

Chapter – IV

Conclusion

It would not be an exaggeration to state that the present research is a mild beginning to explore a vast field which lies unexplored in the field of electronic literature. Throughout the research, an attempt has been made to elucidate the fundamental purpose of blogging (the political-economy of the blogs). The research has been all the more relevant in this politically charged environment. The blogs, it may be asserted, are politically motivated and culture-laden.

A new platform for creating new cultural domain has dawned in the form of blogging. The age-old barriers of traditional cultural hegemony seem to be crumbling under the weight of the new domain. The electoral result of the recently held elections seems to justify the point. The result shows a clear-cut deviation from the usual trend of voting. It appears very obvious into contemporary scenario that technology will definitely have a say in our future cultural picture. Today, technology has invaded all aspects of our life. It appears to have become more reliable than human-beings. The interaction between humans and gadgets is continuously on the rise. This interaction, invasion and dependency on gadgets have made technology a strong contender in the field of cultural hegemony.

During leisure when people engage with gadgets for pleasure, that very time is used to occupy their minds as well as to condition it according to the likings and disliking of the elite class. This intimate access and invasion into people's lives has become possible only through blogging because the blogs entice people to engage with technology. The engagement with blogs has led our society to a different plane where the affluent class uses it as a tool to colonize the minds of the masses. At present, one can ignore the technological applications at one's own peril. The rising middle class who is getting more and more addicted to these social networking websites is more vulnerable to the onslaughts of the dominant classes. Throughout ages, change has been the law of nature. At different times different powerful classes have used different tools to dominate. Now, the powerful class is using technology as a tool to dominate or to continue their dominance. New faces are cropping up to dominate

today's populace especially the youth who tend to flout the traditional culture and is craving to carve an independent space of their own. The new alignments formed by these new forces exhibit altogether new outlook which in many cases is in total contrast to the original alignments. The bloggers, with an aim to enlarge their following, pretend open-mindedness. In a way, it helps in fulfilling the modern parameters of their being human. They tend to create a group mind of their own. A group mind is a social unit of interacting personalities who think, feel and act together and who have some common aims, interests, stimulations, emotions and loyalties. The bloggers write a lot of things to appease their followers.

One important aspect that is noticed is that prominent personalities take to blogging with a clear intent to occupy the minds of their followers as well as to derive certain monetary or other benefits. The celebrity bloggers are the real beneficiary of these blogs. This way they have devised a short-cut to stay in touch with the followers not only for the whole-day but practically every moment. This way there is an ample scope of indoctrinating the minds of their followers. Sometimes controversies are created intentionally to make their ideas or products popular. Blogs have become the latest trend in gimmickry. All what one has to do is to post a controversial blog and after the controversy has erupted just extend an unconditional apology for hurting the sentiments of the people or a particular section of the society. The job is done. It is also used as an easy medium to expose the pitfalls of one's opponents in politics and that too without coming out openly. Many a times it happens that anonymous blogs go viral because of the sensitive material they contain about a particular leader or a prominent person. Then the onus is shifted on the person about whom the blog is circulated rather than the person who originally posted the blog. The power of blogging has often been used or misused as a weapon by the politicians to malign the public image of their opponents.

The present research shows how various tech-savvy sections of Indian society – who follow various bloggers; and along with them the blogs of popular bloggers – are creating a virtual world which bit-by-bit is replacing the real world. Along with the tech-savvy society, the general populace is also getting influenced in active as well as passive manner. These technological innovations have not only added a new dimension to leisure but they have also changed the very concept of leisure. For general populace, leisure now means being glued to their gadgets; and for bloggers it means a new means of advertisement or access to the customers or readers or voters.

Social networking websites are a good source for effecting social change and hence has proved very useful for social activists. One needs to get the sense of what motivates people and one's capability with social media to provide people timely and apt updates. The import of the cause and to present it in proper light is highly significant. People are motivated most by affirming visions that describe a better future than the one they experience now. Paint what the future should look like rather than focusing purely on the negatives. The bloggers tend to avoid painting the extremes. Rather there is an attempt to depict a favorable future so as to invoke people to jump into action. By all means one needs to be very clear about current problems and even consider using examples that goad people into action but one need to be careful by not keeping the message on negativity all the time. Amplifying and describing to people the future possibilities also works. Often passionate writing is witnessed in the blogs of social activists or politicians which ensures evoking the same amount of passions of the readers because the passion exhibited in the blog shows how important the issue is. But whatever passions are poured into writing, it must be considerate of all people involved in terms of caste, race, religion, gender, etc. The most vital aspect of blogging is sharing of information. To fight for a cause one need to ensure that not only one's followers but the follower's follower gets the blog post. If this is done properly and smoothly, a simple blog may be transformed into a mass movement. This is very relevant in the context of celebrity bloggers whose followers run into millions. So, it can be conveniently admitted that social media plays a crucial role in social activism.

Social media has become a vital tool for authors as well. Authors have found a new space of marketing in the form of social media. Marketing is crucial for selling products of all sorts and not only products but also services. Authors planning to sell books get a lot of help from social networking websites. In fact, social media is taking a bigger and bigger role in helping authors get known. Through social media, people get to know authors more intimately. The audience gets a peep into the author's mind. In addition, people use social media to recommend books to others—so it helps books take off. It helps in connecting people with the same taste for books and hence proves helpful in increasing the sales. The authors who take to blogging always have an upper hand in marketing. A blog gives a home base to an author where people can find and connect to him/her and, hopefully, sign up to hear more from the author so they stay in touch. And it helps one engage in community of one's liking with something to offer. Then, social media is important for connecting with new people and expanding the reach of blogs. Not only this, one can generate money from things other than

sale of book. As one of the blogger under the study i.e. Chetan Bhagat also provides services like motivational speeches, consultancy, etc. From this perspective, it becomes a vital aspect of marketing. It is not all about sale of books rather one has many more things to sell—consulting, seminars, coaching and orientation programmes, etc.

For politicians, social media has proved a boon especially during election campaign. It enhances accessibility to the potential voters. Social networking has become core of the web-based campaign with well-designed, versatile and dynamic interactive platform. The power of social networking websites to affect society is based exclusively on its social aspects i.e. interaction and participation. These social aspects result in voting decisions of the people. But citizen voting decisions are not based just on one way communication. More decisive is reciprocation in mass communication, which means conversation with fellow leaders, colleagues, friends and acquaintances that can either consolidate or weaken the voter's opinion. The possibility to communicate directly with voters via social media is groundbreaking. This has commenced a new era which can again be termed icebreaking because it has developed the concept of citizens-initiated campaigning. It's a very novel and innovative concept.

Social media is a very effective medium to bring political leaders and their parties closer to their potential voters. It allows politicians to communicate faster and reach voters in a more targeted manner and vice versa, without the intermediate role of mass media. Traditional media like television, newspapers, etc. do not have much say into this. Reactions, feedback, conversations and debates are generated online as well as support and participation for offline events. Messages posted to personal networks are multiplied when shared, which allow new audiences to be reached. A person can easily access information pertaining to any leader quite easily on social networking websites. One can read blogs of the leaders or can come to know about their views or ideas reflected in their comments on someone else' blog. It acts as a showcase of the profile of the political party and its various leaders, goals of the party in future and its vision for the country. This helps people understand what they should expect from the future government and accordingly vote for the same. Politicians have rightly identified the power of social media and how it can be used to reach out to millions of people at the same time. This platform is used for sharing views between politicians and general public. Political leaders are often seen expressing their views on various issues usually

sharing people's concerns. This makes people feel that these leaders are within their reach. In this way, it has bridged the gap between common masses and high profile leaders up to a great extent. Thus, it can be admitted that social medium helps increase simultaneous interaction with everyone. No need to take appointments, wait for the leaders to talk, one can talk to them just at the click of a button.

Along with all this, social media has carved a whole new economy of its own. It has eaten away a large chunk of business generated in various traditional businesses. For instance, one can get user-generated free news content online instead of going for traditional print media e.g. newspapers, magazines, etc. The revenue generated by classified advertisements is also under grave threat because of free advertisements available online. It has become almost impossible now to protect copyrights of various artists, singers, poets, publishers, etc. provided the current scenario of piracy which is going on in an unabated manner online. The amateur bloggers also add to this as they help in engaging people in online debates because sometimes absurd blogs are posted which indirectly helps in increasing people's presence online. The online presence of people is a strong factor in attracting corporate houses to market their products online. There is a lot of economics involved into the uneconomic activity of blogging. It helps in marketing and consequently saves a lot of finance. It is a new spot for marketing. A lot of new avenues have opened today in the form of jobs, businesses, etc. in various fields. It has created a new economy of its own which definitely has in its fold one or the other thing for everyone.

Hence, it can be safely concluded that in this globalised era bustling with technological advancements one can ignore the importance of such a ubiquitous application at one's own peril. It has made deep inroads into our culture. It has changed the way traditionally politics was done. Politicians' role and reach are far piercing now. Mass movements have acquired a new character and meaning. With the advent of social media even our routine life has changed. Communication has acquired a phenomenal form. The whole world is digitalized now. Hegemony has acquired an altogether new definition. There are new role models and charismatic persons often cutting across national, cultural, regional, linguistic barriers. Finally, a new era has dawned. *Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn*, etc. have come to hegemonize our lives.