CALL FOR PAPERS FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE

Social Media and Policy Making

How can social media intervene in policymaking?

Guest Editor of special issue: Dr. Somayeh Labafi

Iranian Journal of Information Processing and Management

The emergence of participatory social media has created a new ecosystem for the participation of users in social events (Fuchs, 2017). Content exchange by the user generates values such as a social discourse and awareness of a special subject triggering political, social, and other types of changes (Eom, Hwang & Kim, 2018). With tens of millions of active users, social media have turned into dynamic resources of people's interests, needs, and beliefs, giving rise to a rich content reserve. This provides policymakers with a great opportunity to learn about citizens and communicate with them effectively (Miriam, 2014). Social media serve as a link between users and policymakers, serving as a novel source to involve users in formulating and enacting policies (Mellouli, Driss & Trabelsi, 2019). Policymakers need to know the users' opinions, because users post their opinions on social media with minimal supervision (Dekker, van Den Brink & Meijer, 2019). Users express their positive and negative opinions on various issues on social platforms, providing policymakers with a unique opportunity to improve communication with citizens and learning of their needs and opinions (De Paula, Dincelli & Harrison, 2018).

There is a relationship between the collection and analysis of social media data and the quality of public life. The use of public resources, once based on traditional resources in society, is generalized to include the concept of social media. This comes as the conceptualization of the user data and their acceptance by policymakers is viewed as a public resource for engaging users in policymaking in order to secure public interests (Napoli, 2019). Social media monitoring, or generally, social supervision is highly needed if governments wish to learn how to make the best out of user participation in social media (Panagiotopoulos, Bowen & Brooker, 2017).

Thus far, policymakers have failed to systematically use social media data in the policymaking process. This is inconsistent with the evidence-based policy making. The lack of the views and opinions of social media users, who are sensitive to different issues, would challenge formulation, enactment and assessment of policies in future, given the fact that these views and opinions can facilitate the policymaking process by demonstrating some background knowledge of problems in different areas. Therefore, the feasibility of using social media users' data in the public policymaking processes is thrown into question. Since no clear solution has been put forward to tackle this problem so far (Mellouli, Driss & Trabelsi, 2019), this special issue intends to shed some light on the question that how social media data can be used in policymaking. Social media data can improve policy, but it is not clear how they can constitute a part of the evidence in policy. The participation of scholars in other fields will provide considerable insight into this area. As a result, this special issue addresses the following questions for those who are interested to send us their papers for publiction:

1. Can social media data reflect users' needs?
2. What are the limitations of using social media data in policymaking processes?
3. Is "big" data always good data?
4. How do social media affect the generation and conversion of these data?
5. Are computational measurement methods valid and reliable?
6. Do social media data constitute a part of the evidence in the evidence-based policy?
7. Can social media data collection and analysis tools provide the policymakers with relevant evidence?
8. What are the capabilities and limitations of social network analyses in converting the data into the information required by the policymaker?
9. How can greater participation of users in social media enhance the quality of the data generated?
10. How can the crowdsourced content be used in specialized areas?
11. Which of the following contents can better provide the evidence the policymakers need: Texts, images or videos?
12. How does the Crowd Capabilities Framework contribute to determining the value of social media data in policymaking?
13. Despite limitations of social media, how can the data generated trigger value creation in policymaking?

Reviews and Quality Assurance: Each submission will be evaluated by the Editor and those recognized as out of scope will be desk rejected. The remaining

submissions will be evaluated by at least two reviewers. After being reviewed, the submissions will receive an acceptance email message.

Reviewers: Reviewers will be selected based on their relevant expertise.

Template and Style: The submissions must follow the style manual of the Iranian Journal of Information Processing and Management for this special issue:
Each submission is expected to be between 6,500 to 8,500 words including references, tables and figures, and excluding appendices.

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