

# An Analytical Study of New Media and Political Communication

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## Abstract

Recently, it has been stated that social media has had a significant impact on public debate and communication. Politicians are increasingly utilizing social media. Twitter and other microblogging platforms (such as Facebook) have been proposed to enhance political involvement in recent years. Facebook pages and groups have been used by political institutions (e.g., political parties and foundations) to engage in direct dialogue with citizens and encourage more political discussions, while Twitter is an ideal platform for users to spread information in general and political opinions publicly through their networks. According to prior study, political institutions are increasingly required to acquire, monitor, analyses, synthesize, and present social media material that is politically relevant. As a result of the enormous variety of social media platforms and the volume and complexity of information and data involved in them, these activities are referred to as "social media analytics" Systematic tracking and analytic approaches as well as scientific processes and techniques are still lacking in the political domain This paper proposes a methodological framework for social media analytics in political setting.

## INTRODUCTION

Recently, social media has seen a significant increase in the number of users and has been the subject of scientific research (Wigand et al. 2010; McAfee 2006). Facebook, for example, has more than 800 million members globally (Facebook 2011), while Twitter has more than 200 million users (HuffPost Tech 2011). Since social media applications were extensively utilized by the general population, the mechanics of information transmission have changed dramatically. In the past, someone who desired a message to reach a large audience was hampered by the cost of the technological infrastructure required. This barrier has been significantly decreased owing to the widespread availability of Internet access. In this environment, SNS (Social Networking Sites), microblogging, and weblogs have become mainstream (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). It has changed the way that people find, organize and coordinate groups of people who have similar interests. It has also increased the amount

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of informative and news sources available, as well as the capacity to ask for and exchange opinions about a wide variety of issues, among others (Agrawal *et al.* 2011).

Since social media communication is becoming more and more important, conventional public communication, which has been established and controlled exclusively by specific parties, such as politicians, companies and media professionals has undergone a huge transformation (Chadwick 2006). As a result of this phenomenon being seen in a wide range of areas such as sociology, information communication studies, information systems, political science, and linguistics Common goals include better understanding communication patterns such as agenda setting and opinion formation via social media, among other areas of research.

Twitter and Facebook have grown in popularity and are increasingly being utilised by individuals and political institutions (e.g., politicians and political parties, political foundations and think tanks) in the context of politics. Institutions in politics should actively participate in political communication based on social media, especially during election campaigns, according to a new study. As a result, social media provides the ideal vehicle and knowledge base to assess public opinion on policies and political stances, as well as to create community support for individuals running for public office (Zeng *et al.* 2010).

All modern democracies have embraced social media as a tool to engage their people, engage in direct interaction, and promote lively political dialogues in a relatively short amount of time (Hong and Nadler 2011). The United States is considered to be a trailblazer in this regard, with Barack Obama's usage of social media during his last election campaign being the most prominent (Wattal *et al.* 2010). Other studies have shown that social networking sites can increase political engagement and conversation among citizens. Users can use Twitter, Facebook, and other social media sites to share information and political ideas with their networks.

Study after study shows that political institutions and government agencies need to constantly

collect and monitor political relevant online social media information to improve engagement with residents and voters (e.g., Zeng *et al.* 2010; Kavanaugh *et al.* 2011; Paris and Wan 2011; Stieglitz *et al.* 2012). Some examples include recognizing influential users or political opinion leaders, as well as tracking the arguments within their peer group. Particularly during election season, this is crucial. Other significant factors may include identifying developing difficulties and patterns, as well as the ability to predict probable increasing themes in the future The final goal is to provide a clear and comprehensive overview of the analytical findings from different social media platforms (e.g., in regular reports or real-time dashboards).

As a result of the sheer number of social media platforms, unstructured data volume, and complexity of information, this is considered a challenging endeavor. Therefore, search engines do not assess content of this kind when obtaining information using their normal search features. As part of "social media analytics," you'll have to figure out how to identify distinct subjects as well as how to gather and process information (Zeng *et al.* 2010; Agrawal *et al.* 2011; Leskovec 2011; Nagarajan *et al.* 2011). In response to the huge quantity of (mainly unstructured) social media data, Zeng *et al.* (2010) propose that social media analytics provide tools and frameworks to gather, monitor, analyze, summarize, and display social media data in an automated manner.

Political institutions and the government sector (e.g., Kavanaugh and colleagues 2011; Paris and Wan 2011; Stieglitz *et al.* 2012) have grown more interested in social media analytics, as well as businesses and marketing (e.g., Gruhl *et al.* 2010; Larson and Watson 2011). For-profit organizations use social media as a business execution platform for product creation and innovation, customer and stakeholder relationship management, and marketing, in addition to being a rich source of information. "Social media" is an essential element of the next-generation business intelligence platform, according to Gruhl and colleagues (2010).

Open-source and commercial social media analytics tools for business and marketing are available, ranging from simple standard studies

to bespoke solutions. However, politics is a whole different ballgame. Furthermore, when it comes to tracking, monitoring, and assessing social media in a political environment, frameworks that give systematic methods and acceptable techniques and tactics are absent.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### New Media and Political Communication

Social media refers to internet-based apps that are built on the conceptual and technological underpinnings of Web 2.0 and allow for the production and exchange of user-generated content. According to several studies (Aday *et al.*, 2010; Benkler 2006; Bennett 2003; Farrell and Drezner, 2008; Sunstein, 2002; Tumasjan *et al.*, 2011), social media such as SNS, weblogs, microblogging, and wikis are playing an increasingly important role in the shaping of political communication in the United States and around the world today. As a potential driver for expanded participation and democracy, social media has a lot of promise in the political arena. "It's the process through which government and business decisions take into consideration the public's demands and ideals," says Creighton (2005) E-involvement refers to this technique, as well as a method of generating dialogues between elected officials and their electorate members using the Internet as an additional or only instrument.

Defined by the author, Karpf (2009) proposes the idea of "politics 2.0," which he defines as "leveraging the Internet's lowered transaction costs and amount of information to develop more participatory and interactive political institutions". Researchers are increasingly examining the impact of social media in political debate. Political communication and persuasion have become more dependent on social media technology, as demonstrated by the recent US presidential campaign of 2008 (Wattal *et al.*, 2010).

There was a growing awareness that social media might be a useful tool for connecting with people and communicating critical information. When using social media as a communication tool, young

people were attracted to political topics (Chen *et al.*, 2009; Kushin and Kitchener, 2009). Here you'll find an overview of significant social media efforts in the political sphere. We focus on microblogging, social networking, and weblogs.

### Microblogging

Studies on the usage of political microblogging (especially Twitter) have focused on non-parliamentary or legislative applications of the site, respectively. Earlier literature has dealt with parliamentary usage in the USA. Using the US Congress as an example, Golbeck *et al.* (2010) analyzed more than 6,000 tweets from Congress members.

Congress members use Twitter mostly to exchange information, notably links to news items about themselves and to their blog entries, and to report on their daily activities, according to the study's researchers. A similar research by (Ammann, 2010) examines how US Senate candidates used Twitter during the 2010 midterm elections and the substance of their tweets.

It appears that candidates are utilizing Twitter in their campaigns. A candidate's financial resources, state size, and degree of competition in a congressional race all influence how much money is spent. In addition, there is a substantial link between tweet content and the type of candidate and, in certain cases, their political affiliation. If you're a member of the minority party, if your party leaders urge you to use Twitter, if you're young, or if you're serving in the Senate, you're more likely to use Twitter than a member of the majority party.

Hong and Nadler (2011) find no evidence that the use of Twitter by American politicians to measure public opinion changes over time has a positive or negative influence on public opinion. Through the usage of the #IranElection hashtag, Gaffney (2010) examines Twitter use by Iranian voters during the 2009 Iranian elections. Even though Twitter enabled protestors in Iran and throughout the globe organise, the author says that "it is difficult to tell with any confidence what Twitter's involvement was." Tumasjan *et al.* (2011) show that Twitter is extensively used for the dissemination of politically relevant information and that the mere number



of party mentions accurately reflects the election result, indicating that microblogging may have a significant impact on politics.

## Social Network Sites

SNS and their use by politicians have been the topic of recent studies. Williams and Gulati (2007, 2009) examine the extent to which candidates for Congress utilise Facebook during election campaigns in the United States. They discover that the number of Facebook fans may be used as a valid indication of political success in the United States.

In the context of the 2006 Dutch elections, Utz (2009) shows how politicians may utilise SNS to reach individuals who are less active in politics. This strengthens previous opinions about a candidate. Those politicians, on the other hand, who respond to the opinions of their constituents are viewed as more dependable.

According to a study by Kushin and Kitchener (2009), Facebook is used by citizens to engage in online political discussions. According to their findings, Facebook is a valid place to discuss political problems, and the conversation has succeeded in overcoming the polarisation of online political discussion that has characterised it in the past.

Baumgartner and Morris (2010) looked at how young people utilised social networking sites to engage in politics during the 2008 presidential primary season. More than 3,500 Iowa caucus participants between the ages of 18 and 24 were surveyed, and the researchers found that while SNS are viewed by young people to be potential news sources, and that many young people do get some information from these sites, the types of news gathered probably do little to inform them or contribute to democratic discourse.

According to Vitak *et al.* (2011), undergraduate students tend to participate in relatively mild political involvement on Facebook and in other forums. Even while young voters may be politically active, it appears that their involvement is shallow. Some of the most prevalent kinds of general involvement were informational and resource-light, whereas political activities that needed more resources (such as volunteering) were rare.

## Weblogs

Blogosphere in a political environment literature comes in various forms. On the first essay, political blogs are examined for their pros and disadvantages. A survey of 3,747 blog readers, the majority of whom were young and well-educated, by Kaye (2005) revealed that blogs were most often used for political information seeking and involvement.

McKenna and Pole (2007) report that the content of political blogs consists of information about news articles from the mass media, introductions to other blogs' postings, and criticism about mass media coverage of political affairs. McKenna (2007) reports in another paper that political bloggers create their blogs out of a sense of altruism and not for profit.

By using computer-mediated communication, political blogs, according to Hacker *et al.* (2006), can contribute to depolarizing political discourse. According to the authors, conventional mass media and earlier formats such as websites do not have a securitization discourse.

According to Wattal and coauthors (2010), political blogs had an impact on the 2008 presidential election campaign. However, their data show a link between the blogosphere and election outcomes.

Even non-political blogs are full of political speech, according to Munson and Resnick (2011) in a separate research. In a random sample from Blogger.com, 25 percent of all political postings come from blogs that post on politics less than 20 percent of the time, according to the researchers. As a result, non-political sites, such as those devoted largely to personal diaries or hobbies, have become a major forum for online political discussion.

Political blogosphere network analysis is another area of blog study, particularly in terms of social network analysis (Rosen *et al.* 2011). Bloggers are important for political communication, according to Farrell and Drezner (2008). Politics blogs' "focal points" have an influence on agenda setting since they attract the attention of journalists who function as multipliers, according to several studies. Using data collected from US political bloggers, Adamic and Glance (2005) found that the blogosphere is divided between liberals and conservatives, with much fewer cross-links.

## OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the content of Facebook, Twitter critically.
- To critically find out the microblogging on social media about politics things.

## METHODOLOGY

This study is based on the analytical approach of new media regarding the political content. Qualitative method is used for analyzing the previously available content. This study is totally based on the use of new media like Facebook, Twitter etc.

The purpose of this study is to look at how political content on social media. It's a qualitative research project with a content focus. In this study, data was collected and analyzed based on observations. Its purpose is to investigate how a text is interpreted in the media during a political activity. New media and social networks developed in the age of the computer and the internet to allow two-way communication and the rise of interactive modes, while time, place, and monologue faded away. People can edit, ask questions, and reply just like they can on news websites.

Researcher used software to save, analyze, and disseminate research data such as codes and symbols. There are two degrees of computer software usage. For automatic text scanning, word and phrase recognition, and coding in particular scenarios. This stage can be fully automated, with the entire programming and analysis process being automated, or it can be partially automated with a combination of computer scanning and programming, with human symbols manually inserted into the programme. At the most basic level, human persons, read and code documents, and computer software is employed as a tool to aid in the analysis. They're utilized to decipher survey and other study findings.

## Analysis of Social Media

A connection is made between social networks, personal information channels, and the mainstream media through social media. Using user-generated material from social media sites like blogs and

microblogs as well as forums and video sharing sites like YouTube opens up new possibilities and difficulties for both creators and users of information. Analysis of user-generated material and implicit linkages between users is required in order to acquire significant insights into the spread of information, views, and feelings as well as developing issues or trends on social media (Leskovec 2011; Agrawal *et al.* 2011; Nagarajan *et al.* 2011). What we're talking about here is called "social media analytics." Zeng and colleagues (2010) define social media analytics as the process of building and testing informatics tools and frameworks to gather, monitor, analyze, sum up and visualize social media data.

In spite of this, as Zeng *et al.* (2010) also point out, social media analytics faces several challenges, including an enriched set of data or metadata (such as user-expressed subjective opinions and ratings), human-centered computing with its own unique emphasis on social interactions among users, semantic inconsistency/inaccuracy, misinformation and lack of structure, as well as dyadic data. There are a wide range of analysis tools and methodologies available to solve these challenges due to recent advancements in many scientific areas like as computer science and statistics, computational language science, etc. (Nagarajan *et al.* 2011).

So, for example, Larson and Watson (2011) offer a "social media ecosystem" paradigm to explain the connections among stakeholders facilitated by social media. As a result of this paradigm, companies and customers may gain a theoretical knowledge of what they can accomplish via social media. A framework for measuring business/customer social media activities that are essential to firm success is laid forth (Larson and Watson 2011).

Kavanaugh *et al.*, 2011; Paris and Wan, 2011) demonstrate that political institutions, as well as government services, are increasingly in need of utilizing social media resources to enhance services and communication with voters. Staying informed about current debates and managing one's own reputation in virtual communities becomes more essential, especially when it comes to developing themes that might end up in a scandal or crisis for a certain politician or party (see, for example, Zeng *et al.*

Researchers in Virginia, USA, found that aggregation tools for social media are needed to make sense of the massive quantity of data being created, analyze the flow of information, and discover trends across time, according to a research by Kavanaugh *et al.* (2011). Existing tools may serve this function, but they are geared at enterprises rather than government and are therefore not ideal.

As a result of the multidisciplinary character of the research agenda for social media analytics, it has drawn the attention of significant academic groups. Consequently, in our framework, we explore methods from a variety of areas, including computer science and statistics as well as communication studies and sociology.

## Data Analysis of Social Media

Each data source will contain both structured and unstructured data components. As opposed to structured (or more precisely metadata) data, unstructured data includes user-generated textual content ranging from microblogs with little context to blogs with a lot more context, including retweets and mentions. Unstructured content includes user-generated textual content ranging from microblogs with little context to blogs with a lot more context. Any information that meets certain criteria can be stored in databases. The posting's ID, time stamp, username (of the author), the text, and maybe the type of posting are some examples of typical data to be gathered and kept (i.e., status update, blog entry, or retweet, comment).

Others can utilize the first approach when they want to know exactly what people are saying about them on social media, such as politicians or political parties. A politician's name, whether as a fundamental phrase or a hashtag, may be gathered in this scenario. It is possible for them to monitor all posts and comments made by users or fans/members of their own Facebook page or group, for example. If they have a personal blog, a comparable research should be conducted on it. A person's name can be included in a list of all Facebook and blog articles that have been posted to selected Facebook groups/pages or blogs.

In general, political players are quite interested in what social media users have to say about

specific political subjects. As a result of the second monitoring method, tweets and Facebook posts containing keywords linked to the topic of interest may be monitored. Prior to collecting data, suitable keywords reflecting the topic of interest must be selected carefully and consistently. The more terms to be considered, the wider the topic to be studied.

It's common for select actors to be more influential or popular than the bulk of other users, especially on blogs. This group has the potential to influence (online) opinion formation, according to studies. Some politicians want to maintain tabs on such prominent persons and their generated content in order to stay on top of the situation. Using an actor-based monitoring technique, it is possible to follow Twitter, Facebook, and blog articles, as well as the associated comments made by famous users.

When compared to the previous three tracking approaches, the fourth option fosters inductive content exploration. Randomly picking one or more data sets (Twitter, Facebook, or blog posts) over a period of time provides the basis for tracking the data sets. In example, a content analysis may be performed on these random datasets in order to discover important political issues and determine individuals' thoughts or emotions connected with such topics.

A URL-based technique might be employed by political players in order to selectively track the contents of tweets, Facebook posts, and blog postings, given that social media platforms are frequently used for disseminating information, including by publishing URLs. For tweets with a maximum of 140 characters, this may be a valuable tool.

## CONCLUSION

As prior research has demonstrated, social media has become a significant political communication medium in the last several years. In this way, political institutions and voters are able to communicate directly. This might lead to greater openness in political operations as well as greater citizen involvement in political decision-making processes. Political debates through social media including political institutions, however, have not been fully explored up until now.

One of the reasons behind this is a lack of knowledge with current topics and discussions on various social media platforms. Studies have shown that political arguments on different social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and weblogs are growing more important and essential to analyze as time passes.

Social media analytics framework in political context was our most significant contribution to the project." On the other hand, specific data tracking and analysis methods were provided in order to gain a better knowledge of political debates on social media. According to the framework, political institutions that receive and preserve politically relevant user-generated material from social media and monitor, evaluate, and summarize it should utilize it as a guideline for the construction of a toolkit for doing so.

On spite of the fact that our approach is limited to studying public data, we recommend that political actors think about ethics while researching communication in social media. Researchers will find it useful since it's the first complete review of diverse social media analytics methodologies and related analytical methods in the political arena. It's a good starting point for further study.

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