

Trolls as a Platform for Infotainment: A Study on Public Service Commission Trolls in Facebook

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Abstract

A pen may be stronger than a sword, but pencils are now said to be brighter than pens! Ordinary people may find pictures or cartoons on politics and social happenings more attractive than reading newspapers, articles or watching news channels on televisions. Trolls often helps the ordinary people to convey information about social, economic, political and technological happenings more effectively than traditional news mediums. It's a great innovation to spread an idea through a picture or in few words within a limit of a column. However, nowadays trolls have gained a huge popularity among youth. Trolls are now the primary news source for youths. A troll can present the most serious issue in a humorous way. A single meme can upgrade and degrade the integrity of a person or an organization. As like cartoons on newspapers, it is trolls for new media. Basically trolls use images on internet or pictures of popular movies to comment a specific topic or an event. This paper focus on how Trolls are used as a Platform for infotainment: by analyzing on Public Service Commission trolls in Facebook. The methodology used for the study was quantitative content analysis followed by qualitative analysis and sample size chosen for survey was 100.

1. Introduction

Cartoons played an important role in every childhood. We used to laugh at the cartoons which used to be a part of newspapers. But now the 'Trolls' or 'Memes' replaced cartoons. In this informative world, trolls are considered as a powerful tool to spread an information or to raise an issue to get global attention and reach in a short span of time by adding a pinch of humor. In internet terminology, a troll is said to be as, a person who spread information on internet by initiating breaches or making people upset by posting provocative accidental or non-subjective messages in an online community such as online forums, chat rooms, newsgroups, blogs.

The present day usage of this term is suspected to have appeared on internet in late 1980s. This term was originally fishing method incorporated by online thieves to find scapegoats. This simply referred to demons or beasts who hide in the darkness and threaten people. Large range of people enjoy this kind of trolling that brighten the ignorance of the powerful and their eagerness to respond. Internet trolls have a platform of arrays. It states people are doing it for fun, laughter or amusements, especially that derived at another's expense or laughs. For this troll's ranges from clever spoofs of harassments to violent threats. When the victims don't experience the so called fun and laughter, trolls tell them they won't have a sense of humor.

Early incidents of trolling are considered to be same as blazing. But this was changed by the modern use of news media to refer it as a creation of a content that aims another person or a community. Trolling is a game of character duplicity. Admitting one to be played without any consent of most of the players. Trolls endeavors to pass a genuine participant for sharing a group's common interest or taste and concerns; the members in the group, if they are apprehensive of trolls and other character duplicity, endeavor to both distinguish the 'real' from trolling posts and consequent to judge a poster troll, making the offending poster leave the particular group. The success depends entirely on how well those trollers can troll, understanding the character cues, later their success depends on whether the troll's enjoyment is sufficiently curtailing or overcome by the cost by the group.

Trolls or memes created a trend in Facebook and many more mimic social happenings, religious, political and common scenarios which makes people laugh and think at the same time. Creation of trolls are not similar as to cartoons which are created by the artists or cartoonists who have an artistic skill. But in the case of trolls, it is by the common people who have some ideas about the situation of movies which relates with their troll ideas. Also it requires some sort of technology skill but it is not a problem in this contemporary tech driven world.

A study done by Justin (2017) found that trolls arise out of two factors they are situational and innate factors. He even adds that it's better to find the reality behind why trolling is happening rather than banning all those trolls and trollers.

Every human remembers the comic scenes that they have watched in various movies. Thus, these scenes are used as visuals and the dialogues the movie characters uttered were replaced with a fact or general knowledge. They are referred to as educative trolls. This particular form of trolls makes things more appealing for those social media users. They might be scrolling and happen to see this troll and they will gain general knowledge without any cost. No one is ready to sit and learn things especially general knowledge. These trolls are more of use for those preparing or appearing for public exams. They can memorize facts without much hard work.

In Facebook we come across various such troll pages which are of different genres. Few might focus on social issues, politics, entertainment and many more. Those pages which aim at educative purpose in the form of trolls are of great importance and help. Thus, this study mainly focusses on one such page named as PSC Trolls. However, the study mainly focusses to analyze the informative part played by this particular page in Facebook. This particular page has more than 16000 followers in Facebook. It serves as a medium of knowledge platform by using satire as a pinch in memes. It is helping those participants preparing to attend public exams.

2. Review of Literature

There are few researches regarding analyzing trolls and its impacts. Sarada states that, trolls make a public platform for open reviews and satires. At times it might harm a person without lenity but it has a broader reach of usage. It acts as instruments of social change when it has been used as a constructive brighter aspect (Sarada, 2016). However, the concept of trolls or the trolls alone gives why people can't have good things in online. Undoubtedly trolls are upsetting and it can make lives difficult. (Whitney, 2012)

Social media is not at all a dangerous place to be; the misuse has made it dangerous. Criticisms will be without a question in mind this is why feedbacks and comments are gaining importance. Internet has made lives simpler. But this can be helpful when people think before writing in a comment box. Any queries require a proper research and discussions with a third person and results should reach a conclusion regarding it. All of these takes a considerable time and efforts from an individual is part, which is most of them have in their packed lives (Rekha, 2017)

Andris and his team members found that the alteration of new media is an increasingly common approach in the distribution of information. Although the distribution of information is not a new phenomenon there are lots of other

leading phenomenon which is growing in other side which leads to the access of information through online media and social networks. (Andris& et.AL,2015)

Vineetha states that International chalu union the most popular Malayalam troll website in Facebook. She examined how international chalu union page in Facebook and the memes generally engaged in social criticisms as this webpage are new space for social satires. ICU (International chalu union) is not intentionally introduce to politics. But it has some ideology set ups than basic political correctness.(Vineetha,2016) Trolls which made its bodies to run over its hierarchy would have a fate like that of a gene to make its bodies to run over the hills. The important part is that there is no compulsory relation between a meme's replicative powers. Its wholeness from its point of view and its contribution to our wholesomeness(David,1989).

Experts in troll websites like International chalu union and troll Malayalam Trolling is a very hard work mate which requires quick thinking, dedication and a dissentient approach to the everyday and the imagination that goes with humors. (shilpa,2016)Online trolling is a deliberate problem which can make serious residue. In opposition to schoolyard bullying which is collateral to restrict when the victim comes in a safely side of their home. Online trolling can levy damages to a child each second in a day. It is captious to children to analyze the damages they can apply while sitting in front of computers and a long term emotional markings on body which affect the victims of online trolling. (Oliver,2017)

Trolling has become the most modern phenomenon to blow social media networking sites and so far the most dangerous and prejudicial to young and adults alike. Sites like Facebook, online forums, blogging and newspaper comments have emerged as platform and a stage to harass people with insults, provocations and threatening languages. This leads to huge distress to recipients of following messages. Trolling supporters see this as harmless fun but majority of people it affects deviant from fun. Trolling is a form of inducement online which includes sending abusive comments across all social media platforms. It has another meaning that is which is used for bullying having no matter how we dress it up, it actuates people to make comments to another people that elicit further comments. (Jiffy,2015)

Information that are draining from our smartphones into all aspects of our lives. The people who enjoying this online freedom are called trolls. This term which is originally came from a fishing method and online snipers use to find victims. It quickly morphs to refer as the monsters who hide in the darkness and threaten people. (Joel,2016).

This study mainly focused on scrutinizing the impact of PSC troll page in Facebook, which nobody yet undertook for study. This was done to analyze how those preparing for public exams and general public use such kind of troll pages for enriching them with facts.

Research Questions

1. How trolls are used as a tool for sharing information to users?
2. What are elements included to make the trolls more informative
3. What is the reach and acceptability of public service commission troll page?
4. Does the public service commission trolls are beneficial for the aspirants for public examinations?

Objectives

The main objectives of this study includes:

- To analyze the educative and informative function of the PSC trolls.
- To study how dialogues and images help and influence rather than traditional way of learning.
- To analyze the reach of PSC trolls by recording likes, shares and comments of the trolls in this particular page.

Hypotheses

The assumptions put forward under this study includes:

- Trolls of Public Service Commission are informative.
- One comic dialogue from a movie is replaced with a fact or general knowledge.
- Trolls are having great acceptance and influence among individuals rather than traditional way of learning.

3. Methodology**Theoretical Framework**

The theory used in this study is use and gratification theory along with social exchange theory which is considered as social psychology theory that focus on bargaining and individual decision making. Social influence theory considers how individuals influence thoughts and behaviors of others. Social selection theory looks at the 'attraction factors' on two or more. These trolls influence the decision making of individual in choosing which way of learning they need to follow.

Thus, this in turn affect the behavior of individuals. However, this also impart an influence on the attraction of individuals towards various things. In general, these trolls in social media plays a vital role in individual's decision making, behavior and even can influence others. Thus, this study mainly focusses on analyzing how trolls influence the learning process of individuals.

Research Design

In this study the methodology incorporated was quantitative content analysis followed by qualitative interpretation. In this method, survey was conducted for a sample of 100 in number.

Around 15 trolls from Facebook was analyzed based on the likes, comments and share. This is to identify the reach of each troll to far social media users. Survey was done to identify whether trolls are widely accepted among social media users and to evaluate its reach.

A structured questionnaire was distributed to 100 respondents and responses were collected to analyze their attitude towards trolls in Facebook. A survey to analyze whether trolls act as a platform for information was done and responses state that many are active in social media such as Facebook. They are very keen and observant about trolls that serve as an informative platform through Facebook. 100 samples were taken. Questionnaires were given to know the response about the impact of trolls through social media.

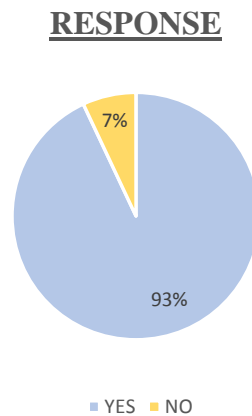
The sample size chosen for survey was 100 in number and survey monkey was used for the purpose.

4. Findings

Informative Purpose of Trolls

Following is the graphical representation of responses from those 100 social media users. Following is the questions and each of their responses:

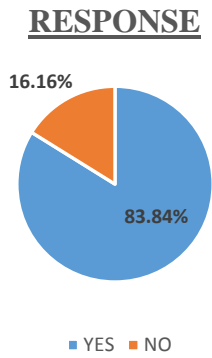
1. Do you have a Facebook account?



Graph.1

The question mainly focused on analyzing the percentage of those having Facebook account. 93% of the respondents have or access to Facebook. Only 7% of the respondents are not possessing Facebook account of their own. Thus, it very clear that only this 7% is unaware about trolls and their informative role trough social media platform such as Facebook. This 7% might not have a personal account due to various personal likes and dislikes.

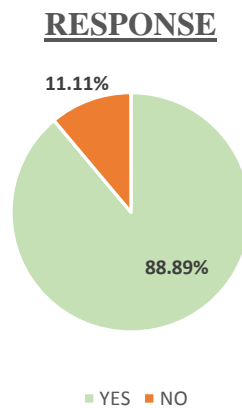
2. Are you active in social media?



Graph.2

The question aimed at studying how many of the Facebook users are active on daily basis. Many might be having account but needn't be that active due to various reasons. Results show that around 84% of the respondents are active in Facebook. This makes it clearer that trolls are seen and accepted by these social media users. Only 16% of respondents are not active in social media on a daily basis.

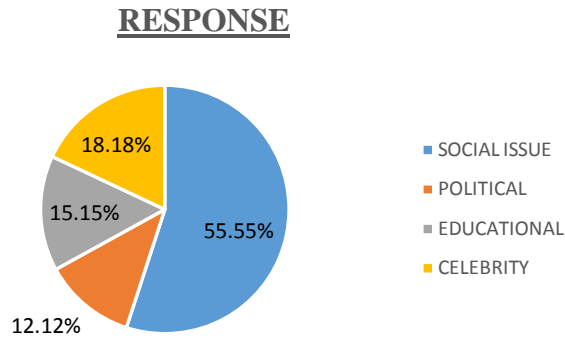
3. Do you like trolls?



Graph.3

The question was to understand how many of those social media users like trolls. Many won't be liking trolls since it has a pinch of satire and mocking attitude. But, the result shows that around 89% of the respondents like trolls and finds it interesting. Only 11%, of the respondent's dislike trolls. This might be due to various personal reasons.

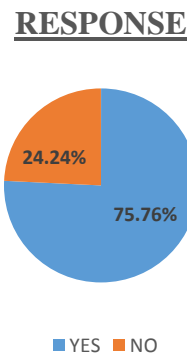
4. Which genre of trolls you like the most?



Graph.4

There are various genres of trolls. The main aim of this question was to know the percentage of likes to various genres of trolls in social media. However, the result seems impressive. When asked about which genre of trolls they like the most half of the respondent's (55.55%) like trolls related to social issues. These trolls present social issues in a satiric manner. These trolls even act as an insight into various existing social issues. Around 18% of respondents like trolls relating to celebrity. Then, only 12% of the respondents like trolls about politics.

5. Do you know about educational trolls?



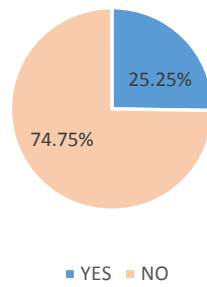
Graph.5

Social media must provide an educative platform. It is not only meant for connecting people. The question aimed at analyzing whether these Facebook users are aware about those educative trolls and those pages in social media. The result was larger number of respondent's (75.76%) knows about

educational trolls. They might be following such kinds of pages in Facebook. They are aware about trolls that share the platform of informative purpose.

6. Are you preparing for public service examination?

RESPONSE

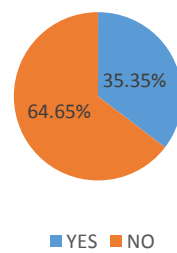


Graph.6

Learning is such a hectic task if one is running out of time. Thus, educative trolls may serve as an easy method to memorize things. The question aimed at analyzing how many are preparing or appearing for Public Service Examinations. Around 75% of respondents are preparing for public service examinations and they are using these informative trolls for better understanding. Only 25% of the respondents are not preparing for PSC examinations.

7. Do you know about public service examination trolls [PSC TROLLS]?

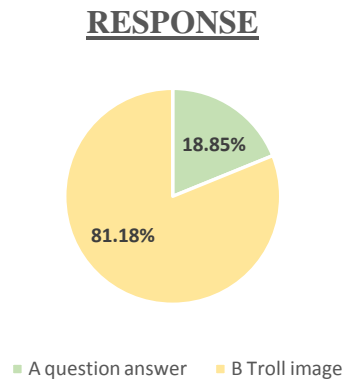
RESPONSE



Graph.7

PSC Trolls in Facebook is a page that serves as a way to share general knowledge in the form of memes. Only 65% of the respondents are aware about this page and its importance. Rest 35% is unaware about the existence of such an informative way in social media.

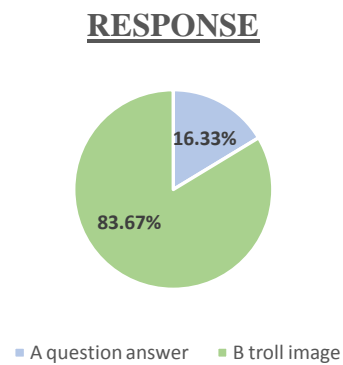
8. Which one of the following you think is the easiest one to learn general knowledge?



Graph.8

Everyone won't be preferring the same way to learn things. So, different methods to memorize things are incorporated. This particular question aimed at analyzing which one they preferred to learn general knowledge. Majority of the respondents gave option B that is the troll image helps them to understand the general knowledge easier and convenient. Trolls with the support of images makes things more understandable and memorable.

9. Which one of the following you think is the easiest one to learn general knowledge?

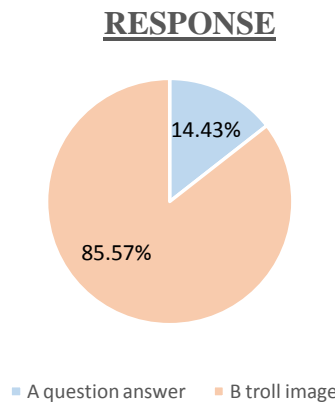


Graph.9

This question was to know whether educative trolls seems to have any effect on those followers in Social media's. Here also 84% of the respondent's finds that the troll image helps them to understand the general knowledge more than that

of just reading and by hearing the question and answers. By hearing seems more hectic for these users

10. Which one of the following you think is the easiest one to learn general knowledge?



Graph.10

Around 86% states that troll images seem more useful to understand general facts rather than question answer format. Only 14% respondents find question answer format as the good way. From all the questions have asked high majority of individuals finds the PSC trolls are easier to learn general knowledge than that of the usual learning method.

After analyzing all the responses from the respondents, it's very clear that trolls from pages like PSC trolls in Facebook are of informative in purpose for the users. In almost all the questions, the responses were more than 80% which makes it very evident that its of useful in nature. Not only it's just informative, people accept it in such a manner that even it influences individual's way of learning. It played a major role in their life and even it made things easier and simpler.

5. Comic Dialogues Replaced with General Knowledge

While looking into the contents of these trolls that being shared in social media, they are very much for general help. Picture 1 is one such troll shared in the PSC troll page in Facebook. In this particular troll, they are sharing the general fact about which is the largest irrigation project in Kerala? The answer is "Kallada". They are revealing the answer by posturizing an image of Kallada travels, which is one of the famous travel operators in South India. This

visualization makes things easier for those reading it. This particular troll gained around 770 likes.

Similarly, picture 2 is another troll sharing another general fact. In this troll, they are helping the readers to learn one important fact about Nile River. Its bit confusing to memorize certain things. However, through this troll things are made easy. This troll about lieutenant gained around 750 likes and more than 30 shares in Facebook.

In picture 3, this troll shares a fact regarding the metal, Silver through picturing one of the famous Malayalam movie scene. The scene is from the Malayalam movie *AyalKadhaEzhutukaaane* enacted by Mohanlal. This particular troll gained around 820 likes, more than 10 shares and few comments in Facebook. They are making clear that silver is one of the best conductor of electricity through this particular troll. Similarly, picture 4, share facts about Palakkad festival in the form of a troll. Palakkad festival or Palakkad pooram is connecting Kerala to one of the cities Coimbatore in its neighboring state Tamil Nadu. So, by picturing one of the famous scenes, they are sharing the important fact about Palakkad pooram and Coimbatore. Around 980 likes along with more than 25 shares is what this particular troll gained in Facebook. In picture 5, they are describing the full form of UNESCO. Many are unaware about the full form of this particular organization. However, this troll makes it very clear about the full form of it. The troll uses one of the comic scenes from the Malayalam movie, *Aadu 2* enacted by Jayasurya. This particular troll gained around 590 likes and near 15 shares by its followers in Facebook page.

Another troll that is picture 6, share the fact about Wayand. This is one unknown or unaware fact about Wayanad. However, this troll adds one main info about Wayanad tourism. One of the comic scenes from the Malayalam movie, *Chotta Mumbai* is used to share this fact in the form of troll. This particular troll gained 450 likes along with 10 shares. Similarly, picture 7 is describing about Pathanamthitta. This district in Kerala is well known for fresh air. Around 1100 likes along with 30 shares is what this particular troll gained. Picture 8 in the form of troll share the importance of October 9&10. October 9 is considered as World postal day and October 10 as National postal day. Thus, in one troll itself two important facts are being shared to its readers. Near 1300 likes plus 35 likes what this particular troll gained from its followers in Facebook.

Picture 9, share the fact about India's slowest arriving train and its Nilagiri Mounter. It's been visualized using an image from Amal Neerath movie, who is famous as master of slow motions. It makes things more easy and appealing for those in search of general knowledge. This particular troll gained 2000 likes along with 35 shares. Similarly, picture 10 is sharing the real name of Birbal, one of the famous Hindu advisors in the court of Akbar. It's been portrayed using the names of characters enacted by a person in two different movies. Scenes from the famous Malayalam movies *The Bangalore Days* and

Maheshinta Prathikaaram enacted by FahadFazil is used for the purpose of troll. 740 likes plus 20 shares are the reach of this particular troll about Birbal.

6. Discussion

The study mainly aimed at analyzing whether trolls are of informative in purpose and whether they are accepted among individuals. The analysis method from questionnaire made it very clear that trolls stand for information dissemination. It acts as a substitute of learning using visuals from comic movie scenes. The famous movie scenes were used for this dissemination purpose. It is acting in order to make learning easier and simpler for those preparing for examinations. Thus, it proves through this study that trolls aim not only at satirizing or mocking at an individual or issue. It does play a part in educating as well as entertaining in the same time.

Trolls in its beginning stage aimed mainly at satirizing public issues to gain attention. However, with the passing of time its purpose changed drastically. Right now, in this android world, trolls act as a medium to provide at least a piece of general knowledge to an internet addict. Trolls just raised many public issues to such a level where it ended in finding solution for that particular issue. Thus, it had gained wide acceptance across many lands.

This study added on to support that trolls do play an unavoidable role in today's social world. Many get an idea about what's happening around the globe through these memes. It's very clear that the content of each meme's is easy for them to understand and it's been of great support for those knowledge aspiring minds. It's useful not only for those appearing for public exams. But, is also helpful to while away time with improving knowledge.

These trolls have great acceptance among individuals that even these trolls influence them in decision making. It's have great acceptance among those social media addicts. These memes act as a piece of information and issue raiser through social media's like Facebook. The likes and shares of each trolls stand to support the argument that it does a part in information dissemination. These followers of pages like PSC denotes that they are of great help and support for those enthusiastic individuals in social media's

7. Conclusion

This study made it very clear that trolls are informative and educative in purpose. They are not just to mock at things through social media or is not just meant to raise social issues. PSC troll page in Facebook has around 16000 followers which makes it clear about the reach of that particular page to those social media users. This page shares general knowledge by replacing famous movie dialogues in the form of troll. This has far reach rather than traditional way of learning.

Things will be more appealing and influencing in the form of images rather than in the form of words. Using famous movie scenes which is rich in comic sense imparts its print for a long period of time. Facts in the form of visuals will have long lasting effect rather than way of mouthing. This particular page in Facebook is sharing facts not only for those preparing for public exams. However, it is useful for those just to gain a piece of general knowledge while they are just tapping and scrolling things in Facebook.

In this tech driven era, no one is ready to sit and read books to gain general knowledge. So, this form of a piece of information is more useful for this 21 century society. Things are changing with the arrival of technologies. Gurukulas were replaced with classrooms and traditional way of memorizing things by sitting and learning is replaced with trolls with the arrival of social media platform. Soon, trolls will be replaced by another level of easy learning.

PSC troll page in Facebook is not only helping those preparing for public exams. Those social media users while scrolling things will gain a piece of information through these trolls. Thus, in turn they are helping those preparing for exams and general public in different ways. These pages are acting as a supporting system for those preparing themselves to appear for competitive exams.

Limitations

The major limitations faced while conducting this study are

- Time and economic constraints
- The study was limited to a single page in Facebook namely PSC trolls
- The analysis of reach of each troll was done mainly based on likes, shares gained by each troll in social media.

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