

## **PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA EFFECTS ON GOOD GOVERNANCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this paper is to explore the “proactive and reactive implication of social media effects on good governance”. The author tries to explain the different situations of implications of proactive and reactive use of social media to control the current scenario. It describes that how government can learn about their transparency and law & order situation on social media proactively before the worst condition. It describes how social media becomes the need of good governance. Social media helps the government agencies to make relationship with citizens. This paper presents comparative analysis of proactive and reactive approaches of social media used by the government. It explains how proactively and reactively manages social media for good governance.

**Keywords:** good governance, proactive approach, reactive approach, social media.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Government access participation, collaboration and novel ideas through social networking sites in order to improve result, that's something relevant to government 2.0. Government usually involve in knowledge businesses such as serve citizens, health care and education etc. Web 2.0 usually consider as social networking sites that allows crowd sourcing, public comments or online communities. Wisdom of crowd and transfer of correct information to citizens makes government more accountable, responsive and transparent, [1]. Social media is the cost effective medium to interact with citizen, to get control on worse situation proactively (cool down crowd through new policies) or to manage natural disaster situations reactively. Social media use by government agencies as a source of instant communication. Blogs and forums can be used for debate on upcoming policies and YouTube can be used to provide education etc. Social media remains helpful in investigation of the suspects.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

J.C Bertot et al. explain government can use social media for new policy development. It helps in listening public point of view and expectations as well as in practical implementation of the policies. Co-creation of policies improves standards of services. Government can share data to get fresh ideas from public knowledge. Social media web sites become dominant ways to exchange information and several government agencies use this medium and make sure their presence on

social networks. Public can actively participate in democratic activities, [2]. Alok Choudhary et al. describes that the social media play a significant role in availing revolutionary events. Protesters and people belong to traditional media use social media sites extensively. To govern appropriately government often behaves reactively on such revolutionary events just like the case of Egyptian government who limits the access of social media sites for their public after the threats of protest, [3]. Meetika Srivastava wrote in her article that social media is now popular for discussion on public forums and interacting with family, friends as well as for business and government. Social media sites can cause in fall of governments, can also boost the political campaign, can bought protests and spread information instantly. Initially governments were not in the favor of using social media for good governance but slowly now this trend is being establishing. Governments now use social media reactively by taking feedback on policies. Now there is a change in relationship of citizens and governments, [4].

Pfeffer Jurgen and Kathleen M. Carley was of the view that social media plays an important role in provoking people and speedy cooperation and mergence of peoples. Basically it fixes the attention on current issue for the short run. Social media can be the source or tool of coordination as it would in the cases of Syria and Arab spring [5]. J. Ignacio Criado et al. were of the view in their article that public agencies embraces web 2.0 tools like blogging, social networking sites, multimedia sharing, virtual worlds and wikis etc. The use of social media in public sector brings cost saving and participation benefits [6]. Yannis Charalabidis et al. cited in their article government agencies embracing considerable efforts for citizen's participation in decision making processes as well as policies. Social media proved to be beneficial for politics that's why government is not absent from social media forums. Enhancing public participation is an important part of good governance because in this current era there is diversification of cultures within the countries. So on larger scale participation of citizens can be taken through web 2.0 social media. Participation or opinion can be taken before implementing policy to improve government agencies decisions and can also be taken as feedback. Policy makers see the negative and positive sentiments for policy. Importantly policy makers can start campaign through social media at any stage of policy making cycle, [7]. Lauge Baungaard Rasmussen wrote that reactive and proactive approaches should be use together not implement these approaches as different ends. According to situation these can be use as continuum rather than as mutually exclusive terms [8].

Joo-young jung found that social media is helps government for reactively managing disaster situation. It disseminates appropriate information through social media, as, in the case of Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 government and mass media uses twitter to provide instant information to citizens, [9]. Suk Kyoung Kim et al. wrote that social media enhance interaction of government with citizens that leads to implement policies effectively. In the case of Korean government, it attempts to satisfy their public by gathering their opinion proactively. Korean government comes up with efficient governing structure through the adoption of social media. This can build trust on government by the citizens, [10]. Government can engage public in different ways like simple giving information about polices or might ask feedback on existing policies or they might ask solution for particular challenge. They can do it through social media sites. There are several problems like security, privacy or accuracy that should be proactively managed [11]. Government agencies use social media to connect with public in emergency situation just like to disseminate information about criminal activity in specific area, instruction

in case of fire or natural disaster and for community to reach for the help in neighborhood, [12]. Government agencies use social media in listening to public activities, to promote education about public safety and to spread information in no cost, [13].

## GOOD GOVERNANCE

Governance can be easily understood as it is the “conduct/performance/administration of the government” governance is just like the guide of societal development such as provision of security or to protect property rights, [14]. Governance is the procedure of decision making as well as its implementation process. Good governance shows how effectively decisions or policy can be implemented. It is about managing all affairs. It is just like the high stander for governance.

### Characteristics of good governance

- 1) **Participation:** Participation is the basis of good governance, as it represents freedom of expression as well as it is better for society.
- 2) **Rule of law:** There should be the security of human rights and fair legal structure.
- 3) **Transparency:** Rules should be followed while making decisions. Whichever the mean use by government, information should be available in freely and understandable mode.
- 4) **Responsiveness:** Stakeholder’s preferences should be considered while making policy as they would be affected by that policy.
- 5) **Consensus oriented:** Good governance is about taking decision in which all stakeholders should be agree.
- 6) **Equity and inclusiveness:** minority groups should not feel isolated from society.
- 7) **Effectiveness and efficiency:** Institutions under good governance should meet the needs of society with the best use of all resources.
- 8) **Accountability:** Government, private and civil society institutions must be accountable to citizens or stakeholders. [15]

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS ADVANTAGES

Social media is use for interaction among people of whole world, whether they belong to different countries or within the same country. Sometimes social media can be used to interact with people having similar interest, for example, for same professions, for the employees from same institute or students with same subjects etc. Social media has four potential advantages, [16]:

1. Collaboration

2. Participation
3. Empowerment
4. Time

Social media provide interaction, sharing of information or to achieve common goals, simply, it enhances collaboration and participation. It's a platform to speak (empowerment). It saves time by allowing user to immediately publish or post anything at no cost.

## **ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Participation, transparency, responsiveness and consensus oriented characteristics of good governance could not be as much possible as with the use of social media. As for participation there would be a forum or blog that can collect immediate point of view from public side. Public can openly reject or accept any policy on social media. Social media could be the cheapest source for it. Rule of law is also better measured through social media. Each and every institution can present their transparency reports through their organizational blog, forum, facebook or twitter accounts. Citizens on social networking sites better gave insight of human right protection in the country. Government should better count it. Otherwise sometimes revolutionary moments speed up through social media, just like the case of Egyptian revolution.

## **CASE (EGYPT)**

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt ruled the country for 30 years. There was corruption, lack of transparency, no freedom of expression, and political participation was not allowed. Egyptians were already depressed with this condition, further ELBaradei started campaign against government together with 30 politicians. Situation becomes severe at the time of death of Khaled Said in June 2010. Through internet, video of his murder were posted everywhere. His disfigured face pictures and video were flooded in facebook ("we are all khaled said" page was prominent one), blogs and YouTube etc. Protest date announced and spread everywhere through social media. ELBaradei and Omar Afifi activists basically initiated the revolution through their facebook, twitter and YouTube videos. That protest ends after the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak on February 2011. [17]



**Figure 1:** We are all Khaled Said

Source: ([www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk/](http://www.facebook.com/elshaheed.co.uk/))

If President Hosni Mubarak would have taken social media seriously at that time, he would come to know that how his dictatorship is going and there was need of change in his policies. Egypt case is the good example of how social media reflects transparency of government policies, promote participation, how much government is consensus oriented and whether they fulfilling the minority plus human rights or not. It shows that government can make amendments in their policies by monitoring social media trends. It also shows if proactive or reactive behavior taken into account on time then it is possible to control citizens before the condition get worse.

## PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE APPROACHES

Reactive approach is simply the action taken after change has accrued. Proactive approach is considered as plans or action taken before the change occurs or action taken in order to avoid threat. [18]. Sometimes it could be more beneficial to be proactive and sometimes it is more beneficial to reactive rather than proactive. Government can use social media proactively as:

1. To check public opinion on an upcoming policy (participation), [19].
2. For decision to change policy during implementation process (before failure).
3. To exceed expectations by knowing public concerns proactively.
4. Government able to estimate risk situation through monitoring social media hot current topics within the country.

Government can use social media reactively as:

1. To correct policy immediately to meet unmet expectations.
2. Overcoming politically averse situations.
3. Management after natural disaster, [20]. (for aid purpose or for disseminating information)
4. Social media sites can be used for investigation reactively, [21].

## REACTIVE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY GOVERNMENT

### Disaster Management

#### CASE (TAIWAN)

*During the Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan, government agencies use social media networking sites in order to get updates. Usually, they lack information about survivors stayed at different places due to lack of communication network as well as land connection. Government makes micro blogs to report incidents. Citizen reports about different types of incidences on micro-blogging and on web 2.0 helps government to control the situation. Ultimately it leads to implement internet based emergency policy in Taiwan. [22]*

Cases like above allow government to take effective participation to save citizens. Just consider a situation if government wouldn't make blogs or social media networking page for public participation at that time, how it could reach to people who survive but have no more link with world through land. Social media can also be used to disseminate information for help. It motivates citizens to help with money as well as volunteer participation on social media site specified for disaster.

### Investigation Use by Government Agencies

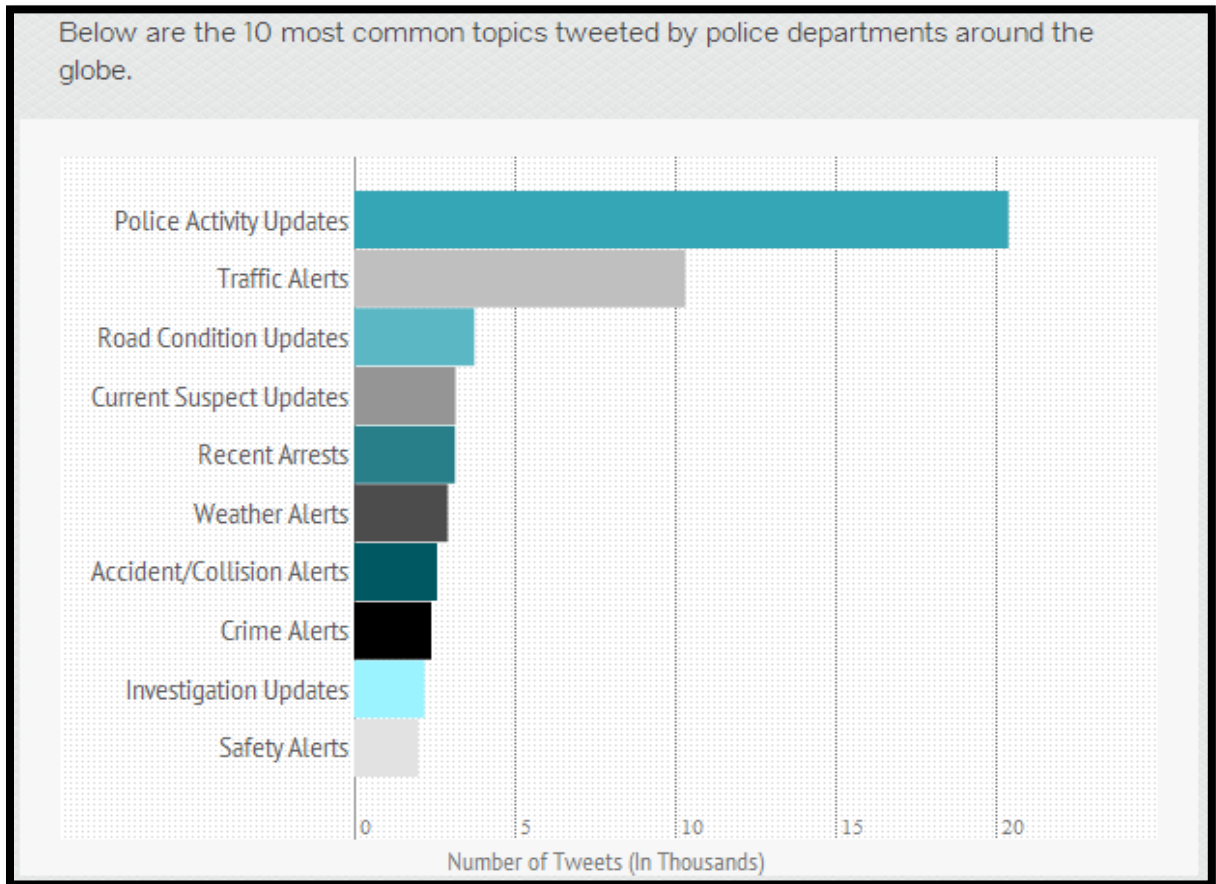
By use of social media it become easier to catch the criminals as well as it's the best and easier source is to identify police brutality. [23]

#### CASE (US)

Melvin colon (US) is facing sentence for murder and weapon crimes, police arrest him through his facebook pictures. Police contact with one of his friend who become agreed to give access to police of colon's personal profile. [24]

Police sometimes use the fake account just showing themselves a friend of the suspect to gain access to his/her personal profile. Personal profile is sometimes helpful to precede investigation. Social media networking sites also remain helpful for investigatory agencies to make public relations and disseminate information about new law and order regulations. Here is graph showing police department using twitter for different purposes.





**Figure 2:** 10 most followed police department (US and the World)

Source:

(<http://www.policemag.com/page/how-police-departments-use-twitter-infographics.aspx>)

## PROACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USE BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Social media helps to provide education or enforce health measure proactively. Social media can be used proactively to provide training about food usage as it is one of the important business of government, as:

### CASE (UK)

Government obligation is to provide education about food hygiene to their citizens. Food Stander Association of UK use social media networks to provide information proactively to save citizens, as they often start “food safety week” and “food hygienic rating scheme” on facebook and on twitter. [25]

### CASE (TURKEY)

Turkey government feels threat by opposition who continuously promote their presence on social media. AKP (justice and development party) trained no. of volunteer for fighting against opposition on social media. But Initiative in true sense was taken after the “Gezi protests”

happened in 2002, there was a protest against PM Erdogan and all these protestors united through social media interaction. After that PM himself has 3.4 million twitter followers. This initiative was not just about stopping protest. This is early preparation of their next election as well as for publicity. [26]

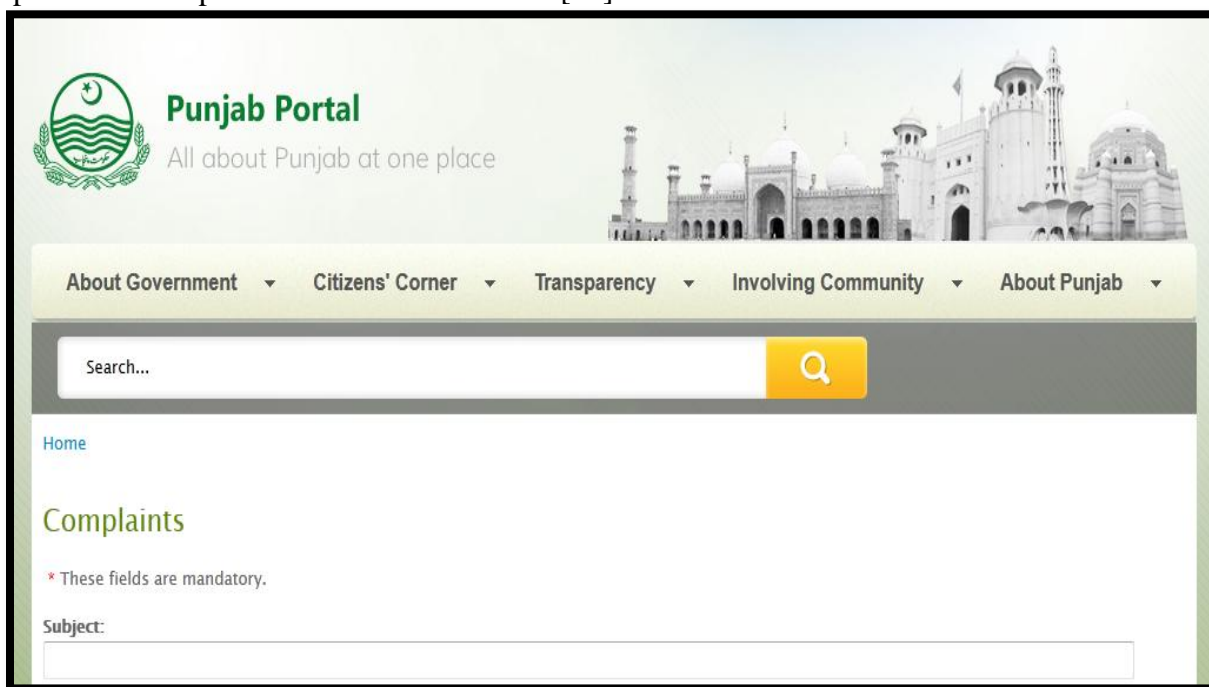
This is proactive as well as reactive approach. Turkey's government takes initiative before the protest. But after the protest PM himself comes in twitter's ground. AKP (justice and development party) also proactively use social media for election purpose.

### **CASE (PAKISTAN)**

Punjab (province of Pakistan) government of Pakistan makes "Punjab Portal" for public participation to reduce corruption. This portal is also made for transparency, as it presents reports of different projects.

Through this portal public can make complaints against corrupt officers. This action was taken to reduce corruption rate of Punjab.

As according to Transparency International Pakistan reports corruption in Punjab is reduced as compared to other province in and after 2010. [27]



**Figure 3:** Punjab portal (all about Punjab at one place)

Source: ([www.punjab.gov.pk/complaints](http://www.punjab.gov.pk/complaints))



Above all cases show how social media reflects components of good governance such as participation, transparency, consensus oriented, efficiency and effectiveness or responsiveness by governments of different countries. Citizen criticism or positive comments is a self explanation of effective use of nation's resource.

## CONCLUSION

Social media is a vital tool used for Good governance. Governments not used it only for current situations but also for the preparations of coming election. Government agencies used social media for investigation, disaster management and also for health measure to make public aware. Social media is a powerful and cost saving medium for effective communication to target citizens or other stake holders. It brings change in nation's history. In simple words, social media is now an unavoidable fact for good governance.

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