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How do Non-profit Organizations in Libya Adopt and Use Social Media to Communicate with The Society

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Abstract

Social media becomes important channels to communicate between non-profit organization and community. This study aims to determine how non-profit organizations have adopted and use Facebook, and how does Facebook motivate donator or volunteer to help non-profit organizations in Libya context through two adoption theory: Media Richness theory and Diffusion theory. This paper focuses on the adoption and usage of social media by covering only non-profit organization in Libya which is registered under the supervision of the ministry of culture and civil society to be population of this study. The social media is limited only to Facebook.

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1. Introduction

Due to the growing of changes in technologies, social media are the formation of higher stages of communication (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy & Silvestre, 2011). Mayfield (2008) mentions that social media has been associated with the features of participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. The application of social media is increasingly fast popularity as a possible way of communication with the public and engaging in public relation by non-profit organizations (Nah & Saxton, 2013). Non-profit organizations mobilize these

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communities' people for collective action and to have a voice in public affairs (Backman & Smith, 2000). For many years, non-profit organizations have succeeded in the realization of several objective functions which have assisted in building and maintaining civil society (Boris, 1999). Before revolution 2011, Libya has few nonprofit organizations. One big non-profit organization is called Gaddafi International Foundation Charity Association (GIFCA). After revolution 2011, Libya has been affected by the war in terms of supplies of medicine, fuel and food which were dangerously short in Libya's urban centers ("Libya's humanitarian crisis," 2011). During the mutiny, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were main social media to extend raw news material for a world watcher. Most of Libyans people read news and to comment on events via Facebook but use Twitter as individuals and activists ("Libya profile," 2012).

After revolution 2011, Gaddafi International Foundation Charity Association (GIFCA) closed down. It gave a chance to international and local non-profit organization to help Libyan people who damaged by the war. From the data base of the ministry of culture and civil society, more than 2,107 local non-profit organizations operated in Libya in 2013. Some Libya non-profit organization closed down. Hence, the researcher tries to know how adopted and used Facebook can help non-profit organization in all dimensions (managers, donors and volunteer) form the well known non-profit organization and use it as a role model for small or unsuccessful non-profit organization. This study aims to determine how non-profit organizations have adopted and use Facebook and how Facebook motivate donator or volunteer to help non-profit organizations in Libya context.

2. Literature review

2.1. Social media in the world

Social media is a communication channel which employs Internet for its applications and services and makes it is possible for users to relate through exchange of information with each other, the people and public (Peary, Shaw & Takeuchi, 2012). Social media consisting six types namely: Blogs, Microblogs, social networks, video sharing, picture sharing and presentation sharing (Schlagwein & Prasarnphanich, 2011). Some social media platforms such as Facebook, social networking, present more than one type, it also can post videos and pictures.

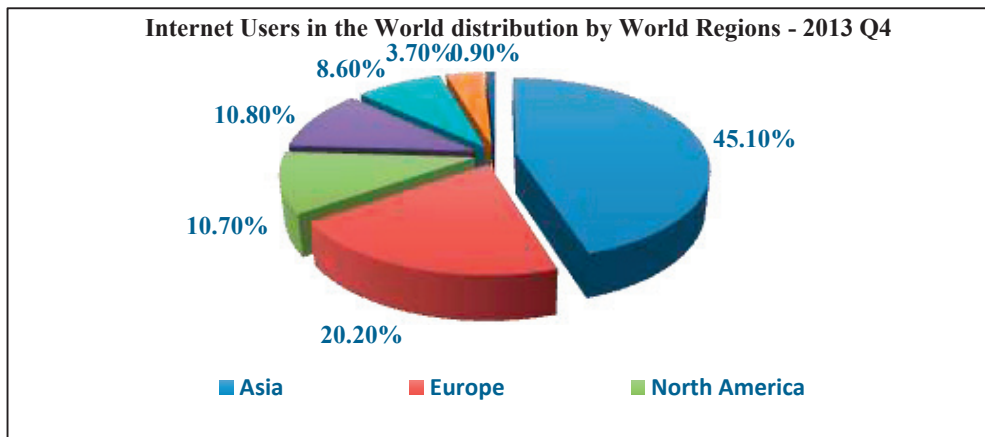


Fig. 1 Internet Users in the world distribution by world regions 2013
 Source: ("Internet Users in the World distribution by World regions 2013," 2013)

Figure 1 shows that the internet users in the World which rapid rise of social media by internet boom era ("Internet Users in the World distribution by World regions 2013," 2013). Figure 1 shows that Libya which located in Africa still has few internet users when compare with other part of the world. It's still in the early stage of adopt and use internet.

2.2. Social media in the Arab countries

In the past year, social media being used in variety ways in Arab regions such as campaigns, participation, and create an opportunity for debate and interaction ("Arab Social Media Report," 2011). The Arab social media sites, blogs, online video, and other digital platforms are used to be a observer to what is controversial of the most dramatic and unparalleled improvement in freedom of appearance, association, and access to information in contemporary Arab history (Ghannam, 2011).

2.3. Facebook in the world

The most popularly used social media like Facebook has been used as a platform for the realization of important goals like safety identification in a disaster, location of displaced-persons, providing support for the disabled people, attracting volunteer organization, and fundraising among others (Acar & Murakami, 2011). Established in February 4, 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg ("Facebook Investor Relations," 2014). In September 2012, Facebook has over one billion active users (Fowler, 2012). In 2011, users can create profiles with photos and images, lists of personal interests, contact information, memorable life events, and other personal information, such as employment status ("Facebook Timeline," 2014). Users can communicate with friends and other users through private or public messages, as well as a chat feature, and share content that includes website URLs, images, and video content ("Desktop Help," 2014). All of the above total 309 million members or about 38.6 percent of Facebook's 1 billion worldwide members (Hitipeuw, 2012). As of March 2013, Facebook reported having 1.11 billion monthly active users, global ("Investor Relation," 2013). Facebook has affected the social life and activity of people in various ways. It can also unite people with common interests and/or beliefs through groups and other pages, and it has been known to reunite lost family members and friends because of the widespread reach of its network (Richter, 2013).

2.4. Facebook in the Arab countries

Social media tools have become an essential in everyday lives of many people. Facebook is claim as most popular social networking sites in the world. The number of civil who use social media in Tunisia and Egypt growth and shift dramatically such as Tunisian citizens connected through Facebook increased by 8% during the first two weeks of January 2011. The type of usage also changed markedly, shifting from being merely social in nature to becoming primarily political. UAE is the top Arab country in term of Facebook penetration, more than 45 percent of the population having Facebook accounts ("Arab Social Media Report," 2011).

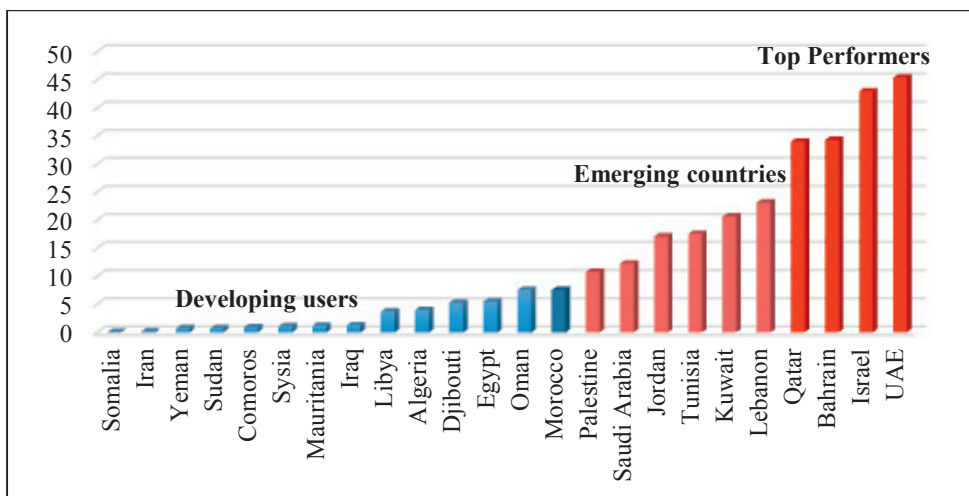


Fig. 2 The Facebook User Penetration in the Arab Region plus Iran and Israel (Dec. 2010)
Source: ("Arab Social Media Report," 2011)

In Libya, the numbers of Facebook users are 260,400 people from population 6,545,619 people and the Facebook penetration is only 3.98% of country population. Facebook users in Libya indicate that 67% of all users are 15-29 years old and 33% of all users are over 30 years old, 70% of Facebook users are male ("Arab Social Media Report," 2011).

2.5. Non-profit organization

Non-profit organizations in any society serve as the mechanism that provides room for the active participation and involvement of many people in their communities, and serve as essential channels through which community preferences are voiced (Boris, 1999). The significance of non-profits as essential channels by which communities' people connect themselves and interact with one another in building trust, relationships, and social capital which make it possible for the communities to effectively operate at all levels has been suggested and demonstrated by theory and research respectively. With the people being brought together, non-profit making organizations mobilize these communities' people for collective action and to have a voice in public affairs (Backman & Smith, 2000).

To accomplish these goals, the ability of the organizations depends on their internal resources and capacities. The combination of capacities and the idea of the strategy of the non-profit organizations provide a better set of tools for gaining insights into whether and how non-profit making organizations employ social media. In order to ensure that resources are used effectively and strategies are executed properly, it is important to have the organization's governance structures. Lastly, the environment where the organization carries out its operations and assists in the choice and success of particular communication strategies (Nah & Saxton, 2013).

2.6. Non-profit organization in Libya

All of Libya non-profit organizations are private organization, but they have to register under the supervision of the ministry of culture and civil society. During the run to the Libyan revolution that successfully overthrew the dictatorial Mohammar Gadaffi's over forty years rule, the Libyan citizens ,particularly the youths within and outside the country, made important contributions through the social media. The social media were deeply involved in the revolution thus it is not out of place to assume that social media will be regarded as a relevant tool to post revolution life in Libya. During this period some of the non-profit organizations such as the New Libya Foundation, Volunteer Libya and 1Libya to mention but a few have also employed social media to support the historic event.

In Libya, the roles of non-profit organizations have undoubtedly become unique and fascinating particularly after the revolution and uprising of February 17. Given the role of social media and non-profit organizations in Libya during and after the revolution, the current study will focus on how non-profit organizations in Libya have adopted and used Facebook and how Facebook helped the Libyan non-profit organization to achieve their goals.

2.7. Social media of non-profit organization

Social media expedites the circulation of information, and provides a medium through which media relations are strengthening (Curtis, et al., 2009). Social media makes organizations to be more accountable for their engagements with the general publics. Knowing that they will face public scrutiny, organizations strive to appear trustworthy and have an honest presence with a view to making their claims recognized and trusted by stakeholders or wider publics (Edwards, 2010). In an attempt for organizations whether for-profit or non-profits to become trustworthy, they become more transparent and open in their activities. Much information about their various actions, decision-making processes, basis of decision and data are made available to the public and as such, organizations that use social media relatively appear transparent than organizations that do not (Harquail, 2011). Social media requires dedicated internet access. In some countries charges for Internet access at Internet cafes can be said to be quite high (van Brakel & Chisenga, 2003).

3. Theories

3.1. Media richness theory

The media richness theory has been applied in a wide variety of issues with success in both theoretical

analyses and empirical studies. In the hierarchy of richness, the Facebook business page has been found to be richer than email and one or two levels below face-to-face communication (Aasheim & Stensønes, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Adoption and usage of the Facebook business page by financial institutions as a customer interaction tool has been explained using MRT (Aasheim & Stensønes, 2011). Facebook, in terms of richness, makes an ideal tool for dissemination of information, collaboration, education and moral support during disaster management (Ahmed, 2012). Finally, the rich interface of Facebook has been extremely effective in spreading climate change awareness among employees of a business (Ali, 2011).

3.2. Diffusion theory

The diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. The origins of the diffusion of innovations theory are varied and span multiple disciplines. Nonetheless, such approaches focusing on individual-level have been argued to be appropriate for the analysis of individual priority for one technology as against the other (Nah & Saxton, 2013).

4. Research questions

This research attempts to investigate and find the answers for following research questions:

- How do non-profit organizations have adopted and use Facebook.
- How do Facebook helps non-profit organization to achieve their goals.
- How do Facebook motivate or encourage donator to help non-profit organizations.
- How do Facebook motivate or encourage volunteer to help non-profit organizations.

The purposes of this study is to determine how non-profit organizations have adopted and use Facebook, and how does Facebook motivate donator or volunteer to help non-profit organizations in Libya context by use qualitative approach through Media Richness theory and Diffusion theory.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, we can conclude that social media becomes important channels to communicate between non-profit organization and community. This paper focuses on the adoption and usage of social media by covering only non-profit organization in Libya which is registered under the supervision of the ministry of culture and civil society to be population of this study. The social media in the discussion is limited only to Facebook.

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