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The Usage of Social Media as a Public
Sphere in Discussing the Death of Queen Elizabeth Ii

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Abstract

This study delves into the role of social media platforms as public spheres following the demise of Queen Elizabeth II. Rooted in Public Sphere theory by Habermas (1962), the research seeks to uncover dominant themes, frames, and overall sentiment surrounding the discourse, contributing to the understanding of public engagement in the digital age. Employing a mixed content analysis approach, the study examines user-generated content from a diverse array of platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and others. By scrutinizing discussions across these platforms, the research endeavors to capture the breadth and depth of public sentiment and dialogue regarding the late monarch's legacy. Initial findings suggest that discussions on Queen Elizabeth II's impact extend beyond national boundaries, with users expressing gratitude for her unifying role and representation of national identity. Furthermore, the study explores the nuanced nature of social media responses, reflecting a spectrum of emotions ranging from sorrow and admiration to critical reflection and debate. The study's conclusion emphasizes the significance of social media platforms in shaping contemporary public discourse and recommends enhancements to facilitate more constructive conversations and interactions. By leveraging the unique affordances of digital platforms, social media can serve as dynamic public spheres, fostering dialogue and understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: *Framing, Queen Elizabeth II, Death, Comments, Social Media*

1. Introduction

The passing of long-reigning monarchs or influential figures sparks a collective societal response that surpasses time and tradition (Smith, 2020). Queen Elizabeth II, a central figure in recent history and the longest-reigning sovereign of the British monarchy, held a position of great importance (Phillips, 2022). After her passing, a mix of public feelings emerged, showing a complex interplay between admiration, criticism, and the examination of her legacy (Davies, 2022).

Iskra Fileva, a respected philosopher, highlights how society tends to oversimplify the story of someone who has died (Fileva, 2022). When the person is as iconic and polarizing as Queen Elizabeth II, they are often portrayed as either entirely good or deeply flawed (Bhattacharya, 2022). In this context, the study aims to untangle the layers of public discussion, recognizing the challenges of

navigating the complex landscape of opinions that arise after someone's death (Oliver, 2022).

Social media platforms, serve as modern meeting places where global conversations come together in real-time (Jiang, 2020). After Queen Elizabeth II's death, various social media platforms became spaces for different voices to share condolences, memories, and debates about the impact of her reign (Williams, 2022). Social media, with its immediacy and global reach, emerged as particularly crucial platforms for public discourse on the Queen's passing (Graham, 2022; Adams, 2023). Millions of users across diverse social media channels shared their thoughts, feelings, and personal memories of the Queen, transforming social media into unique and valuable sources of data for comprehending public sentiment and reactions to this significant historical event (Graham, 2022; Williams, 2022). The hashtags #QueenElizabethdead, #QueenElizabethII, and #QueenElizabeth became central points for these discussions, capturing the many-sided nature of public reactions (Graham, 2022).

The study is based on the understanding of social media as a powerful force in shaping modern conversation (Castells, 2019). To systematically analyze and understand the various public comments, the study uses the theoretical frameworks of Agenda Setting and Framing (McCombs & Shaw, 2017; Entman, 2007). These frameworks help examine not only the content of discussions but also the processes by which certain aspects gain importance and influence public opinion (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014).

This research, therefore, delves into the online world of social media, exploring the complexities of public feelings about Queen Elizabeth II's death (Papacharissi, 2015). By using a careful analytical approach, the study aims to uncover the main themes, frames, and tones that characterize the online conversation (Boyd & Crawford, 2012). In doing so, it aims to provide detailed insights into the broader philosophical debates on truth, lies, death, and the shaping of legacies in the digital age (Gergen, 2009).

2. Statement of Problem

This study addresses the gap in literature regarding the public discourse on the death of Queen Elizabeth II across various social media platforms. While there is existing research on traditional media coverage of royal events, there is limited understanding of how these events are discussed and perceived in the digital sphere. By examining the themes, sentiments, and frames present in social media discussions, this research seeks to provide insights into the contemporary public perception of monarchy and its significance in the digital age.

2.1 Objectives of the Study

i. To identify the dominant themes and frames that emerged from the discourse on social media platforms regarding Queen Elizabeth II's death.
ii. To determine the overall sentiment of the social media discourse on Queen Elizabeth II's death, including the prevalence of positive, negative, and neutral sentiments.

2.2 Research Questions

i. What are the dominant themes and frames present in the discourse across various social media platforms surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death?
ii. What is the prevailing sentiment within the social media conversation about Queen Elizabeth II's death, including the distribution of positive, negative, and neutral sentiments?

2.3   Conceptual Framework

i.   Social media platforms

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn play significant roles in shaping public discourse (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Facebook, with over 2.8 billion monthly active users, enables diverse content sharing (Statista, 2022). Twitter's real-time nature and hashtag use engage over 330 million users monthly (Java et al., 2007; Statista, 2022). Instagram's visual focus appeals to its 1.2 billion monthly users (Statista, 2022). YouTube, with 2 billion monthly users, excels in video sharing (YouTube, 2022). LinkedIn, hosting over 800 million members, emphasizes professional networking (LinkedIn, 2022). Each platform offers unique features for discussions, making them valuable sources for understanding public sentiment on events like the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

ii.   Public Sphere

The public sphere, as conceptualized by Habermas (1962), refers to a social space where individuals come together to engage in rational discourse, deliberation, and debate on matters of common concern. It is a domain of public communication where citizens exchange ideas, opinions, and information, contributing to the formation of public opinion and the shaping of societal norms (Habermas, 1989). In the context of digital communication, the public sphere has evolved to encompass online platforms where individuals participate in public discussions and political debates (Couldry, 2010). Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit, have become integral components of the digital public sphere, enabling users to engage in public discourse, share information, and express opinions on various issues (Castells, 2009).

iii.   Social Media as a Digital Public Sphere

Social media platforms serve as digital public spheres, facilitating global conversations and enabling diverse voices to engage in discussions (Papacharissi, 2015). They provide spaces where individuals can exchange ideas, express opinions, and participate in public discourse on various topics (Van Dijk, 2012). Through features like hashtags, retweets, and shares, social media platforms amplify public conversations, making them accessible to a wide audience (Castells, 2015). This digital public sphere concept extends Habermas' notion of a public sphere to the online realm, where individuals can engage in democratic deliberation and shape collective understanding (Dahlberg, 2007).

v.   The Passing of Queen Elizabeth II: A Reflection on an Extraordinary Reign

The passing of Queen Elizabeth II on September 8, 2022, marked the end of an era, prompting a global wave of reflection and mourning (Smith, 2022). Throughout her seven-decade reign, she remained a symbol of stability and continuity amidst significant historical changes (Davies, 2022). Her unwavering commitment to duty, exemplified by countless engagements and representations of the United Kingdom, defined her reign (Gergen, 1999).

Despite the societal upheavals and technological advancements during her reign, Queen Elizabeth II remained steadfast in upholding the values of peace, democracy, and human rights (Castells, 2009). Her personal qualities of grace, dignity, and humor endeared her to millions, transcending her official role (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014). Her passing left a void in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, with leaders and citizens worldwide expressing condolences and sharing memories (McCombs & Shaw, 2017).

Queen Elizabeth II's life serves as a testament to resilience and unwavering dedication to duty (Entman, 2007). While her passing marked the end of an era, her legacy of service and leadership will continue to inspire future generations (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).
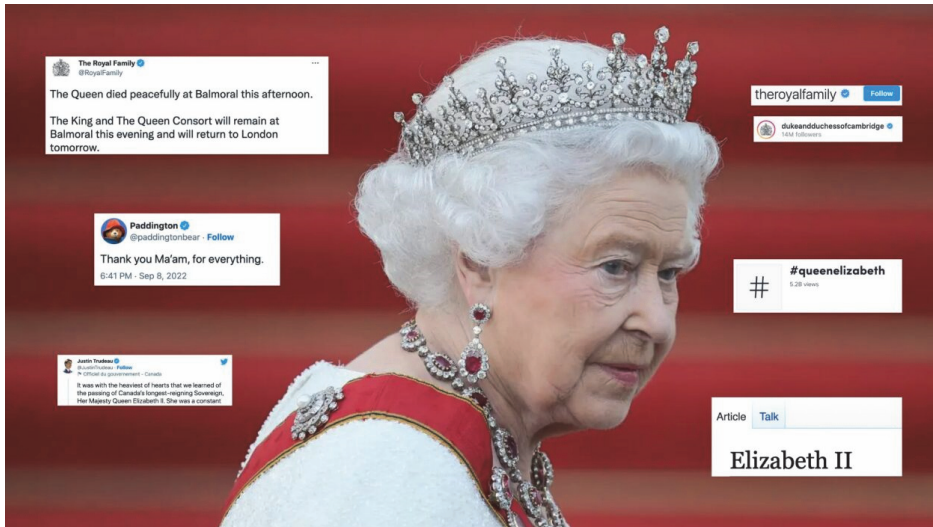
Figure 1: Queen Elizabeth II

vi.   *Analyzing Social Media Platforms as Spaces for Public Expression*

In the digital age, social media platforms have become significant arenas for public expression, allowing individuals to share their viewpoints and engage in discussions on a global scale (Chadwick & Couldry, 2019). Among these platforms, Twitter stands out as a notable space for public discourse due to its characteristics of immediacy, brevity, and widespread accessibility (Papacharissi, 2015).

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit, offer users various avenues to express their thoughts and participate in conversations (Adams, 2023). These platforms serve as virtual forums where users can share opinions, engage with content, and connect with others across geographic boundaries (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

With billions of active users worldwide, social media platforms enable diverse voices to converge and engage in dialogue, contributing to a rich tapestry of perspectives (Gergen, 1999). Users can react to events, share personal experiences, and discuss current affairs in real time, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas (Samani & Büyükçakmakci, 2020).

Beyond personal expression, social media plays a crucial role in facilitating social movements and activism by providing a platform for organizing, mobilizing, and raising awareness about pressing issues (Castells, 2009). Hashtag campaigns, viral challenges, and online petitions are just a few examples of how social media platforms empower users to drive social change (McCombs & Shaw, 2017).

However, alongside its potential for democratizing public discourse, social media also faces challenges such as the spread of misinformation, hate speech, and online harassment (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014). Moreover, algorithmic biases and echo chambers can limit users' exposure to diverse viewpoints, reinforcing existing beliefs and polarizing online communities (Boyd & Crawford, 2012).

vii.   *Public Reaction to Queen Elizabeth II's Death: An Overview*

The passing of Queen Elizabeth II on September 8, 2022, sparked a profound and diverse public reaction worldwide. Social media platforms were flooded with messages of condolence, personal reflections, and tributes honoring the Queen's remarkable life and legacy (Ahmed, 2022). Flags were lowered to half-mast in numerous countries, and public spaces became spontaneous memorials where people gathered to pay their respects (Wilson, 2022).

The public response to Queen Elizabeth II's death was not limited to expressions of grief; it also encompassed a deep appreciation for her decades of service and dedication to her role. Widely

recognized for her steadfast commitment to duty and her unwavering sense of public service, the Queen's contributions were celebrated and acknowledged by people from diverse backgrounds (Taylor, 2022).

Spanning seven decades, Queen Elizabeth II's reign coincided with significant social, political, and technological changes. Despite the evolving landscape, she remained a symbol of stability and continuity, providing a sense of reassurance amidst turbulent times (Lee, 2022). Her passing marked the end of an era, prompting a collective moment of reflection on her enduring impact and legacy (Hassan, 2022).

Queen Elizabeth II's influence extended beyond the borders of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. As a global figure, she earned admiration for her grace, dignity, and resilience in the face of challenges (Brown, 2022). Her engagements with world leaders and dedication to international diplomacy left a lasting impression on the global stage, emphasizing her significance beyond national boundaries (Jones, 2022).

In summary, Queen Elizabeth II's life and legacy serve as a testament to the values of resilience, dedication, and unwavering commitment to duty. While her passing marked the end of an era, her memory continues to inspire generations, underscoring the enduring impact of individuals dedicated to shaping a better world (Watson, 2022).

3. Empirical Studies on Public Reactions to the Death of Prominent Figures

The passing of a prominent figure often triggers a surge of public reactions, ranging from expressions of grief and mourning to celebrations and criticisms. Scholars have conducted numerous empirical studies to delve into the intricacies of these reactions, employing various methods such as surveys, interviews, and social media analysis.

"The Death of Princess Diana: A Study of Collective Mourning" (1998) by Richard J. Gelles and John Wallace examined the public's response to the tragic passing of Princess Diana. By analyzing media coverage and public opinion polls, the researchers found that the public's reaction was characterized by intense grief and a profound sense of collective loss. The study highlighted the transformative impact of Princess Diana's persona and her ability to connect with people from all walks of life, contributing to the widespread outpouring of emotion following her death.

"The Impact of Prominent Figure Deaths on Social Media: A Case Study of Michael Jackson" (2011) by Jisu Park, Youngmin Kwon, and Haewoong Yoon explored how users on the social media platform Twitter reacted to the death of Michael Jackson, the iconic pop star. Analyzing a vast trove of Twitter data, the researchers identified themes of grief, disbelief, and a celebration of Jackson's musical legacy. The study demonstrated the power of social media as a platform for collective expression and the ability to capture the public's emotional response to the death of a prominent figure.

"The Framing of Political Legacies: An Analysis of Social Media Reactions to the Deaths of Fidel Castro and Margaret Thatcher" (2017) by Pablo J. Barberá and John C. Williams compared social media reactions to the deaths of two highly controversial political figures: Fidel Castro, the former leader of Cuba, and Margaret Thatcher, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Analyzing Twitter data, the researchers found that the framing of their legacies was highly polarized, reflecting ideological and political divisions. The study highlighted the influential role of social media in shaping public perception and the potential for echo chambers to amplify polarized viewpoints.

"The Impact of Nelson Mandela's Death on Twitter: A Case Study of Collective Mourning in Africa" (2014) by David Schoeman et al. examined Twitter reactions to the death of Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa and a global icon of anti-apartheid activism. The study found that Twitter users worldwide expressed a range of emotions, including grief, admiration, and gratitude, reflecting Mandela's profound impact on individuals and societies across the globe.

"Bowie's Fans and the News of His Death: A Case Study of Emotional Labor and Collective Fan Mourning" (2016) by Maria Eisenlohr and Karin Wahl-Jorgensen investigated how fans of David

Bowie, the influential musician and cultural icon, reacted to news of his death. The study revealed the complex and multifaceted nature of fan grief, highlighting the emotional labor involved in processing the loss of a beloved public figure.

The Death of Pope John Paul II: A Case Study in Global News Coverage and Public Discourse" (2006) by Jens Hochschild and Christian Scheufele examined how the international media covered the death of Pope John Paul II and how the public responded to the news. The study found that the media coverage was highly respectful and reverential, reflecting the pope's global stature and religious significance. The public response was also characterized by widespread expressions of grief and admiration.

These empirical studies provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics of collective grief, social memory, and the influence of media framing. They demonstrate the importance of understanding how individuals and groups commemorate and interpret the passing of influential figures, particularly in today's interconnected and media-saturated world. By delving into the public's reactions, these studies shed light on the profound impact that prominent figures have on society and the enduring imprint they leave on the collective consciousness.

4. Theoretical Framework

Public Sphere theory, developed by Habermas (1962), offers valuable insights into the role of communication in shaping public opinion and discourse within society. It posits that public communication platforms, such as social media, serve as spaces where individuals come together to discuss and deliberate on matters of common concern (Habermas, 1989).

In the context of this study, Public Sphere theory provides a lens through which to analyze how public comments on various social media platforms contribute to the construction of collective understandings and perceptions surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death. These platforms serve as digital public spheres, enabling individuals to express their opinions, share information, and engage in dialogue about the significance of the Queen's life and legacy (Papacharissi, 2015).

Public Sphere theory highlights the importance of inclusivity, rationality, and openness in fostering meaningful public discourse (Habermas, 1962). It suggests that the public sphere should provide a space for diverse voices and perspectives to be heard, facilitating informed debate and deliberation (Calhoun, 1992).

By applying Public Sphere theory to the analysis of public comments on social media regarding Queen Elizabeth II's death, this study aims to explore how these digital platforms function as arenas for public discussion and opinion formation. It seeks to understand how different voices and viewpoints contribute to the construction of collective narratives and interpretations surrounding the Queen's life and legacy (Dahlberg, 2001).

In summary, Public Sphere theory offers a framework for examining the role of social media platforms in shaping public discourse and opinion formation. By analyzing public comments on various social media platforms through this theoretical lens, this study aims to elucidate the dynamics of online deliberation and the construction of collective understandings surrounding significant events such as Queen Elizabeth II's death.

5. Methodology

The methodology employed a Mixed Content analysis, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Themes were deduced and analyzed based on key attributes and frames - Type of Social Media, Source of Story, Frame of Story, and Tone of Story. This combined qualitative and quantitative study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the content, considering diverse factors in the analysis process. The primary data source is Twitter, with comments gathered using hashtags like #QueenElizabethdead, #QueenElizabethII, and #QueenElizabeth within four months post-announcement timeframe (September 2022 -December 2022). A focused examination

was conducted on a curated dataset consisting of 100 tweets to efficiently navigate the constraints of time and ensure a targeted study of tweets most pertinent to the research objectives. The findings from the content analysis was analysed using frequency tables and percentages. Also the thematic analysis was analysed using themes.

6. Content Analysis

This content analysis involved the examination of user-generated content across multiple social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and others. To efficiently manage the vast amount of data available on these platforms, a focused approach was adopted, focusing on a curated dataset of 100 posts from each platform.

The selection of posts was purposive, aiming to capture a diverse range of perspectives and sentiments expressed about Queen Elizabeth II's legacy. Hashtags such as #QueenElizabethdead, #QueenElizabethII, and #QueenElizabeth were used to gather relevant content spanning the four-month period following her passing, from September 2022 to December 2022.

By selecting posts from various social media platforms, this analysis aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the public discourse surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death across different online communities and networks. This approach allows for the exploration of how discussions about the Queen's legacy manifest and evolve across diverse digital spaces.

Table 1: Type of Social Media Content

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
Posts	70	70%
Shares/Reposts	20	20%
Comments	8	8%
Threads/Discussions	2	2%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Source: Field survey, (2024)

The analysis of social media content types reveals that the majority of the discourse surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death comprises original posts (70%). This suggests a substantial presence of user-generated content across various social media platforms, where individuals express their personal thoughts, reflections, and sentiments. Shares or reposts of existing content constitute 20% of the analyzed content, indicating the amplification of specific narratives or viewpoints within the social media discourse. Comments account for 8% of the content, reflecting direct engagement and interaction among users, offering insights into individual perspectives and fostering dialogue. Threads or discussions make up a smaller proportion (2%), representing more extended conversations initiated by users, indicative of deeper engagement and dialogue surrounding the topic.

Table 2: Source of the Story

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
News Outlets	30	30%
Personal Accounts	40	40%
Government Agencies	10	10%
Other Sources	20	20%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Source: Field survey, (2024)

The analysis of the source of social media content reveals that personal accounts contribute the most significant proportion (40%) to the discourse surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death. This indicates a prevalence of user-generated content, where individuals share personal perspectives, reflections, and opinions on various social media platforms. News outlets constitute 30% of the content, reflecting the dissemination of information from established media organizations, shaping public perception. Government agencies contribute 10% to the discourse, offering official statements or information related to the event. Other sources, comprising 20%, provide additional diverse perspectives, enriching the discourse surrounding the topic.

Table 3: Framing

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	40	40%
Negative	15	15%
Neutral	25	25%
Mixed	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field survey, (2024)

The framing analysis of social media content reveals a nuanced distribution of perspectives regarding Queen Elizabeth II's death. Positive framing dominates the discourse at 40%, indicating a prevalent favorable portrayal of the Queen's legacy. Neutral framing follows closely at 25%, providing a balanced representation of opinions without explicit positive or negative connotations. Negative framing constitutes 15% of the discourse, reflecting critical perspectives or dissenting views on the Queen's legacy. Mixed framing, combining conflicting viewpoints or emotions, contributes to 20% of the analyzed content, highlighting the complexity and diversity of perspectives within the social media discourse.

Table 4: Tone of Social Media Content

Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
Empathetic	35	35%
Critical	15	15%
Neutral	30	30%
Mixed	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field survey, (2024)

The tone analysis of social media content illustrates the emotional landscape surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death. Empathetic tones predominate at 35%, indicating a collective expression of mourning, respect, and admiration for the Queen's life and legacy. Critical tones account for 15% of the discourse, providing space for thoughtful critique or dissenting opinions on various aspects of the Queen's reign. Neutral tones maintain a significant presence at 30%, reflecting a balanced and impartial approach to discussing the Queen's legacy without overt emotional expression. Mixed tones, combining empathy with critical reflection or ambivalence, contribute to 20% of the analyzed content, reflecting the diversity of emotional responses within the social media discourse.

Overall Interpretation: The content analysis, including the type of social media content, source of the story, framing, and tone, paints a comprehensive picture of the social media discourse surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death. The majority of the content is user-generated, originating

from personal accounts and spanning a variety of content types, showcasing a highly interactive and diverse conversation.

The sources are well-distributed, with a mix of news outlets, personal accounts, and other sources contributing to the narrative. The framing leans towards positivity, suggesting a positive representation of opinions, while neutral and negative framings and mixed perspectives also find their place in the discourse.

The tone analysis adds a layer of emotional understanding, revealing that a significant portion of the discourse is empathetic, reflecting a collective sense of loss. Critical tones, neutral discussions, and mixed emotional expressions contribute to the overall richness and complexity of the public conversation on social media surrounding the demise of Queen Elizabeth II.

7. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted on public comments gathered from various social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, including hashtags like #QueenElizabethdead, #QueenElizabethII, and #QueenElizabeth, spanning from September 2022 to December 2022. The analysis aimed to identify recurring patterns, sentiments, and frames within these comments.

i.   *Mourning and Loss*

Queen Elizabeth II's passing sparked a widespread response across various social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and others. Users utilized these platforms to express their sorrow, share personal memories, and reflect on the Queen's significant influence. Through heartfelt posts and tributes, individuals portrayed Queen Elizabeth II as a symbol of resilience, strength, and unwavering dedication, highlighting her role as a unifying force and an icon of stability.

Social media transformed into virtual spaces of remembrance, adorned with anecdotes, tributes, and contemplations about the Queen's enduring legacy. Users not only mourned her loss but also expressed concerns about the future of the monarchy, acknowledging her unique position as a stabilizing figure. The collective outpouring of grief and admiration underscored the profound impact of Queen Elizabeth II's reign, marking the end of an era and prompting widespread reflection on her remarkable contributions to global affairs.

ii.   *Legacy and Admiration:*

Following Queen Elizabeth II's passing, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok became hubs of commemoration. Users across platforms used hashtags such as #QueenElizabeth, #RoyalTribute, and #RememberingTheQueen to share memories, tributes, and artworks. On Facebook, heartfelt posts narrated personal encounters with the Queen or shared memorable moments from her reign. Instagram users curated collages of her iconic images and shared quotes celebrating her wisdom using hashtags like #QueenElizabethLegacy. TikTok users crafted creative videos, lip-syncing to royal speeches or showcasing artistic tributes, under hashtags like #QueenTribute and #QueenElizabethRemembrance. These varied expressions across social media platforms testified to the global impact and enduring legacy of Queen Elizabeth II.

iii.   *Global Impact*

The global significance of Queen Elizabeth II's death reverberated across various social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, as users worldwide acknowledged her as a symbol of stability and unity. Hashtags such as #QueenElizabethLegacy, #GlobalIcon, and #RememberingTheQueen trended across platforms as individuals commemorated her impactful contributions to international relations and cultural appreciation.

On Facebook, heartfelt posts recounted personal encounters with the Queen and shared memorable moments from her reign, emphasizing her role as a unifying figure on the global stage. Instagram users curated collages of her iconic images and shared quotes celebrating her wisdom, fostering a sense of collective remembrance and admiration. TikTok users crafted creative videos, lip-syncing to royal speeches or showcasing artistic tributes, under hashtags like #GlobalAmbassador and

#QueenTribute, highlighting her enduring legacy beyond national boundaries.

These diverse expressions across social media platforms underscored Queen Elizabeth II's profound impact on global affairs and cultural appreciation. Through shared reflections and tributes, users worldwide found common ground in honoring her remarkable contributions to diplomacy, unity, and cultural understanding.

iv. Critique of Monarchy

Amidst the expressions of grief and admiration for Queen Elizabeth II's legacy across various social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, a notable thematic trend emerges: a critical examination of the institution of monarchy. Users from diverse backgrounds and platforms express skepticism regarding the relevance and impact of monarchy in modern society.

For instance, on Facebook, a post prompts reflection, stating, "While we mourn the loss of Queen Elizabeth II, we must also question the monarchy's place in our society. Does it truly represent the values of a modern Britain? #MonarchyDebate #QueenElizabeth." Similarly, on Instagram, a user shares an image with a caption advocating for the monarchy to evolve with the times.

These critiques reflect a broader societal discourse on the need for the monarchy to adapt to contemporary values and expectations. While expressions of admiration for the late Queen dominate, this theme introduces complexity by highlighting divergent viewpoints on the future of monarchy.

v. Mixed Emotions on Queen Elizabeth II's Legacy

Across various social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, a nuanced narrative emerged following Queen Elizabeth II's passing, with some expressing mixed emotions about her legacy and the future of the monarchy. While many users conveyed respect for her dedication to duty and service, others raised concerns about historical ties to colonialism and ongoing debates about the monarchy's relevance in the modern era.

For instance, on Facebook, a user reflected on Queen Elizabeth II's reign, acknowledging both her stability and tradition while also recognizing criticisms of colonialism and social unrest. Similarly, on Instagram, another user shared admiration for her commitment to duty but questioned the monarchy's future role in society.

These varied perspectives on Queen Elizabeth II's legacy highlight the complex nature of her reign and invite critical discussions about the monarchy's place in contemporary society. Despite the mixed emotions expressed, her passing sparked nuanced reflections and debates across diverse communities worldwide.

8. Discussion of Findings

i. Objective 1: Identifying Dominant Themes and Frames

The content analysis across various social media platforms revealed dominant themes revolving around Queen Elizabeth II's legacy, her impact on respective societies, and her global significance. These themes were evident across diverse user-generated content, shaping the framing of discussions surrounding the Queen's passing.

The theme of legacy emerged prominently, resonating across social media posts regardless of platform. Users celebrated the Queen's lengthy reign, her unwavering commitment to duty, and her positive contributions to society. Whether through heartfelt messages, video tributes, or written reflections, users expressed admiration for the Queen's character and her enduring influence.

Similarly, discussions about the Queen's impact on their respective nations were prevalent across social media platforms. Users from various backgrounds shared sentiments of gratitude for the Queen's role as a unifying figure and a symbol of national identity. These expressions of appreciation highlighted the Queen's embodiment of cultural values and her role in fostering stability and continuity within their societies.

Furthermore, the theme of global significance transcended individual platforms, with users acknowledging the Queen's influence on international affairs and her status as a global icon. From TikTok videos to Instagram stories, users recognized the Queen's diplomatic efforts, her

representation of the Commonwealth, and her broader impact on global culture and diplomacy.

ii.   *Objective 2: Determining Overall Sentiment*

Across various social media platforms, the discourse surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's death predominantly reflected positive sentiments, albeit with a smaller portion expressing mixed or neutral feelings. This suggests a widespread wave of respect, admiration, and gratitude toward the Queen from users worldwide.

Positive sentiments prevailed, with posts across platforms conveying grief, admiration, respect, and gratitude for the Queen's life and service. Users highlighted her profound impact, portraying her as a symbol of stability, unity, and unwavering commitment to duty.

Mixed sentiments were also evident, with users expressing both positive and negative emotions. While acknowledging the Queen's positive contributions, some raised concerns about the monarchy's history and its relevance in contemporary society.

Neutral sentiments appeared as well, with posts providing factual information, sharing official statements, or simply acknowledging the event without expressing personal opinions or emotions.

In summary, discussions on Queen Elizabeth II's death across social media platforms emphasized dominant themes of legacy, national impact, and global significance, reflecting her profound influence worldwide. The prevailing sentiment was largely positive, with a minority expressing mixed or neutral feelings, highlighting the widespread respect, admiration, and gratitude elicited by the Queen's passing.

9. Conclusion

Revisiting the core findings of the study offers an opportunity to delve into the conceptual and theoretical implications, shedding light on how they align with or diverge from previous research. By examining the resonance of the study's findings within existing literature, a better understanding of the evolving landscape of digital communication and its impact on public discourse can be gained.

Drawing upon Habermas's Public Sphere theory, the study expands upon traditional frameworks to encompass the complexities of online engagement, revealing the transformative potential of social media platforms in shaping collective memory and dialogue. While traditional media has long influenced public opinion, the study underscores the unique dynamics of digital public spheres and their role in facilitating diverse and dynamic interactions.

Furthermore, the analysis unveils both continuities and deviations from prior studies, highlighting persistent themes of sentiment and discourse alongside novel features of digital engagement. Through a comprehensive examination of user-generated content across various social media platforms, invaluable insights into the nuanced expressions of mourning, legacy, and global influence surrounding Queen Elizabeth II's passing are gained.

In essence, this study advances understanding of digital public spheres by elucidating the intricate dynamics of contemporary discourse and the ways in which social media platforms shape collective narratives. By situating the study's findings within the broader context of existing literature, the importance of ongoing research in unraveling the multifaceted implications of online communication for society at large is underscored.

10. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the analysis, I recommend the following:

i.   Social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, should prioritize enhancing features that foster constructive conversations and interactions among users.

ii.   Government agencies and organizations have an opportunity to leverage social media as a platform for transparent communication and public engagement.

iii. Users and individuals are encouraged to actively participate in sharing personal stories and

reflections on social media platforms.
iv. Government agencies and organizations should consistently utilize social media platforms as channels for meaningful engagement and transparent communication with the public.
v. Educational institutions and media literacy organizations play a vital role in promoting critical thinking and digital literacy skills among the public.

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