

# CROSS CULTURAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA A THEORITICAL APPROACH

**Jyotsana Thakur**

Assistant Professor, Media Studies Amity University Gurgaon, Haryana

## ABSTRACT

*The new paradigm of Public Relations is partly a consequence of a sudden development of information technology, which is particularly manifested in the fact that the organisations have recognized the importance new media has on the accomplishment of their aims. Between media and communication there exists a very interactive (symbiotic) relationship, because media industry trends and patterns for media contents production head towards preference of sensation-seeking contents, whereas the organisations can, due to their actions, ensure themselves maximum presence in the media. In so doing, the organisations are constantly trying to manipulate and exploit free media for their own purpose. We might say that it is the social media itself that provide global reach to public relations, it influences the way the public perceives them and benefits that arise from it, it influences political decisions used to respond to organisations, but also the relations formed through national and international communication. However, through a thoughtful approach social media can turn into a kind of weapon which can then be used as an important device in defeating issues, and the positive benefits certainly exceed unfavourable consequences caused by possible irresponsible actions by a part of journalists or media companies.*

**Key words:-** Social Media, Communication Strategies, Cross-Cultural Public Relations

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **Public Relations-A major Transformation**

Both internal and external in International communication is becoming more focused in a core form. Since the world is getting sharper and pointed, the small and medium sized organizations are participating and competing the global market players, thus becoming more competitive and so there is a face off at a broader approach.

Public Relations is experiencing a dramatic paradigm shift. The shift is caused by a dependency on Internet. Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn have outgrown the vision of Marshall McLuhan's (1965) global village and with it unprecedented expectations of PR actioners to service a new, intercultural and worldwide audience.

The profession has changed and questions whether the change is for better or worse. The spread of internet not only pin point's new media but introduces social media. Now people on the Web wants to reach far and wide and get connected to more people with just a click of a button and wants immediate access to the latest information about every aspect. This is what PR practitioners do to get access to their clients at the fastest pace as possible. This justifies that monoculture approach is not valid anymore. The advanced usage of new media has made PR people more equipped with handy information as press releases and other documents can be accessed 24x7 to journalists from every part of the world. The web- social media access has forced PR people to work harder because they're exposed to the public in ways that didn't exist before. Information travels faster as a press release originating in some part of the world is read by millions of people on the computers, mobile screens in various countries of the world.

The report is introduced as the title suggests on what is social media and public relations cross cultural communication and the correlation between the two. It discusses the various tools for PR and how social media impacts public relations, the benefits of social media in cross cultural communication, with complete case studies of Indian and Foreign culture by focusing on "Lakme" and "Loreal" the leading cosmetic brands respectively.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In the first attempt, the paper is concentrating on specific topics of what is Social Media and Public Relations and understanding the correlation of Public relations and Cross Cultural Communication.

In the second phase of the paper a complementary objective is going to be introduced: The media tools for PR, introduction to social media explaining the role and influence of PR in modern society with impact of social media on PR and benefits of social media in Cross Cultural communication.

The third phase comes after listing out the various benefits in numbers of social media in cross cultural communication, it focuses on real time learning through case studies and understanding of the culture and PR and the difference that PR makes to the society, followed by conclusion and references.

### **Research Questions**

1. To justify the existence and pertinence of corporate communication.
2. To describe and characterize public relations.
3. To study in depth and Cross Cultural Communications
4. To describe social media and identify the media tools for PR.
5. To identify the role and influence of social media in modern society
6. Aim to enhance understanding and learning and aware through popular PR campaigns
7. To describe the strategies impact of social media on PR
8. To determine the underlying benefits of social media in cross Cultural Communications
9. To describe and identify the cultural difference on various aspects
10. Briefing about the famous case studies of cosmetic brands of India and France (Paris).

### **3.METHODOLOGY**

The phases of the paper described in the subheads share in essence Public Relations definitions, also introduction to cross cultural communication. Then role of social media impact and benefits to PR and cross cultural communication, respectively. In addition to this, various tools for PR, usage of social media platforms and popular social media campaigns will be discussed to enhance learning. This will further incorporate the case studies of a cosmetic brand, for which comparison and analysis and social media strategies will be described.

The brand samples and related case studies have been done to show clarity by comparison of the two cosmetic products. This also enlightens and makes the reader learn about the most popular campaigns done in public relations for awareness to bring about a change in the society. The paper is completely based on secondary data collection. The data analysis is done in the conclusion.

All references quoted in review of the literature are purely based on secondary data. The conclusion summarizes the title about what's the thought process.

### **5.PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Public, for the purpose of discussion of public relations, is a group of people with some kind of common interest with which we are concerned. The purpose of public relations practice is to establish a two-way communication to resolve conflicts of interest by seeking common ground or areas of mutual interest and to establish understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information.

The scale of activity to promote good public relations may vary considerably according to size and nature of interested parties but the philosophy, strategy and methods will be very similar, whether the public relations program is designed to influence the international understanding or to improve relations between the company and its customers, agents and employees.

Public relations is a two-way persuasive communication process which is used as an instrument of generating goodwill, co-operation, understanding-etc between the organization on the one hand and its public on the other. Public relations can never be aggressive, it is always persuasive.

It is persuasive communication process. Accordingly the public relations exercise will depend on truth, honesty, courtesy, social interaction and use of convincing power and logic, instead of intimidation or dominance. Information should not be partial and total and sincere.

In public relations exercise long term objectives are achieved. Hence, it will be a continuing exercise. Organization will mean all types of institutions, factories, companies and offices, etc. public include all those persons who are carried with a particular organization in one form or other. Each organization will be different publics.

**Public Relations is:**

- Art and science of developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill
- The behavioral science concerned with the study of behaviors and attitudes of the management of the organizations as well as the employees and other publics of the organization.
- The technology of making other people agree to your proposal
- The persuasive communication designed to influence specific publics, and
- Doing good and getting credit of it.

As per Cutlip and Center, Public Relations is an engagement function which evaluates the public attitude and identifies the policies and programmes in co-operation with the public's.

Bernays says, "Public Relations is two-way street."

## **6.PUBLIC RELATIONS & CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Public relations play an important role in the world of international business. From a corporate standpoint, PR can help companies to develop positive images for their businesses. From a marketing perspective, public relations play an important role as part of the marketing strategy. PR help to position the company's product or brand and build brand equity.

**The generic principles are as follows**

- 1.Public relations is involved in strategic management. An organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with the strategic publics, both external and internal, that provide the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization.
- 2.Public relations is empowered by the dominant coalition or by a direct reporting relationship to senior management. In effective organizations, the senior public relations person is part of or has access to the group of senior managers with greatest power in the organization.
- 3.The public relations function is an integrated one. Excellent departments integrate all public relations functions into a single department or have a mechanism to coordinate the departments. Only in an integrated system of public relations can public relations develop new communication programs for changing strategic publics.
- 4.Public relations is a management function separate from other functions. Many The importance of culture in global public relations -232 organizations splinter the public relations function by making it a supporting tool for other departments such as marketing, human resources, law, or finance. When the public relations function is sublimated to other functions, it cannot move communication resources from one strategic public to another the way an integrated public relations function can.
- 5.The public relations unit is headed by a manager rather than a technician. Communication technicians are essential to carry out daily communication activities. Yet excellent public relations units must have at least one senior communication manager who conceptualizes and directs public relations programs or this direction will be supplied by other members of the dominant coalition who have no knowledge of communication or relationship building.
- 6.The two-way symmetrical model of public relations is used. Two-way symmetrical public relations is based on research and uses communication to manage conflict and improve understanding with strategic publics. Excellent public relations departments model more of their communication programs on the two-way symmetrical model than on the press agency, public information, or two-way asymmetrical models.
- 7.Asymmetrical system of internal communication is used. Excellent organizations have decentralized management structures that give autonomy to employees and allow them to participate in decision making. They also have participative, symmetrical systems of internal communication. Symmetrical communication with employees increases job satisfaction because employee goals are incorporated into the organizational mission.
- 8.Knowledge potential for managerial role and symmetrical public relations. Excellent public relations programs are staffed by professionals — people who are not only educated in the body of knowledge but who are also active in professional associations and read professional literature. 9. Diversity is embodied in all roles. The principle of requisite variety states that effective organizations have as much diversity inside the organization as in the environment. Excellent public relations include both men and women in all roles, as well as practitioners of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

An organizational context exists for excellence. Excellent public relations departments are nourished by organic, decentralized management structures, which allow participative rather than authoritarian cultures.

## **7. CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Cross cultural communication is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate in similar and different ways among themselves and how they endeavor to communicate across cultures. Cross cultural communication is important for any company that has diverse workforce or plans conducting global businesses. This type of communication involves an understanding of how people from different cultures speak, communicate and perceive the world around. Cross cultural communication in an organization deals with understanding different business customs, beliefs, and communication strategies. Language differences, non-verbal differences and power distance that affect cross cultural communication. Cross cultural differences can thwart PR campaign plans. It is therefore crucial that PR practitioners incorporate a cross cultural competence and global thinking approach. With the growth of international business, PR have become more complex. Public relations functions therefore become far more challenging. In addition to the usual professional skills, PR practitioners should expand their knowledge of world cultures, languages, customs, and ways of conducting business.

## **8. THE FACTORS AFFECTING CROSS- CULTURAL COMMUNICATION ARE**

Culture directly affects the communication process in an international business setting through seven variables. These seven items form the acronym LESCANT:

- Language
- Environmental and technological considerations
- Social organization
- Contexting and face-saving
- Authority conception
- Nonverbal communication behavior
- Time conception

The seven factors alone do not provide a thorough knowledge of another culture. Moreover, these seven dimensions of culture are not intended to represent the only cause of intercultural communication difficulties. Being aware of these factors does, however, provide an underlying foundation on which one can construct a framework for understanding the businesspeople from other cultures. In short, these seven factors represent an approach for asking the right questions needed to see the most significant cultural differences and similarities. The answers to those questions vary according to the individual experiences of those involved.

## **MEDIA/TOOLS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Creation and maintenance of a good public reputation is a complex and ongoing process. Without an effective PR, it is very difficult to reach the attention of the target audience and much less to influence their opinion and decisions. But when the relationship with the target group is finally established, it needs to be maintained in order to keep it on a high level. The process works similar to the interpersonal relationships. When two people lose contact, they pretty much disappear from each other lives no matter how close they used to be. And the same happens with the target audience if the established relationship is not maintained. Common PR activities include speaking at conferences, seeking industry awards, working with the press, communicating with employees, and sending out press releases.

### **Common PR Tools and Techniques**

In order to build a relationship with the target audience and maintain it on a high level, PR specialists use a variety of tools and techniques. Some of the most common ones include:

#### **Attendance at public events**

In order to attract public attention and keep it engaged with a particular organization or an individual, PR specialists take an advantage of every public event and the opportunity to speak publicly. This enables them to directly reach the public attending the event and indirectly, a much larger audience.

#### **Press releases**

Information that is communicated as a part of the regular TV or/and radio programme, newspapers, magazines and other types of mainstream media achieves a much bigger impact than advertisements. This is due to the fact that most people consider such information more trustworthy and meaningful than paid ads. Press release is therefore one of the oldest and most effective PR tools.

### **Newsletters**

Sending newsletters – relevant information about the organization or/and its products/services - directly to the target audience is also a common method to create and maintain a strong relationship with the public. Newsletters offering promotional products are also a common marketing strategy but PR specialists use it to share news and general information that may be of interest to the target audience rather than merely promoting products/services.

### **Blogging**

To reach the online audience, PR specialists use the digital forms of press releases and newsletters but they also use a variety of other tools such as blogging and recently, microblogging. It allows them to create and maintain a relationship with the target audience as well as establish a two-way communication.

### **Social Media Marketing**

Like its name suggests, it is used primarily by the marketing industry. Social media networks, however, are also utilized by a growing number of PR specialists to establish a direct communication with the public, consumers, investors and other target groups.

### **Messaging**

Messaging is the process of creating a consistent story around a product, person, company, or service. Messaging aims to avoid having readers receive contradictory or confusing information that will instill doubt in their purchasing choice or spur them to make other decisions that will have a negative impact on the company. A brand should aim to have the same problem statement, industry viewpoint, or brand perception shared across multiple sources and media.

### **Audience Targeting**

A fundamental technique of public relations is identifying the target audience and tailoring messages to appeal to them. Sometimes the interests of different audiences and stakeholders vary, meaning several distinct but complementary messages must be created.

Stakeholder theory identifies people who have a stake in a given institution or issue. All audiences are stakeholders (or presumptive stakeholders), but not all stakeholders are audiences. For example, if a charity commissions a public relations agency to create an advertising campaign that raises money toward finding the cure for a disease, the charity and the people with the disease are stakeholders, but the audience is anyone who might be willing to donate money.

### **Media Marketing**

Digital marketing is the use of Internet tools and technologies, such as search engines, Web 2.0 social bookmarking, new media relations, blogs, and social media marketing. Interactive PR allows companies and organizations to disseminate information without relying solely on mainstream publications and to communicate directly with the public, customers, and prospects. Online social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter ensure that firms can get their messages heard directly and quickly. Other forms of media include newspapers, television programs, radio stations, and magazines. Public relations people can use these various platforms and channels to publish press releases. It is important to ensure that the information across all channels is accurate and as complementary as possible.

## **9.SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social Media has a wide role to play in changing the mindset and lifestyle of common man. In a developing country like India, such a thing has a deep root in transforming things. Social media has its own positive and negative impacts and it is spreading its territory vigorously as fast as a forest fire. A developing country is always in a state of instability with respect to the changes in the lifestyle, culture and civilization; and they get very easily influenced by the newly emerging fields especially when that comes into play from some developed countries. Social media has got an air to burn its flames throughout the world. Something that has planted its roots universally is definitely highly influential, and Indians are no bar in getting into its whirlpool.

Now when we get into the depth of the topic, and check what actually the social media means; not surprisingly majority will come up with the reply of Facebook, and a few may go ahead with more social networking sites. Is that entire social media all about? Well, social media is much more than these social interactive sites, and contains the stuff a lot more than the mere gossips and sharing some personal pictures.

Coming on to the discussion of the various inclusions within the raft of social media, let's start with the most popular one being the 'Social Networking Sites'. The sites like Facebook are used as a time-pass by the majority population, but many intellectuals use this to advertise and promote their small and large scale business as well. People also have much

knowledge regarding the blogging sites like Twitter, content communities like You Tube, social news sites like Leakernet etc., but nobody actually links these with the social media. These sites remain on the top surfing sites, still without knowing their utility as social media. Again the collaborative sites like the Wikipedia are utilized to the fullest for reference for all sorts of study and analyses. There are some selective audience sites like the virtual gaming sites and the virtual social world sites. All these have a widespread impact on altering the culture of any community.

These sites have a good volume of useful material which is handy from the day-to-day utilities to the work arena or business block or the sports avenue or for that matter any other field. People from any field, any culture, tradition, linguists or community are not out of its vicious circle. Leaving behind the illiterate ignorant population, every child, every person is already into the trap of this social media. The more people are into the social circle, the more they are prone to serious risks of letting their personal details and information into the hands of the hackers. Parameters of Social Media influencing the Indian Culture and Mind-set. There are various parameters that influence the mind-set of the common man especially with respect to the alterations in our culture and tradition that has a very special image and respect world-wide.

### **Quality of the Content**

Starting with the 'Quality of the Content' that is present in these sites involved in the social media. The web content is really of high quality with an efficient lay out and presentation summing up all the relevant details from the core content to the recent research or development on the topic. On the other way round, the material content does not have any boundaries, screening, limitations or censored. These are just displayed without any restrictions which are definitely impacting the mind-set of the youth, who are getting more and more aggressive in their conduct. This is very much appreciated from the present law and order situation of our country.

### **Accessibility**

Again, the content displayed is available to anyone and everyone. The sites are more commercial and they just want publicity by hiking the undue bits of information. Such exaggeration of the news is not only against the ethics of the news circulation, but it often harms the image and future life of the victim, who is already undergoing immense trauma. This availability of unwanted piece of information like the detailed explanation of the rape cases, is definitely not going to provide any help to the readers; hence just an undue publicity in order to attract many more readers. The easy accessibility of the content and the bits of personal information like the social profile uploaded in these sites are like a cherry on the cake for the hackers. The critical information gets an easy breakthrough, and people are indirectly digging the pit for their own fall. A simple example like the easy accessibility of the profile pictures could be misused by anyone in any way. This is what India is facing today in the form of 'cyber crimes'.

### **Usability**

The easy learning and grasping aptitude of the children is again focused by the social media by various attractive advertisements being popped up and distracting their attention towards the gaming zones. Even if a child tries to search for the study material, the advertisements popping in are enough to distract their attention. Also the age bar laid on the social media is so vague that any child can pave their way to gain entry to the rubbish contents of the Internet world, as worse as the porn content. With a total lack of security and safety of the content displayed, how can we hope our culture to be moving on the right path? Children do get their minds adulterated with these rubbish contents; being the stepping stones of future India, they are definitely hampering our culture and image universally.

### **World Come Closer**

With so many negative points to be displayed, the social media do have some points in their favor. We cannot deny the fact that the social media has wrapped up the world into the hands of the Indians. The world has come closer, with the possibility of interaction anywhere in the world in just a few clicks away. The family can get in touch with their children working abroad, the grandparents can have a regular glimpse of their grandchildren, they can interact, visualize and perceive their growth. Social media is helping to retain our family bond and in fact has made the bond more affectionate. From the business and work point of view, the contents displayed on the social media can be easily edited, unlike the old fashioned articles and journals. This easy editing and displaying the recent and latest updates again have helped to build up the general awareness and contributed in the growth of the Indian economy indirectly. With a deep analysis of the subject, we can precisely call the social media as a tool that requires utmost cautious handling. This can be highly beneficial if used appropriately. Undoubtedly, the social media can have a very good impact on our culture and can help to spread our days old tradition with immense pleasure and prestige. All that requires is a firm mind, good intellect and a decent approach to the available source that is social media.

## **THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE MODERN**

### **Public Relations Industry**

Over the last few years, it has become apparent that social media has captured the fancy of most people. The extensive use of social media has drastically changed the way people communicate and share information. Social media has a huge impact not only on people, but also on brands across industries as they devise strategies to engage their audiences and win their loyalty. Public Relations (PR) is no different as professionals constantly seek to communicate with and hear from customers, who are ever-present and active on social media. It, therefore, makes sense for PR practitioners to use it to their advantage. In fact, most of them have made it an integral part of their practice and offer social media management services. It's not just Facebook and Twitter where brands strive to make their presence felt. Platforms such as LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, and Google+ cannot be overlooked if modern PR practitioners want to convey their story successfully.

### **How PR practitioners can use each of these platforms advantageously.**

#### **Facebook**

Wherever you go, you're sure to find people using Facebook as if they were addicted to it. You can love it or hate, but you certainly cannot ignore it. It is extremely popular among the masses, and allows you to engage your audience through high-quality content in the form of posts, images, videos, infographics, and links. In order to succeed on Facebook, you will need to become a conversational brand. Only then will you be able to build a strong base of audience. Once you've developed that, they will be able to follow your page and receive updates about your brand as and when you post them..

Apart from that, PR practitioners also explore other features that may be helpful in engaging audiences. These include Mentions (open only to public figures), Facebook's improved search function that makes public posts more accessible, Facebook's shopping tab (not available to all) to partner with marketers and leverage it for better sales, Instant Articles (for iOS) to offer valuable content to customers, and Facebook Events to manage the many events that will be organized. Additionally, Facebook's 'Donate' button, Music Stories and Facebook Professional Services are other features that are helpful to PR professionals.

#### **Twitter**

Another platform that is widely used by PR professionals in modern times is Twitter. 'Short and sweet' should be your mantra on this platform as you are limited to 140 characters, which is why it can get challenging to get your message across and ensure that it is thoroughly understood.

However, Twitter is particularly great for making announcements to the public about businesses or clients such as the launch of a new product, the winning of an award, an upcoming event, introducing a new brand in a new market, or to keeping your audience updated during a crisis or an emergency. Of course, you need to let the hashtags (more on them mentioned later in the post) do the talking for you. PR practitioners use Twitter to conduct research by keeping tabs on what clients, competitors, friends, media or influencers are tweeting about. It is an effective networking tool which makes it easy to connect with new people, follow them and get them to follow you.

#### **Instagram**

One of the reasons behind the success of Instagram is its ease of use. All you need to do is click a photo and post it. Plus, the Search and Explore functions are turning the social network into an easy-to-navigate news source. Pictures can speak better than text. The main motive of Instagram is to offer interesting accounts, photos and places to consumers. The biggest benefit for PR practitioners here is that they get a ready-made source of influencers to investigate. Some of the most successful Instagram campaigns have capitalized on this aspect.

In addition to showcasing their client's offerings and credentials on Instagram, PR practitioners can use visuals to create and raise awareness about issues and causes, take followers behind the scenes to make a personal connection, and promote events before, after and while they are in progress to entice, create interest and keep tongues wagging for a long time. Features such as double-tapping and tagging people go a long way in increasing user engagement as well.

#### **LinkedIn**

Most people are still of the opinion that LinkedIn is more of a professional networking platform rather than a social one. But that has changed with its new emphasis on publishing. LinkedIn can now be used as a blogging forum as well. PR practitioners can use LinkedIn to highlight their client's experience, disseminate content, finding influencers, gaining industry insights, connecting with new clients, discovering media opportunities, identifying new business opportunities and amplifying clients' media coverage.

While networking opportunities are the biggest draw of LinkedIn, PR practitioners can also use it to establish the relevance of their clients' company page(s). Such a page can prove to be a critical touch point for your brand. PR practitioners can increase their reach by joining LinkedIn Groups where customers and prospects are, or by creating one themselves. The focus, however, should always be on quality rather than quantity. Being in numerous groups does not mean having more contacts or referrals.

By contributing quality inputs on these groups on a regular basis, PR practitioners can help businesses establish themselves as influencers or thought leaders. The groups are also helpful when it comes to conducting market research. Marketers can create free polls and post them to LinkedIn Groups to collect feedback on a product or service.

### **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The terrain of public relations practice is shifting with new media bringing about substantial increases in stakeholder strength through facilitating communication within stakeholder groups and between different stakeholder groups. Anyone with a computer linked to the Internet has the ability to publish information for potential global consumption and it is clear that the internet 'is revolutionizing many aspects of public relations research and practice. The Internet gives public relations practitioners a unique opportunity to collect information, monitor public opinion on issues, and engage in direct dialogue with their publics about a variety of issues. However, much of the academic literature has an overall tone of lament that practitioners were simply transferring traditional approaches and models of public relations practice to the web and were not evolving their practice.

New media is becoming the preferred term for a range of media practices that employ digital technologies and the computer in some way or another. It is used as a term in educational settings as the title of university departments and courses and also as a title of certain artistic practices, making new media both an academic and intellectual subject, and a practice. New media definitions remain fluid and are evolving, with some definitions of new media focusing exclusively upon computer technologies and digital content production whilst others stress the cultural forms and contexts in which technologies are used. One key feature of new and emerging media technologies is that they are often portable and facilitate review of the impact of new media on public relations mobility in communications. New media has a wider reach than anything before it. Wireless and digital technological improvements to media have lifted previous restrictions that required connecting to a static, physical network or machine.

### **BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

1. People strengthen, build and maintain relationships through social media.
2. Interactions and conversations establish interconnectedness, which is an important for communicating with people in the host and home countries.
3. Helps in overcoming adjustment challenges
4. Establish a sense of community
5. One gets information about people from different cultural backgrounds.
6. Helps in recognizing the different impressions and expressions of people
7. Helps in relationship building
8. Helps in adapting new culture easily
9. Helps in creating a sense of belonging and integration into the new culture
10. Helps in individual development
11. It keeps in touch with friends and family in home country's essentially
12. Provides outlet for people to communicate in order to stay updated, aware and informed about the current events.
13. Social media helps people from the host countries, feel part of their home countries.
14. From social media use, relationships are strengthened
15. Social media helps in intercultural adaption
16. Social media keeps people in touch far and wide, connects people from various cultures and are very convenient for communication purposes
17. Social media helps people to understand various languages, especially slang and common phrases.
18. It helps people understand different ethnicities and cultures.
19. It helps to eliminate and understand cultural differences
20. Familiarizes people with certain norms, traditions, practices and beliefs, etc.
21. Understanding cross-cultural aspects of PR includes understanding the culture of different societies, online culture itself and cross-border uses of social media.
22. New channels of global communications are also being opened up by social media tools, bringing different cultures across the world together instantaneously online.

## **CASE STUDIES**

### **STUDY OF INDIAN CULTURE**

#### **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIA**

After 'tech savvy' it is the 'social media savvy' that has become synonymous with today's generation. About 2/3rd of Indians online spend time on different social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, etc. Even the trend of sending personal emails seems to have become obsolete as compared to social media. But why is this media becoming so popular in India? Interaction, live chat, status updates, image- as well as video-sharing are few of the major aspects that play a role in the popularity of social media. On the other hand, customer's responses, interaction and brand awareness is why the companies are using social media in India and across the globe. Thereby, multiple roles played by social media beyond its core role of mere communicating information are leading to its popularity.

By December 2012, the number of social media users in urban India had reached 62 million. A sudden availability of smartphones and mobile Internet has led to a spurt in the use of social media. All the business ventures in India rely on social media to understand their consumer base, for brand awareness and interaction. Indian citizens use social media to build virtual communities, groups and to interact and chat. So, there is no doubt that Information and Technology, in particular rapidly increasing social media plays an important role in shaping the mind of customers towards certain products and brands. At the same time, it is used for entertainment and leisure by most of the Indians online. Each day, about 100 million Indians are engaged in social media, more than the population of Germany.

#### **Social Media and Recruitment in India**

Social media and recruitment go hand in hand with social media becoming an integral part of recruiting firms. These firms are using LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to find new employees and skills. So, gone are the days when for employment recruiters as well as employees used to rely on employment exchange and classified ads in the newspaper. Hiring through traditional media was based on gut feeling whereas through social media, it is based on interaction, communication and direct response. Most of the organizations have well planned strategies for talent acquisition through social media.

#### **Social Media and Business**

Role of social media in business and consumer market in India cannot be undermined. It is the change in consumers' behavior that is changing the role of social media in India. With time, use of social media has seen a drastic change from just used for fun plus knowledge and marketing. For business purposes, Facebook is the most important social media platform as there is customers' engagement, followed by Twitter, YouTube and blogging. Social media is used by brands to build communities for interaction and spreading news.

So not only individuals but every organization, big or small, has an online presence on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube channels and other related social media platforms. 95.7% of organizations in India use social media to build communities, 76.1% for highlighting brand news, platform specific parameters such as number of likes, share, comments, people talking about the company are considered by 81% of the organizations to measure their success. As far as the budget is concerned, most of the organizations set budget below INR 10 million on their social media spending that makes 1-5% of their total marketing budget. Social media interaction provides useful information about the behavior of the customers to the organization on regular basis.

#### **Social Media in Indian Politics**

Social media is not only confined to you and me but to politicians as well. Through different activities politics and politicians in India have brought social media into the limelight. It is expected that social media will play a huge role and influence the coming general elections to a great extent. The study by IRIS Knowledge Foundation and supported by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has indicated this fact. Social media will be real game changer with political leaders having millions of fans on Twitter and supporters on Facebook as well as Google+. In order to build a certain image, most of the politicians also have their own websites. A few examples:

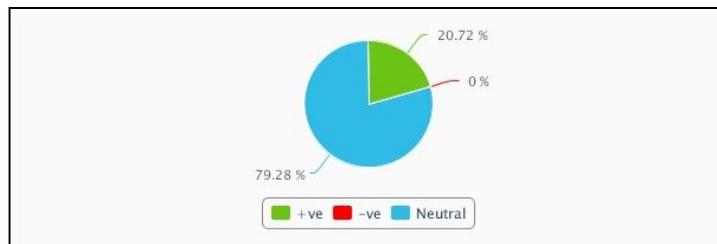
All the recent lectures by Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi got huge social media attention. He even hosted a political conference on Google+ hangouts and this makes him the third politician across the globe to do this after Obama and Australian PM Julia Gillard. Ajay Degan hosted his Google+ Hangout in which the common man was free to ask live questions from him. He has a strong presence on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Shashi Tharoor is very active on Twitter and his tweets are quoted in mainstream media. Few months back, you must have seen a page on Facebook seeking Dr. Abdul Kalam as president of India. Then there is Anna Hazare's Social Media Campaign against corruption in India. Many researchers have indicated that social media would be stronger and more persuasive than television in influencing people.

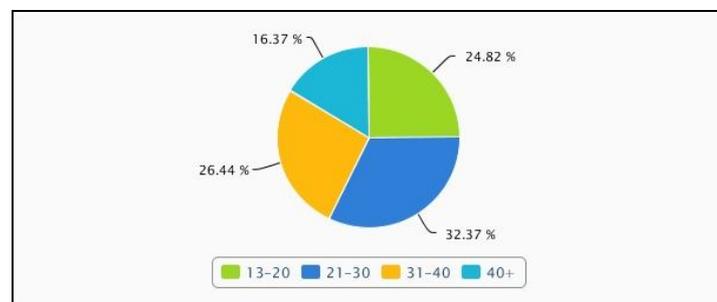
### LAKME-COSMETIC INDIAN BRAND

Lakmé, which got its name from a late 19th century French Opera Lakmé by Léo Delibes, which is the French word for Goddess Lakshmi, has been in the business of sharing secrets of the mythical beauty of goddesses to Indian women. And in its attempt to diffuse the message to the mass, the cosmetic brand has used all kinds of marketing channels, including the now-popular digital media, led by social media platforms. To keep the focus sharp, in this article, we shall see how the brand has performed on social media leaving discussions on the rest of the channels for elsewhere. Audience Analysis of Lakmé

Owing to the brand building exercise by Lakmé, the sentiments expressed by people (see second image), both male and female, is either positive or neutral. There is almost no negative emotion flowing for the brand, but what is surprising is the number of male followers of the brand. As is evident in the following image, slightly over 40% of social media fans of the cosmetic brand comprises of male.



The gender distribution of Lakmé's fans could be a bit surprising, but not so its age distribution. The closer a person is to his/her prime the likelier is his/her chance of following the brand on social media- as you can see people between 21-30 make the largest chunk of its social media followers.



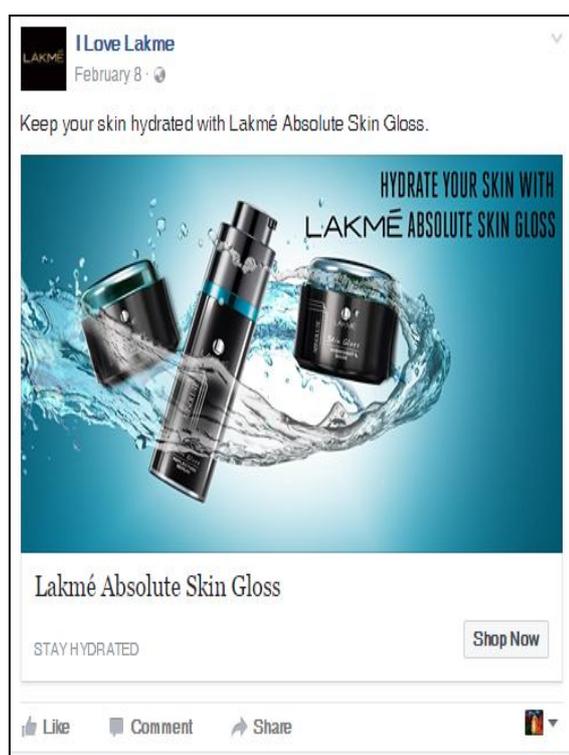
### Lakme Social Media Strategy

Looking gorgeous and feeling beautiful seem to be the mantra that Lakmé follows on social media. The content it shares and the design of it talks not only about its products, fashion shows, and contests, but also about the little steps a woman (or a girl) can take to look gorgeous and be the object of much-coveted desire, as the brand sees it to be the driving agenda of all women, or at least its fans. We need to see in the following sections, what form this strategy takes when it comes to individual channels like Facebook, Twitter, and the like.

Lakmé on Facebook

With almost 19.25 lakhs Facebook fans, of which a little over 39,000 actively engages in discussion, Lakmé has a pretty strong Facebook presence. The brand has used a nice mix of image and video updates from its events, make up tips, and contest, which has helped it maximize its reach among Facebook Users

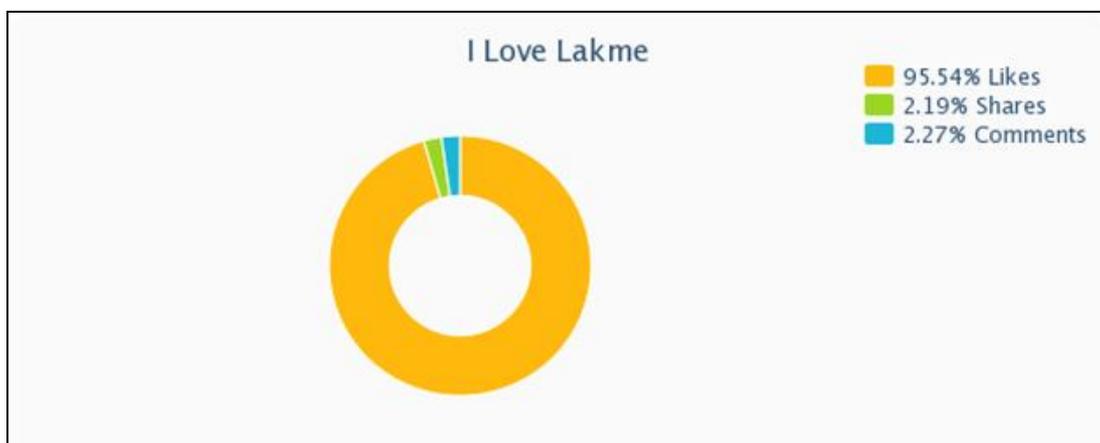
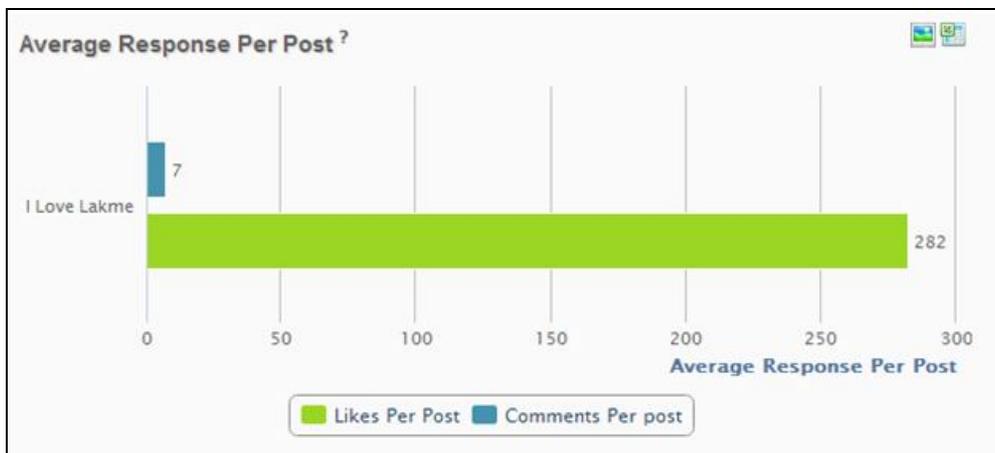
When sharing tips the brand does add a call to action asking its followers to take a particular action. For example, in the following image, the brand has asked its fans and followers to “like” the post only if they are going to use the shared tips. 233 likes, 17 shares, and 8 comments are the testimony to how serious fans take the tips shared by the brand



Talking of the post updates, it is worth noting that Lakmé has made an apt use of hashtags, mentions, and links to important pages (see the image below), and the copy used in the posts may not be impressive, but it has secured some rather emotionally-charged comments. It could also be because of the reward announced for the winners



It is these types of content pieces that have moved people to engage with the brand, though mostly it is in the form of likes rather than comments or shares (see the images below). The brand should work on improving the instances of share and comments on its posts, and that it can do by improving the quality of copy it uses in its updates.



### Lakmé on Twitter

Like Facebook, Lakmé is also significantly active on Twitter, in recent times, even though the number of its total fans is barely 10 thousand. But that could be because of some wrong decision taken in the past. At the moment, the brand is going strong and causing some real conversation on the micro-blogging website. One example of which can be seen in the following tweet.



### Lakmé Elsewhere on social media

The brand is also active on YouTube and Pinterest. It has more than 14,000 followers, with total video views of more than 82 lakhs, which is a respectable number in its own right. While many of its videos have not crossed a 1 lakh view count, some of them have recorded way beyond that. For example, the following DIY nail art video has been watched more than 2 lakh times, and the Kareena video posted below has been seen more than 9.5 lakhs times.

On Pinterest, it has more than 744 followers. Here the cosmetic brand has created 49 boards to entice followers with attractive pins. Although 744 is not a number to be proud of but seeing the strength of the platform in India, it is not a number to complain about.

### Expert View and Results

Lakme has managed to engage its primary target audience: girls and women, through various activities that seem to catch their fancy. It is surprising and pleasant to see that the brand has as many male fans and followers as their female counterparts, but they don't seem to be interacting much with them. While the content shared by the brand is catchy, the tonality can be improved. A lively communication will definitely improve their engagement and help them connect better with their audience. Also, it can be observed that most of the engagement is in the form of mere likes. Lakme should think of a content plan which leads to an engagement beyond mere likes. The brand needs to be more conversational and publish updates that are share-able.

## STUDY OF FOREIGN CULTURE

### L'OREAL PARIS – COSMETIC BRAND

#### Introduction

The L'Oreal Group is the world's largest cosmetics and beauty company, with an annual turnover of €20.3 billion, a presence in 130 countries, 27 global brands, 68,900 employees and 19 Research & Innovation centers with brands such as Garnier, Maybelline New York and the Body Shop. They widely use social recruitment in various countries worldwide (such as India and the Philippines), however it is especially prominent in the United Kingdom and the United States.

### **The L'Oreal Social Media Strategy**

L'Oreal have a uniform branding on all the websites for the countries in which they operate. The jobs section of each website lists available positions in that country and only a few link to the relevant social networks. The UK LOreal.Jobs website links to theL'Oreal Talent Recruitment Facebook page, the L'Oreal LinkedIn page, the L'Oreal Luxe TalenTube Facebook page and the @LOrealCareers Twitter feed.

The L'Oreal US jobs website has an interesting and innovative way of linking to the relevant social media platforms. The Facebook page can be found via [facebook.lorealusa.jobs](http://facebook.lorealusa.jobs), the Twitter @LOrealUSACorp feed via [twitter.lorealusa.jobs](http://twitter.lorealusa.jobs), the LinkedIn page via [linkedin.lorealusa.jobs](http://linkedin.lorealusa.jobs) and the YouTube channel is found at [youtube.lorealusa.jobs](http://youtube.lorealusa.jobs) (all these will be explored in more detail later, apart from the Twitter feed). The uniform branding of the various careers websites give an overall professional look to the careers side of L'Oreal, and the linking to the social platforms helps possible applicants find what they need with ease.

### **L'Oreal on Facebook**

The L'Oreal Talent Recruitment Facebook page ([facebook.com/LOrealTalentRecruitment](http://facebook.com/LOrealTalentRecruitment)) is the worldwide Facebook page for all L'Oreal careers and jobs (with other pages existing for certain countries – such as India), and uses the Work4Labs application for their 'Work for L'Oreal' tab. The Twitter tab is linked to the @LOrealCareers Twitter feed, however the other tabs are not used often, and the page does not regularly post content. It does, however, have over 30,000 likes, so the jobs tab must be working well in attracting talent.

There are two other 'specialist' Facebook pages for the UK and USA – the UK graduate jobs and internships page ([facebook.com/LorealGradJobsUKI](http://facebook.com/LorealGradJobsUKI)), and the USA careers page ([facebook.com/LOrealUSACareers](http://facebook.com/LOrealUSACareers)).

The L'Oreal Grad Jobs UKI page, with a cover photo of some of its past employees, has no additional tabs (apart from the standard photos, map and likes), however it posts regularly with photos, job postings and links. With over 900 likes, the page is quite active, and does get comments, likes and shares on its content – but the lack of likes and activity can be explained by how specialist it is.

The L'Oreal Careers in the US page, however, is much more popular (with almost 7,000 likes), but does not post any content. It does, however, have a working 'Jobs' tab which lists current openings, as well as tabs explaining the ideas and missions of working for L'Oreal in the US. The cover photo is interesting, and the additional tabs are all branded in a similar fashion – a great way to run a page, apart from the lack of content!

### **L'Oreal on Twitter**

L'Oreal have careers based Twitter accounts for the UK (@LOrealGradJobs) with over 1,100 followers, and a general account (@LOrealCareers) with almost 3,500 followers.

The L'Oreal Careers Twitter feed (@LOrealCareers) holds around 3,500 followers, and regularly posts jobs (all using the hashtag #jobs) as well as some news articles about the company (which receive some 'retweets' and 'favourites').

The L'Oreal (graduate jobs) UK Twitter feed (@LOrealGradJobs) has over 1,100 followers, and posts daily about campus visits and other such news. They also reply to other users' tweets and run a very 'human' account. The normal tweets rarely get retweeted, but the contest tweets can have over one fifth of the followers retweeting them – a very popular way to attract talent, and increase the base that read job openings. There are other accounts, but these are the two main feeds for the UK and USA careers side of L'Oreal.

### **L'Oreal on LinkedIn**

L'Oreal have one LinkedIn company page – with a branded 'Careers' tab to match. The tab holds an introduction to working for L'Oreal, a YouTube (which can be seen below), plus testimonials from past employees and links to the L'Oreal Talent Recruitment Facebook page and @LOrealCareers Twitter feed, and relevant websites.

The tab is regularly updated with job openings and the branding looks very professional – a good job from L'Oreal. You can see a few statistics about L'Oreal's use of LinkedIn for recruitment below.

### **L'Oreal on YouTube**

L'Oreal UK Careers has a branded YouTube channel (/LorealUKCareers) with only 5 videos and 5 subscribers but over 2000 video views. It does have a good quality graphic background, and links to corresponding websites, but it is the 'Trainee' set of videos which have the most views. YouTube is a great tool for social recruitment, and with the last video uploaded in May (and not very high quality – mainly filmed on a mobile phone), L'Oreal UK could spend a bit of time creating some simple videos to really promote working for the company.

L'Oreal USA have a Careers channel ([lorealusacareers](https://www.facebook.com/lorealusacareers)) – named L'Oreal USA Corporate, with only 30+ subscribers, but almost 10,000 video views. There is no branding and only 10 videos (uploaded over a 2 year period). The videos are high quality, but hold no description or tags – so will never be found by future employees unless they find the channel. L'Oreal has a great resource here, but have not used it to its full potential (and they should, because it's worth it!) – even short 30 second high quality clips can really boost a recruitment process.

### **Expert View and Results**

There are two case studies surrounding L'Oreal's use of social recruiting – one from Facebook (courtesy of Work4Labs), and one from LinkedIn.

L'Oreal use the Work4Labs tab on their L'Oreal Talent Recruitment Facebook page (shown above). The case study surrounds an internship posted on their L'Oreal Talent Recruitment Facebook page using the Work for Us app, which allowed fans and employees to share the posting via their networks. Using the app, and the Work4Labs' AdvertHiring platform (to create advertisements linking to the job posting), the following results reached:

The internship's ad campaign had an "optimised" performance and return on investment – generating 5.88 million impressions with 4,167 clicks (a 0.071% click through rate (CTR). The click through rate was much higher than the average CTR of Facebook ads (which is roughly 0.02%).

This led to L'Oreal receiving 153 applicants (a 3.67% conversion) – with almost all of them being pre-qualified due to the specific targeting options (education, experience) that L'Oreal chose for the ads.

The campaign had an "immediate and high quality turnaround" with applicants viewing the job and submitting resumes minutes after it went live.

L'Oreal received 17 qualified resumes within the first 12 hours of the campaign – a huge difference to the limited success from traditional methods.

As these results (courtesy of Work4Labs) show, Facebook has been a success for social recruitment for L'Oreal.

L'Oreal used LinkedIn to solve 3 new challenges in their social recruiting process. The company recruits 6,000 new managers a year (including internships), using all the regular techniques, but wanted to solve these challenges (and used LinkedIn to do so):

### **Sourcing difficult-to-hire candidates**

#### **Reaching passive candidates**

#### **Online reputation**

The company set up a 'Careers' tab on their company page (as discussed above) and "polished" individual recruiter profiles. Using their current network – with 15,000 L'Oreal managers and employees on the site – to find passive talent, the company had really fit the LinkedIn referral slogan of "the best employees refer the best candidates".

L'Oreal actively uses social media for their recruitment, and has results to match. Their Facebook pages are well branded however could do with more content, whereas their Twitter feeds are actively updated with jobs and news. Their YouTube accounts could be used more, whereas their LinkedIn page (and Careers tab) is just right – and may fit better with the rest of their pages once they receive the new design. The two case studies show that L'Oreal is actively using social networks for recruiting and it is successful – however it should never replace the more traditional methods, as you never know where the perfect candidate could apply from.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

The report touches the core areas of corporate communication, public relations and cross cultural communication. The major techniques and media tools in PR are newsletter, press releases, pitch notes, messaging, blogging, social media marketing, and digital media marketing. Social Media has a wide role to play in changing the mindset and lifestyle of common man. Social media is digging deep roots of transforming things in the world. Coming on to the discussion of the various inclusions within the raft of social media, social media is eliminating cultural bars, and is impacting the culture of any community everywhere in the world. The world is coming closer with social media, and thus public relation people or actioners are using social media bringing the world together more closely and benefit in lessening cross cultural barriers. We have seen the case studies of biggest prestigiously named cosmetic brands such as L'Oreal

and Lakme', to understand social media strategies, campaigns ideas, ideations and reaching its audiences in different cultures and make the brand presence felt. A Good intellect, decent approach and a firm mind of PR practitioners is forcing the brand organizations such as we studied about L'Oreal and Lakmeto be more competitive in reaching the heads of people and digging deep down the line making the brand presence felt by its target audience at their best. The report is made at the best keeping in the industry nuances and understanding them better for future businesses.

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