Bringing the individual back in

Private entrepreneurs as actors in international relations – the case of Mark Zuckerberg

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to study individuals in international relations especially private individuals in global politics. Therefore the paper focuses on analyzing the case of Mark Zuckerberg the founder and chief executive of Facebook who affects the international arena. The paper illustrates Zuckerberg's strategies to assert wide influence and power within Facebook's network and through multiple networks.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper follows new theories of studying the human agent in international relations, concentrating on private individuals as new actors in international relations (IR). Thus, depending on "network making power theory" and the "three-dimensional power perspectives; (discursive, structural and instrumental)", the paper illustrates the case of Mark Zuckerberg as a private entrepreneur and his authority in the era of social media dominance with a focus on: Zuckerberg's discursive/ ideational power strategy. Zuckerberg's strategy to work as a switcher through multiple networks. The most obvious one is the Facebook network, through which he can assert global influence.

Findings – Formal state officials are not the only type of individuals who can affect international relations. Technological evolution has empowered private individuals as influential actors in international relations (IR). Interdisciplinary approaches became essential tools in studying new actors affecting IR. There are new patterns of power linked to individuals without formal positions. Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook and global philanthropist, is considered an influential actor in IR depending on programming and switching strategies to assert his power in a networked world.

Originality/value – This paper is able to prove that there are new forms of power which belong to private individuals in a networked world.

Keywords Bottom-up approach, Mark Zuckerberg, Network programmer, Networks switcher

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The realist paradigm in international relations focused on the study of nation-states as the main actors in IR. Initially, the state behavior emanating from a sovereign entity was given priority in understanding international relations. The state level of analysis was the dominant paradigm for a long time. This traditional vision was limited and incomprehensible as it neglected a large part of the crucial interactions in the international arena.

The study of non-state actors in international relations began as one of the most important manifestations of globalization. Nye (1990, p.157) mentioned that the idea of

power diffusion in international relations resulted from newly sprouting issues that changed the influence of the nation state. This has increased the activities of transnational actors.

Initially, the influence of individuals in international relations has emerged in the form of the leadership paradigm as official governmental leaders in the international system. This is through decision-making processes concerned with the nation state's foreign policy. Non-traditional patterns of non-state actors in international relations have emerged as a result of increasing communication between people. The spread of information and communication technology enabled the existence of individuals as actors in IR.

Private entrepreneurs are private individuals who established transnational networks across their nation states in different domains: technological, economic and cultural. Some of them are called social entrepreneurs. They seek to tackle global problems to refine societies in the direction of global change via networking power.

Accordingly, the study seeks to analyze the role of individuals as actors in the international arena, and mainly the transnational effects of private entrepreneurs. It delves deep into the case of Mark Zuckerberg – CEO of Facebook and the founder of the "Chan-Zuckerberg initiative" for philanthropy work. It shows various strategies and tools of power.

Consequently, this paper answers the main research question: how individuals with informal authority have crucial influence on global affairs in a networked world. It manifests the case study of Mark Zuckerberg and his influence.

Consequently, this paper is divided into two main parts:

(1) The first part studies the theoretical framework that deal with individuals in international relations theory. It begins with analyzing the individual, as presented in formal state officials and ruling elites. Afterwards, it investigates new models of individuals affecting the international arena without having any formal authority, whether they are collective or individual.

(2) The second part is concerned with private entrepreneurs in international relations and their authority, examining the case of Mark Zuckerberg, and his private authority as a global actor in a networked world.

The individual as a level of analysis in international relations
The levels of analysis in international relations have emerged in the studies of Waltz, Kaplan and David Singer. Waltz, in his book, *"Man, The State and War"*, cited in Schneider (1960) defined three levels of analysis for understanding the international phenomenon. They are the individual level of analysis, the state level of analysis and the international system level. This division of levels of analysis shows that it is a geographical division. At a macro level, it is represented in the international system. At a micro level, it is represented at the level of nation state and the level of individual (Chatterji, 2013, p. 34).

Scholars of IR have ignored the study of individuals' influence on the international scene and turned to study other analytical tools. However, some trends have started to re-focus on the individual level of analysis. As a result, questions concerning the influence of individuals in international relations have been raised. For example, "What is the behavior of states affected by individuals?", and "Under what circumstances do individuals become more influential?" Indeed, Individuals do not only affect the behavior of their states, but also the behavior of other states, especially when there is a concentration of power which allows leaders to have the upper hand in times of crisis and major changes (Byman and Pollack, 2001, p. 109).

After the cold war and the failure of traditional international relations perspectives to predict its end, international relations theorists recognized the need to focus on the human

side to make war and peace decisions in politics. Those human choices have become a crucial element in the understanding of events elaborated in the post-cold-war era. All international transformations assert that human will and human perception are important forming and interpreting international affairs (Hudson and Vore, 1995, p. 210).

The phenomenon of individuals as actors in the international arena is initially associated with the model of political leadership. The decision-making process in the nation state represents the perception, the mind and the will of those individuals. Accordingly, many theories have evolved like great man theory, personality theory and attitudes theory (Fox, 1959). All these theories deal with the role of leadership at both the domestic and international levels.

The analysis of international relations must focus on people-centered analysis, and the decision makers on national and international levels. This is due to the fact that individuals are the ones who feel threatened or safe. They are the ones who perceive, who are misunderstood, who cooperate or refuse to cooperate, and who determine the needs and interests. Welfare and dignity issues are related to the human element and not to institutional symbols (Kelman, 1970).

Thus, the individual level of analysis helps us to understand the role of the human being in the decision-making process, and how the leader's personality influences the foreign policy decisions depending on their beliefs and experiences. It should be noted that the evolution of international relations does not arise from international institutions, but it arises from changes in people's minds, attitudes, and priorities. Those changes determine the patterns of change in institutions and decisions (Kelman, 1970, p. 3).

Consequently, the individual level of analysis was limited to individuals with official positions and authorities in the state based on their ability to formally make political decisions, and thus, they have a direct impact on the international arena.

Therefore, individuals' roles increased in the international arena, and theoretical trends explored the role of individuals who have no official positions in international relations. This resulted from globalization and the increasing communication between people, regardless of time and space constraints.

Bottom-up approach in international relations

The geographical divisions of the three levels of analysis in international relations resulted in a strict definition of state sovereignty. However, according to the great reformation of globalization, the meaning of definite state borders and state sovereignty were redefined. The globalization new trends have contributed to understanding the bottom-up approach in international relations studies regarding individuals' roles. Accordingly, non-official citizens and individuals new interactions created a "citizen-driven approach". It contributed massively to the understanding of international relations (Crooks *et al.*, 2014, p. 206).

Due to the impact of individuals' roles in the international relations, scholars introduced the concept of "politics for human beings". It redefined politics as a social act to provide humanitarian needs and social realities. Individual needs are prerequisites for human existence as these needs are the motives of human beings across different cultures. If politics are contemplated this way, individuals' needs will become a starting point for both domestic and international policies. Therefore, some scholars argued that it is theoretically wrong to deal with individuals according to the constraints of the nation state or the international system, which can ignore the importance of the human element. Even when attention is paid to individuals, it is only related to formal decision-makers as nation states representatives (Isaac, 1974, p. 264)

Therefore, individuals have become an area of interest in international relations. Many questions have been raised about the non-official individuals. This is due to the existence of formal authority which was the criteria of judging the influence and legitimacy of individuals' role in international affairs.

Global developments have enabled individuals to influence international relations. Thus, the skills of individuals developed resulting in a "skill revolution" at mass levels, which made citizens press their leaders effectively. These developments have empowered the individual to be an important agent in international relations. Citizens are traditionally defined by their affiliation to the nation state. In the context of the globalization era, the ability of the nation state to shape the identities of individuals has been reduced; individuals are considered to be less nationalist and more cosmopolitan. Accordingly, there have been large movements of individuals in the context of "civic responsibility". As a result, the concept of citizenship has been broadened to include the voluntary affiliation to any internal or external activity to satisfy human needs (Rosenau, 1997, pp. 235-277). Consequently, more and more highly functional societies have governed global politics.

There are "collective action" movements of individuals represented in the forms of social movements, activist networks and global public opinion. Bayat, in his book, "Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East" referred to the movements of individuals and how ordinary people have become increasingly influential regardless of formal or institutional frameworks. He refers to "non-movements" as the collective actions of millions outside the institutional frameworks in public squares, streets, homes and communities which he calls the "Art of Existence". These movements consist of workers, women, youth and students. This contributed to the change of the Middle East since the Iranian revolution (Bayat, 2013).

Increasing opportunities, mobility, advanced technology and high levels of education, together with increasing opportunities for training and experiences at the local and international level have enabled more networked international relations. The concept of contentious politics has evolved; it is broader than the study of social movements as it seeks to study the protest movements, strike waves and transnational activist movements. Hence, it is related more to the informal institutional and non-institutional interactions that bind the local and the global together. In the context of globalization, the movement of individuals and groups in different communities and states has increased. Cosmopolitans identified as the groups and individuals who employ local and international opportunities and resources to achieve common goals with international allies (Tarrow, 2005, pp. 24-29).

Consequently, the methodology of bottom up approach based on the individual level of analysis has become an important interpretative approach in international relations studies. The role of individuals in global politics has developed to be more populist, grass-rooted, and not yet a traditional elitist one. Thus, there are individuals at the leadership and elite level, as well as empowered individuals at the informal levels.

The power of networking/communicating and individuals' empowerment in IR
The increasing popularity of the internet and communication tools has empowered new actors. Information technology has led to structural changes in societies and at the international level, because it empowers certain social groups more than others, as it redistributes power, values, beliefs and the principles of societies (Bae, 2003, p. 83). Therefore, new patterns of non-state actors have emerged in the international arena, such as activists who advocate women rights, environmental issues and human rights.

Humanity has become a common framework for social sciences giving recognition to the individual's rights in dealing with state authority. This is shown in several areas,

particularly in the areas of human rights and in the field of environmentalism. The common property of humanity has been confirmed. Thereupon, the role of individuals as actors in the international relations has been elaborated. The idea of a global citizen, especially in the Cosmopolitan school has evolved to set individuals as the basic unit of analysis. They gained universal rights, regardless of states and borders through the international humanitarian community and surpassing the narrow national boundaries (Cabrera, 2008, p. 87).

New actors have gained the potential to challenge the state authority and have influence globally. Non-state actors have entered the sphere of international scene as individuals, groups and civil society organizations. These entities tend to have horizontal networking rather than traditional vertical and hierarchical forms of authority. Studying global civil society and human rights in institutions and networks has created transnational interactions by individuals outside the government positions (Ruggie, 2004).

The monopoly of power at the national level has been reduced to give a chance for new forms of power at the sub-national level and at the transnational level. The civil society became a part of individuals' negotiations and debates realizing that the individuals' community is more important than the community of nations, and that the humanitarian tie is strengthened through political groups rather than states. The perspective of the global community or world society has emerged to consider individuals as non-state actors (Buzzan, 2004, pp. 8-9).

The world has become more networked and the individuals have become aware of networking power. Official or unofficial actors cannot influence the international arena without building communication links with other networks sharing the same values and interests. The goal of networking is to build power capable of influencing an area of interest. The ability of individuals and groups as non-state actors penetrating the state power spatial control has grown, because networking depends on transnational links. Hence, networking creates a state of collective power for individuals to act as transnational actors (Hanafy, 2015, p. 4).

Traditional visions of power studies focus on the possession of both material and moral sources and assume a structural form of power, regardless of context, issues, topics and areas of influence. The network analysis focuses on the dynamic dimension which coincides with the complexity of the international phenomena, so it allows the study of different levels of analysis. Thus, power in a networked society lies in the bonds and relationships that bind one another together. The actor's influence depends on his influence in the network which is indicated by his relationship with other actors in the network and outside (Khafaga, 2015, p. 7).

Through networking and communications, individuals can impart information to create awareness of new global issues and exert pressures and influence in international domains. The impact of these networking strategies lies in the ability of creating attention, changing agendas, influencing institutional processes and changing the policies of the target, which advocate accountability policies (Keck and Sikkink, 1999, p. 29).

The social power of networks arises from the ability to create meaning in the minds of individuals through communication processes. The individuals have interest in building networks and communication links. Thus, they create a network impact, through which individuals seek to achieve their goals and activities in the international arena (Kahler, 2009, p. 26).

Power in the technological communication era is multidimensional; therefore, to exert influence and power over an actor, it depends on the ability to form networks and the ability to set the objectives of the networks in accordance with the actors' values and the ability to

communicate with other networks, and to create common rules of understanding and cooperation based on shared values. Accordingly, actors in the network can be:

- A "programmer": the one who is able to program a network, develop its objectives and reprogram it to deal with surrounding environment. This process differs from one network to another.

- A "switcher": who is responsible for networking within the network and in relationships with other networks to enhance the network's power, (Castell, 2011, pp. 776-77) especially networking between media, political, cultural and economic networks.

Networking power and communication strategies lead to increasing individuals' roles in international relations, whether they are collectively or individually. Hence, new patterns of individuals as actors in the international arena have evolved. When it comes to political actions of individuals in the international arena in a globalized world, we can mention leaders as formal state representatives, citizens and entrepreneurs with their own private agendas (Partzsch, 2011, p. 6).

Private individuals in international relations
Influential private individuals in IR have emerged with different spheres of influence and tools of power in the political sphere. A new type in the list of non-state actors is represented in individuals outside the governmental positions who possess the skills and resources to have an international impact. They have financial, economic or informational capacity to influence transnational events within their own states and in the regional or international sphere.

Influential private individuals and ideas inventors have emerged either by relying on wealth or fame. There are models of businessmen, owners of technology and communication networks, owners of media companies, armed groups leaders, international mafia leaders, private entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs, and internet hackers. All these individuals have their impact on a global level away from the formal state authority. Some of them may clash with nation state officials and others may enter a complementary relationship with state officials.

Some of the world's rich people are working to solve global problems with social projects in international relations. Their presence is linked to the emergence of private authority in global governance. These individuals work in the areas of poverty, environment, and education. They have become internationally influential creating social and political changes (Partzsch and Fuchs, 2012).

Among these individuals who have a global impact are:

- *George Soros*, who is a global businessman and the owner of the Open Society Foundation that works worldwide in nearly 60 countries around the world. It represents a transnational network operating mainly in central and eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union. He adopts a wide range of initiatives to advocate human rights, education, independent media, and public health (Stone, 2010, pp. 267-268).

- *Bill Gates*, who is the owner of the Microsoft Corporation. It is an international company operating in 102 countries. His fortune is estimated around 79.2 billion. Bill Gates plays a major role in charitable works worldwide through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It supports programs in Islamic countries amounting to $7bn, and its institutions work in education and health to eliminate diseases. The

Bill Gates institutions have disbursed nearly \$472m in higher education since 2006 (Strauss, 2013).

- *Fethullah Gulen*, considered internationally as one of the most influential Islamic reformers, advocates for education, consolidation of peace and civilizational dialogue. Many individuals have been affected by his speeches and efforts in the educational field in both Turkey and abroad. His efforts have already contributed to peace-building in many areas of conflict, including the Balkans, Iraq, Northern Ireland and the Philippines (Mohaned, 2007).

Private individuals are capable of making a significant impact due to several reasons. First, those individuals are less bound by the rules of the political game, unlike individuals in official positions, who are restricted by such rules. Second, they are less accountable to the public; they are working far away from the bureaucracy, which makes their movements easier than the movements of many leaders in governmental positions. Third, they possess vast resources and are connected to transnational networks that enable them to successfully champion the values they believe in.

The technological revolution and the advent of cyberspace have helped technology entrepreneurs' role at international levels. They can have local and international influence regarding their states, and they have a clear role in lobbying governments for internet policies. They have a large amount of resources and powerful tools. Therefore, they can have direct confrontations with nation states authorities.

Scholars often focus on structures and not human agents in the study of network power, but some scholars focus on the role of the human agent through "the concept of the protocol". The protocol, here, is defined as the scientific and technological rules and standards governing relationships within the network. It is considered as an explanation of how human control exists. Consequently, they can have the power to connect or disconnect in the networks. This is what can be called "network sovereignty", as these networks operate based on the data transmitter settings and rules (Stumpel, 2010, pp. 9-13).

Network making power strategy is a crucial tool of power which means the ability to control a network. This control appeared in two strategies, the first one is to constitute a certain network and to have the ability to program and reprogram network goals and mechanism. The second one is to have the ability to work as a switcher to connect with other networks to set common goals (Arsenault and Castell, 2008, p. 489). Therefore, the crucial elements of power in the network society are the ability to set the rules, program a network and switch between different networks.

Arsenault and Castell (2008) tested this hypothesis through the case of Rupert Murdoch, CEO of News Corp as a media giant. They discovered that Murdoch's strategies and business model penetrate new markets and leverage public and political elites' opinions to achieve more targets by controlling multiple connecting points through switching actions. Thus, they assumed that the switcher power is crucial in a networked world.

Depending on the network making power strategies, Moran (2018) investigated the case of Mark Zuckerberg's network switching power. She assumed that Zuckerberg, as a media mogul, gains power through interconnections across multiple networks. Moran added two updates to the results achieved by Arsenault and Castells. First, she highlighted that the power of the switch is a double edged sword as it creates opportunities, and weakens the power of seekers. The second result of Moran's study is that technological media networks, especially social media ones differ from others. Therefore, to asset power, requires "mega-switchers.

From a different theoretical framework, Partzsch and Fuchs (2012) investigated the cases of Bill Gates and Michael Otto's power model, as individual entrepreneurs and transnational philanthropists, who influence globally through their financial contributions. The power model of those individuals has three dimensions. The first is the instrumental dimension, which means the ability of those individuals to influence political decision makers through pressure, alliance, or cooperation through lobbying activities. The second is the material structural dimension, which means the ability of individuals to constitute private institutions and global networks that have the ability to enforce rules and standards. The third is the discursive/ideational dimension, which focuses on the strength of values and beliefs adopted by these individuals, and embraced by the institutions that have chosen to exert political pressure. They achieve values globally and locally in context through speeches seeking global change. It means that those private actors do not pursue interests, but they create them. Hence, this framework highlights the discursive and ideational power besides the instrumental and material power of private individuals in international relations.

This paper seeks to examine the case of Zuckerberg by bringing together network making power theory and the three-dimensional power perspectives. Network making power theory helps in understanding the structural and instrumental power dimensions of private individuals. Thus, Castell (2011, p. 776) mentioned that the programmer role is decisive. Once the network is programmed, it can work efficiently to achieve its goals.

Hence, depending on the network making power strategies of programming and switching, the main power strategies clarifies well Zuckerberg's case. Programmers control network goals and rules, as well as contact points. Network programmers have the ability to determine the content of what the public can see and the search engines results. They are also capable of producing, distributing and controlling the content. Thus, this power can be used for political, commercial or personal purposes (Moore, 2016, p. 29).

Castell (2011, pp. 781-82) mentioned that:

> Network-making power is the capacity to set up and program a network and that the owners and controller of media networks are the ones who have the financial, legal, institutional, and technological means to organize and operate mass communication networks to accomplish the goals they assign to the network.

Accordingly, Mark Zuckerberg can reprogram Facebook goals and resources to assert his authority vertically within Facebook's network. Besides this, he can be networks switcher by asserting his authority horizontally as a switcher between the Facebook network and other technological and non-technological networks. Consequently, Mark Zuckerberg's power and authority model is programming and reprogramming the ethics and objectives of the Facebook network and developing relationships across different networks as well.

Although Moran (2018) applied network making power strategies to illustrate Zuckerberg's case as an influential actor, she does not pay attention to the discursive and ideational power dimension. It is a crucial tool of analysis as social networks are governed and ruled by their programmers' speeches that determine what can be done and what cannot. These speeches do affect people by shaping their minds.

Castell (2016, pp. 12-13) mentioned that the ability to program a certain network depends mainly on enhancing effective discourse and persuasion methods in favor of the programmer's goals and plans. Therefore, this paper aims to add the discursive and ideational power of Zuckerberg's case, as it illustrates his strategy as a programmer of Facebook's network and other technological and philanthropist networks. It is reflected in his discourse which shapes values and identities across multiple networks. This frames Zuckerberg's public image as a global actor.

Accordingly, this paper discusses strategies of Mark Zuckerberg to assert power and authority represented in three main mechanisms. The first one is the ability to program the Facebook network goals and vision through his declared speeches aiming at building a global community of people. It can have a transnational effect depending on Zuckerberg's vision and tools represented by the discursive power of Zuckerberg. The second one is to assert his vertical authority within the hierarchal and financial administration of Facebook depending on the founder-led culture that represents his structural power. The third one is to assert horizontal authority by connecting Facebook with other technological and non-technological networks through which he can gain more power and authority. Hence, he supports his instrumental power by lobbying decision makers depending on the power of the switcher.

Mark Zuckerberge's discursive/ideational power strategy

Mark Zuckerberg was Time's 2010 "Person of the Year". The reason behind this was that Zuckerberg was able to connect more than half a billion people and was able to redraw their social relations creating a new system for exchanging information. Zuckerberg could change the way we live. It is also reported that Zuckerberg is able to connect 12 per cent of humanity in one network together, so that he is able to create a social entity nearly twice the size of the United States. If Facebook was a country, it would be the third largest country, just after China and India (Grossman, 2010).

The discursive approach of power is considered one of the most important of Zuckerberg's strategies to gain and assert power. Thus, Zuckerberg adopts a discursive strategy worthy of mention and analysis, as he offers important political, cultural, and social insights. Scholars considered it as an appropriate approach for better understanding of Facebook network strategy and policy towards its users and its surrounding environment. Thus, understanding Zuckerberg's own language is performative and functional, as it is framing debates surrounding social networking (Zimmer and Hoffmann, 2014). Studying Zuckerberg's discourse sparks questions and concerns about common online social life complexities as Zuckerberg has power and influence in a wide range of public talks and conversations. This shapes social networking platforms main issues like privacy, online identity and people to people online relations rules.

Zuckerberg is considered a prominent figurehead of the most reachable social network. As a CEO of Facebook, Zuckerberg has the power of indicating Facebook's self-definitions. The definition of Facebook as an entity and its mission evolved in Zuckerberg's discourse as Facebook expanded. Accordingly, Hoffmann *et al.* (2018, pp. 204-206) mentioned that Facebook's self-definition has evolved via three phases in Zuckerberg's discourse:

- "A useful directory for quickly finding information about people."
- "A social network connecting and enabling the sharing of information between people."
- "A critical social infrastructure for the Web and the world."

At the beginning- as the founder and the CEO of Facebook- Zuckerberg declared that Facebook was originally built to "make the world more open and connected" and that Facebook was created to give people the ability to participate. Zuckerberg believes that Facebook is a not-for-profit company as it aims to achieve an important social mission. This mission is accomplished through "giving more people a voice". According to Zuckerberg's vision, Facebook aims to:

- *Strengthen people to people relations*: Zuckerberg believes that personal relationships are the basic unit of society, so Facebook builds the tools that facilitate more connections. He declared that, "*We have already helped more than 800 million people map out more than 100 billion connections so far, and our goal is to help this rewiring accelerate.*"

- *Improving people's connections to products, businesses and economy*: in an open and connected world, it is easy to communicate with high quality products: therefore, Zuckerberg has mentioned that, *"More than four million businesses have Pages on Facebook that they use to have a dialogue with their customers. We expect this trend to grow as well."*

- *Changing people's relations with their governments*: communication increases accountability and transparency, and leads to more empowerment of people and greater solutions to problems. Thus, governments will respond to the demands directly formulated by people and there is no need for political mediators. (The Telegraph, 2012).

Mark assumes that there is great need and opportunity for everyone in the world to get in touch and connect. Zuckerberg gives global community and global citizenship priorities on his agenda, as he referred to in his speech at Harvard University on May 25, 2017:

What defines us [. . .] It is not nationality, religion or ethnicity, but the fact that we are global citizens [. . .] Progress now requires convergence, not just as nations, but as a global community. This is the struggle of our time. (The Harvard Gazette, 2017).

Mark Zuckerberg has defined the characteristics of the desired global community as the goal of the Facebook entity. Zuckerberg gave a detailed speech in February 2017, on his personal Facebook page entitled "Building the global community". He assumes that our world is facing global problems; therefore, humanity must unite, not only as states, but also as a global community. He said:

The most important thing we can do in Facebook is to develop social infrastructure to give people the ability to build a global community that works for all of us.

According to Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook as an institution can build important global community characterized as:

- *Supportive community*: Mark Zuckerberg's speech shows that the Facebook community includes a variety and layers of relations. It begins with personal relationships, and then institutional relationships. Zuckerberg believes in the importance of online communities to enhance physical communities. Consequently, Zuckerberg argued that "*there is a real opportunity to connect more groups that will be meaningful to social infrastructure in our lives*". As a result, Zuckerberg believes in "*a healthy society that needs these communities to support our personal, emotional and spiritual needs*".

- *Safe community*: Zuckerberg mentioned that Facebook helps individuals to be safe by enhancing a community that "*prevents harm, helps during crises and rebuilds afterwards in a world where anyone across the world can affect us*". According to Zuckerberg, Facebook gives "*a real opportunity to build global safety infrastructure*", where Facebook, as noted by Zuckerberg, can help prevent damage, help during crisis, or to rebuild after the crisis. There is a safety check feature to verify *"friends who might be affected by an attack or a natural disaster"*. Zuckerberg said that The

'Safety Check' feature has been activated 500 times in two years. Zuckerberg announced also that during an earthquake in Nepal, Facebook community collected 15 million dollars to help people recover and rebuild, which according to Mark is the largest collective relief effort in history.

- *An informed community*: Zuckerberg believes that Facebook is a historical and civilized force, as it can enable everyone to have a voice. It supports what he called public discourse, which advocates the possibility of creating the greatest positive impact on the world by building a common understanding worldwide.

- *A civically engaged community*: Zuckerberg believes that collective values are reflected in societies through participation in the civil process. Therefore, he believes that there are two distinct types of social infrastructure that must be built. The first is the infrastructure that encourages participation in existing political processes, such as voting, and expressing opinion. This happens through the great interactions provided by the Facebook community ensuring that the political process reflects societal values. The second one is to establish a new process for citizens around the world to participate in collective decision-making. As our world is more connected than ever, and individuals face global problems that stretch across national borders, Zuckerberg sees that Facebook, as the world's largest community, can provide a great opportunity globally to encourage civic engagement. Zuckerberg gave an example of the 2016 US presidential election where Facebook helped more than two million people to register and vote. Zuckerberg sees this as one of the largest voting turnout efforts in history, and is greater than the combined efforts of the two major parties in the USA.

- *An inclusive community*: that reflects common human values from local to global levels. Zuckerberg believes that building an inclusive global community requires the establishment of a new process for citizens around the world to participate in community governance. Therefore, Zuckerberg declared that Facebook is not just a technological or media entity, it is a community of people. This means that we need community standards that reflect our collective values for what should or should not be allowed. (Zuckerberg, 2012) Therefore, Zuckerberg represents a crucial node in the Facebook network through his position. He is able to create his own vision for transnational networked community through Facebook. He assumes that Facebook network can strengthen a connected global community of people both online and offline.

Zuckerberg has the ability to formulate public opinion on a wide range of common concerns and issues. Zuckerberg's discourse highlights the value of openness and transparency as the main end of Facebook, which leads to a more open and connected world. Nevertheless, McGeachy (2019, pp. 21-31) mentioned that Zuckerberg's public discourse is ambivalent as follows:

- Zuckerberg's description of Facebook relations with its user is unstable, changeable and contradicted somehow. There are sometimes democratic relations calling for democratic negotiations and civic participations. Those relations are top-down at other times.

- Although Zuckerberg refers to Facebook as a global community of people that enhanced global citizens' approach, Zuckerberg's top-down approach of governance enhances nationhood pattern.

- In spite of calling for democratic and civic participation through the Facebook community, Zuckerberg considers himself and the Facebook executive body as social leaders, innovators, and architects through codifying and reinforcing his values and beliefs system. He formed the Facebook platform architecture with himself occupying the prominent figurehead position.

Accordingly, Zuckerberg's rhetorical strategy plays a major role in expanding his power and authority through his ability to define concepts, draw relationships and set governing rules within the Facebook network and its relationship with users and the surrounding environment.

Asserting vertical authority within the Facebook network
The Facebook Company had revenues of $41bn in 2017 and more than 2 billion users per month. The first IPO in 2012 was the largest ever subscription to a technology network at the time. The majority of Zuckerberg's wealth is derived from a 13 per cent stake on Facebook (Bloomberg Billionaires Index, 2019).

Material structural approach of power refers to the ability of global institutions and transnational networks to set and enforce rules and standards that might replace those holding the formal decision making power. Actors controlling financial and technological networks and resources have acquired a rule-setting power (Partzsch and Fuchs, 2012, p. 12). Consequently, individuals, who are the founders of social networks, play a significant role controlling the policies of these platforms. Mark Zuckerberg comes on the top of the list. The Facebook Company is considered one of the most important technology giants. Hence, Moore (April 2016) investigated technology giants' civic power which is:

- *The power to command attention*: Technology giants have a significant impact on the social and political context as they have the ability to form the virtual domain. This means increasing their ability to attract public attention to shape priorities by controlling access to technology networks' content and services, especially in democratic societies. They have become alternative channels of information and they have a great role in protecting the security of citizens globally. Therefore, technology entrepreneurs might act as gatekeepers, but they are non-neutral ones.

- *The power to communicate news and information*: Technology giants have the power of inclusion and exclusion through their worldwide networks. In 2015, about nine news organizations have been allowed to broadcast on Facebook. Consequently, the Facebook administration has the right to choose the quality of the news and the content allowed to be broadcasted; additionally, their search engines have the ability to exclude certain results. Mark Zuckerberg declared that Facebook aims to build the perfect personalized newspaper for every person in the world.

- *The power to enable collective actions*: Technology giants have the ability to gather people for certain collective actions through empowering them to achieve rapid political and social changes. At the same time, those entrepreneurs can use their exclusion power to put obstacles in the way of certain collective actions, as they have the ability to control their networks' access. Consequently, they have the power to give people a voice and to influence peoples' voting.

- *The power to call to account*: Mark Zuckerberg believes that enabling people to participate and giving them voice via Facebook leads to a real transparent dialogue discussing governments' credibility. This results in extensive accountability

policies and tools worldwide. Consequently, through the Facebook community, people are empowered to cast the first stone at public authorities.

In the cases of social media networks, their founders play the most crucial role and completely control their networks as Freedman (2015, p. 4) mentioned that,

> In the cases of social media proprietorship may be seen as a means of maintaining a focus on innovation and retaining the 'vision' of the founder in order to extract maximum profits in a growing industry.

Accordingly, Mark Zuckerberg's position as the founder and chief executive officer of Facebook enables him to play a major role in the network society. He is the most important node in the network; he can connect vertically and horizontally with other relevant actors and networks.

Mark Zuckerberg's authority within Facebook can be understood according to the founder-led culture. It means that being the owner of the idea and the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg has many authorities within Facebook as a mechanism to assert and support his power inside Facebook and across other networks. Thus, Moran (2018, pp. 5-6) investigated Zuckerberg's tools to assert his vertical authority as follows:

- *On the financial side*: Zuckerberg has restructured the Facebook institution according to "Action plans 2016" that targeted creating "class C shares". It represents a "non- voting share class", so Zuckerberg can control the decision-making process and can even sell off large amounts of his stock in Facebook.
- *On the technological side*: Zuckerberg has expanded his effect technologically in two ways; one of them is to get new technological tools to expand Facebook's reachable zone by buying augmented reality (AR) and automatic speech recognition (ASR) technologies. The second one is to enhance Facebook's terms of profile by buying "WhatsApp", which is the famous mobile messaging service.
- *On the administrational side*: Moran has assumed that Facebook is a worldwide network with geographical divisions and hierarchical division. It is represented by board of directors and function-based teams to give the impression of decentralization, but in fact it is more like a top-down decision-making power.

Consequently, Zuckerberg has asserted his authority within Facebook by programming and reprogramming Facebook goals and tools according to global developments. Additionally, he controls its hierarchical, technological and financial sides. Zuckerberg asserts his rule to set power through vertical control over the Facebook network, which enhances his material structural power dimension.

Switching power: asserting horizontal authority across multiple networks
The success of Facebook and its spread make it a crucial node in global technology networks. It means that Mark Zuckerberg has broad authority to contribute widely in programming the objectives, tools, and values that govern the wider technology networks. Hence, Zuckerberg is pursuing a horizontal expansion through the acquisition of technology competitors. Thus, besides getting WhatsApp services, Zuckerberg, in 2010, got key patents and intellectual property from Friendster, Instagram photo sharing application, "Beluga", a group messaging tool, and "Karma", a social gifting platform. (Moran, 2018, p. 7).

Mark Zuckerberg has announced in December 2015 that he would plan to donate about 99 per cent of his shares for charity works; thus, he launched in cooperation with his wife Priscilla Chan "Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative", which announced on its official website that

"Our mission is to find new ways to leverage technology, community-driven solutions, and collaboration to accelerate progress in Science, Education, and within our Justice and Opportunity work" (Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, 2019).

Zuckerberg became an important actor in philanthropy. In 2016, his foundation donated about $3bn in charitable grants to fund medical projects to cure disease. Besides that, he donated $600m over 10 years to create a new medical research institution in the San Francisco area. This charitable work also supports a range of reform projects in immigration and criminal justice areas (Benner, 2016). Zuckerberg's philanthropy network enables him to lobby law-makers and to engage in political networks to advocate his political agenda. Zuckerberg's efforts in charitable works give him a lot of advantages as he has complete control over his organizations. Moreover, he gained a greater ability to switch between political and economic networks with less restrictions and transparency requirements (Reiser, 2017, p. 926).

Data are big power source referred to as "data power", and is a new way of figuring out how the public thinks, and what it is saying. It is used by companies and governments through data collection and mining. Therefore, Facebook is not just a tool of communication in the case of revolutions and political changes (Kennedy and Moss, 2015). Zuckerberg is involved in the international political scene, as an important actor, who can influence public opinion and shape the political trends. He has available information and data which can shape public opinion.

Facebook tracks the political interactions of its users in the run-up to elections. It can have a profound effect on the election results. As an obvious example, "Cambridge – Analytica" showed the Facebook data scandal in early 2018. It revealed that the British company was charged for analyzing Facebook users' personal data without the users' permission for political reasons and to interfere in the US presidential election in 2016. It worked in favor of President Donald Trump's campaign and in the referendum of Brexit. Mark Zuckerberg has declared in Congress that it was his responsibility, stating that:

> I started Facebook, I run it, and I'm responsible for what happens there. It's not enough to just connect people, we've got to make sure those connections are positive. It's not enough to just give people a voice; we've got to make sure people aren't using it to harm others or to spread misinformation (Spross, 2018).

Zuckerberg is a crucial switcher between many networks. His increasing contributions in terms of material and ideational influence have been widely recognized. Working as a switcher across multiple networks has given Zuckerberg instrumental power to influence decision-makers via lobbying. In Zuckerberg's lobbying activities in 2013, he led a campaign with other leaders in the technology and business communities to command attention against immigration law in the US. As a result, FWD.us, as a political organization, was established. It announced on its website that, "Our goal is to influence policymakers and those around them to make the policy changes that create opportunity and unlock America's potential". (FWD.us, 2019). Hence, he has become a significant global player; as he can tackle global concern issues and can lobby for a certain interest.

Conclusion

This paper is mainly interested in investigating the human agent effect in international relations, which corresponds to the extreme interest in the nation state as the unitary actor in IR. Thus, dealing with human will and beliefs demands a broader lens than the systematic theory of IR. It advocates interdisciplinary approaches in international relations, which appeared as an explanatory need to study new actors in the international arena.

As a result of the communication revolution, private individuals and mainly private entrepreneurs with transnational activities become skilled role-takers in international arena. They are able to conduct a large part of international affairs. Private individuals' influence in global affairs is related to their private authority. They have the power to influence decision-makers and masses. Through vast resources and transnational activities, individual entrepreneurs have become the new actors having a global impact in the international arena.

Investigating the human agent role in network societies depends on the ability of programming tools and strategies. Additionally, it can switch between many networks to assert power and influence. Hence, Mark Zuckerberg's authority has extended across many networks. The most obvious one is the Facebook network, through which he can assert global influence. He can set standards and rules that can be adopted by relevant actors in other social networks. Mark Zuckerberg's impact in a globalized and networked world is a simple fact. His power strategies depend on material, as well as ideational tools; he mixes discursive power strategy with structural and instrumental power tools.

Accordingly, this paper has argued that material and ideational power are relevant to network making power theory. The discursive power approach is an essential dimension in enhancing strategies and techniques of power within the network society and beyond. Thus, the ability of being a programmer of a certain network, or a switcher through many networks depends on a coherent performative and functional discursive strategy, which is relevant to structural and material power dimensions.

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