

Chapter 47

Analysis of Social Media in Administration: Epistemological and Practical Considerations

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes some case studies about social media in organizations' administration. To do this, social media's epistemological base will be introduced, considering contributions from the subject of organizational behavior. The importance of this discipline is that it brings together social sciences points of view (social psychology, sociology and anthropology). After this, views will be presented regarding the mathematical nature of social media. In this part, the internet's influence on social media will also be discussed, for it has contributed to a new common sense, and it is responsible for social media popularity. Finally, how social media interferes in organizations will be attested to, as well as how it can be managed. In order to help the understanding of such knowledge, a survey will be introduced, with articles related to organizational practices in social media.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication through computers has been changing organizations and conversation, allowing for the creation of social media on internet. This media also has been changing how people communicate, work and are entertained. With the coming of the internet in the 1990's, this media basically consisted of small focal groups. Nowadays, social media has become a wide public space where millions of people feel more comfortable in using their real identity online.

However, Silva Junior (2007) has asserted that the term 'media' itself is very broad, referring to relationships among many characters. Some authors approach the subject as organization in networks, organizational networks, networking, bondless organizations, nets, collegial approaches and so forth.

This chapter aims to emphasize how important the use of social media is in the field of administration. But, before analyzing this point, the chapter will show the basis of social media, through the way in which the 'media' concept has been developed in some fields such as philosophy, sociology, anthropology and organizational psychology. After, the focus will be social media on the internet, where this subject has been spreading lately, especially with information and communication technology expansion (ICT).

From here, the theoretical reference will show the diversity of the subject 'social media' in a variety of scientific fields. It can be concluded that the origin of social media is before the internet. Indeed, the internet has contributed to the technological improvement of social media, serving as a disseminator for it to be widely debated.

THEORETICAL REFERENCE

With the literature studied in respect to social media, we can see that it is a subject which permeates many different fields such as philosophy,

sociology, anthropology, organizational psychology, computer science, information science, data processing etc.

In order to approach the main tendencies that have influenced social media in administration, this theoretical reference is divided into two parts: the Social Current and the Technological Current.

SOCIAL CURRENT

In Social Current, the bibliographical review is based in philosophy, sociology, anthropology and organizational psychology fields. Those sciences analyze social media's influence on society before the coming of internet. It means that those sciences go to the essence of what grounds human interactions, and at the same time they analyze technology's impact on an individual's daily life.

Philosophy

In the beginning of civilization, humankind was gathered in clans. These primitive units shared the same interests, values and communication tools, defining specific hierarchical structures. The clans founded the first societies and as they spread, techniques developed.

Rudinger (2007) attests that only in the XVII century did techniques start truly affecting the way of living, cultural life and society's sociability, making the concept of culture strongly connected with the concept of technology, which originated technoculture.

For Subirats (1989), the analysis of modern technoculture must consider the ontological dimension of the technique as the principle present in forms of culture. Thus, the way in which technology affected society found a wide field for discussion in philosophy.

There are basically two lines of thought in philosophy about technique: technologic thought and "technophobia". Technologic thought is divided into Prometheans or technifiles and Faustians.

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