divided into three parts. First, paid media per media is when firms do something directly by advertising on the social media platform. The second is earned media when a firm does something that impresses its customers; the third is owned media, when it is on the social media channel for its followers. Nowadays, social media have become very strategic to the customer. Whenever customers have any grievances, they can contact us. Social media personalities like celebrities are also used to promote products online, so customer opinions and behaviours are affected through social media. Nowadays, social media platforms are also used to shortlist candidates in the companies' job selectors' social media profiles.

Academics and science also use social media platforms for scientific knowledge and new findings. Platforms such as research gate LinkedIn Academy are used to share their opinion and articles to interact with scientific information and academic materials. Social media tours are also used to highlight historical events and alternative news.

However, there are a few challenges in this process. Fake news or Misinformation is being spread massively. There has been an addiction to social media among the youth. Because of this slip disturbance happening, emotional

⁸ About Us – tribal affairs - Nagaland. <https://tribalaffairs.nagaland.gov.in/about-us/>

⁹ Social media and its effect on mental health: Friend or foe? <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-psychiatry/article/social-media-and-its-effect-on-mental-health-friend-or-foe/69739AE4193E69478B0EA6AC51EB9C02>

¹⁰ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/240960/share-of-indian-population-using-social-networks/>

¹¹ Is texting hurting the younger generation's writing skills?. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/opinion/commentary/ct-opinion-generation-alpha-texting-writing-skills-employment-20220613-hsgh2a6dtjrtj5nizuipkb5gi-story.html>

¹² <https://tourism.gov.in/>

effects are being seen among the users, while in the political and religious sense, polarisation is happening not only ideologically but also in religious wage extremism is also going on. Privacy has also become critical in data mining and big data group^[13].

Sometimes manufactured bots, an automatic program operating on the computer, are also used for social media platforms where robots like comment following and falling on the social media platform. According to another study, people with higher social comparison orientation use social media more heavenly than people with low social comparison orientation^[14].

Popular tribal Hashtags

1. #tribal
2. #tribaltattoo
3. #tribalart
4. #tribaljewelry

Some examples

One such social media post, which got viral on social media platforms, was a living root bridge found in Meghalaya. This classic example of tribal indic knowledge allows scientists for future botanical architecture projects. The bridge is made up of weaving roots and leaves of a rubber tree and has been built for centuries. It means to cross rivers and is attractive and elastic.

JAYS is another of India's biggest mass movements through social media. The acronym stands for Jai Adivasi Yuva Shakti, a group started on Facebook in 2012 to spread awareness among tribals about education and their rights.¹⁵ The movement now has over 10 lakh tribal members in tribal in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha, who participate in many group activities on social media and on the ground. In 2013, JAYS organised a "Facebook Panchayat" in Madhya Pradesh. Its main aim is to apprise tribals about their rights, inspire them to gain education and fight against atrocities and social evils.

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¹⁵ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/meet-jays-india-s-biggest-social-media-movement-for-tribals/story-WNFaLfltrcrgskIbwey6iP.html>