Journalism and Mass Communication

Volume 2, Number 4, April 2012 (Serial Number 7)

David Publishing Company
www.davidpublishing.com

Publication Information:
Journalism and Mass Communication is published monthly in print (ISSN 2160-6579) by David Publishing Company located at 9460 Telstar Ave Suite 5, EL Monte, CA 91731, USA.

Aims and Scope:
Journalism and Mass Communication, a professional academic journal, commits itself to promoting the academic communication about recent developments on Journalism and Mass Communication, covers all sorts of research on journalism, radio and television journalism, new media, news ethics and regulations, the integration of media and culture and other relevant areas and tries to provide a platform for experts and scholars worldwide to exchange their latest findings.

Manuscripts and correspondence are invited for publication. You can submit your papers via Web Submission, or E-mail to journalism@davidpublishing.org. Submission guidelines and Web Submission system are available at http://www.davidpublishing.org; http://www.davidpublishing.com.

Editorial Office:
Tel: 1-323-984-7526 Fax: 1-323-984-7374
E-mail: journalism@davidpublishing.org; journalism@davidpublishing.com

Abstracted/Indexed in:
Database of EBSCO, Massachusetts, USA
Chinese Database of CEPS, American Federal Computer Library center (OCLC), USA
Chinese Scientific Journals Database, VIP Corporation, Chongqing, P. R. C.
Ulrich's Periodicals Directory
Pro Quest/CSA Social Science Collection, Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS), USA

Subscription Information:
Print $450; Online $320; Print and Online $600 (per year)

David Publishing Company
9460 Telstar Ave Suite 5, EL Monte, CA91731, USA
Tel: 1-323-984-7526 Fax: 1-323-984-7374
E-mail: order@davidpublishing.com, shelly@davidpublishing.com

David Publishing Company
www.davidpublishing.com

Journalism and Mass Communication

Volume 2, Number 4, April 2012 (Serial Number 7)

Contents

Media Studies

Society and Network Culture

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 503-513

The Use and the Effects of Militaristic Elements in the Turkish Printed Sports Media

Güven Büyükbaykal, Murat Mengü
İstanbul University, İstanbul, Turkey

Football is a sports branch comprising a "human" factor with different aspects, such as intelligence, intuition, will, character, struggle, spectators, and balance. With the created global economic market, football is an indispensable part of our lives. It entices the masses, plays an effective role in the socio-economic destinies of societies, and directs the mass psychology of societies negatively and/or positively. The success that football clubs in Turkey attained recently in Europe and the third standing that our national football team gained in 2002 have accentuated the relationship between the printed football media and football. Today, Turkish sports journalism sometimes tends to exploit the emotions and encourages the discourses inciting violence and biases to get more readers (to increase the circulation rate) and guarantee the continuation of the attention. Many words expressing militarism are used in the headlines of sports news. In these articles, the footballers are depicted as alert soldiers and the teams as troops conditioned to victory. In the frame of both national matches and the European Cups, the militaristic elements are used through nationalistic discourses in the sports news of the printed media. Thus, the aim of this study is to analyze the presentation and quantity of the militaristic elements used in the news on football in newspapers. The news in the *Milliyet*, as a mainstream newspaper, issued in two periods, namely after the 2002 World Cup (November 1-December 31, 2002) and today (February 1-March 30, 2008) will be studied through the discourse analysis method with respect to the headlines and contents. Therefore, the comments and the ideas of columnists will be excluded from the scope of this study.

Keywords: printed sports media, football news, militaristic elements, nationalistic discourse

Introduction

Generally speaking, militarism indicates the preponderance of the military class or its ideals and accentuation of military virtues and ideals. It is also a policy of aggressive military readiness (Webster, 1993, p. 1433).

Furthermore, militarism or militarist ideology is the view that society should be governed by the concepts comprised in military culture and its legacy. Militarists assume the view that discipline is the highest social priority, and state that the development and maintenance of the military guarantees national and social order. National policy is believed to be best served by focusing the society on preparation for military operations and conducting military operations. Social restraint follows the imposition of military order on civilian society.

Güven Büyükbaykal, assistant professor, School of Communication, İstanbul University.
Murat Mengü, Ph.D., School of Communication, İstanbul University.

Under the justification of force, militarism asserts that civilian populations are dependent upon the needs and goals of its military. Common principles include advocation of "peace through strength" as the proper method to secure the interests of society, which is expressed through traditional diplomatic relations and the matters related to social welfare. Militarism is essentially undemocratic and antidemocratic. Therefore, it is not part of the culture of democratic societies but flourishes in those subjected to totalitarian theories.

Militarism, in practice, is a preference toward goals, concepts, doctrines, and policies that will be exercised by the threat or actuality of military force/(Militarism, n. d.). In short, militarism is war-mongering or the advocacy of war or actual carrying out of war or its preparations.(What is Militarism?, n. d.)

Within the scope of this study, it is assumed that Turkish Sports Journalism sometimes tends to exploit the emotions and encourages the discourses inciting violence and biases to get more readers (to increase the circulation rate) and guarantee the continuation of the attention. Many words expressing militarism are used in the headlines of sports news.

Definition and Characteristics of Football

Football is a sports branch comprising "human" factor in its nature with different aspects through intelligence, intuition, will, character, struggle, spectators and balance. The characteristics of football may hold a different meaning and significance for each individual in the world. The definition of football should, therefore, be considered in this sense:

> Football is a highly active life style with a sophisticated rhythm, experienced very rapidly with momentary reflexes that everything may change by hitting just a few millimeters either to the left or right of the ball and also any possibility may arise by taking an action this or that way; now or then. (Kıvanç, 2001, p. 41)

Having fun with spherical objects has always been appealing for human beings since the ancient times. Football can be regarded as one of the rare sports activities, which gives pleasure to the spectators as much as the players. The skills of the players in football show variety. A goal scored at a match appears differently than another goal scored in the same match. And this aspect makes football watched by so many people. "Football is one of the simplest games in the world that can be played even with a pair of socks put into each other, a crumbled piece of paper or any round objects" (Yılmaz, 2002, p. 21).

The rules and intrinsic aspects of football lead to its popularity all over the world.

> Football is very simple; its rules are few and not complex. Even off side, as the most difficult rule, is not complicated. Controlling the ball with feet that are not as skillful as the hands is even more difficult. In fact, what gives the pleasure of magic and dynamism to football is overcoming this difficulty. … Any surprises are possible in the game. Besides uncertainty is possible, excitement never ends. This is reflected to the result of the game as well. It is possible that the weakest may beat the strongest. (Bora, 2002, p. 50)

At this point, it would be beneficial to consider what makes football so appealing.

> The common attraction of football results from several factors, such as the possibility of contention with the rivals in the same area, its being performed with relatively more players with respect to the other sports branches, the necessity to get organized and bringing the individuals together who have begun to perform their daily work practices indoors since the industrialization. (Öcal, 2002, p. 120)

One of the important reasons for the popularity of football today is professionalism. Most of the young people who observe that football brings a considerably high amount of money choose this sport not only for

pleasure but also as a profession. In the arena of football where a vicious contention is exercised, just a few of the millions of young people can have the chance of stepping up into the magical world of football that they see in the media. Moreover, "football is a vast ritual area where people can participate individually, which can only be repeated in huge concert of rock and heavy metal groups" (Bulaç, 2002, p. 18).

Just like the congregation of the people from different educational and socio-economic levels as well as different political views in a temple, thousands and even hundreds of thousands of people support their favorite teams as a whole. As participants, individuals either feel happy or sad together with the other fans simultaneously.

Again, it is almost impossible to underestimate the sociological, cultural, economic, legal, and political aspects of football. From a sociological point of view, football is one of today's social institutions. From a cultural perspective, there is practically no other organization that can bring millions of people together from different parts of the world at the same time without making any segregations regarding language, gender, and ethic orientation. From economic point of view, football is an almost industrialized huge sector that can make billions of dollars of profit in a single country even once a year. As for the legal dimension, on the other hand, the recent disagreements among the football clubs pertaining to transfer problems that turn to court cases can be given as an example. In fact, the "Bosman Case" was long in the agenda of the sports circles.

From a political point of view, on the other hand, football is considered to be an agent or means used to continue the military and diplomatic struggles that the nations in today's world cannot solve in any other way. Thus, when a direct relationship between football and current political agenda is established, 22 players struggling on the green field usually get alienated to their identities as sportsmen as well as to a field of sports activity and turn to be the representatives of their own national identities or the elements of the present political discourse. With this aspect, football displays a significant function in not only the international arena but also the national political activities. It is not coincidental that Salazar who set up one of the longest absolute dictatorships of the 20th century in Portugal, explained the reason for such a long period of dictatorship with 3F formula, that is "Fiesta, Fado, and Football". In fact, football has formed the most important domains of legacy of the dictatorships in Latin America.

Recently,

> In accordance with the changing economic, social, and political conjuncture of the world, both the rules and the organizational structure of football have undergone some changes in the context of "globalization policies". For instance, in order to score more goals, and increase the ratio and excitement of watching it, some changes have been made in the rules, i.e. off side, foul. Likewise, through some new organization, for instance, Champions League, the feeling of "national" identity has been kept alive. (Sert, 2000, p. 58)

Definitions and Characteristics of Nationalism and Militarism

Nationalism is a concept that has arisen after the period of nation-states. Nationalism gained a considerable importance during the transition period from agricultural to industrial social structure. Nation-states necessitate the arousal of the consciousness of "we" and the improvement of a common educational language. It seems that there are basically two kinds of nationalism: the first one is based on territorial and citizenship elements; and it is generally related to Western-European nationalism. The other one depends on ethic orientation or cultural-historical-linguistic national identity and it is generally referred to Eastern Europe.

Human beings are the entities that desire to be in security by living together with similar beings. By structuring the concepts of "we" and "the others" as well as referring to the values attributed to these concepts, a dual world is created and an in-group solidarity is attained. As a result of the economic changes in the world and the establishment of new states following the collapse of the Eastern bloc, the macro-nationalistic period is replaced by the micro-nationalistic one. With post-modern views concerning that different identities should express themselves, a new perspective has been developed that local aspects should be given as much importance as the universal ones. The Turkic republics established as a consequence in the aftermath of the fragmentation of the Soviet Union have indirectly contributed to the review of the nationalistic aspects in Turkey. The nationalistic wave exercised in the world has also produced some repercussions in Turkey and a new nationalistic discourse has emerged. In the Turkish nationalism, "west" represents "the others" that is both admired and hated. The unnamed war experience throughout the country also had an influence over the rise of nationalism after the 1980s. The support of the European countries to PKK[1] contributes to the emergence of an animus towards those countries and also the development of discourses that are likely to reinforce the idea that "the Turks do not have any friends other than the Turks" (Talimciler, 2003, pp. 109-110).

Nationalism and Militarism in Football

Throughout history, there has been an interaction among the concepts of sports, but particularly football, militarism and nationalism. According to the records, in 2500 B.C., Chinese Emperor, Huany-Ti used to make his soldiers undergo a sort of quickness exercise with a ball that had to be passed through two vertical posts. In the same way, there are similarities between the modern football and "Harpastrum" that was played by Roman soldiers in the first century A.D.. Apart from the exercises, team spirit, solidarity, and creativity, there are the common aspects between football and military training.

Considering the importance of football with regard to politics, the indicators of national independence are the capacity to control the borders, the power to issue national currency and to organize football matches in the international scale. Moreover, football creates the feeling of having a common identity in individuals. The fans supporting their own teams convene and they represent a shared sense of belonging.

Nevertheless, martial metaphors in the discourses on football are quite common, such as bombing the opposite goal, launching a devastating attack, sieging the penalty area etc.. Regarding the issue with respect to rituals and current practices, it can easily be seen that flags are hoisted before the matches and national anthems are sung. "The beginning of a match is also the beginning of a fight. The league break during winter is a kind of ceasefire. The 'catenaccio' (means 'hinge' in Italian) of Italians is a game emphasizing defense. The questions such as, 'Does this game show a similarity with the military tactics of Romans?' and 'Is it a subliminal figuration of Emperor Hadrianus who had a hundreds of kilometers long wall built in order to prevent the invasion of Barbarians to the imperial territory?'"(Boniface, 2007, p. 76), indicate the similarity and interaction between football and militarism.

Furthermore, according to George Orwell, football is a war where the sounds of bullets are not heard. Jean Girodoux, on the other hand, expresses his views in such a way that"in 1933, all leaders in the world decided to become nationalists. They were surrounding themselves with reinforcements stronger than the Great Wall of China. There are only two organizations that have international characteristics: wars and games" (Boniface, 2007, p. 76).

[1] Kurdish terrorist organization.

Football can also be used as an effective means of propaganda for countries. During the periods when the international political atmosphere gets sensitive, politicians can use football as a trump card for increasing the support that they will obtain and strengthening the power they will exercise over their societies. There is an interesting example from the past: "In 1938, just before the final match that was going to be played in Hurgary, Mussolini sent a four-word telegraph message to the Italian footballers: 'either victory or death!'. The Italian team who won the match was all in military uniforms for the reception the next day. In 1998, the provocative headline of Manière de Voir, a file issued by *Le Monde Diplomatique*, was 'Sports is War' ".

Before the semi-final match between the United Kingdom and Germany in Euro 1996, *Times,* as the greatest publishing company of London, quoted Karl von Clausewitz's comment: "football is the continuation of war with different means". In 1981, Pierre Bourgeade tells the story of a former East German football player who later begins to work in the secret service in his book, *Le Football, c'est la guerre poursuivie par d'autres moyens* (A War Continued with Different Means) issued by Gallimard Publications. After the match between Mönchengladbach and Saint-Etienne, one of the main characters of the novel says that "You have seen how we scored the two goals; one of them was with a wing attack, the other was from the hip…Do not these goals remind that the German Army defeated the French with their maneoeuvres in both wars? The wing attack is a Schieffen plan. And this plan brought our armies to the gates of Paris in 1914".

Numerous examples can be given to show that football is a war in different forms. Henry Kissinger, who is interested in football as much as geopolitics, states that "West German national team plans their matches as painstakingly as the West German General Staff plans their attacks and tactics". … . Although football does not normally cause any wars in a classic sense, it is a good opportunity to provoke the atrocities that can be suppressed with difficulty and also evoke the ghosts of the past.

In fact, similar things happened during the Asian Cup held between July 17th and August seventh, 2004 in China that,

> Brought China and Japan against each other… Some Chinese fans wore the uniforms of the Japanese invaders in the 1930s in order to show the Japanese why they declared mobilization for that match. Some of them were carrying placards on which "300,000" was written as a reference to the Chinese civilians decimated by the Japanese Army in Nanking in 1937. (Boniface, 2007, pp. 79-84)

Overall, sports in general and particularly football, as the most popular branch, not only increase but also strengthen the nationalistic feelings. Regrettably, offensive and chauvinist attitudes are displayed at both national and important matches when the rate of tension is quite high. Considering Turkey, the most conspicuous aspect of the Turkish nationalism emerging in football fields is the European-Western complex. In the present dilemma, there seems, on the one hand, an admiration and envy for European countries and teams, on the other hand, a hostile attitude by considering Europe as an enemy, takes revenge and imposing dominance over them.

Nationalism and Militarism in the Football News in Printed Media

Today, in the football news of the Turkish printed sports media, the elements of nationalism and militarisms are frequently used. Needless to say, the main purpose is to sustain the interest of the readers and increase the circulation rates. On the other hand, there were writers in the Turkish media who used militaristic elements in a humorous way in their texts without provoking violence and abusing nationalistic feelings. On

November 1928, when Fenerbahçe beat Galatarasary 2-0, Abidin Daver, a sports writer, told the match in the *Cumhuriyet* (newspaper) humorously like a naval battle:

> It must have been the right time that Galatasaray launched an attack. As it was an impromptu attack, Kemal Şefik who managed to approach the enemy ships suddenly sent a horrendous torpedo. This attack was followed by the bull's eye hit of Kemal Faruk's (Farukiye) torpedo. Against the superiority of the Galatasaray fleet, the enemy was thrown into an utter confusion. They either could not have an opportunity to fire their guns or the fired guns could not hit the targets. The firings of Farukiye totally scattered the enemy fleet. (Atabeyoğlu, 1991, p. 15)

As it can easily be seen in this quotation, Farukiye, a nickname for a footballer, Kemal Faruk, is reflected as the name of a frigate in the Ottoman Navy. Moreover, in the original Turkish text, the verb *bocalamak* means both the confusion of the enemy fleet and also "bearing away to leeward" and "veering a ship" as a naval term.

Recently, the successful performance of the Turkish football teams in Europe and the third standing of the Turkish National Team in 2002 have strengthened the relations between the printed sports media and football. The style of printed sports media seems to be evoking nationalism and fanaticism quite frequently.

Another characteristic of the Turkish nationalism with respect to football that is reflected in the media is the tendency to explain our "national failures" with an "index of excuses". This stems from the influence of "foreign powers" and also stresses that the superior characteristics of our nation should never be questioned, while the discourse of football in the media presents the national matches as a life and death matter. It also strengthens the international "war" effects in the league matches by using the military vocabulary more frequently. Some examples are as follows: "'We are like dynamites', 'We are going to tear Frankfurt apart', 'We will fight till the end', 'lethal tactic', 'The footballers of Fenerbahçe say that they will strike Sigma with counter-attacks', 'the Fight of the Descendants of the Ottomans with the Roman Empire' (referring to a football match between Galatasaray and Rome). Similarly, Haessler from Rome is quoted to say that 'Mamma I Turchi!' " (Bora & Erdoğan, 1993, pp. 228-230).

It is observed that a nationalistic discourse is used in newspapers with regard to the teams participating in both national and the European Cup matches. According to the findings, the headlines are structured as if the Turkish teams as well as the footballers contending abroad represent the whole country. Another important point in nationalistic discourse is that on the one side, there is Turkey and on the other side there is a team that must be subdued and beaten. In this case, the insuppressible intention is to show the power of Turks, continue the historical magnificence in sports and prove it in Europe. Experienced failures against the opponents that should have been given a lesson in fact, ill will and animosity against the Turks are both given prominence and are stressed. While the successes of the rivals are usually presented in a humorous way, the failures of the Turkish teams are given by hiding behind some excuses.

The dosage of nationalism displays an increase during the national matches and European Cup. By referring to the consciousness of being a Turk, the feeling of "we" is strengthened. "My Turkey: My Pride!"(*Fotomaç* August 8, 1995), "Come on Turkey; Smash (them)!"(*Fotomaç*, December 10, 1992), "You are a Turk: You Can Crush (them) Today" (*Fotomaç*, October 27, 1992), "We are Turks, We are Strong, We will Win"(*Fotomaç*, June 10, 1996). The perspective towards the others should also be noted in the following examples: "'They are Strong, but They are not Turks' (*Fotomaç*, October 2, 1992), 'This Manchester is Just Our Piece of Cake (*Fotomaç*, September 28, 1993)'" (Talimciler, 1999, pp. 102-103).

In the discourses forming "them", on the other hand, apart from being humiliated as they are not Turks, "the others" are depicted with the discourses reflecting violence, war and also fury against Europe. Some examples are as follows: "'Come on my Turkey, send your missiles' (February 14, 1995), 'Europe will be bombed' (September 16, 1992), 'The target is panzer, Turkey will run over' (October 10, 1998)" (Talimciler, 2003, pp. 112-113).

Method

The use and effects of militaristic elements in the news in printed Turkish media have been analyzed with respect to the headlines of the news on football in the *Milliyet*, as a mainstream newspaper, issued in two different periods, namely after the 2002 World Cup (November 1-December 31, 2002) and currently (February 1-March 30, 2008). These periods have been chosen randomly. As the scope of this study is limited with the headlines, the comments and the ideas of columnists have been excluded.

Findings

The analysis of the headlines forming the corpus of this study denotes that the most frequently repeated military term is the "amphibious landing operation" which means the act of bringing soldiers onto land that is controlled by the enemy. The examples including this term are as follows:

"Landing Operation for Visa" (March 26, 2008, p. 32); "Landing Operation of the Scouts" (March 07, 2008, p. 26); "Landing Operation to Izmir" (November 17, 2002, p. 32); "Landing Operation to Ümraniye" (December 08, 2002, p. 28); "Landing Operation to Denizli" (December 17, 2002, p. 26); "German Landing Operation"(December 20, 2002, p. 28); and "The Landing Operation to Dubai" (December 31, 2002, p. 28).

As it can be seen in the examples, away games are considered to be amphibious landing operations. Regarding the headline "Landing Operation of the Scouts", apart from an organization for boys/girls that teaches them practical skills, "scout" also means a soldier, plane etc., that is sent to search the area in front of an army and get information about the army of the enemy. In the respective piece of news, in fact, a group of scouts visited the facilites of a major football team.

With respect to the following headlines, another frequently repeated word that has a martial connotation is "duel" which means both a fight with weapons between two people, used in the past to settle a quarrel or a situation in which two people or groups are involved in an angry disagreement.

"Goal Duel: 3-2" (March 13, 2008, p. 28); "The Winner of the Duel is Inter" (December 11, 2002, p. 26); "The Goal Duel" (December 19, 2002, p. 30); "The Duel of the 'Youths'[2] for Passage"(December 23, 2002, p. 26); "The Duel Between Inter and Fatih Terim" (December 28, 2002, p. 29); "Terrific Duel from the Legionnaires" (November 16, 2002, p. 30); and "Legionnaires are at Work" (December 07, 2002, p. 24).

In the last two examples, there is also a reference to the members of a legion, which is a large group of soldiers, especially in ancient Rome and also the French Foreign Legion. In the headlines, "legionnaires" is used to define the Turkish footballer playing in foreign teams.

Parallel to "landing operation", the third frequently and also independently used military term is "operation" that indicates a planned military or police action especially one that involves a lot of people. Some examples are as follows:

---

[2] Nickname for a Turkish football team, Gençlerbirliği.

"Georgian Operation" (March 06, 2008, p. 31); "A New Front Has Been Opened in the Simsar Operation" (March 26, 2008, p. 31).

In the second example, with the use of "front", a progress in a procedure is defined as the area where fighting happens in a war. Similarly, the process by which a footballer moves or is moved from one team to another is also defined as an "operation", which includes: "Transfer Operation" (December 25, 2002, p. 29); "Asper Operation" (December 28, 2002, p. 27).

There are also historical references in the headlines. The first one is related to a military rank in the Ottoman history, namely "pasha", "a man of high rank or office, especially a military commander or provincial governor in Turkey and North Africa" (Webster, 1993, p. 1649). Although the equivalent of the respective rank is an admiral or general in today's armed forces, traditionally this title is still used informally: "Karabükspor is like Pasha" (March 31, 2008, p. 22).

As seen in the example, a sports team is praised with the use of this rank in a simile. With the use of a high military rank, the victorious achievement of a football team, namely Karabükspor, is stressed. Interestingly, in addition to the use of this title, a parallel historical reference is made in another different headline: "And the Last Coup is from the Pasha" (March 25, 2008, p. 28).

Although what is meant here on the surface structure is an achievement that is extremely impressive because it is very difficult, there is also an implication of a sudden and sometimes violent attempt by citizens or the army to take control of the government. With the use of "pasha" in the same headline, there is also a reference to the three coups (coup d'etat) in the history of the Turkish Republic, namely in 1960, 1970, and 1980. In fact, what is meant in this example, is an outstanding performance of a football team, Kasımpaşa, which has allowed it to obtain power.

Implications for coup continues without historical references as well. Interestingly enough, one of the cities as well as the football team of this country is called "Ordu", which also means "army" (ordu) in Turkish. Therefore, the headline "The Strike of Ordu to Antalya", referring to a match in "(The team of) Ordu Beaten Antalya", also means "The Military Coup to/in Antalya".

"Beating Arsenal was a major coup for the club." Going back to the historical references, "Major Offensive" can be given as an important example. As a military term, offensive is a planned military attack involving large forces over a long period. While the overwhelming power of a team over another is implied here, in the deep structure a reference to the Turkish history is made; a major offensive was launched on August 26, 1922 during the Turkish Independence War.

The historical references to the titles or definitions used even in earlier periods can also be seen in the headlines. For instance, a soldier or fighter who is brave and experienced is associated with a footballer: "Impatient Warrior" (March 03, 2008, p. 24).

In the same way, while the outstanding success of a footballer is linked with someone who gets control of a country by fighting, his unexpected inefficiency is associated with a soldier, sailor etc.. Someone who has been and most probably injured in a war. Considering the secondary meaning of "veteran", as someone who has had a lot of experience of a particular activity, it is also possible to read this headline through a positive perspective: "Conqueror of the Cup, Veteran of the League" (March 03, 2008, p. 28).

With respect to such titles or definitions, probably the most interesting headline displaying a rather contradictory characteristic is “Cheap Hero”. While “cheap” indicates not deserving respect, showing a lack of honesty, moral principles, or sincere feelings, “hero” is a man who is admired by doing something extremely brave.

Being a fundamental military term indicating a fight between two or more countries or between opposing groups within a country, involving large numbers of soldiers and weapons, “war” is used in the headlines to denote a situation in which a person or group is fighting for power, influence, or control: “The War of the Presidents” (March 15, 2008, p. 36); “The War for the List” (December 16, 2002, p. 25); “The War of Faith” (November 20, 2002, p. 30).

In the last example, the effect created with “war” is even strengthened with the use of “faith”, which denotes a strong feeling of trust or confidence in someone or something as well as belief and trust in God.

Despite the predominance of military terms in the headlines, there is also place for “peace”. However, it is again used with “war” in a dual opposition:“War and Peace” (December 10, 2002, p. 25).

Even when “peace” is used independently, there is even an implication of a previous period of contention or fight: “Time for Peace in Football” (March 14, 2008, p. 29).

Moreover, it is possible to notice some military practices in the headlines. The first one is “mobilization”, Needless to say, if a country mobilizes or mobilizes its Army, it prepares to fight a war. Similarly, the preparations in a team are regarded as a mobilization: “Mobilization in Cim-Bom[3]” (November 26, 2002, p. 29).

In the same way, the same strenuous action seems to have been taken for a football player, too: “Mobilization for Mehmet Topal” (February 26, 2008, p. 27).

Mehmet Topal is a footballer of a Turkish team (Galatasaray) and he is suffering a serious injury. The attempt by his teammates to take widespread action to provide support for him is regarded as mobilization.

Besides numerous references to coup d’etat, a situation in which the army controls an area instead of the police, especially because of fighting against the government is also referred to in the example of “Martial Law was Imposed”.

Within the context of some military practices and actions, a team’s beating their opponents with three points is associated with the situation when soldiers, especially sailors refuse to obey the person who is in charge of them, and try to take control for themselves: “Vestel Mutinied” (March 31, 2008, p. 25).

Likewise, stopping something from succeeding is linked with attacking or destroying a ship with a torpedo: “Friendship was Torpedoed” (November 02, 2002, p. 30).

Similarly, the failure of a major team is referred to the sinking of the most important ship in a group of ships belonging to the navy: “The Flagship Has Sunk” (November 14, 2002, p. 30).

As for the other military practices, a team’s assuming a defensive position is linked with taking guard in a long narrow hole dug in the ground as protection for soldiers: “Denizlispor Has Taken Guard in the Trench” (November 14, 2002, p. 28).

Likewise, assuming an intentionally passive position to take prompt action is associated with a sudden attack on someone by people who have been hiding and waiting for them, or the place where this happens. “Cim-Bom is Lying in Ambush” (December 22, 2002, p. 30).

[3] Nickname for a major football team, Galatasaray.

Furthermore, beating a rival by scoring numerous goals is reflected to a continuous attack on a place or raid by big guns and bombs, that is “Bombardment”. As for other examples, “A Bomb was Dropped in Bursa” and “Reiziger Bomb” can be given.

In the same way, it also possible to see the metaphorical use of “bomb” in the headline: “The Referees are Time Bombs” (December 11, 2002, p. 29), a weapon made of material is set to explode at a particular time is used to describe the psychological state of the referees who are about to go against the wall. Thus, considering the figurative use of “time bomb”, it is also possible to notice a situation that is likely to become a very serious problem.

A motivating utterance before a match is also reflected with an order to tell people to start walking quickly and with regular steps: “Quick March!” (February 11, 2008, p. 26).

Even the unusually high number of injured footballers in a team is depicted as a large organized group of people trained to fight on land in war: “The Army of the Lame” (November 17, 2002, p. 30).

It is possible to observe the same attitude through the metaphorical use of “prisoner” in a case of an infection that has affected the director of a major team: “Bacterium Has Taken Prisoners of War” (March 14, 2008, p. 27).

The final military reference can be seen in the headline of the news about the homage of footballers to the members of the Turkish armed forces, who were killed while fighting for their country: “(They) Commemorated Those Killed in Action” (March 24, 2008, p. 31).

It should be noted that as in many cultures, being killed in action is associated with sacrificing oneself not only for a nationalistic but also a holy purpose in the Turkish culture and therefore, those who were killed in action are highly respected and admired by people.

Conclusions

Football, as the most popular branch of sports, creates the feeling of having a common identity in individuals and also leads to an increase in nationalistic feelings. The fans supporting their own teams convene and share a sense of belonging. In other words, football serves not only to increase but also to strengthen the nationalistic feelings. Nevertheless, especially at national and important matches, offensive and chauvinist attitudes might be displayed.

The most conspicuous reflection of Turkish nationalism emerging on the football field is probably the European-Western complex. In such a dilemma, there is a tendency; on the one hand, to admire and envy the European countries along with their teams; and on the other hand, to consider the West as an enemy, to wreak vengeance and impose our power upon them.

The findings in this study indicate that generally speaking, in football the newspaper reports, there is a tendency to promote nationalistic feelings through the use of military terms. Although it might be hard to claim that there is an overt intention to exploit the emotions of readers and foster the discourses inciting violence, jingoism and biases, there seems to be a tendency to promote nationalistic feelings through the introduction of military expressions. It has also been found that in these headlines there are several cultural, political, and historical connotations.

References

Atabeyoğlu, C. (1991). *Türkiye' de Spor Yazarlığının 100. Yılı (1891-1991)*. İstanbul: A and B Kitapçılık ve Dağıtımcılık.

Boniface, P. (2007). *Futbol ve Küreselleşme* (İ. Yerguz, Trans.). İstanbul: NTV Yayınları.

Bora, T. (2002). Futbol, Toplumun ve Hayatın Aynası Olarak İlgimi Çekiyor. *Karizma, 11,* 48-52.

Bora, T., & Erdoğan, N. (1993). Dur Tarih Vur Türkiye. In R. Horak, W. Reiter, & T. Bora (Eds.), *Futbol ve Kültürü* (pp. 221-240). İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Bulaç A. (2002). Dünyanın Ayağa Düşmesi. *Karizma, 11,* 13-18.

Kıvanç, Ü. (2001). *Kesin Ofsayt*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

"Militarism". (n.d.). Retrieved March 22, 2008 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Militarism

Öcal, D. (2002). Halkla İlişkiler Endüstrisi, Popüler Spor ve Futbol. *Toplumbilim-Futbol Özel Sayısı, 16,* 117-128.

Sert, M. (2000). *Gol Atan Galip***.** İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları.

Talimciler, A. (1999). Türkiye Spor (Futbol) Medyası. *Birikim, 117,* 98-103.

Talimciler, A. (2003). *Türkiye'de Futbol Fanatizmi ve Medya İlişkisi***.** İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık.

"What is militarism?" (n. d.). Retrieved March 5, 2008 from http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/faq/milit.html

Yılmaz, E. (2002). Futbol ve Yaşam. *Toplumbilim-Futbol Özel Sayısı, 16,* 15-22.

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 514-529

The Nigerian Press, Brown Envelope Syndrome (BES) and Media Professionalism: The Missing Link

Nnamdi T. Ekeanyanwu , Nkechi Obianigwe
Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

Brown envelop syndrome (BES) has remained a controversial issue in any debate centred on the Nigerian press, media professionalism and media ethics. It is one of the major setbacks of media growth in Nigeria. BES is a system whereby journalists collect money or other material gifts from news sources, company executives or event organizers to cover such events and probably give it the wildest publicity as the case may be. It symbolizes the rot that has plagued the Nigerian media industry since the early 1980s to date. This paper therefore builds from an empirical study by the same authors, as well as literature materials to argue that media professionalism and the enforcement of the various ethical codes that preach professionalism are the practical ways to ensure ethical conduct and behaviour amongst journalists and other categories of media practitioners, especially in Nigeria where these are missing. This, according to the paper, is the missing link in the quest to rid the media industry in Nigeria from the monster called BES.

Keywords: brown envelop syndrome (BES), media ethics, media professionalism, ethical codes, journalists, Nigerian press/media

Introduction

As important as information and technological resources are to media organisations, so are human resources. Human resource is an important element that forms the crux of the subject matter of brown envelope syndrome (BES). This is very important to our understanding of the major issues that have cropped up in the controversy surrounding where the media syndrome called brown envelope in the Nigerian media context comes from. BES is a result of the gap in human ethical reasoning. It is also a reflection of the moral decadence in the general system called Nigeria. In this regard, we must not see BES as just another media coinage or concept but a problem that arises in the first place because of institutional challenges in the management of peoples' collective resources, human capital deficiency, and misplaced/misappropriated priorities. These are the core issues this paper hopes to address.

The place of the media in building the Nigerian state cannot be overemphasized. Both in the nation's military experiment and her chequered experience towards democratization, Nigerian journalists have taken the position of war lords to ensure that the rights of the citizens are not trampled upon. This informs the statement made by a famous journalist and former Lagos State Governor, His Excellency, Alhaji Lateef Jakande, that the battle for Nigerian independence was fought and won on the pages of newspapers.

Nnamdi T. Ekeanyanwu, Ph.D., Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University.
Nkechi Obianigwe, B.SC. (Summa Cum Laude), Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University.

According to Joseph Pulitzer as cited by Charles (1999), the journalist "is there to watch over the safety and welfare of the people who trust him" (p. 225). In the Nigerian perspective, the media, to put it succinctly, have done well in pursuing this noble goal. It is therefore no longer debatable that the media are largely responsible for the actualization of Nigerian's independence, curbing of neo-colonial excesses and the propagation of the ideals of a modern nation-state. According to Oseni (1999), the media have been consistent in exposing corrupt and inept leadership, socio-political perfidy and primitive dictatorship. In as much as workers of all sorts are required to perform; financial objectives predominate and there seems to be little scope for ethics, irrespective of the worker's own personal motives and desires.

Journalism is an industry, a major player in the profit-seeking market economy while journalists are merely workers in that industry, driven by the need to make a living. In another perspective, journalism is a profession, a vocation founded on ethical principles which direct and regulate the conduct of the practitioner. In such an industry, media workers are like any others. They are concerned about getting jobs, job security, working conditions, future prospects, and personal satisfaction. These are predisposing factors that could constitute a reason to engage in BES or other forms of compromise.

Nigerian journalists are members of the society with basic needs and challenges. Some of these needs include the need for security, comfort, and the need to build self-esteem. They also face challenges which are both political and largely economical. In essence, the average Nigerian journalist is struggling to meet his/her or basic needs in an extended family structure with its gargantuan demands on his/her lean wages. The journalist is also struggling to balance the numerous contending political forces and avoid being the battle ground in a game of deceit he/she does not understand. Nevertheless, these challenges should not be a basis for the journalist not to take his/her responsibility to the public unserious.

Adewale (2008), in his "The Rot in Nigerian Journalism Is Much Deeper Than We Thought" cited a controversial statement by Graham Greene to back up his position thus: "A petty reason perhaps why novelists more and more try to keep a distance from journalists is that novelists are trying to write the truth and journalists are trying to write fiction" (http://www.ngex.com/news/public/article.php?ArticleID=961). This embarrassing irony aptly describes the state of Nigerian journalism and journalists in particular.

From previous researches, it has been discovered that the age old trust in Nigerian journalism has been seriously eroded. Adewale (2008) explained this fact especially in the clumsy relationship between the former national soccer coach of Nigeria, Shaibu Amodu and the Vanguard sports editor and columnist, Onochie Anibeze. According to him, "the relationship was such that Amodu once asked one of his players to disembark from the team bus so he could accommodate Mr. Anibeze. The reward for Mr. Amodu is unquantifiable and these symbiotic relationships have worked well for this journalist at the expense of their profession and the Nigerian masses". Adewale (2008) further noted that the situation is such that we now have journalists who cover a minister for a year or two, only to report nothing but glowing attributes about that minister and the ministry under him. In the end, the public is isolated from the true picture of happenings in such a ministry (http://www.ngex.com/news/public/article.php?ArticleID=961). The only benefactor is usually the journalist who goes home with all forms of brown envelopes, junkets, free trips and etc. to the detriment of media professionalism and ethical standards.

Media Ethics and BES in Nigeria

In our everyday lives, we are faced with the problems of right and wrong, good and evil, virtue and vice.

Man, being a rational being, has the ability to choose between good and evil, right and wrong, and the fact that he is a social being entails that he does not exist in isolation but in a society. He is, therefore, faced with various challenges that are peculiar to the society and is compelled to interact with other social beings in the same society. This interaction makes him find fulfilment and solidarity with his fellow men, which makes a person act morally or ethically only when he relates himself in principle to all mankind (Akabogu, 2005).

Ethics is an integral part of human existence that is primarily concerned with the personal duties of an individual to himself and to others. It also forms the major crux of this paper. Ethics is a branch of philosophy which deals with judgement as to the rightness or wrongness, desirability or undesirability, approval or disapproval, or acceptability or the unacceptability of our actions and deeds. Ethics can also be defined as a normative science of conduct which is concerned with the right or moral or acceptable thing to do per time in a given space. In media practice, ethics aims at regulating the behaviour of journalists and guarding against the abuses of their power as gatekeepers and watchdogs in a complex societal arrangement. Media ethics therefore remains a core constituent of media professionalism. In other words, we cannot talk about media professionalism without major reference to media ethics.

In fact, the journalist as a member of the society is expected to maintain some ethical codes of conduct as he discharges his duty or responsibility of informing the members of the public objectively and accurately. Furthermore, Ngwodo (2008) made it clear that to obtain truth, these ethical codes of conduct must be observed with utmost commitment and when these codes are violated, the actions taken are seen as unethical. However, in the Nigerian situation, all sorts of ethical issues or problems abound which may include materialism, bribery, corruption, embezzlement, fraud, sycophancy, and all kinds of professional indiscipline and misconduct. Of all these ethical problems, the issue of materialism, which is manifested in the form of bribery and acceptance of gifts popularly called “brown envelope”, is rife and therefore demands scholarly attention so as to call the situation to order. This nomenclature is derived from the underworld business of wrapping of wares in brown envelopes.

It is no longer news that the BES has become an albatross for the 21st century Nigerian journalist. It has been criticized by scholars in the field of mass communication who describe it as a form of inducing writers and editors with financial gratification to influence their writings in favour of the givers. As we have discussed earlier, the journalist owes its credibility to the public since they are seen as the “voice” and “ear” of the people. But when the journalist performs his/her duties in the interest of a select few for personal gains, it is regarded as irresponsible and thus the credibility of the profession becomes doubtful (Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010).

BES has become so common that a journalist might accept it without knowing that he/she has actually accepted a bribe that can make him/her compromise journalistic principles or expected ethical standards. A reporter of *Jakata Post* of Indonesia, Hermawan (2006) gave the analysis of findings which clearly illustrated that most journalists were unsure of when they had received a bribe thus:

> Even though the journalistic code of ethics clearly prohibits reporters from accepting bribes, they are still divided on what constitutes a bribe. A recent survey by the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AIJ) shows that 85% of 400 journalists surveyed in 17 cities believed that accepting money from news sources was a form of bribery, but only 65% agreed that receiving valuable goods, such as cell phones and cameras was bribery. 33% of the respondents believed that having their travel expenses covered by a news source was a form of bribery, while 65% said it was not. 36% of journalists thought that hotel accommodation provided by news sources was bribery. Many of them have an erroneous perception of bribery. They think bribery only occurs when a source deposits money into their bank account. (http://www.asiamedia.com)

These monetary gifts could pressurize the journalist into doing what the giver wants, and this makes the journalist unable to be objective in his reporting of events and issues involving the people who give such gifts. Thus, the news stories produced are likened to commercial products that have been paid for by the customer which should serve the need to which the product is expected, in favour of the customer. The average Nigerian journalist sees BES as normal and so not ashamed to ask for the money openly. An instance of this was the case of the Rt. Reverend Abiodun Adetiloye, retired Anglican Archbishop of Nigeria, who was sighted at Murtala Mohammed Airport, Lagos. Journalists crowded him, asking for an interview on issues of national importance. The man of God spoke at length. His views were newsworthy. But the journalists felt they needed something more to write the news. They asked for "transport money" when the religious man declined; the journalists blacked out the entire interview (Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010).

The subject of BES is usually discussed under Envelope Journalism (also called "Red Envelope Journalism", "White Envelope Journalism", "Ch'ongi", and "Wartawan Amplop"), which are colloquial terms for the practice of bribing journalists for favourable media coverage. In other words, it could be called red envelope or white envelope syndrome depending on how it is regarded in a particular country or the normal envelope used to wrap the monetary gifts. However, the term "brown" envelope is relative to the Nigerian press and could also be adopted as such in any other country.

The term seems to be most commonly used in several countries like Asia—the Philippines, Japan, Korea, and Indonesia. It arose from the envelopes used to hold cash bribes, given ostensibly as tokens of appreciation for attending a press conference. More recently, the term Automated Teller Machine (ATM) journalism has arisen, to indicate the change to electronic transfer of bribes to journalists' bank accounts (http://www.en, wikipedia.org/ cited in Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010).

Although it was hard to say when this syndrome became rampant in the media, literature, however, suggested that it became a topical issue when the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in Nigeria brought about news commercialization. It has been reviewed from past researches that corruption has been institutionalised in the press with BES. In the long run (especially in political processes), it becomes very difficult to correct or criticize leaders that emerge through such dubious processes particularly by the press that throws them up in the first instance. Easterman (2003) explained the influence of politicians with regard to this syndrome thus:

> In political processes, the journalists themselves are seen as barriers to free and fair reporting. In 2003, a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) state chairman, Alhaji Makama Rigachikum once regarded the Nigerian journalists as corrupt, but he demonstrated how politicians like him made journalists corrupt. After a press conference, he offered a gift of 50, 000 Naira to journalists; although very generous, yet unethical. But in Nigeria, it is a routine exercise as politicians pay what is called "dash" in brown envelopes to make sure they get favourable coverage. (p. 23)

This development is clearly against the social responsibility theory of the mass media, which would be discussed in details in the course of this paper. Simply put, the notion of the social responsibilities of the mass media means that the mass media act as the conscience of the nation by revealing bad things, commending good ones and keeping the interest of the citizenry uppermost in their agenda.

Overview of Literature on BES, Ethics, and Professionalism

The issue of brown envelope cannot be discussed in isolation if we consider the term as a sort of financial gratification which is related to the term "news commercialization". The United Nations Educational, Scientific,

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1980), as cited in Omenugha and Oji (2007), noted that "News has become a commercial product ... Important developments in the countryside are pushed aside by unimportant, even trivial news items, concerning urban events and the activities of personalities"(p. 14). In Nigerian media scene, news is no longer about reporting timely occurrences or events, it is now about packaged broadcast or reports sponsored or paid for by interested parties, thereby giving room for individuals, communities, private and public organizations, local governments, state governments and ministries to gain access to the media during news time for a prescribed fee. The message they wish to put across is then couched in the formal features of news and is passed on to the unsuspecting public as such (Omenugha & Oji, 2007, pp. 13-16).

According to Omenugha and Oji (2007), commercialization of news began in Nigerian media houses as a result of SAP introduced in 1986 and the eventual withdrawal of subsidies from government owned media houses. According to Okunna (2003), "The trend nowadays is that even public media which are run with public funds are not immune to commercial competition. In broadcasting, for instance there is the widespread manifestation of the punishment syndrome in government owned broadcast organisations" (p.78). Okunna (2003) further explains that in punishment syndrome, governments clearly exert financial and administrative pressures on public service broadcasters to be more cost-efficient and self-sufficient in financing their day-to-day operations. They are also encouraged to develop their own sources of revenue by entering the market.

With the increasing rise in production cost and dwindling circulation, the media houses resort to all kinds of tricks to make money. The situation has led to a lot of compromise with "sensationalization" of news stories and half truths reaching an alarming stage. However, just as the media organisations were subjected to economic pressure and tried all means not to sink, so were individual journalists. The greatest problem that besets Nigerian journalists is that of poverty (which is still a persistent problem); which scholars agree need to be addressed if the ethical and professional standards are to be maintained (Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010).

Rather than do so, however, the current practices in most media organisations in Nigeria seem to be encouraging unethical practices. Publishers in Nigeria, rather than pay attractive wages to the journalists, refer to their identity cards as meal tickets. In other words, the journalists are encouraged to make money on their own in whatever manner they deem fit, thus encouraging the popular BES within journalism parlance in Nigeria (Omenugha & Oji, 2007). Most times journalists are often invited by the high and mighty in the society to "their" (slated) events. In many cases, the journalists are so well-taken care of and they go home with the so-called "news" often written by the people who invited them.

Increasingly, commercial-oriented news stories are gradually taking the place of hard news reports. It is important therefore that reporters and editors should concern themselves with quality news coverage and reportage than making unholy profits. News commercialization has affected information flow tremendously. As the majority of news is paid for, therefore, the news that sees the light of the day has to be induced by somebody or an organization, while news stories that are genuine and authoritative are dropped because there is no inducement where such news stories emanate from (Hanson, 2005, p. 140).

Nevertheless, a difference exists when there is a legitimate sale of air time for paid messages adjacent to or within news breaks and when broadcast and print media stations charge news sources for the privilege of covering and relaying their pre-paid views or messages as news. In the latter case, articles that do not emanate from the organisation like review materials from external sources, are paid for else, such articles are shoved aside .When this is the case, the media is seen as selling cheaply the integrity of its newscast by attesting to the "truth" of the claims of the so-called sponsor. This then leads to news distortion as the person who pays the

piper often calls the tune. Since the media would not like to lose a major customer, they will do all within their reach to satisfy such client that pays them enough money to have his/her view projected. In return, the client may dictate how and what he/she wants out of the news packaging of the media house. This can extend to dictate to the media what making the news, thereby emasculating opposing views. In whatever way, the issue of news commercialization as seen, makes the news susceptible to abuse by interest groups who can pay their way into the media to project an idea they want people to accept.

The dwindling image of Nigeria's press as a result of BES is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. Okunna (2003) clearly established the fact that "only a disciplined press can make meaningful contribution to national development" (p. 258). The implications of a non-disciplined press might not be immediate, but the end would always justify the means. In the same vein, the Rector of Times Journalism Institute, Ndubisi Ugbede, cited in Umejie (2008), stated "A journalist that peddles lies (or is not objective) will sooner or later die; it may not be physical death. The profession has a way of forgetting those who cannot stand to the ethics of the profession" (http://www.independentngonline.com/).

However, some media professionals do not even see this act as being unethical or as a corrupt practice. To them, the issue is more of survival than corruption. Okoye (2007, p. 22) cited an interview with a veteran journalist, Abiodun Adeniyi, who is of the opinion that brown envelopes that are voluntarily given should not be seen as bribe. This act of freewill, according to him, is evident in other professions. He continues thus:

> Our job is no different from that of lawyers and doctors and so should enjoy the same welfare package they are entitled to. If journalists are not allowed to take brown envelope, then media proprietors should come out with good conditions of service. The temptation might sometimes be too great to resist if they remember that what awaits them at the end of the month is nothing to write home about (p. 22).

Danladi (2008, p. 2) was of the view that Nigerian journalists were the most poorly paid in terms of their total welfare package. According to him(2008), "Some earn as little as N15, 000 (Less than a $100) a month... The journalists have found themselves in a difficult situation of balancing the demands of their survival and that of protecting the interest of the society in which they live, vis-à-vis adhering to professional ethics". He is also of the view that poor remunerations, which give rise to BES and undermine the achievements of the Nigerian journalists. Zaggi (2007) supported this view thus:

> It is shocking to know that some media organizations in Nigeria pay meagre, irregular or sometimes no salaries at all to journalists working for them. They only tell the journalists to use the name and reputation of the medium to earn a living for themselves. This of course is a fertile ground that breeds bribery and corruption into the profession. The worker deserves his wages to meet his/her needs. To deny him the fruit of his labour is to say the least callous. Denied good and regular salaries, these journalists are forced to depend on gratification and bribery for survival. This practice however has given rise to the concept of "cheque book journalism", which has today become widespread in the country under different names. Some call it "brown envelop", others call it "qua", while others have christened it as "egunje". (p. 2)

It is clear that this breeds distorted reports and if the journalists must reports truth, Zaggi (2007) points out that the journalist should be well paid to enable him to have the courage to resist all forms of temptations and to report only the truth without allowing anything to influence his news judgment. Some journalists even receive same amount with their salaries as bribes or even more than their salaries, how then can they remain truthful to the profession that places little or no financial value on them?

It is interesting to see the wide income gap between reporters and their editorial bosses. Some reporters earn as little as 50,000 Naira a month, and many of them are M.A.Degree holders. While apart from getting money from politicians who want favourable reports, the editors have all the perks enjoyed by their

counterparts in say the banking sector. Of course, this means that overtime those who are good and really interested in journalism are discouraged from pursuing careers in journalism simply because they cannot get income from the sector and those who stay resort to accepting brown envelopes just to survive (Onyisi, 1996).

It is in this guise that Umejie (n. d.) in his study "Brown Envelope Syndrome and Salad Journalism*"* emphasized the fact that Nigerian journalism "is not built on but has thrived nowadays on a culture of bribery and corruption. Then, the pen was mightier than the sword, but now the pen has become powerless and useless because of Naira chase and our journalists have turned lily-livered"(p. 24).

While giving an insight into the history of gratification in Nigerian journalism, emphasis was laid on the fact that the acceptance of gifts by journalists from news sources could be said to be as old as Nigerian journalism and consequently a global phenomenon (Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010). However, it was established that in the journalists' relation with society, they face ethical squabbles which thus explain the fact that the basic problem of journalism mainly has been ethical. The issue of conflict of interest is clearly spelt out and explained. Here, it is seen as a clash between professional loyalties and external interest that undermines the credibility of the moral agent, while also drawing attention to the fact that the journalists' primary responsibility is to their readers and viewers, and when they accept favours, gifts or other special considerations from vested interest or news sources, it raises serious questions about their objectivity (Alvin, 2000).

On the subject of the code of ethics for journalists, Umejie (n. d.) compared various ethical codes of various media related organizations and found out that the issue of compliance and enforcement are lacking in making the codes merely academic. In the same study reported here, Umejie (n. d.) adduced several reasons why the journalist receives gratifications for his reportorial functions. In the study, it was discovered that 51% of sampled practitioners picked poor wages as the reason for the prevalence of acceptance of gratifications. Low advertising revenue and low readership were also identified as reasons. It was also discovered that gifts given to journalists by news sources were the manifestation of deeper economic problems facing the journalist; as a result, traditional values such as objectivity and truth have been jettisoned on the platform of materialism.

Related studies have also shown that the Nigerian media organizations are not "faithful" in pursuance of specific journalistic principles, especially as it relates to the principle of objectivity. Boyer (1981), as cited in Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe (2010), viewed objectivity as "balance and even handedness in presenting different sides of an issue; accuracy and realism in reporting; presenting all main relevant points and separating facts from opinion" (p. 120). Objective reporting is the bedrock of journalism and should be transparent and devoid of sentiments or emotions.

In the Nigeria media, the need for objectivity is of paramount importance especially when the news reports involve government officials and personalities who would want to appear as saints before the unsuspecting public. In political processes, there is always the tendency for a party to influence the decisions of the media thereby stifling the objectivity principle of the press. In the constitutional role of the media, Tony Momoh points out the obligations of the media as stated in Section 21 of the 1979 Constitution thus: "the press, radio, television, and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times uphold the fundamental objectives contained in the chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people" (Obianigwe, 2009, p. 28).

In this sense, anyone who decides to participate in the mass communication process either as a publisher or journalist must do so in the understanding that it has a duty to first and foremost monitor governance at all times and freely too. Besides the constitutional role of the media, there are also the media doctrines which

variously believe that the media should be seen as an instrument of national development, as playing a leading and supportive role in national building, enlightenment, education, and dissemination of public information. Nevertheless, these epicentre roles of the media as outlined in its functions are predicated on objectivity (Oseni, 1999, p. 96, as cited in Obianigwe, 2009).

The journalist is not to be totally influenced by pressures from other personalities; hence their duty is to report the news and to do so in the interest of the public rather than individual interests. Reporting news in the interest of certain individuals stifles the objectivity of the press. Olumuyiwa (1988, p. 106), as cited in Obianigwe (2009) had this to say about the importance of objectivity in journalism:

> Objectivity in news representation is not a myth, nor a mere philosophical abstraction, but an attainable media goal which the journalist must strive for even in the face of opposing realities. Objectivity in the collating and presenting of news is the goal of the reporter, and a major principle of journalism. In spite of the fierce competition among newspapers, news magazines, radio, TV, or wire services, in regard to who gets a story first and is fastest in making such news items public property, objectivity in the disseminating of news is acknowledged as a significant hallmark of modern journalistic practice. (p. 2)

The concept of objectivity is the oldest and still the key legitimating professional ethic of liberal journalism; it is a guarantee of quality control which asks us to believe that what is being said is valid and believable (McNair, 1998, p. 65). According to Siebert (1956), cited in McNair (1998), "The underlying purpose of the media is to help discover truth, to assist in the process of solving political and social problems by presenting all manner of evidence and opinion as the basis for decision"(p. 65).

It should not be the norm for journalism and the media whose basic tenets are accuracy and fairness to aid the spread of lies and deception. Unfortunately, the growing commercial interests of media organizations, and the drive for dominance by institutions and states have contributed to the erosion of the tradition of truth telling and objectivity in the media. In this guise, the concept of democracy is misrepresented if there is a biased, one sided, slanted view of an issue or report in the news (Obianigwe, 2009, p. 24). The Secretary General of The International Federation of Journalists, Aidan White once said that when journalism is inaccurate, when it marginalizes important issues or denies access to different voices and when it is manipulated to serve narrow interests, it damages democracy (Torres, 2008).

For journalism to survive and to function effectively, journalists must make a conscious effort to protect and nourish the values and public good that flow from committed, ethical journalism. As contained in the International Index of Bribery for News Coverage (2003), cited in Brayton (2008), the objectivity of the media cannot be proved if it is subject to monetary influences and pressures:

> A consumer news medium in no culture or situation can declare its objectivity, fairness and communication integrity when gate-keeping decisions are influenced by factors that are unseen and such as occurs with "cash for news coverage". This is especially true in societies that claim to be democratic and civil and humane. An attempt to present truth in a fair and objective manner and in a known context must be seen as a universal value when the value of truthfulness is declared, either explicitly or implicitly. (p. 25)

In Nigeria, many journalists attend political and various events expecting to receive not necessarily scoops, but cash-filled brown envelopes. Local and international observers monitoring ongoing elections warn that the practice is threatening to corrode Nigeria's fledgling democracy because positive publicity is usually reserved for the highest givers. It is an irony that this is supposed to be a profession that is all out to unearth corruption, yet it is now one of the bastions of corruption in the country. Reporters are becoming increasingly perceived as

"hired guns" rather than professionals who are out to serve the public good (Obianigwe, 2009, p. 25).

However, the "brown envelopes" are sometimes seen as a "cannot-do-without" since they aid the survival of the journalist. This syndrome has become so institutionalised in the press that even the senior editors prompt their subordinates to fend for themselves as they go to the fields to gather information. According to Nze, a political writer with the *People's Agenda*, a daily newspaper based in Lagos, recalled that when he was hired, his editors gave him his press credentials with the admonition to "go out there and make money for yourself". A good political writer could earn about $200 a month by attending events and collecting brown envelopes and most times you do your job and please some people, those you please would appreciate you (Maharaj, 2003).

Ayodele (1988, p. 111, as cited Obianigwe, 2009) emphasized the fact that there had been severe charges of sycophancy levelled against the media and its staff. Sycophancy in this context refers to the media professionals who sing praises of the powerful people in a bid to get something from them. There are always sycophants in the midst of media men and women who, having abdicated their sacred duty, oath and trust play up to the gallery; journalists whose actions and attitudes appear or actually are snivelling and grovelling. As desirable as objectivity in news presentation, it cannot thrive in climates populated by questionable characters and personalities who have taken over the media industry.

The media are clearly recognized as having four major functions. The surveillance of the environment as well as analyzing and interpreting events in the environment form an important part of these four major functions. Ayodele (1988), cited in Obianigwe (2009, p. 26), further posits "that the degree to which the journalists exhibit sycophantic tendencies or actually plays the sycophant in his surveillance, analytic and interpretative roles, is determined to a large extent by what type of constraints, bias, prejudice or personal opinion he has. Therefore, the journalist is objective only to the extent to which he is not unduly influenced by personal bias, prejudice or other extraneous constraints. Personal bias and constraints could stem from one or a combination of factors: political non neutrality, financial and job insecurity, the journalist's cosmology, prevailing social prejudice and idiosyncrasies".

However, in whatever way the personal bias or constraints of the media is viewed, the aim of the press here is to give and report issues in a way that it aligns with the public interest, but where there are personal injunctions based on the reasons given above, the subject of the publics' interest tends to be hazy. Ganiyu (2004, p. 17) stressed the fact that journalism demands that its practitioners be incorruptible no matter what they face. They should not succumb to bribery and corruption, never receiving gratification in order to cover or publish an event. Public interest should at all times dictate the conduct of the journalist. Mark Fowler, former Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission defines public interest as that which interests the public (Olukotun, 2005, p.1). McQuail (2003) also views public interest as "The idea that expectations from, and claims against the mass media on the grounds of the wider and longer term good of society can be legitimately expressed and may lead to constraints on the structure or activity of the mass media"(p. 301).

Interestingly, the code of ethics for Nigerian journalists adopted by the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) stresses public interest in its preamble thus: "Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. It is morally imperative for every journalist and the various news media to observe the highest professional and ethical standards; in the exercise of his duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for public interest".

Olukotun (2005) posited that this principle was linked to that of the concept of media accountability whereby the media were held down to some notions of responsibility regarding the content, quality and impact of their work, in the larger interest of society. The public interest principle can be traced back to the American

Commission on Freedom of the press of the 1940's which suggested that "the press looks upon itself as performing a public service of a professional kind", which however emphasizes the fact that there are some things which a truly professional man will not do for money.

There are of course deep contentions among scholars as to what constitutes the public interest and who should decide, as the commercial interest of the press seems to override that of the public. According to Dan Agbese (1995), as cited in Olukotun (2005):

> Publishing is business; a business is no good unless it survives. The publication which sells is the publication which is successful. It is also the one that survives. Everyone who invests in a newspaper or magazine wants to make money. Unless the publication sells, the money cannot be made and the investment is lost. In the search for profit, there is then the relegation of news worthy issues for those that will bring profits to the organization even when it is not in the common good of the public. (p. 2)

Theoretical Issues

As we note in the introductory part of this paper, the journalist is responsible to the general public in terms of how he/she reports news. This justifies the use of social responsibility theory as a theoretical support for this paper. During the yellow journalism era, most media professionals cared very little for the niceties of accuracy, objectivity, and public sensitivities. But in the first decades of the 20th century, a crusade began among some media professionals to clean up the media and make them more respectable and credible. The watchword of this crusade was professionalism and its goal was elimination of irresponsible and shoddy content (Baran & Davis, 2003, p. 93). As a result, there was the need for a theory to guide this task of media reform and answer questions in relation to:

(1) Should the media do something more than merely distribute whatever content will earn them the greatest profits in the shortest time?

(2) Are there some essential public services that the media should provide even if no immediate profits can be earned?

(3) Should the media become involved in identifying and solving social problems?

(4) Is it necessary or advisable that the media serve as watchdogs and protect consumers against business fraud and corrupt democrats? (Baran & Davis, 2003, p. 93)

Baran and Davis (2003, p. 93) established the fact that the answers to these questions are contained in the normative theory of the press, which is a type of theory that describes an ideal way for a media system to be structured and operated in particular societies and situations. Normative theories describe the way things should be done if some ideal values and principles are to be realised. Of all the other forms of normative theories, the one that has an enduring appeal for media practitioners, especially American media practitioners, is the Social Responsibility Theory. As at the time Siebert, Peterson and Schramm wrote their book on the Four Theories of the Press, Social Responsibility was clearly recognised as one important construct out of the other three that were mentioned. Social Responsibility theory from all intent and purpose came about to address the rather utopian expectations of the Libertarian theory.

However, some individuals like Harold Lasswell and Walter Lippmann believed in direct regulation of the media by the government agency or commission. This idea was founded on the premise that the media practitioners cannot be trusted to communicate responsibly or to use media to serve public vital needs. From the findings of the Hutchinson Commission on the role of the press, social researchers at the University of

Chicago—the Chicago School opposed the notion of unregulated mass media as they would inevitably serve the interest and tastes of large or socially dominant group and the small groups would be regulated to the background.

Social Responsibility Theory presupposes that the media take it upon themselves to elevate their standards, providing citizens with the sort of material and disinterested guidance they need to govern themselves. Dennis McQuail (2000) summarized the basic principles of social responsibility thus:

> (1) Media should accept and fulfil certain obligations to society; (2) These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance; (3) In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self-regulating within the framework of law and established institutions; (4) The media should avoid whatever might lead to crime, violence or civil disorder or give offense to minority groups; (5) The media as a whole should be pluralistic and reflect the diversity of their society by giving access to various points of view and rights of reply; (6) Society and the public have a right to expect high standards of performance and intervention can be justified to secure this for the public good; (7) Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers and the market. (p. 212)

With regard to the issue of BES, this theory explains the fact that, media ownership is a form of stewardship rather than unlimited private franchise. In other words, the media are established to serve the intent of the public rather than personal interests. Yet the quest for personal aggrandisement seems to have infiltrated the practice of journalism in Nigeria and beyond. The social responsibility of the press goes further than devotion of the press to the service of public interest through provision of accurate, truthful, and complete accounts of the day's events to the public or self-determined pursuits.

The fact of this theory in essence is that the media must operate within the confines of all social standards and ethics. The Commission on the Freedom of the Press (1942), as cited in Uwakwe (2003), provided an idea about what responsible performance is:

> It is the duty of the press to provide a truthful, comprehensive account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning. The press should serve as a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism, give a representative picture of the groups in the society, help in the presentation and clarification of goals and values of the society, and provide full access to the day's intelligence. (p. 283)

Media Professionalism and Ethical Enforcement: The Missing Link

The media of communication are regarded as mirrors through which we can view our world. From news reporting and investigative journalism to the broadcasting of soaps, drama, and films, they provide us with information, entertainment and seek to enhance our understanding of the world. Hence, in often indirect ways, the media engage with and affect our beliefs, values and fundamental commitments to external relationships. Naturally, given the media's increasing presence and influence within our world, a lot of ethical and social questions that need to be addressed have come to the fore. This then means that given the impact of the media, in principle as Abati (1999, p. 69) posits, the media should be responsible to all constituencies in terms of how it reports news, interprets events and mediates social reality.

But often, the media's interests and interests of individual journalists clash with other interests in the environment. Here, although perceptions are usually not the same nevertheless, the media in fulfilling its function as "inspector general of society" must remain true to its own ethics. The media in any society at all, ought to exercise responsibility one way or the other. It presupposes that the media has the capacity, breadth and the mind to impact on society.

After a long study into the nature of the press in Nigeria, Abati (1999) said that beyond the politics of the

media, it faced other challenges relating to practice, ethics, and professionalism, "the future growth of journalism as a profession in the country, would depend on the degree of investment on ethics and professionalism"(p. 88). However, with regards to the subject under discourse, objectivity, truth and other responsibility of the media must be adhered to, in a bid to ensure that some basic rules that apply to the ethics of the media are observed. In Nigeria, the press is no longer keen on giving objective reports to their audience, hence the reason why the image of the press is deteriorating overtime. There have been accusations of bias, press cynicism, media manipulation, condemnations of journalism intrusions into peoples' privacy, worries about the damaging or distorted effect of the televised media on people and the impact of a mediatised world generally. Media manipulations have thus been made possible via the brown envelope received by journalists on several occasions in unholy alliance with news sources and makers. The BES has eaten deep into media practice and professionalism in mostly developing societies thus casting a dark shadow on media credibility. Because of BES, we now have a distorted view of global reality. This is very disturbing if not dangerous in a world that is heavily dependent on the media to make up its mind.

With all that has been identified with the Nigerian journalists, how far have they been able to keep to the code of ethics and ethical standards that have been set? Despite the codes and noble intents that have been put forward by media organizations and associations, incidents of corruption and unethical practices are still rampant in the Nigerian media. It was discovered by the Media Rights Monitor (2000, p. 4, as cited in Ekeanyanwu & Obianigwe, 2010) that these vices thrive in the Nigeria media industry because the culture of ethics and sound morality in the Nigeria journalism is a culture which is never heeded by those who preach it. According to the Media Rights Monitor, many senior editors are eager to receive lucrative media consultancy contracts with government officials, wealthy individuals, and organizations and they are often alleged to go to these places to negotiate sale of stories filed in by reporters that are not favourable to persons and groups concerned. There are also no official instruments with which to enforce adherence to ethical values in Nigeria and where such exists, the pedigree of the persons vested with such authority is often a subject of concern.

Numerous journalists, on the basis of friendship, ethnic and religious affinity, relationship or in deference to authority, set aside their professional judgment in the performance of journalistic functions. They then perpetrate corruption and unethical practices through tendering of bias reports, where the journalists often become more political than politicians by not giving all parties to an issue the benefit of responding to charges published against them. Thus, Nigerian journalists instead of reporting events have become events themselves.

These situations as described make it important for a professional code of conduct to regulate media performance and professional conduct. The importance of ethics is underscored by the fact that all journalists and professional associations worldwide have ethical standards that guide and regulate their members' professional activities. Also, numerous media organizations have in-house ethical standards prescribed for their journalists. In Nigeria, besides the NUJ Code of Conduct, numerous media organizations also have in-house codes that they make available to journalists upon employment.

Although the NUJ's Code of Conduct or the Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice can be seen as constraining behaviours of individual journalists, they may also help journalists to resist what they see as unethical behaviour and to defend journalistic integrity (Harcup, 2004). In Nigeria, code of ethics for journalists was first established and adopted by the Nigeria Press organisation (NPO) in 1979. This code paved way for a new one which is currently in existence. Nigerian journalists pledge to abide by these codes of ethics and to observe them judiciously. The extent to which these codes have been observed by Nigerian journalist is so

limited especially with regards to the issue under discourse. According to Okunna (2005, p. 93), there is an erroneous notion that ethics cannot be enforced; it is however the press council which is an appropriate organ for the enforcement of ethical codes in journalism, and the Nigerian Press Council should be empowered to play its role in the effort to enthrone balance in the nation's media content. Omole (2000) as cited in Okunna (2005) emphasized the role of the NPC thus:

> The Nigerian Press Council is a quality control arbiter that facilitates the promotion of a fair, vigorous and credible journalism by providing the forum where the public and the news media can engage each other in examining ethical standards of truth, balance and fairness. (p. 93)

With recourse to the BES, the issues specified in the code of ethics that concerns this topic can be clearly drawn from: Accuracy and Fairness, Rewards and Gratification, Access to Information, and Public Interest. This entails that the issue of financial gratification is important and draws with it several other implications that could alter the journalism profession.

However, our worry here is that this code has been in existence for more than a decade now and still BES has become even more hydra-headed and complex in its application. This malady has become institutionalized in the Nigerian media industry, that eradicating it seems herculean. But the truth remains that no matter how long a disease stays in the human body, it does not make it right or become part of the original human mechanism or system. Therefore, enforcement of the various codes that preach professionalism is the only way to ensure ethical conduct and behaviour amongst journalists and other categories of media practitioners. This is what we consider, from our empirical findings, as the missing link in the quest to rid the media industry in Nigeria from the monster called BES.

We know that pessimists will criticise how this could be achieved. We make bold to say that not all Nigerian journalists and media practitioners are corrupt. There are a lot of them out there who detest anything immoral, unprofessional and unethical, including BES. They may be few but with concerted efforts and media attention to the issues raised in this paper, this could be curbed and even be eradicated with time. What is urgently needed in the meantime is to appoint men of proven integrity to hold sway in the bodies that are supposed to control the activities of the practitioners in the industry. They should also be empowered to do their jobs. We believe that immediately convictions start coming after trials, others will sit up.

Before this stage could be reached, government and private operators should attempt to make the industry somehow attractive with improved welfare packages, so that the common excuse of making the ends to meet will no longer be tenable. But what surprises us in the course of this study is that most of the persons involved in this disgraceful professional misconduct will never let a thief who stole to eat to go free. This means that poverty and hunger could never justify stealing or killing. So, why would a journalist use poverty and hunger to justify professional misconduct, immorality, and unethical practices? Definitely, this can no longer be an acceptable excuse for the professional misconduct called BES.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper is based on the findings of a study on BES by Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe (2010), which evaluated media practitioners' perception of BES as an unethical issue in the Nigerian media industry. The findings were validated through the multiple methods of data collection undertaken. For instance, the researchers used a combination of interviews with senior editors in the chosen newspapers, observation of

events in press conferences and survey of practicing journalists in Lagos, Nigeria.

The study recommended that for a strong capital base, mergers and acquisitions be encouraged so that they can have a strong capital base to provide for worker's welfare; editorial policy about rewards and gratifications has to be clear and distinctive so that media institutions could apply sanctions to journalists that accept gratification from news sources as long as they pay these journalists well; the NUJ should enforce industry wide welfare standards so as to fortify the integrity of journalists to resist bribery in whatever form it comes.

However, majority of the journalists were of the opinion that the following measures could help address the situation:

(1) Proper education and understanding of the meaning of BES;

(2) Adequate ethical orientation;

(3) Improved welfare packages;

(4) Fear of God;

(5) Organization of public campaigns and workshops for media people and givers;

(6) Proper reward in media organization and prompt payment of salaries;

(7) Enhanced working conditions/ improved conditions of service;

(8) Enhanced self worth;

(9) Provision of logistics (transportation) for staff during official assignments;

(10) Sustained awareness creation on the malaise;

(11) Employees should be treated with dignity;

(12) Job security measures should be put in place;

(13) Professionalism and enforcement of professional codes that guide the industry;

(14) Provision of adequate equipment and resources for doing the work;

(15) Checking the infiltration of quacks into the system;

(16) Overall improvement in the economic climate in the country;

(17) Recognition of the role of journalists by the government;

(18) Better and improved motivation;

(19) Stiffer sanctions on givers and takers of BES by the Nigerian Union of Journalists;

(20) The Economic Financial and Crimes Commission should be strengthened to check against corrupt politicians so as to reduce corruption;

(21) Enactment of a specific law against the BES;

(22) Organizers of events should give journalists advertisements instead of brown envelopes;

(23) Reduce time pressure on journalists;

(24) Honest leaders and leadership;

(25) Proper building of the nation's economy;

(26) Retirement benefits;

(27) Roper editorial checks;

(28) Societal checks;

(29) Inter-industry competitive remuneration;

(30) Changing reporters' beats;

(31) Morality should be instilled in the journalist;

(32) The Freedom of Information bill should be passed by the government so that journalists would be

conscious of the journalists' ethical codes;

(33) Media ombudsman;

(34) Promotion and celebration of journalists who have made desirable achievements;

(35) Proper organization of the NUJ like other professional bodies e.g., ICAN.

On the other hand, the minority respondents who did not feel that the tradition could be combated also gave reasons which included:

(1) African culture to show appreciation;

(2) Brown envelopes do not influence journalists to give bias reports;

(3) Media relations and corporate gifts cannot be separated from money gratifications;

(4) Poor remuneration;

(5) Inadequate monitoring of published items;

(6) Gatekeepers' perception;

(7) Capitalists run media organizations with their own interest uppermost in their minds than that of the workers;

(8) Organisers may see you as unwilling to report the news when you do not accept it/ givers take offence when appreciation is turned down;

(9) Universal practice that cannot be ruled out;

(10) The greed of some journalists cannot be ignored;

(11) Insincerity of the Nigerian system encouraged by the larger society;

(12) The "pay before service" mentality in Nigeria;

(13) Pressures and the desperate need for favourable coverage by organizations.

The willingness of the journalists to aid in the dejection of this practice is hinged on the fact that for the practice to be curbed, other issues of welfare and motivation must be considered, rather than the long held view that it is mainly the meagre salaries of the journalists that prompts them to receive brown envelopes. We therefore conclude that strengthening and enforcement of the existing codes in the industry remain the missing link in our quest to entrench true professionalism and ethical practices in the Nigerian media industry.

References

Abati, R. (1999). The media in Nigeria: Patriots or cynics? In T. Oseni (Ed.), *The media, transition, and Nigeria* (pp. 56-78), Nigeria: Solaprint.

Adewale, F. (2008, June 12). The rot in Nigerian journalism is much deeper than we thought. Retrieved August 16, 2011 from http://www.ngex.com/news/public/article.php?ArticleID=961

Akabogu, C. (2005). The ethical journalist and brown envelope syndrome: The way forward. *International Journal of Communication, 3*, 201-205.

Alvin, D. (2000). *Ethics in media communication: Cases and controversies.* Belmont: Wadsworth.

Baran, S., & Davis, D. (2003). *Mass communication theory: Foundation, ferment, and the future*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Brayton, C. (2008, July 8). Afghanistanism in Nigerian journalism. Retrieved September 16, 2008 from http://tupiwire.wordpress.com/

Charles, B. (1999). The media as conscience of the nation. In T. Oseni (Ed.), *The media, transition, and Nigeria* (pp. 21-34). Nigeria: Solaprint.

Danladi, K. (2008, September 14). Choppe syndrome in Nigerian journalism. Retrieved October 14, 2008 from http://www.saharareporters.com/

Easterman, M. (2003, October 7). Nigerian press program 0340. *Common ground: Radio's weekly program on world affairs*. Retrieved August 7, 2008 from http://commongroundradio.org/

Ekeanyanwu, N. T., & Obianigwe, N. (2010). Perception of Lagos-Based journalists on brown envelope syndrome (BES) in the coverage of news events in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review, 1*(1), 117-125.

Ganiyu, M. (2004). *The reporter's companion: A complete guide in news reporting and writing companion series 1.* Nigeria: Emgee.

Hanson, R. E. (2005). *Mass communication: Living in a media world.* New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.

Harcup, T. (2004). *Journalism: Principles and practice*. London: Sage

Hermawan, A. (2006, July 23). *Indonesia: Journalists start against "envelop journalism"*. Retrieved August 7, 2008 from http://www.asiamedia.com/

Maharaj, D. (2003, April 17). *A good scoop in Nigeria fills reporter's purse.* Retrieved September 16, 2008 from http://www.latimes.com/

McNair, B. (1998). *The sociology of journalism*. London: Arnold.

McQuail, D. (2000). *McQuail's mass communication theory* (4th ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Ngwodo, C. (2008). *Truth, power, and the Nigerian press.* Retrieved August 9, 2008 from http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/

Obianigwe, N. (2009). Perception of Lagos-Based journalists on brown envelope syndrome in the coverage of news events in Nigeria (an unpublished B.SC. Project, submitted in the Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University).

Okoye, T. (2007, August 29). *How to stop brown envelope syndrome.* Retrieved September 28, 2008 from http://www. sunnewsonline.com

Okunna, S. (2003). Media ethics: Making media professionals partners in national development. In Uwakwe (Ed.), *Communication and National Development* (pp. 66-81). Nigeria: Africa Links Books.

Okunna, S. (2005). Re-inventing media content in Nigeria: Creating a balance between social responsibility and business concern. *International Journal of Communication, 2,* 85-93.

Olukotun, A. (2005). The media and national development. In Oso, Lai (Ed.), *Communication and Development* (pp. 34-51), Nigeria: Jedidah Publishers.

Omenugha, K., & Oji, M. (2007). *News commercialisation, ethics and objectivity in journalism in practice in Nigeria: Strange bed fellows.* Retrieved September 16, 2008 from http://www.labcom.ubi.pt/ec

Onyisi, T. (1996). Mass Media Ethics: Analysing the 'Brown Envelope'or 'AWUFU' syndrome. In I. Nwosu & U. Ekwo (Eds.), *Mass media and marketing communications* (pp. 78-91). Enugu: Thoughts Communications Publishers.

Oseni, T. (Ed.). (1999). *The media, transition, and Nigeria.* Nigeria: Solaprint.

Torres, J. (2008, July 18). *Unethical practice is threatening journalism*. Retrieved August 26, 2008 from http://www.gmanews.tv/nation

Umejie, E. (n. d.). Brown envelop syndrome and salad journalism. *Poor Remuneration Bane of Nigerian Journalism 2*. Retrieved September 18, 2008 from http://www.independentngonline.com/

Uwakwe, O. (Ed.) (2003). *Communication and national development.* Nigeria: Africa Links Books.

Zaggi, H. (2007, June 28). *Editorial independence in Nigeria media: The way forward*. Retrieved 2008 from http://www.nasarawastate.org/newsday/index/html

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 530-538

Methodology of Culture: The Power of (Foreign) Films

Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager
University of Denver, Denver, USA

This essay critically addresses the cross-cultural challenges international and study-abroad students have to face in the process of (geographical and metaphorical) world travel and demonstrates how a better interaction and re-connection with culture can be facilitated with the help of authentic foreign films with intercultural topicality. This essay illustrates the importance of intercultural cinematography as powerful means of gaining cultural awareness and promoting inclusive cross-cultural dialogue.

Keywords: intercultural cinematography, power, marginalization, inclusive dialogue

Introduction

> In this age of mixing and hybridity, popular culture, particularly the world of movies, constitutes a new frontier providing a sense of movement, of pulling away from the familiar and journeying into and beyond the world of the other. (Hooks, 1996, p. 2)

It is quite challenging for study-abroad students to first adjust to a foreign culture of their interest and then again, to re-adjust to their home culture. At the same time, cross-cultural travel of the constantly growing number of students is typical for the current century of globalization and on-going migration. This essay demonstrates how the processes of the unavoidable (direct and reverse) acculturation can be facilitated with the help of visuality that connects to students' living experiences. Specifically, this essay demonstrates the salience of using authentic foreign films, those unique cultural journeys in the virtual reality of another country, created in and through inter/national cinematography, as powerful means of gaining cultural awareness and sensitivity, necessary for cultural travel.

Films divulge cultural truths and norms that serve as conscious or subconscious lessons to their viewers, thus forming a lens with which the audience can look through when encountering the foreign culture—A hermeneutical lens, different from that crafted by the culture of origin. In such a way, a film becomes a resource, necessary for construction of a well-rounded and non-discriminatory view and understanding of a foreign culture. This essay demonstrates how authentic foreign films may serve as cultural bridges and alternative pedagogical means of critically addressing various social differences and enabling cross-cultural communication on terms of reciprocity, mutual respect, and inclusion.

Cultural Reality on Screen: Discourse of Cinematographic Borderlands

The social phenomenon of multifaceted border crossing is central in the current century of globalization. Border crossing can be understood as geographical, political, rhetorical, and cultural. In the very process of migration and travel, international and study-abroad students constantly face numerous challenges of

Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager, Ph.D., Communication Department, University of Denver.

multifaceted border crossing that tend not only to challenge but also to change them, their personalities, their social positions, as well as their fundamental attitudes to "selves" and "others" they encounter in new cultural contexts they are exposed to. A critical cultural scholar Anzaldúa (2007) suggested that the borders and walls that are supposed to keep the undesirable ideas out are entrenched habits and patterns of behavior; yet, these habits and patterns are the foes within. Therefore, especially nowadays, cultural rigidity can become fatal since it does not allow for what Lugones (1994) defined as "world travel": a fascinating journey to the world of the "other".

International and study-abroad students constantly undergo the intriguing processes of world travel; crossing geographical, rhetorical, linguistic, and cultural borders. As a result, they are confronted with social realities, different from those, communicated by their own culture. In their work on critical media texts, Ott and Mack (2010) characterized culture in itself as a problematic and complex term. They suggested that culture is rhetorical and thus functions symbolically. Therefore, possessing certain culture is a result of our shared symbol system that allows us to communicate meaning to one another. In other words, a culture is sustained and transmitted through the words and images that are salient for members of the culture. Furthermore, as suggested by Anzaldúa (2007), we only perceive the version of reality that culture communicates; and, at the same time, reality is reflected in and created through media. Movies, specifically, act like cinematographic essays, conversations, and interviews that rigorously and playfully examine what we are seeing, ways in which we think about what we are seeing, and ways in which we look at things differently. This work interrogates even as it continually celebrates cinema's capacity to create new awareness, to transform culture right before our eyes, to create and re-create identities (Hooks, 1996). Hooks (1984, 1990, 1995, 1996, 2000, & 2001) recognized that critical discussions of films took place everywhere in everyday life and emphasized a transformative character of the discussions. Across class, race, sex, age, and nationality, people watch films and talk about them, virtually crossing cultural borders and politicizing the impact of media scapes.

Films have a tremendous impact on our vision of the reality and on the interpretative lens we use to make sense of this reality. The national cinematography (in particular) and mass media (in general) of the United States, for example, create on screen an Americanized version of the reality that re-confirms the intrinsic national value of the famous American Dream and serve to further promote in the world national values and attitudes, known as the culture of Americanization. Ott and Mack (2010) provided a vivid example of how the media can be strategically used to maintain and promote the national American interests:

> Media regulations with the goal of maintaining national interest are concerned primarily with American domestic infrastructure and global image. Often most apparent in times of war, these regulations ensure that media technology and practices do not compromise national security and the government's ability to protect the public. (p. 83)

Media both regulate the information the audiences need to create their vision of the reality; and, even more importantly, media create certain visions of the reality on screen by means of strategic representation of salient social domains and prevailing relations of power. Often acting in the national interest of their home country/culture, such imagery reflects the dominant ideas of, for instance, marginalization of certain ethnic/religious groups; and can potentially develop into a tool of marginalization or, on the contrary, liberation.

Intercultural cinematography is particularly keen on centering and politicizing the relations between the "self" and the "other". By creating such imaginary, cinematography assumes a pedagogical role in lives of

people and serves as a means of teaching culture. In her work on cinematography, Hooks (1996) suggested,

> Movies remain the perfect vehicle for the introduction of certain ritual rites of passage that come to stand for the quintessential experience of cultural border crossing for everyone who wants to take a look at difference and the different without having to experientially engage with the "other". (p. 12)

In other words, movies are cultural journeys with limited risks for those who, like international and/or study abroad students, expose themselves to the challenges of world travel to the unknown side of the "other", whose cinematographic identities are political and representative of the society. Cinematographic representations are cultural processes that constitute individual and collective identities. Representations serve as signifying practices and symbolic systems that discursively constitute and reproduce meanings and subject positions, with which we identify (Hall, 1996; Woodward, 1997). Therefore, the question of identifying with art goes beyond the issue of representation *per se*; it is representative of the entire society, its politics of inclusion and exclusion, and, most importantly, the issues of cultural dominance and power, typical of the processes of cross-cultural communication. Dominant paradigms, i.e., predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable are transmitted to us through the culture. Typically, the dominant cultural paradigm is socially constructed (and further confirmed through the imagery in media) by those in power who want to re-claim it over and over again—usually, at the cost of marginalizing and ostracizing culturally different communities. Such version of culture is typically created and confirmed by the master narrative.

Art Under the Influence: Impact of Master Narrative

Master narrative is multifaceted. It operates on visible and invisible levels. It expresses itself in practices of educational system, job market, popular culture, and, unavoidably, mass media. It confirms the center and reconstructs the borders, the pieces of defense that would not allow the "other" to enter and to belong to. And it sets its own rules and criteria for cultural "passing" of the "other", for their social inclusion and integration or, on the contrary, their marginalization and exclusion. The master narrative suggests the presence and disturbance of a number of discourses that produce "ascriptive identities that are disabled, colonized, voiceless, powerless, nameless, and hence known and therefore dismissible" (Swadener & Mutua, 2007, p. 37). Master narrative reflects and re-creates dominant culture. As suggested by Ott and Mack (2010), culture is always ideological. The version of culture we inhabit teaches us to see the world in some particular ways and not in others by means of privileging and normalizing certain power discourses.

Discourses of social privilege are usually grounded in relations to power as defined by Foucault (1972, 1977, 1980, 1990). Foucault suggested that discourse is powerful, but it is powerful in a particular way, because it is productive. Discourse disciplines can subject into certain ways of thinking and acting. Rose (2001) suggested that "Human subjects are produced through discourses. Our sense of our self is made through the operation of discourse. So are objects, relations, places, scenes: discourse produces the world and understands it" (p. 142). Discourse creates our social reality and our perception of the world, our ways of encoding, and decoding messages we receive from it.

In his work on encoding and interpreting visuality, Hall (1980) argued that the mass media and popular culture create a specific discourse, and the latter usually encodes what he called the "dominant code", which supports the existing political, economic, social and cultural order. In making his argument, Hall was drawing above all on the work of Gramsci on "hegemony" as the dominant meanings and values of a society—the sort

of power, maintained by culturally constituent forms. Ott and Mack (2010) suggest that the concept of hegemony is a key in understanding the ascension and persistence of dominant ideologies. They interpret hegemony as the process by which one ideology subverts other competing ideologies and gains cultural dominance. *Ergo,* hegemony is the process of convincing people to support the continued existence of a social system.

Dominant (aka hegemonic) ideologies reflect the desires and interests of socially powerful groups, yet at the same time these ideologies also come with the added promise that it is in the best interest of dominated individuals for them to accept these particular values and beliefs. On that meaning, by limiting the possible perceptions or interpretations of the world, ideology also normalizes certain aspects of it, makes social relationships and arrangements between individuals seem normal, and makes established relationships of power appear to be natural order of things. Nakayama and Krizek (1995) for example referred to discourses of whiteness in the United States as an ideological rhetoric: the visuality and the discourses most commonly used to portray and discuss whiteness reinforce its privileged place at the centre of our conceptualization and interpretation of race.

Nead (1988) also suggested that films in particular and art in general should be understood as an ideological discourse, as a specialized form of knowledge that creates our perspectives on power. She specifically claimed that "The discourse of art consists of the visual images, the language and structures of criticism, cultural institutions, publics for art and the values and knowledge made possible within and through culture" (p. 4).

On this interpretation, the concept of art goes beyond understanding of visual images and becomes knowledge, institutions, subjects and practices which work to shape our consciousness and our vision of the world in a certain way. In other words, discourses are articulated through all sorts of visual and verbal images and texts and also through the practices those languages permit, suggesting in such a way intertextual reading of cinematographic works.

The very concept of "intertextuality" refers to "the way that the meanings of any discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image but also on the meaning carried out by other images and texts" (Rose, 2001, p. 142). Thus a specific visuality will make certain things visible in particular ways and other things un-seeable, invisible and thus seemingly unimportant. This dynamic of visual (in)visibility, in its turn, has political implications for the relations of power, privilege, and marginalization.

Going in line with the dominant cultural ideology, a popular cinematographic perspective silences the voices of cultural "others", representing them in their biased cultural rigidity. Speaking in colonial terms, the question of cinematographic representation of cultural diversity goes back to the socially established stereotypical binary and further colonizes our minds instead of suggesting non-discriminatory inclusive strategies. As suggested by Bhabha (1994),

> The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, ongoing negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridity that emerges in moments of historical transformation. (p. 3)

In his critique of the politics of representation, Bhabha went back to the challenging nature of what Alcoff (1992) defined as "the problem of speaking for others". In this famous problem of authority, the role of stereotypical (usually negative) representation of cultural diversity proves crucial. Specifically, with regard to

visuality, Ott and Mack (2010) suggested that media stereotypes make value judgments about the worth, taste, and morality of another culture, and in doing so they can influence our attitudes, behaviors, and actions towards members of that culture. Although stereotypes are not always negative reflections of a culture, they yet always overlook the inherent complexity of a cultural group and present media consumers with simplified and flawed representations.

The specificity of authentic foreign films is the alternative, i.e., "switched" cultural perspective—they allow the under- or mis-represented cultural groups to gain the authority/voice/perspective and finally "speak for themselves". A Chinese filmmaker, for example, will suggest a different cinematographic perspective on the specificities of Chinese-American cross-cultural dynamics than an America filmmaker. In other words, a Chinese cinematographic perspective suggests topicality, social behaviors, and the dominant system of cultural values, which would drastically differ from the respective American perspective. On that meaning, authentic foreign films have the potential to not only offer an alternative interpretation of the reality, but also to invite the audience to re-think the fundamentals of cross-cultural communication, such as the definition of "self", the "other", and the alternative perspectives on the multifaceted border-crossing. By centering and validating perspectives of typically marginalized and thus often silenced, under or mis-represented groups, such films contain an enormous potential of cultural transformation and promotion of a political agenda of solidarity and social justice.

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) specifically emphasized the salience of art-based work in crossing borders of art and research and promoting a progressive political agenda that addresses issues of social inequity. Such work exposes oppression, targets sites of resistance, and outlines a transformative praxis that performs resistance texts, giving authority and accountability to traditionally silenced voices of marginalized communities. The rhetoric of cinematographic borderlands provides its audience with an extremely powerful asset: the possibility of cultural transformation, essential for the unavoidable process of world travel and necessary for promotion of inclusive and non-discriminatory multiculturalism, a direct consequence of the ongoing cultural migration.

Promises of Visuality: Films as Vehicles of New Consciousness

Contemporary cinematography, especially the one that focuses on critical representation of the "other", contains a reservoir of possibilities for non-discriminatory cross-cultural communication and can be used to initiate a significant change in public consciousness. Furthermore, cinematography has the power of turning its numerous audiences into critical citizens by means of making them media literate. In his work on mediated communication, Potter (2008) emphasized the salience of media literacy in the globalized world:

> Becoming more media literate gives you a much clearer perspective to see the border between your real world and the world manufactured by the media. When you are media literate, you have clear maps to help you navigate better in the media world so that you can get to those experiences and information you want without becoming distracted by those things harmful to you. (p. 9)

The critical awareness, enabled through media literacy, is a necessary prerequisite for the initiation of an inclusive cross-cultural dialogue with the traditionally marginalized groups. In her work with visual rhetoric, Foss (1988) argued that for members of marginalized groups, artwork creates a new forum for participation in public dialogue. Ott and Mack (2010) suggested that much of what we know about the world we live in comes to us in mediated forms, rather than through the direct experience of various social phenomena. Foss (1988)

explained that the display of identity in a public, aesthetic way, typical of intercultural cinematography, creates a place for that group's discourse in the web of social relations. Similarly, Woodward (1997) and Flores (2003) emphasized salience of representation in the process of formation and reformation of cultural identity, specifically focusing on what Alcoff (2006) conceptualized as visual identities, i.e., ethnicity and race. Hooks (1996) suggested that "Movies not only provide a narrative for specific discourses of race, sex, and class, they also provide a shared experience, a common starting point from which diverse audiences can dialogue about these charged issues" (p. 3). On that meaning, films provide a twofold transformative affect on its audiences. On the one hand, they provide a visual platform, i.e., a specific cultural setting that enables a journey in space in time and implements what Alexander (2003, 2008) and Drzewiecka and Nakayama (1998) conceptualized as the politics of space where culture is being created. A unique ability of cinematographic time/space travel allows for and invites to critically re-visit controversial pages of history and to rethink cultural memory, responsible for the hermeneutic lens of contemporary public consciousness. As suggested by Robins (1996),

> Cultural relationships develop through history, through accumulation of stories that we tell ourselves about the "others"; often reflecting fear or ignorance, these stories evolve into mythologies that obscure and deny the reality of the "others". All of these factors may work to inhibit cultural interaction, experience, and transformation. (p. 82)

In other words, films bring us back to the very roots of the historic/ideological specificity of our relationships with the "self" and the "other", shedding light on historically created and often stereotypical attitudes towards the foreigners, such as anxiety, fears, exoticizing, or, on the contrary, fascination with an glorification of foreigners. As Senocak and Tulay (1998) argued, "Condemnation and glorification of foreigners are pretty much the same things; both are defense mechanisms which are not based on partnership but rather on power relations" (p. 275). Such mechanisms define relations of power and manifestation of diverse identities as the most salient features of politics of cinematographic representation.

Although cinematographic imagery often reconfirms existent social ideology of cultural hegemony, it also contains the ability to suggest creative ways of a cross-cultural contact on screen instead of discursively fortifying the boundaries between the "selves" and the "others". Visuality has the power of influencing our minds, creating certain images of relationships with people and cultures different from ours. Jensen (2002) conceptualized arts not only as representative of the social reality around us ,but, most importantly, as capable of changing it:

> If we want to change the world, we need to do it directly. The arts are not good for us; they are us—expressions of us. We cannot look to the arts to transform us, or make the world a better place. To make things better, we need to dispense with instrumental logic and intervening variables, and find democratic ways to identity and engage in right action. It's up to us, not art. (p. 206)

By suggesting a non-discriminatory imagery of "self" and the "other", cinematography can enable its numerous audiences to see (literally and metaphorically) how a contact with the "other" takes place on screen and positively affects both parties involved, culturally transforms their identities, and enriches their concepts of "selves". Furthermore, work with visuality suggests interpretation of identities as fluid social constructions created and re-negotiated through contact, and the cinema has the ability of envisioning of such a contact might look like. Robins (1996) suggested:

> We must consider identities in terms of the experience of relationships: what can happen through relationships, and what happens to relationships. In this way, we can take up again the question of dynamism versus closure in identity.

> Ideally, cultural relationship and interaction will be open to new experience. It will be possible to confront and modify more basic cultural emotions (fears and anxieties) and to recognize the other as a culture apart, not as a projection or extension of one's own culture. On this basis, reciprocity becomes feasible, and it will be possible to display empathy, concern and responsibility in the cultural relationships. (p. 79)

The unique ability of cinematography to extend beyond existing cultural limitations and create an alternative reality on screen contains a reservoir of possibilities for cultural interactions that, instead of typical fear and anxiety towards the unknown cultural, the "other" might be based on tolerance, solidarity, and love. Hooks (2000) further suggested:

> We were, collectively, to demand that our mass media portray images should be used to reflect love's reality, loving interaction would happen. This change would radically alter our culture. The mass media dwells on and perpetuates an ethics of domination and violence because our image makers have more intimate knowledge of these realities than they have with realities of love. (p. 95)

The alteration of culture Hooks addressed in her work criticizes social hegemony, based on relations of cultural dominance and marginalization of diversity that, in fact, have developed into social normativity and needs to be critically revisited in the globalized world of the 21st century. Validation of cultural diversity, enabled in and through cinematography, is salient for creation of inclusive multiculturalism, which in its turn is inseparable from the phenomena of identity, homeland, and language—the concepts crucial for the successful process of effective intercultural dialogue and (geographical as well as metaphorical) world travel.

Power of a Dialogue: Transnational Bridging and Cultural Nomadism

Change of public consciousness towards a non-discriminatory dialogue with cultural diversity is a difficult yet necessary step in the process of promoting inclusive multiculturalism, essential in the globalized culture of the 21st century. Public change of consciousness means the start of a long overdue discussion of repressed identity problems and fear of contact with foreigners (Senocak & Tulay, 1998), a process that contains a reservoir of possibility of cultural transformation. This change is synonymous with the deconstruction of the rigidity of the concepts of "self" and the "other" and initiation of a negotiation of "otherness" as an alternative source of knowledge how to be in the world. Frequently, cinematographic dialogues function as spaces of debates and cultural negotiations and explore how visuality creates a space for and engages in meaningful dialogues among different bodies, minds, and images (Jones, 2005; Conquergood, 1985; Denzin, 2003). Conquergood (1985) specifically suggested that "Dialogical performance is a way of having an intimate conversation with other people and cultures. Instead of speaking about them, one speaks to and with them" (p. 10). Cinematographic dialogues invite various audiences to join the conversation, taking place in virtual reality, created on screen, and in a way to bridge the existing reality with the virtual one. Hooks (1996) suggested that "Media images have so much power that they distort reality" (p. 12), and at the same time their power can be used to bridge the two realities and suggests culturally transformative strategies by offering the right imagery.

Alternative to the metaphor of a cross-cultural dialogue and bridging of different realities, enabled through intercultural cinematography, is the concept of cultural nomadism, also interwoven with identity politics and culturally transformative in its nature. Braidotti (1994) suggested that:

> Nomadic consciousness consists in not taking any kind of identity as permanent. The nomad is only passing through, she/he makes those necessary situated connections that can help her/him to survive, but she/he never takes on fully the limits of one national, fixed identity. The nomad has no passport or has too many of them. (p. 25)

Similar to inclusive cross-cultural dialogue, cultural nomadism contains a reservoir of possibilities of mutual respect, accountability, and fair representation with regard to cultural otherness. As suggested by Alcoff (2006), "Proponents of nomad subjectivity announce that fluidity and indeterminateness will break up cultural hierarchies that inflict oppression and subordination" (p. 275). Most importantly, both cultural bridging and cultural nomadism erase social hierarchies and enable cross-cultural interactions on equal terms, in a form of an open, inclusive communication, based on reciprocal respect, tolerance, and conceptualization of cultural difference as an invaluable asset.

Conclusions

This essay illustrates how contemporary intercultural cinematography plays an educational, even pedagogical role in lives of its numerous audiences. For international and study-abroad students, it specifically suggested considering authentic foreign film with intercultural topicality as means of enabling successful (physical and metaphorical) world travel. This work demonstrates how the images we see and interpret together with the cultural interactions we observe in films have the power of creating certain visions of the world. They also have the power of either confirming or challenging our values, our attitudes, and our relations with different people and cultures. The current essay suggested that only through an open, non-judgmental visual contact with the "other" will the film audiences involved be able to liberate themselves from existing anxieties and fears of cultural difference in their minds. Such liberation is transformative because it allows for a reciprocal dialogue with the "other" in the everyday non-fictional interactions: A dialogue that reaches beyond the irreconcilable differences and creates solidarity and truly inclusive multicultural community.

References

Alcoff, L. M. (1992). The problem of speaking for others. *Cultural Critique, 20,* 5-32

Alcoff, L. M. (2006). *Visible identities: race, gender, and the self.* New York: Oxford University Press

Alcoff, L. M., & Mohanty, S. P. (2006). *Reconsidering identity politics: An introduction.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Alexander, B. K. (2003). Fading, twisting, and weaving: An interpretive ethnography of the black barbershop as cultural space. *Qualitative Inquiry, 9*(1), 105-128.

Alexander, B. K. (2008). Performance ethnography: The reenacting and inciting of culture. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (pp. 75-119). Thousand Oaks, C. A.: Sage.

Anzaldúa, G. (2007). *Borderlands: la frontera. The New Mestiza* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). Culture's in-between. In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 53-61). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Conquergood, D. (1985). Performing as a moral act: Ethical dimensions of the ethnography of performance. *Literature and Performance, 5,* 1-13.

Denzin, N. K. (2003). Performance ethnography: Critical pedagogy and the politics of culture. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin N. K., & Lincoln Y. S. (2008). Methods of collecting and analyzing empirical materials. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 45-57). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Drzewiecka, J., & Nakayama, T. (1998). City sites: Postmodern urban space and the communication of identity. *The Southern Communication Journal, 64,* 20-32.

Flores, L. A. (2003). Constructing rhetorical borders: Peons, illegal aliens, and competing narratives of immigration. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 20(4),* 362-387.

Foss, S. K. (1988). Judy chicago's the dinner party: Empowerment of women's voice in visual art. In B. Bate & A. Taylor (Eds.), *Women Communicating: Studies of Women's Talk* (pp. 9-26). Norwood, NJ: Albex

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge* (translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith). London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith). London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1980). Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings. In G. Colin (Eds.), *Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The history of sexuality: An introduction* (Vol. I, R. Hurley, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Hall, S. (1980). "Encoding/decoding" in centre for contemporary cultural studies. *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies.* London: Hutchinson, 128-38.

Hall, S. (1996). Who needs identity? In S. Hall, & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp.1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hooks, B. (1984). *Feminist theory: From margins to center.* New York: South End Press Classics.

Hooks, B. (1990). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics.* Boston: South End

Hooks, B. (1995). *Art on my mind: Visual politics.* New York: The New York Press.

Hooks, B. (1996). *Reel to real: Race, sex and class at the movies.* New York: Routledge.

Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody*. Cambridge: South End Press.

Hooks, B. (2001). *All about love.* New York: Harper Perennial.

Jensen, J. (2002). *Is art good for us? Beliefs about high culture in American life*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.

Jones, H. J. (2005). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (*3rd ed*, pp.763-791). Thousand Oaks, C. A: SAGE.

Lugones, M. (1994). Playfulness, "world" travelling and loving perception. In D. S. Madison (Ed.), *The Woman That I Am* (pp. 626-638). New York: St. Martin's Press.

Nakayama, T. K., & Krizek, R. L. (1995). *Whiteness: A critical rhetoric. Quarterly Journal of Speech, 81,* 291-309.

Nead, L. (1988). *Myths of sexuality: Representations of women in victorian britain*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ott, B. L., & Mack, R. L. (2010). *Critical media studies: An introduction*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Potter, W. J. (2008). *Media Literacy* (4th ed.), Thousand Oaks, C. A: Sage Publications.

Robins, K. (1996). Interrupting identities: Turkey/Europe. In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 61-87). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rose, G. (2001). Visual methodologies: An introduction to the interpretation of visual materials. Thousand Oaks, C. A: Sage.

Senocak, Z.,& Tulay, B. (1998). Germany—A heimat*?* In A. Harnisch, A. M. Stockes, & F. Weidauer (Eds.), *Fringe Voices: An Anthology of Minority Writing in the Federal Republic of Germany* (pp. 256-264). Oxford: Oxford International Publishers Ltd., Berg.

Swadener, B. B., & Mutua, K. (2007). Decolonizing performances: Deconstructing the global postcolonial. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln, & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (pp. 31-43). Thousand Oask, C. A: Sage.

Woodward, K. (1997). Identity and difference: Culture, media, and identities. Thousand Oaks, C. A: Sage.

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 539-550

The Power of Social Capital in Massive Multiplayer Online Games: Cooperation and Cronyism in World of Warcraft

Mark C. Meachem
Dominican College, New York, USA

The number of people playing Massive Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs) is growing steadily, yet there are limited studies on the social impact that this online activity has. This research, using both quantitative and qualitative data, focused on whether users of the most popular MMOG, World of Warcraft (WoW), exhibited behaviors of social capital in their online gaming activity and whether there was any correlation to offline social capital. The findings indicated that cooperation provided the best indicator to make a correlation about a gamer's offline social capital behaviors. One conclusion, stemming from this is that, in virtual worlds, the added social capital can lead to cronyism and help those in power maintain the status quo.

Keywords: Massive Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs), social capital, World of Warcraft (WoW), online games

Introduction

A growing area of social concern attached to Internet use is video gaming, especially Massive Multiplayer Online Games (MMOGs). While online worlds can often be seen as isolating the user from others, they also can create interaction. Regardless of one's opinion of virtual worlds, like MMOGs, they are growing communities that cannot be ignored. Approximately, 10,000,000 people worldwide, about the same number of people who live in the state of Michigan, play the most popular MMOG, World of Warcraft (WoW), and millions more play other MMOGs (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2007). This is too large a population for academia to fail to understand or recognize. And these numbers are growing dramatically; subscriptions for popular online games grew from just about 1,000,000 users in 2000 to over 16,000,000 users by January 2008. Many of these users are in the US, but a growing number are in Asian markets, such as Korea and Japan (Woodcock, 2008). Some researchers have just begun to examine the effect on social capital that certain separate areas of Internet use has, yet little has been done on the specific effect of MMOGs. This specific area needs more study to determine what effect relationships formed via this Internet option has on users' social connectedness (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Williams, 2004; Williams, Ducheneaut, Xiong, Zhang, Yee, & Nickell, 2006). This paper examines whether gamers who interact in online games have decreased social capital behaviors, or if, in fact, such virtual play is associated with greater social capital behaviors. If there is an increase, do those in power have an advantage in acquiring this capital?

In the book *Democracy in America*, De Tocqueville (1835) noted that what made a democracy unique and special was the need to interact with others, as compared to a centralized tyranny, which promoted isolation and separation. While this was what De Toqueville observed during the fledgling years of American democracy,

Mark C. Meachem, assistant professor, Division of Arts and Sciences, Dominican College.

social interaction has become less common and is no longer sought out in America as a way to answer social issues. In his seminal work *Bowling Alone*, Putnam (2000) found that direct membership in face-to-face organizations dropped from 10% to 20% in the final 30 years of the 1900s, and actual active participation in volunteer organizations and groups plunged more than 50%. According to Putnam, one main reason for this decline in social involvement was technological advancement. Putnam's work, however, was conducted in the early years of Internet usage and the capabilities and role of the Internet and online worlds had changed dramatically. While the social exchanges that De Tocqueville experienced are, in some ways, different from those experienced within social communities on the Internet, the two do share many commonalities that can benefit human understanding of the benefits of social networks. Understanding the importance of social interaction and its critical role in democracy, this research attempts to first identify what, if any, levels of social capital are found in MMOG play and secondly, if MMOGs do require online social capital and connectedness, does power influence these connections?

MMOGs and Social Interaction

MMOGs can be a thoroughly collaborative space, not only within the game but also beyond the game (via fan websites and discussion boards). Moreover, because these virtual worlds are played in real time they function as a highly visible and thoroughly traceable medium (Steinkuehler, in press) for the study of social exchanges. Players engage in a loosely structured environment with open-ended fantasy narratives, and users are generally free to do as they please. Such choices, within a framework of the rules in a virtual world, are not so different from democratic ideals in the real world. Citizens, bound by the framework of democratic laws, are provided a freedom to do as they please.

One of the most important aspects of the development of social capital within and surrounding a MMOG is the ability of the game to help the individuals who play it experience and choose long-term social networks that establish game playing and other social aspects or outcomes of the world surrounding the game. The players also often join guilds, a more formal form of association than the temporary raid or quest groups. They are usually described as the place where most of a player's important relationships are formed and frame a player's social experience in the game (Ducheneaut, Yee, Nickell, & Moore, 2007; Jakobbson & Taylor, 2003; Seay, Jerome, Lee, & Kraut, 2004).

Steinkuehler (in press) said gamers were the form and substance of the deep social networks found in virtual environments and these networks were what made MMOGs different from single-player games. MMOGs generate political systems, social hierarchies, and power structures (Curtis, 1992) and these networks even develop a means to enforce its rules (Jakobbson & Taylor, 2003; Lin & Sun, 2005; Reid, 1994). The social networks in MMOGs also lead to a sharing of the player' collective intelligence as individuals write unofficial user manuals that tend to be more specific and precise than official ones, and they form in-game mentorships to teach new players the cultural norms (Steinkuehler, in press; Galarneau, 2005; Levy, 1997; Squire & Steinkuehler, 2005).

Defining Social Capital

Social capital generally refers to the resources obtained by the social connectedness and the norms of reciprocity that arise from membership within communities. The actual definition of social capital is rather elastic and varies from researcher to researcher. While Narayan and Cassidy (2001) noted that there was

consistency in the definitions of social capital at a broad level, including its forms and the dimensions social capital embraces; the definitions of social capital are varied at an operational level. Not surprisingly then, the methods used to gauge social capital are also diverse.

Social capital is not necessarily a positive element to society. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, social theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) connected the idea of social capital with that of other dimensions of capital that relate to social class—the other two significant dimensions being economic and cultural capital. In this view, social capital relates to conflict because of its emphasis on the power function and control. Bourdieu's view is that social capital, like economic capital, is a resource and such capital is viewed through the eyes of the people engaged in the struggle for capital as they pursue their own interests (Bourdieu, 1986; Siisiainen, 2000). Rather than viewing social capital as connections that bring a society together, Bourdieu (1986) viewed the social connectedness as a byproduct of individuals' attempts to interact with others so they can gain advantages. Being social is a form of long-term investment that requires effort and is done as a necessity to maintain power, rather than something performed out of human kindness. Social capital, which Bourdieu (1986) argued is, at its roots, derived from economic capital. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrued to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). As with any form of capital, Bourdieu felt the more an individual has, the more power and control one gains in a society. In essence, Bourdieu (1986) said social capital offered a credential to an owner that entitled them to some form of credit. As a result, those who are in power make an attempt to maintain the status quo and look to make sure their behaviors are set as the norm by which others are judged. As people gain a profit from this social capital, there is a mutual self-interest to join together and maintain the profitable way, thus leading to social class structure.

The economic divisions develop into social stratification—a division of people into socioeconomic classes or layers. These classes, which derive from inequalities in education, possessions, control of resources, are important for industrial societies (Giddens, Duneier, & Appelbaum, 2000).

However, modern capitalism claims to offer something not all past societies could—an opportunity for social mobility. This means one has the chance to move up or down the socioeconomic scale, giving everyone at least an equal opportunity to improve his/her condition. This ideal may not be the reality in the United States, because the upper class continues to fight for the status quo, which does not allow for sincere mobility. Those who run the capitalist systems argue that everyone is free to make money, yet the reality is that few really do. Capitalism also seems to support values of equal opportunity yet, as we have seen, the results of the system are extremely unequal.

This is evidenced by several studies that show there is a strong connection between parents' socioeconomic status and their children's. An American university study found that a child born in the bottom 10% of families ranked by income has a 31% chance of ending up there as an adult and a 51% chance of ending up in the bottom 20%, while one born in the top 10% has a 30% chance of staying there and a 43% chance of being in the top 20% (Krueger, 2002).

So the American ideal that we can become whatever we choose to be is not the reality. In truth, due to social stratification, the better way to look at our children's future is that they are likely to become (at least economically) what their parents were.

In addition, like economic and cultural resources, such capital can be passed along to younger generations in a family (Bourdieu, 1986; O'Brien & Fathaigh, 2005). This follows the axiom *It is not what you know but*

who you know. Following this idea, because of the social relationships people in power have formed, they can use that social capital to assure that their sons or daughters will attend the best schools and meet people in power so the child can attain jobs that allow him/her to keep social classes static. Conversely, Bourdieu felt the lack of social capital between lower and upper classes keeps the powerless from gaining more capital(Bourdieu, 1986; O'Brien & Fathaigh, 2005; Scholz, 2003). Therefore, what constitutes social capital is defined by the powerful and is based on inequality and social closure.

So even though definitions throughout the 20th century have varied, a growing body of literature over the last several years showed that the definition of social capital regularly included elements of trust, cooperation (or reciprocity), and the exchange of information(Putnam, 2000; Coleman, 1990; Grootaert, Narayan, Nyhan, & Woolcock, 2004). Putnam (2000), like De Tocqueville before him, seemed to argue that active community involvement was a significant way in which citizens experience cooperation and reciprocity. For the purposes of this study, using the main concepts found broadly in most all definitions, the concept of social capital will focus on increased trust, cooperation/reciprocity, and exchanges of information by individuals in a community that can increase individual's social interaction.

Methodology

This research used both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess social capital. For the quantitative aspect, the intent was to recruit members of the game WoW to take an online survey. The survey was offered through the computer program, Survey Monkey. Links to the survey were posted on various popular website forums and chat rooms that revolved around WoW, such as wowhead.com, wowforum.com, and worldofwar.net. It should be understood that while quantitative approach, such as this survey, is suited to drawing inferences from statistical relations, quantitative data lack an understanding of such issues as context and process and that is why the use of qualitative methods is also important.

From a qualitative standpoint, the author utilized participant observation. Like De Tocqueville, one way to understand the virtual world is to be in the world. However, virtual worlds, such as those in MMOGs create methodological problems for researchers. One of the keys to this style of research is that the researcher actually be there, in the field, interacting with the subjects. However, in the case of online worlds, defining where "there" is becomes complicated. In addition, rather than studying the person at the keyboard, such virtual observation is observing the persona created in cyberspace by the gamer (Ducheneaut & Moore，2005). The author interacted in the online world of WoW for over 100 hours (approximately 10 hours a week over three months; 40 hours as a beginner and about 60 hours under an account of an advanced player—above level 60) and observed the experiences of gamers in different stages of the game. WoW was chosen because, as noted earlier, the game is the most popular MMOG in the world and therefore is affecting the largest number of citizens. Using a participant observation style, the author was able to observe the behaviors, communication, and social interactions between players in the environment. While this part of the study can be explained as ethnographic in nature, the author chose not to specifically define it as ethnography. The reason for this is that ethnography concentrates on creating a significant cultural interpretation of one specific community in the MMOG.

Quantitative Research

The quantitative portion of the study focused only on a survey of WoW players. The survey, titled the

MMOG Social Capital Questionnaire (MSCQ), was self-designed but several ideas for questions regarding civic activity came from the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey developed as part of the Saguaro Seminar, an ongoing initiative of social capital expert, Robert D. Putnam of Harvard University. The Saguaro Seminar project centers on increasing understanding of what researchers know about society's levels of trust and community involvement (The Saguaro Seminar from Harvard College, 2007).

Specific details on the statistical survey focused on four variables. One is dependent variable—social capital and three are independent variables—trust, cooperation (reciprocity), and information exchange.

Three independent variables—Trust, cooperation, and information exchange.

Trust: This score was measured on a continuous scale with a range of 1-5 (1 being "never" and 5 being "always"). The score was computed as the average of questions 16-21 from the MSCQ (an example of such a statement from this area would be "I discuss personal issues, such as your job, relationships, and family, with members of my guild"). Lower scores indicated the study participant exhibited in-game trusting behavior to a lesser extent while higher scores indicated the study participant exhibited in-game trusting behavior to a greater extent.

Cooperation: This score was measured on a continuous scale with a range of 1-5. The score was computed as the average of questions 22-27 from the MSCQ (an example of such a statement from this area would be "I help beginning players by offering them in-game advice"). Lower scores indicated the study participant exhibited in-game altruistic behavior to a lesser extent while higher scores indicated the study participant exhibited in-game cooperative behavior to a greater extent.

Information Exchange: This score was measured on a continuous scale with a range of 1-5. The score was computed as the average of questions 28-37 from the MSCQ (an example of such a statement from this area would be "I contact other WoW players outside of the game to discuss WoW via Facebook or social networking sites"). Lower scores indicated the study participant exchanged game-related information outside the game to a lesser extent while higher scores indicated the study participant exchanged game-related information outside the game to a greater extent.

One dependent variable—social capital. This score was measured on a continuous scale with a range of 1-5. The score was computed as the average of questions 5-15 from the MSCQ (an example of a question from this area would be "How often do you have conversations with a neighbor?"). Lower scores indicated the study participant exhibited real life civic activity to a lesser extent while higher scores indicated the study participant exhibited real life civic activity to a greater extent.

Research Questions

R1: Is there a correlation between in-game cooperative behavior and real life social capital?

R2: Is there a correlation between in-game trusting behavior and real life social capital?

R3: Is there a correlation between game-related exchanges of information outside the game and real life social capital?

R4: Does game related to trust, cooperation, and information exchange outside the game add independent information in predicting real life social capital?

Research Hypotheses

Four statistical hypotheses were tested in this study (H0 represents "null hypothesis" and Ha represents "alternative hypothesis").

Hypothesis 1:

H0: There is no correlation between in-game cooperation and real life social capital.

Ha: There is a correlation between in-game cooperation and real life social capital.

Hypothesis 2:

H0: There is no correlation between in-game trust and real life social capital.

Ha: There is a correlation between in-game trust and real life social capital.

Hypothesis 3:

H0: There is no correlation between exchanges of game-related information outside the game and real life social capital.

Ha: There is a correlation between exchanges of game-related information outside the game and real life social capital.

Hypothesis 4:

H0: Cooperation, trust, and information exchange outside the game do not add independent information in predicting social capital.

Ha: Cooperation, trust, and information exchange outside the game add independent information in predicting social capital.

Results

Examining the findings, the author focused on the quantitative results and then used the qualitative data to fill in gaps or offer depth to some of the findings from the survey.

Quantitative Data Collection

The online survey was conducted over a two-month period in early 2009. There were 273 entries in the survey database; however, only 190 completed all of the questions. Therefore, the final sample size for the study was 190. Of the 190 study participants, 84% were male and 16% were female. The average age of those completing the survey was 25.29 years old and the average number of hours spent playing WoW each week was 24.59 hours. Nearly 86% were White, while 5.3% were Asian. Every other ethnic group was represented by less than 4% of respondents. While the large majority of participants were American, because the posting was on a U.S.-based website, there were a few responses from Europe and Asia.

Research Hypotheses Findings

Regarding the four hypotheses, the results of the survey provided varied results with regard to correlations with certain independent variables to social capital. Hypotheses 1 and 3 showed statistically significant correlations, but hypothesis 2 did not show a significant correlation.

H1: The first hypothesis dealt with the correlation between in-game cooperation and real life social capital. There was a statistically significant, moderately strong positive correlation between social capital and Cooperation, r (190) = 0.34; $p \leqq 0.001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between social capital and cooperation. That is, those who tended to exhibit more game-related cooperation tended to also exhibit more real life civic activity.

H2: However, in regard to the second hypothesis, which focused on the issue of trust and the correlation to social capital, the data offered a different result. There was no statistically significant correlation between social capital and trust r (190) = 0.055; $p = 0.45$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected and it was concluded

that there was not a statistically significant relationship between social capital and trust.

H3: The third hypothesis dealt with the issue of a correlation between information exchange among WoW players and the players' real life social capital. There was a statistically significant, weak positive correlation between social capital and information exchange, r (190) = 0.17; $p = 0.021$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between social capital and information exchange.

H4: The final hypothesis aimed to discover whether cooperation, trust, and information exchange inside the game did or did not add independent information in predicting social capital outside the game. collectively, cooperation, trust and information exchange explained a statistically significant proportion of the total variance in social capital scores, F (3,186) = 9.57; $p < 0.001$; R-square = 0.12. The interpretation of the R-square is that cooperation, trust and information exchange collectively explain only 12% of the total variance in social capital scores. However, the data did show that only cooperation was a statistically significant predictor of social capital.

What can be taken away from the results of testing hypothesis 4 is that after controlling for trust and information exchange, the average social capital score is expected to increase by 0.31 points for every 1-point increase in the cooperation score. So once we determine the level of cooperation a player shows in WoW, we can make a determination of that player's offline social capital behaviors, regardless of the player's trust levels or information exchange levels during game play.

Qualitative Observations Regarding Cooperation

Close to 100 hours were spent in direct observation for this research. Approximately half the time was spent as a beginning player (low-level, not in a guild) and the other time was spent as an experienced player (above level 70, member of a guild). As a low-level player, the author chose to be a priest and went from level one to level 14 during my observation time. At the high levels, the character I used was a Dranei Warrior who advanced from level 75 to 80 during my observation.

Cooperation and reciprocity were minor factors at the lower levels of play. Cooperation was also less relevant here because group quests, which required the work of multiple people, did not occur until the low-level avatar was at level 11, meaning that for much of the experience as a new player, the author could handle a quest by himself/herself. Once the author reached level 11 or above, he/she would then begin to see occasional quests that required group work. However, the author did benefit from certain random acts of kindness, which the author classified here as cooperation. While the person helping the author did not need something of his/hers or expect that he/she would (or could) pay back the favor, the author believed this constituted a type of cooperative reciprocity because the person felt that in the future others would help him/her out at a point where he/she needed assistance. In essence, the other person was cooperating with the social system in place rather than with the author directly, since the author could not offer payback. This is the idea of paying it forward, or generalized reciprocity, where a good deed is expected to be repaid by having the benefactor do a good deed to others instead. The author believe that random acts of kindness in WoW are not due to some higher-standard that WoW players live up to and that others do not, but rather that these players who are a part of an online world understand how to effectively pursue their own self-interests. The players help others with the belief that they will eventually be helping themselves. At higher levels of play, such cooperation became an absolute imperative. You are required to form temporary groups that need to work

together on a group quest or a raid if you wish to advance to the next level. It is in these groups that the basic rules of MMOG socialization tend to take place and can be where you find your friends or future guild mates. As a result, having friends at higher levels of power is an asset to those newer players if these lower-level gamers wish to get ahead quickly. In addition, the higher level players set the standard of behavior and can make sure those who become future leaders hold similar patterns of game play and online behavior.

Discussion and Conclusions

Based on the results from the quantitative data, it can be surmised that cooperation provides the best indicator to make a correlation about a gamer's offline social capital behaviors. Simply put, once it is known how much cooperation the WoW player displays in the game, one can make fairly accurate estimates as to that person's level of social capital. Of course, this is not to say that playing WoW increases social capital behavior. Rather, what the data show is that among those who play WoW, their level of in-game cooperation serves as an indicator of the player's social activity offline. This study is not suggesting that WoW makes the player more or less socially active but what can be determined is that those who do have a desire to show social capital behaviors have opportunities to do so through interacting in the WoW community.

However, what is somewhat apparent in the quantitative data and very apparent in the qualitative research is that in-game cooperation is a relevant and necessary behavior for many WoW players as they progress. The cooperative and altruistic behaviors seen in players are not a sense of selfless love for others' well being but rather they are part of an attempt to effectively pursue their own self-interests. This is not to say that the cooperation is done only for personal gain either. Ultimately though, there is no way to determine personal motivations for cooperative behaviors seen in WoW and one must consider the game design as a factor in forming such behaviors. If the game is designed in such a way that cooperation and altruism to others in a guild are rewarded, players are more likely to display those behaviors, even if the motivation is for self-interest. An online game that is designed to reward personal success and that fosters a "me-against-the-world" attitude may likely find players who are less helpful to others. In some ways, these online communities and games are no different than a family or neighborhood that teaches children certain attitudes and behaviors based on the behaviors the child witnesses over and over.

Power and Control in MMOGs

In "More Than Just 'XP': Learning Social Skills in Massively Multiplayer Online Games", the author argues that the complexity of the games is highlighted through the new emphasis of such games on social rules and contexts that must be learned to appropriately interact with other gamers, present and distant (Ducheneaut & Moore, 2005). The gaming scenario requires not only the development of a whole new set of language structure but also a demonstrative set of appropriate and inappropriate social demands. Exclusion from play tends to be the outcome of the display of inappropriate social behavior online, be it through official exclusion or simply having other gamers ignore you if you speak or act inappropriately in the given context. This censure can become a destabilizing consequence for bad behavior and will therefore serve as the most effective deterrent that can exist in the game, given the gamer's degree of investment in the game. However, such exclusion also serves as an example of the restrictions and stratification that exist within social groups. The dominant group wishes to maintain authority and wishes to have others accept the norms the dominant group deems "normal". Those who do not accept these norms may be expelled from a guild or ostracized by others

playing around them. If a player loses their guild, they also lose access to key materials, support, and information, so the desire to conform can be strong if the player wishes to progress in the game(Williams et al., 2006; Jakobbson & Taylor, 2003; Rettberg, 2008). So while social capital may be being built through interaction in MMOGs, the real concern regarding social capital, as noted by Bourdieu, can also be evidenced here that those who develop the most social capital have power over who will be given positions of control, and what behaviors and norms are expected. As a result, those gamers with social capital in a game like WoW can further their own value and reputation.

Another of Bourdieu's concerns about social capital—cronyism—can also be seen within MMOGs. As Jakobsson and Taylor (2003) pointed out, as with real life, success in MMOGs is not always about what you know but rather who you know. These researchers, playing an MMOG titled Ever Quest, compared the interaction in online worlds to being in the mafia. Newer players can get ahead because they are "connected" to other players who are a part of established networks. Such connections, like those in the mafia family, provide benefits both in terms of tangible items (money, weapons) but also intangible items (such as protection and assistance with quests). A player who lacks these connections starts off the game at a disadvantage and is less readily accepted into a group or guild. In their research, Taylor (called T. L.) was a veteran of the game and Jakobsson (called Mikael) had just begun playing. They detail an interaction that exemplifies this issue of cronyism. T. L. then informed Mikael that there were some people that he (Mikael) should meet. Mikael did not entirely understand the point of being introduced to these high-level and long-time players that he was too inexperienced to hunt together with anyway, but T.L. insisted that they were not only very nice but also very useful people to know (Jakobsson & Taylor, 2003, p. 81).

This experience led Mikael to attain gifts and tips that he would otherwise not have had attained until he was much farther along in the game. This highlights a concern of the networks in MMOGs—the development of what is sometimes referred to in the corporate world as the good of boy network. While in the corporate world, such connections may be developed by the ability to play golf or by the prep school the person attends, in a MMOG the benefit may come from a real life friend, a similar expression of an interest, or a specific skill your avatar has. Experienced players are likely to choose friends and those players that have complementary skills but veterans also want players who will agree to follow established norms.

Social capital also can create problems within guilds. Like the medieval guilds, guilds in MMOGs are self-regulated groups that recognize seniority and practice discrimination by recognizing some skills above others. Guild recruitment can become similar to career recruitment where the focus is on people with specific skills and willingness to work hard for the group. Guilds also have rules and norms that members must follow. The group can play a critical role in the socialization process of newer players. While each guild has its own specific interests and expectations, there are general rules that apply to all guilds. Those who wish to join a guild have to accept these rules or else they will either not be chosen to be a part of the guild or the new player will be removed from the guild if the guild master (leader of the guild) finds your behavior to be unacceptable. Again, what is acceptable is determined by those already established in a guild and tends to serve those already established players(Williams el at., 2006; Haly, n. d.). For example, reviewing forum postings about guilds supports the idea that information exchange is critical to MMOG success and also shows that current players are willing to share information to help others. However, it also solidifies the fact that certain structures for guilds already exist and must be followed. Forming a guild costs money, has a hierarchy, and allows officers in the guild to chat privately without regular guild members seeing the exchange. This allows those in control of

the guild to make decisions and implement them without non-officers having input. In addition, noting that in the discussion on guilds, the author of this post lists what he/she deems "successful guilds" must do. The author noted the importance of the social capital issue of trusting each other and communicating with each other. Yet, tied to this reference is that the guild leader should choose the guild mates that he/she trusts the most and makes them officers. This perpetuates the guilds stratification due to social capital ideals.

Another growing concern of both social and economic capital in MMOGs is that some games develop a feeling of racialization that influences behaviors and creates stratification. Nakamura (2009) studied WoW and found that a capitalistic society was developing that mirrored the real world in terms of racial narratives and the division of labor. Though not approved of by many players, Nakamura noted that the practice of "gold farming" was growing. Gold farming refers to the gamers, a large number of whom are in China and Korea, who are hired to play the game and get their avatar to develop virtual goods to be sold for real-world money in online sites like eBay. These goods include weapons, clothing, gold and sometimes their own higher-level avatars.

As a result of this practice, Nakamura and others have recognized a form of hatred and racism. Gold farmers are often referred to as "Chinese gold farmers" and there is a growing anti-Asian feeling to the sentiment against gold faming. This dislike is in some ways similar to the development of sweatshops and immigrants in real-world environments. The upper-level economic groups do not like the immigrants or approve of the practice of sweatshops. However, the upper-level economic group takes advantage of the lower-level group's work by buying these goods without putting in the time, effort and labor of tedious repetitive tasks that must be done to earn the goods. As a result, those who already have more economic capital increase their possessions and standing at the expense of those lacking economic capital.

Future Directions

While there were some interesting findings in this study, there were areas of concern. First, the survey sample was relatively small for a community of millions so further research should continue to see if the findings hold true on a larger scale. One area that deserves greater study is the danger of the development of social capital behaviors in MMOGs. More research should be devoted to the stratification and hierarchical structures that develop in MMOGs. Much of the research on MMOGs has focused on the pro-social benefits of these environments, and the idea that perhaps these pro-social situations would make gamers more socially skilled but there is a possibility that these pro-social behaviors can lead to problems. Could someone who develops online trust actually become overly trustworthy? If social capital can be acquired, does it lead to an acceptance of social norms by a greater number of players? If American and Asian companies develop a large number of these games played worldwide, will this make the acceptance of certain norms become easier in cultures not from these areas?

Another area of concern that requires more study is the economic requirements of the game that may contribute to the digital divide where lower-income families do not have equal access to technology as their middle-class peers. While most Americans use the Internet, those who do not have easy access are generally from lower-income households. The fact that the vast majority of the survey respondents are White may mean the results just indicate one racial group's behaviors in the MMOG. The results may not represent lower-income groups to play WoW, a gamer must pay about $15 each month. This cost may mean that players with more income are able to play for a longer period of time and those less economically stable would not

sustain play long enough to reach higher levels. This leads to the issue of Bourdieu's concerns of social capital. If having economic capital makes access easier, this may mean that those with greater economic means can reach higher levels faster. This allows them to have an increased reputation and hold greater positions of power in the game (such as in guilds). Once these players are leaders, they may choose only those who support the behaviors they already display—thereby maintaining the status quo in the environment.

References

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-259). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Coleman, J. (1990). *Foundations of social theory*. Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press.

Curtis, P. (1992). Mudding: Social phenomena in text-based virtual realities. In P. Ludlow (Ed.), *High noon on the electric frontier: Conceptual issues in cyberspace* (pp. 347-374). The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

De Tocqueville, A. (1835). *Democracy in America* (A. Goldhammer, Trans.) New York: The Library of America.

Ducheneaut, N., & Moore, R. (2005). More than just "XP": Learning social skills in massively multiplayer online games. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education,* 89-100.

Ducheneaut, N., Yee, N., Nickell, E., & Moore, R. (2007). The life and death of online gaming communities: A look at guilds in World of Warcraft (In Proceedings of CHI 2007, San Jose, 2007, pp. 839-848). Palo Alto Research Center, San Jose, CA.

Galarneau, L. (2005). Spontaneous communities of learning: A social analysis of learning ecosystems in massively multiplayer online gaming (MMOG) environments (Paper presented at *The Digital Games Research Conference*, Vancouver, British Columbia).

Giddens, A., Duneier, M., & Appelbaum, R. P. (2000). *Introduction to sociology.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co..

Grootaert, C., Narayan, D., Nyhan J. V., & Woolcock, M. (2004). Measuring social capital: An integrated questionnaire (Working Paper No.18). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Haly, J. (n. d.). Hyperidentities within MMORPGs: An analysis of social interaction in MMORPGs and their effects on their players (Undergraduate dissertation, U. K.), Retrieved February 25, 2009 from http://www.halycopter.com/uni/undergraddissertation.pdf

Jakobbson, M., & Taylor, T. L. (2003). The Sopranos meets Everquest: Social networking in massively multiplayer online games (*5th International Digital Arts and Culture Conference*, Melbourne, DAC, Melbourne, Australia, pp. 81-90).

Kahne, J., & Middaugh, E. (2008). Democracy for some: The civic opportunity gap in high school (Working Paper No. 59). Washington DC: *Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.*

Krueger, A., B. (2002, November 14). The apple falls close to the tree even in the land of opportunity. *New York Times*.

Levy, P. (1997). *Collective intelligence: Mankind's emerging world in cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.

Lin, H., & Sun, C. (2005). The "white-eyed" player culture: Grief play and construction of deviance in MMORPGs (Paper presented at the *Digital Games Research Association Conference*, Vancouver, June 16-20).

Nakamura, L. (2009). Don't hate the player, hate the game: The racialization of labor in World of Warcraft. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 26*(2), 128-144.

Narayan, D., & Cassidy, M. (2001). A dimensional approach to measuring social capital: Development and validation of a social capital inventory. *Current Sociology, 49*(2), 59-102.

O'Brien, S., & Fathaigh, M. (April, 2005). Bringing in Bourdieu's theory of social capital: Renewing learning partnership approaches to social inclusion (Paper presented at the *Educational Studies Association of Ireland Annual Conference*, Maynooth, Ireland).

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone*. New York: Touchstone.

Reid, E. (1994). Cultural formations in text-based realities (Unpublished master's thesis, University of Melbourne). Retrieved May 7, 2008 from http://www.aluluei.com/cult-form.htm

Rettberg, S. (2008). Corporate ideology in World of Warcraft. In H. Corneliussen & J. Rettberg (Eds.), *Digital culture, play, and identity: A World of Warcraft reader*. Cambridge, MA: M. I. T. Press.

Scholz, C. W. (2003). Approaches to social capital: The emergence and transformation of a concept (Paper submitted to the American Sociological Association, 2003 Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA).

Siisiainen, M. (2000, July 5-8). Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu versus Putnam (Paper presented at the ISTR Fourth International Conference *The Third Sector: For What and for Whom,* Dublin, Ireland).

Squire, K. D., & Steinkuehler, C. A. (2005). Meet the gamers. *Library Journal, 130*(7), 38-41.

Seay, A. F., Jerome, W., Lee, K.S., & Kraut, R. (2004). *Project massive: A study of online gaming communities*. Vienna, Austria, ACM Press.

Steinkuehler, C. (in press). Cognition and literacy in massively multiplayer online games. In D. Leu, J. Coiro, C. Lankshear, & K. Knobel (Eds.), *Handbook of research on new literacies.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Stone, W. (2001). *Measuring social capital*. Melbourne: Autralian Institute of Family Studies.

The Saguaro Seminar from Harvard College (2007). Civic engagement in America. Retrieved August 18, 2007 from http://www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro/

U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2007, December 26). National and state population estimates 2000-2007. Retrieved March 18, 2008 from http://www.census.gov/popest/states/NST-ann-est.html

Williams, D. (2004). Trouble in river city: The social life of video games (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor).

Williams, D., Ducheneaut, N., Xiong, L., Zhang, Y., Yee, N., & Nickell, E. (2006). From tree house to barracks: The social life of guilds in World of Warcraft. *Games and Culture,* 338-361.

Woodcock, B. S. (2008). An analysis of MMOG subscription growth. Retrieved May 14, 2008 from MMOGCHART.COM: http://www.mmogchart.com

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 551-564

Base of the Pyramid Population: Identifying Populations to Increase Citizen Participation Through Information Technology

Paulina Alvarez Barillas
Mexican Presidency/Presidency of the Republic, Mexico City, Mexico

The Municipality of Puebla is today's capital of the fourth most important city of Mexico. During 2009, its city hall ranked infirst place in category of metropolitan city as part of "Digital City Award". From the strategy to use information and communication technologies to reach governmental efficiency, as well as interact with the population and socioeconomic development of the zone, free wireless internet was implemented in 39 areas to facilitate the access to training of citizenship by using this new form of media. The municipality has a population with great economic disparity, which is translated in strong social exclusion, located mainly in housing units and popular colonies with people in situation of hereditary poverty. Because of that, the need of knowing the profile and the consumer habits of mass media communication emerges. The research evaluates identification of actual and potential users of the web2.0, so it can be possible to recognize the chances of intervention in this segment and increase its participation on public character programs and promoting equality of opportunities and the possibility being a participative citizenship that contributes to the local human development.

Keywords: poverty, citizenship, civic engagement, web audience, human development

A Conceptual Look to Understand the Road From a Global Stage to a Local One: Citizenship in Metamorphosis

Rethink the metamorphosis that social subjects have suffered from the rapid pace of globalization from the perspective of cultural industries and the media imply analyzing different processes that shape its production structure 10 years after starting the 21st century. It also represents an opportunity to look at the effects that the economic crisis of 2009 left specially in Puebla city that is the capital of the fourth largest city in Mexico and development of new socio-cultural realities that lead to the existence of mediated groups of citizens, with a higher technological link lifestyle, more influential in their environment through the use of tools at your fingertips.

Today, the existence of these new audiences and citizens should be noted since its formation to understand how a number of variables in different segmentation models have been considered for integration profiles that mutated, then redefining the center of attention target audiences of the organizations seeking to help build governance and citizen participation to transform a city and its inhabitants. It seeks so to walk from the utopian to the formation of the public towards the development of the foundations of a model of education in social and cultural participation based on constructivism for the formation of tastes, interests and relation to goods, to

Paulina Alvarez Barillas, Director of qualitative studies, Public Opinion Coordination, Mexican Presidency/Presidency of the Republic.

become habits of belonging and support in order to foster inclusive participation and use of cultural freedom. Faced with this scenario is a real challenge for local municipal organizations implementing the characterization developed in the field of cultural management, public education and training to meet economic development objectives, social, development and access to culture through use of Web2.0.

On the other hand, it is worth considering two fundamental aspects in the treatment of the information resulting from research: the study of culture and citizen participation because it is a challenge to develop information leading to the understanding of these processes from the perspective of practices and cultural consumption because although there is a tradition in cultural studies being understood as few existing national, state or municipal, that emphasizis the knowledge or population profile, and that is proposed as a tool for use in the context of the political economy of communication, where governance, citizenship and participation are an area of growth and development. However, we present the theoretical difficulty in approaching the analysis of cultural consumption:

The absence of a specific view conceptually able to mix the enormous diversity of cultural events called is clearly manifested in the descriptive definitions, following the model Tylor, merely to present a repertoire—always in the form of incomplete list of items together as diverse as the beliefs, rituals, social habits, production techniques and material artifacts (Giménez, n. d., p. 24). The truth is that culture, overall, has become an important sector of the economy, a factor of "economic growth" and a pretext for speculation and business. Thus tends to lose more and more an aura of generosity and its specificity as an operator of social identity, communication and perception of the world, to become largely goods subject to the law of profit maximization(Giménez, n. d., p. 9).

However, from the perspective of Gómez (2009): "The influence that had some strands of post-modern cultural studies helped to marginalize the concept of ideology and, concomitantly, to allow the divorce is now observed between cultural studies and political economy" (p. 1). On the one hand, the concept of culture is linked to notions of identity and otherness (in particular prefer to understand the otherness as part of the concept of identity) and also has deep roots in the configuration of meaning. Culture is the realm of meaning and like every human action and its representation are components of the semiotic sense, everything is human culture. For another, it presents the prospect of Braudrillard for whom the value of the sign regulates the production of goods and the company has become a show staged by the media (Gómez, 2009).

According to McGregor (2002), who defined cultural identity:

> ... The sense of belonging and differentiation that is built into the daily practices and rituals of a community, creating, reproducing and transforming symbolic production through two main sections: social action and processes of meaning: acts and speeches that are developed through praxis understood in the way of Paulo Freire (1970) as the ongoing process of reflection and action that men perform on the world to understand and transform it. (p. 2)

In this concept one another, which is the heritage and must be assessed because companies themselves are recognized through the values that are a source of creative inspiration...The preservation and appreciation of cultural heritage then allow people to defend their sovereignty and independence and therefore affirm and promote their cultural identity (UNESCO: World Conference on Cultural Policies, 1982, p. 45).

García Canclini (2008) explained that identity:

> ... Not only is brewing in the physical space of the territories, but through messaging networks and assets, and should therefore be understood as a social communication as articles concerning local, national and international characteristics of

> a restructured society. The identity is then satisfied by the taking of the territory and is inhabited by participating indelocalized communication networks. (p. 174)

Taking the approach that makes García Canclini on social communication processes into account, it must then consider the cultural industries as "the sectors related to the creation, production and distribution of goods and services that are cultural in nature"(Lanzafame, 2007, p.11). Culture is part of a market-the market exchange messages or symbolic, where goods and services are quick obsolescence, passing from one hand to another and from one city to another in search technological diffusion, currency information and/or remote seduction. Moreover, Douglas and Isherwood (cited in Sunkel, 2002) suggest that a cultural practice is when the commodities used to think... to construct a universe intelligible (p. 3). García Canclini (2008) also cites that definition of consumption as "the set of processes is performed cultural appropriation and use of products" (p. 3). In the same vein, Barbero (1987) suggests that "consumption is not just playing strength, but also production of meanings: rather than a struggle that is not limited to the possession of objects, as happens more decisively by the use that shape and those who enroll action lawsuits and devices that come from cultural competence" (as cited in García Canclini, 2008, p. 231). About the consumer, Brunner (1988) states that "its function is to select, recognize and seize..., that universe is doomed to be himself an interpreter of the interpretations that circulate around it, to translate symbolic experiences without being 'real' in his own biography are, however, in his experience as a consumer of symbolic experiences made for him" (as cited in García Canclini, 2008, p. 24). Finally, for Hopenhayn (n. d.), cultural industry is globalizing conquering markets, decentralized hearings to focus on profits, and finally converges the inclinations and preferences of the world to the symbols the same industry rises and spreads.

> Taking a global perspective on the deterritorialization of the world, the sense of identity and cultural consumption is becoming key factor for the generation of segmentation models particularly focused on how a population is about traditions, customs and cultural heritage as they form part of a lifestyle. (Barillas, 2009, p. 52)

For that reason we include a number of aspects in this sense, as "Latin America live intense cultural processes resulting from globalization of economies, seeking to homogenize consumption patterns directly affect, and particularly, to local cultures..." (as cited in Barillas, 2009, p. 52). It also states that "cultural identity is the sense of belonging and differentiation that is built into the daily practices and rituals of a community" (p. 52). It provided the ability to create, recreate and transform cultural symbols.

In recognition of the social learning spaces where identities are conceived, mention that Althusser (as cited in Gómez, 2009) proposed the existence of eight ideological state apparatuses (IEA) formed by the apparatus religious, legal, labor, family, school, union, cultural and informational that is, a number of institutions coming from a private domain, and then becomes site of ideological practices, such as governance and citizen participation. In this regard, the text "Use and Abuse of the Concept of Governance". De Alcántara (1998) questioned its popularity due to the wide applicability of the term in relation to basic problems of political order and its lack of any relationship with the state, defining as building consensus, or obtain the consent or acquiescence necessary to carry out a program, in a scenario where different interests are at stake likewise emphasizes that under the World Bank perspective embodies the traditions and institutions through which authority is exercised in a country (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2005, p.1) and consists of:

> (1) The process by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced; (2) The ability of government to formulate and effectively implement public policies agreed; (3) The respect of citizens and the state for the

> institutions that regulate the interaction between individuals and between them and the State. (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2005, p. 2)

Structured under six dimensions according to the report *Governance Matters IV: Governance Indicators 1996-2004, World Bank Institute:*

> (1)Voice and Accountability: measure various aspects of exercise of human and political rights and civil liberties of individuals; (2) Political Stability and Absence of Violence: calculate the probability of emerging threats or violent changes in government, affecting the continuity of public policies; (3) Government Effectiveness: the competence of the bureaucracy and the quality of public services; (4) Regulatory Quality: the quantity and quality of policies governing the market; (5) Rule of Law: estimates the quality of contract enforcement, the administration of justice in the courts and the police as well as the incidence of crime and violence; (6) Control of corruption: calculates the degree to which public power is exercised for the purpose of private gain. (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2005, p. 4)

Therefore, within the ideological state apparatus (IEA) and the areas where governance is generated, social actors are running for citizenship, being conceived as:

> ... The key to transforming the local space in a public space and helping create conditions for strengthening democratic governance, citizen participation**,** unlike other forms of participation (political, community, etc.) refers specifically to the inhabitants of the cities involved in public activities representing special interests (not individuals), being exercised primarily in the area of daily life and at the local level, where there is greater proximity between authorities and citizens. (Guillén, Saenz, Castillo, & Badii, 2009, p.181)

De Alcántara (1998) in his text "Use and abuse of the concept of governance" proposed re-denounce the tendency to unrealistic draw lines between "state" and "civil society" efforts to strengthen the public sphere and reward contributions to the common good. This could be thought of a new attempt to develop a discourse of citizenship, being a useful perspective to the impact of the results of this investigation, as well as generic criteria for the design of intercultural policies, proposed by Zallo here, among them are:

> (1) Decentralization of communications; (2) Promotion of minority cultures; (3) Fluent communication between cultures; (4) Reducing inequalities in access to culture; (5) Limitation of the undesirable processes of concentration of capital; (6) Empowerment and protection of creators and communicators; (7) Self-organization of users of culture and communication; (8) Access to the regular expression of dissent and social cultural diversity; (9) Consideration of the cultural sector as a strategic sector; (10) Monitoring and correcting the imbalances caused by the markets; (11) Transfer and ductile-type technologies; (12) Social education in the functional use of new technologies; (13) Need for control and regulation also in the digital world, capturing the notions of "public service" and "universal service"; (14) Growing subsidiarización replacement for incitement and involvementprivate financial actors. (as cited in Gascón, 2003)

In national *practice* on public participation, my country has a Model of Education for Democratic Participation (MEDP), developed by the Federal Electoral Institute under the Strategic Program 2005-2010 Civics points:

> Mexico is a country of great cultural diversity, while marked by deep social inequality. Poverty, low education, exclusion and discrimination that restrains nearly half of the population, are obstacles to equitable development and that all people have access to the knowledge they require to exercise their citizenship. (FEI, 2005, p. 4)

This model is intended to "encourage the development of civic skills that promote the formation of citizens capable of democratic participation in public affairs" (FEI, 2005, p. 5) and is composed of fundamental civic skills:

> (1) Recognition of citizenship, such as individual and collective political identity that equates to all persons of rights, without distinction based on gender, ethnicity, social status or other status; (2) Understanding the ownership of key democratic rules and procedures that allow citizens to require compliance authorities rights through their participation in the public sphere. (p. 5)

Key Points of the Local Scene: A Survey on the Population Base of the Pyramid in the City of Puebla, Mexico

According to Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (Latin America Social Panorama, 2006, p. 3), Mexico is characterized by being in a region where per capita income levels equal to one fifth of the world's most developed regions but five times that of the regions more developed. On the other hand, the report of the Social Panorama of Latin America 2007, ECLAC, based on special tabulations of household surveys from different countries shows that for 12 countries, there is a general downward trend in Mexico where have 31.7% of people in poverty while 8.7% are living in extreme poverty and stresses that the country has accumulated a "reduction in the poverty rate of over 5% points between 2000-2002 and 2006" (pp. 18-19). In another vein, it argued that Mexico had a chance to meet the international commitment to reduce poverty by half by 2015 in terms of economic growth during 1991 and 2006, "it is possible to infer that Mexico will reach the first Millennium target only if its income per capita grows at a similar rate to the average of the last 16 years" (Uthoff, n. d., p. 5).

In relation to the projections of extreme poverty, it is considered that Mexico, along with Ecuador, Brazil and Chile, belongs to the group of countries that have met the first Millennium target. The goal, "provides a total term of 25 years (from 1990 to 2015) of which have passed 17, which represents 68% of the time schedule" (Uthoff, n. d., p. 20). In contrast, it is observed that the national poverty line is one of the issues has discussed United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and arrives in Mexico to 10.1%, and it reports that 9.9% of Mexicans survive on a dollar a day and 26.3% two dollars. This means that 36% of the population lives in poverty and misery (UNDP, 2004).

According to previous information, then highlights the first challenge of the Millennium Development Goals, to eradicate poverty, an aspect that is directly linked to developing opportunities for Mexicans to have the ability to cover basic needs, which not be fully covered, generate poverty in different degrees, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Moreover, the geographical position of Mexico, particularly situated in one of the most unequal in the world, to has two specific conditions: bordering the United States and a "per capita income five times higher than that of the poorest regions of the world, though the interior of Mexico people are still living in homes with as much or more precarious situations than the average of the poorest regions in the world" (Uthoff, n. d., p. 2).

Although Mexico being considered in poverty has been eradicated, the World Bank said "that 45 million Mexicans are living in poverty in the midst of a persistent and substantial gap in development between regions and ethnic groups" (González & Brooks, 2008). The most recent scenario shows that "one in two Latin Americans fell into poverty in 2009 following the Mexican economic crisis, according to estimates by the World Bank and the Government of Mexico"(González, 2010, p. 2).

The state of Puebla is located strategically in central-south east of the capital of the republic, bordered on the east by the state of Veracruz to the west with the State of Mexico, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala and Morelos and south by the states of Oaxaca and Guerrero. Puebla's economic activity is based in the industrial sector, which is the main engine of growth of the state. According to the current geographical distribution of the

population, it appears that the major population concentrations are in the city of Puebla and Cholula in the municipalities of San Martín and Texmelucan, in the rest of the state variables are densities, some very low compared with the average (State Government of Puebla, 2008). It indicates that the state of Puebla has a little more than five million inhabitants. The city of Puebla is the one that has the greatest number with 1,346,916 people. Only six municipalities, in addition to Puebla with a population greater than 75,000 inhabitants, of these, two municipalities outside the region Angelópolis: San Martín Texmelucan (121,071 inhab.) and San Pedro Cholula (99,794 hab.), one part to the Valley of Atlixco and Matamoros: Atlixco (117,111 inhab.), one of the Tehuacán region and Sierra Negra: Tehuacann (226,258 inhab.), one at Sierra Northeast region: Teziutlán (81, 156 hab.), and the town of Red Snapper (83, 537 hab.) are in the Sierra Norte region. Thus, these cities are major urban centers of the state.On the other hand, the Mixteca region has no municipalities with population greater than 35,000 inhabitants, what is the least densely populated region of the state, which could be explained by the high levels of migration presented in this region (Autonomous University of Puebla, 2008).

The City of Puebla, by the name of Heroic Puebla de Zaragoza, is a municipality and capital of the State of Puebla (Mexico).The city of Puebla, is also known as Puebla de los Angeles. It is the fourth largest and most important city in Mexico, behind only Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, according to the latest census conducted in 2005, are the fourth largest metropolitan areas. According to final results of the Second Census of Population and Housing 2005, Puebla City in that year had 1,399,519 inhabitants (the municipality, 1,485,941). Its metropolitan area, including 43 locations in the states of Puebla and Tlaxcala had 2,008,101 inhabitants. Puebla metropolitan area (MPMA), consisting of 23 municipalities of Puebla and Tlaxcala, brought together a total of 2,109,049 inhabitants, which constituted the fourth most populous metropolitan area in the country. For 10 July 2007, to maintain the growth rates recorded during the period 2000-2005 are estimated 1.44,039 million inhabitants for the city, 1.53,148 million for the municipality, 2.07,367 million for the conurbation, and 2.18385 million inhabitants in the metropolitan area.

To define the space environment analysis of the municipality, this research takes as a basis of geographical demarcation as does the Ministry of Social Development under the Habitat program, which aims to tackle “the challenges of urban poverty through the implementation of actions combine, among other things, improving basic infrastructure and equipment of the marginalized urban and community development actions designed to improve service delivery in those areas” (SEDESOL, 2008, P. 1).Habitat polygons selected SEDESOL where he headed their actions. A polygon is defined as “marginal urban areas with high concentration of households in poverty that are the heritage and scope of the program” (SEDESOL, 2008, p. 1). It also stresses that the City ranked in first place in the category of Metropolitan City as part of “Digital City Award” in 2009 gave the Iberoamerican Network of Digital Cities belonging to the Latin American Association of Research Centers and Telecommunication Enterprises (AHCIET) the strategic use of new information and communication technologies to enhance government efficiency, and interact with the population and socioeconomic development in the area, 39 areas of implementing free wireless internet to facilitate access and training for citizenship in the use of this medium.

Design Types on the Base of the Pyramid Population Inhabiting the Northern and Southern City of Puebla

Considering the above mentioned context, the need to know the practices and cultural consumption of that

population, resulting in a final scene in different areas: general profile and socio-demographic lifestyle: consumption and cultural consumption. However, the purposes of this document submit only the profile and what the consumption patterns of media use of current and potential audience of Web2.0, in order to recognize opportunities for municipal government intervention in this segment to increase their participation in public programs, and to foster equal opportunity to contribute to human development.

Considering the Internet as part of a system of production and consumption sectors messages recent cultural industries conducted an exploratory research with a cross-sectional and quantitative approach to identify socioeconomic and psychographic characteristics of the population to integrate types but particularly to have an overview of cultural consumption and media. We used a two-stage sampling in the first stage, using a probability sample by simple random sampling based on two lists, the first of which dealing with marginalized areas, specifically classified as belonging to the level of asset poverty, according to the Habitat program SEDESOL (2008) and the list of National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics-INEGI (2005) with the estimated number of inhabitants per colony. In the absence of the INEGI maps of apples and number of households in marginalized settlements in poverty or wealth, the maps of basic geo-statistical areas geographical boundaries do not coincide with the colonies with the characterization are necessary, then the second stage will take place through a non-probability quota sampling, using the field work to show people through a filter of the instrument chosen to live in the colony.

Was initially considered carrying out a stratified sampling by area, however, secondary information with which account, you have barriers in order to implement this method as there are two information products that contain standardized information units targeting different population: by colonies and basic geo-statistical areas (AGEBS), whose data crossing, do not agree on the geographical zone. For that reason, we choose to use a simple random sampling method in relation to the colonies selections. Based on 54 colonies, intends to make the first sampling, since the total of them, part of the criteria that were selected in the program to fight poverty by SEDESOL in 2008 have characteristics that make them similar in that they have high concentration of poverty households in assets, that is the reason for carrying out under this context, the first part of the sample.

Formula sampling:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 pq\, N}{e^2[(N-1) + Z^2(pq)]}$$

Displays: *nine colonies* confidence coefficient: 95.5% with a maximum error margin overall results: +/-2.5 points. The second phase belongs to a non-probabilistic convenience sampling where, for shares shall be elected from the population and that “participants are selected according to pre-specified quotas in relation to demographics, attitudes or behaviors”(Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2004, p. 358). We opt for a selection of colonies south of the town mainly by growth in the area during the past 10 years and because they are some of the poorest neighborhoods but at the same time have received basic social infrastructure.

Population: of a total of 32.387 inhabitants, with: (1) Confidence coefficient: 95.5%; (2) Maximum error margin overall results: +/-4.5 points; (3) Sample: 377 persons.

The instrument consisted of 45 questions of which two were measured on a likert scale, nine as ordinal variables, 28 variables were nominal and the rest were considered as open questions. The data are analyzed descriptively by frequency analysis and cross-tabulations graphics as significant associations seeking to know. The associations between poverty rate (independent variable) with: (1) socio-economic characteristics, and (2) psychographic characteristics of the population (dependent variables), are examined through nonparametric

correlation coefficient and Kruskal Gamma of Goodman and the statistical Tau by Tau c of Kendal. These statistics are used to test the null hypothesis of no association between the variables, against the alternative hypothesis of the existence of association.

Goodman-Kruskal Gamma—Association Between Nominal and Ordinal Variable

Through the nonparametric correlation coefficient of Goodman-Kruskal Gamma to measure the relationship between an ordinal variable and a nominal one, namely a bivariate relationship. Gamma can be calculated even when some counts in cells are low or zero (Garson, 2009). Gamma cannot be calculated if all cases are concentrated in a row or column (Garson, 2009).The assumption of these coefficients that you in principle even when data must be ordinal, can also be used with categorical data (Garson, 2009).The interpretation of the coefficient is based on the intervals proposed by Davis (1971) as: 0.01 to 0.09—negligible association; 0.10 to 0.29—low association; 0.30 to 0.49—moderate association; 0.50 to 0.69—substantial association; and 0.70 or greater—association very strong.

Kendal Tau Cvb—Association Between Ordinal Variables

Tau b is a test statistic that measures the association between two ordinal variables, with adjustment for ties and is most appropriate when the table is square variables (Malhotra, 2004); Tau c is most appropriate when the table is rectangular variables (Malhotra, 2004). The assumption of Kendall's Tau statistic refers to data must be ordinal (Garson, 2009).

Profile BOP: Could Be a New Technologic Audience?

In order to define the behavior of the population and their lifestyle, raised questions about the monthly expenditure allocated to the household, managing the credit system and access to information technologies. To understand the results given in Mexican pesos, the peso is making a change of $13.05 pesos per U.S. dollar, and $15.95 pesos per Euro. In this regard, it stresses that first generates 20% of respondents shared information on the expenditure allocated to household goods.

Under the heading of "food" is in the range most representative of $3000 pesos for 12%, $2000 pesos to 8.77% and $4000 pesos to 3.9%, however, the amounts ranging from less than thousand dollars, to 9000. About the amount allocated to the heading of "housing" notes that higher frequencies are between $500 and $1000 pesos, about "water" stands spending bimonthly $300 pesos, while 4% are $1,000 pesos which invest monthly household goods such as clothing, footwear, furniture and home accessories. Spending on health and transportation stresses that invests about 4.5% of $1,500 pesos a month for health and 8% eroge transportation between $400 and $500 pesos per month. On the expenditure on information technology such as cellular telephony, Internet and video, about 9% spent between $300 and $500 pesos.

The investment is made on leisure activities, including recreation and culture, tours, vacations, travel, personal care, alcohol and snuff, and is called discretionary spending, in relation to this aspect shows that the highest frequency, is presented in the range of $1,000 pesos a month for this area (3%), while only 2.27% of which spent $500 pesos, and a smaller percentage, $200 pesos (2%).

On access to new technologies, particularly for domestic use, is found to be only the third part which has a personal computer with internet access, using the telephone connection (47%) that is considered a low speed. It is important to note that although only 33% have computer at home, 70% of respondents use the internet giving the following use: check email (29%), purchase (6%), chat (21%), maintaining page staff (14%), informative (28%) and another, such as pornography and sell (2%). As cell phone ownership asserts that seven in 10 people

have a mobile phone, and 9 out of 10 use a prepayment system, either card or recharge.

Cultural Consumption: Perception Culture, Infrastructure, and Cultural Practices

In order to identify the perception of the concept, "culture" asked respondents to mention what to them represented the concept, and almost 50% openly expressed a relationship with the "knowledge", "education" and "reading", while a lower ratio referred to activities that were part of the cultural, as the "theater", the "cinema" and "art". According to the cultural infrastructure and supply arrangements in each colony, it appears that only 20% of respondents could identify a specific space, but highlights the "schools" and "audiences", although the proportions are low, only 10% and 2% respectively. It fails to recognize that for a little over half the population, culture is "unimportant", and is only considered "important" by a tenth, also highlights that 23% believe that "not important" therefore conclude that in this segment, eight in 10 people do not pay attention to culture.

It also stands that the willingness to attend cultural events is only 33% of respondents, while the other shows an opposite trend, in addition, the profile of low participation in events is linked to that belonging to any group, organization, workshop, where they are taught school sports or entertainment, is minimal: only two out of 10 did so. In this regard, only 11% of respondents said they were linked with a group of social participation as a political party or Non-Governmental Organization, sports team or group prayer.

To identify the perceptions about the importance of carrying out a series of activities qualified will be asked openly, for this approach follows that the range of higher grades, are between eight and seven. The first parameter—eight shows that the population gives relevance to attend the House of Culture, followed by attending a "library" and "preserving the traditions of the neighborhood where he lives" and by "go to concerts" and "reading magazines". In relation to the activities qualified with seven, such as "read newspaper", "visit museums" and "attend the cinema" are highlighting activities. Also, the highlighting activities have received low grades, are "playing games", have a blog, go to "a dance" as well as attend a "library".

Some habits were asked about areas where activities such as listening to music and watch movies, projecting that six in 10 people listen to music in the "house" (61%), and a significant proportion do so in the "work" (18%). The consumer film stresses that seven out of 10 people see a film its "home", while 21% do so in the movies. As for reading habits and preferences, a distinction that 36% read "books" and 33% in magazines, while 23% have the "6-10" books at home, followed by 17% who has "11-20" exemplary. Finally, on the habit of reading, 7 in 10 people are not reading "cartoons or comics".

Analysis of Cross Variables

When examining the relationship between nominal and ordinal variables, the calculation of the Gamma correlation coefficient is valid since not all cases concentrated in any row column of the corresponding contingency tables. There is a low association between positive and significant poverty rate: (1) marital status; (2) place to watch movies; (3) membership of the respondent or his family to any organization, group, workshop, or school sport or entertainment; (4) because of the lack of habit to attend cultural activities; and (5) internet access and computer ownership. There is also a marginal association (p value = 0.056) with cultural infrastructure of the colony.

It was observed a low negative and statistically significant relationship between poverty rate: (1) expenditure incurred by a person in any cultural activity; (2) the quantity of books that are at home; (3) type of

credit or loan; (4) educational level of the chief or head of household; (5) spending provisions for cultural events; and (6) number of pieces in the house.

Statistically significant associations, we obtain the following information:

The highest percentage of respondents in asset poverty (49.2%), capability poverty (42.5%) and food (57.9%) corresponds to the married. The highest percentage of subjects excluded from receiving some level of poverty, are single (49.5%). Most of those interviewed in asset poverty and food, are not spent on cultural activities (35.4% and 36.8% respectively) and 35.9% of those who are in poverty of capabilities spend between $51 and $100, but surprisingly, of which not considered in poverty, most (24.8%) spend less than $50.

At any level of poverty in which individuals are perceived, most people see movies in their homes to avoid attending the cinema. Most subjects who are not in poverty (32%) and those considered in capability poverty (33.3%), own more than 40 books at home. A large percentage of individuals in food poverty (33.3%) have at home less than five books.

The majority of respondents without poverty (58.4%), capacity building in poverty (46.2%) or food (52.6%) do not attend cultural events because of time, the 52.8% of people in asset poverty is justified by lack of money, 29.2% of subjects in asset poverty have micro credit. Many of those in poverty or food capacity have bank loan (37.5% and 50% respectively). In addition, the other 50% of subjects in food poverty have personal credit. At any level of poverty, most individuals do not have computer and internet access. 26.7% of respondents whose poverty has no professional education, those at some level of it (assets, skills, or food), most have studied only up to secondary school (33.3%, 28.2%, and 44.4% respectively), justifying the negative association reported. Most individuals do not belong to any organization, group, workshop or school sport or entertainment, at any level of poverty.

Many of the individuals who are not in poverty are willing to spend on cultural events, between $51 and $100 (25.7%) and between $101 and $200 (25.7%), 26.8% of those in the level of asset poverty and 35.9% of the level of skills spend less than $50, which justifies the negative association reported earlier. Unexpectedly, 42% of those considered in food poverty, spend between $51 and $100.

At any level of poverty (assets, skills, and food), most have at his home in three to four pieces (46.2%, 65%, and 57.9% respectively). The existence of low positive and negative associations, but statistically significant between poverty and socio-demographic and psychographic variables, suggests and justifies the design of a segmentation model containing socio-economic and psychographic variables, based on the poverty rate in the base population of the pyramid that inhabits the city of Puebla. However, the results of tests of hypotheses regarding the existence of association between variables must be interpreted and used with caution because we do not perform strictly random sampling.

Taking into account the specific objectives pursued in this research, we present the design of four types on the population base of the pyramid, where it is considered socio-demographic and lifestyle. It is important to note that the names given to these types are a contribution depending on the behavior of target audiences.

(1) Discoverers. They are characterized as people who do not perceive themselves as poor in spite of belonging to the level of asset poverty, are reluctant to attend cultural activities, but have the highest ranks of willingness to pay to attend.

Table 1

Discoverers

Type of poverty	No amount of poverty
Marital status	Married or unmarried
Occupation	Housewife, student, or employee
Religious doctrine	Catholic or Christian
Educational attainment of respondent	Or secondary school
Educational level of household head	Secondary or vocational training
Membership workshop, group, or social organization.	It does not belong
Cultural infrastructure	Sports fields
Type of activities or cultural topics	Library, theater, cinema, and open forum
Spending on cultural activities	Less than $ 50.00 pesos
Willingness to attend activities	Loth
Willingness to pay to attend activities	From $ 51.00 to $ 100.00 and $ 101.00 to $ 200.00 pesos
Credit type	Credit card
Using pawnshop in the last 6 months	Not used

Note. Prepared by spss data.

(2) Static. They are characterized by people who perceive themselves in poverty heritage, reluctant to attend cultural activities and the spending of both activity and its willingness to pay and stay in minimum ranges.

Table 2

Static

Type of poverty	Patrimonial
Marital status	Married or unmarried
Occupation	Housewife, employee or merchant
Religious doctrine	Catholic or other (non-Christian or Methodist)
Educational attainment of respondent	Or secondary school
Educational level of household head	Or secondary school
Membership workshop, group, or social organization.	It does not belong
Cultural infrastructure	Sports fields
Type of activities or cultural topics	Library, open forum, cinema
Spending on cultural activities	Less than $ 50.00 pesos
Available by attending activities	Loth
Willingness to pay to attend activities	Less than $ 50.00 pesos
Credit type	Microfinance
Using pawnshop in the last 6 months	Not used

Note. Prepared by spss data.

(3) Observers. People Are characterized as who perceive themselves in poverty capacity despite belonging to the level of asset poverty, are reluctant to attend cultural activities and pay more than the average of typologies, for attending an activity although showing willingness to pay is lower.

(4) Intentional. They are characterized as people who perceive themselves in food poverty in spite of belonging to the level of asset poverty, are reluctant to attend cultural activities, do not pay to attend an activity even though the provision of payment presented is above the average for other types.

Table 3

Observers

Type of poverty	Capabilities
Marital status	Married or unmarried
Occupation	Businessman, housewife or student
Religious doctrine	Catholic or other (non-Christian or Methodist)
Educational attainment of respondent	School
Educational level of household head	Secondary
Membership workshop, group, or social organization	It does not belong
Cultural infrastructure	Sports fields
Type of activities or cultural topics	Library, open forum, cinema.
Spending on cultural activities	From $ 51.00 to $ 100.00 pesos
Willingness to attend activities	Loth
Willingness to pay to attend activities	Lessthan $ 50.00 pesos
Credit type	Bank loan
Using pawnshop in the last 6 months	Not used

Note. Prepared by spss data.

Table 4

Intensional

Type of poverty	Food
Marital status	Married or unmarried
Occupation	Housewife, unemployed, student, or merchant.
Religious doctrine	Catholic or Christian
Educational attainment of respondent	Primary.
Educational level of household head	Secondary
Membership workshop, group, or social organization.	It does not belong
Cultural infrastructure	Sports fields
Type of activities or cultural topics	Film Library
Spending on cultural activities	Nothing
Willingness to attend activities	Loth
Willingness to pay to attend activities	From $ 51.00 to $ 100.00 pesos
Credit type	None
Using pawnshop in the last 6 months	Not used

Note. Prepared by spss data.

Conclusions and Challenges for Social Participation via Web2.0

The results provide a general information input for decision making for design, planning and implementation of municipal programs based on new technologies, considering on the one hand that only 30% of people have their own computer equipment, and 50% of them have dial-up. It is therefore concluded that the population/audience base of the pyramid has a low turnout, but the current structure of municipal services such as transactions and services, business, transparency in information retrieval, directory, public attention, relevant information surveys, state and federal procedures may include individual dynamics for this segment of the population to a higher level of citizen participation, much as use of services. Thus arises the "*paradox of the colonial city to city total digital connectivity*" (Alvarez, 2010, p.19) and that despite having international

recognition for the implementation of new technologies at the level of municipal government, large population size is out of reach.

It is proposed that to ensure that these are inclusive forming a foundation for improving the quality of life of a population group that today, apart from not self-perceived as “poor” seems to be out of access to goods and technological services and the possibility of public-web2.0: programs of the municipal government, culture, environment, gender, public transport, health, and deployment of screens in public spaces to the information provided. Another possibility is participation through the generation of content in social networks, for each of the areas that make up the City Council, considering that the current user population is prosumer, in the case of the population could become an audience 2.0 suggests the implementation of a donation campaign with internet telephony to the population base of the pyramid in order to receive messages, create and share, with a second phase, the acquisition of low-cost personal computers because they do not has a computer at home now.

In relation to the formation of Web2.0, it is suggested to generate audience participation information by traditional and alternative media, *below the line* strategies based on differentiation of messages and target activities in order to encourage meaningful learning and experience.

Finally, the recognition of population profiles enables you to implement strategic planning with public information, selectivity of population access to internet, life stage or behavioral characteristics of practices leading then to a residence, change of habits and frequent attendance .That is, there is participation encouraged so focused, in the medium and long term sustainability participation programs to achieve a participatory democracy where social actors, acting in consequence of the infrastructure and the town now have. The challenge then is to generate public participation in culture as a public appearance, that from its appropriation and redefinition constantly being generated, and this in turn is part of the elements of human development and governance to rise, contributing to achieving the objectives of the new millennium through the construction and reconstruction of citizenship.

Another alternative use of this information is the implementation of citizen participation rate in Latin America of the Inter-American Democracy Network that considers:

“Participation in political activities” consists of the attributes that define the intensity of such involvement: “Tenure managerial position”, “A resistance to meetings”, “payment of dues or other contributions”, “Participation in decision making”, and “Application and receipt of information”. Each of these attributes has a certain weight that can generate a single score for each combination of such holdings “partial”. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the area concerned will consider the set of combinations and thus quantifies the value that should account for these nuances through the use of new technologies.

This study is a tool, which leads to propose and generate a taxonomy of the municipal population on “practices and cultural consumption” to a study requested by a municipal government organization in cooperation with the Autonomous University of Puebla. Where the population is classified as “Type Elemental” made up of four subcategories: (1) Elementary; (2) Pro experimental; (3) Experimental; and (4) Convenient. The “Experiential Type” with age ranges from less than 12 years to 25 years and consists of five subcategories: (1) Hands-selective; (2) Selective; (3) Selective accustomed; (4) Selective leisure; and (5) Selective dependent, ranging from 26 to more than 65 years of age (Barillas, 2010, pp. 9-14).

In view of the above, we evaluate the necessity of reintroducing or link cultural studies to political economy, as the market of symbolic goods is essential for the production of capital and the production system image information and knowledge creates wealth. From a personal standpoint, this research will continue

supporting the processing capacity of the civil society to improve their environment, and is intended for the use of specialized information is an input to improve the strategies and actions of a conscious cities committed to raising their own quality of life.

References

Autonomous University of Puebla. (2008). Socio-economic atlas the state of Puebla. Retrieved from http://atlaspuebla.inrs-ucs.uquebec.ca/

Barillas, P. A. (2009). Design of types on the base of the pyramid population inhabiting the northern and southern city of Puebla criteria based on lifestyle and cultural consumption (Marketing Master Thesis, Universidad Madero, Puebla).

Barillas, P. A. (2010). Paradoxes in transit: Alternate routes to the understanding of users/public/hearings in the town of puebla (Paper presented at *AMIC XXII National Meeting 2010*, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City).

Canclini., G., & Ernesto, P. (2008). *Cultural industries and the development of Mexico*.Ed XXI-FLACSO, Mexico.

De Alcántara, C. H. (1998). Uses and abuses of the concept of governance (online). *International Social Science, 155*. Retrieved May 28, 2010 from http://www.unesco.org/issj/rics155/alcantaraspa.html

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). (2006). Social Panorama of Latin America 2006: Appraisal of 80 sites to determine the real estate capital gains generated by investments in infrastructure of the habitat agenda. Ministry of Social Development, LC/G.2326-P/I. Santiago, Chile.

Federal Electoral Institute. (2005). *Model of education for democratic participation (MEPD) FEI*. México.

Gascón, M. F. (2003). Citizenship and cultural diversity in the agenda of a government. *Mapping Complex in Times of Perplexity*. Retrieved May 28, 2010 from http://web.upla.cl/revistafaro/

Garson, G. D. (2009). Statnotes: Topics in multivariate analysis. Retrieved from http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/statnote

Giménez, M. G. (n. d.). Prolegomena. Culture in thephilosophical and literary tradition in the common social discourse.

Gómez, S. C. (2009). Althusser, cultural studies, and the concept of ideology. Retrieved May 28, 2010 from http://www.oei.es/salactsi/castro3.htm

González, A. R. (2010). Poverty in Latin America, the rise of Mexico, 50% of the New Poor (online). *La Jornada*. Retrieved April 23, 2010 from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2010/04/22/index.php?article=002n1pol&section=politica

González, A., & Brooks, R. D. (2008). Even in poverty, 45 million Mexicans, says the World Bank. *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2008/04/09/index.php?section=economia&article=024n1eco

Guillén, A., Saenz, K., Castillo, M. H., & Badii, J. (2009). Origin, space and levels of participation. *International Journal of Good Conscience Daena*, *4*(1), 179-193.

Hair, J. R., Bush, R. D., & Ortinau, J. (2004). *Market Research in a changing information environment.* McGraw Hill Interamericana: México.

Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A., & Mastruzzi. M. (2005). Governance matters IV: Governance indicators for 1996-2004, World Bank Institute. Retrieved May 20, 2010 from www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/esp/pubs/govmatters4-e.html

Lanzafame, F. (2007). *The cultural industries in Latin America and the Caribbean, challenges and opportunities, culture as an engine of economic growth and social inclusion in the Americas.* Organization of American States, Washington DC Slide 7.

McGregor, J. A. (2002). Identity: The membership to be created and not destroyed (unpublished).

Naresh K, M. (2004). *Market research* (4th ed.). Prentice Hall Pearson: Mexico.

National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics. (2005). *National survey on household income.* INEGI, Mexico.

Stone, E. (2007). *What is culture? Cultural industries for the integral development asset: Opportunities and risks for the region.* Inter-American Development Bank, Organization of American States, the Competitive Intelligence Unit Slide 13 and 19.

Sunkel, G. (2002). A look at the other: The culture from consumption. In M. Daniel (Ed.), *Studies and other Latin American intellectual practices in culture and power*. CLACSO, Latin American Social Sciences Council, Caracas, Venezuela. Retrieved 2002 from http://bibliotecavirtual.clacso.org.ar/ar/libros/cultura/sunkel.doc

UNESCO. (1982). *World conference on cultural policies*. México, D.F.

United Nation Programm for Development (UNPD). (2004). *Human development report: Cultural liberty in today's diverse world.* Ed: Mundi-Press Books: Madrid

Uthoff, A. (n. d.). Reducing poverty and inequality. Comisión Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean ECLAC, United Nations

Journalism and Mass Communication, ISSN 2160-6579
April 2012, Vol. 2, No. 4, 565-579

Plurk Politics—Micro-Blogging Is Changing Political Communication in Taiwan

Luc Chia-Shin Lin , Naren Chitty
Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

The use of social media in political communication has demonstrated its significance by the example of Arab Spring and the 2008 US presidential election, but its role in non-western democratic countries like Taiwan has rarely been examined. Micro-blogs share some characteristics with other types of social media but operate in a lighter way that has made it more and more popular among Internet users. Most researchers focus on the better-known Twitter, however, Plurk has found a niche and becomes the leading type of micro-blog in Taiwan and many politicians enjoy using it for political communication. This study seeks to answer the question "What patterns do Taiwanese politicians exhibit when utilizing Plurk?". By combining Habermasian communicative action theory and Foot and Schneider's Web Sphere, this research attempts to form a theoretical framework for micro-blogs. In-depth interviews were conducted with Taiwanese politicians at various levels and it was discovered that the broad pattern of political communication via Plurk may be characterised in Habermasian terms as strategic, through information broadcasting, public opinion formation, and political mobilization. In addition, this research shows that Taiwanese politicians use Plurk to gather information and ideas in exchanges which have dialogic elements.

Keywords: web2.0, political communication, dialogic communication, strategic communication, Plurk, micro-blogging

Introduction

Social media's penetration of society and its effectiveness in speedily mobilizing interest groups offer opportunities for promotion not only in the domains of advertising and marketing but also in politics. The democracy wave in the Middle East in 2010, popularly known as the Arab Spring, can be seen as a good example to demonstrate the power of social media. The Arab Spring took place in countries which lacked well-developed democratic systems and this forced people to seek an outlet to express their grievances. Social media played a role not only by enabling individuals to express their emotions but also by enabling them to connect as a network. In other words, the main factor that fostered the Arab Spring was a bottom-up social movement that organized people through social media and the intervention of politicians was less than in traditional political movements. It appears unlikely that the phenomenon of the Arab Spring will be replicated in democratic countries because the democratic system to some extent provides legal ways to satisfy citizens. The Arab Spring can therefore be viewed as one of three ways in which social media are used in political communication. A second way is illustrated by the example of the 2008 US presidential election where

Luc Chia-Shin Lin, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Music, Media, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University.
Naren Chitty, professor, Department of Music, Media, Communication and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University.

"Obama's Web2.0 strategies" (Olsson & Dahlgren, 2010) were deployed in a western democratic context. The third way in which social media is used can be seen in Taiwan, a non-western democratic country. In this context, how does social media perform in political communication? What have been Taiwanese politicians' experiences in using social media? These fundamental questions address the central aim of the research which is to explore, explain, and categorize the ways in which social media is used in political communication in Taiwan.

Even though the well-known social media Facebook is as popular in Taiwan as it is in western societies—eight million unique visitor per day in Taiwan according to Google Trends (Feb. 25, 2012), and even though Taiwanese politicians enjoy using it, an alternative social media, namely Plurk, attracts equal attention in political communication. This study examines the utilization of Plurk as an avenue for political communication in Taiwan, and explores further ways of undertaking a systematic study of this topic. What patterns do Taiwanese politicians exhibit when utilizing Plurk? Through in-depth interviews of Taiwanese politicians who frequently employ Plurk, this research explores the patterns that enable Taiwanese politicians to use it to greatest effect.

While new media have become a popular tool for politicians to employ, politicians tend to control these media and avoid interactions with netizens (Stromer-Galley, 2000). With the development of the Web2.0 concept (O'Reilly, 2005), bottom-up power has increased and has become powerful enough to compete with traditional top-down political communication. These two opposite powers construct the phenomenon of political social media usage, and the dynamic balance between them shapes the ways in which politicians employ social media. This research attempts to integrate Foot and Schneider's (2006) Web Sphere and Habermas's (1984) communicative action theory in a new way of thinking about the political use of social media. The Internet rarely interests Habermas (2006) and he has never referred to Web2.0, but the essence of his communicative action theory, which argues for the equal status of actors, can be transferred to the individuals who use Web2.0. Meanwhile, there is a gap between Web Sphere and Web2.0 in political communication, and communicative action theory offers possible ways to address that gap.

Social Media and Plurk

Researchers are paying more and more attention to social media from various perspectives, including political communication. Scholars have employed a "me-centric platform"(Langlois, G., Elmer, G., McKelvey, F., & Devereaux, Z. 2009) or "a sense of personalized communication" (Compton, 2008) to see the relationship between politicians and voters. Unlike traditional political communication, the relationship between social media and politicians emphasizes on the role of the audience and their importance, leading to the development of personal friendships between politicians and netizens (Sweetser & Lariscy, 2008). Gueorguieva (2008) and Robertson, S. P., Vatrapu, R. K., and Medina, R.(2009) indicated that the most important feature of social media was the reduced level of control that campaigns had over the images and messages of candidates. Vitak, J., Smock, A., Zube, P., Carr, C., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C. (2009) found that young voters' participation in politics seemed to be relatively passive. Social media provides a venue where netizens enjoy being the center of their world and they have gained more power than they had before, yet they are reluctant to get involved in public affairs, and this creates a gap for politicians to fill. Researchers focused on the use of social media in political communication, especially in election campaigns, tended to care the perspective of audience (e.g., Erikson, 2008; Robertson et al., 2009; Valenzuela, S., Park, N., & Kee, K. F., 2008; Vitak et al., 2009; Wu,

2009). They usually employed surveys or experiments to understand the perception of audience. Since the function of interactivity of social media is stronger than any other new media tools, it is fair enough to view social media in this way. Yet, candidates actively dominate the Internet in the context of employing social media in elections. Audience mostly plays a passive role. Even if the perspective was from the politicians or candidates (e.g., Aparaschivei, 2011; Compton, 2008; Macnamara, 2011; Macnamara & Kenning, 2011), researchers paid their attention on the content that politicians posted. In other words, the problem on how politicians thought about social media was little discussed.

Under the umbrella of social media, the micro-blog, a relatively new Web2.0 tool, shares some characteristics with other social media but possesses its own unique characteristics. Micro-blogging fills a gap between blogging and instant messaging, allowing people to publish short messages on the web about what they are currently doing. It offers new possibilities regarding lightweight information updates and exchange. The users of micro-blogs seem to play different roles as information sources, friends, and information seekers (Java, A., Finin, T., Song, X., & Tseng, B., 2007). Grosseck and Holotescu (2008) indicated that micro-blogs (in this case, Twitter) could be a useful tool for promoting blogs, for Public Relationship (PR)/marketing, for communicating about politics, for exchanging news, and for building up networks.

Most researchers focus mainly on the older and more renowned Twitter, started in 2006 (Ebner & Maurer, 2008; Ebner & Schiefner, 2008; Grosseck & Holotescu, 2008; Java, et al., 2007; Passant, A., Hastrup, T., Bojars, U., & Breslin, J., 2008). Some researchers explore Twitter in the context of political communication (Bruns & Burgess, 2011; Giustini & Wright, 2009; Larsson & Moe, 2011). To some extent, Twitter dominates the Western democratic countries in political communication, but in Taiwan the overwhelming advantage of Twitter is challenged by another micro-blog, Plurk. According to Google Trends, daily unique visitors to Plurk numbered more than 600,000 worldwide, including about 400,000 visitors from Taiwan (Google Trends, 2010), while Twitter in Taiwan only had about 50,000 unique visitors per day. The registered membership of Plurk in 2009 was more than one million in Taiwan (Cang, 2009). The traffic rank of Plurk in Taiwan is 25th (Alexa.com, 2010). This shows that even though Plurk is not a mature competitor with Twitter around the world, it has created an important niche in Taiwanese politics which makes it a worthwhile subject for research in a Taiwanese context, not so much as a distinct technology, but rather as an avenue for political communication.

Plurk is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that allows users to send updates through short messages or links in messages with 140 text characters or less. Updates are shown on the user's home page on a timeline which lists all the updates received in chronological order, and delivers the user's messages to other users who have signed up to receive them. Users can respond to other users' updates through the Plurk.com website, by instant messaging. Users can also post new messages to express their feelings by using the emoticons provided, such as symbols for smile, sick, dance, and so on (Plurk.com, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

Foot and Schneider (K. Foot, 2006; Schneider & Foot, 2005) propose the concept of the Web Sphere to understand the relationship between the Internet and political communication. A Web Sphere is a collection of dynamically defined digital resources spanning multiple websites deemed relevant or related to a central theme or object. The dynamic nature of the Web Sphere means researchers can always find new websites. Whether or not a website is considered relevant to a research topic which depends on the ways in which websites are linked.

Based on the premise of the Web Sphere, Foot and Schneider developed a Web Sphere analysis that considered the relationships between producers and users. Structural and feature elements refer to the content, and hypertext and the links refer to technologies (K. Foot & Schneider, 2006). Even though they mention Web2.0 and introduce the term "coproduction" (K. A. Foot & Schneider, 2002), the technology itself seems to be of more interest to them than relationships and content. This viewpoint can be confirmed by going back to the development of Web Sphere. When they were developing the concept, Foot and Schneider employed the term "online structure" (Foot, Schneider, & Xenos, 2002) to denote a particular electronic space, comprised of various pages that allowed individuals to perform social actions. They used three dimensions—anticipatability, predictability and stability to construct the Web Sphere. Anticipatability refers to anticipating the emergence of Web Sphere; predictability refers to predicting the types of actors; and stability refers to how frequently the boundaries of the Web Sphere need to be reconsidered (Schneider & Foot, 2005). In other words, the dynamic nature of Web, from their perspective, is dependent on the technology itself.

However, the strength of social media is its capability to maximize the essence of Web2.0, which is that all actors can contribute to social media and share the power over the communication. The Web Sphere concept needs to be modified to accommodate this fact. Yet, Foot and Schneider adopt the perspective of the politicians and they examine the ways politicians employ the Internet strategically. In this research, politicians are the main actors on Plurk and their perceptions about the use of social media play a dominant role even though politicians and netizens are equal on Plurk. In this regard, Foot and Schneider's web campaigning practices are employed to represent politicians. K. Foot and Schneider (2006) defined four practices (transactions) in web campaigning—informing, involving, connecting, and mobilizing—and suggested that each practice involved a distinct type of relationship between the campaign organizations and other political actors. *Informing* means creating online structures consisting of features that present information; *Involving* relates to facilitating the affiliation between site producer and site visitor; *Connecting* suggests an online structure that serves as a bridge between the user of the site and a third actor. The practice of connection is not limited the technique of linking, but broadly suggests cognitive (e.g., non-hyperlinked information links) as well as transversal bridges (hyperlinks) between users and third actors. *Mobilizing* provides an online structure facilitating a user's efforts to involve another actor in the goals and objectives of the campaign. The base on which mobilization is constructed is the need of netizens and politicians for shared venues for reinforcing their political beliefs.

Web campaigning practices sharpen one edge of the social media blade, while the other edge can be sharpened by Habermasian communicative action theory (1984). The essence of Web2.0—information sharing, collaborating and user-center design—can be simplified as a daily conversation through the web. The conversation here emphasizes the equal status of actors, a perspective which can be referred as Habermasian. From his perspective, communicative action could be seen as ethical, and "free of manipulation", and the participants are guaranteed the "reciprocal" and "symmetric" opportunity to apply all types of speech acts during communicative interaction (Hass & Deetz, 2000, p. 31). People can have the normative intention of arriving at shared understandings in a non-manipulative manner, and they can have the communicative capacity to interact in ways congruent with these intentions. Habermas distinguished communicative action from strategic action and instrumental communication. However, people don't always communicate like this (Dahlgren, 2001, p. 41). In other words, pure ethical communication is more theoretical that actual, and seems impossible to achieve in the political communication field. Simultaneously, pure strategic communication confronts the challenge of communicative effect.

In this paper, it is recognized that strategic communicators in contemporary political campaigns see the advantage of offering dialogic venues. These venues cannot be viewed as ethical or dialogic in a pristine Habermasian sense. Between the ideal constructions of strategic and ethical communication, three mixed types may be identified, as depicted in the Table 1 below:

Table 1

Types of Habermasian Communication

Ideal type 1	Mixed with intention weighted to 1	Mixed with balanced intention	Mixed with intention weighted to 2	Ideal type 2
Strategic	Strategic dialog	?	Dialogic strategy	Ethical

Ideal Type one is teleological or instrumental, Habermas defined this type as strategic; Ideal Type two is communicative or dialogic, this type is ethical. In addition to these two pure types, there are some situations in which the intentions of actors are mixed. If the intentions of actors tend to be more oriented to success and less to reaching understanding, this research calls a strategic dialogue; the converse situation is a dialogic strategy. The optimal balance between strategic action and ethical action, however, is yet to be examined. This study aims to combine dialogic communication with Habermas' communicative action to explore the balance.

Influenced by Habermas, Kent and Taylor (1998) employed the concept of dialogic communication in an Internet research project and emphasized that the term "dialogue" focused on the attitudes that participants had toward each other in two-way symmetrical communication. However, Kent and Taylor, like other scholars who employ dialogic communication theory, focus mainly on the PR field, and scholars rarely concern themselves with political communication until Sweetser and Lariscy (2008). Even though Sweetser and Lariscy take dialogic communication theory as a model to analyze candidates' uses of Facebook, their findings indicate that candidates do not use Facebook for two-way relationship building, and so the situations they have studied do not fulfill the essential conditions of dialogic communication. Even so, the concept of friendship via micro-blogs offers a lens through which communicative action may be viewed. In order to form friendships, close interpersonal relationships based on the establishment of trust are required (that is, they involve interpersonal communication in which intimate information is disclosed). Personal and intimate communication is positively related to strength of ties (Mesch & Talmud, 2006). This form of communication could be seen as the process of reaching understanding, and it emphasizes the value of "phatic" communication (Miller, 2008).

While friendship can represent communicative action in micro-blogging, Erikson (2008) proposed another notion, "fandom" to replace it. According to Erikson's findings, politicians have not accidentally fallen into the discourse; rather, they intentionally control the information on their site to motivate their friends' activities. Political persuasion is about networks and narratives, because the political brain is an emotional brain, and it determines elections through voters' states of mind. Moreover, consciousness operates across the processes of the mind (Castells, 2009). In relationship between friendship and fandom, Van Zoonen (2004) proposed the concept of fan democracy and argued that political constituencies and fan communities were similar. Fans may be characterised as preferring participation and deep discussion and as making intensive emotional investments.

Research Method

The main concern of this research is "the role of Plurk in Taiwanese political communication". It involves micro-blogging, political communication and Taiwanese politics which are discussed above. Developed from

the main concern, the main research question is "What patterns do Taiwanese politicians exhibit when utilizing Plurk? What is the pattern of Taiwanese politicians utilizing Plurk?" The sub-questions are "Is the pattern different from web campaigning?", "What is the perspective of Taiwanese politicians when they use Plurk?", and "How do Taiwanese politicians use Plurk?"

In order to answer the research questions, this research employed in-depth interviews as the main research method. As Marvasti (2004) indicated, the sampling of qualitative research was usually purposive. Therefore, this research focused on Taiwanese politicians who frequently employed Plurk as political communication tool. The respondents were nine Taiwanese politicians, all of whom owned Plurk accounts. All of them said that they were regular, everyday users of Plurk, although their Karma values, which was a benchmark used on Plurk to evaluate frequency of participation, varied between 56 and 97 out of 100. Five of the respondents were national politicians and four were local politicians. They included a former minister (referred to in this research as "Minister"), a national-level legislator ("National"), directors of a national political party ("Director1", "Director 2"), an aide to a former prime minister ("Aide"), a local county candidate ("Local A"), and Taipei city councilors ("Local B", "Local C", and "Local D"). Even though the former minister is not an incumbent, he continues to influence the Taiwanese political sphere and may receive a ministerial appointment after the next election. The directors of a national political party are in charge of the party's information and Internet departments. Not only do they use Plurk, but they also instruct politicians in their party on how to utilize Plurk as a political communication tool. The inclusion of the four local politicians, provides different perspectives in order to encompass the width of Plurk utilization.

This study asked questions about a range of issues to do with the use of Plurk, including motivations for using Plurk, the formation of friendships and connections on Plurk, political mobilization, content, the efficacy of Plurk, and the comparison of Plurk with other social network sites. The interviews lasted between 31 and 69 minutes (mean = 50 minutes), and were all carried out within a period of two weeks in October 2009.

Findings and Discussion

Previous research shows that the main factor that drives politicians to employ Plurk is a characteristic it has in common with other new media tools—it is a "like-minded chamber" (Luders, M., 2009; McKenna, K. Y. A., 2002; Southwell & Yzer, 2009; Wojcieszak & Mutz, 2009).

> It is very easy to know people's political ideology on Plurk, because pan-Blue oriented netizens rarely get into pan-Green netizens' venue, and vice vesa. Therefore, most people who reply to your message tend to have the same political ideology and politicians can get positive responses and feel comfortable. (Local B)

However, the attractions of having a chamber populated by like-minded users is not enough to explain why politicians are attracted by Plurk. Another concept, "friending" between politician and netizens, provides more clues to answer the question of why politicians use Plurk. Sweetser and Lariscy (2008) indicated that the majority of messengers tended to feel that they had a personal friendship with the politician. Rightly or wrongly, there is a perception of proximity and dialogic communication.

It was discovered that the broad pattern of political communication via Plurk (through information broadcasting, public opinion formation, and political mobilization) may be characterized as strategic dialogue. However, in Habermasian terms it would merely be viewed as strategic. Besides strategic dialogue, transactions occurring on Plurk fall into the category of another dialogue strategy—information and idea collection

(friending, involving mutual disclosure falls into this category). All communication has elements of dialogic communication, but in the case of the politicians, this is part and parcel of a strategy.

Information Broadcasting

Traditionally, candidates' camps use their campaign websites as a means of providing information which shows the candidate in a positive light, and the goals are to inform website visitors, to increase public awareness of issues, and to persuade undecided voters (K. Foot & Schneider, 2006). Plurk is used for a similar purpose which is categorized as information broadcasting, but unlike campaign websites, politicians do not have full control over the structure and content of Plurk.

> Politicians' traditional official websites seek to attract netizens, as do campaign offices on the Internet; but Plurk can be seen as being like a textual broadcasting or TV program. When we post some information on the timeline, not only can our friends and fans see the information, but also our Plurk friends who are enthusiastic will redirect (retwee) our information to their timelines and that allows more people to receive the information. The velocity of passing information on Plurk, simultaneously for thousands of people, is greater than traditional Internet tools. (Director 2)

Plurk provides a transactional venue that allows participants to control the site that shapes netizens as active agents who can help politicians to disseminate information more effectively if they want to. This characteristic distinguishes Plurk from traditional campaign websites, yet interestingly enough, they share some of the functions of campaign websites identified by K. Foot and Schneider (2006). Agenda setting is one of the functions of campaign websites, and Plurk can also be used to do this:

> Not every issue is suitable to organize a formal press conference, nor is it possible to have as many press conferences or news releases in a day as an opposing political party member, otherwise people feel annoyed. However, people accept that we express our thoughts on Plurk, and even better, journalists visit Plurk very often and find news resources there, politicians still get the opportunity of publicity in a way. (Aide)

The main characteristics of the political usage of Plurk as mentioned above are similar to the concept "informing" put forward by K. Foot and Schneider (2006). However, Foot and Schneider associate informing with two concepts, "involving" and "connecting", through the calendar feature of campaign websites. On the one hand, information broadcasting on Plurk retains the function of informing (which can happen at an interpersonal level) and on the other hand, it incorporates Plurk's ability to transmit information effectively and rapidly to large numbers of people. K. Foot and Schneider (2006) indicated that "position taking" was the presentation of a candidate's stance on an issue, and dialogue occured only when two or more campaigns presented opposing positions on the same issue. However, dialogue does not only occur between different politicians on Plurk; it also occurs between politicians and netizens.

> If we want to raise an issue or organize an activity, we will post a message on Plurk to inform Plurk friends in order to show how much we care about this issue. However, I think this is a kind of informing to me, because my Plurk friends are mainly occupied by their jobs, and it is very hard to invite Plurk friends to join our activities. (Aide)

Information broadcasting seems to follow a one-to-many communication pattern, but on Plurk, dialogue between politicians and netizens can be triggered on a topic. This phenomenon is also addressed by Southwell and Yzer (2009). In other words, dialogue is not manipulated by any one party, and netizens can follow the conversation or not, based on their individual inclinations. In fact, if the dialogue is raised by netizens, it shows more communicative in Habermasian term.

Information and Idea Collection

I get a lot of messages through Plurk, especially many young Plurk friends provide innovative ideas which I can use. (National)

Information and idea collection could be seen as "Involving", however, it also contains some elements of "Connecting". If considering this solely from the perspective put forward by Foot and Schneider, information and idea collection will be seen as purely strategic and our purview will be limited. Information and idea collection can be associated with dialogic communication by Plurk's two-way communication role which can be defined as providing a means whereby an organization and its publics can communicate interactively (Kent & Taylor, 1998). The findings of this research confirm that Plurk does help politicians and netizens communicate with each other without boundaries and that it sometimes provides opportunities to increase understanding:

> Even though I am a local politician, I have opportunities to communicate with people national wide on Plurk. However, their opinions are usually different from those of people in my electorate. For example on the issue of building a gondola system, many of Plurk friends ask whether "it is safe" or "will it work?" They don't really know that what local people are concerned about is that a park will disappear if the construction goes ahead. Even so, the opinions they expressed did not contradict mine. Since local people don't want to build a gondola system, the issue of safety issue can be a reason to stop it. Combine them, and I can make my stance stronger. (Local D)

Reaching understanding is considered to be a process of achieving agreement among speaking and acting subjects (Jürgen Habermas, 1984). From this perspective, Plurk helps politicians and netizens achieve understanding through the collection of information and ideas. However, if we measure information and idea collection against Habermasian communicative action, it seems not to measure up. In order to determine whether information and idea collection is strategic action or communicative action, it is necessary to know whether the politicians involved have ulterior motives for being involved in the communication. However, to uncover the politicians' intentions it is not enough to measure any of the quantitative variables involved. Even if this was possible, it would be a meaningless exercise. According to Habermas's communicative theory, as long as it contains any strategic element, information and idea collection is strategic. However, this kind of pure situation seems not happen in reality. Therefore, Dialogic strategy can be employed to examine communication between politicians and netizens on Plurk. Politicians prefer to have some dialogue with netiziens while they are involved with information and idea collection, but their intentions contain some elements of attempting to garner political support. Examining these two intentions, one can conclude that politicians mostly have an open attitude toward information and idea collection.

> A Plurk friend left a message asking me to enquire about a former Taipei city councilor. I found that the communiqué from Taipei city council indicated that the former councillor resigned. The truth is that the former councillor was murdered during "The 228 Incident".[1] Therefore, I traced this clue and found the grandson of the former Taipei city councillor and surprisingly enough, he is also one of my Plurk friends. Because of this issue, their family members became my loyal supporters. (Local C)

In this case, the politician was motivated by a request from a netizen, and his/her intention can in most part be seen as being to reach understanding, but following up the information also provided some possibility of

[1] The 228 Incident also known as the 228 Massacre was an anti-government uprising in Taiwan that began on February 28, 1947 that was violently suppressed by the Kuomintang (KMT) government resulting in many civilian deaths.

winning supporters (success) at the same time. This exemplifies the dialogic strategy of politicians.

Additionally, the transaction of friending can occur during the process of information and idea collection. This is especially true from the perspective of netizens, since they provide information or ideas without any conditions, because they take politicians to be their friends. Mesch and Talmud's (2006, p. 41) findings highlight "the importance of reaching trust and reciprocity, necessary in any close relationship". Based on this foundation, friending transactions can be well exercised, and improve the intention of reaching understanding of politicians. Besides the notions we mentioned above, coproduction or prosumption was also associated with information and data collection.

> During the period of check, we needed to find an instructor of dactylology to teach us how to show "step down President Ma" in dactylology, therefore, I posted a message on Plurk, and one of my Plurk friends posted a video to show us within a day. (Local B)

The definition of coproduction is that "all political actors—ordinary citizens as well as political professionals—who venture onto the political Web are not only users but also potential producers" (Kirsten A. Foot & Schneider, 2002, p. 229), which is a little bit different from the example. However, if we recognize that all the actors who are involved in Plurk play a dual role as "consumer" and an "information provider", this sort of providing information or knowledge can be seen as coproduction.

Public Opinion Formation

Public opinion formation should be distinguished from political mobilization, although both these transactions can be included in mobilizing. From Foot and Schneider's perspective, "mobilizing builds conceptually and technically on each of the three web campaign practices"—informing, involving, and connecting (K. Foot & Schneider, 2006, p. 132). However, "mobilizing" contains all web campaign transactions and if one employs Foot and Schneider's term without amendment, it would not be possible to invest this study with the requisite focus. Public opinion formation is conceptualized as building a political climate that influences public opinion; and political mobilization strictly occurs offline, which means supporters physically participate in the activities of politicians.

Public opinion formation is associated with "connecting" and "mobilizing". When campaigns attempt to shift a site visitor's orientation or encourage them to do something with other offline actors, they engage in connecting (K. Foot & Schneider, 2006). Public opinion formation relies on netizens who are galvanized to act online or offline to influence public opinion, or to "mobilize". In other words, public opinion formation is a two-step transaction: firstly, netizens are connected; secondly, they react.

> When we find something negative to our party on the Internet, if we directly fight back, it usually rebounds and blurs the focus of that issue. Instead, I provide correct information on Plurk and motivate my Plurk friend to deliver correct information. My Plurk friends usually react immediately and surf through the Internet to find out the negative message. Even though the message was posted on some political forum where I cannot reach, they help me to correct that message and minimize the damage to us. (Director 2)

Providing correct information not only informs netizens, but also helps them to develop a cognitive bridge with politicians. Of course, this transaction is strategic, because strategic logic involves specific goals and the means to achieve them (Gregory, 2005). The goal is to create a positive atmosphere by supplying correct information, and it matches with Habermas' definition of strategic action.

> I learned that a call-in talk show on TV was discussing President Ma's address "Reading traditional Chinese and writing simplified Chinese", and that the TV show had created a call-in poll to ask people "do you support this address?". I posted a message on Plurk saying "I just called and voted against this issue, hope my Plurk friends can support me and vote". I found it works! Even the TV show host said that this was the first time their call-in poll had attracted so many participants. (Director 1)

For public opinion formation to be well done, netizens must receive politicians' illocutionary messages (building understanding), and experience perlocutionary responses (to strategic communication). In other words, when netizens (hearers) understand politicians' intentions (successful creation of positive atmosphere), through the locutionary act of making a phone call (meaning), they achieve the goal see Table 2. According to Habermas (1984), if a speaker (politician) wants to be successful, he may conceal his perlocutionary aim. If so, a hearer (netizen) may fail to discern the intention of the speaker, and the perlocutionary effect becomes side-effect of an illocutionary act. In this regard, a politician may conceal his intention in order to achieve his goals, but he may show his intention to ensure that the hearer really understands, because either way could lead to success. Therefore, public opinion formation is located on the cusp of the communicative and dialogic, or we could say it is "strategic dialogue", as seen in the following example:

> One of my Plurk friends posted a message that currently there was a web poll "Should Taiwan's leader stand down over delays in aiding typhoon victims?" on Cable News Network(CNN) official websites, I think it was the first time to people were asked on Plurk to vote on an international journalism website. Because CNN restricts repeat voting by tracking IP addresses, I tried to mobilize as many of my Plurk friends to vote as possible, and I posted the latest outcome of the vote every few minutes. It turned out that there were 14,972 people who voted, 82% (12,306) said "Taiwan's leader should stand down" and 18% (2,666) said "no". The web poll became the headline of newspapers on the next day. (Director 1)

In this case, dialogue was initiated by a netizen while the politician played the role of catalyst to disseminate this dialogue. The netizen's intention was understood by the politician and they reached an understanding, which meant this dialogue was communicative; but the politician redirected the information into another transaction venue, where his intention may have been concealed (promoting a negative image of his opponent to help increase his own party's supporters) or may be his intention may be perceived by other netizens, which leads to strategic dialogue.

Table 2

Relationship of Actors in Habermasian Communicative Action

	Illocutionary Act	Locutionary Act	Perlocutionary Act
Politician (P) [Blog magnet][2]	1. P's intention of message A, ("Intention of forming a negative political climate towards opponent")	2. P's message A on Plurk: *I just called and voted against this issue, hope my friends on Plurk can support* me and vote.	
Indidividual netizen supporter (N1)		4. N1 dials telephone poll number voting "no".	3. N1: Perceives intention at 1.
Aggregate netizen supporters (N2)		5. Vote result	
Third parties (N3)			6. N3: Receives negative image of opponent.

[2] In their discussion of "websphere", Foot and Schneider (2002) distinguish between (1) site producers, (2) visitors/users, and (3) third parties. In the context of Plurk, politicians may be viewed as "blog magnets" rather than site producers. Visitors/users (netizens) soon become "fans" and "supporters". Supporters are willing to act in support of the politician through voting and other means. Their supportive remarks and reports of aggregate voting on issues can influence third parties.

Political Mobilization

Political mobilization is different from public opinion formation because in the practice of campaign political mobilization is directly associated with winning the election while the aim of public opinion formation may just be to create a positive atmosphere toward particular politicians. They are different to some degree. Political mobilization is defined as netizens physically participating in activities organized by politicians, to show their support or to enable other actors to change their attitudes. Recruiting volunteers is a type of political mobilization,

> During Typhoon Morakot[3](2009, August 8-10), Democratic Progressive Party(DPP) set up a rescue-support website on eighth Aug on which it created a page to ask people to register as volunteer workers. There were more than 500 people who registered on the websites on 9-10 Aug. After analysis, we found that one fourth of the people were there because they received the information on Plurk. People were willing to leave their personal details, which showed that they trusted Plurk to a certain extent. (Director 2)

> One of the politicians who was responsible for collecting resources in Taipei County during Morakot Typhoon, he only employed Plurk as a medium to deliver information. It turned out that he successfully collected 26 truckloads of resources within 10 days. (Minister)

In this transaction, Plurk demonstrated its effectiveness and competence and this situation reflects the nature of the politician-centered political culture of mobilization. From netizens' perspective, political mobilization is strategic, but this transaction includes some elements which are communicative. According to Habermas (Jürgen Habermas & Cooke, 1998), "anyone acting communicatively must raise universal validity claims, which includes: a) uttering something intelligibly; b) giving (the hearer) something to understand; c) make herself thereby understandable; and d) coming to an understanding with another person" (p. 22). Put it this way, the politician expressed himself clearly, so that the politician and netizens comprehended one another. The politician expressed his intentions truthfully (helping people who suffered from flood), so that netizens could find the utterance credible (they trusted the politician). Finally, the politician had to choose an utterance that enabled the netizens to have the right to accept or refuse the request. Especially in political mobilization, netizens can always refuse the request which is made by politicians. Even though political mobilization contains some strategic elements, it should not be seen as purely strategic. Here is another example which shows netizens' free will,

> We organized a mock party for Maokong Gondola to criticize the Taipei city government, inviting our Plurk friends to join us. In order to attract the younger generation, we organized some programs with popular live band performances. I didn't expect many people to appear because the location was very inconvenient to reach without a car and it was a rainy day. The turnout numbered 80 people, much more than my expectation. I think it was successful response to a local issue. (Local D)

The politician's intention (of organizing a political party to increase his influence) may or may not have been concealed. However, after feedback from Plurk, he altered his strategy, organizing programs that netizens found more acceptable. Therefore, political mobilization in this context can be characterized as strategic dialogue.

---

[3] Typhoon Morakot wrought catastrophic damage in Taiwan, leaving 461 people dead and 192 others missing, most of whom are feared dead and roughly NT$110 billion ($3.3 billion USD) in damages. The inordinate amount of rain triggered enormous mudslides and severe flooding throughout southern Taiwan. One mudslide buried the entire town of Xiaolin, killing an estimated 500 people in the village alone.

Discussion

Based on Foot and Schneider's four practices of web campaigns, we categorized the four transactions by using Plurk. We found that when Foot and Schneider defined these practices, some of them overlapped with each other in concept and, therefore, this model is of limited practical use for understanding microblogs. The framework of four transactions incorporates the four practices of web campaigns, as shown below.[4] The first transaction, information broadcasting, has characteristics of informing, involving, and connecting. The second transaction, information and idea collection, has characteristics of involving and connecting. The third transaction, public opinion formation, has characteristics of connecting and mobilizing. The fourth transaction, political mobilization, mixes the characteristics of involving, connecting, and mobilizing.

Table 3

The Relationship Between Four Practices and Four Transactions

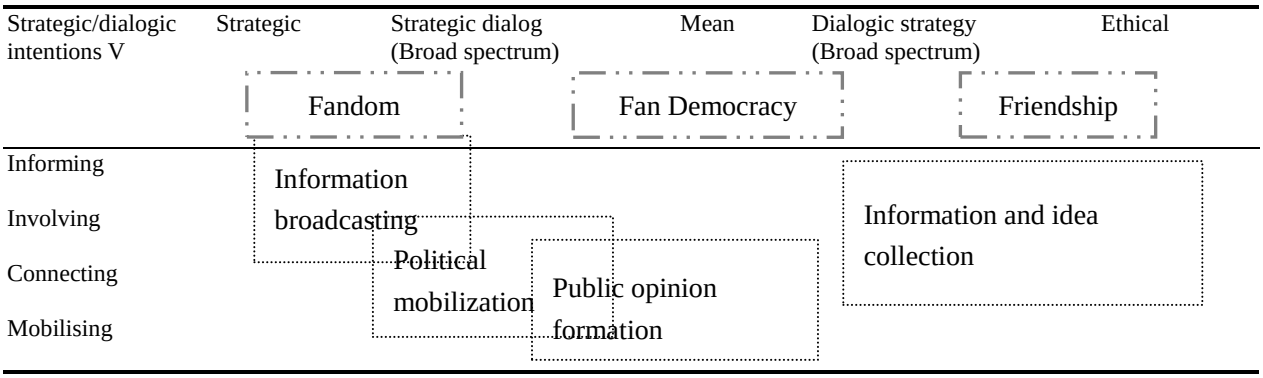
	Information broadcasting	Information and idea collection	Public opinion formation	Political mobilization
Informing	*			
Involving	*	*		*
Connecting	*	*	*	*
Mobilizing			*	*

Note. * means a transaction involves in practices.

In order to map the relationships between the four transactions and dialogic venues, we drew on Habermas' communicative theory to form the whole structure, as follows[5]:

Table 4

The Distribution of Four Transactions



The structure shows that when politicians utilize Plurk as a transactional venue, their intentions are mostly strategic, with the only exceptions being in terms of information and idea collection. If we just follow the notion of Habermas to distinguish strategic action from communicative action, problems linger when we employ the four transactions to analyze micro-blogs. Recognising the existence of mixed types of action allows researchers to define the differences between these mixed types and it provides a more practical analysis tool. Under this structure, ideal categories of strategic and ethical processes are not viewed as existing in real

[4] Table 3: The relationship between four practices and four transactions
[5] Table 4: The distribution of four transactions

political communication. However, mixed categories are observable in practice. Political mobilization, public opinion formation or information and idea collection—these three transactions all include some elements each form of communication. Between the broad-spectrum mixed types (strategic dialogue and dialogic strategy) can be theorized a mean.

Conclusions

The pattern that Taiwanese politicians employ when using Plurk has been identified from this research. It consists of "Information broadcasting", "Information and idea collection", "Public opinion formation", and "Political mobilization". It is obvious that the strategic elements dominate politicians' use of Plurk even though Plurk contains more characteristics of Web2.0 than their use of the medium. However, Habermas (2006) indicates that the Internet can undermine the control power of authoritarian regimes. This reduction of control may force politicians to alter their thinking and this fosters dialogue between politicians and netizens. Plurk happens to be a perfect example of the provision of such venues. Political communication in this context therefore, cannot be characterized as an example of ideal Habermasian dialogic communication. Rather, it needs to be viewed as a hybrid form of strategic and dialogic communication.

Even though the number of respondents in this research was limited, the results provided useful baseline data for Taiwanese politicians' views about the use of Plurk in 2009. The study proposes a theoretical model with which to view the relationship between politicians and netizens. In using the pattern this research develops, further research can develop a quantitative content analysis to understand the trends that how politicians employ social media.

Besides quantitative methods, some directions can be explored as well. On Plurk, political communication in the guise of social communication has an advantage over undisguised political communication because of Plurk's outlinking capacity (Foot, K., Schneider, S. M., Dougherty, M., Xenos, M., & Larsen, E., 2003). Plurk becomes a "core node" of a social network that acts like a public sphericule (Karim, 2002). Further research may aim at the construction of a wider map of the political communication that arises from the outlinking capacity of Plurk. Further research may also look at political supporters' views of the use of Plurk as well as changing perceptions of Plurk over time.

References

Alexa.com. (2010). Alexa: The web Information Company. Retrieved August 30, 2010 from http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/plurk.com

Aparaschivei, P. A. (2011). The use of new media in electoral campaigns: Analysis on the use of Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in the 2009 Romanian Presidential Campaign. *Journal of Media Research, 4*(2), 39-60.

Bruns, A., & Burgess, J. (2011). Ausvotes: How twitter covered the 2010 Australian federal election. *Communication, Politics, and Culture, 44*(2).

Cang, H. C. (2009). Alvin woon innovated microblog; Timeline makes business opportunity. *UBN Weekly, 190*.

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. New York: Oxford.

Compton, J. (2008). Mixing friends with Politics: A functional analysis of 2008 Presidential Candidates Social Networking Profiles. Conference Papers from *National Communication Association*, 1.

Dahlgren, P. (2001). The public sphere and the net: Structure, space, and communication. In W. L. Bennett & R. M. Entman (Eds.), *Mediated politics: Communication in the future of democracy*. Cambridge University Press.

Ebner, M., & Maurer, H. (2008). *Can micro-blogs and weblogs change traditional scientific writing?* Paper presented at the Proceedings of *E-Learn 2008*, Las Vegas.

Ebner, M., & Schiefner, M. (2008). *Micro-blogging—More than fun?* Paper presented at the Proceeding of *IADIS Moblie Learning Conference 2008*, Portugal.

Erikson, E. (2008). Hillary is my friend: MySpace and political fandom. *Rocky Mountain Communication Review, 5*(1), 3-16.

Foot, K. (2006). Web sphere analysis and cybercultural studies. In D. Silver & A. Massanari (Eds.), *Critical cyberculture studies: Current terrains, future directions.* New York: New York University.

Foot, K., & Schneider, S. (2006). *Web campaigning*. MIT Press.

Foot, K., Schneider, S. M., Dougherty, M., Xenos, M., & Larsen, E. (2003). Analyzing linking practices: Candidate sites in the 2002 US electoral websphere. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 8*(4).

Foot, K. A., & Schneider, S. M. (2002). Online action in campaign 2000: An exploratory analysis of the U.S. political web sphere. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 46*(2), 222.

Foot, K. A., Schneider, S. M., & Xenos, M. (2002). *Online Campaigning in the 2002 U.S. electoral web sphere*. Paper presented at *The Internet Research 3.0 conference*. Maastricht: The Netherlands.

Giustini, D., & Wright, M. D. (2009). Twitter: An introduction to microblogging for health librarians. *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association, 30*, 11-17.

Google Trends. (2010). Retrieved Aug 30, 2010 from http://trends.google.com/websites?q=plurk.com&geo=all&date=all&sort=0

Google Trends. (Feb 25, 2012). Retrieved from http://trends.google.com/websites?q=facebook.com&geo=TW&date=all&sort=0

Gregory, B. (2005). *Public diplomacy and strategic communication: Cultures, firewalls, and imported norms.* Paper presented at *The American Political Science Association Conference on International Communication and Conflict.*Washington, D.C.

Grosseck, G., & Holotescu, C. (2008). Can We use twitter for educational activities? Paper presented at *The 4th International Scientific Conference e-learing and Software for Education*. Bucharest.

Gueorguieva, V. (2008). Voters, MySpace, and YouTube: The impact of alternative communication channels on the 2006 election cycle and beyond. *Social Science Computer Review, 26*(3), 288-300.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (2006). Political communication in media society: Does democracy still enjoy an epistemic dimension? The impact of normative theory on empirical research. *Communication Theory (10503293), 16*(4), 411-426.

Habermas, J., & Cooke, M. (1998). *On the pragmatics of communication*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Hass, T., & Deetz, S. (2000). Between generalized and the concrete other: Apparoaching organizational ethics from feminist perspectives. In P. M. Buzzanell (Eds.), *Rethinking Organisational and Managerial Communication from Feminist Perspectives*. SAGE Publications, Inc..

Java, A., Finin, T., Song, X., & Tseng, B. (2007). Why we twitter: Understanding microblogging usage an communities. Paper presented at the *WEBKDD and 1st SNA-KDD Workshop 2007*. San Jose, California.

Karim, K. (2002). Public sphere and public sphericules: Civic discourse in ethnic media. In S. D. Ferguson & L. R. Shade (Eds.), *Civic discourse and cultural politics in Canada: A cacophony of voices* (pp. 230-242).

Kent, M. L., & Taylor, M. (1998). Building dialogic relationships through the world wide web. *Public Relations Review, 24*(3), 321.

Langlois, G., Elmer, G., McKelvey, F., & Devereaux, Z. (2009). Networked publics: The double articulation of code and politics on facebook. *Canadian Journal of Communication, 34*(3), 415-434.

Larsson, A. O., & Moe, H. (2011). Studying political microblogging: Twitter users in the 2010 Swedish election campaign. *New Media and Society*. doi: 10.1177/1461444811422894

Luders, M. (2009). Becoming more like friends. *NORDICOM Review, 30*(1), 201-216.

Macnamara, J. (2011). Pre- and post-election 2010 online: What happened to the conversation? *Communication, Politics, and Culture, 44*(2), 18-36.

Macnamara, J., & Kenning, G. (2011). E-electioneering 2010: Trends in social media use in australian political communication. *Media International Australia(8/1/07-current),139*, 7-22.

Marvasti, A. B. (2004). *Qualitative research in sociology: An introduction*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd..

McKenna, K. Y. A., Green, A. S., & Gleason, M. E. J. (2002). Relationship formation on the internet: What is the big attraction? *Journal of Social Issues, 58*, 9-31.

Mesch, G., & Talmud, I. (2006). Online friendship formation, communication channels, and social closeness. *International Journal of Internet Science, 1*(1).

Miller, V. (2008). New media, networking and phatic culture. *Convergence: The Journal of Research Into New Media Technologies, 14*(4), 387-400.

O'Reilly, T. (2005). What is Web2.0: Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software. Retrieved from http://oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html

Olsson, T., & Dahlgren, P. (2010). Introduction. In T. Olsson & P. Dahlgren (Eds.), *Young people, ICTs, and democracy: Theories, policies, identities, and websites*. Goteborg, Sweden: Nordicom.

Passant, A., Hastrup, T., Bojars, U., & Breslin, J. (2008). Micro-blogging: A semantic web and distributed approach. *Paper* presented at *The 4th Workshop on Scripting for the Semantic Web*.

Plurk.com. (2010). FAQ. Retrieved August 30, 2010 from http://www.plurk.com/faq

Robertson, S. P., Vatrapu, R. K., & Medina, R. (2009). The social life of social networks: Facebook linkage patterns in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Paper presented at *The Proceedings of the 10th Annual International Conference on Digital Government Research, Social Networks, Making Connections Between Citizens, Data, and Government*.

Schneider, S. M., & Foot, K. A. (2005). Websphere analysis: An approach to studying online action virtual methods. In C. Hine (Ed.), *Sociail Science Research on the Internet*. Oxford: Berg.

Southwell, B. G., & Yzer, M. C. (2009). When (and why) interpersonal talk matters for campaigns. *Communication Theory (10503293), 19*(1), 1-8.

Stromer-Galley, J. (2000). Online interaction and why candidates avoid it. *Journal of Communication, 50*(4), 111-132.

Sweetser, K. D., & Lariscy, R. W. (2008). Candidates make good friends: An analysis of candidates' uses of facebook. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 2*(3), 175-198.

Valenzuela, S., Park, N., & Kee, K. F. (2008). Lessons from Facebook: The effect of social network sites on college students' social capital. Paper presented at *The 9th International Symposium on Online Journalism*. Austin, Texas.

Van Zoonen, L. (2004). Imagining the fan democracy. *European Journal of Communication, 19*(1), 39-52. doi: 10.1177/0267323104040693

Vitak, J., Smock, A., Zube, P., Carr, C., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C. (2009). "Poking" people to participate: Facebook and political participation in the 2008 Election. Conference papers in *International Communication Association,* 1-41.

Wojcieszak, M. E., & Mutz, D. C. (2009). Online groups and political discourse: Do online discussion spaces facilitate exposure to political disagreement? *Journal of Communication, 59*(1), 40-56.

Wu, J. (2009). Facebook politics: An exploratory study of american youth's political engagement during the 2008 Presidential Election. Conference Papers in *International Communication Association*, 1-23.