



## Communicative events in disaster situations: the changing role of social media

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**Abstract:** Facebook and other social media show indicators of behaving as a rudimentary form of collective consciousness as more and more people engage in social networking activities facilitated by the user friendliness of the social media resulting in interactivity and interconnectivity.

This study evaluates the users' activities on the networking site Facebook in the light of super typhoon Haiyan. As such the study focused only Facebook messages that reflect or pertain to ecological topics. Such insights into the "collective actions" and other social initiatives are valuable information to situate the emerging attributions of typhoon impact, government behaviour and their ecological implications and consequences to social dynamics.

A vigorous and self-sustaining information flow and exchange is critical in keeping the principle of "transparency" alive and more so in direst of moments. Results of the study show that *liking, sharing, commenting* and *posting* updates are ways available to the user to curate or make sense of the volume of information available in the internet. Furthermore, what drives people to interact is a complex of factors which manifests in their message threads. Reflexive empowerment could rapidly occur provided the right factors and condition such as in cases of calamities and disasters are present to prompt people to action. Such catalytic communicative event may result in a contagion resulting to clustering or bandwagon effect. If the intensity of such contagion is high enough, such social network can transform into an actual and real-time social engagement.

**Key Words:** interconnectivity; interactivity; new media; typhoon Haiyan; collective intelligence; facebook; social media