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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES OF NGOS

Abstract:

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are aware of the potential that internet provides them to reach out to their stakeholders and they are trying to make use of this potential. Most of the literature concerning NGOs and their social media activities shows that NGOs are having a hard time adapting to social media and they are not making full use of the potential that social media offers them (Waters, Burnett, Lamm and Lucas 2009, p. 105; Bortree and Seltzer, 2009, p. 318; Lovejoy, Waters and Saxton, 2009, p. 313; Waters and Jamal, 2011, p. 323; Muralidharan, Rasmussen, Patterson and Shin, 2011, p. 177; Miller, 2011, p. 46).

The purpose of this study is to examine the social media activities of the NGOs located in the City of Çanakkale in Turkey. Data were collected through interviews with people in key positions in the NGOs and also content of social media pages of NGOs were analyzed. Facebook and Twitter are selected as social media websites examined in the study, since they are well-known and widely used sites. The goals of and expectations from NGOs' social media usage are questioned in interviews. The study also tries to determine whether NGOs are using different social media websites for different aims and in which way they are using them. Additionally the study explores with whom they interact on social media, how are they choosing to interact and how efficiently the NGOs are using the feedback they get. The challenges and shortcomings regarding NGOs' social media usage are explored as well. At the end, findings of the study are discussed, and recommendation for practitioners and possible future research implications are presented.

Keywords:

Non-Governmental Organizations, Social Media, Communication

JEL Classification: M00, M10, M19