

Social Media Platforms Have Transformed Philanthropic Activities into the New Era of Modern Charity through Their Online Platforms

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ABSTRACT

Through social media a vital social change emerged that transformed interpersonal communication particularly with regard to public relations practices and donation collection methods. Through social media platforms charitable organizations obtain robust tools that help them manage supporter engagement better and spread cause-related content to donors and potential donors by simplifying donation procedures. Several social media platforms enable charities to target broad audiences across different global regions and time zones where they effectively obtain donations as well as maintain continuous supporter support.

The interactive aspects of social media platforms enable users to present causes in human experiences which strengthen their emotional bond with followers. Charities gain better reputation and higher audience exposure through using both hash tag campaigns with influencer partnerships and donor engagement events such as live stream content and competitive donation initiatives. The benefits from social goodness platforms require proper problem management from organizations when such solutions are implemented.

The main issue with online donation systems exposes donors to security vulnerabilities that pose major difficulties. Those who might donate avoid giving assistance because of fears about their data protection together with their right to privacy as well as doubts about illegal charity operations. Untruthful charity activities and inaccurate information that quickly spread through social networks inflict damage to reliable organizations by reducing public trust.

The industrialized format of altruism and its commercialized nature creates multiple ethical uncertainties regarding the realness of charitable actions. People struggle to differentiate genuine philanthropic practices from performative action organizations because this lack of clarity makes them evaluate both groups' authentic intentions and donor motives. The negative perception around worthy charitable causes emerges because people opt for attention-grabbing content instead of consistent meaningful work to become viral.

This research identifies both positive and negative elements which social media establishes as modern strategies for philanthropic organizations. The exploration evaluates how digital platforms modify donor conduct and organizational strategies and builds ethical situations. The study proposes solutions for safeguarding both donors and ensuring genuine donor participation on secure online platforms. The text presents strategic guidance to help charitable organizations derive maximum benefit from social media through proper utilization of advantages and management of risks. Charities achieve trustworthy donor

relationships by acquiring knowledge through their investigations to use digital donation channels securely.

1. INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution brought Facebook Instagram and Twitter into existence to transform human interaction and business outreach which are now essential for personal relationships and professional relationships. Social networks serve as fundamental components that transform worldwide human interaction because they determine how users obtain and process and execute information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media applications are now essential components for maintaining personal relationships and running business operations and delivering social information to users across the globe.

Nonprofit organizations effectively use social media features to move forward their organizational goals. These digital platforms deliver strong tools which enable organizations to produce advocacy initiatives while facilitating public interaction and collection of resources. Through social media channels nonprofits have overcome geographical barriers to grow their supporter networks which result in online communities that share their values and mission (Guo & Saxton 2014). Live video and stories and direct messaging features on social media allow nonprofits to engage their present base of supporters and simultaneously acquire new contributors who progress from observation to direct philanthropic involvement.

The sudden accessibility of donations through social media platforms plays a major role in boosting contributions from online donors. Procedure donors can quickly discover and assess important stories alongside transparent details because these elements generate believing associations that drive them to act right away. The top social media platforms present visual representations together with narrative content that demonstrates the critical importance of the cause because this format drives donors to donate (Saxton and Wang 2014). Through likes, shares and comments social platforms make donation actions visible therefore encouraged people to start supporting causes from their peers.

The fundamental digital transformation structure made by Facebook and Instagram enables innovative ways for fundraising. Educational staff together with campaign leaders can enhance donation promotions alongside donor awards and direct delivery of updated content across numerous platforms. New social fundraising techniques emerged from traditional methods to become peer-to-peer fundraising that uses donors' personal connections particularly during virtual fundraisers and cause-based contests (Shier & Handy, 2012).

The objective of this research involves analyzing the changing impact of social media on nonprofit fundraising by exploring changes in donation practices and updating donor relationship strategies and recent donation distribution channels. This research analyzes how social media connects technology with human conduct and philanthropic activities to find out what fundamental frameworks convert traditional donations into network-based approaches.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media has transformed non-profit donations by enhancing public exposure of nonprofit activities along with new donor-enabling experiences with organizations. The built-in donation tools Facebook and other related platforms have introduced create simplified fundraising features which allow users to donate directly from their social platforms according to Kautz (2017). The Go Fund Me platform among others allows individual people to establish personal fundraising efforts that enable widespread backing for causes through informal nonprofit structures. Social media uses its powers to help nonprofits boost visibility to new supporters while it simplifies the process of making donations according to Tesch et al. (2018). The dual features of social media increase charitable donations because they enable financial contributors while broadening dissemination of critical information to potential givers.

Research studies have studied various psychological processes which lead people to engage in charitable activities through social media platforms. Harrison (2016) identifies social proof as well as urgency and emotional storytelling among the key motivating factors. People are drawn to imitate others' charitable acts through viral campaigns such as the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge since social proof affects their decisions based on public visibility of donations and participation. Urgency in social media messaging becomes an effective tool when platforms deploy alerts about urgent situations whether they involve charity appeals during time constraints or crisis relief measures. Viewers develop a higher chance of donating through emotional storytelling that uses transformative imagery and firsthand testimonials or video materials. Chouliaraki (2013) demonstrates how emotionally touching stories make faraway suffering relatable which stimulates viewers to become compassionate participants because they develop moral sensibility.

The implementation of social media into charity initiatives faces several raised concerns despite delivering useful benefits. The term “slacktivism” which Morozov (2009) created defines online gestures that demand minimal effort from users who post or share social media content without visible actions beyond likes, shares, or comments. These actions frequently lead to minimal meaningful contributions. Slacktivist behavior creates illusions of personal achievement that may discourage people from performing enduring helpful activities like monetary donations or volunteer work. Digital fundraising creates fresh problems when it comes to demonstrating transparency alongside ensuring proper financial accountability. The increase of online donations generates new questions about tracking funds and oversight responsibilities and donor ability to validate campaign authenticity according to McFadden and Cone (2021). Beyond recognition is essential to establish digital governance standards and stronger regulatory oversight because these elements ensure trusted funding methods on the internet.

Numerous scholarly research studies establish social media plays an influential role in boosting charitable donations by creating extensive reach and cutting down barriers and triggering psychological factors. Social media's power in philanthropy faces two essential

challenges because of slacktivism along with weak evaluation systems which need solution to deliver its complete capacity.

2.1. The Democratization of Philanthropy through Social Media

Social media platforms function as essential catalysts for the major shift in charitable giving by making philanthropy available to everyone. Access to high-net-worth individuals and corporate sponsors and institutional charity events restricted participation in charitable activities before social media became widespread. Social media platforms have lowered access points for philanthropic activities so people with internet access now have a new way to participate in giving.

Crowd funding platforms such as Go Fund Me Kickstarter and Patreon demonstrate how democratization has emerged since they allow people to fundraise for various causes without requiring initial capital. According to Mesch and Tschirhart (2019) platforms have increased grassroots movements by providing people with social change ownership while eliminating the need for large organizations or intermediaries to participate in charitable activities. The challenge used viral properties of social media to generate \$115 million in ALS research funds through basic charitable activities such as donations or nominations for others (Li, 2020).

The Ice Bucket Challenge is a prime example of how social media has made giving viral. Social media enabled the Ice Bucket Challenge to unite millions of people across the globe by enabling them to carry out basic charity work that generated \$115 million for ALS research according to Li (2020). Such campaigns show the potential of social media to create massive, spontaneous support for causes that would have been difficult to mobilize without digital tools.

2.2. Increased Transparency and Accountability

Social media platforms have improved the visibility of charitable organizations allowing people to develop greater confidence in the activities of nonprofit institutions. The lack of communication between traditional charity donors and their beneficiaries sometimes sparked doubt among donors about how donated funds were spent. Donor engagement experiences growth on social media due to how charities can deliver detailed reports and specific donation results to potential donors according to Dhanani, et al., (2021).

Dhanani, et al., research discovered According to the research by Dhanani, et al., (2021) donors respond better to organizations that utilize social media to provide complete information about their operational activities. For instance, nonprofit organizations like Charity: Water through their regular updates Charity: Water presents photographs that show the clean water project's development in three stages from start to finish showing donors the direct outcomes of their donation funds.

User-generated content within social media platforms works as a tool to enhance accountability for organizations and their donors. People who donate money can use online

reviews to choose reliable charities while filtering out untrustworthy groups. Through authentic donor relations based on trust Nonprofit organizations now engage with the social media trend through open communications.

2.3. The Role of Emotional Engagement and Storytelling

Social media philanthropy relies heavily on emotional engagement as its foundation. Modern charity campaigns heavily rely on storytelling through videos and personal narratives as their most effective tool. Through social media platforms organizations can share effective stories which strike deep personal connections with potential donors.

Heinrich and his team, in a study from 2019, found that highly emotional campaigns lead people to donate more. When organizations post info graphics and videos, they see a stronger increase in user interaction than when they share only text-based ideas. With social media, both people and organizations can easily make emotional content that inspires others to help. *Celebrity and Influencer Involvement in Charitable Giving.*

Modern charitable campaigns have undergone significant changes since celebrities and social media influencers became actively involved in the space. Before today celebrities participated in philanthropy through occasional financial gifts during lavish charity events. Online platforms enable influencers to advocate for their causes through their massive follower bases on a daily basis. When these figures choose to promote charitable causes their followers become more engaged in donations and volunteer ship and expand the impact of the cause.

At the start of 2020 You Tuber Jacksepticeye successfully collected over \$4 million for charity through his series of live streamed donation campaigns. Social media influencers use their platform for philanthropic work through diverse content shown by Jacksepticeye in YouTube. Through peer-to-peer fundraising everybody now can start charitable campaigns without needing any institutional backing to fundraise for their chosen cause.

2.4. Crowd funding and Peer-to-Peer Fundraising Models

Through crowd funding platforms like Go Fund Me and Indiegogo people now primarily use peer-to-peer fundraising tools for philanthropic activities. Members of the public develop individual fundraising drives through their social media presence to support their preferred causes and individuals. The emergence of peer-to-peer fundraising allows people to begin their own fundraising efforts that support medical needs or community needs or humanitarian causes on a worldwide scale. Through peer-to-peer fundraising people and small non-profit organizations now collect donations from their social networks without going through conventional philanthropic organizations (Brown & Smith, 2019).

Today social media platforms allow both charities and individual users to develop emotional storytelling that essentially activates societal engagement. The emergence of digital philanthropy has benefited significantly from the active participation of both celebrities and influencers. Famous public identifiers who possess big followings among

actors musicians and You Tubers put their resources toward spreading awareness about their preferred causes while extending their financial support to those charitable groups. An audience of millions follows their emotional appeals together with compelling stories enabling them to support charitable objectives (Williams 2020).

2.5. Challenges and Ethical Considerations

The rise of internet-based platforms used for charitable work has created various ethical issues within social media philanthropy. The basic issue with social media arises from its capability to enable deceptive practices. Social media has become a lucrative environment for scammers because it makes charitable contributions too easy for donors to make. Momentumful social media scams produce dual harm for charity donors because they impact funds belonging to giving organizations (Ghosh, 2021).

The term "slacktivism" now describes people who employ social media sharing of causes instead of donating monetary assistance towards charity work. Morozov (2010) states that awareness-raising campaign have received criticism since they produce passive activism instead of achieving real meaningful change.

2.6. Challenges

Nowadays, social media platforms are important in changing how philanthropic activities happen. Fundraising for causes, locally and globally, has become easier and more effective due to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (now X), TikTok and YouTube. The move to digital has made giving, activism and charity available to more people and introduced “Hashtag Movements,” online donation campaigns and campaigns driven by influencers. But studying how philanthropy changes on social media encounters various difficulties. This happens because digital platforms are growing quickly, ethics can be complicated, there is limited data and measuring social impact in this business is not easy. This essay analyzes the primary issues researchers meet when trying to understand how social media has influenced charitable work in the present period. Some main challenges are given below-

i) Being able to use dependable and complete data

A big hurdle in researching social media’s role in philanthropy is that there is not enough easy-to-review and comprehensive data. For the most part, social media platforms conduct business as private firms using their own algorithms and analysis of people’s engagement. Although likes, shares and comments from users are displayed, greater insights about donations, advertising reach, clicks on ads and targeting audiences usually require the use of paid advertising resources or other platforms. Besides, often data does appear, but it is not typically standardized between different platforms. Because of this inconsistency, it is difficult for researchers to study different trends together or to develop models that work for many types of digital philanthropy.

ii) Difficulties in identifying who is responsible and the reasons for problems

Difficulties in identifying who is responsible and the reasons for problem. It is often hard to uncover the effect social media activity has on people making philanthropic contributions. For example, when a charity sees a sudden influx of donations after a famous social media post, it's important to understand if all of it was thanks to the campaign alone or a variety of reasons. Since fundraising is now spread across many channels, attribution is even more complicated. Email campaigns, newsletters, holding events in person and employing traditional media are usually part of an organization's strategy, along with social media. Separating what social media contributes from everything else is not easy for researchers.

iii) Pedestrian Activism

Pedestrian Activism and "Clicking While You Watch" Even though you can reach a lot of people on social media, interacting there can sometimes be light. Sharing an item or adding a hash-tag online is a common way many individuals approach activism, without actually spending much time or money. Evaluating the amount of transformation has become a difficulty for researchers. Strong online activity may not always mean a charity's work is noticed or its supporters stay motivated. When we gauge "meaningful" engagement, examples like volunteering or often giving money are harder to analyze than simple likes and retweets.

iv) Moral Issues

Moral Issues and Tricks to Pull at the Heart Unemotional content is rare in social media fundraising, as fundraisers typically use pictures or videos of needy children, victims of disasters or poor communities. Even though they work well for bringing attention and money, these actions cause important ethical concerns about people's humanity and consent. It is vital for researchers to handle such ethical complexities, yet it is a big challenge. It is necessary to examine emotionally triggering images in campaigns with a fair and ethical position. Additionally, researchers should look at the ways that social media platforms boost engagement by filtering content in this way.

v) Misinformation and False Tactics

Misinformation, False Tactics and Trusting Friends Making and sharing content on social media is very convenient, so it's easy for misinformation and fraudulent fundraising campaigns to crop up. Broadly shared fake pages, claims that are not true and undependable fundraisers tend to lower the public's trust in internet donations. For scholars, it means studying how users decide what is and is not a real reason to collect money, along with the success of Facebook's and GoFundMe's precautions against unrealistic causes. The frequent presence of frauds in these efforts creates challenges for studying how social media really supports philanthropy.

vi) Platform Algorithms Inequitably

How Platform Algorithms Inequitably Affect Users Most of a brand's social media visibility is driven by these algorithms which favour posts and pages that are popular among users and are backed by high advertising budgets. As a result, initiatives that have energized followers have to compete with major or influencer-supported groups who often attract more attention. Researchers have to consider that such biases may mean that attractive or popular causes get more money, while lesser-known ones miss out. For this reason, it may become blurry who deserves support and why.

vii) Limits of Culture and Geography

Social media may be used everywhere, but how it is used in philanthropy depends on local ways of life, digital skills and how fully people are connected to the internet. So, while TikTok is a major way people give in the U.S. or Europe, it may not be as effective for aid in the countryside of Africa or Southeast Asia. As a result, researchers should not use results from one situation to explain other situations in the same way. Cross-cultural studies are required, but are difficult, since they deal with language disparities, multiple legal systems and various social and political issues.

viii) Platforms are constantly evolving and the trends are always shifting

Algorithms on social media change, new features are added and users' behavior is always changing. A strategy that works well this year could not work in the future. Video may, in the future, be the standard form, pushing aside traditional stories based on text or images. The fact that digital philanthropy is always evolving makes it hard for researchers to follow subjects over time or to develop reliable, lasting theories about it. What brought success on Facebook last year might not work at all on TikTok or similar sites in the future?

xi) Problems relating to the Digital Divide and Inclusion

A lack of access to technology, the internet and technical knowledge prevents certain people from getting involved in charity work. People who struggle may not be capable of donating online or starting up their own campaigns. Since many people give online, researchers are curious about who participates and who does not. These inequalities require us to look closely at social, economic and infrastructure matters.

3. METHODOLOGY

For the study, a mixed-methods design is used to look into how social media has brought philanthropy into the digital world of charity. To grasp the different parts of this transformation which involve behaviours, technology and organizational changes, the approach takes into account both types of data. This research aims to study main changes in charitable giving thanks to social media, examine common ways donors interact and explore

the approaches taken by both individuals and organizations to manage and promote giving online.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected at the same time, but only after being examined separately were they brought together for analysis. This arrangement makes it possible to analyze both statistical patterns and their backgrounds in more detail. The following matters are part of the methodological components:

- Analyzing numbers coming from surveys and statistics provided by others
- Analyzes data using case studies, studies of campaigns and interview analysis
- Social media analytics (how much users engage with the platform)

All of these methods worked together to improve the validity and reliability of what we found.

3.1. Techniques Used for Collecting Data

3.1.1. Surveys

An online survey was given to people to evaluate their actions, likes and reasons for supporting charities using social media. Survey answers were gathered from those who give money as well as those who manage nonprofit organizations.

The sample consisted of 750 participants. (520 personal donors and 230 workers from nonprofit organizations)

- To keep the results diversified, random sampling was used based on age, where people participate and their choice of platform

Distributing the Google Form was done on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.

A selection of topics for the surveys included:

The amount of donations processed over social media channels

- Most often used social media sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and YouTube)

How much do people trust social media for fundraising?

- Participating in campaigns run by influencers.
- How well social media works to bring attention to a topic.

Data from the survey was analyzed using statistics and regression to search for results that were consistent or related.

3.1.2. Case Studies

Our team decided to analyze six case studies with qualitative approaches. These campaigns featured projects created by businesses as well as those originated by the community.

1. In 2014, people across the world took part in the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge which raised millions through peer fundraising.
2. This year's #Giving Tuesday was a global day of digital fundraising.
3. In 2021, #Team Seas was launched as an environmental fundraiser run by influential people

4. Charity water – 20 years using a digital transparency model
5. A GoFundMe drive was set up to help the victims of the 2020 Beirut blast.

3.1.3. Expert Interviews

We spoke to 12 people in semi-structured interviews, who worked in nonprofit marketing, social media strategy and digital fundraising. The goal was to find out how professionals think social media has impacted giving practices.

Each interview lasts for 30–45 minutes.

- Mode: The meeting was facilitated on Zoom and afterward transcribed for study
- Themes Presented in the Text: platform-tailored ways to fundraise

The part influencers and digital ambassadors play

1 Troubles with being transparent and gaining trust from donors

2 What is predicted for digital philanthropy moving forward?

The interviews were analyzed thematically to find common ideas such as emotional immediacy, virility, giving becoming less centralized and the impact of algorithms.

3.1.4. Using Analysis on Social Media Platforms

Details from the public's interactions on social media were gathered and looked at with Meta Business Suite, Twitter Analytics and Social Blade to understand:

Growth in the fan base during campaign weeks

- Times when people watch videos most often

Posts that led to the most donations were:

- How often hash-tags are used and what current trends they highlight

Campaigns operating between the years 2019–2023 were the focus of the study and each campaign's results were collected over six months. It was used to confirm the patterns found in both the survey and case study studies.

3.1.5. Using Methods for Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

- These tools are mostly used in research: SPSS, Excel
- Methods of analysis: Descriptive statistics, making crosstabs and using correlation analysis
- The significance level is set for values lower than 0.05.
- Among the different demographics, we looked at how their preferred platform, how often they give, their age and their motivation vary.

Qualitative Analysis

- Database: NVivo

• Process:

1. Code the interviews and case studies to find out what main themes they cover.
2. Axial coding meant organizing topics and relating them to each other.

3. I picked out information to explain how the use of technology shaped both how donors interacted and how organizations managed their strategies.

A number of data sources indicated themes like “peer influence,” “real-time urgency,” and “visual storytelling.”

4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Obtaining ethics approval from the IRB took place before anyone began collecting the data. All of the people in the survey and interviews agreed to take part and gave their consent. All sensitive information was masked and the data were locked up on protected and encrypted servers.

At any time, the subjects were able to stop participating and their privacy was kept in the data recording. For this research, we used content from social media postings published under public campaigns properly.

5. PROBLEMS WITH THE APPROACH

- An automatic bias can happen when participants report their own survey responses.
 - Sometimes, the number of social actions does not accurately match how much money is donated.
 - Some case studies only discuss successful campaigns and don't include the hurdles faced by those that did not do as well.
 - Changing platform processes can make it tricky to repeat findings in the future.
- Still, bringing in different sorts of evidence strengthened the results and deepened their value.

6. DISCUSSION

The research indicates social media has become an extremely effective method through which organizations gain donations. The tool has significant limitations in its operation. The accessibility of donating through social media remains undeniable yet greater strategies need development to turn online engagement into action-based outcomes. Organizations working with non-profit mandates need to establish methods which help fight slacktivism and promote greater involvement from donors. Online fundraising brings ethical concerns because it raises problems about financial disclosure and user privacy as well as narrative exploitation to bring in donations.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To engage audiences emotionally charitable groups should tell stories which connect with people at a deep level. The organization should present emotional content through video stories or personal testimonials or revealing views of their work activities.
2. Work with strategic influencers since their partnership drives better visibility coupled with stronger credibility for your campaign. Organizations should confirm that their influencers reflect the principles of their cause to prevent authenticity problems.

3. Nonprofit organizations should maintain transparency during fundraising processes through detailed explanations of monetary distribution. Higher donor trust develops because of open financial transparency and this leads to increased donor involvement.
4. Organizations should find methods to keep donors active by offering them ongoing membership opportunities or ongoing donation options and volunteer-based associations.

8.CONCLUSION

The space for charitable giving has changed radically through social media because it provides non-profit organizations with new ways to connect with wider audiences while looking for donations differently. Organizations need to solve both slacktivism issues and implement ethical digital campaign practices in order to fully achieve their social media fundraising goals. through cohesive influencer collaboration with social networking platforms and sustained donor bonds non-profit organizations can achieve maximum benefit from social media platforms in their drive for social change.

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