CHAPTER 8 Social Media – Country Updates

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Chapter 8 Social Media – Country Updates covers various countries in Asia on their status of social media. In this chapter, we have articles of the following countries;

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8.1 Social Media in Bangladesh around 2020

Mohammad Abdul Haque Anu and Nazmul Hasan Majumder

Abstract

This section aims to provide an overview of social media usage in Bangladesh, as well as to present cyber threats on social media and the benefits of "Digital Security Act 2018" for solving the social media related issues. The section discusses the security and privacy of individuals, governments, and organizations, as well as issues related to social unrest, misinformation and fake news. By presenting these issues, the present section will provide the reader with a picture of the current situation of social media usage in Bangladesh.

Introduction

Bangladesh is home to 167 million people, with a large percentage between 13 and 35 years old. Most of them are highly interested in providing their services online to paying customers, and the Internet is the only way for Bangladeshis to connect to the rest of the world. The usage of Internet in Bangladesh has been rapidly increasing since the introduction of the Internet in the early 1990s (1993-1995) through the Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) [Eyamin 2020]. From 2014, the users of the Internet have been growing rapidly and capturing the opportunity of e-commerce and freelancing, particularly so among the young generation of Bangladesh. So, in that case, social media is performing a vital role to improving connectivity in business and other social activities that can deeply impact social life. Therefore, social media is performing a common role among these matters. Over the last 10 years, social networking sites have been

keeping a resistless dimension for young people through those for exposing people views and opinions that really plays a major issue in our country and social harmony [Alim 2016].

The internet users in Asia were 2,366,213,308 as of May 31, 2020, and the social media platform Facebook had 832,336,400 active users in Asia, meaning a 55.1% penetration population, according to 'Internetworldstats' as of March 31, 2020 [I.worldstats 2020]. The Bangladesh's neighbour, India had 560,000,000 internet users as of May 31, 2020, with 251,000,000 Facebook users as of March 31, 2020, meaning a 40.6% penetration population, while the fifth largest Internet user country in Asia, Bangladesh had 96,199,000 internet users and 33,713,000 Facebook users with 58.4% penetration population at the same time [I.worldstats 2020; Tech 2018].

Internet Users **and Social Media Usage in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh started its internet journey in 1993 [Eyamin 2020], but the people of the country got the opportunity to use the Internet for the first time on June 4, 1996. The VSAT-based data circuit was commissioned for the first time in country, and Internet connectivity services were available to the public. After the Internet was launched, the June 1996 National Poll results were made available to the netizens of the world using the World Wide Web.

This was the first ever usage event of its kind in Bangladesh. The effort was appreciated in many corners of the world, especially among Bangladeshis living abroad. Gradually, Bangladeshi people were introduced to different uses of the Internet. According to data from the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), as of January 2019, the total number of Internet users had reached 91.421 million, and Mobile Internet, and ISP+PSTN users at 85.6 million, and 5.7 million people, respectively [BTRC 2019]. Young people nowadays are engaging in various types of social networking websites, especially Facebook. Facebook is having a tremendous impact on the young generation [Jin 2013]. Facebook became popular in Bangladesh after launching in 2004, and its popularity is continuing to increase among the young. Nowadays, over 34 million people are actively using social networking websites in Bangladesh. Although only 10,000 Bangladeshis used Facebook in 2008 [Syed 2020], 33 million

people were active on Facebook in 2019, compared to 2.1 million on Instagram and 0.3 million on Twitter.

A data report from UCWEB on Social Media Behaviour in Bangladesh stated that 70% of people are heavy users who visit social networking sites daily, and among them 39.8% of users usually spend at least 1-3 hours on such sites per day. Fifty percent of the total users have more than 300 friends on Facebook, and 70% of among them spend most of their time on social media in their everyday life. Among social media users, 22.7 percent spend more than 5 hours, 16.9 percent spend near 3-5 hours, and 39.8 percent engage in social media between 1 to 3 hours per day. The majority, 75.6%, of online social networking users believe that social media platforms are good for their social lives, although 37% of them did not meet with their online friends offline even once [Ameli 2014]. These statistics show that social media is becoming a major factor nowadays in the lives of the citizens of Bangladesh.

Social Media Behaviours in Bangladesh

Social media is a means of online communication that connects users, enabling virtual participation and collaboration. Many social media websites allow their users to write and share information on the web in order to engage in interactive collaboration with one another, which can help users find new information. Social media has also unveiled the opportunity for e-learning, which has greatly impacted the young generation through online communication and collaboration [Alim2016; Syed 2020].

Social media includes microblogging sites such as Twitter and social networking sites such as Facebook. A primary feature of social media is that people actively follow someone who is posting content, and they are able to respond. You may find that blogs allow feedback, but social media is all about spreading information to participating users [Jin 2013; Hasan 2015]. Fake news is a downside of social media in that erroneous news can travel as fast as real news [Ameli 2014]. Posting false information on social websites can create problems with just about anything, from politics to community affairs to the reputation of an individual or organization [Jin 2013; Shafaat 2014].

Social Media Activities in Bangladesh: The social media companies Hootsuite and Wearesocial published an analysis report in January 2019 on social media users and activities of the world. It also shared an overview on social media and the Internet of Bangladesh. It revealed that 157.2 million people of Bangladesh are currently using mobile phones, which accounts for 94% of the total population, and 92 million people of the population are connected to the internet. Users of social media are vastly increasing in recent years, and 20% of the total population are active users, at over 34 million people, even though only 10,000 people were using Facebook in 2008 [DataReportal 2019]. So it is clear that social media can greatly impact Bangladeshi people. Facebook is the most used form of social media in Bangladesh, and people would like to share their opinions or consent through social media besides Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. More than 33 million people are now using Facebook, where 73% of them are male and 27% are female [DataReportal 2019]. According to the analysis report of Hootsuite and Wearesocial, 14% of females and 33% percent of males between 18-24 years of age use social media, and 7% of females and 25% of males from 25 to 34 years of age use social networking sites in Bangladesh. Most people are under 35 years old, and due to their youth, can potentially be emotionally manipulated by fake news [DataReportal 2019].

Fake News and Question Leaks in Social Media: The education system is the most important part of a country. It can enrich a person's capability, which, in turn, can change the shape of the whole country. Unfortunately, a few culprits have tried to leak exam questions recently through social media, which creates an ethical dilemma for our society. These types of fake news are a downside of social media, spreading as fast as real news. Moreover, the results of students are becoming worse due to the overuse of social networking because of how much time students are spending on such sites [ThawhiduKabir 2014; SabaMehmond 2013; StefaniaManca 2016]. The questions for the first four exams of Secondary School Certificate in 2018 were leaked on Facebook, Messenger, and WhatsApp between half an hour, and an hour before the exam, but the moral education exam question went viral between one, and one and a half hours before the exam. So, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) decided to do "The Internet Blackout" during the exam dates from 8am to 10:30am [Tribune 2018; Correspondent 2019]. All Internet Service Provider (ISP) received the strict instruction from BTRC and the

RAB (A Law enforcement Agency) detained five people including four teachers in Dhaka and Gazipur on February 19, 2018. So, the government took all of the necessary steps with the help of law enforcement to arrest them. The government made a few laws and is trying to strictly implement them to eliminate the spreading fake news through social media. The government is strictly monitoring social media to prevent leaks of exam questions. After passing the Digital Security Act 2018, five people were arrested on charges of cheating on medical college entrance exams, as authorities provided the suspects with fake leaked questions on social media [Parliament 2018; Correspondent 2019]. Dhaka court remanded them in custody for two days in the case started at Paltan Police Station after initial interrogation by CID officials [Parliament 2018; Correspondent 2018]. The government has already started to monitor social media and is trying to filter the content of those websites which are vulnerable for society [Correspondent 2019].

Social Unrest Issue (Ramu Attack): The Cox's Bazaar Ramu violence on September 29, 2012 on Buddhist temples happened because of a misunderstanding. The mobs destroyed 12 Buddhist temples and monasteries and 50 houses in reaction to a tagging of an image depicting the desecration of the Quran on the timeline of a fake Facebook account under a Buddhist name. The actual posting of the photo was not done by the Buddhist who was falsely accused [Wong 2016; bdnews24 2012]. The attacks that started at 11:30pm on September 29 lasted until around 4am on September 30, 2012. Another news report said that Rohingya refugees from Myanmar were suspected to be involved in the attacks. On Tuesday afternoon October 2, 2012, three Rohingyas were arrested by the police in Chakaria Upazila of Cox's Bazaar District while they were trying to attack a Buddhist monastery in Manikpur. For these kinds of issues, the government took major steps to control social unrest by enacting the Digital Security Act of 2018 [Ashutosh 2012; Wikipedia 2020; Parliament 2018].

Shahbag Movement Generated by Social Media: An issue related to war criminals in Bangladesh raised in 2013 through the Shahbag Movement, and the outcome of the movement was to demand the justice for war criminals. The incident was inspired and realized by social media, as Shahbag became the place of a movement to demand the supreme punishment for 1971 war criminals. With the passage of time, the Shahbag movement has turned into a strict demand for the death penalty for all those who committed war crimes against the nation. A single

Facebook event ‘Protest Against the Ruling Made for QuaderMolla’ by the Bloggers and Online Activists Network (BOAN) was the behind of starting of the Shahbag Movement. Their aim was to protest against the judgment, and they raised their demand for the captial punishment of war criminals. Facebook played a major role in the protests by Facebook users in terms of spreading their message through video, photos, and writing [Shafaat 2014]. Bangladesh’s Bloggers and Online Activists network (BOAN) summoned the public to join the resistance. News of the protest spread very fast with the help of online media platforms. At its peak, almost 100,000 people of different sectors, such as students, professionals, musicians, writers, and all classes of people, united for the very first time in years, under the banner of Shadharon Jonogon (ordinary people). In less than a week, Bangladeshis held smaller protests in cities as far away as London and New York. Protestors published thousands of pictures online, in blogs, on Facebook, Twitter, and online websites. A new web portal was created for the Shahbag Movement, and Shahbag Square has become a major place for social feeds and updates of the Shahbag Movement. The protest has also been carried out in other nations, which has been captured by Flickr. Mandy of the Bangladeshi newspaper and webblog aggregates have erupted as well, protesting for the death sentence of war criminals including ‘Somewhereinblog’ and ‘Amarblog’. The movement place of Shahbag has also been renamed as ‘ProjonmoChattor’ after the beginning of protests. Without achieving the death sentence of all war criminals, banning the Jamaat, and boycotting all Jamaat institutions, the protesters of ProjonmoChattor said that they will not move from there [DatReportal2019].

Utilization of Facebook as a Commerce Platform (Known as F-commerce): In 2017, the e-CAB estimated that there are around 8,000 Bangladesh e-commerce pages on Facebook. As an unregulated economic phenomenon, f-commerce is offering inclusive entrepreneurial opportunities with practically no entry barriers. This is partially driven by promotions from telecom firms involving free access to the Internet via Facebook (including with pictures). This allows a medium for both buyers and sellers to transact offline. This informal activity is significantly larger than formal e-commerce transactions. There is some concern regarding the viability of regulating this activity, even though both regulators (Bangladesh Bank) and commercial banks are in favour of not imposing regulations at this point. Instead, stakeholders

realize that this activity could instead give rise to e-commerce start-ups who will migrate to formal channels based on organic growth and opportunity identification [Roux 2015; Ruehl 2016; UNCTAD2019].

Social Networking Platform for Educational Purposes: In Bangladesh a Facebook influencer named Razib Ahmed, established the "SEARCH ENGLISH" Facebook group in 2016 for learning English for all ages of people all over the world through the Facebook. More than 2 million group members are in this group to enrich their English skills through practicing writing by contributing posts and comments. Recently, active members are contributing video posts for enhancing their speaking skills. The group works on improving the four major English skills which are reading, writing, speaking, and listening [Owusu 2015; Ahmed 2014; Roux 2015; Manca 2016; SDAsia 2019].

Digital Security Act in Bangladesh

Bangladesh Government took major steps through the Digital Security Act of 2018 to control social-media-related offenses to improve the nation's direction with regard to social media issues [Parliament 2018]. A few rules will be enforced well to eliminate social unrest, fake news, and social-media-related problems. Here, we mentioned a few sections below that are related to the case studies mentioned earlier, and those cases have obviously contributed to social media governance in Bangladesh.

Section 25

Publishing, sending of offensive, false or fear inducing data – information, etc.

(1) If any person in any website or through any digital medium-

a. Intentionally or knowingly sends such information which is offensive or fear inducing, or which despite knowing it as false is sent, published or propagated with the intention to annoy, insult humiliate or denigrate a person or

b. Publish or propagates or assists in publishing or propagating any information with the intention of tarnishing the image of the nation or spread confusion or despite knowing

it as false, publishes or propagates or assists in publishing or propagates information in its full or in a distorted from for the same intentions,

Then, the activity of that person will be an offense under the Act [Parliament 2018].

(2) If any person commits any offense mentioned within sub-section (1), the person will be penalized with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 years of or fine not exceeding 3 lacs taka or with both.

(3) If any person commits the offense mentioned in sub-section (1) for the second time or recurrently commits it then, he will be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or with fine not exceeding 10 lacs taka or with both.

Digital Security Act 2018 mentioned a few laws at sections 28 and 31, under the crime and punishment criteria about the publication, broadcast, etc. of such information in any website or in any electronic format that hampers the religious sentiment or values.

Section 28

(1) If any person or group intentionally or knowingly with the aim of hurting religious sentiments or values or with the intention to provoke publish or broadcast anything by means of any website or any electronic format which hurts religious sentiment or values then such activity of that person will be considered an offence.

(2) If any person commits an offence under in sub-section (1), the person will be sentenced to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 7 years or fine not exceeding 10 lac or both.

(3) If any person commits the offence mentioned in sub-section (1) second time or repeated,

He will be punished with imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or fine not exceeding 20 lac taka or both.

Section 31

(1) If any person intentionally publish broadcast any kind of file in any website or digital format which will create hostility, hatred or adversity among people or destroy any communal harmony or create unrest or disorder or deteriorates or threatens to deteriorate the law and order then that activity of that person will be considered as an offence.

(2) If any person commits any crime mentioned within sub section (1), the person will be penalized with imprisonment for a term not exceeding to 7 years or fine not exceeding Tk. 5 lac or with both.

(3) If any person commits the crime mentioned in sub-section (1) for the second time or recurrently commits it, he will be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or with fine not exceeding Tk.10 lac or both.

Conclusion

Finally, we want to conclude with the last opinion that Bangladesh is the emerging information technology country and social media is massively extended because of the large proportion of young people. So, the government and policymakers of the country are taking more initiative to making a peaceful environment for social media in Bangladesh.

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8.2 Social Media in Pakistan

Ahmed Bakhat Masood

(1) Internet Indicators in Pakistan

Mobile broadband penetration has reached 36.18% in Pakistan and is further growing rapidly. The telecom sector of Pakistan has shown tremendous growth in terms of Internet broadband penetration, especially after the launch of 3G/4G services in the country in 2014. The chart shown below, which was published by the Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA), shows the penetration in cellular and broadband services in Pakistan. As depicted in the chart, mobile broadband is the most popular choice of broadband for Pakistani users.

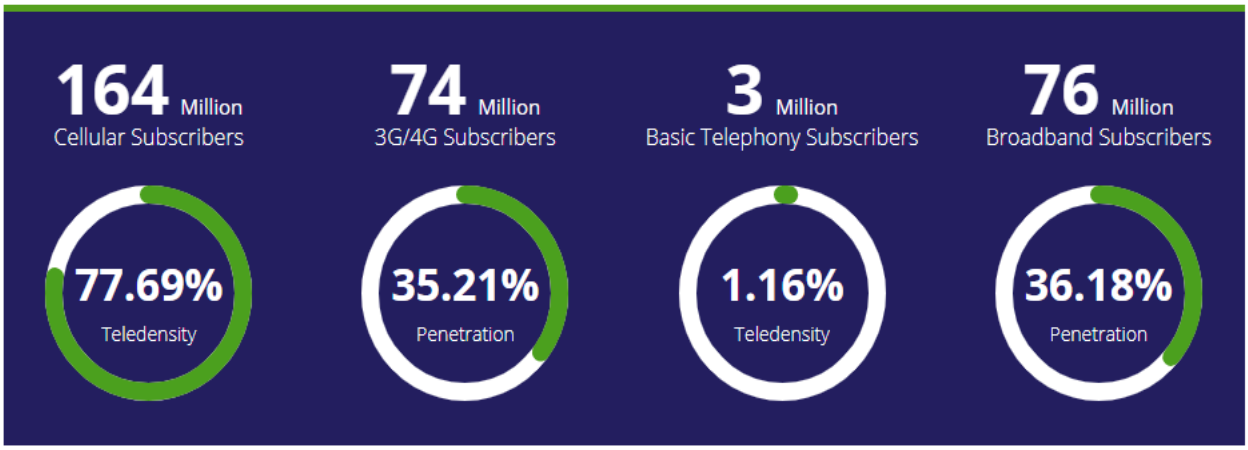


Figure 1 Penetration in cellular and broadband services [PTA 2019]

Generally, people use the Internet for communication, entertainment, education, hobbies, sports, news, and politics. There are gender differences is usage. Women significantly use the Internet for education and hobbies, while men are more likely to give priority to news and sports, according to a report published by the British Council Pakistan [British 2019].

(2) Usage of Social Media in Pakistan

Globally, social media is not just a communication platform, but it has become a necessary symbol of online presence for companies and individuals. Social media has provided users the opportunity to express themselves, and businesses are taking advantage of easy outreach to maximum the number of customers they can influence. In Pakistan, social media is also gaining popularity, and the growth of different social media tools is increasing rapidly. According to statistics published by HootSuite in January 2019, 37 million users were active users of social media at the time of publication of the report. Among them, 36 million users were using Facebook, 6.3 million were using Instagram, 5.1 million were using LinkedIn, 2.15 million were using Snapchat, and 1.26 million were using Twitter. Moreover, 41% of social media users were between 18 and 24 years, and 36% people were between 25 and 34 years old. These statistics indicate that the majority of social media and Internet users are young people in Pakistan, as per the joint report of “We Are Social” and “Hootsuite”, January 2019.

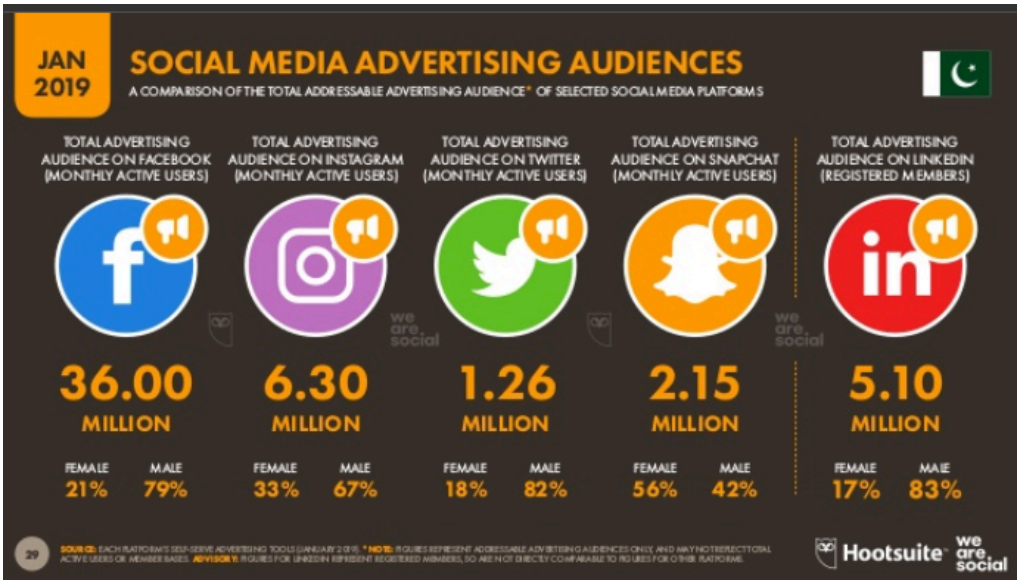


Figure 2 Social Media Advertising Audiences [DataPortal 2019]

Pakistan is the 13th largest country in terms of the number of Facebook users, as per a Quarter 4 2019 report of "We are Social", with a significant share in other social media applications like Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Twitter [DataPortal 2019b].

According to a study released by the US-based market intelligence firm Sensor Tower, WhatsApp was the most downloaded non-gaming app in Pakistan as of 16 November 2019 with 18.1 million downloads, whereas the Chinese App, TikTok was second on the list with 16.3 million downloads between 1 January 2019 to 16 November 2019 [News 2019].

(3) Impact of Social Media on Society

Social media has impacted Pakistani society and has caused vital changes in the society. Detailed descriptions in affected sectors are given below.

Business opportunity

Social media has provided tremendous opportunities for the businesses to promote their products in Pakistan. Mobile phone operators and mobiles phones are dominating in the business sector of

social media in Pakistan. Mobile phone operators, including Jazz, Zong, and Telenor, have most clientage on Twitter and Facebook, whereas Oppo, Vivo, Samsung Pakistan, Huawei mobile phones, Draz.pk (an online business and subsidiary of Aliexpress), Easy Paisa (mobile banking) are the most popular businesses on YouTube. Online businesses like Draz.pk, members of the banking sector like Meezan Bank, mobile banking service providers like Easy paisa & Jazz cash, property information providers like Zameen.com, and vehicle sale and purchase sites like Pakwheels and OLX are effectively using social media to attract their customers. These companies have significant presence on social media.

Political

Considerable research over the past decade has been produced on the impact of social media and the Internet. For instance, Facebook has emerged as the most significant platform for political expression and participation online [ResearchGate 2019]. Political parties have realized the importance of social media and invested substantial resources to promote themselves and launch campaigns against their opponents. The existing government party in Pakistan, Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) is known for its social media campaigns during the pre-election protests and during the elections. Even after taking over the government, PTI has given tough time to all of the opposition parties through its use of social media campaigns [SocialBakers 2019]. Other parties have also invested in social media campaigns; however, they are still far behind the ruling party in terms of social media campaigns [AsiaDialogue 2018]. Since the emergence of social media, the course of election campaigns has changed altogether. Social media has become the major source for political parties to express their agenda, and it also provides the opportunity for launching campaigns during elections. Candidates who have a presence on Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter have proved that they have a higher success rate in getting elected. Similarly, campaigning on social media has become as essential as door-to-door campaigning in the recent general elections in 2018, and social media has enabled candidates to directly reach out to voters, mobilize supporters, and influence the public agenda [IRNA 2017]. In contrast to other parts of the world, individual Pakistani politicians have more followers than their respective political parties. This was revealed in a new study, entitled “Parties Online: Political Communications and Digital Democracy in Pakistan”, on the digital footprint of Pakistani political parties and politicians ahead of the general elections on 25 July 2018. All of the major

political parties have their social media teams that are actively campaigning on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. It seems that political parties and politicians consider Twitter as a more effective tool of disseminating information rather than their websites and other social media tools.

Two weeks before the general elections of July 2018, the top 5 most popular Pakistani politicians' Twitter accounts were as follows [IRADA 2017; Academia 2019];

1. Imran Khan (PTI) with 8.058 million followers;
2. Maryam Nawaz (PML-N) with 4.740 million followers;
3. Shahbaz Sharif (PML-N) with 3.999 million followers;
4. Bilawal Bhutto (PPP) with 2.738 million followers;
5. Jahangir Tareen (PTI) with 2.522 million followers.

Education

Social media has played a vital role in the improving education in Pakistan. Most of the students in remote rural regions are utilizing social media to access online lectures. This is also an excellent opportunity for women to access online lectures from their homes. The Virtual University of Pakistan has uploaded several lectures delivered by expert teachers and have provided education at very low cost, which is not only giving an opportunity to people from different regions and walks of life but also benefitting people who are busy in their offices and do not have the time to attend university in person. According to Social Bakers, "Ilm ki Dunya", Dr. Najeeb, Sabaq.pk, and the Virtual University of Pakistan are the most popular Pakistani education YouTube channels, as shown in the chart below:

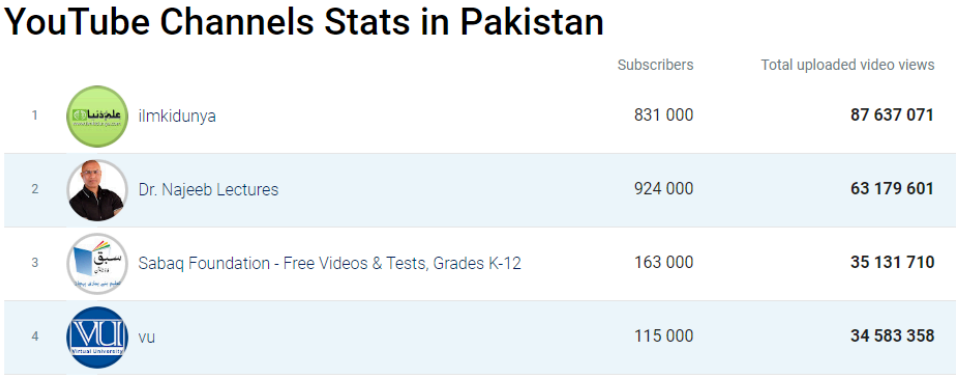


Figure 3 YouTube Channels Statistics in Pakistan [SocialBakers 2019b]

Good Governance

The government of Pakistan has effectively used social media for the welfare of its citizens. One of the leading examples is the usage of Android apps to control dengue fever in the province of Punjab, which was the worst affected by the disease. To prevent another outbreak, the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) developed an Android mobile application for real-time information on larvae prevention and detection, as well as public hygiene activities. PITB officials managed to take geo-tagged photographs of designated areas for dengue surveillance. The data stream submitted by the people of Punjab through the Android-based mobile application was plotted on Google Maps in real time as the mobile application captured latitude and longitude along with the photographs, which helped government agencies to identify the affected area; these agencies managed to spray those areas to prevent further outbreaks [PITB 2019].

Aysha Mumtaz, the former director of the Punjab Food Authority launched a campaign against the low quality of cleanliness in famous restaurants and used social media to communicate while seizing restaurants found violating the cleanliness standards. In a short span of time, the Punjab Food Authority shut down and fined several famous restaurants, hotels, and eateries for substandard and hygienic conditions, regardless of their prestige or powerful identity. Social media users appreciated her steps for the provision of safe food and backed her campaign. Social media activists gave her the name "Dabang Lady" [ProPakistani 2015]. Similarly, DCO Rawalpindi's regular updates on social media users regarding governance issues of the city, are very much appreciated by the social media users.

Promoting Tourism in Pakistan through Social Media

Pakistan has tremendous natural and historic places, from snowcapped peaks to diverse rich cultures. Pakistan was attracting large numbers of local and foreign tourists, but there was a decline in tourism due to terrorist attacks that were successfully countered by Pakistani security forces. The government forces managed to bring peace to the country, thereby improving the security of the nation. This improved security paved the way for tourists to return to Pakistan. According to the report, 1.75 million tourist visited Pakistan during 2017 alone. Statistics from the Pakistan Tourism Development Cooperation (PTDC) show that 30% of travelers were domestic and 70% were overseas tourists. Over the past few years, tourism has increased by

300% due to improved security situation in the county. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the total contribution of tourism to the GDP of Pakistan showed a growth of 5.8% in 2018 while its contribution to employment showed a rise of 2.6%. WTTC is expecting a rise in this amount to $36.1 billion within a decade. PTDC and provincial tourism organizations like the Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) and the Tourism Corporation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (TCPK) are working hard to attract more tourists to Pakistan.

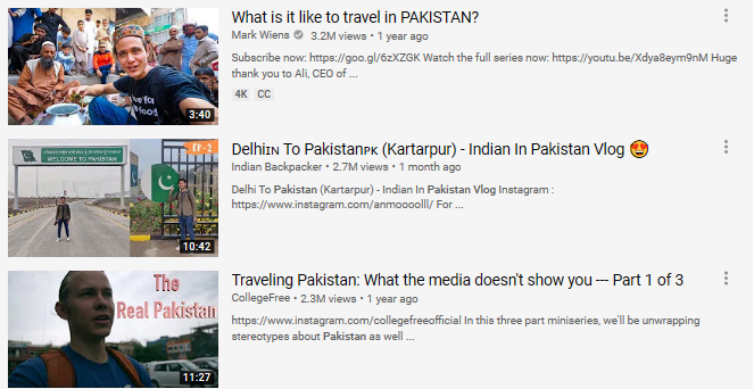


Figure 4 Tourism development in Pakistan [ResearchGate 2019]

Some vloggers have efficiently used YouTube as a platform to express themselves. Viewership for some of the vlogs has surpassed 3 million. At the same time, some government and private organizations are increasing their presence and advertisements on social media to promote tourism in Pakistan. The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) is an example that has tremendous presence on Facebook and YouTube.

Social Media for Job Hunting

All over the world, social media has provided a new way to hunt for jobs. Pakistani youth are also using social media for job hunting, especially LinkedIn. The user base of LinkedIn has reached 5.8 million, where 56.4% of Pakistani professionals are in the age bracket of 25-34. According to a report in 2019, 83% of the LinkedIn users are male, whereas only 17% of LinkedIn users are female [Napoleoncat 2019; DataPortal 2019].

Entrepreneurship through Social Media

Some of the entrepreneurs have used social media, especially Facebook, very effectively. One example is the homemade food industry in Lahore, where Rija's is managing her business called Zesty Bites. She is using Facebook to introduce and develop her business and to process food orders. Her prominent food items are pasta, burgers, and pizza, as well as all kinds of cakes and sandwiches [Gulfnews 2019].

Blogging and Vlogging Opportunities

After the launch of to 3G/4G service, social media opportunities have flourished in the country; as a result, blogging and vlogging culture is growing in Pakistan. People are using blogs to share their views on their traveling adventures, on products, and even on social issues in the country. Blogging has become a profession for some people and a new way of earning money. Technological developments have enabled the sharing of live video streams, so people are now sharing their videos directly from any place and during any event. As a result video logging or *vlogging* in the country is also gaining popularity. People in Pakistan have used this blogging and vlogging opportunity, and some have gained popularity and even career opportunities through the success of their blogs and vlogs.

Overnight Stardom

There are examples of people becoming celebrities overnight. In one case, a tea seller in Islamabad became a celebrity when a photographer took his pictures and published them on social media. Social media users liked these photos and shared them; as a result, the tea seller soon became a model [BBC 2019]. Similarly, Tahir Shah became a celebrity when he posted his song through social media and got over 7 million views in 2017 [GEO 2019].

Cyber Bullying and Harassment

Some rogue elements in the society are using the Internet and social media to create and propagate rumors, to send viruses by email, to leave abusive and insulting messages, and to create content that portrays the victim in negative ways. A cyber harassment helpline with a toll-free number (0800-39393) was launched on December 1st, 2016, and it was the first of its kind in Pakistan. Currently, the helpline is available to serve the public from 9 AM to 5 PM from Monday to Friday. In addition, victims can send emails to helpdesk@digitalrightsfoundation.pk

to communicate their concerns or complaints. As per the Cyber Harassment Report issued by the Digital Rights Foundation, during the first two years of operation of the helpline, from December 2016 to November 2018, complaints of online harassment, violence, and bullying were received [Digital 2019]. In the government sector, the national Response Center for Cyber Crime (NR3C) provides the opportunity to the people of Pakistan to launch complaints about any scam or misuse online [Complaint 2019].

Family Reunions

There are several examples in which social media played a role in a family reunion. A woman was separated from her family at the age of 12 and crossed the border. Her family members considered her dead; however, 48 years later, thanks to the proliferation of social media, her family members managed to meet after 48 years, when she had reached the age of 60 and had come to Pakistan with her son and grandson. She was finally able to go home to see her brothers [Complaint 2019].

Fake News

Fake news is matter of concern all over the world. Similarly, Pakistan is also facing difficulty to manage fake news. Though local authorities are working to sort out the issue, due to jurisdiction issues, it has become hard to curb fake news [RFERL 2019].

(4) Blasphemous Content

The availability of blasphemous content on social media is a very big issue for the Pakistani social media users, as social media companies do not block hate speech / content on the Internet due to their own free-speech policy, whereas this definition changes from region to region and culture to culture.

Public Safety

Blasphemous content can be used by rouge elements to misguide the masses and provoke violence in the society; therefore, the government of Pakistan is putting forth its best effort to keep the content away from the Pakistani community to avoid violence in the country due to hate

speech. Critics of the government's actions view this as an infringement on human rights; however, the government views these actions as public safety measures.

Right of Speech or Disrespect for Communities

Some of the elements have started blasphemous campaigns on social media, especially against Islam. Although these campaigns are not given any attention by the literate community, they can create unrest in Islamic countries, especially in Pakistan. So, there is a need to declare such content as hate speech by the social media companies, as such content can lead to violent protests against local communities that did not have any role in this content. In 2012, due to some social media campaigns containing blasphemous content, especially on YouTube, violence erupted in Pakistan and it became difficult to manage. The matter was brought to courts, and YouTube was banned in Pakistan for three years. YouTube was re-opened after the creation of a local version where blasphemous content was blocked for the acceptability of the local community. During the period of suspension of YouTube in Pakistan, the situation was very difficult for those that were using YouTube for their learning and entertainment. However, they were convinced of the necessity to block blasphemous content.

(5) Social Media Activism

Some civilians believe that the Internet and social media should be open and there should not be any type of blocking, whereas the government considers that some of the content should be restricted for the safety of the general public to avoid any security unrest. Therefore, heated debates on this topic have become a normal part of life. Most activists criticize the Pakistan Electronic Crime Act (PECA) of 2015 for strict punishment of any social media activity, whereas government agencies consider the act to be a vital tool to manage crime in the society. PECA has become a tool for the security agencies to somehow control openness on social media.

(6) Social Media and Businesses

As per statistics from Social Bakers, fashion and services are the most popular sectors on Facebook, whereas services are dominating after Fashion industry, whereas Telecom sector is dominating in the services sector. Further details are shown in Figure 8.2-5 below.

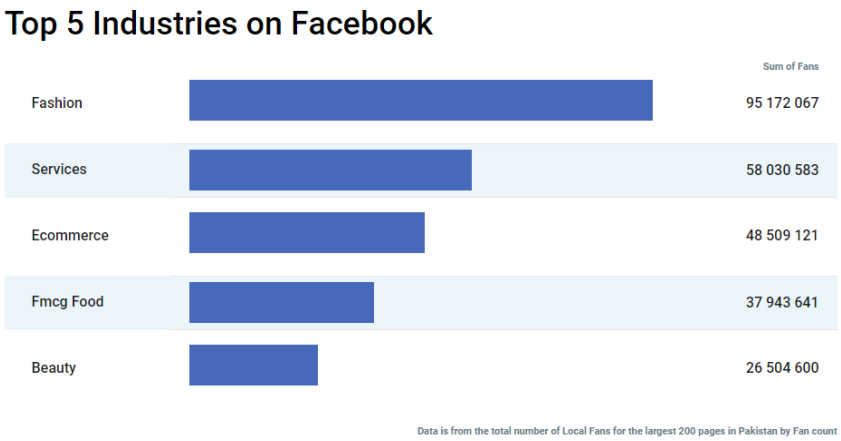


Figure 5 The top 5 industries on Facebook

(7) Social Media and Entertainment

Social media has become the most effective tool for entertainment and news channels, for broader viewership across the borders. Most Pakistani channels are using YouTube as their primary social media tool. Table 8.2-1 below shows the five most popular channels used in the country, according to Social Bakers.

S. No.	Channel	Subscribers	Total uploaded video views (As on 15-12-2019)
1.	ARY Digital	10,600,000	5,903,132,614
2.	Hum TV	6,790,000	2,527,609,162
3.	Coke Studio	8,420,000	1,894,832,870
4.	Geo News	5,380,000	1,328,269,896
5.	Samaa TV	4,370,000	1,158,204,301

Table 1 The five most popular channels

In addition to the channels above, PTV Sports is the most popular on Facebook, and Express News has most followers on Twitter [Herald 2019].

(8) The Role of Regulator

The Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA), the telecom regulator of the country, is promoting Internet and mobile broadband in the country. PTA believes in openness on the Internet, but there are some exceptions that cannot be permitted, such as blasphemous content, threats to national security, and pornographic content. PTA has taken several steps to ensure openness on the Internet and arranges several events on the usage of social media. PTA also issued the Best App Award to encourage app developers and entrepreneurship in the country.

(9) Social Media Awareness and Security

It is very important to create awareness of social media crimes in the country; therefore, the Pakistan Telecom Authority has taken a variety of steps to create awareness amongst the masses to avoid any type of identity theft and crime. Most social media users are not aware of the threats related to social media; therefore, they share too much information that can be misused. Therefore, government agencies have been issuing infographics in English and Urdu languages in order to raise the awareness of general public to avoid any difficult situation.

(10) The Future of Social Media in Pakistan

The internet and social media have become essential parts of the life of the general public in Pakistan. It is expected that social media will continue to grow in the country.

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8.3 Social Media in South Korea

Hyunjoo Chung and Sunyoung Yang

1. Introduction

South Korea has set records related to Internet technologies for several decades since it established the domestic Internet in May 1982 [Chon 2013]. Thanks to the rapid development of the Internet infrastructure, South Korean online user communities and cultures have also been flourishing. Online chatting programs, community spaces via Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs), and online avatars brought about advanced social networking services (SNSs). Likewise, online games such as StarCraft became popular nationwide creating the phenomenon of "e-sports" [Jin 2010]. The impact of information and communication technologies on the real world (hereafter, offline world following the common usage of the English term "offline" in South Korea) in politics is extensive as evidenced by street demonstrations, national elections, the recent presidential impeachment of Park Geun-hye (2013–2017) from 2016 to 2017, and ongoing feminist activism.

This paper will examine social media in South Korea by delineating the trajectory of important platforms and services. We define social media from broader perspectives following scholars who define social media based on the notion of "sociality", which examines the ways in which people are associated with others [Fuchs 2014; Miller 2016]. Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web, did not support the hype of Web 2.0 because the attributes of Internet technology have always been user centered in his eyes [Lawson 2005]. We share a similar perspective toward social media. Hasn't the Internet including its precursors such as domestic networking services, also known as PC communication (*pisi tongsin*) in South Korea, always been social media? We think any platforms that enhance human relationships and networks can be labelled as social media in a broader sense. We intend to delineate the formations of different platforms, services, and types of online communities in South Korea so that we can understand social media in its fullness while delving deeper into platforms and services that have been considered social media in a more specific sense such as directly connecting their users through personal connections embedded in given platforms and services. Miller, et al. avoid a historical approach to examine discontinuities between the prior uses of the Internet and those with today's social media [Miller 2016]. This route can be a useful strategy, but we decided to take a historical approach in this paper since we think examining history can be more beneficial to understand the development of social media and new sociality in South Korea. Our broad definition of social media will help us to situate social media within broader

historical contexts, which will also aid in understanding the formation of social media and its implications in more depth.

In the following, we will discuss social media services in South Korea from the domestically developed ones to ones from abroad. This comparative approach will elaborate the particularities of South Korea, which has been capable of developing its own platforms and services as well as competing with foreign platforms and services such as Facebook and Google. We will discuss the implications of social media on South Korean society and wrap up our discussions by asking the question, "What's next?"

2. Social Media Services in South Korea

2.1 Services Developed in South Korea

Social media based on computers and networks started in South Korea in the 1980s in two representative ways. One based on computer networks with Usenet news became available in 1983. This type of social media was not popular since it was available only in English without Korean language support. The other type of social media based on personal computers with dial-up modems started with the early version of Chollian in 1984 and the Korea Economic Prestel in 1986, which became KETEL in 1989 and HiTEL in 1991 [Jeong 2021]. These social media platforms were called PC communication in South Korea and offered services such as a bulletin board system (BBS) and news as well as electronic mail in Korean. The online communities and cultures created by the PC communication were succeeded by web-based services in the 1990s.

Daum Cafe

Daum Cafe is the second user-oriented service launched by Daum Communication in 1999 after their first, successful, free email service, Hanmail, established in 1997. Jaewoong Lee, the founder of Daum explained that he conceived the idea of Daum Cafe when he saw people sitting and talking at a cafe while he was studying in France [Han and Song 2013]. Daum Cafe is an online community service for various interest groups based on BBSs. Starting out with acquaintances such as alumni gatherings, Daum Cafe has grown based on individual users' political and social preferences such as feminism, support or opposition for politicians, fan groups, and street demonstrations. The early users of Daum Cafe created virtual relationships while constructing their virtual selves in their country where the offline world has tightly regulated its people based on region of origin, academic backgrounds, nepotism, and patriarchal bonds.

Daum Cafe users usually do not have any previous relationships with each other in the offline world but voluntarily gather since they share common interests, in other words, themes or interests of cafes they subscribe to. Rules for these unrelated individuals are first made by the creators/administrators of given cafes and later run by core members participating in the administrative committees. Members of given cafes are willing to fulfill the requirements to gain access to information allowed only to the cafe members. However, the role of making rules sometimes becomes the power to dominate the given cafe, causing disputes and, in extreme cases, protests or litigation between administrators and cafe users [Hong 2007].

The new form of online community that Daum Cafe created contributed to inducing users to revisit and increase the time spent on Daum as an Internet portal. Its success prompted other companies such as Naver.com to introduce similar services offering community spaces. The largest cafes are "Second-hand Country" (Joonggo nara, https://cafe.naver.com/joonggonara), in which users sell used goods with 18 million subscribed members, "Diesel Mania" (http://cafe.naver.com/dieselmania), a fashion community with 10 million subscribed members, "Mom's Holic" (http://cafe.naver.com/mamsholic), a cafe for mothers with 2.9 million subscribed members, and two women-only cafes, "Jjukbbang" (http://cafe.daum.net/ok1221) with 1.6 million members and "Women's Era" (Yeoseong sidae, http://cafe.daum.net/subdued20club) with 800,000 members. Since its launch, Daum and Naver Cafes have secured many users without major changes in its services. The largest cafes of these companies have influenced South Korean society in terms of new businesses, cultures, and politics. The cafe service offering online community space played an important role in shaping the Internet into social media in South Korea in its early days of popularization.

Sayclub

Sayclub, serviced by Neowiz since 1999, started by providing web-based clubs and chat rooms that people used to enjoy in PC communication environments. Neowiz developers created the Sayclub service to make it easy for anyone to use a web-based chat without downloading chatting applications to their PCs. The Sayclub service showed a list of users who were currently connected to the site so that its users could easily participate in one-on-one or group chat rooms. The Sayclub service offered South Korean Internet users new experiences of forging relationships beyond offline acquaintances through spontaneous chatting. In addition, users could enjoy Sayclub chatting while creating various content such as music broadcasts, quizzes, photo sharing, and role-playing games since Sayclub allowed users to enter tags directly into its chat rooms. In this sense, Sayclub chatting was a platform enabling user-created content (UCC) also known as user-generated content (UGC) [Park 2016].

In such a virtual space, people wanted to create their virtual selves and to express themselves as avatars. Neowiz created a new service offering its users online avatars to purchase in 2000, 16 months after it started the Sayclub service, marking the world's first paid digital item service that also became the very first revenue model of the "freemium" service for online platforms and gaming companies. Neowiz's paid digital item service used by five million customers offered a "character shopping mall" where users could decorate their avatar

characters, a “display board advertisement” where users could display personal advertisements, and “binoculars” through which users could look for people. Their freemium pay services ranged from 10 Korean won (approximately USD $0.01) to 5,000 won (approximately USD $4.60). Sales exceeded 300 million won (approximately USD $272,000) in one month after starting the service [Song 2000], and the accumulated sales exceeded 10 billion won (approximately USD $9 million) over the first year [Hong 2001]. Neowiz found that there were not any available ways for underaged youths, a large portion of their users, to pay for their services. Neowiz introduced a new mobile payment method using a verification code, which resulted in sales doubling [Park 2016].

SayClub implemented strategies to expand its paid avatar service for chatting to other services such as email, homepages, and online games, but these attempts were not as successful since another service called Cyworld was growing rapidly. Sayclub currently has 70,000 monthly users remaining. Despite its fast growth and fall, Sayclub contributed to the global online service community by inventing the freemium model [Chon 2013].

Cyworld

Cyworld, South Korea’s first SNS company, was co-founded in 1999 by six people who were attending graduate school and in the same startup club at the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) in 1998 [Lee Y. 2016]. In the following year, Cyworld began its service with the introduction of the Il-chon (first degree connections) and Yi-chon (second degree connections) system on peoplesquare.com. Yong-joon Hyoung, one of the co-founders said that while serving in the military, he came up with the idea of a website for setting up blind dates based on subscribed members’ social networks. Hyoung delved deep into the issue of trust with the insight that blind dates are based on one’s trust in acquaintances who set them up on dates. Hyoung benchmarked sixdegrees.com launched in 1997 and match.com in 1995, both in the U.S. and combined a new function named “Personal Resource Planning” (PRP), which was inspired by “Enterprise Resource Planning” (EPR) [Min 2013]. Cyworld’s emphasis on trust was reflected in the use of individuals’ real names in their service, which also coincided with the plan to provide a space that could show the personalities of individual members through menus such as “Mini-home-pi” (mini homepage) and “Mini-me” (virtual self or avatar).

With the spread of digital cameras, people uploaded their daily photos to their Cyworld mini home-pi. A new phenomenon “sel-ka” (self-camera, which is equivalent to “selfie” in English) became popular with the growing popularity of SNS, especially Cyworld. Cyworld users enjoyed sharing their everyday lives with their acquaintances as if they were able to read their friends’ diaries or see their daily activities. “Pado tagi” lit. meaning surfing became another popular Cyworld phenomenon in which its users stayed up all night and visited their connected acquaintances’ mini-home-pi one by one as if they were surfing. Altogether, the popularity of Cyworld brought about a new nationwide practice called “Cy-jil” lit. meaning “doing Cyworld.”

Cyworld contributed to the growth of the newly emerging freemium model of paid digital items, which Sayclub started in 2000, by combining digital items with its SNS environment.

People were willing to pay a couple of thousand won (approximately USD $0.05 - $1.47) to decorate their mini-home-pi, “mini- room”, the main room of their mini-home-pi, and mini-me. Digitized background music and games that visitors could enjoy on one’s mini-home-pi were also popular items to purchase [Son 2004]. All these digital items were available for Cyworld users to buy for their connected acquaintances or Il-chon. Cyworld currency called “Dotori” meaning acorn in English was also available as a digital item, which made it easier for Cyworld users to buy items on Cyworld with less frequent online payments.

SK Communications, the provider of Nate On, a representative messenger service along with MSN messenger at that time, took over Cyworld in 2003. This M&A generated rapid synergy by incorporating messenger users and notification functions on Cyworld. After Cyworld was integrated into the Nate.com domain in 2009, the total number of users of this domain increased to 32 million [Jeong J. 2010]. By the mid-2000s, Nate.com’s services grew significantly to the point that approximately 80% of the South Korean Internet population used it [KoreanClick 2009]. Given that Friendster and Myspace, the first generation of successful SNS in the U.S. started service in 2003 and Facebook in 2004, the development of SNS in South Korea that began with Cyworld was considerably ahead of time with Myspace and Facebook openly benchmarking the success of Cyworld.

The success of Cyworld started waning with the beginning of the mobile era. Moreover, the leaking of the private information of 35 million subscribed users of Nate.com in 2011 furthered its decline. Cyworld, which suffered from management difficulties due to the loss of users, tried to recover by receiving an investment of 5 billion won (approximately USD $4.6 million) from Samsung Venture Investment in 2017, but its attempt was not successful [Yun 2019]. There were occasions where Cyworld was not accessible in 2019 and 2020, which riled Cyworld users who did not want to lose their archived data such as photos and posts/comments on Cyworld. In July 2020, a member of the National Assembly proposed the “Cyworld Data Protection Act”, which allows individual users to request the transmission of their personal information at any time [Heo 2020].

Naver Jishik-iN and Blog

The Jishik-iN service, lit. meaning “intellectuals” in English was launched by Naver in October 2002 as a service to ask for and provide information created and circulated by Naver users themselves. Jishik-iN has been widely used. While Naver started as an in-house venture of Samsung SDS in 1997 and became an independent corporation in 1999 [Lee 1999], with the help of Jishik-iN, Naver quickly became the most popular Internet portal in South Korea exceeding Daum in 2004. Since then, Naver has continued to create information in Korean through various methods. For example, Naver asked experts to create content in various fields such as music, fine art, film, and IT and digitized dictionaries on various topics as well as old newspapers in bulk.

Also, Naver has improved the credibility and quality of information provided in Jishik-iN by increasing the expertise of users who respond to questions. Beginning with the responses of doctors and government administrators in 2009, the company has expanded its scope to

traditional medicine doctors, accountants, and judicial officers. Since 2019, through a new service called “Expert”, not only professional license holders but also everyday experts in different areas such as cooking, fashion, beauty, education, or design, have offered paid counseling services.

Naver has also encouraged its users to create other types of user-created content (UCC) such as the Naver Blog. While the cafe service offers community spaces in which subscribed members create and share content/information under the given cafes’ themes, the blog service offers personal media in which individual users continue to post on their topics of interest including dining-in, traveling, cooking, child rearing, or pets. The Naver Blog service has offered SNS in the name of “Neighbor”, which is similar to “friend” and “follower” in other SNS. The Naver search engine has shown its blog posts as one category of its search results, which enhanced the growth of its blog service even more. The user-created content from Jishik-iN questions/answers to blog posts combined with SNS and search engines enables one’s everyday life to become useful information for others.

KakaoTalk

KakaoTalk is the first South Korean mobile messenger launched in 2010. KakaoTalk has grown explosively and has been the dominant messenger used by over 97% of South Korean smartphone users [KoreanClick 2020a], creating a new phenomenon “Are you doing Katalk?” similar to the previously mentioned Cy-jil, or doing Cyworld. KakaoTalk has been fully based on mobile phone numbers, which enabled this new service to become the most popular platform for the mobile era.

In addition to text, voice, and video messaging, KakaoTalk offers free and paid emoticons, which are not typographic approximations but illustrations and animations used to express moods and emotions. KakaoTalk started its emoticon service in 2011 and has sold a total of 7,500 types of products; an average of 29 million monthly users use these emoticons [Kim 2019], which is equivalent to 65% of all KakaoTalk users.

KakaoTalk has secured a large proportion of the South Korean population and become the most popular social media platform nationwide. KakaoTalk has combined new businesses based on social graphs since 2010. For example, Kakao Gifts, which allows users to send their friends gift coupons, and Kakao Game, which allows users to play games by inviting friends, have been popular. Kakao Pay launched in 2014 allows users to transfer money and make payments. Kakao Taxi launched in 2015 connects taxis with users similar to how Uber connects users to available taxis.

The company also merged the nation’s leading portal service Daum to combine news and other content services in 2014 and music service Melon in 2016. KakaoM, a drama entertainment production company was launched to provide video content in 2018. As such, KakaoTalk, which started as a mobile messenger in 2010, has grown into a successful platform based on the number of subscribed users and its social graphs.

Naver Band

While the social media service with the largest number of users in South Korea is KakaoTalk messenger, the second largest is Naver Band, a service specialized in group communications for school groups, regional groups, and special interest groups. The Band service was launched in August 2012 by Camp Mobile, which Naver spun off to create services free from existing PC-based services for the mobile era. Naver Band recorded 10 million downloads by May 2013 [Jeon 2013] with the marketing catch phrase "Use Band when you create meetings with family, friends, and clubs" while emphasizing private circles "within us" different from the open networks of Facebook or Twitter. Naver Band added a new menu called "alumni search" in August 2013, which became a turning point for further growth while being called the second "I-love-school", which was a popular SNS in the early 2000s [Bae 2013].

Since 2014, Naver Band has implemented market-proven revenue models such as a game center, paid emoticons, and advertisements based on its social graph. Naver Band changed its service direction by adding "open community" features such as groups based on certain topics and interests in 2015 to overcome the limitations of a closed community based on private circles. Although Naver Band has grown steadily as a group communication service, its profitability compared to the size of the service has deteriorated, which resulted in merging with Naver, its parent company in 2017. Since then, Naver Band has made more investments in developing overseas markets. Naver Band has attracted attention as a remote communication tool in the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic and currently has 2.5 million monthly users [Baek 2020].

2.2 Services from Abroad

Facebook

Facebook started its service in Korean in July 2008 and experienced rapid growth with a 15% monthly growth rate since the iPhone was released by KT in South Korea in November 2009 [No 2019]. While domestic SNS were not successful in adapting to the new mobile era, Facebook, which had already serviced mobile applications, spread quickly in South Korea. Facebook opened their South Korean office with two employees when the number of Facebook users in South Korea exceeded 150,000 in 2010. The number of Facebook users increased to 10 million in 2012 [Kim 2013].

How could Facebook increase the number of subscribed users in South Korea so quickly? To answer this question, we need to start with Facebook's release of the Facebook Platform based on the social graph in 2007. The term "social graph" means the "network of connections and relationships between people on the service" and became popular at the Facebook F8 conference on May 24, 2007 when the new Facebook Platform was introduced. [Farber 2007]. Other entities from individual users to small and large companies can benefit from Facebook's social graph, the largest social network dataset using the Facebook Platform. Facebook

demonstrated the power of its social graph through the rapid growth of its platform while beating its competitors including Google's Social Graph API launched in 2008 and discontinued in 2012. Releasing its platform and social graph became a turning point for Facebook to transform from a SNS to a platform business. The vision of Facebook Platform has been much more than just a business model from its inception since its goal was to rewrite the entire online universe within the closed wall of Facebook [NIPA 2011].

Facebook, a comparatively late arrival as a SNS in South Korea used a very effective strategy to increase the number of subscribed users: using contacts in subscribed users' email accounts, which were third-party data. Facebook recommended people with whom their newly subscribed users had exchanged emails as friends when those users offered IDs and passwords of their email accounts. Then, Facebook expanded its friend recommendation into given users' friends' friends. Although there was some media coverage on Facebook's unauthorized use of third-party data, it did not become a significant issue since Facebook explicated their use of third-party data in their Terms and Conditions [Jeong 2010].

Once the number of users reached 10 million in 2012, popular Facebook pages came to wield more influence in South Korean society. For instance, Pikicast (https://www.facebook.com/allnewpiki/), which publishes fun content, released its own app and secured 6.5 million subscribers, and The World Funniest Videos (https://www.facebook.com/funfunmv/), which offered funny videos and has 1 million subscribers, are examples of successful content providers on Facebook. These popular Facebook pages lead a new trend of "snack culture" to indicate the consumption of content conveniently and quickly such as during a commute or lunch break [Kim et al. 2017]. Ninety percent of South Korean Facebook users watch such videos on Facebook [Lee 2016], and Facebook ranked second in the video advertising market slightly below YouTube, which ranked first [Jin 2017a].

YouTube

YouTube started its service in South Korea in 2008 along with Facebook, Myspace, and Second Life. YouTube focused on offering localized content through strategic alliances with more than 60 South Korean partner companies such as Mgoon Entertainment, SM Online, JYP Entertainment, JoongAng M&B, and NCSoft, which enabled YouTube to rank first in terms of page views in 2009 [Park 2010]. Moreover, YouTube opened a new channel called "My YouTube" to help Asian singers and fans to communicate with each other better. My YouTube invited 2PM, Big Bang, 2NE1, and BoA to upload videos from their everyday life. It also paid copyright fees to the Korea Music Copyright Association so that fans could consume songs and create derivative work freely [Gu 2010]. Another factor that spurred the rapid growth of YouTube in South Korea was the Real Name Policy implemented by the South Korean government in 2009, which required logging in with one's real identification to post on websites with more than 100,000 daily visitors. YouTube refused to cooperate with this policy but blocked posting itself when given users' origin countries were marked as South Korea. South Korean Internet users who were against the Real Name Policy moved to YouTube, which they could still use by changing their country from South Korea to something else [Song 2014].

Along with the growth of YouTube in South Korea, content created by South Korean users came to be watched worldwide. A well-known guitar prodigy, Sungha Jung's video of playing guitar had 100 million views in 2010. A newly released song "Nothing' on you" by Jay Park, a former member of 2PM had 1 million daily views in 2011 while Big Bang's song "Tonight" ranked seventh on the Heatseekers Albums and ranked third on the World Albums of Billboard chart without any promotion in 2011 [Lee 2011] and SM Town's World Tour in Paris in June 2011 also became popular through YouTube. The close relationship between K-pop and YouTube prompted Google CEO Eric Schmidt, who was visiting South Korea in 2011, to help globalize K-pop, which resulted in a new music category "K-pop Genre" being added to YouTube [Google 2011]. These efforts culminated in the worldwide popularity of Psy's "Gangnam Style" in 2012 and continues to fuel the popularity of K-pop artists, especially BTS.

While YouTube was gaining traction, MNcast, the second largest South Korean video-streaming platform closed in 2009, and Naver discontinued its UCC video service in 2010. The platform afreecaTV launched in 2006 enabled individual users to engage in live broadcasting and maintained a successful service in South Korea. afreecaTV maintained its service much better than other video streaming platforms until YouTube expanded its revenue-sharing program to individual users in 2012. afreecaTV meaning "all free casting" enabled individual broadcasting jockeys (BJs) to broadcast while communicating with their audiences. The revenue model of afreecaTV has been based on "star balloons" (*byeol pungseon*), a paid digital item that audiences can send to BJs. Popular BJs on afreecaTV edited and uploaded their live broadcasts on afreecaTV to YouTube to diversify their income streams. afreecaTV suspended several top BJs' broadcasts for the reason that those BJs did business activities without afreecaTV's approval, which upset BJs who later moved exclusively to YouTube in 2016. Since then, afreecaTV has experienced a decline since the revenue sharing model of YouTube was more beneficial and convenient for BJs than that of afreecaTV [Gwon 2015].

Being a YouTuber can be lucrative. Management companies for YouTube stars called multi-channel networks (MCN) such as CJ E&M, DIA TV, Treasure Hunter, and Sandbox emerged in 2015. The average monthly income of MCN creators is 5.4 million won (approximately USD $5000) with a variety of content such as lifestyle and travel (37%), reviews and reactions on movie and music (25%), food shows called "mukbang" (26.9%), beauty and fashion (22%), and entertainment (18.5%) [Lee et al. 2018]. YouTube continued to develop its services, for example, opening Community Tab and Premium, a paid channel subscription in 2016, Super Chatting sponsoring individual broadcasters in 2017, and YouTube Music in 2020. The popularity of YouTube contributed to South Korean elementary school children citing one of the three most favored future careers was to become a creator such as a YouTuber [KRIVET 2019].

Domestic broadcasting and communications companies have established joint companies to compete with foreign companies as the influence of YouTube and Netflix have rapidly grown in South Korea, but their efforts have not produced meaningful results yet. Rather, YouTube Music launched in 2020 and Spotify, which launched in 2021, have brought about concerns whether the South Korean digital music industry would also be dominated by foreign platforms. The success of YouTube poses a threat for South Korean Internet platforms such as Naver and

Kakao/Daum. The total hours of monthly usage on the YouTube app on Android (25.3 billion minutes) started exceeding KakaoTalk by 4% in January 2018 and widened to 52% with 40.2 billion minutes of monthly usage in January 2020 [KoreanClick 2018; KoreanClick 2020b]. The number of YouTube users is also catching up with that of KakaoTalk, which has the largest number of subscribed users among South Korean online platforms by 90% with 35 million monthly users [KoreanClick 2020c]. A report by Korea Press Foundation shows that youths aged 10 to 18 use video platforms (37.3%) more than Internet portals (33.6%) as search engines [Korea Press Foundation 2019]. This report indicates the changing preferences of Internet users from Internet portals to video platforms.

Twitter

Twitter was introduced to South Korean Internet users through celebrities such as Yuna Kim, Hyori Lee, Wonder Girls, and TVXQ before Twitter started its service in Korean. Beginning with around 6,000 users in January 2009, Twitter users in South Korea increased to 760,000 in December 2009 with the joining of celebrities [Baek 2010]. Twitter started its service in Korean as well as a business collaboration with Daum, which showed the real-time search results of Twitter posts on Daum's main page in January 2011. Naver has also shown the real-time search results of SNS including Twitter since 2010. Naver and Daum, the two largest South Korean Internet portal services, provided Twitter better leverage to appeal to South Korean Internet users.

The structure of Twitter allows users to expand their Twitter networks easily through the "follow" function. Also, a tweet's length limit of 140 characters, which later increased to 280 characters, was particularly effective to deliver breaking news. For example, people tweeted real-time traffic information during the typhoon season in 2010 to help other drivers. The fast spread of Twitter posts has also worked well for political actions such as encouraging others to vote or posting photos verifying that one had voted [Lee Y.J. 2016]. The National Election Commission allowed election campaigns via SNS in 2012, which fostered the growth of Twitter as well. The #metoo and #withyou hashtag movement including #schoolmetoo, which disclosed teachers' sexual harassment of middle and high school students, has also been popular on Twitter, which brought about offline actions such as school and street demonstrations [Gu 2019].

However, the open and simple structure of Twitter, which allows users to create accounts only with email identification, have also been used for negative purposes, such as circulating pornography conveniently while giving Twitter the nickname "Red Twitter" meaning pornographic Twitter. The Nth Room incident, which created and circulated sex slavery videos used Twitter as a meeting place before opening a closed group chatting room. The South Korean government enacted the Nth Room special law that requires service providers such as Twitter to delete illegal posts in 2020 [Kim 2020].

The open structure of Twitter has also been conducive for fandoms. The #thankyouyuna hashtag for Yuna Kim who retired at the Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014 recorded 63,000 posts and BTS's Twitter account has been the most retweeted one since 2017. Twitter CEO Jack

Dorsey visited South Korea in March 2019 and thanked K-pop stars and fans for their contribution to Twitter. Twitter's sales of the fourth quarter of 2018 increased by USD $909 million, 24% more from the same period of the previous year with 5.3 billion tweets related to K-pop [Choi 2019].

Instagram

Instagram started its service in Korean in December 2012. At the beginning, Instagram was an app people used when they wanted to upload high-quality photos to their Facebook accounts. The number of Instagram users passed 300 million worldwide exceeding the number of Twitter users in 2014 [Gu 2014]. It was about the same time when the number of Instagram users using Android, 3.2 million users, exceeded that of Twitter users, 3.19 million in South Korea as well [KoreanClick 2014]. Instagram has continued to grow to 10 million monthly users in July 2017 [Jin 2017b] and 17 million monthly users in November 2020 while Facebook has 13 million monthly users and Kakao Story has 9.47 million monthly users [KoreanClick 2020d]. While the number of SNS users started decreasing for the first time in 2019, from 48.2% in 2018 to 47.7% in 2019, Instagram was the only SNS that continued to grow from 10.8% to 19.3% while others such as Facebook and Kakao Story experienced a decrease [KISDI 2020]. The main segment of the population that has led the growth of Instagram in South Korea are females in their teens and twenties. In a recent survey, Instagram ranked as the top SNS platform for online shopping with 35.9% while 24.4% used cafes and blogs and 16.3% of people used Kakao Story [Go 2019]. As of November 2020, the number of monthly users for Instagram, Facebook, and Facebook Messenger are 17 million, 13 million, and 5.7 million, respectively, resulting in 35.7 million users of social media owned by Facebook, Inc. [KoreanClick 2020e].

TikTok

TikTok started its service in Korean in November 2017, a month before its monthly users exceeded 100 million worldwide. Similar to other countries, the main users of TikTok are youths, especially elementary school children. Specifically, 63% of female Internet users (620,000 people) and 22% of male users (230,000 people) in the age group of 7-12 and 26% of female Internet users (340,000 people) and 23% of male users (310,000 people) in the age group of 13-18 use TikTok [KoreanClick 2020f]. For all age groups, TikTok users on Android spend the longest amount of time with an average of 8.7 minutes when they open the app compared to 3.8 minutes for Facebook users and even less for Facebook Messenger, Instagram, and Twitter [KoreanClick 2020g]. For the average monthly usage, Twitter ranked first with 625 minutes, TikTok ranked second with 586 minutes, and Facebook ranked third with 446 minutes. The number of monthly users for TikTok was 3.1 million as of October 2020, 41% more than the previous year [KoreanClick 2020h]. As their viral marketing strategy, TikTok uses "challenges." Challenges are usually made by advertisers with specific requests of making videos with certain stickers, music, and filters. Users create the content fulfilling those requirements and share with hashtag. The most successful challenges in South Korea were the promotion event of singer

Zico's new song with 800 million views within a month [Jung 2020] and BTS' promotion of Hyundai's global hydrogen campaign "Because of You" with 100 million views in 27 days [Song 2020]. While Donald Trump banned TikTok to protect national security in 2020, TikTok violated the Personal Information Protection Act in South Korea by not checking the age requirement of 14 years old or older as well as moving personal information abroad. TikTok shows changing trends in the video streaming industry. Depending on how new services such as TikTok, Spotlight by Snapchat, and Shorts by YouTube appeal to users, further changes in social media would be inevitable.

3. Implications of Social Media in South Korea

3.1 Political Aspects

The historical particularities that enabled the rapid development of the Internet and social media in South Korea did not come out of the thin air. South Korean modernity and nation-building since the Korean War have been firmly grounded in the value of modern science and technologies. Democratization in 1987 after a thirty-year military dictatorship raised people's expectation of freedom. Through the late 1980s and into the mid-1990s, South Koreans were free to appreciate diverse forms of culture and participate in social movements, resulting in an environment demanding even more individual freedom. Around this time, social media based on PC communication appeared. This early social media spread quickly among youths, the highly educated, and social activists in the years immediately following democratization in 1987. This social atmosphere full of hope and expectation quickly came to a close in 1997 when the Asian financial crisis hit South Korea. Social and economic reconstruction became vital in the country after the Asian financial crisis in 1997.

South Korea's offline world had long been a space of surveillance based on the anti-communism movement of the Cold War period under authoritarian regimes. Online spaces have offered South Koreans political agoras in which people can express and share their political opinions freely. Political agoras and their influences did not just stay online but started organizing the politics in the offline world since the online and offline worlds are interwoven with each other. While online agoras used to be dominated by left-leaning democratic groups at its inception, conservative groups have risen as well in online spaces as the number of Internet users in older generations has increased especially with the use of smartphones. More importantly, South Koreans have witnessed the emergence of far right-wing groups not only in older generations but also among youths online. This phenomenon is not just limited to South Korea but also elsewhere in the world as Brexit and Trumpism show in relation to the rise of populist politics. Simultaneously, counter-movements such as feminist politics and environment activism have also thrived in online spaces. The Internet and social media have played key roles in these new political trends.

3.2 Economic Aspects

With the Asian financial crisis in 1997, South Korea was required to go through significant economic reconstruction to compensate for its IMF bailout. The IT industry played an important role in the process of economic reconstruction as a new imaginary of the knowledge economy of developed countries that South Korea was supposed to move onto. While financial mergers and corporate restructuring were under way, the boom of small start-ups and venture capital appeared in the aftermath of the crisis. The Kim Dae-jung government from 1998 to 2003 promoted and supported small start-ups, especially those based on new ICTs to transition the South Korean economy towards a knowledge-based economic structure considered more advanced than the heavy industries monopolized by large conglomerates.

Despite the government investments and nationwide infrastructure, the path of the development of the Internet and social media in South Korea would have been very different without engineers and entrepreneurs who have developed the Internet as well as online platforms and services ahead of other regions. Research labs and start-up clubs at universities played an important role in creating capable manpower. For example, the Software Architecture Laboratory (SALab) at KAIST led by Kilnam Chon who initiated the South Korean Internet project in 1981. People from SALab have led the Internet development in 1980s. As discussed above, Cyworld was founded by people who attended the KAIST and its start-up clubs. Hae Jin Lee, the founder of Naver and NHN Corp. graduated from KAIST. Jung-ju Kim, CEO of NXC and Jake Song, CEO of XL Games who were members of SALab among others, have led the online gaming industry. Lee attended the graduate program at KAIST while living in a dormitory with Jung-ju Kim as a roommate. After finishing his master's degree at KAIST, Lee joined Samsung SDS where he met Beom-soo Kim who became the co-CEO of NHN and later founded KakaoTalk [Kim 2017].

Internet portals such as Daum and Naver became major companies in South Korea. Online game companies also lead very successful businesses in the new digital economy. Virtual avatars or items showed the possibilities of new sources of revenue created by the digital economy. Individual users have created new professions such as power bloggers, YouTubers, or influencers. In the meantime, reorganizing the existing offline economy through the online infrastructure or human networks, "online to offline" (O2O) service, has created new opportunities. For example, Kakao Taxi launched in May 2015 had 70% of all registered taxis in South Korea as subscribed users by December 2015 with 600,000 daily calls. In addition to Kakao Taxi, Kakao launched a start-up, "Cleaning Lab" connecting house cleaning companies with customers and Kakao Bank, which does not have branches in the offline world, in 2017. Kakao Bank has 13 million subscribed users and 10 million monthly users.

3.3 Socio-Cultural Aspects

If the rosy picture of the knowledge economy of information society was 100% true, our world would have been even more prosperous and equal with the emergence of the digital economy. However, this new economy has been accompanied by a more flexible labor regime as well as jobless growth. South Koreans have witnessed the disappearance of lifetime employment and underemployment of highly educated people combined with the persistence of rigid gender divisions of labor and lack of social safety nets. Individuals are solely responsible for their own well-being. Youths in their twenties and thirties increasingly tend to give up high-cost milestones because youths entering the job market under a flexible labor regime cannot afford such expenses unless they are supported by financially stable families. The label "Generation Giving-Up N Things" (N-po-sedae) has emerged and changed as the number of sacrifices has increased including dating, getting married, having children, getting a job, and becoming a homeowner [Yu and Park 2011]. One of the most preferred professions in South Korea among young adults in their twenties has been civil service for many years since this field still offers job security despite the nationwide promotion of entrepreneurship [Shin 2018]. This reality asks us to rethink the impact of the digital economy on ordinary people's lives.

These people are users of ICTs and digital technologies who have produced user created content (UCC) in the so-called Web 2.0 and social media and whose private data have been lucrative sources for platform companies. While the offline world of South Korea is highly competitive with social pressures from family, school, and work, its online spaces still offer more flexibility and possibilities for individuals to become who they want to be. For example, someone that feels incapable in the offline world because she has not excelled academically or has been unsuccessful in the job market could be a well-known popular figure in a Daum Cafe or on Instagram with many followers while having several "bu-cae", alternate character or multi-persona in English, for other communities such as Twitter for the radical feminism movement and Facebook for offline relationships at school. Social media indeed becomes the medium through which we build and maintain our sociality as well as who we are.

3.4 Global-Local Aspects

South Korean tech companies have developed several key online platforms and services ahead of other companies worldwide. To reiterate, Daum Communications started its free email service, Hanmail in 1997 and Daum Cafe, its first successful social media service in 1999 while establishing itself into the largest Internet portal in South Korea beating foreign services such as Yahoo. Cyworld was one of the successful SNS in the inception of the SNS era. Although Cyworld benchmarked sixdegree.com and Match.com, it developed and popularized successful services much earlier than Myspace or Facebook. In terms of video streaming platforms, YouTube was co-founded in February 2005 and then developed its platform afterwards. At about the same time in South Korea, afreecaTV was already developed and started its closed beta

service in May 2005. There was also Pandora TV in South Korea founded in 1999 and launched in 2004, preceding YouTube.

Another domestic breakthrough was KakaoTalk, a mobile messaging platform. It started its service in March 2010 soon after WhatsApp was released in May 2009. Similarly, Naver, the largest Internet portal in South Korea since 2004 released its mobile messaging service, Line in June 2011 after KakaoTalk and WeChat, a Chinese mobile messaging service released in January 2011. According to Sang-hyeok Lee, CTO of KakaoTalk in 2010, there were already WhatsApp and MN Talk when they were developing KakaoTalk. While WhatsApp had more users but was a paid app, MN Talk was free but technically not stable. His team was confident that they could service the most stable mobile messenger even though it was not the first service. To make their service more advanced than WhatsApp, Lee's team added the "group chat" function which KakaoTalk serviced first among many mobile messaging platforms [Kakao Editor 2020]. After KakaoTalk was launched, many South Korean companies from Daum to Naver, SK, LG, and KT developed and launched their mobile messenger services, but these services were not successful since their UI/UX were too complicated. The biggest competitor for KakaoTalk was Tic Toc, a mobile messenger developed by another start-up, Madsmart which was bought out by SK Planet in April 2012 and discontinued in 2016 [Kim 2016].

South Korean companies such as Daum, Naver, and KakaoTalk have been more competitive than foreign platforms at least in the domestic market, but this tendency has changed since US-based platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram began their services in Korean in earnest. It is questionable why South Korean platforms are losing their market shares in South Korea even though they preceded other competitors with much success. Miller et al. [2016] see a specific cultural alignment such as the Il-chon system between the particular society and the particular platform as a possible reason why Cyworld was not successful outside South Korea. However, they also contend that a desire to follow global dominance could be possible. There are other possible reasons to explain why South Korean platforms have been successful mainly in the domestic market and have been recently losing their lead to foreign platforms. First of all, the differences in financial strength. The financial resources of Facebook and Google are not an issue just for non-US based companies but also their competitors in the US market. Large firms became tech giants by eliminating possible competition through buying out new start-ups or investing in the same areas with much more capital [Foroohar 2019]. Moreover, it is necessary to point out the differences in symbolic and cultural capital. US-based tech firms are privileged with English as a hegemonic global language as well as the global dominance of American culture. The limit of Cyworld could be attributed to the lack of this capital rather than its specific cultural particularities. Lastly, the differences in manpower from engineers to CEOs, who can develop a long-term vision such as transforming its business from an SNS to an open platform based on the social graph, and investors who understand such visions. This last aspect heavily relies on the other two factors. South Korean cases can shed light on the US dominance in digital society in relation to the roles of other regions, diversity, and digital divide.

4. Conclusion: What's Next?

This paper examined the trajectory of social media in South Korea over the last thirty years. We will wrap up this paper by asking the questions, "What's next? What are the most pressing questions we need to ask ourselves at this moment about social media?" We see as the most serious issue the domination of big tech companies and marketization of online spaces, which the Internet opened up as the commons for dreaming of a new frontier based on more freedom and equity. The ambitious vision of these tech giants to enclose online spaces within their platforms is based on the fundamental principles of a capitalist market: eliminating the competition and maximizing profits. Their visions are not for their users or stakeholders but advertisers and shareholders, which is why decisions have been made to make their platforms and services more addictive, to violate the privacy of individual users to collect more data, and to manipulate the perception of their users [Orlowski 2020].

The power of big tech companies seems invincible. Is there anything individual users could do? Even tech start-ups with smart, savvy employees find it very hard to make changes to the existing domination and compete with the behemoths. New start-ups might not be able to change the current situation, but users with collective intelligence and power might. Individual users have not signed up for social media and online spaces, which feel like a giant marketplace and trade in human futures like pork belly futures or oil futures [Orlowski 2020]. There have been different platforms that have risen and fallen. Even though the big tech companies hold the dominant power based on their accumulated data and social graph, what sustains their power is their users who can move to more trendy new platforms anytime as the successes of KakaoTalk and TikTok showed, and viral changes could be made.

To enact real changes, however, we as individual users need to return online spaces as the commons as well as social media as the beneficial social graph. YouTube beat out the existing South Korean video streaming platforms by offering a better revenue-sharing program. How about a new platform that shares their revenue not only with content providers but also the audiences of the content who are also the users of the platform? This platform would not manipulate their feeds or recommendations of content for individual users to make their users stay longer almost like an addiction because the platform's priority would be to benefit their users, stakeholders, rather than their advertisers and shareholders. Such a platform might not be a privately owned company but a non-profit-organization supported by the public sector including right-minded governments. Governments still have strong power as the example of US and India banning TikTok and other Chinese apps demonstrates [Babones 2020]. The growth of big tech, especially in the US and China would not have been possible without their governments' support including a form of connivance. However, the same government power could be used to shape a better direction as the examples of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the proposal of taxing data collecting and processing show. We need to rethink social media from the perspective of benefiting our society and people, not the handful of tech owners and investors.

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