

Hashtag (#): A very powerful tool that can make a major change in the world.

Abstract.

The motive of this paper is to present to you the power of hashtag empowered people to have real change in the society because many serious issues were being taken very lightly in countries like India. Hashtags are mostly being used on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on. Hashtag is a very powerful tool that internet users use to develop contents, to fight against injustice, to seek for help and to bring change in countries and societies. Through hashtags people connect to each other round the globe. Hashtag is a tool where it unites the community together. Campaign as well as movements are being created on social media to bring small as well as major changes in the world. The paper discusses about the reason and ways that internet users such as news channels, politicians and celebrities make use of social media in order to create campaigns, movement and to voice out their opinion or to pass a message because social media is a platform where everyone is very active. In the generation of today social media is essential in each one's life from young to elderly people. Community are built on social media, people see social media a better way to protest to seek for justice as social media brings all the internet users together that creates a community, people give their opinion freely about any issue.

Key words: #Awareness #Network #Community #Campaign #Hashtag #SocialMedia

Introduction

Power of hashtag empowered people to have real change in the society because many serious issues were taken lightly in countries like India. Online relations can change the mentality of people through social media, therefore people rules the social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Internet users end up by getting more and more information and knowledge out of it by being active on these platforms. There is a network amongst internet users that creates a community and that leads to a development of an issue by using hashtags. In India people uses hashtags to create awareness and to have a major change in the country as well as to force the government to take action whenever is needed. For example: #IndiaTogether and #IndiaAgainstPropaganda encouraged women to take a stand for themselves against sexual harassment, and violence, a second example is #MeToo Campaign helped the authority to take legal action towards the matter and the third example is #JusticeForSSR

where a celebrity was found dead in his apartment and the police and doctors declared his cause of death was suicide which wasn't the real case.

Hashtags rules because it is a tool where the internet users are able to find a post that interests them, Hashtags is a form of words, multi-word phrases that classifies content as well as it tracks topic on social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter etc. Internet users use hashtags to seek for posts, tweets that they are interested into and it is a two way tool, if you want your post to be seen by the audience, people uses Hashtags to make their post to have a voice. Hashtags are led to a symbol #, here are some examples #stopdowry, #stopviolence (Grauschopf, 2020). Hashtag is also form of tool that the internet users use to express themselves and to seek for help and get solution where in India when there is a major issue and not action is being taken, the internet users use hashtags to the content and the content become so viral that it results in the generation of hashtag therefore it gathers the attention of a wider and stronger audience. Hashtags advocacy is everywhere, it is a way of how people protest online via social media and it is connects us globally for any cases or topic that grabs our attention and encourages every internet users to contribute for a change.

“The Use of Twitter Hashtags in the Formation of Ad Hoc Publics” where it shows the ways hashtags were beings used for their future steps in the period of election, sometimes it is based on specific themes and topics to convey their message or to plan for a campaign (Bruns, 2021). Therefore here we can see how a politician put the hashtag tool into practice. “Battle of the Hashtags: Debate over farmers’ protest goes global for local” in this article It speaks about the protests of farmers in India and how did celebrities around the globe, politicians as well as the Bollywood industry’s people express themselves and supported the farmers on social media platforms. It has been mentioned on social media that international pop icon Rihanna, climate activist, Greta Thunberg as well as the adult star Mia Khalifa, they supported the farmers’ protest by tweeting using the hashtag #FarmersProtest. In India the hashtag became a rage overnight and afterward with the global support the Centre had to up its twitter game. MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava therefore a statement was tweeted where he spoke about the advantages of the farm laws, and all the talk that is discuss between government and farmers’ representatives, and so on. “Before rushing to comment on such matters, we would urge that the facts be ascertained, and a proper understanding of the issues at hand be undertaken. The temptation of sensationalist social media hashtags and comments, especially when resorted to by celebrities and others, is neither accurate nor responsible,” the statement signed off, and touched it up with the hashtags #IndiaTogether and #IndiaAgainstPropaganda. Afterward, there have been a lot of politicians, celebrities as well as many other social media users were using hashtags boldly and asking India to stay one and to not be a target or victim of propaganda. While there was many other famous Bollywood influencers and celebrities who were constantly posting #IndiaTogether and #IndiaAgainstPropaganda as they were all hoping for an amical resolution to take place (Basu, 2021).

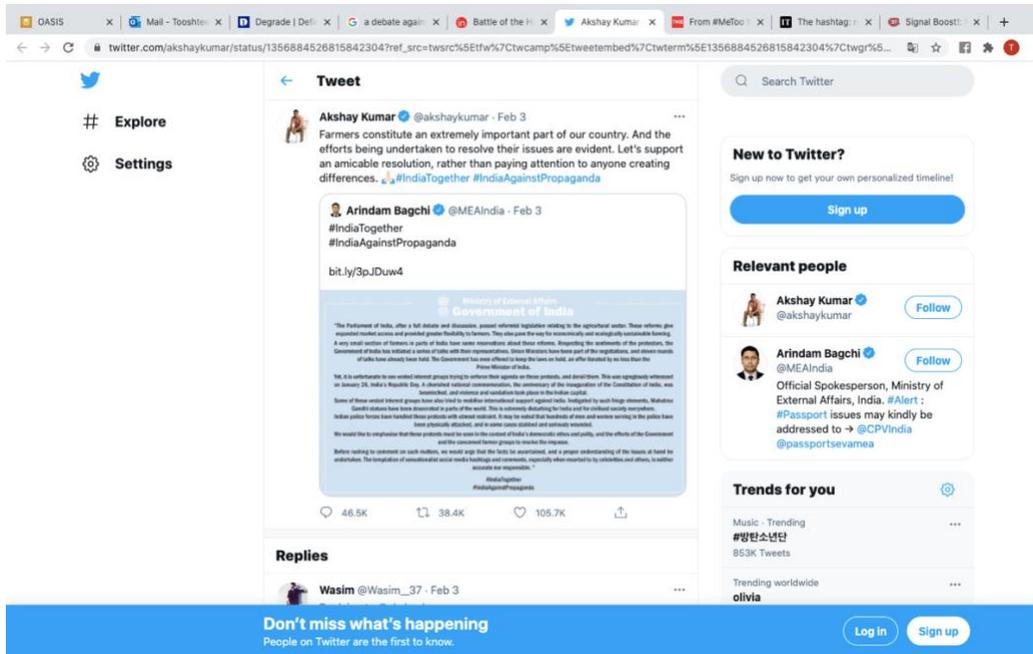


Figure 1 Kumar, A., 2021. [Twitter] https://twitter.com/akshaykumar/status/1356884526815842304?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1356884526815842304%7Ctwgr%5E%7Cwcon%5E1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.indiatoday.in%2Fnews-analysis%2Fstory%2Fbattle-of-the-hashtags-debate-over-farmers-protest-goes-global-for-local-1765657-2021-02-03

This is one of a tweet from a celebrity of India to show his support towards the Champaign.

Therefore, it clearly shows the way all celebrities, politicians and internet users supports the framers through the hashtag. Nowadays hashtag is a very crucial tool on social media as it connects everyone to everyone. Here in this debate it show the way the spokesperson from the MEA came up on the Twitter platform to tweet and explain how things is going and going to be, he also made use of hashtag #IndiaTogether and #IndiaAgainstPropaganda to get support and to make the audience aware of the situation. Following up all big celebrities, Politicians and internet users started to post the #IndiaTogether and #IndiaAgainstPropaganda to show their support and to awake and creates awareness. The hashtag tool basically unite people around the whole world, from a normal citizen to celebrities and famous persona.

“#MeToo topped Instagram’s advocacy hashtags with 1.5 million usage in 2018” (IANS, 2018), in India, The #MeToo movement in the year 2018, 1.5 millions usage of the Instagram’s advocacy hashtags actually took the Bollywood and the media industry of India into an unbeatable trendy photo-sharing. With hashtags, we can estimate how many amount of activity have been made as reported in the “Instagram Year In Review 2018”, the Facebook-owned company actually said that #timesup have been used for about 597K times and so on, it has also been demonstrated that the platform might be one of the most powerful platform for internet users to express themselves, to speak up and

speak out and that can lead to bring hope to meaningful causes (IANS, 2018). Here, hashtags have been used in many ways as well as forms to make the audience feel part of the #MeToo campaign, through this, many more people had the guts to speak up for themselves and eventually people got all together, they created a network and they worked together to show what wrong was actually happening. In this movement, internet users were able to support those who were a victim of it and it created a buzz that even on other platforms like YouTube and so on started to interview those victims and help them to seek justice. Therefore, the use of hashtags have an impact on how to make a footprint to help people to connect to each another and to have a change especially in India, because India it is a country where for centuries women didn't have to right to voice out and to take a stand for themselves but now with social media and communities gender equality is developing countries like India.



Figure 2 Jagan, S., 2018. #MeToo.
 [Instagram]<https://www.instagram.com/p/BqnQ2YalsoI/>

Here is one screenshot above is of the #MeToo Campaign where this lady on the picture was one of the victim and who seek fairness via the movement.

In India, an actor, Sushant Singh Rajput founded dead in his apartment. According to the Mumbai Police his dead cause was suicide. And a preliminary post-mortem made in Cooper Hospital confirmed that his death is asphyxia due to hanging (Indianexpress ,2021). The late actor's death was a mystery as he was a very brilliant actor as well as a

very good human being. He has a good relationship with his friends, families, colleagues and his girlfriend (Pandey, 2020). Around a week, a new channel “Republic World” which is a Republic media network channel started to make debates about the issue, the lead Arnab Goswami who own the republic channel started to invite ministers and people who were close to the late actor. In his debate they were able to know that the late actor didn’t committed suicide and it is a case of murder. The news channel, the late actor’s friends, families and fans started a Campaign #JusticeForSSR. For this Campaign the media, family and close ones of the late actor took social media platform to run their Campaign, all the fans of the late actor started to search justice for him via Instagram, Facebook as well as YouTube (RepublicTv, 2020). Through the Campaign the media took advantage to pass their message to the courts and all the ministers who took the death of the late actor very lightly. People such as the neighbors of the late actor started to denounce what happened the eve of his death. The #JusticeForSSR was buzzing around the world, through this many fan from all countries got together as one and started to fight for justice on the social media platform. Through this CBI and NCB got into action for this matter. Via this Campaign the Republic channel got on the number one position on media, and there are many other news channels who were not happy with this, they started to question how can #JusticeForSSR can make a new channel become so famous. The this article it has mentioned how the owner of republic took the advantage of this Campaign to belittle the minister and other parliaments, the new reporter used words such as “ national security, terrorism, identity politics, and confrontational party politics” in order to grab the attention of the public (Chakravaty, 2020). But here in this Campaign we can see that it has been a big lost for the Bollywood industries as many big celebrities names and frame were being attacked, many celebrities were being trolled, their lives became a circus because people were abusing them (Yadav,2020). #JusticeForSSR is an example that shows the way the social media and community had merge together to fight for justice for the late actor and here via this Campaign news channels were having the opportunity to build their names although there was many news channel was against the reporter, Arnab, he kept on fighting for justice where the case of death turned out to be a murder.

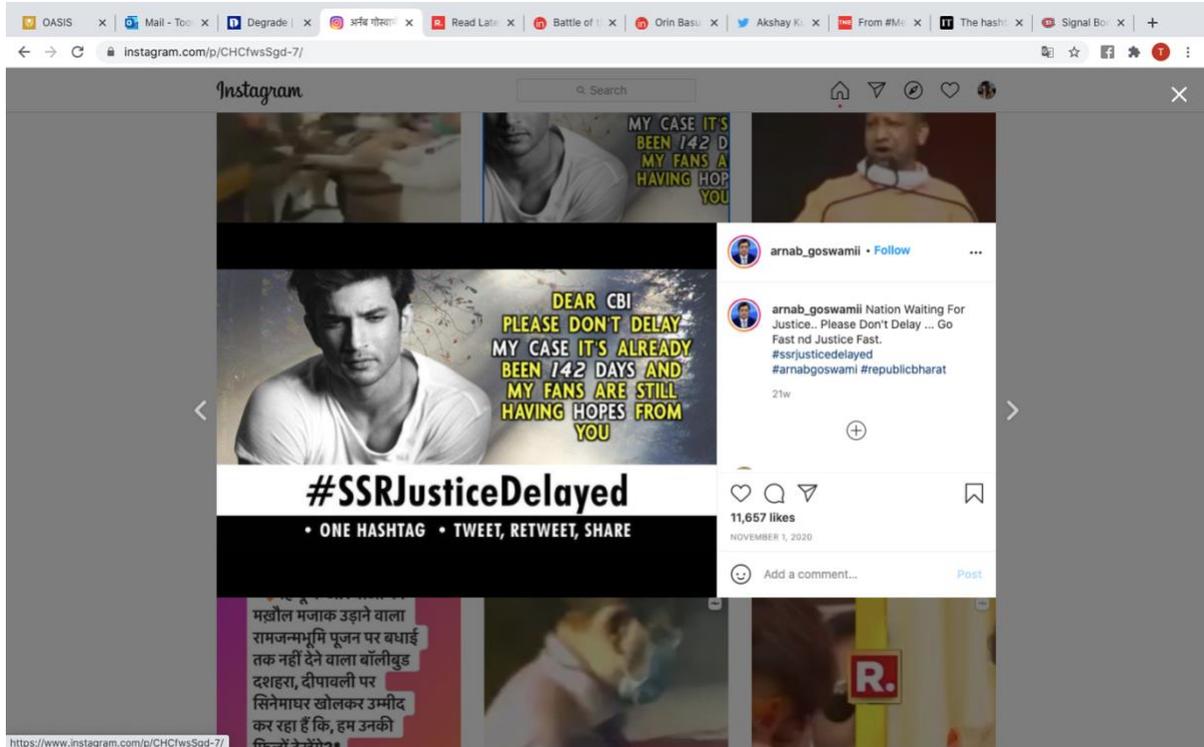


Figure 3 Gosawmii, A., 2020. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CHCfwsSgd-7/>

When there was delay for CBI to take the case hand, the report, Arnab, used to use #SSRJusticeDelayed as you can see in the above picture. Through this action, the late actors' fans started to share a post of him and they add #SSRJusticeDelayed and the government immediately to action about this and sent a team of CIB to investigate on the matter.

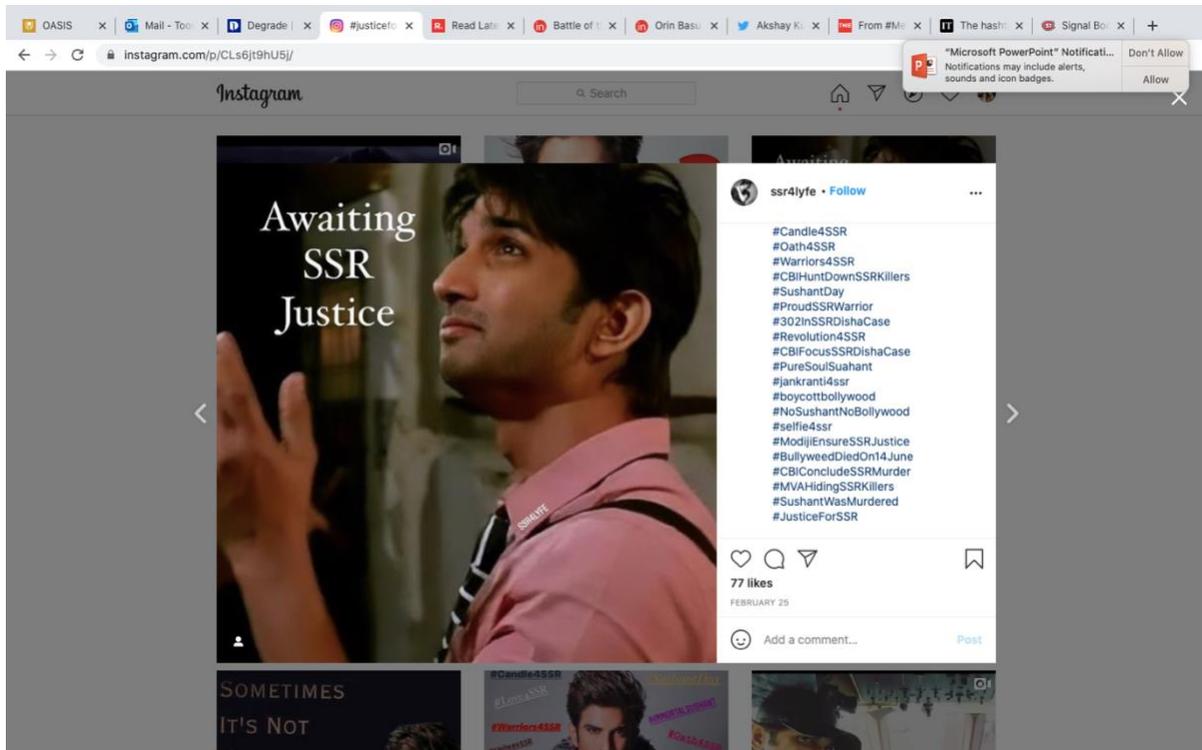


Figure 4 Girl, F., 2021. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CLs6jt9hU5j/>

In the above picture, in the about section of caption, a fan of the late actor was asking for justice as in the start of the incident police officers and other people who were in charge of the case was trying to fool the audience and the late actor's fans. Therefore this fan posted a picture of the late actor and in his caption he wrote #Candle4SSR #Oath4SSR #JusticeForSSR #SushantDay.

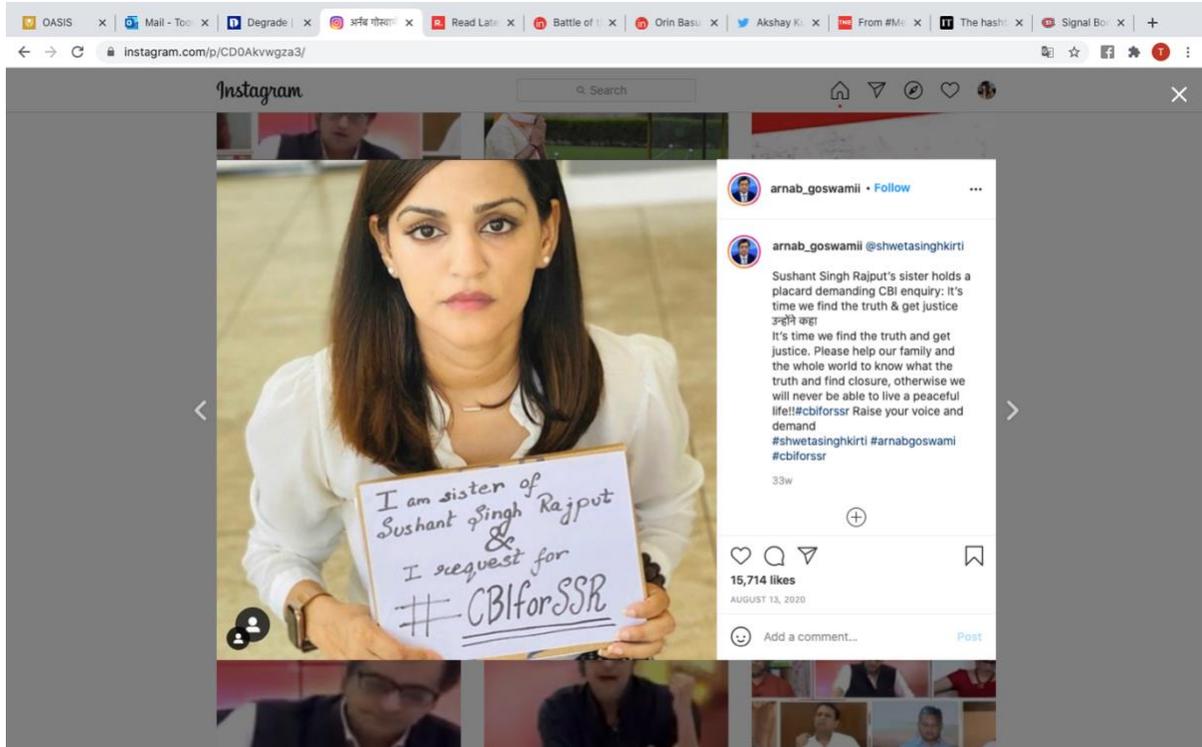


Figure 5 Gosawmii, A., 2020. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CD0Akvwgza3/>

Here is a picture of the late actor's sister asking for the CBI to have a proper investigation on his brother's death. She used #CBIforSSR where all the fans and people who care about the late actor starting posting so that the message could reach the CBI. And eventually after some weeks the CBI took the case in hand and so many evidence that the police were trying to hide was all being sorted out.

Conclusion

The hashtag is a very powerful tool in our today's generation. Through hashtags citizens, celebrities and politicians have the opportunity to voice out, to make their point visible, to express themselves, to seek for justice, to have a change in the society as well as in the judiciary system. People are very much active on social media so via the platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram people creates a community and they get together to support each other and to pass their message. And social media is a platform where information are being passed on within seconds. Hashtags creates awareness and promotes a chain for people to take a stand for themselves as well as to step out and raise their voice whenever there are injustice that happens, especially in countries like India. Social media and community connects and develop the mind of people. In a way people using social media help the citizens and internet users to be more aware of their actions and to think wisely about the consequences.

References

Basu, O. (2021). Battle of the Hashtags: Debate over farmers' protest goes global for local. <https://www.indiatoday.in/news-analysis/story/battle-of-the-hashtags-debate-over-farmers-protest-goes-global-for-local-1765657-2021-02-03>

Bruns, A. (2021). Enhanced sentiment learning using Twitter hashtags and smileys | Proceedings of the 23rd International Conference on Computational Linguistics: Posters. <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.5555/1944566.1944594>

Chakravarty, A. (2020). How the #JusticeForSSR campaign helped Republic Bharat race to the Number 1 position <https://www.newsland.com/2020/09/10/how-the-justiceforssr-campaign-helped-republic-bharat-race-to-the-number-1-position>

Desk, E. (2021). Sushant Singh Rajput death case: Here's the status. <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/sushant-singh-rajput-death-case-here-the-status-so-far-7154837/>

Grauschope, S. (2020). Hashtags: What They Mean and How to Use Them Correctly <https://www.thebalanceeveryday.com/what-does-hashtag-mean-and-how-do-you-use-one-892814>

Gosawmii, A., 2020. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CHCfwsSgd-7/>

Girl, F., 2021. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CLs6jt9hU5j/>

Gosawmii, A., 2020. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/CD0Akvwgza3/>

IANS, I. (2018). #MeToo topped Instagram's advocacy hashtags with 1.5 million usage in 2018. <https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/technology/metoo-topped-instagram-advocacy-hashtags-with-1-5-million-usage-in-2018/1412879/>

Jagan, S., 2018. #MeToo. [Instagram] <https://www.instagram.com/p/BqnQ2YalsoI/>

Kumar, A., 2021. [Twitter] https://twitter.com/akshaykumar/status/1356884526815842304?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1356884526815842304%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.indiatoday.in%2Fnews-analysis%2Fstory%2Fbattle-of-the-hashtags-debate-over-farmers-protest-goes-global-for-local-1765657-2021-02-03

Pandey, V. (2020). Sushant Singh Rajput: Mystery and voyeurism around Bollywood star's death. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-53655118>

World, R. (2020). Before you continue to YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFEgYyp93gg>

Yadav, J. (2020). Justice for SSR campaign is now a free-for-all abuse circus. BJP IT cell has been overtaken. <https://theprint.in/opinion/pov/justice-for-ssr-campaign-is-free-for-all-abuse-circus-bjp-it-cell/504456/>