SOCIAL MEDIA: A NECESSARY EVIL IN THE COMPLEX SECURITY LANDSCAPE

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1. Introduction

The way individuals interact has undergone a radical change due to global technological growth. The emergence of social media, a product of technological advancement, has had a significant impact on communication. Social media have permanently altered the dynamics of production, consumption, and dissemination, whether in the form of social networking (Facebook), photo and video sharing (Instagram, YouTube), or micro-blogging (Twitter) sites.[1] Social media have also challenged information hierarchies and opened up access to and produced an entirely new ecosystem of information exchange.[2]Contrary to traditional media, social media are distributed in participatory systems of communication where people who were once considered audience members now create significant amounts of 'user-generated content.' Citizens now can influence public opinion and debate as communication topics. Social media allow individuals all over the world to communicate and share information in real-time. Additionally, users choose to follow or be followed by others, arrangements that allow instant diffusion of content and exhibit 'viral' characteristics, where information can quickly spread across networks and often in a chaotic manner. The interaction between social media and traditional media (such as television) is another crucial aspect of social media. Traditional media increasingly depends on social media to fill their 24-hour news cycles and cover stories that originate on social media platforms.

Despite their growing impact and reach, as well as their ability to influence ideas and public dialogue, social media still offer significant potential. They are utilized in political circles as a communication tool to improve participatory democracy. In this regard, social media have opened new avenues for civic participation in political processes, inspiring hopes for a democratic reinvigoration.[3]Social media platforms have become crucial instruments for disseminating information on disaster awareness and management during times of disaster.[4] For example, during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, which shattered a large part of the New York City metropolitan area, The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) used social media to alert the public about the storm before it arrived, places where people could charge their phones, find shelter, water, and food, and other relief that was available in the region.[5] Similarly, during the Haiti earthquake, social media enabled citizens' engagement by supporting the dissemination of information on evacuation and rescue experiences, as well as sending alert messages.[6]

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[1] Walsh, J. Social media and moral panics: Assessing the effects of technological change on societal reaction. International Journal of Cultural Studies 1–20, (2020)

[2] Pandalai, S. The social media challenge to national security: Impact and Opportunities. (2016).

[3] See Bradshaw, S., & Howard, P. N. Truth and Trust (2018)

[4] Bruce, R. L Social Media and Disasters: Current Uses, Future Options and Policy Considerations (2011)

[5] Lumpp, T. G. The Effects of Social Media on National Security within the United States. Published Master of Science in Cyber security Thesis, Utica College (2014)

[6]Hodge, N. U.S. Diverts Spy Drone from Afghanistan to Haiti. Wired Magazine, January 15, 2010.Interception of Communications Act, Chapter 11: 20. Government Printers (2010)

The relevance of social media in the conversation around police is maybe its most effective application in terms of how it directly affects national security. Open-source intelligence platforms have been used with social media. The police in several nations have taken advantage of social media's potential by deploying intelligence units to conduct online surveillance, reconstruct events, and gather official knowledge about the actions, personalities, and motivations of suspects. This is because social media makes it easy for the police to access secret information. Twitter can be used to send timely warnings about risk and criminal activity, as well as to foster support and develop trust by sharing information about effective enforcement. Social media platforms have also been utilized to combat terrorism and civil unrest. For example, following the Stanley Cup riots in Vancouver in 2011, officials used facial recognition software to examine images and videos posted on Facebook by participants, onlookers, and outraged people to 'name and shame' alleged rioters—efforts that led to hundreds of arrests. Similar to this, during the Boston Marathon bombings, regional and federal law enforcement agencies kept an eye on information shared on Reddit, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to aid in the identification of the offenders. They also utilized Twitter to update the public on the investigation's progress, to calm nerves and request public assistance, and to correct misinformation by the press.[7]

Despite their positive implications on humanity, social media platforms portend a double-edged sword, as they have posed new challenges in the realm of personal and national security. On a personal level, Rose warns[8] that there are greater chances of private information becoming public, which opens users to various security risks as the information is easily transferred between social media platforms. Over-sharing of information on social media networks also increases the vulnerability of location-based information, thus posing a threat to citizens' privacy. The threats to privacy are compounded by the fact that social media platforms are relatively easy to access, and posted content can be easily seen and reviewed by anyone with an interest in the user's personal information. There is much documented evidence of the impact of social media on the broad national security discourse in both developed and developing worlds. Terrorism, one of the leading threats to global security, has been propagated by social media platforms. Terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have been using social media to recruit and radicalize citizens. Specifically, ISIS has been using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Skype to lure mostly Western recruits to Syria for terrorist training. Terrorists are using social media platforms to announce their successful attacks, thereby causing fear and panic amongst citizens. The problem is compounded by the fact that once they publish their successful attacks on social media platforms, they create a permanent online record. Similarly, social media platforms have also been used to facilitate violent protests. For instance, during the 2011 England riots, teenage gangs used social media communication platforms to evade authorities, publicize lawlessness and coordinate antisocial behaviour. In some parts of the world, social media platforms have been used as powerful communication tools for fuelling social and political upheavals. Through social media platforms, activists can easily overcome censorship, coordinate protests, and spread rumouring instances where regimes stifle dissent and try to control public discourse. Protests in Tunisia and Egypt, which led to an overthrow of sitting presidents, were coordinated through

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[7]Pandalai, S. The social media challenge to national security: Impact and Opportunities, (2016).
[8] Rose, C. The security implications of social media. Journal of Management and Information Systems, (2021)

social media. Summarizing the impact of social media in the Tunisia and Egypt revolutions, Liaropoulos[9] highlighted that social media managed to spread the message in the early phase, mobilized part of the local population, and drew international attention. His analysis of the Arab Spring revolution also concurred that the usage and growth of social media in the Arab region played a significant role in the mass mobilization of protestors, empowerment, shaping of opinions and influencing change. Social media platforms have also been instrumental in the spread of fake news to cause fear and panic among citizens.[10] Fake news, defined as news which is wholly false or contains deliberately misleading elements incorporated within its content, is widely circulated online. Fake news that is propagated through social media platforms can also have implications for the economic wellbeing of the nation. For example, in 2013, the Associated Press's Twitter account was hacked and released a tweet falsely claiming that there had been two explosions at the White House and that President Obama had been injured.[11] Within 2 minutes, the tweet had reached US stock traders and the Dow Jones dropped over 143 points (a $136.5 billion loss). Although the tweet was discovered to be erroneous and taken down within minutes, the damage had been done and this was a wake-up call for security analysts and policymakers to consider the negative implications of believing false information.[12] The manipulation of public opinion over social media platforms has also emerged as a critical threat to public life and this phenomenon has been rife during political campaigns in different countries. In their report on social media manipulation during political campaigns, Bradshaw and Howard found out that some organized social media manipulation campaigns were characterized by misinformation in 48 countries. There have also been fears that fake news may have influenced the 2016 United States presidential election's outcome. For instance, the most engaged-with, yet fake story, was the story which claimed that Pope Francis had endorsed Donald Trump for President and the story amassed 960 000 shares on Facebook. In his study on social media and moral panic, Walsh[13] contends that social media favour content likely to generate significant emotion and outrage, thus making it a facilitator of division and hostility. Such content's emotional valence infects other users, influencing their subsequent interactions and escalating bitterness within online environments. Such social media-induced hostilities were witnessed during the xenophobic attacks in South Africa in 2015 and 2019, which were perpetrated by South African citizens on foreign nationals–whom South Africans accused of taking their job opportunities and committing criminal activities. Social media platforms played a significant role in perpetuating such xenophobic attacks, which were characterized by beating and sometimes killing of foreigners, as well as looting of foreigners' shops. The Citizen Research Centre [CRC][14] noted that during the 2015 xenophobic attacks, a total of 21, 660 social media posts were classified as either extreme hate speech or incitement to violence. The study by CRC also noted the influence of social media in broadcasting irresponsible xenophobic statements by key political figures, with some of the reckless statements triggering xenophobic attacks (Citizen Research Centre [CRC], 2019). News24 (2019) also noted the impact of misleading social media posts as a precursor to some of the xenophobic attacks in 2019. Social

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[9]Liaropoulos, A. The challenges of social media intelligence for the intelligence community. Journal of Mediterranean and Balkan Intelligence, 1(1) (2013)

[10] See Bradshaw, S., & Howard, P. N. Truth and Trust (2018)

[11]Forster, P. Bogus AP tweet about explosion at White House wipes billions off US markets (2013)

[12]Ghonim, W. Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People is Greater Than the People in Power. Harcourt (2012)

[13] Walsh, J. Social media and moral panics: Assessing the effects of technological change on societal reaction. International Journal of Cultural Studies 1–20, (2020

[14]See Its Report on Xenophobic Violence in South Africa (2019)

media were awash with old videos purporting to be current xenophobic attacks, with some of the videos not originating from South Africa. Thus, in the context of South Africa, social media were used to instigate violence in two ways: first, through inciting citizens to act against foreigners, and second, through spreading false information about alleged xenophobic attacks. Despite the existing evidence, little is known about how social media usage promotes or disrupts security in the complex security setting. This article seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge by appraising its advantages and disadvantages. The article is composed of five parts. Part One presents an introduction. Part Two briefly discusses the methodology employed. Part Three covers the literature review. Part Four presents the advantages and disadvantages of social media usage amidst the complex security landscape. Part Five concludes and recommends doable state interventions that can be used to mitigate the negative effects of social media usage while maximizing its positive effects.

2. Method and Materials

This study is basically qualitative desk research based on detailed document analysis. Being a scholarly review, it did not use data collection procedures or statistical methodologies employed by positivist researchers. Instead, the study appraised the advantages and disadvantages of social media usage to national security by using readily accessible and available public domain documents. To obtain information and data, the researcher systematically reviewed both academic and non-academic documents such as written unpublished papers, journal articles, reports, and case studies. The contents were collected from several reputable worldwide publishers' and organizations' websites using search engines. Using the keywords 'social media' and 'national security' in developing nations like Tanzania, a Google Chrome internet search was done. The researcher properly collected, evaluated, and interpreted relevant data by synthesizing rich data drawn from various sources to derive the intended meanings. Nevertheless, despite being the theoretical desk-based review of the subject matter, its key findings, recommendations and conclusions were drawn from valid and reliable empirical data.

3. Literature Review

Social media usage has become a global phenomenon and the number of worldwide users continues to grow. It was expected to reach approximately 2.95 billion people in 2020, nearly a third of the Earth's population.[15] According to Baytiyeh,[16] each social media platform provides features that cater for different types of users. Some platforms are more popular than others, but even the unpopular ones are utilized by a portion of the world's population.[17] Likewise, the use of social media can be manifested in various aspects of human lives.[18] Through social media, users have established an online community as their digital neighbourhood referred to as *super-peer*, which significantly contributes to influencing behaviour, shifting attitudes, and shaping cultural norms.[19]Social media is used to facilitate connections, representation, and airing out their voices. Social media enabled the youth to form identity-based communities and networks. For example, Brough et al.[20]unveil shared success stories among low-income and under-

[15]Chen, C. Y. Smartphone addiction: Psychological and social factors predict (2020)
[16]Chen, C. Y. Smartphone addiction: Psychological and social factors predict (2020)
[17]Baytiyeh, H. Social Media's Role in Peace building and Post-Conflict Recovery, (2019)
[18]Henry, M., &Harte, B. A new model for assessing the value of social media activity, (2019)
[19]Stevens, R., Gilliard-Matthews, S., Dunaev, J., Woods, M. K., &Brawner., (2017)
[20]Brough, M., Literat, I., &Ikin, A. (2020). 'Good Social Media?': Under-represented Youth (2020)

resourced youth of getting work, something which helps them to lead their own lives.[21]Despite its positive effects, social media is a potential catalyst to increase youth vulnerability to peer victimization and psychosocial difficulties. This supports that uncontrolled use of social media and available social apps influence adolescents' emotional well-being.[22]In particular, the youth perceive social media as a useful tool for self-expression, relational interactions, exploration, and browsing. They can interact to share peer-based learning and new media literacy. Social media is viewed as important in facilitating online and offline friendship ties to support the development of intimacy and connection to others. Social media is also viewed and used as an enabler in building social capital among people, such as youth cohorts, to accomplish various economic activities.[23]Many scholars have strongly argued that the costs or benefits of social media usage are, inter alia, determined by the users themselves but not social media as tools.[24] We also support this position; innovation is not awful but the users of the innovation. Among others, the pains or gains from social media use depend largely on the user's purpose, taste and interests they intend to achieve in a given time and space.

3.1 The Duality of Social Media

Social media can promote peace or cause conflicts, depending on users' intentions and interests. As such, social media can help share beneficial information to overcome crises and maliciously promote terrorist activities and spread harmful propaganda.[25] Additionally, violent perpetrators have used social media to recruit youths to their course, posting and displaying hateful messages and texts and propagating their violent ideologies. For example, terrorist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are believed to have been using social media to mobilize and facilitate recruiting new members across the world, including from developed countries such as Canada.[26] Such groups have also used social media platforms to spread fear and violence.[27] Besides, Blevins et al.[28] noted that gangs in developed nations use social media to express themselves, send threats and intimidate, brag, display aggression, and mourn. Suzor et al.[29] posit that social media have intensified existing patterns of gendered violence and introduced new forms of intrusion, abuse and violence against women. This practice is often referred to as online gender-based violence or technology-facilitated violence. Generally, such forms of violence aim to maintain structural inequalities and spaces that men have traditionally occupied for a long time, causing harm to women's well-being, safety and sense of security, civic and social engagement, education and employment opportunities. Steward et al.[30] have shown that excessive and inappropriate social media use brings various socio-economic advantages; if it is not controlled, improper use stimulates conflicts.

In contrast, social media have several positive features in promoting peace in conflict-affected regions and building social cohesion. For instance, social media help to bring together hostile groups and individuals by encouraging dialogue, addressing negative perceptions of violence and

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[21]Brough, M., Literat, I., &Ikin, A. (2020). 'Good Social Media?': Under-represented Youth (2020)

[22]Weinstein, E. The Social Media See-Saw: Positive and negative influences on Youth (2019)

[23]URT. Electronic and postal communications (Online Content). Dodoma, Tanzania (2018)

[24]Rice, E., &Barman-Adhikari, A. Internet and SM use as a resource among youth (2018)

[25] See Błachnio, A., Przepiorka, A., &Pantic, I. (2016).

[26]Naseem, M. A., et al., Social Media as a space for peace education (2016)

[27]Blaker L. The Islamic State's use of online social media. Military Cyber Affairs 1(1), (2015)

[28]Blevins, T., et al, Automatically processing tweets from gang-involved youth (2016)

[29] See Suzor, N., et al (2006)

[30]Steward, J. H., et al., Informing policies in forensic settings (2006)

reshaping attitudes, as well as promoting tolerance and mutual affection. In addition, social media allows citizens to receive and produce the necessary information, keeping them up-to-date on what is happening concerning the existing socio-economic and political developments. According to Grossman,[31] the democratic process should promote an 'electronic republic', whereby individuals or citizens are empowered to generate and receive information on issues, decisions and any other legislative scenario that may impact the citizenry massively. Social media provide space for the excluded and marginalized voices to be informed and heard by those who hold positions. In Pakistan, for example, blogosphere positively facilitated the voices of the excluded and marginalized to be heard as well as provided democratic and inclusive public debates among civil society participants and the space for peace education, which cultivates conversation and debates. Besides, social media has been useful in coordinating peaceful democratic processes such as organizing and archiving protests intending to send a particular message to society to be worked upon, before they bring chaos. So, the advantages and disadvantages of social media usage are discussed below.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Advantages of Social Media Usage

Social media offers new perspectives in understanding conflict contexts, informing how interventions are designed. This includes mapping people and conversations, gathering data about conflict dynamics and overcoming traditional program design challenges. It can amplify peaceful voices and shape the public and political narrative.[32] This includes countering fake news and threat narratives and addressing potential trigger points through rumour management. It can also have a bridging function between local, national and international spheres to mobilize action.[33] It can create new spaces for people to connect, coordinate and mobilize around peace. In addition, it can act as a vehicle for collective coping, augment traditional dialogue activities, engage people in dialogue that may not ordinarily participate in offline activities and strengthen peace processes. The Internet and social media have brought with them a new form of empowerment that fundamentally altering relations between citizens and states and having an impact on both global and local levels. The Arab Spring demonstrated how social media can be a powerful platform and tool to facilitate the spread of protest movements, often led by a new digitally connected youth.[34] ICTs have also emerged as tools to support more effective humanitarian responses, improve peacekeeping and serve as an information platform to support refugees in crisis. In refugee camps, social media is often the only source of news and information to which the refugees have access. Many refugees depend on apps and websites such as WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube to fill the information gap.[35]Additionally, the dramatic spread of digital technologies and the Internet in fragile and conflict-affected contexts has opened new possibilities for political, economic and social transformation. Access to social media and other forms of cyber-enabled communications facilitates new avenues for civic

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[31]Grossman, L. The Electronic Republic: Reshaping Democracy (1996)

[32]See Deutsche Welle Freedom (2017)

[33]See International Telecommunication Union (2017)

[34]See Internet World Stats (2017)

[35]This report was written by Raouf Farrah et al., (2017)

participation and engagement. Millions of youths have used the Internet to promote peace and help build a better future for themselves and their countries. Today, hundreds of 'Peacetech' initiatives with millions of active users exist in some of the most complex and challenging contexts. These initiatives include crisis mapping, crowd sourcing platforms, peace gaming, blogs, podcasts, WhatsApp groups, online petitions, tech first responder programs and GIS-based security applications. These are transforming relationships between warring parties. Digitally savvy youth from around the world are at the centre of this change. In so doing, they are acting as peace-promoting mechanisms. However, despite the benefits, not all youths are benefiting equally. As the 2016 World Development Report indicated, "There also are persistent digital divides across gender, geography, age, and income."[36] Some 4.2 billion people still lack access to the Internet, and the majority reside in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The poorest households are excluded, and women are most often left behind.[37]Women in Africa have, on average, 34 percent less access to the Internet than their male counterparts.[38] In an increasingly connected society, where digital literacy is essential, a lack of access to the Internet and ICTs by young women will have important long-term consequences on their access to education, economic opportunities and quality social services.[39]

4.2 Disadvantages of Social Media Usage

4.2.1 Terrorism

Social media are increasingly used by terrorist organizations as tools for ideological radicalization, recruitment, communication and training. Terrorist groups also take advantage of social media to communicate with cyber-crime organizations and to coordinate along with them fund-raising activities (from illicit activities) carried out in part (for example drug smuggling and gunrunning) or completely (for example phishing) on the Internet. The link between organized crime and terrorist organizations is increasing considerably in the cyber-world, and this coalition will produce new offensive technologies.[40]To date, the terrorist groups which make the most substantial use of social media for their illicit purposes are the Islamic jihadist ones.[41] Facebook and YouTube channels are often used by al-Qaeda to recruit and increase the number of sympathizers and jihad supporters, especially in the West (for example spreading photos and videos of successful terrorist attacks, publishing lists and biographies of the martyrs, preaching or ideological texts). Social media and, more generally, the Internet allow the publication and diffusion of extremist ideas and material that may lead a weak individual to recruit him/herself, at times unaided by any mediator or someone to help him/her.

Social media are used by terrorist groups for propaganda activities to make public successful terror attacks and, consequently, to throw the civil population into a panic. Since spreading news and content on social media can be considered 'viral', this kind of propaganda can considerably overdraw the media effect already produced by the traditional means of information and communication (satellite TV, newspapers, radio) and cause consequences even more dangerous

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[36]See World Bank Group (2016)
[37]See International Telecommunication Union (2017)
[38]See World Bank Group (2016)
[39]Ibid
[40]Urdal, H. 'A clash of generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence (2006)
[41]Urdal, H. 'A clash of generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence (2006)

than those caused by terrorist attacks (for example, circulating the news of an attack to communication and connection infrastructures used by the stock market might throw investors into a panic and, consequently, lead small money-savers to behave irrationally; hence, it might cause even more severe economic damage than the damage itself to the very material infrastructure). In addition, some organized groups, mainly terrorist groups, could use social media to deliberately spread false information (in part or in full) during a disastrous event (for example an earthquake, a flood, the accidental blast of a nuclear reactor, a pandemic) or immediately after it ends, to overdraw their damaging effects, mystifying the people and delaying emergency operations and the response of a country. For example, al-Qaeda has a 'net-like' decentralized structure, Facebook and Twitter can be used as platforms to organize and connect the single groups linked to it, and also the 'lone wolves and the leadership. Social media are also used to communicate oblique messages, arrange plans for terrorist acts, manage the training of new terrorists, and provide logistical support and operative assistance (for example giving advice about how to go through a roadblock, build them and handle arms and explosives, find and use cyber weapons, dodge and counter investigation by security agencies**.**

4.2.2   Criminality

Criminal organizations use social media as support, communication and coordination tools to conduct their illicit activities. Such illicit activities can be either pure information ones (for instance spreading child pornography with a fee, 'virtual' identity thefts, phishing, the spread of viruses, Trojans, worms), or 'traditional' ones (for instance drug smuggling, human trafficking, money-laundering, and transfer of documents from industrial espionage). The criminal groups that use social media are made of people coming from the same geographic area and who know each other personally. They are also made up of people scattered all over the world who are linked exclusively by 'virtual' relations.[42] These 'criminal communities' are generally coordinated by one or more moderators who have the power to remove members who do not provide high-quality information or tools and to assign an increasing level of reliability to those who make more contributions than others. The use of social media and, in general, of IT technology for criminal purposes is dramatically expanding, not only because they are spreading but also because the individuals perceive the actions they commit as less unsafe if compared to what happened in the past.

4.2.3   War

According to a recent NATO provisional study[43], future conflicts will occur in more and more connected environments, which will be characterized by the use of new communication and information technologies, social media included. It is a few years since social media have been employed by the Armed Forces in several countries, and now they are ready to be employed more and more frequently to accompany traditional offensive means. In particular, the use of social media during a conflict adds to the employment of other mass media such as newspapers, TV, and radio for propaganda, influence and deception activities, as better explained in the subsequent section.[44]The number of wars between entities with international subjectivity has

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[42]Rao, N. et al.,Smart phones, youth and moral panics (2020)
[43] See NATO findings about the likelyfuture wars (2019)
[44]Ibid (2019)

been very low and open-source material has been sparse in the last decade; accordingly, investigating cases of the military campaigns conducted with actual employment of social media in support of military operations is not possible.[45] Nevertheless, in this regard, it is crucial to cite briefly the two latest conflicts between Israel and Lebanon. During the second Israeli-Lebanese war in 2006, Hezbollah carried out several attacks. To be precise, during the conflict they published several videos and photos on blogs, social networking sites and YouTube to foster their image and criticize Israel's capability and their security services. Furthermore, Hezbollah managed to instill a 'perception of failure' in the Israeli political-military establishment which conditioned the course of the conflict. During the following war (2008-2009), instead, Israel showed much effective management of social media. It used them responsibly to circulate true information and counter-information campaigns. This indicates that social media can also be negatively used as a war strike.

4.2.4 Protest and Revolution

New technologies and in particular social media constitute an asset of great importance both for protest movements and revolutions. Rebels and revolutionary groups turn to such tools to better organize and spur masses to action, specifically to arrange protests or struggle activities and manage their tactical and operational aspects. Since social media are gaining a great deal of power in determining the conclusion of protests and revolutions, their employment is likely to increase remarkably in the immediate future.[46] Social media are tools which enable revolutionary groups to lower the costs of participation, organization, recruitment and training. Social media allow revolutionary movements to be more autonomous and, therefore, less easily influenced by people not involved in the organization and less dependent on external financing. Social media let their users 'bypass 'the control governments usually makes on them, creating alternative channels to spread fake news.[47]Lievrouw[48] agrees with this observation and talks about the role of social media in the course of the protests in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and Syria, claiming that the regimes have lost their absolute control of information, gradually losing power while the population has acquired the power to handle and spread such information. Algerian writer and journalist Amara Lakhous[49] also points out how social media and the Internet make information censorship and manipulation almost impossible. Similarly, Marco,[50]a freelancer for the cultural magazine Limes, studied the protests in Egypt and found that, in societies where traditional public media are controlled by the government and the private ones are censored by the companies they work for, social media represent a unique opportunity for the civil population to counter the regime to enhance their freedom of speech, even if doing that can lead to civil unrest.

4.2.5 Irresponsive use by civil servants

Turning to social media enables the dissemination of confidential or job-related news whose subsequent use or possible manipulation cannot be predicted and circumscribed. Cases of non-

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[45]Heywood, A. Global politics. Macmillan International Higher Education (2014)
[46]Henry, M., &Harte, B. A new model for assessing the value of social media activity (2012)
[47]Kaufhold, M. A., &Reuter, C. Cultural Violence and Peace in social media (2019)
[48]Lievrouw, L. A. Alternative and Activist New Media. Cambridge: Polity Press (2011)
[49]When discussing how social media can be harmful to political stability (2017)
[50] See Marco, H when examining the pains and gains of the social media usage (2018)

authorized and uncontrolled publication of classified or sensitive information or content (audio, video, photo, etc.) through social media are more and more numerous. In these cases, national security can be severely compromised by the use of social media.[51] Freedom of expression and communication has to stop where the need to protect the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive data start, that is to fulfill the general duty of confidentiality at work. Since the civil service is increasingly using social media for their institutional purposes, as well as civil servants are doing it for personal interests, the government must take form action to prevent their misuse.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This article aimed to critically appraise the use of social media within the context of complex and unpredictable security environments. The upswing in the adoption of social media as communication platforms has brought a dilemma. That is, it can either heal or kill depending on the interest and purpose of the users. The resultant security threats have been quite huge and detrimental. One key threat is that they facilitate terrorism, violent protests and revolutions. Facebook has mostly been used to issue rebellious statements and to urge citizens to revolt against their governments. The challenge of controlling social media communication has facilitated the spread of fake news on social media platforms. Such fake news has negative security, economic, political and social effects. These are intended to cause terror and despondency in the nation. Moreover, social media platforms have facilitated human trafficking, global threat to human security. Governments ought to formulate policies that minimize the negative effects of social media usage while maximizing the positive effects by changing threats into opportunities for social economic development. Otherwise, all state action to take full control or stop social media usage is impractical. New technologies, chiefly social media, are a necessary evil. The government should invest in public education on the positive use of social media if the World is to remain secure and peaceful.

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[51]Mergel, I. Social media in the public sector (2012)

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