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Social Movements and Its Communication through Media in Public Sphere

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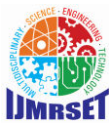
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ABSTRACT: Politics used to mean ideas. In politics these days, leaders are individuals, or better yet, personalities. Every social or political leader seems to pick and accept a role. Another instance of the porous boundaries of politics in action is the relationship between social movement leaders and their effective public outreach. Large number of people is expressing a dislike for political institutions in general and conventional forms of political engagement in particular by political leaders. That is why; dislikes by the public have contributed in the rise of social movements. Public reaction has come to be associated in many nations with mistrust due to the severe damage done to traditional political parties by corruption, populism, nepotism, cronyism, inefficiency in delivering welfare, development schemes and a decline in credibility. Social movements rose due to inhuman treatment and subjugation of human rights by the rulers in power. Now- a-days, information about the social movements is spreading like wild fire through media. Local issues about social movements are getting disseminated internationally in matter of time due to media. Social movement issues are debated and public opinion is generated within no time. Public is responding to social movements from anywhere in the world. Due to media, issues are no more remaining local in any country. In few social movements, issue is getting focused without throwing any leader in particular for example Farmers protest against farms laws passed by Indian parliament. Arab spring spread far and wide instantly and overthrew several governments in Northern Africa and Middle East. Generally, media mobilizes, shapes opinions, and empowers public to bring change. Freedom of speech, democracy and vibrant civil society will avert social movements to a large extent.

KEYWORDS: Periphery, Fragmentation, Porous, Social movements, Contemporary technology, Public opinion, Political discourse, Power, Modernization, Social communication etc.

I.INTRODUCTION

Since social movements serve a public purpose, their leaders and adherents should always endeavor to spread their political message to a wider audience of potential participants rather than limiting it to a select few "supporters." Social movements will be successful only, when they enlarge to a wider base. For this they need, social communication. There are many communication platforms to do so to get connected to the social masses in a large scale. Social movements can now achieve their objectives more successfully, thanks to current technologies. It's hard for these new social media actors to find a place in the public sphere. Modernizing Habermasian conception of the public sphere was necessary. As a result, the purpose of this essay is to address the following queries: Can social movements establish a different kind of public sphere? What tools are necessary for social movements to engage with the public sphere? Our theory contends that recent significant developments have occurred in the periphery of public life, mostly as a result of innovation brought about by contemporary technology. Moreover, we think that Habermas' concerns about the fragmentation of the public



sphere are still relevant, even though a new public sphere will probably develop. To preserve the democratic process in a society, there must be a public forum accessible to all those affected by political decisions. Now-a-days, social media provides public forum to vent their anguish against any political decision. Social media has democratized by bringing the media platform to the masses. Public can air their dissent through social media platforms. Politicians in power can assess the feelings of the public and take necessary action to pacify public dissent.

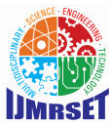
The media platforms and the public sphere: The notion of public sphere serves as a crucial framework for the study of social communication. We believe it is relevant for this research work to develop and clarify the idea of public sphere because social movements are a component of the public sphere discourse of today. Politics and media history have a long history that is intimately connected to the public domain and public opinion. According to Jurgen Habermas, improving a society can be achieved through reason and communication. According to Habermas, the advancement of political discourse and social communication is what gives a society its popular support as it develops. Argument in the public realm is known as the "public sphere," and it is separated from the home and family's private sphere (Habermas, 1987:390). Print media, electronic media and social media can offer a new, democratic, and open channel of information access, which is necessary for everyone to be able to participate in public conversation. Since "the news narrative must contribute to public awareness about the reality" (Bignell, Orlebar, 2005:132), news must be representative, truthful, balanced, and useful to assist people in entering the public sphere. Each media platform has advantage and disadvantage in spreading information among the public. Social media is more appropriate for social movements to succeed as there is no gate keeping. Every person having access to social media can express their views on any issue of choice. Debates can be held, opinion is formed and feedback can be got instantly. Irrespective of caste, creed, religion, race, gender and language, public can participate in public conversation.

A growing body of research has focused on the "global public sphere," which has emerged as a result of the globalization of communication and the media. This space allows for the expression of issues of global importance, including gender equality, human rights, ethnic equality, and the environment etc, with the help of media. At the same time, there is disagreement over this concept's validity (Sparks, 1998, for example). Habermas is right, despite the flaws in his theory, when he claims that during the democratic revolutions, a public sphere emerged that initially enabled common people to organize, participate in political discourse, and challenge unjust authority.

The first open forum for discussing public issues was the Agora in ancient Greece. Agora is thus a place specifically earmarked, where all residents gather to debate on variety of subjects. Now-a-days, all democracies, including the contemporary state, rely on multi-media platforms like social media and television to discuss social issues. In Europe, public discussions moved from academies and literary groups to the press during the seventeenth century, thus have been considered a drastic change in modern democratic countries.

However, this public place seems to have shifted in the present. Marketing, trivialization, and over-personalization have all worked to diminish sincere involvement and engagement in public conversation. The way that the public sphere analyzes and how media affects it, has changed as a result of the emergence of modern media networks, mercantilism, electronic media, the Internet, public transformation, and the growing influence of marketing strategies.

The emancipation movement gave rise to the public sphere, which has enabled people to express their thoughts freely and engage in public discourse on a range of subjects, while also seeking solutions to societal issues. Notwithstanding its flaws, Habermas' analysis of the structural development of the public sphere highlights the



media's growing significance in politics. According to Habermas' theory, corporations have attempted to dominate national and international public spheres by utilizing the media and culture to further their own profit-making objectives.

Leaders, the media, and the social movements

Over the past century, social scientists have become increasingly interested in social movements. According to Herbert Blumer (1993:199), social movements "can be viewed as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life." Their origins are in a state of discontent, and they draw their motivation from both desires and aspirations for a different way of living. Social movements are defined as "those organised efforts, on the part of excluded groups, to promote or resist changes in the structure of society that involve recourse to no institutional forms of political participation," according to Doug McAdam (1982:25). A different perspective is provided by Sidney Tarrow (1994: 4), who claims that "social movements are better described as cooperative challenges based on shared goals and social solidarity in ongoing interactions with authorities, opponents, and elites rather than being seen as manifestations of extremism, violence, and deprivation".

Since theorists often reinterpret and characterize social movements, it is challenging to characterize the concept. Consequently, numerous definitions and typologies of social movements have been developed and are currently in use. By examining and combining the definitions of the leading theorists of these movements, we were able to pinpoint two notable differences in the definitions of social movements. Thus, social movements fall under the following definitions:

- a. From an analytical standpoint, as a mode of group activity that explains a social dispute and eventually seeks to change a social structure. The creation of a collective identity is allegedly a key component of social movements, which are processes of action and interaction. So, "others" refers to the institutions, the politicians, and the opponents, while "us" share a set of values and standards.
- b. From empirical point of view, social movements can be categorized as national, international, transnational, or global according to the range of geographical areas in which their different forms of collective action are used. (See, for instance, Eyerman and Jamison (1991), Thorn (1997), Melucci (1996), Cohen and Hrato (1992).

It is possible to differentiate between old and modern social movements:

- i) "Old" movements: labour, agrarian, nationalist, and other movements emerged during the 19th century.
- ii) "New" movements include those for gay rights, human rights, and anti-racism, among others.

Social movements require strong leaders. The people interfering in public life are the leaders of social movements. Due of their perceived distinction from politicians, they have credibility. Social movement leaders are trusted because the public views them as fellow activists. A leader must possess certain fundamental attributes in order to accomplish his objectives and inspire others to join him such as ability to deal with others and convince them to follow him, character, influence, positive attitude, and excellent communication skills, and great organization abilities, good knowledge about the social issues, self-assurance, self-control, and discontent with the political system.

II.CONCLUSION

In order to establish a new public sphere of influence —"a place where alternative communication gains new ground," social movements initiate for great effort (Atton, 2002:152). Dominant opinion streams on television



and other media channels serve as additional reinforcement for this alternate public arena. The emerging technology is a new ally for the social movements. These days, there's no shortage of idealized things on electronic media, print and social media. In addition to taking up people's leisure time, the electronic media programme and social media content influences people's social connections and political beliefs in addition to the means to create their own identities. Emergence of technological media platforms such as digital media, electronic media provides global access to news and current affairs instantly have opened up new avenues for open and democratic access to information. Print media, electronic media and social media has facilitated social movements around the world for example Arab spring, Me-to movement, Occupy wall street and Black life matters etc. Without a doubt, social movements have an impact on the emergence of an alternative public sphere; however, more examination and study of this aspect will be necessary in the near future.

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