

Instagram an Intimate Medium for Social Connectivity between Celebrity and Fans – A Textual Analysis

Bharat^{1*} Amarjeet²

¹ Ph.D. Research Scholar, Institute of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Kurukshetra University
Kurukshetra, Haryana, India-136119

² Ph.D. Research Scholar, Institute of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Kurukshetra University
Kurukshetra, Haryana, India-136119

Abstract – Instagram a mobile photo-sharing application and service that allows users to share a photos, videos, personal views, thoughts, ideas and opinions, and comments of their lives with a large quantity of audience in a matter of seconds. The celebrities create a good relationship with their fans through their posts published on Instagram. The purpose of this research paper is to find fan engagement and intimate relationship between the celebrities and their fans. For this research paper we analyzed 50 Instagram posts of top three bollywood celebrity—Salman khan, Shahrukh khan and Aamir Khan—to find which categories of posts engage fans. It also investigated the intimate relationship with their fans through their comments.

Keywords – Instagram, Photo-Sharing Application, Celebrities, Intimate Relationship, Fan Engagement, Instagram Posts, Bollywood Celebrity

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES

Social networking sites are applications of 21st century that allow users to create a personal profile and then connect with large audience to exchange ideas, views, information, personal and social thoughts, and other types of media. These websites are Facebook featuring a collection of posts, status updates, audio, videos messaging and photo-sharing and games. The latest platform is Snapchat, which allows people to send photographs to friends and family members that disappear within a seconds. For all recent platforms, the ideas of connectivity and network-building are the successful key.

These social networking sites build a good relationship and connection with family, friends, acquaintances; colleagues, etc. are all with whom a real-life interaction with people. However, there are some relationship between celebrities and their fans in which they are fully involved with each other these are known as intimate relationships. Intimate relationships are the fully involved interaction and exchanging of thoughts with each other. There is a two side relationship between celebrities and their fans. Both build a good connection through comments and feedback.

Celebrities have millions of followers on social media websites. Since there are lakh of notifications and replies for each celebrity's post, it is impossible for the celebrity to respond and see to each of their fans but they replied and definitely think about their fans feelings and emotions. Research has shown celebrities fans are very much emotionally attached with their role model. When anything happened to celebrities they think they are part of their lives.

INTRODUCTION TO INSTAGRAM:

Instagram is an image and video sharing platform, creates a unique visually oriented storytelling opportunity. Instagram is an intimate image sharing platform. In the present scenario every celebrity is on Instagram. Instagram shares images, videos in a few seconds. Instagram is the best intimate medium for celebrities and their fans. One of the best examples is superstar Salman Khan, when one his fan asked him about his marriage and he replied. (As soon as Possible). Salman khan, Shahrukh khan and Aamir khan are very active on Instagram. This study examined celebrities Instagram posts to find out what posts engage fans and how fans are emotionally attached with these posts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For this study, a literature review was done on the concept of Intimate interaction, other related theories, studies on Instagram, Intimate Interaction refers to a close friendship or an imaginary social relationship, an illusion of face-to-face relationship and an interpersonal sharing between the media user and the consumed media.

Intimate interaction has been studied most often using film personalities such as newscasters or soap opera characters (Giles, 2002). Fans grow to know media figures through observation of their life; some suggest that intimate interaction may be a functional alternative to interpersonal relationships for certain people (Rubin & McHugh, 1987).

Stever and Lawson (2013) studied Twitter as a channel for communication between celebrities and fans. Using a mixed methodology of qualitative content analysis and open coding in grounded theory, they analyzed the content of 12 entertainment media celebrity accounts. Their study found that these celebrities' communication via Twitter could be broken down into three realms: social, marketing, intimate.

The "live" component of Twitter "gives a fan the sense of actually 'being there' with the celebrity and, as such, is possibly the most intimate form of media communication used to date by celebrities to connect with their fans" (Stever & Lawson, 2013, p. 351). For the current study, the author focused on adolescent girls' parasocial interaction since there has been not much research on this age group.

One study conducted by **Theran, Newberg, and Gleason** (2010) found that the majority of girls saw celebrities as media figures and not as interactive partners, as opposed to someone to connect to and build a relationship with. However, most of the women cited in the study were old enough to be the girls' mothers, not girls themselves.

Many theories and ideas dealt with the significance and role of parasocial interaction. Uses and gratifications theory has "three basic tenets: (i) people are goal directed in their behavior, (ii) they are active media users, and (iii) they are aware of their needs and select media to gratify these needs" (Rubin & McHugh, 1987, p. 280).

As previously mentioned, some believe that parasocial interaction parallels the interpersonal relationship; the parasocial interaction satisfies the need of an interpersonal relationship the consumer may be lacking. Researchers, such as Shao (2009), have studied the relationship between social media and uses and gratifications theory. The purpose of the study was to determine the appeal of user-generated media (UGM), such as YouTube and

MySpace, which were popular at the time. It found three ways of interacting with UGM: producing, participating, and consuming.

INSTAGRAM ENGAGEMENT:

Instagram is a video-sharing, photo-sharing, mobile networking service that has quickly become one of the top android applications for mobile devices. Lee, Lee, Moon, and Sung (2015) found five primary social and psychological motives driving Instagram users: self-expression, escapism, and peeking, social interaction, archiving. The Findings revealed Instagram users are motivated to establish and build social relationships with other people using this platform.

Instagram, a social media application, is now becoming increasingly popular as a business and communication tool. Instagram is broadcast and it achieves something like intimacy. Instagram is a quirky way to interact your life with friends through pictures.

With 50 million photos uploaded daily and 100 million monthly active users. Instagram is the dynamically growing web application on the planet amongst the top 50 websites, growing from 15 million to 25 million unique visitors in just one month. The research study explored how this intimate medium unfolds on Instagram among their users. The study asked two research questions:

RESEARCH QUESTION:

RQ1: What types of messages do celebrities post to Instagram?

RQ2: What type of content gets the most response by their fans?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this research study, three bollywood superstar Instagram accounts were analyzed for their content (post). Salman khan, Shahrukh khan, Aamir khan are three bollywood celebrities who fall in the top five in number of Instagram followers. These three superstars had more comments and feedback on their account which shows the sign of intimate relationship.

Content analysis was used for analyzing the posts. Textual analysis was also employed to explore the intimate relationship. The most recent 20 Content Analysis of Celebrity Instagram Posts by Salman khan and 15 Instagram posts by Shahrukh khan, and 15 posts of Aamir khan from April 1, 2017 to April 14, 2017 (a total of 14 days analysis) were coded to find the type of content and the level of fan involvement in the post. Textual analysis was

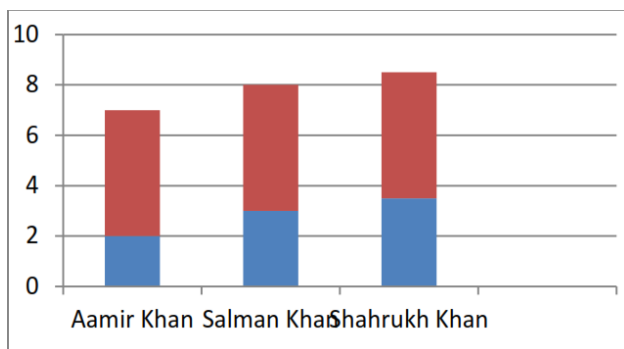
done on the most to find a deeper relationship or connection with the celebrity.

FINDINGS:

A content analysis of the three Bollywood celebrities led to two categories of Personal, fan interaction. Personal content included family events, likes, dislikes and events. Fan posts were directed that how much fans are involved in the post/ activity.

A total of 50 Instagram posts were divided into two categories: personal (22), Fan interaction (28). Overall, the Fan interaction was the most gossip topic. Salman Khans fans posted 1200 comments on his post; all comments were related to his personal interaction. Aamir was busy on thugs of Hindustan film shooting many of his posts were assumed to be related to her fan interaction. Aamir khan, fans congratulated him for starting his new project. 1328 comments were posted on 5th April 2017.

Shahrukh khan was attended the ceremony of IPL10 season so he posted his picture on Instagram and his fans commented on his photo. 1522 comments was posted and all comment was related to his related to fans interaction. Shahrukh khan beats other two celebrities in case of fan comments. We see more and more involvement on Shahrukh khan post. His fans were crazy and posted comments in every second. Most of the post was related to fan interaction. Fan interacted with their celebrity fully involved.



Fan Engagement of Celebrity Instagram Post

Salman Khan replied to his fan comment 2 times in a day, where Shahrukh khan and Aamir khan never to his fans. The chart showed that Salman khan was more attached to his fans circle where Shahrukh fans have maximum fan interaction.

CONCLUSION

This research study find what kind of content celebrity Instagram accounts sent out to fans. This study sought to determine what type of content gets the most comments and feedback interaction. Their messages, 50 posts, were divided into two different categories: Personal (22) and Fan interaction (28). Fan interaction is of greater value. Shahrukh khan

has huge fan circle and where Salman khan replied to his fans. Salman khan is more attached to his fans. Aamir khan has mixed response. The overall result of the study is that three superstars are aware about his fans posts. They commented or not that does not matter but they check their fans comments and feedback.

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Corresponding Author

Bharat*

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Institute of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra, Haryana, India-136119

biddy88@gmail.com