

Examining the revolution of internet usage media essay

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



Internet usage has brought revolution in communication. In the recent past, there has been advancement internet technology making internet more accessible to many peoples. In business and institutions internet communication has brought major changes to how communication is made. One of the major effects of internet is making information more accessible to most people. Although this has been highly praised, it has brought questions on regulation on usage of internet. In the recent past families, organizations, institutions, interest groups and even governments have been calling for internet censorship. Internet censorship can have positive impact depending on context.

New technological innovations have led to the introduction of internet services which play a major role in the world of communication. The internet provides an appropriate forum, where people can communicate with one another regardless of their geographical location. Due to minimal regional restriction on internet services, people from virtually all ages with internet knowledge in most part of the world can easily access it. Conventionally, internet was a communication tool that mainly consisted of e-mail service. Internet users still sign up for user accounts through which they receive and send e-mails to other registered users (Foerstel 120). Since the modifications of original internet user configurations, internet has significantly improved in its functions as it provides a wide array of options in both private and commercial websites with a lot of information.

North Korea is considered among the top blog-unfriendly nations in the world due to internet censorship. It is only the foreigners and politically privileged

people who are allowed to access the internet freely in the country.

Consequently, there is no openly existent blog in leading to difficulties by North Koreans to access blogs. Journalists are allowed by the government of North Korea into the country on condition that they are followed around by watchers to ensure they do not indulge in suspicious activities. The government also carries out censorship on news before it is made public hence control over all information that the citizens receive (Icon Group International, Inc. 39). In Pakistan, self censorship by media companies started with the reign of General Zia who was both the president and army chief (Icon Group International, Inc. 48). In this form of censorship, press material is checked so that the government's credibility is not tarnished. All press material in Pakistan must favor the government of the day to ensure political serenity in the country.

In Guilford County, North Carolina, initial plans to ban two books " The Color Purple" and " Native Son" that were used in teaching literature in the curriculum faced a petition to eliminate them from the coursework and won. This was as a result of a censorship policy which was aimed at using software and other means to restrict pornographic material from being accessed from online sources or school libraries, a move that was considered unconstitutional (Foerstel 207). School boards in Lima, Ohio and Jackson County in Ripley unanimously voted against this form of censorship by the year 1999. At the same period, " The Color Purple" was eliminated from the curriculum and libraries at Ferguson High School in Virginia (Foerstel 207) due to claims of vulgar language and explicit content.

This form of internet restriction was received as an unappreciative move of eliminating library material for scholars. As a result of the censorship move gaining negative response, lawmakers prepared new and better rules that allowed scholars to obtain online information without the boundaries censorship caused as a result of preventing public obscenity displays through the internet (Foerstel 114).

The internet came with a myriad of challenges and in some cases, unique set of unanticipated drawbacks also came forming its disadvantages. Based on extreme case scenarios, this essay seeks to argue against the application of censorship policies to information sources on the internet. It goes ahead to suggest the alternative need for better protection policies that favor both the users and controlling bodies before finalizing on the extent of its applicability if deemed necessary.

Sandra Hughes of CBS news reports of Robert Wise, an online sex predator who preys on a 14 year old girl and later on gets arrested for soliciting for sex from a minor unfolding the dangers of unrestricted online communication between different parties. The CBS reporter further gives an account of the story of Kyla Reed, a 15 year old who goes missing without a trace after being an active participant in MySpace. Investigations link her disappearance to her activities on the social network (Kreiser 7). The culmination of such stories is a likely reason that would arouse governments to conduct censorship of the internet. This would however not put an end to the activities of predators as they would carry them out elsewhere. It is a

preferable option to innovate alternative means of preventing online predators.

Various aspects of socialization can be attributed to interactions through the internet that have improved communication among different users of the web. This has been made possible by internet service developers inventing ways of configuring more sophisticated services such as voice over internet protocols and instant messaging services that pave way for the creation of highly interactive web sites. Presently, Face book, MySpace and Twitter are the leading social internet sites which use chats as the latest culmination of instant messaging service among other options for internet communication. Such web sites reflect on the need to have communication infrastructure which appreciates urgency and convenience, the limitations in the physical environment notwithstanding. Restricted internet use would bar intercommunication among people of different cultures thus deterring the build up of social ties and should be avoided where applicable.

Internet usage is increasingly becoming a necessity to users who spend most of their time searching for information that is to be implemented in either personal or professional use. Internet also plays a fundamental role in the media fraternity as it is a means of sending and receiving both local and international news (Jones 19). Basing on this, communication is made much easier for journalists because they have access to vital information through the internet and a ready audience. CBS and other news networks have links on Face book, Tweeter and MySpace to keep track of its audience for information dissemination. With new innovations, there were introductions of

updated journals in form of blogs which provided diverse information.

Journalists are however criticized by scholars as being supposedly cynical in their work which brings about the claim of lack of professionalism.

Jones' weblog on " Real" and " fake" news shows the criticism reporters receive from the public and intellectuals for what they term as

irresponsibility caused by bias in reporting. They brand this as the main reason for the young people being politically ill informed as a result of turning to non credible or single sided sources of information (Jones 20).

Such political content in news makes authorities have reason to ground a basis for information censorship.

Positively impacting sites include those which are educative and informative in terms of providing essential academic materials to users. In addition,

many people use online services to communicate with people across the continent. At present, communication is much easier through the internet

because people can easily chat from sites of social networks. Apart from education and communication purposes, the internet has gained popularity

because of its entertainment nature as users can play games, download pictures, music and movies (Contrada 117). Despite the many benefits

derived from internet use, there has been a realization of some setbacks.

Internet can negatively influence users since it at times contains offensive

and explicit materials. At a very rampant rate, sexual sites with pornographic content are frequently visited by people of different ages including underage

children out of curiosity or ignorance. Regardless of parental monitoring, it is very difficult to control what children do while using computers. For this

reason, there are controversies on what basis the internet should be censored (Farhi 5).

Due to high levels of possible risks that vulnerable internet users are predisposed to, censoring online services is increasingly becoming a preference to authorities since it promises protection to its users from the proliferation of malpractices such as sexual exploitation. Censoring is seen as a probable solution that would therefore help parents who have difficult time in controlling their children's access to pornographic sites that display distorting material oblivious of what their effects may be. Similarly, the degree of devastating effects that it has on the users is deliberately ignored by the hosts to the detriment of the society.

Even though censoring of internet content may not have a major influence on the amount of responsibility adults practice on the vulnerable group, it is important to control unsociable internet activities like human trafficking (Chawki & Wahab 1). People especially, women and children often fall into the trap of human traffickers who advertise themselves and conduct most of their practices through the sites. Without knowing many people are blindly lured into such illegal practices since it is sometimes difficult to judge the credibility of a given site due to their persuasive nature. To help curb these cases, censorship may seem to be a preferable option. However, governments involved should come up with new ways of monitoring the use of internet especially in criminal activities such as human trafficking (Chawki & Wahab 4).

In relation to e-mail services, censoring the internet would prevent users from illegally accessing unauthorized information. E-mail intruders would therefore have a difficult time in acquiring information once the internet is censored. In addition, censoring internet information will help detect and prevent behaviors and habits of users with malicious motives. This is likely to save the society a lot of social problems that lead to loss of moral wellbeing. The main reason is that all undesirable information is crushed automatically when the internet is censored. Furthermore, users are protected from hate mails or any other information from the populace that leads to negative effects.

Censoring the internet can be beneficial since it will ensure control of the kind of material that people access such as government information. These administrative bodies are usually strict when it comes to secrets and will always try to conceal vital records from the public. Although there are ways of concealing information, some individuals will work out ways of accessing such records through the web. Arresting such people may not be a permanent solution because others might continue with the trend. Effective innovative ways to detect and prevent these malicious acts would be a useful remedy to the governments since the public will not succeed in acquiring any secrets (Drezner 34).

Although censoring the internet can be advantageous, it may deny non-targeted individuals the opportunity of accessing important information (Contrada 83). Internet should not be censored because it may prevent people from getting vital information. Such information as educative content,

scientific information based on recent studies may lead to new ideas that could be hidden from users. Therefore, censoring internet sources is likely to hinder innovation and new discoveries because the means of acquiring new and supportive information is complicated.

Censoring the internet can also be a disadvantage to individuals as they would not get the opportunity to express themselves. Internet is a place where people can openly express themselves to other people. Furthermore, it is also a place where people can learn about the views of others. By restricting online services, free interaction would be hindered. To a certain level, a particular government can benefit from internet restrictions although it would be at the expense of its citizens (Contrada 64). This means that internet censoring is seen as only benefiting the government while its citizens suffer. Such a government risks being viewed as overly oppressive.

In most cases, censoring internet sources may appear like denying citizens the right to information. People have the need to acquire knowledge about all changes that are happening around them and in other places. Restricting online services will also prevent them from knowing important information about the government. It is not fair to put people in the dark especially when there are difficulties in the country. Societies are part of a country and so should be updated of various issues within the nation (Contrada 32).

Moreover, censoring the internet would prevent the media from accessing and conveying essential information to citizens by the government. There should be freedom of the press whereby journalists can express themselves without any restrictions. Once online services are restricted, journalists may

be unable to even access international news. In America, restricting the internet would go against the 1st Amendment right which states that there should be freedom of speech and press (Drezner 33).

Globalization is increasingly changing the world of communication as there are new technologies which make interactions much easier. Internet communication is considered as one of the major sources of information to the media fraternity both locally and internationally. Censoring the internet may therefore limit the manner in which the media sends information to its target consumers and limit intercultural communication which is widely done through the web. Journalists are frequent internet users as they receive and convey information through different sites.

Journalists prefer using blogs because it is a quick method of information dissemination especially when conveying urgent and important information. Through blog sites, journalists are able to discuss a wide range of topics which including politics, economy, environment, finance and many more. More often, journalists use online services to publish political issues that may affect their country or other countries. If the internet is censored, it would not be possible for people to acquire certain information about political issues. Online services should not be censored because it would prevent journalists from hosting and visiting blog sites that are very essential to them. Apart from blogs, journalists normally visit social networks which they use due to their fast nature and popularity in information conveyance. Journalists also prefer the site especially for stories that are changing so fast such as the development of a report on survivors of a plane crash.

Mainstream media depends on such information since collection and encoding can be done fast. (Farhi 3).

Primarily, internet plays an essential role in the world of communication. Through the internet, people are able to communicate with one another regardless of their geographical locations. Online service is therefore one of the major source of information to media fraternity. (Rosen 3). Although internet is very useful to genuine users, it also has limitations since it is characterized by sites that contain sexual materials.

Censoring the internet has been made necessary owing to the need for keeping unauthorized individuals at bay through blocking access to sites by users who cannot practice self censorship as a result of ignorance or curiosity. The demerits arising from liberal internet use can however be curbed by coming up with monitoring policies that protect and prevent vulnerable groups. This is mainly because censorship would deny genuine internet users the opportunity to acquire information from a variety of sources. A better recommendation would be to develop alternative internet policies that permit users to access specific sites on the internet. This would protect vulnerable groups from exploitation by malicious people thus enhancing the security of the state.