

Social Media's Roles in the Change of Vietnamese Society: Emerging Public Sphere for Citizens

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Abstract : The Internet in Vietnam has developed significantly over the last 20 years and made impressive advances, permeating into every part of daily life, changing people's habits as well as the way people's communication. Under this situation, social media have become useful tools for the citizen to get and share information. About 10 years ago, most Vietnamese people got the information through state media, but thanks to the development of the Internet, nowadays, social media have been giving them rich sources of information at any area of society. By using case study research methods, documentary research method and in-depth interviews conducted with social media users, NGO activists, and Vietnamese scholars in 2017, the paper found that social media has been bringing a cyber public sphere to whom wish to discuss social and political issues. And, more importantly, it gives them a chance to connect with the government and policy makers quickly and effectively. Moreover, people use social media to supervise activities in society to prevent social evils and corruption in Vietnam. However, besides these positive points, people also have to cope with the rising situation of fake news which causing consequences for the society, such as pulling off crimes or cheating money and others. The paper concluded that social media plays important roles in the change of Vietnamese society, giving citizens a cyber public sphere unrestrictedly to discuss social and political issues but also bringing many bad risks to citizens.

Keywords : Vietnamese, social media, politics-society

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