

The Impact and Role of Social Media Networks on Arab Spring: Egyptian Revolution Case Study.

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 2. Analyze literature and other sources and make literature review focused on Impact and Role of Social Media Networks on Arab Spring define basic concepts, objectives and methods.
 3. Characterize the background and aim of thesis and formulate hypotheses in relation to a given topic.
 4. Describe the research methodology.
 5. Analyze Social Media Networks techniques before and after Arab Spring.
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Abstract:

While in most countries, Social Media Networks (SMN) are used for leisure and business, there are places where those platforms have become tools for mass mobilization and protests organization. Countries throughout the Arab world varied in their usage of social media networks (SMN), but learned from watching others on how to use it effectively to engage the outside world and to broadcast the human rights abuses committed by their respective regimes. Social unrest began in Tunisia in December 2010 and quickly spread to countries across the Middle East and North Africa, most noticeably in Egypt, Tunis and Syria. In several of these countries, protests evolved into revolutions resulting in the overthrow of autocratic governments. These events, now known as the Arab Spring, have significantly changed MENA region, and in particular in Egypt as its resulted into the restructuring of the Egyptian regime

The aim of this study is carried out based on two research themes: studying the impact and role of social media networks (SMN) in the Egyptian “Revolution” of 2011 according to activists and experts, and studying the role of social media sites from the viewpoint of Al-Jazeera and CNN news channels.

For this aim, in the study, the researcher will use both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. The qualitative research data will consist of ten in-depth interviews with Egyptian activists and experts who were actively participating in the Egyptian Uprising, and studying briefly cases studies from other Arab Spring countries such as Tunisia, Jordan, Syria and Morocco. The quantitative research data was gathered with the aid of content analysis of news articles, from the respective news websites. Content analysis of news articles demonstrated that CNN news website gave more importance to the role of social media tools in Egyptian Uprising especially to Facebook. The articles in CNN highlighted the role of social media in a positive tone. Al-Jazeera’s articles revealed a more neutral tone when talking about social media sites, when they did mention the importance of the social media sites it was mostly the blogs by Egyptian activists. Egyptian activists and experts interviews support that social networking sites have a very important role in the Egyptian revolution to motivating the protesters and organising demonstrations, but there are many reasons that prompted the Egyptians to protest such as poverty and injustice.

Key words: Arab Spring, Egypt Revolution, Uprising, Facebook, Social Media Networks

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the print version of my Master's thesis The Impact and Role of Social Media Networks on Arab Spring: Egyptian Revolution Case Study, and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

AHMED FIHAILI

In Zlín, 12th April, 2013

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I dedicate this thesis to... All martyrs of Arab Spring Uprisings.

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"They may crush the flowers, but they can't stop the Spring."

Alexander Dubcek, Prague Spring 1968

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Introduction

“We use Facebook to schedule protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world”

Unknown activist from Cairo

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has always been a volatile region, with multiple conflicts and disturbances just in the last ten years. The Arab world has once again been shaken to its core by a series of revolutions and popular uprisings beginning in December 2010. This time, however, there is a “new” component to these movements: social media networks (SMN). Social media, of course, has been around for quite a while now, but the marriage of political activism and social media in the MENA region reached a crescendo when protests erupted and activists on the ground used Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, to send real-time updates to the rest of the world. The role that social media has played, though, has been debated by academics, journalists, and others. Although this is an ongoing situation, one can at least postulate that social media, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, have provided an important tool and outlet for social and political activism in the MENA region.

This study springs out from the observation that the protests in MENA have been labeled both the Facebook and Twitter revolution by western media. The aim of this thesis is to carry out research to understand the exact role of social media networks in the protest movement. The link to the previous paragraphs is the idea that ‘social media’ was seen to be one of the main facilitators of the Egyptian Revolution of 2011.

This can be verified by the fact that Egyptian Uprising of 2011 has been called several names, but the one that resonates with the researcher the most is the name: “Facebook Revolution”. The indication of this can be seen if one is to type the word “Facebook Revolution” in Google search, and see that there are 819,000,000 results for this title and keep rising. This title applies to the Middle East, particularly to Egyptian, Syrian, Libyan and Tunisian Uprisings.

The article from the Guardian newspaper further sheds light on the Facebook Revolution. It states that the net and social networking have become mainstream, even in societies that seem relatively underdeveloped social networking is gaining prominence. The article further states that, “Nearly a third of the world now has an internet connection. Facebook is the third biggest “country” on Earth, in terms of population, and if things keep going as they are, it will soon have more users than India has people.”

The following statement by Wael Ghonim, an Egyptian marketing manager for Google and an active protestor during the Egyptian demonstrations, was telecasted on western mainstream media channels repeatedly for days last February:

“I want to meet Mark Zuckerberg one day and thank him ... I'm talking on behalf of Egypt. ... This revolution started online. This revolution started on Facebook. This revolution started ... in June 2010 when hundreds of thousands of Egyptians started collaborating content. We would post a video on Facebook that would be shared by 60,000 people on their walls within a few hours. I've always said that if you want to liberate a society just give them the Internet.”

The main objective of this research is to identify the important role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution. Therefore, this thesis will aim to demonstrate how the characteristics of social networking can be harnessed to further the goals of collective political actions, while also bearing in mind the significance of cultural and historical context. By examining both primary and secondary sources, it will highlight the inherently dialectical nature of the Internet, aiming to avoid a technologically deterministic perspective that characterizes the Internet as a force strictly for either liberation or oppression. Rather, the thesis argues that though there were underlying socio-economic issues and historical factors that played a crucial role in fuelling the revolutions of early 2011, they cannot be fully understood or appreciated without reference to the unprecedented role of social networking in both facilitating the actual events of the uprisings and bringing them to international attention at an unparalleled degree, literally in “real time.” Though it is undeniably correct in saying that revolutions will occur regardless of the existence of the Internet or technology, the connection between technology and society is central to this discussion; “technology is society, and society cannot be understood or represented without its technological tools.

Countries throughout the Arab world varied in their usage of social media networks (SMN), but learned from watching others on how to use it effectively to engage the outside world and to broadcast the human rights abuses committed by their respective regimes. Some political pundits, academics and journalists have embraced social media networks (SMN) as an undeniable force for good, claiming that, “democracy is just a tweet away,” or as the oft-quoted Egyptian Google executive Wael Ghonim famously said, “If you want to liberate a society, just give them the Internet.” The Internet has been heralded as an effective weapon of the weak and disenfranchised against their authoritarian leaders, resulting in what New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof labeled the “quintessential 21st-century conflict,” in which “on one side are government thugs firing bullets...[and] on the other side are young protesters firing ‘tweets’.”

Facebook had already been playing a role in the activists’ movement in Egypt since summer of 2010. A young man named Khaled Said had been brutally beaten to death by two police officers after he had posted video online showing officers using drugs, and days later pictures of his brutally beaten body surfaced online, accompanied by a Facebook group (Preston, 2011). The police are rarely ever held responsible for their actions, and it would have been the same in this case, were it not for someone who took a picture and uploaded it. The Facebook and YouTube sites brought the pictures into peoples’ homes, as well as to foreign media, sparking international outrage. Seven months later, the same page was used by creators to help organize and mobilize people for a “Day of Rage”, a turning point for the protestors in Egypt (Piachaud, 2011).

YouTube has also been an essential part of the online campaign used by the activists to post videos of their respective police forces beating, torturing, and killing dissidents. If one proceeds to YouTube.com and types in “Egypt Uprising”, there are **68,200** results! Uploading videos has also become an important outlet for citizen journalism, especially in places where foreign journalists are not allowed to enter, and the media within the state is state-run, which means that it is completely controlled by the government and any dissent is not tolerated.

An example of this would be in Syria, where foreign journalists are barred from entering the country. People in Syria are finding innovative ways to practice political voyeurism, often putting their lives in great danger by doing so. Saeb is one such activist, located in Syria, who reports that several of his colleagues have recently gone missing while filming military operations in a nearby town (Stack, 2011). Saeb, and the activists working with

him, have left their homes and families behind in order to pursue their goals of freedom and democracy. In addition to a strong commitment, technical expertise is also required because of the rolling Internet blackouts, as well as no data service on smart phones in Syria, after it was cut by Syriatel, a telecomm company owned by embattled President Bashar al-Assad's cousin) (Stack, 2011).

Twitter is another form of social media that has been capitalized on by the protestors. It has allowed the people to follow each other, with protest organizers being able to mobilize the people following them in real-time. They have also been able to follow foreign media contacts, who have been essential in bringing stories of the protestors to the forefront of mainstream international media. CNN's Amber Lyon discusses the role of social media in a recent interview with Mediaite. Lyon was recently in the Middle East, where she made many contacts, and discusses how active the young protestors are on social media websites (Joyella & Lyon, 2011). A critical idea taken from this is that they activists still keep in touch with her, and continue to have correspondence. This is key for the activists, to keep in touch with the contacts that they have made. Websites such as Twitter make that possible without the need for more formal communication, such as e-mail. It allows the people to connect on a more social level, and in real-time, which help them stay relevant.

1.1 The Arab uprising

The first usage of "Spring" to define an uprising by people towards political progressivism and advancement were "springtime of the peoples" and "spring of nations" used by many as a portmanteau term for the revolutions of 1848 in Europe.

Then, the term "Prague Spring" was used to refer to the period between January 5th to August 21st of 1968, a period of relative political liberalisation in Czechoslovakia, before the Soviets invaded the country and put an end to the reforms, and replaced reformist leader Alexander Dubcek with conservative Gustav Husak.

In December 2010, a Tunisian fruit vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, set himself and the Arab countries on "fire" in protest of what he considered unfair treatment from his government. And so began the Arab Spring, a movement that has swept the Middle East and captured the world's attention. The Arab region witnessed most Electronic Revolutions that were mobilized through the use of social networking websites such websites helped people

in having collective actions and overcame their fears and encouraged enough to go to streets and speak out.

Majority of these digital revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Jordan and Syria are the result of oppression and authoritarianism, and the system of persecution that the Arab peoples are still living in the face in their daily lives. These people suffer from high unemployment rate in the other, corruption, high food prices, and the most human rights violations, such as freedom of expression. So find those people through social media, and means to express their political views, and found not share their views by almost everyone, which in turn, encouraged ordinary people as well as political activists to speak and express their opinions, beliefs and ideas freely (Buisier, 2011).

1.2 The Egyptian Revolution of 2011

”الشعب يريد إسقاط النظام” = *The people want to bring down the regime*"
 "إرحل يعني إمشي يا إلهي مابتأفهيهمشي" = *Leave (in Classical Arabic) means leave (in Egyptian Arabic) in case you don't understand me*"

Beginning in December 2010, unprecedented mass demonstrations against poverty, corruption, and political repression broke out in several Arab countries, challenging the authority of some of the most entrenched regimes in the Middle East and North Africa. The second revolution in Arab Spring, the Egyptian revolution officially started in social media among activists centered around plans for a nationwide protest on 25 January 2011.

On 25 January 2011, known as the "Day of Anger" (Arabic: يوم الغضب yawm al-ḡaḍab, or the "Day of Revolt", protests took place in different cities across Egypt, including Cairo, Alexandria, Suez and Ismailia. The day was selected by many opposition groups such as the 6 April Youth Movement, We Are All Khaled Said Movement, National Association for Change, 25 January Movement and Kefaya to coincide with National Police Day. The purpose was to protest against abuses by the police in front of the Ministry of Interior. These demands expanded to include the resignation of the Minister of Interior, the restoration of a fair minimum wage, the end of Egyptian emergency law, and term limits for the president.

On January 28, 2011 the protestors burned down most of the police headquarters. Ministries and government offices had been closed down. People had taken over the streets of Cairo. According to Bamyeh (2011) "The Revolution in Egypt will be the formative event

in the lives of the millions of youth who spearheaded it in Egypt, and perhaps also the many more millions of youth who followed it throughout the Arab world.”

Although the youth were the driving force in the beginning of the Uprising the movement quickly became national as people from all age groups, social classes, men and women, Muslims and Christians, urban and peasants- all sectors of society joined hands in bringing down the regime. (Bamyeh, 2011). In order to understand how this Uprising operated during the main two weeks of the events certain features have been identified, which according to the researcher summarize the complexity of the Uprising.

The features as identified by Bamyeh (2011) in his article are the following: Marginality, spontaneity, civic character in contrast to state's barbarism, priority given to political demands and autocratic deafness. The following part of the paper will look upon these features individually to see how they affected the Uprising.

Marginality

As the word denotes the revolution began at the margins, while the media was focused on Tahrir Square in central Cairo, large demonstrations were breaking out in 12 of Egypt's provinces. In fact most intense moment in the earliest days of the revolution were occurring in marginal sites like Suez. Another factor of marginality was seen when the events in Tunisia started from the marginal areas and traveled to the capital. From Tunisia it traveled to Egypt.

Although no doubt the political situation in both countries is different as far as economic indicators and degree of liberalization is concerned what is worth noting is how the youth of Egypt were influenced by the Tunisian example. According to interviews that Bamyeh mentions in his article, the youth activists of Egypt were feeling proud of accomplishing the end of the regime faster than Tunisians where it took them a month to accomplish. He further states that, “The collective perception that a revolution was happening at the margins, where it was least expected gave everyone the confidence necessary to realize that it could happen everywhere.

Spontaneity

The character of this revolution was spontaneous, without any permanent organization. There was no recognized leadership from the start till the end and people were responding to situations as they unfolded. Such organizational needs as: how to communicate, what to

do the next day, how to help and evacuate the injured, how to counter the ‘baltaggiya’ (police) assaults etc ... occurred in the field directly with people making decisions right at the spot. People did not feel the need to appoint one man to talk for them rather a common statement was that “the people” decide.

Another important factor in regard to spontaneity is that it is hard to predict or control the events and spontaneity gave the whole Uprising a strong level of dynamism. People were determined to bring down Mubarak’s regime. According to Hossam Hamalway (2011) “It appeared that spontaneity played a therapeutic and not simply organizational or ideological role. More than one participant mentioned that revolution was a psychologically liberating one.”

Spontaneity was also responsible for changing the demands as the protest movement evolved. It started as a demand for basic reforms on January 25th, and moved to a demand of changing the regime completely within three days. It then moved to a demand for Mubarak to step down immediately which further led to a demand for him to be put on trial.

Baymeh (2011) states that, if one has to look back to the events on January 25th, it is seen that people were not in fact demanding Mubarak to step down but rather condemning the possible candidacy of his son and protesting against Mubarak running for candidacy again. But by January 28th, immediate removal of Mubarak from office became the concrete demand. The character of the revolution in regard to slogans was also affected by spontaneity.

Civic Ethics

Civic ethics were strongly visible amongst Egyptian people during the days of protests. It was worth mentioning that religious opposition has always been strong in Egypt but during the protests days it was seen that religious parties like Muslim Brotherhood joined in the protests and could not direct the protestors. It was seen that civic ethics stood out pushing aside all other religious and political factors (Baymeh 2011)

The people were clear and united in their demands. It was primarily political demands which aimed at getting rid of a corrupt leader. It was seen that economic and social demands were not given so much priority as people were focused on getting rid of the corruption. According to Hossam Hamalway (2010) “There is something in the air in Egypt. It could be Mubarak’s Autumn of Fury, as I and increasingly many people around me sense.

Not a day passes without reading or hearing about a strike. No one knows when the explosion is going to happen, but it seems everyone I meet or bump into today feel it's inevitable."

Autocratic Deafness

One of the most important features as seen in the Egyptian Uprising that was a key contributing factor was autocratic deafness. The term used by Bamyeh as explained by him means, "The ill-preparedness of ruling elite to hear the early reverberations as anything but undifferentiated public noise that could be easily ignored by the usual means." This means that the ruling elite did not expect that people will go through with the protests till the end, till their demands are met. For decades the ruling party had been using a one-way communication with the public allowing no feedback from the people. (Bamyeh 2011)

He further talks about how this phenomenon of ruling structures was visible in the slow and uncertain manner of government's response. On January 28th, when protests in Egypt were at their peak and many world leaders were expressing concern, the Egyptian government remained silent, until Mubarak spoke at midnight. "Mubarak was saying the exact opposite of what people had been expecting him to say. His statements resulted in more protests. His speech on the 1st of February was further received by many protestors as the height of arrogance." Bamyeh (2011)

Mubarak managed to further outrage the people on February 10th, when rather than resigning he delegated his powers to the vice president. That action resulted in massive crowds gathering around the presidential palace on February 11th.

Autocratic deafness was a major factor in escalating the revolution. Mubarak's ancient regime had not anticipated that the people of Egypt had become the enemies of the government.

1.3 Justification for the research

In order to justify the necessity and relevance of this research project, it might be said that the protest movements today are utilizing new media technology (Web 2.0) like never before. The most important aspect of this lies in the fact that the youth, the critical minded democracy prone citizens are rising up against old regimes which are more prominent in the MENA region. The events of Arab Spring which presented us with Libyan, Tunisian, and Egyptian Uprisings just show the necessity for this research project. These movements

were closely mentioned with new media's role in intensifying the change. These are the times where social media networks (SMN) and new media technology are given a lot of credit and hyped as promoting political change in stagnant regions.

These events raise an important question of how political activism is changing and in what manner does social media tools assist this evolvement. The next chapters will provide with in depth study of the actual role of social media sites during the Egyptian Uprising.

The aim of this study is to add to the similar academic field but also to make sure that the assumption of social media's revolutionary impact is well understood and thoroughly criticized.

The following pages provide a detailed exploration of the main research question:

What was the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?

This thesis is divided into the two questions which should be seen as complementary to one another, the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis will provide the answer to the main question.

RQ1: What role did social media sites play in the Egyptian Uprising according to the Egyptian activists and experts?

RQ2: What was the impact of social networks during the Egyptian Revolution according of the CNN & Al-Jazeera news channels and how did these channels used the social networking sites to broadcast?

The reader will be exposed to the Egyptian people's voices through the interviews with participants of the Uprising of 2011. Their views, opinions and narratives of their experience and their utilization of social media tools will provide this research with reliable and credible information.

This thesis will deal with how those who participated in the Egyptian uprising used social media networks (SMN) and personal online blogs as a form of online activism, as these are the most readily accessible forms of social media available. The study consists of nine chapters which discuss the Role and Impact of Social Media on the Egyptian Revolution. The role of the Social Networks has been seen positive. On the other hand, some find that the Social Networks Sites (SNN) has gone beyond organizing the protests and the mass mobilization and was an active maker of the events. In chapter two, the theoretical chapter will provides the reader a background to the topic and the rationale of the project's

importance, followed by the research aim, objectives, nature and scope of the primary research. the researcher will explain that the theories of mass communication that were developed long before the advent of social media, to place its use within a wider context of communication, and to explain how the inherent characteristics of social networking that made it appealing to the activists in Egypt, and as this thesis aims to analyse the link between social media and political mobilisation through the creation of a network society, it is imperative to fully explore established “theories of mass communication” and the researcher will explain that the theory of Social movement and Organisation also provides further context to the impact social media had as a method of facilitation . In chapter three, the Literature Review will provide the reader definitions to the tools of social media also will provide historical context for the advent of social media within the Middle East. The researcher will provide definitions and key terms in Social Media and studying the basic forums of Social Media. The researcher decided to explore in this chapter what the purpose of using social media as a tool for marketing communication. In this chapter on the role of Social Networking Sites (SNS) in Political participation, and the exact role of Role of Social Networking Sites in protesting and in revolutions and provide some examples show the role of (SNS) in the revolutions and protests, and in contrary the researcher will launch an arguments for and against the Social Media Tools usages in Politics and end this chapter with a brief description about the hacktivism of Social Networking Sites (SNS). Chapter four provides the methodological framework of this research, the details of the method that will generate the required results will be discussed and a step-by-step procedure of the analysis will be discussed. Chapter five will specify why a qualitative approach, case study as methodology, and observation and interviewing as research methods are the most appropriate in reaching the research aim and objectives. The researcher will describe the case of the Egyptian Revolution 2011 and provides results of the activist’s interviews from Egypt and Tunis, in addition to other cases studies from different Arab Spring countries such as Tunis, Jordan, Syria and Morocco to understand the real role of social media in the uprisings. The Egyptian case study will specifically address the role of social media by activists and experts in the uprisings in Egypt, which have up to the time of writing, led to a regime change. The events in Egypt are particularly relevant to this debate, for, “if we learned political leadership and coalition building from the French Revolution, the Arab revolutions in...Egypt demonstrated the power of networks.” First, the events of the actual revolutions will be summarized, in order to analyse whether social media played a purely

positive role in the uprisings, and whether it has continued to shape the subsequent regime change up to the present day, at the end of this chapter the researcher will explain the role of social media networks (SMN) as depicted by the Egyptian activists and experts. In chapter six, the social media study will provide interesting quantitative findings that are analysed and compared to the theory developed in the first part of the thesis, the researcher will study the role of social media sites as represented by AlJaz and CNN channels news. In chapter seven, the project part will provide a complete study about how to use of social Media in Political Marketing, Political Communications between political parties and voters. In Chapter eight will be a discussion analysis of the results and it will be seen in light of the claims from the previous studies. Finally, chapter nine provides the conclusion of this research. The exploration of the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Uprising via interviews and analyzing the data from news articles makes this research highly up to date and dynamic and will provide recommendations for “Next stop for the Arab Spring”

The aim of this research is identifying the real role of social media and is it justified to make it so significant that a country’s political revolution is actually named by a "Facebook Revolution"?. It seems relevant to see how important has social media been made by the two chosen channels news and how important do the Egyptians feel social media was in helping them topple their government.

1.4 Hypotheses

1. Egyptian revolution was labeled to be a “Facebook Revolution” In this study, the researcher aims to understand the real role of social media sites in the revolution of 2011.
2. The role of social media sites in the revolution has been over-rated. There are other important factors that need to be considered and understood in order to comprehend the Egyptian Uprising of 2011.

The hypotheses mentioned above will keep the researcher on track throughout the project and will eventually be either justified or negated at the end of this research.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Part

Theoretical Part

This thesis examines how social media specifically Social Networking Sites (SNS) shaped and mobilized the public's political thoughts that created the Egyptian Revolution. In order to examine their role, the theoretical line of reasoning will develop starting from the general definition and explanation of key concepts on political activism and social media. The reason for including the political activism is that it will lay a framework to understanding the events that occurred in Egypt. As social media is a relatively new phenomenon and as it is an Internet manifestation, the researcher will look into how has Internet evolved over the years to provide people with a platform for expressing themselves? Related to the main research is the concept of understanding activists and their role in political activism because the Uprising was seen to be highly influenced by the activists and experts. Hence, the specific key concepts of activists and civic engagement will be discussed. Other concepts that are important to mention in the literature review are the key concepts of social media, mobilization, participation and organization as these factors contribute to understanding the events of the Uprising.

The principal focus of this research is to examine how social media sites played a significant role in the Arab Spring and particularly in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011? To what extent people use these social media tools in political activism, and in what ways social media has played a role in contributing to events such as mass protests and revolutions. How has social media affected the method in which people protest? How it has affected the key elements of political activism that were mentioned earlier such as mobilization, participation and organization. Another important aspect that the researcher will look into is: how social media is effective if compared with mainstream media. Do mainstream media highlight the importance of social media which in turn leads to the rising popularity of social media for activism and protests? These terms will be looked upon in light of the current literature available on this topic. In order to build on the theoretical framework of this research some aspects of sociological and philosophical approaches in regard to social media will be mentioned.

2.1 Social Movements and Organization Theory

Social movement theories is an interdisciplinary study within the social sciences that generally seeks to explain why social mobilization occurs, the forms under which it manifests, as well as potential social, cultural, and political consequences. Using these theories, the researcher hope to draw conclusions about the causal mechanisms that drove individuals in particular MENA countries to engage in different degrees of protest participation during the Arab Spring. Social movement theory also provides further context to the impact social media had as a method of facilitation.

The ‘structural’ theory of revolution popularised by Theda Skocpol. Skocpol (1979) argued, on the basis of a comparative study of the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions, that revolutions are not made by revolutionary theorists or by dedicated bands of revolutionaries, but rather they are the outcomes of complex interactions between social and political structural conditions. In Wendell Phillip’s words, ‘Revolutions are not made; they come’. Other students of modern revolutions have, however, come to rather different conclusions. John Dunn (1972), for example, without denying the importance of structural conditions to the creation of revolutionary situations, quite reasonably insists that successful twentieth century revolutions cannot be understood except as complex performances by imaginative and committed actors. Just possibly, revolutionary actions may create revolutionary situations out of unpromising structural conditions; more certainly, structural conditions may provide revolutionary opportunities which go begging for want of suitably talented and energetic actors. Moreover, each successful revolution changes the political repertoire available to all revolutionaries who come after it. In sum, the record of the twentieth century tends to confirm the Leninist theory of revolution as a triumph of political will and organisation rather than the Marxist one which sees revolutions as the dark deliveries of historical necessity and social structural conditions.

It must, therefore, be doubted whether it is safe to generalise from Piven and Cloward’s conclusions about the experience of poor people’s movements in the United States. It needs to be remembered that their study covered a limited period of history in just one country. At the very least it must be considered whether the pattern they found is a product of the peculiarities of United States political culture; Castells’ account (1977, ch. 14) of urban protests in Paris came to the contrary conclusion that unruly protests were unsuccessful and that the most orderly were the most productive of desired re-

sults. The decentralised political system of the United States provides many openings for political access but imposes severe institutionalised limitations on effective policy implementation. This, together with a political culture dominated by the ideology of democratic pluralism, generates grievances, legitimises their expression, and relatively easily (if incompletely and often ineffectively) accedes to protestors' demands. Strongly centralised states with fewer points of access and more effective mechanisms of policy implementation may be more resistant to disorderly protests but more hospitable to more institutionalised forms of participation by the poor. Certainly, Western European countries have generally been more accommodative to trade union organisation and have presented fewer obstacles to voter registration or voting itself than have many of the United States. The costs of political organisation to the poor in relation to the benefits derived from it have, as a result, generally been lower in Western Europe and Australasia than they have in the United States.

According to McAdam and Paulsen, the strength of social ties strongly influences recruitment on the individual level, weak social ties can be effective in communicating and spreading the message of a social movement across diffuse networks. This suggests that an effective network structure would have dense networks of weak ties to outside entities in addition to strong interpersonal ties within those groups. (Ibid 19, 655)

While participants in social movements are often recruited through preexisting social ties, McAdam and Paulsen argue that additional context is necessary to better determine the nature of individuals' interpersonal social ties to the movement. Such context illuminates whether it is the presence of a tie to the movement, the number of ties, or the strength of the tie that matters most. (Ibid 19, 641) Additional relevant contexts to consider are individuals' affiliation with multiple organizational or familial networks simultaneously, for these could prove conflicting in individuals' decisions of whether to participate in a given social movement. (Ibid 19, 641) McAdam and Paulsen emphasize the importance of considering the manner in which social ties can both lead to increased and decreased activism. They further argue that individuals' large variety of relationships are all crucial elements of the context surrounding why those who had social ties to the movement chose to participate, and what the effect of ties to parents, peers, and others had on the decision. (Ibid 19, 645) In general, pre-existing organizational affiliation has been found to be a critical structural factor linked to participation in social movements, as membership in organizations facilitates the formation of increased interpersonal ties, and thus individuals be-

longing to certain groups are more frequently targeted for recruitment by movement organizers over unaffiliated individuals.(Ibid 19, 644)

In turning to social media and its effectiveness as a medium for social movement mobilization, there is a mixed review on whether it has had a negative or positive impact. Melissa Lerner highlights the negative effects attributed to Internet use by some social movement theorists: the Internet's provision of information alone does not produce sufficient social capital and community ties for sustained social movement activity geared towards democratization. Rather, increased access to online information by the public, combined with the often unregulated ability to publish a wide variety of information, can actually lead to an oversupply of confusing, inaccurate and distracting information. In addition, the replacement of real-world, face-to-face communication decreases solidarity and consensus-building that is critical to social movements. However, she argues that the combination of web-based organizing and social movements, in which members participate both online and in the real world, can be very effective. (Ibid, 557)Also, in a politically repressive climate, cyberspace can facilitate alternate avenues for expression that reduce some of the risks of public activism and can also provide otherwise unavailable information to encourage dissident sentiments or anti-government action. (Ibid, 558)

Marc Lynch posits that the effect of "new media"—including both satellite television and Internet-based social media is growing as increased numbers of people in the Middle East gain access to and develop proficiency in utilizing information technologies. This in turn is creating a new public sphere in which citizens are able to overcome authoritarian states' monopolization of information and fundamentally challenge state control. In the shorter-term, he argues that new media encourage collective action by reducing transaction costs, creating "informational cascades," increasing the costs of repression, and producing scale and diffusion effects.(Ibid. 304) However, he acknowledges the conflicting arguments addressing the effect of new media on the emergence of protests and highlights the importance of other context including the role of older media such as AlJaz in contributing to the development of the uprisings, as well as fundamental political and economic issues.(Ibid, 303)

Lynch contends that new media reduce the traditional transaction costs of organizing by reducing communication barriers, providing automatic higher visibility for small-scale protests, linking like-minded individuals, and providing a venue to discuss political ideas that could otherwise entail risks if voiced publicly in authoritarian states.(Ibid, 304) Along

these lines, the expression of beliefs online can empower individuals who would normally not speak out against a regime in public for fear of reprisal. Lynch argues that these informational cascades, which can occur nationally and beyond borders, were witnessed within both Egypt and Tunisia with the spread of anti-government protests from a small number of people to the broader public, who had been sympathetic to the message and then were empowered to join. Transnationally, the spread of protests from Tunisia to Egypt could have been influenced by perceptions regarding the possibility of successful political change after the removal of bin Ali in Tunisia.(Ibid, 305)

Lynch also argues that the publicity by new media of violent repression at popular protests raises the cost of repression by authoritarian states insofar as it can provoke international attention and fuel local resentment. New information technologies have also helped develop a more unified Arab political space, which has created a greater diffusion of ideas and contributed to the adoption of similar language and protest methods among demonstrators.(Ibid, 305) Though Lynch sees new media as an influential factor in demonstrations in the short-term, he suggests that continued research is needed in order to map the causal mechanisms of new media's impact on contentious politics and to determine the broader effect of these technologies upon society in the longer-term.

2.2 Theories of Mass Communication

Mass communication, blogging, Facebook, Twitter. These are the tools of a revolution in today's society. No longer can you overthrow a country with a gun and a rainbow themed wardrobe. No, but with a laptop, well you might be able to. In the Spring of 2011, The researcher saw this at work. The Arab Spring, which led to the overthrow of dictators in the countries Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen along with revolutions all through the Middle East, was fueled through social media. Facebook and Twitter allowed for people to get in contact with massive amounts of people all through the country. Youtube and blogging allowed for people to immediately update everyone across the globe in new information from firsthand accounts to videos of what is happening at that minute.

Though Lasswell's functionalist theory of the media and Granovetter's theory of weak ties are both based on sociology rather than International Relations, and were developed before the advent of social media, these theories can be adequately used to explain why the Egyptian activists in this example chose social media as their form of communication.

Harold Lasswell's functionalist sociology of the media provides an analytical framework for the study of communication. Born in the wake of leaps in communication techniques post-World War I, Lasswell's formula is based on the multi-faceted question "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" This framework favours a content analysis approach, a research technique that "aimed to achieve an objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications. Content analysis is utilized in the following chapter to analyze how the Egyptian activists behind the Revolution used social media tools.

Manuel Castells's network theory can be effectively used to explain how the characteristics of social networks can be valuable for political activism, through the creation of weak ties, the anonymity provided by the Internet, and the egalitarian nature of online communication. "Weak ties are useful in providing information and opening up opportunities at a low cost. The advantage of the Net is that it allows the forging of weak ties with strangers, in an egalitarian pattern of interaction where social characteristics are less influential in framing, or even blocking communication." The strength of a tie is based on a "combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie." Social media networks are based on these weak ties- acquaintances with other people whom one might share common interests or goals with, or may have mutual friends. The strength in weak ties lies in their ability to introduce us to new ideas and new information, and the Internet allows these ties to be forged with incredible speed over vast geographical barriers.

In his seminal 1973 study entitled "The Strength of Weak Ties," sociologist Mark Granovetter analysed the link between micro-level interactions and macro-level patterns in social networks, concluding with the strength of weak ties lies in their potential for "diffusion, social mobility, political organization, and social cohesion in general," across different networks. (Granovetter 1973, 1361) The advantages of weak ties over strong ties lie in their ability to diffuse information and ideas across social groups. Granovetter illustrates this theory by using the example of spreading a rumour. If an individual shares a rumour with all of his closest friends (considered strong ties) and those individuals pass the rumour to their close friends, some individuals are likely to hear the rumour multiple times, as "those linked with strong ties tend to share friends.(Ibid., 1366)" Thus, the information is contained in one social group. When applied to political mobilization, the same rule applies. If the activists organizing the protests in Tahrir Square had only spoken to their clos-

est friends or family members, it is unlikely that hundreds of thousands of Egyptians would have shown up on 25 January. By capitalizing on the weak ties forged online through social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, the activists were able to not only circulate their calls for political mobilization, but began a dialogue that fostered the attitude for political activism in Egyptian communities. A final conclusion of Granovetter's study that is germane to the Egyptian example is that "weak ties are more likely to link members of different small groups than are strong ones, which tend to be concentrated within particular groups." Weak ties established online allowed different oppositional factions to connect over a common goal of ousting Mubarak, and to translate this into political mobilization.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1 Definitions and key terms in Social Media

Web 2.0 is the set of tools to alter web pages to become an interactive media so that users can interact socially giving rise to social revolution and eventually Facebook revolution. The terms and tools related to the same are described in brief detail for web 2.0, social media, and Facebook revolution.

3.1.1 Web 2.0

Kärkkäinen et al., (2010 p.2) quote from Lehtimäki et al. 2009 that “web 2.0 means technologies that enable users to communicate, create content and share it with each other via communities, social networks and virtual worlds, making it easier than before, as well as to have real life experiences in virtual worlds and to organize content on the internet with content aggregators”. On the technical side Kaplan & Haenlein (2010a) describe web 2.0 as a set of tools and techniques for the world wide web which provide the basic functionalities for its operation and functioning. Among the tools are adobe flash which provide a method to upload and display animation, interactivity, and audio/video streams to web pages. Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequently updated content, such as blog entries or news head-lines, in a standardized format. Finally, AJAX (Asynchronous Java Script and XML) is a method to retrieve data from web servers asynchronously, in the background without interfering with the display and behaviour of the whole page. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010a p.60-61) opine that “web 2.0 is a term that was first used in 2004 to describe a new way in which software developers and end-users started to utilise the World Wide Web; that is, as a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion”.

3.1.2 Social Media

It is the grouping of all the new sorts of the online media, which share all or at least most of the coming five characteristics (Mayfield, 2008):

- Participation → Social media aside from the traditional media allows the active audiences, not passive receivers of the media messages to contribute and give feedback.

- Openness → Social media services not only lifted any form of barriers for audiences, but also encouraged them to participate, give feedback, vote, comment, access content and share information with others.
- Conversation → Unlike traditional media, social media services permit the two way communication. Media are no more broadcasting content to be transmitted and distributed to the passive audience.
- Community → The introduction of social media has helped audiences to communicate across different communities especially those who share common interests such as political views, religion or certain bands.
- Connectedness → Almost the majority of social networks prosper on their connectedness through the liaison of different websites, resources and people.

3.1.2 Facebook Revolution

The protests that swept across the Middle East during 2011, also named the Arab spring, have been labeled the Facebook revolution among western media. Facebook Revolution may refer to different revolutions and protests, which were coordinated using Facebook:

- 2009–2010 Iranian election protests, following the 2009 Iranian presidential election against the disputed victory of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
- 2011 Tunisian revolution, overthrowing President Zine el abidine Ben ALI Media curbs and usage of social networking sites in Kashmir, protests against the "Bloody Summer" of 2010
- 2011 Egyptian revolution, overthrowing President Hosni Mubarak

The term Facebook Revolution rejected by Tunisians and it has been called the Jasmine revolution. The term 'Facebook revolution' overrates the role of social media in the arab spring. Because it is a people revolution @arabsocialmedia #emaj2012

3.2 Basic Forums of Social Media

According to (Mayfield, 2008). At this time, there are basically seven kinds of social media. Note, though, that innovation and change are rife.

Social Media Networks (SMN)

These sites allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. The biggest social networks are MySpace, Facebook and Bebo.

Blogs

Perhaps the best known form of social media, blogs is online journals, with entries appearing with the most recent first.

Wikis

These websites allow people to add content to or edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database. The best-known wiki is Wikipedia⁴, the online encyclopaedia which has over 2 million English language articles.

Podcasts

Audio and video files that are available by subscription, through services like Apple iTunes.

Forums

Areas for online discussion, often around specific topics and interests. Forums came about before the term “social media” and are a powerful and popular element of online communities.

Content communities

Communities which organise and share particular kinds of content. The most popular content communities tend to form around photos (Flickr), bookmarked links (del.icio.us) and videos (YouTube).

Microblogging

Social networking combined with bite-sized blogging, where small amounts of content (‘updates’) are distributed online and through the mobile phone network. Twitter is the clear leader in this field.

3.3 Definition of Social Networks Sites

Social networking is a grouping of individuals into specific groups. Social networking can take place in person because of places like work, universities, and high schools, but it is most popular online. (Mayfield, 2008)

Online social networking uses websites that help people communicate via messaging, chatting, and sometimes voice capability or video chatting. Social networking is like a community of internet users. Most of these users share a common interest in hobbies, religion, or politics. Social networking sites allow you access to other member profiles and allows you to contact them (Wikipedia).

Thus, in their book Danah M. Boyd (University of California-Berkeley) and Nicole B. Ellison (Michigan State University), they defined Social Networking Sites as web-based services that permit its users to do the following:

1. Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system.
2. Articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection.
3. View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.

Social networking sites (SNSs) are currently the most popular Web application services and enable users to engage in online communication and information sharing with friends or social groups (Governatori and Iannella, 2011). Facebook and Twitter are among the most well-known SNSs, with a vast numbers of users, although there is considerable competition in this market. With the rapid growth of SNSs, both the Internet behavior and preferences of users have evolved. Among Internet users in the USA, 65% online adults use SNS (Madden and Zickuhr, 2011), which is more than those who use other online services, whereas approximately one-half of European Internet users use SNS (European Commission, 2011). In addition, SNSs are also attracting many young users in emerging nations, and the number of SNS users in such countries is increasing rapidly (boyd, 2008). According to a 2010 market research report published by ComScore, in the USA, people now spend more time using Facebook than Google (AFP.Com, 2010). Thus the researcher can conclude that social networking has already become the popular online activity of most people.



Figure 3.3: Social Networks Sites

3.4 Advantages of Social Networks Websites

Social networking is a recent invention that has the Internet still at the edge of its seat due to its popularity with people. This is mostly because it really is for the people. Bringing every kind of social group together in one place and letting them interact is really a big thing indeed. Everything about it lies on the advantages and disadvantages of social networking, and what it can do for everyone. And, here are some of the advantages that can be more than enough for anyone to want to join social networks.

Low Costs

Definitely, it's cheaper to use online social networking for both personal and business use because most of it is usually free. While personal use is rather simple for anyone, the business functions are underestimated by many. In a social networking site, anyone can scout out potential customers and target markets with just a few clicks and keystrokes, adding a boost to the usual advertisements and promotional strategies. It lets anyone learn about their likes and dislikes, which is tremendous.

Builds Credibility

Any company definitely can gain the customers' confidence if the company can connect to them on both a personal and professional level. Despite having to do a bit of work, it definitely pays off as you can be tapped for an offer if someone catches wind of your products or services.

Connections

A social networking site can be a good way to make connections with people with similar interests and goals. They can be a way to connect with or "meet" people that a student may not have had the opportunity to before—including other students, staff, faculty and even alumni.

Thanks to social networking sites, meeting someone in person has become a thing of the past. "Poking" has become the new handshake. Making friends and renewing old ones is easy. Thus, meeting people and staying connected with classmates and friends is a major benefit of social networking sites.

Social networking sites offers campus surveys, "party" or event listings and other information that communicates the "pulse" of a campus culture. Therefore, they can be a great way to understand and stay connected to your campus community as a whole.

Some social networking sites offer advertising to its subscribers. Whether a student creates a "party" for an upcoming event or pays the \$5 for 10,000 "hits" for an ad, Facebook is a great way to advertise as a student organization, club, Greek chapter, team, etc. Most importantly, social networking sites offers students the opportunity to create a positive self-image. The profiles gives you a chance to create the image of themselves that you want people to see by putting you best qualities "out there." This shows that you care about you reputation and (to a certain extent) what people think about you—whether it's your peers, University faculty and administrators, or future employers.

1.5 Concepts of Social Networks Sites

There are two main common concepts that most of the social networking websites share despite of the different reasons that they might be established for (Carfi and Chastaine, 2011). These two concepts are the following:

- Profile: Whereby for each and every individual in these social networking websites, he or she has an online profile that “serves as the individual’s identity” in this online community. For example, in the professional milieu, the individual’s profiles

always has information regarding his or her skills, education, resources, interests, experiences as well as affiliations.

- Connections: all the social networking websites allow their members to form connections with other people. These connections are either implicit ones whereby they are formed based on old relations or they are explicit connections meaning that they are newly set and formed by the members themselves.

Thus, social networking websites truly hold a great power. Since social networking websites were able to turn the Internet from static web pages to quite dynamic ones in which members connect and share their different skills, experiences and interests (Carfi and Chastaine, 2011).

3.6 History of Social Networking Websites

Computer messaging systems were available before the development of social networking sites. The Compatible Time-Sharing System, (CTSS) was one of the first time-sharing operating systems. It was developed in 1961 at MIT's Computation Center and it allowed several users to share the resources of one mainframe computer. The system also allowed user-to-user communication which can be compared to the use of email today. CompuServe was then developed in 1969 as an online commercial service that allowed users to access discussion boards, chat rooms and electronic mail. Later in

1971, email began to take shape with the incorporation of the "@" sign which was now used to separate the name of the user and the machine (Computer Messaging Before the Web-A visual Timeline (1960-1990), 2008).

In 1978 computer experts established what they described as an Electronic Information Exchange System at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. The exchange system was used by the United States Office of Civilian Defense and it allowed its users to send email messages to each other and also to access a common bulletin board (Hiltz & Turoff, 1993).

In 1985 an online community by the name, Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link (The Well), was developed. The Well was founded to create a platform for dialog between writers and readers of the Whole Earth Review. It is considered as the place where the online movement was born and it is also where Howard Rheingold first came up with the term „virtual community“. (Learn About the Well, 2010).

Quantam Link was also founded in 1985 and featured services such as instant messaging, electronic mail and chat rooms. This service was later renamed to America Online (AOL). In 1988, Prodigy was launched as an online service which was very similar to CompuServe. Prodigy was different in that it had a graphical user interface which made it easier to use. The development of CompuServe is considered to have contributed to the development of other online communities (Computer Messaging Before the Web-A visual Timeline (1960-1990), 2008).

Launch Dates of Major Social Network Sites

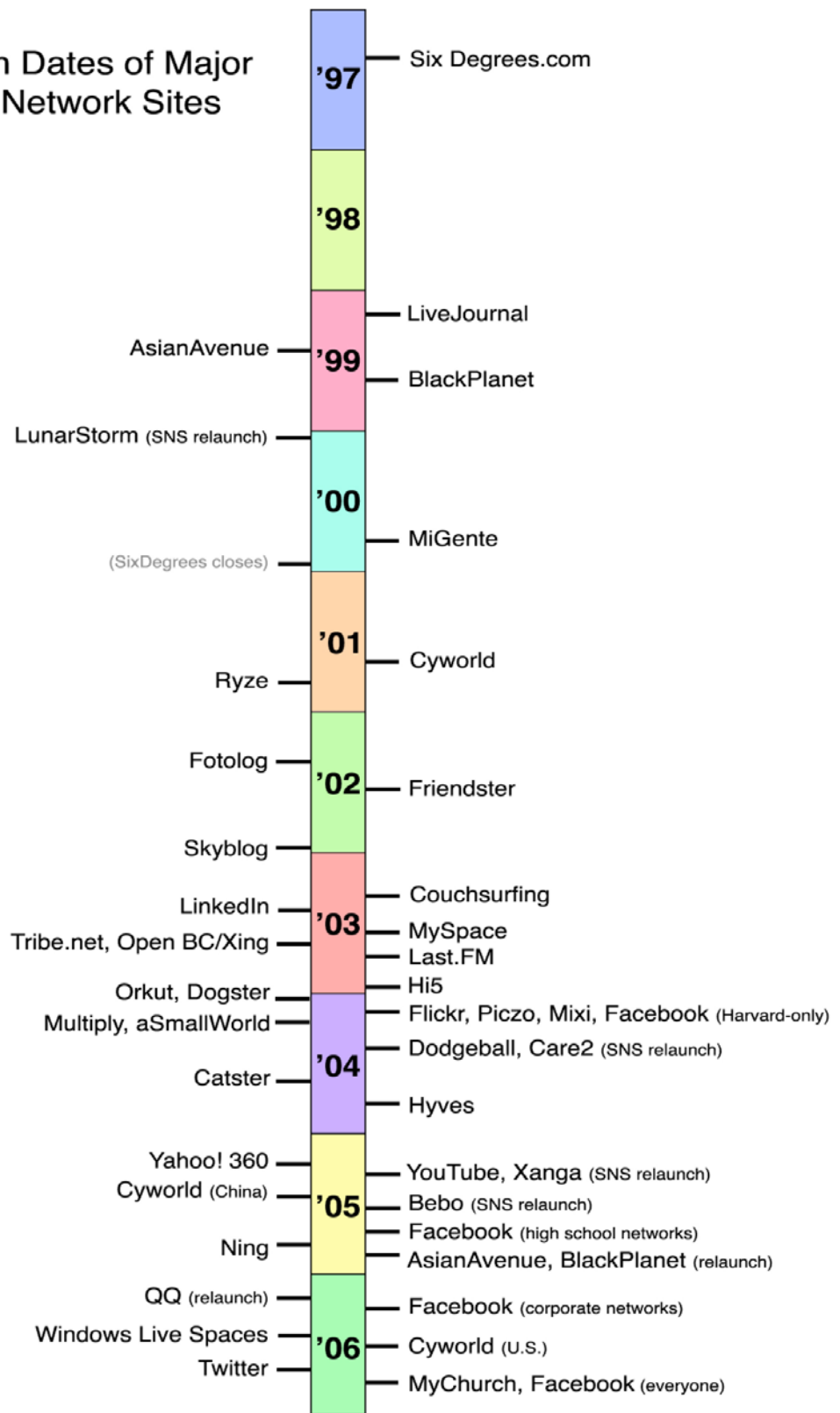


Figure 3.6: Timeline of the launch dates of many major SNSs and dates when community sites re-launched with SNS features tottem, Source: <http://usabilitynews.usernomics.com/2007/11/social-networks-totem-pole.html>

3.6.1 Classmates

Classmates.com is a social networking service created in 1995 by Randy Conrads who founded Classmates Online, Inc. The social media website was originally designed to assist members in finding friends and classmates from kindergarten, primary school, high school, college, work and the United States military.

Classmates proved almost immediately that the idea of a virtual reunion was a good one. Early users could not create profiles, but they could locate long-lost grade school chums, menacing school bullies and maybe even that prom date they just couldn't forget. It was a hit almost immediately, and even today the service boasts some 540 million registered accounts.

3.6.2 SixDegrees

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), the first recognizable social network site (SixDegrees.com) was launched in 1997. SixDegrees.com allowed users to create profiles, list their Friends and, beginning in 1998, surf the Friends lists. AIM and ICQ buddy lists supported lists of Friends, although those Friends were not visible to others. SixDegrees was the first to combine these features

From 1997 to 2001, there were tremendous community tools that supported social networking websites beginning with "supporting various combinations of profiles and publicity articulated Friends." For instance, AsianAvenue, BlackPlanet, and MiGente that allowed their users to form their own profiles whether personal, professional or dating ones and at the same time users can identify friends on their profiles without having the approval for those connections.

2.6.3 Live Journal

In 1999, LiveJournal was launched by American programmer Brad Fitzpatrick, whereby it listed one-directional connections on user pages. It was able to ensure more privacy settings as "people mark others as friends to follow their journals." In addition, Cyworld, the Korean virtual world's sites, were also launched in 1999 and in 2001, adding SNS features that are independent of other websites.

3.6.4 Ryze

In 2001, Ryze.com was launched to help people influence their business networks. The founder of Ryze Adrian Scott reports that he first introduced the site to his friends and then “primarily members of San Francisco and technology community, including entrepreneurs and investors behind many future SNSs.” Interestingly, people behind the creation of Ryze, Tribe.net, LinkedIn, and Friendster were closely matted in both personal and professional wise, as they believed that they could work and support each other without competing. Yet, Friendster became the most prominent, LinkedIn became a powerful and successful business service, Tribe.net was only able to grow while attracting a niche user and Ryze was never successful in attracting mass users.

3.6.5 Friendster

Friendster was created in 2002 by Peter Chin, Jonathan Abrams and Dave Lee. The group wanted to find a way for people to meet new friends on the Internet, keep in contact with already existing friends and to expand personal networks in a safe manner. At the time of the site's creation, the concept of social networking was still novel and the group hoped web interactions would spur face-to-face relationships among users. It wasn't until the site grew and competitors like Myspace launched that the concept of social networking globally was really approached.

The group was founded in 2003 with a \$12 million investment by a private capital investor firm called Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Benchmark Capital. The money was initially focused on growing the site out of a conceptual level to the large level of success the site saw. Launched in March of 2002, the site found over three million users in the first few months. Becoming a national success in the United States made the concept of social networking acceptable. The site grew to mainstream popularity and was offered a buyout in 2003 from Google. The site declined, citing a continued interest in solitary ownership. A 2006 funding offer from the group's initial investor helped to spur financial success. Later investors like DAG Ventures, IDG Ventures and a 2009 acquisition by MOL Global has helped to keep the company afloat.

Another accolade of Friendster was that since the site was one of the first networks out there, they acquired numerous patents of interest to the world of social networking such as those related to gauging similar users, storage of social data relationships, content management on the Internet and more.

The main three groups that help Friendster in gaining its popularity are bloggers, gay men and attendees of the burning man art festival. Then its popularity grew to reach 300,000 users only through word of mouth before the coverage of the traditional press that began in May 2003 (O'Shea, 2003).

3.6.6 My Space

Myspace was founded in August 2003 by employees of eUniverse, an internet marketing company (later known as Intermix Media), after they saw potential in Friendster's concept. Chris DeWolfe, Brad Greenspan, Tom Anderson and Josh Berman all worked on the project. Anderson would later become president and DeWolfe would become CEO.

As a result, MySpace was able to grow rapidly building its growth on the early adopters of Friendster. One of the most prominent groups that encouraged people to switch was the indie-rock bands that left Friendster because of the difficulty in compiling with its profile regulations.

A band such as the Indie-rock that originated in Los Angeles, was one of the reasons for the success and growth of MySpace. This is because bands start to create profiles with their fans and send VIP passes for popular clubs. In return, this helped MySpace to surpass the success of Friendster. Also, the "bands-and-fans dynamic was mutually beneficial" for the success of MySpace, as both the bands and fans want to reach and contact each other.

Two distinguishable features differentiate MySpace from all the other social networking websites. First, MySpace continuously adds new features based on the demand of its users. Second, MySpace allows its users to personalize their pages by not restricting them from adding HTML in their profiles forms or "copy/paste code culture emerged on the web to support users in generating unique MySpace backgrounds and layouts."

In 2004, many teens in the U.S. started to join MySpace not as older users because they were in Friendster, but because they are interested in connecting with their favorite bands or they are encouraged to use the site from older family members. MySpace in turn changed its policy to allow minors to join and with this exponential growth, three different populations were formed: musicians/artists, teenagers, and the post-college urban social crowd.

In July 2005, after News Corporation purchased MySpace for \$580 million and gained a great media attention, MySpace was plagued for moral and safety issues. The site was ac-

cused because of sexual interactions between adults and minors and a quick legal action was required, as panic for a moral sexual concern quickly spread among the users (Bahney, 2006).

Later, in 2006, Fox launched a UK version of MySpace. This was a successful attempt at adding the UK music scene to MySpace. Later they also released MySpace in China. They're working on adding MySpace to other countries too.

Google is signed on as MySpace's search provider and advertiser. Slide.com, RockYou! and YouTube also help MySpace add functionality for it's users. Many other websites on the Net create templates and other accessories that MySpace users can use to design their MySpace profiles.

MySpace has also added many different channels and widgets to their site. There are things on MySpace such as MySpace IM, MySpace Music, MySpace Music, MySpaceTV, MySpace Mobile, MySpace News, MySpace Classifieds, MySpace Karaoke, and more.

Currently MySpace lives in California. They're in the same building as their owner, Fox Interactive Media (which is owned by News Corp). MySpace only has about 300 people on staff. They gain over 200,000 new users every day and have well over 100 million users worldwide.

3.6.7 Blog

Blogger was launched in 1999 by Pyra Labs. As one of the earliest dedicated blog-publishing tools, it is credited for helping popularize the format. In February 2003, Pyra Labs was acquired by Google under undisclosed terms. The acquisition allowed premium features (for which Pyra had charged) to become free. In October 2004, Pyra Labs' co-founder, Evan Williams, left Google. In 2004, Google purchased Picasa; it integrated Picasa and its photo sharing utility Hello into Blogger, allowing users to post photos to their blogs.

In 2004, Blogger introduced a major redesign, adding features such as web standards-compliant templates, individual archive pages for posts, comments, and posting by email. In 2006, Blogger launched its latest version in beta, codenamed "Invader", alongside the gold release. This migrated users to Google servers and had some new features, including interface language in French, Italian, German and Spanish.[3] In December 2006, this new version of Blogger was taken out of beta. By May 2007, Blogger had completely moved

over to Google operated servers. Blogger was ranked 16 on the list of top 50 domains in terms of number of unique visitors in 2007. And blogger play an important role in the political mobilization during Arab Spring in 2011.

3.6.8 Twitter

Twitter, launched in 2006, is a “real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting.” Users communicate via “Tweets” which are short posts limited to 140 characters, also allowing for embedded media links.

Twitter is much more than just your friends telling you about their day. It has changed the media, politics and business. Many will report they hear their news first on Twitter- stories of natural disasters, sports scores, the death of a celebrity and more are shared first on Twitter.

Twitter users can “follow” or essentially subscribe to the updates of other users, some of which include conventional media sources, such as Newsweek or AlJaz, celebrities, and friends. Additionally, tweets can be categorized using “hashtags” which “group posts together by topic or type.”(Ibid)

Social media and microblogging site Twitter has changed political communication profoundly. In the past, political news and commentary was only reported by a select group of those “in the know”. But today, for example, the most popular hashtags in the Arab region between January and March 2011 were #egypt (1.4 million mentions), #jan25 (1.2 million mentions), and #libya (990,000 mentions). There are an estimated 131,204 Twitter users in Egypt between 1 January and 30 March 2011, generating an average of 24,000 tweets a day during that time period. One user in Cairo generated 60,000 words alone during the 18-day revolution, a total of 1,500 tweets. The Arab Social Media Report tracked the volume of daily tweets in Egypt throughout the time period of 1 January through 28 February, with the peaks in Twitter use revolving around major events in the uprising, including the protests in Tunisia on 14 January and Hosni Mubarak stepping down on 11 February. (Chebib & Sohail 2011, 141)

Twitter has also had an impact on business as brands find a new way to reach their fans where they are already- in social media and on their smartphones. Twitter has become a tool that businesses large and small can use to reach their target market, provide customer service, share their unique content and more. It’s also become a way for everyday people

to keep in touch with their favorite celebrities and a tool for the celebrities to stay in contact with their fans.

3.6.8.1 The Number of Followers

Twitter allows each user to send 250 direct messages per day, 1,000 updates per day. Retweets are counted as updates. Users can make 4 changes to account email per day. The technical follow limit is 1,000 per day. Once an account is following 2,000 other users, additional follow attempts are limited by account-specific ratios.

3.6.8.2 Twitter Usage in Egypt

The average number of Twitter users in Egypt between January and 30 March, 2011 was 1,131,204. The most popular trending hashtags across the Arab region in the first quarter of 2011 were #egypt (with 1.4 million mentions in the tweets generated during this period) #jan25 (with 1.2. million mentions), #libya (with 990,000 mentions), #bahrain (640,000 mentions), and #protest (620,000).

According to Ossama El-Badawy, the Online Competitive Intelligence Manager, internet in Egypt witnessed a dramatic growth after the revolution with a 100%+ Twitter users growth during recent months.

3.6.9 YouTube

As with many of the start-up internet companies, YouTube is the little site that could. Founded by three friends Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, they were all early employees of PayPal who saw a gap in the market for a video sharing website.

According to Hurley and Chen, the idea of YouTube came at the difficulties experienced in trying to share videos taken during a party San Francisco. This story has been considered a very simplified version, and Chen has recognized that this idea can be promoted by the need to present a simple story to the market. Karim said that the party never happened, and that the idea of sharing Internet video was his. His colleagues have stated that the party did happen, and Karim's original idea was to create a dating site where people could be classified based on their videos. Karim acknowledges having been influenced by a dating site called HotorNot.com ('Hot or Not'), where users could upload pictures of themselves, which were then rated by other users.

YouTube was the first website dedicated solely to uploading and sharing personal video. Over 3 billion videos are viewed each day on YouTube, reaching 800 billion playbacks in

2011 these result in 60 hours of uploaded video every minute. The video sharing platform is available in 60 languages and 42 countries, and has over four billion views per day (

. As well as uploading and viewing media, users can also leave comments on videos. YouTube is the third most frequented website online.

3.6.9.1 The Number of Followers

To watch a video on YouTube, there is no need to register as a user. Anyone can watch the videos that have been uploaded on the website. The embedding option can be used to share the videos uploaded on YouTube on other social media websites. The embedding option makes it easier for people to promote videos and help them go viral

3.6.9.2 YouTube Usage in Egypt

According to the report prepared by Techno Wireless, during the first week of the Egyptian Revolution 2011, Egyptian users viewed 8.7 million pages on YouTube. This number was reduced after the blockade of internet services by Egyptian authorities from 28 January until the first of February

3.6.10 Facebook

Of all the Social Networking sites that have been developed so far, Facebook is perhaps the most popular. It also possesses technological capacities that bridge online and offline connections, as real life relationships can be further developed online.

Facebook was created in 2004 and by 2007; it was reported to have more than 21 million registered members generating 1.6 billion page views each day (Needham & Company, 2007). Current statistics found on the sites press room, report that Facebook currently has more than 400 million active users, 50% of who log into the site on any given day. According to information on the site, over 500 billion minutes are spent on the site every month (Statistics, 2010). Due to this heavy usage patterns, Facebook constitutes a rich site for researchers interested in the study of social networks.

Facebook enables its users to present themselves in an online profile, accumulate Friends who can post comments on each other's pages, and view each other's profiles. Facebook members can also learn each other's hobbies, interests, musical tastes, and romantic relationship status through the profiles. Individuals network connections, or friends are able to write messages on a person's wall, as well as edit or delete what they have written. They

are however, not able to change or delete anyone else's comments other than their own (Henderson, 2008). The site is tightly integrated into the daily lives and media practices of its making it a good source of information for researchers carrying out studies on social networking sites.

Facebook also has the "Group" feature that was introduced in 2004. Through groups, users have the opportunity to share common interests with each other. This is because the feature provides a common platform where Facebook users can meet other individuals with similar interests on different topics. The group platform gives members the opportunity to share information about that topic, and have public discussions that are elegant to their interests. The group application is therefore an important feature that contributes to overall interactivity on Facebook (Feezell, Conroy & Guerrero 2009).

An individual's profile is probably the most important feature of Facebook. This is because the users profile includes detailed information and it therefore acts as a mini- biography. Users have the flexibility of deciding the amount of information they want to disclose on their profile page. The profile is usually the first page that comes up when a user logs onto Facebook (Henderson, 2008).

Although most Social Networking Sites have similar technological features, they have differences in the cultures, rules and norms that surround their use. Most sites support the maintenance of already existing social networks; such as real life friendships, but others help strangers connect based on shared interests, political views, or activities. Several scholars have studied Social Networking Sites in order to understand the practices, implications, culture, and meaning of the sites, as well as users' engagement with them. The next few paragraphs highlight some of these studies.

Most studies on Social Networking sites have been concerned with the privacy of the information that is disclosed on social networking sites. Privacy on the internet has been a concern for internet users in general, and is not a unique concern with the use of social networking sites. Most web users are concerned about the risks that are involved in their disclosure of their personal information. They are worried that their personal information may be abused by the websites that collect their personal information, or by unauthorized parties. One privacy concern on the internet is identity theft as it has the potential cause other crimes on the Internet (Cheng, Wu & Zeng, 2006). Joseph and Richard (2007), argue that the issue of privacy on online networking sites has been the main cause of tension be-

tween the business aspect of social networking sites and the safety and privacy concerns of the users. Social networking sites have the potential for huge monetary gains through online advertising. For privacy reasons, users of social networking sites usually receive privacy setting recommendations from social networking sites whose default settings are rarely altered or even questioned. However, there still exist privacy problems owing to the fact that some of the users are not usually aware of the amount of personally identifiable information they have provided to groups, companies and individuals.

An individual's Facebook profile contains recognizable pieces of information such as name, date of birth, political and religious views, interests and hobbies as well as education and work information. This gives Facebook the ability to offer a snapshot of who an individual is and the people that that individual knows. The features and applications that Facebook users chose to engage in, also serve as conduits for information sharing. Facebook users share sensitive information on their profiles because they have social reasons and motivations that cause them to underestimate the risks involved in doing so. Facebook provides users access to its privacy policy, which makes users aware that the information they provide on their profiles may be shared with third parties and that Facebook takes some measures to protect the users information.

However, studies have shown that Facebook users do not read privacy policies and are even misinformed about what these policies are (Grimmelmann, 2009).

Also, users are not aware that Facebook's default privacy settings allow their information to be published publicly and that they need to actively change these settings if they do not want their information viewed by other parties. The other reason why Facebook users easily share sensitive information on their profiles, disregarding the risks involved, is that Facebook offers users a strong sense of relationship with other users and this distracts the process of evaluation of the privacy risks involved (Grimmelmann, 2009).

Studies have also been carried out to find out the impact and use of social networking sites in other facets of society such as business, politics, media, education and healthcare. Feezell, Conroy and Guerrero (2009) , carried out a study on Facebook using a multi-method design explore issues in the content of online political groups and whether these groups have any potential influence on offline political engagement. Results from their study revealed that online groups were useful in performing the most of the positive civic functions, such a mobilizing communities and encouraging political participation; just as

offline groups did. An example of a service that has been used extensively in political mobilization is "Arab Spring". Arab Spring is a large network of local groups that allows users to organize local groups or find one of the thousands groups that are already meeting up face-to-face (About Arab Spring, 2011). Many Facebook pages, set up to promote the strike, attracted tens of thousands of followers. The government mobilized to break the strike through infiltration and riot police, and while the regime was somewhat successful in forestalling a strike, dissidents formed the "6 April Committee" of youths and labor activists, which became one of the major forces calling for the anti-Mubarak demonstration on 25 January in Tahrir Square.

Although several issues surround the use of Social Networking Sites, their growing popularity and use is of interest to media and public relations practitioners. Nowadays most of the social networking websites are targeting wider audiences; few ones are interested in targeting niche people with specific interests or characteristics, for example, activity-centered websites like Couchsurfing, identity-driven websites like BlackPlanet, and affiliation-focused websites like MyChurch. By now, there is no reliable data concerning the number of websites available and the number of people who use such websites, but social networking websites are exceedingly growing in popularity worldwide.

3.6.10.1 The Number of Followers

Facebook allows each user to have up to 5,000 friends per friend list. They can have the same friend on multiple lists as well. Users can have unlimited Followers.

3.6.10.2 Facebook Usage in Egypt

Facebook is the most popular social media network in the Middle East and has 8,357,340 users in Egypt as of July, 2011. 78% of Egypt's Facebook users are between the ages of 15-29 years and 22% users are above the age of 30 years. In the second edition of a series of reports produced by the Governance and Innovation Program at the Dubai School of Government, it has been observed that among Arab countries, Egypt has seen the highest increase in the number of Facebook users in the first quarter of 2011. The report surveyed Facebook users in Tunisia and Egypt and also found that six out of 10 respondents in both countries said that blocking access to social media provided a boost to the revolutions.

3.7 Growth of social network Sites

According to comScore report. Facebook, Twitter Lead Social Networking growth. In October 2011 Facebook reached more than half (55 percent) of the world's global audience, Social networking accounted for nearly 1 in every 5 minutes spent online globally in October 2011, ranking as the most engaging online activity worldwide. Social networking sites now reach 82 percent of the world's Internet population age 15 and older that accessed the Internet from a home or work computer, representing 1.2 billion users around the globe, according to a report from comScore, a company specializing in the measurement of the digital world.

The report, "It's a Social World: Top 10 Need-to-Knows About Social Networking and Where It's Headed," analyzes the current state of social networking activity around the globe, providing insights into how social networking has influenced the digital landscape and the implications for marketers operating in this social world. In October, Facebook reached more than half (55 percent) of the world's global audience and accounted for 1 in every 7 minutes spent online around the world and 3 in every 4 social networking minutes, the report found.

"The emergence and widespread global adoption of social networks has vastly influenced human interaction on an individual, community and larger societal level, and underscores the convergence of the online and offline worlds," said Linda Boland Abraham, comScore CMO and executive vice president of global development. "Regardless of geography, social networks are weaving themselves ever more intricately into the fabric of the digital experience, opening a world of new opportunity for business and technology."

In recent years, microblogging has taken hold as a popular social networking activity on a global scale. In October, Twitter reached 1 in 10 Internet users worldwide, growing 59 percent in the past year. Other popular microblogging destinations seeing rapid adoption include Chinese site Sina Weibo, with its audience growing 181 percent in the past year to rank as the 10th largest social network in October. Tumblr, which ranked 12th worldwide in audience size, grew 172 percent in the past year.

Although young users age 15-24 still represent the most highly engaged segment of social networkers, with an average of 8 hours per visitor spent in the category in October, social networking is catching on among older age segments across the globe. The report found people age 55 and older represented the fastest-growing age segment in global social net-

working usage, with the penetration of social networks in the segment increasing nearly 10 percentage points since July 2010 to 80 percent in October 2011.

In the United States, 64 percent of smartphone users accessed social networking sites at least once in October 2011, with 2 in 5 smartphone owners connecting via social networking nearly every day. In the EU5, 45 percent of smartphone owners accessed social networks on their mobile device during the month, with nearly 1 in 4 doing so on a near daily basis. Of the 43 markets individually reported by comScore, 41 markets saw at least 85 percent of their respective online populations visit social networking sites in October 2011.

3.8 Social Networking Sites user statistics

Social Media changed the concept of traditional report. Since Mashable.com start to present an in interactive reports, many expert and blogger start to use the “Infographic” report, which make the report easier to read and understand it.

According to infogarphic Spring 2012 Social Media User Statistics, Dave Larson present below an infogarphic report contains user activity in comparison of Social Networking Sites (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest) in :

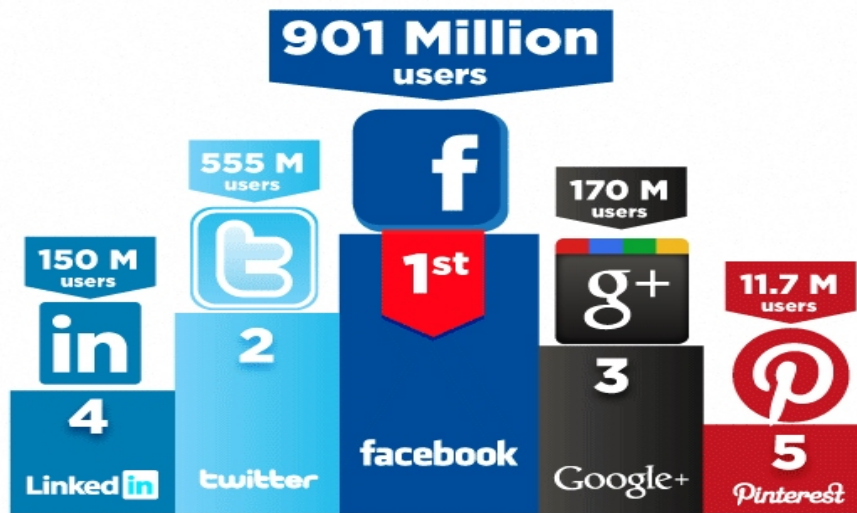
- Number of Users on popular Social Networking Sites.
- Monthly visits on top Social Networking Sites.
- Male-Female Ratio.
- Time spend by average Social Networking user per month



USER ACTIVITY

Comparison Of Social Networking Sites

Number of Users on Popular Social Networking Sites



Monthly Visits on Top Social Networking Websites



Figure 3.8 Social Networking Sites user statistics

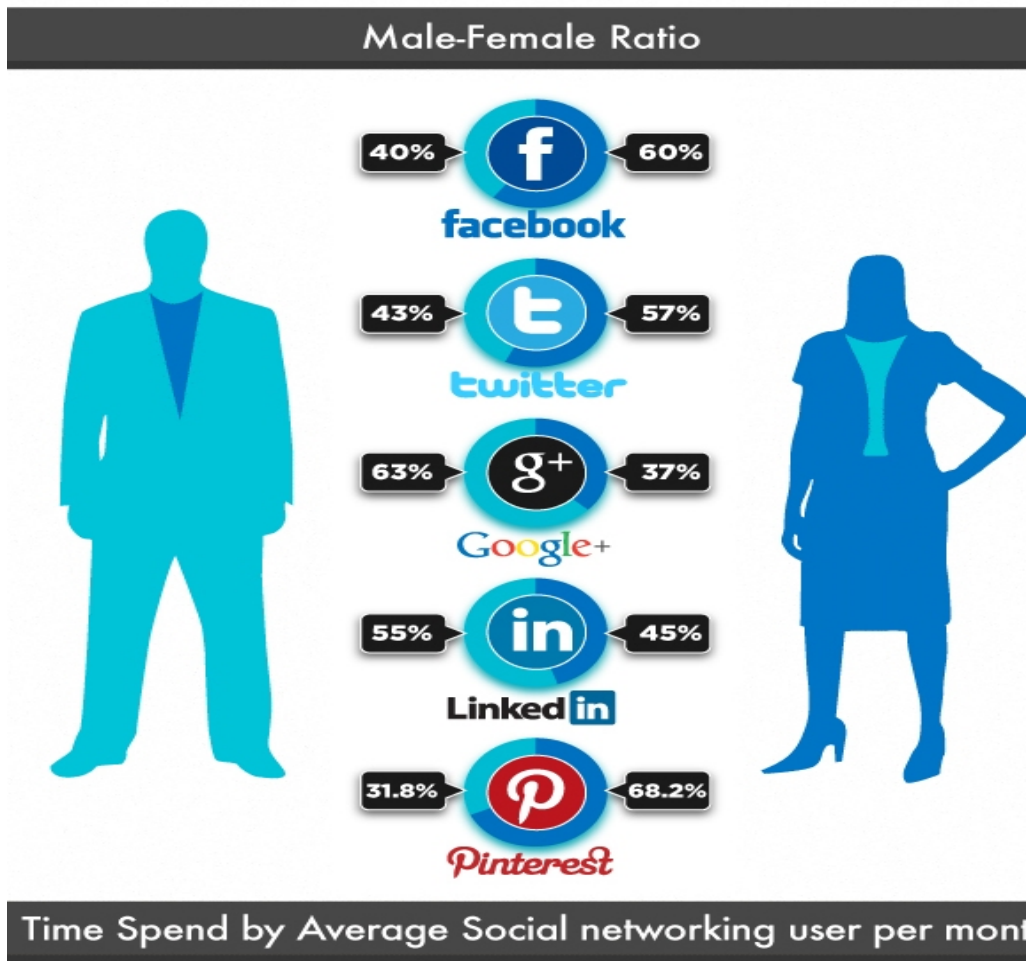
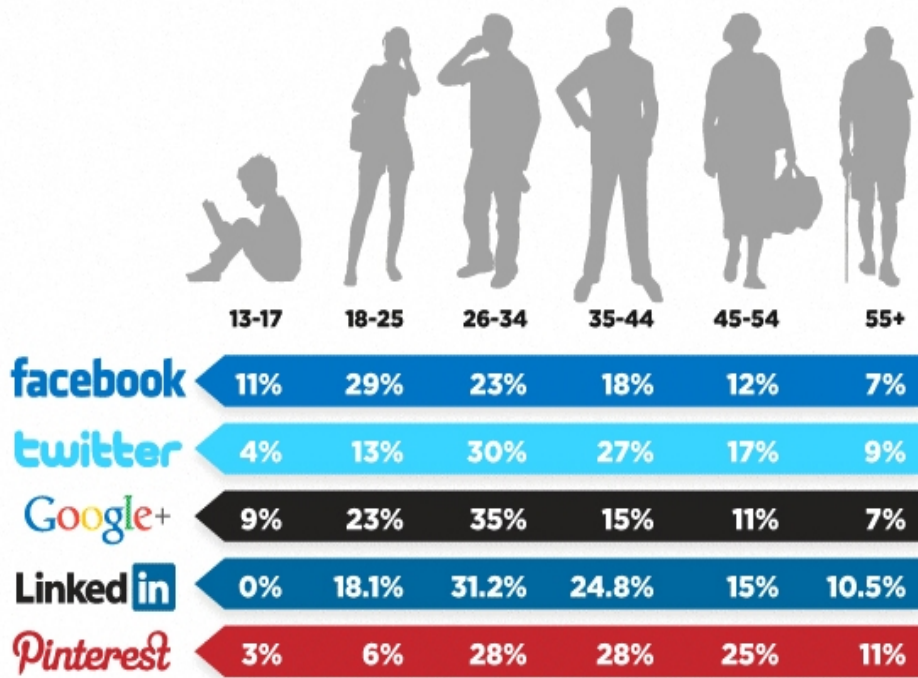
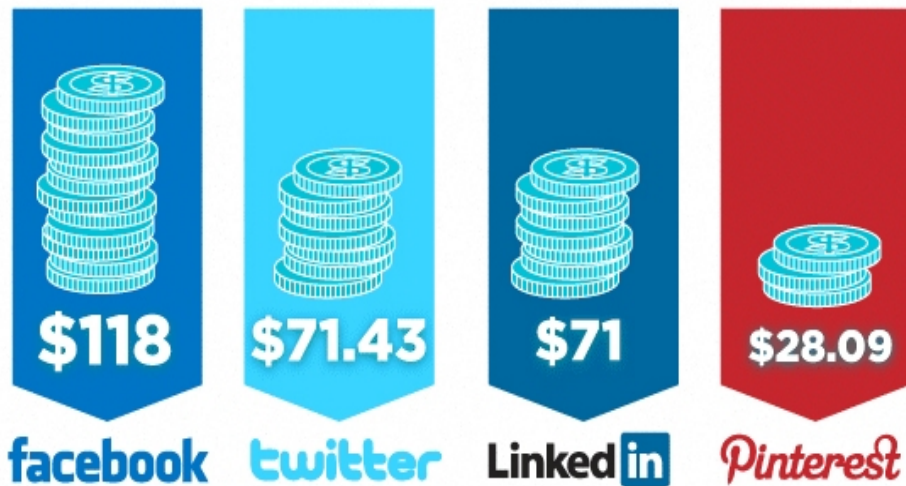


Figure 3.8 Social Networking Sites user statistics

Age Demographics of Social Networking Users



Estimated User Worth of popular Social networking sites



Compiled & Designed by
GO-Gulf.comTM

Figure 3.8 Social Networking Sites user statistics

3.9 Social Media Addiction

The term “social media addiction” is frequently seen in headlines and tossed around by television pundits. But society should not be so quick to attach the term “addiction” to social media activities, experts say.

“Addiction is a word that should not be used lightly to describe a set of behaviors,” says Mark Fabbri, director of the Psychology degree program for South University. “Addiction is related to a compulsion to consume something or engage in a set of behaviors to the point that it significantly interferes with a person’s life.”

The dictionary defines addiction as “the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, such as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma.”

Fabbri points out that common, identified addictions include sex, gambling, various substances, and even the internet.

“Any action can become addictive if it has a negative significant impact on a person’s life, but I would caution using the term addiction outside its intended definition,” he adds.

Adam Singer, the social media practice director for LEWIS PR — Global Communications, wrote a blog post for his media blog, *The Future Buzz*, titled *Why ‘Social Media Addiction’ Makes Absolutely Zero Sense*. He says individuals who abuse something, like social media, to the extent that it causes problems in their lives probably have deeper issues.

“I think social media addiction is something being played up in the media because it is a hot topic right now,” Singer says. “A lot of people are leveraging that for story ideas, or to trump up the value of something whether that’s products that stop access to social sites at work or psychologists trying to sell different services. There are motivators to playing it up.”

Neil Vidyarthi is managing editor of *Social Times*, a blog which covers the stories of the people in the business of social media. He says he personally believes social media can be addictive, using Facebook as an example.

“There’s a voyeuristic tendency none of us realized would be so high,” he says. “That’s why there are 500 million users spying on one another. We’re all interested in what others are doing. Facebook does something you could never really do before. Now you have this

real-life, breathing example right in front of you and it's so fascinating to people and they can get addicted."

But Fabbri cautions that there is a big difference between addiction and overuse of social media.

"An addiction will cause the individual to lose out on other things on life," he adds. "For example, spending so much time on social networks at work causes the individual to lose their job. A person can spend too much time in social networks but still are able to function adequately in life. Like any activity there is a need to find balance in what we do."

An article in Psychology Today called Social Media Addiction: Engage Brain Before Believing echoes Fabbri's assertions, saying "it concerns me that, as a society, we are very cavalier tossing around the concept of 'addiction.' Addiction is a serious psychological diagnosis based on specific and seriously life-impairing criteria."

3.10 Impact of using social media as a tool for marketing communication

The usage of social media has been rising constantly in recent years. Also for companies these new platforms became interesting as soon as they realized that their customers spend a lot of their time on social media platforms. The companies stated that social media marketing communication can be done by almost every company, no matter what kind of market segment they are in. Although social media marketing communication is a relatively simple, fast and cost-effective way for companies to get into a communication with their customers and stakeholders, there are a few rules everyone should obey before starting a social media marketing communication and of course while doing it. Risks occur only if the company starts to get into a communication they cannot avouch. If the company gets into a marketing communication they cannot support by the competences the company has, they risk the loss of brand reputation and damage to the image of the company. As long as the companies utilizing social media platforms as marketing communication channels stick with their competences and companies doesn't see a risk in the usage of social media for enterprises. Furthermore, companies favour the interdependence of different social media platforms, which makes it easier for companies to spread their marketing or communication message with little effort to a large stakeholder audience. YouTube videos published by the companies can be linked on Facebook and the Twitter channel edited by the company can also be connected to other platforms like Facebook to keep stakeholders updated at this channel also. The companies embrace the form of marketing communication enabled

by social media. The marketing communication became more personal and companies get more into a face-to-face dialog with their customers and stakeholders. The companies have further possibilities now to interact with the stakeholders via the social media platforms

3.11 Social Media and the Nonviolent Revolution

In the case of Egypt, the recent uprising is constructed as a youth, non-violent revolution in which social media (especially facebook and twitter) are champions. The underlying message here is that it these “middle-class” educated youth (read: modern) are not “terrorists,” they hold the same values as “us” (the democratic West), and finally use the same tools (facebook and twitter) that “we” invented and use in our daily-lives. They are just like “us” and hence they deserve celebration. These constructions are clear from a quick look the CNN, Time, Vanity Fair and others representations of the so-called leaders or icons of this revolution. They are all middle (upper) class Egyptians under the age of thirty. Most of them have one or more connection to the West, either by virtue of education (Time’s cover feature of seven “youth,” included three students from the American University in Cairo), work (e.g. Wael Ghoneim, sales manager at Google), or training. According to the BBC, Dr Gene Sharp the author of “Non-Violent Revolution Rulebook” is “the man now credited with the strategy behind the toppling of the Egyptian government” through activists “trained in Sharp’s work.” This same profile of young people similarly monopolized television talk-shows in Egypt. And while many of these individuals did take part in the uprising in different capacities their status icons of the “revolution” in when the majority of the Egyptian population and those who participated in the uprising are of the subaltern classes is both disturbing and telling. This majority of people who have never heard of Dr. Sharp or Freedom House, never studied at AUC, or worked for Google. More profoundly, they are antagonistic about “Western” influence and presence in Egypt. Thus the class composition of dissent has been cloaked by a new imaginary homogenous construct called “youth.” In this construct, the media and academic analysts lump together the contradictory and often conflictual interests of ‘yuppies’ (young, urban, professionals of the aforementioned connections and backgrounds) with those of the unemployed, who live under the poverty line in rural areas and slum-areas. Under this banner of “youth” the “yuppies” and upper middle-class young people are portrayed as the quintessential representative of this uprising.

3.12 Social Networking Sites and Political Participation

The rapid growth in usage of social networking sites begs a reconsideration of the meaning of mediated political participation in society. Castells (2009) contended that social networking sites offer a form of mass communication of the self wherein individuals can acquire a new creative autonomy.

Social media are increasingly part of contemporary campaign practice. In recent years, there have been a wide variety of examples of how social networking sites have facilitated the growth and extension of grassroots movements (Schulz, 2008) or how they have boosted citizens' engagement in electoral campaigns (Castells, 2009, pp. 346–364; Erkul & Kes-Erkul, 2009; Metzgar & Maruggi, 2009) (Arab Spring, 2011). Many of these examples foster the logic of interactivity and user engagement that works alongside and in association with mainstream media. The purpose is often not to remain within the enclaves of social media sites but to gain mainstream coverage and infiltrate all media channels as the viral communication spreads. In this manner, social media platforms enable new ways in which to think and act political engagement ways that facilitate political participation and mobilize grassroots groups or individuals against common goals. Social media blur and cross over into mainstream media just as, in a similar process, the creative autonomy of the individual combines with political intent of the collective. The combination of creative autonomy with political intent is claimed (Castells, 2009; Stiegler, 2008) to offer up a form of political individuation that is radicalizing and that can empower individuals and promote social change

The idea that social networking sites such as the Facebook are having a profound political effect is not surprising news for anyone especially after the various revolutions that are taking place in the Arab region in the last few months that spread from Tunisia to Egypt, to Bahrain, Libya, Yemen and other parts of the Arab region. It is obvious that "Twitter, Facebook and YouTube have been an integral part of political upheaval and change in the Middle East" (Lloyd, 2011).

3.13 Usage of politics in Social Networking Sites

Now companies are creating more and more accurate models of how people socially interact, and are building on the web of connections that people share. The next generation of social networking websites are creating new ways for people to effectively leverage those connections and scale them up. Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace are new means to reach

political participants where they are interacting with their friends, and in a much more efficient way than previously possible. Each commands the attention of tens of millions of people on a daily basis. For example, more than half of Facebook's over 50 million unique users (growing by more than 1 million weekly) visit the site daily, and generate an average over 2 billion page views per day. YouTube streams more than 100 million videos daily.

By leveraging "friend" connections and using virtual "word-of-mouth" marketing, these social sites offer an opportunity to break through the media cacophony. On sites like Facebook, trusted people spread political messages in a way only dreamed of in the age of mass media

Thus, most people worldwide are now having a free medium whereby they can express their political beliefs freely without censorship and fear from the governments.

3.14 Role of Social Networking Sites in protesting

In part by using the social networking sites, activists organised and publicised the unprecedented protests that gave rise to the so-called Arab Spring, which has so far seen longtime governments in Egypt and Tunisia fall, regimes in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Bahrain clash with the opposition, and leaders in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE offer more benefits to their populace. Social media its rise and its new activist uses have "played a critical role in mobilisation, empowerment, shaping opinions and influencing change," the report said.

According to (The National UAE) The most popular Twitter hashtags in the Arab region in the first three months of this year were "Egypt", "Jan25", "Libya", "Bahrain" and "protest". Nearly 9 in 10 Egyptians and Tunisians surveyed in March said they were using Facebook to organise protests or spread awareness about them.

All but one of the protests called for on Facebook ended up coming to life on the streets. These and other findings from the newly released second edition of the Arab Social Media Report by the Dubai School of Government give empirical heft to the conventional wisdom that Facebook and Twitter abetted if not enabled the historic region-wide uprisings of early 2011.

According to Freeland television, Facebook and Twitter "have been more powerful in solving the problem of collective action, by giving people unhappy with their governments the confidence that their views are widely shared."

Thus, social networking websites are effective and powerful in helping us to know whether we share our views with the public or it is only a personal opinion (Freeland, 2011). Yet, still inaugurate a new regime is the most difficult step that could not be achieved with the social networking websites.

Moreover, social media could differ in languages being used, but the similarities between the different social networking websites are quite clear in use. Besides, blogs are now considered one of the main threats and challenges to media providers as they can cause real societal changes by now are having over 200,000 active blogs in the Arab region (Ian, 2011).

Expressing opinions about politics, community issues and religion is particularly common in the Arab world. For instance, in Egypt and Tunisia, two nations at the heart of the Arab Spring, more than six-in-ten social networkers share their views about politics online. In contrast, across 20 of the nations surveyed, a median of only 34% post their political opinions.

Similarly, in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan, more than seven-in-ten share views on community issues, compared with a cross-national median of just 46%.

There is considerable interest in social networking in low- and middle-income nations. Once people in these countries are online, they generally become involved in social networks at high rates. For instance, the vast majority of internet users in Mexico, Brazil, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Russia and India are using social networking sites.

Conversely, publics in some more economically developed nations seem less enthusiastic about interacting with others online especially Japan and Germany, the only two countries where less than half of all internet users participate in social networks. And those Japanese and Germans who do go online for social networking use it less often than others around the world to express thoughts on culture, community, sports, politics and religion.

3.15 Social Networking Sites and the Revolutions

3.15.1 Introduction

Since the “dot-com crash”, the new Internet eventually deemed Web 2.0 by web enthusiasts mutated and evolved into the giant, interconnected beast of social networks that everyone uses today. The Internet is, make no mistake about it, all about social interactions and social connections.

Recently, James from MUO wrote a bit disparagingly about the potential for Twitter to offer valuable information, or the value that it brings to sparking social revolution. While his point may be true regarding the London riots, it's hardly true about most revolutionary acts around the world. Social networking sites, tools and forums are providing the world with catalysts for change that will ultimately topple entire regimes.

The power of social networking sites has increasingly been felt in politics. The positive effect of social media on the Arab Spring is widely agreed upon. During the Tunisian revolution, people spread stories via Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube about state oppression and police brutality, thereby spreading awareness of things the autocratic regime had tried to keep hidden.

Social networking sites helped protesters in one country come together and spread the word of revolution rapidly to other countries in the Middle East and North Africa. All the while it also brought the conflict in front of the world's very eyes. The success of the Tunisian revolution had an emboldening effect and Egyptians quickly followed suit by revolting against the ruling regime. On one of the first days of revolution, more than 90,000 people signed up on Facebook for a protest against torture, poverty, corruption, and unemployment. The week before President Hosni Mubarak ended his 30 year rule, the number of tweets about political change in Egypt increased ten-fold.

Facebook had 845 million monthly active users as of December 2011 and is accessible in over 70 languages. By September 2011, Twitter had 50 million active users logging in at least once a day. Social media has enabled these masses of people to democratize media production. In countries that do not have free media, people use social networking sites to access and spread information that state television does not provide them with. They are creating their own agenda and changing what is being talked about. Even before the Arab Spring many people opposed Ben Ali and Mubarak, but they had been fragmented. New networking technology helped them form groups, build solidarity and organize protests.

Many autocratic governments fear social media's power. The authorities shut down a number of websites or completely turned off internet access during Arab Spring protests. This only fed the rage, causing more people to take to the streets because they could no longer follow the unrest from afar. The Tunisian government hacked Facebook accounts in order to gain inside information. Reuters reports that bloggers have been threatened with

imprisonment in several countries for spreading “malicious rumors”. In China, activists disappeared after online calls for a Jasmine Revolution in February 2011.

The image shows a screenshot of the Facebook page for 'Free Iran'. The page header includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the page name 'Free Iran' with a 'Like' button. Below the header, it identifies the page as a 'Non-Profit Organization' based in 'Tehran, Iran'. A row of five photos shows people participating in a protest, with some wearing green gloves and holding up their hands in a 'V' sign. The main content area features a post from 'Free Iran' with a photo of a hallway and the text: 'Iran orders censoring of epic Persian love story eight centuries on www.freedomessenger.com'. The post is dated '18 hours ago' and has '9 people like this'. Below the post, there are two comments: one from 'Veronika Fořtová' and another from 'José Antonio Ouellette'.

Figure 3.15.1: Facebook page of "Green Revolution" of Iran

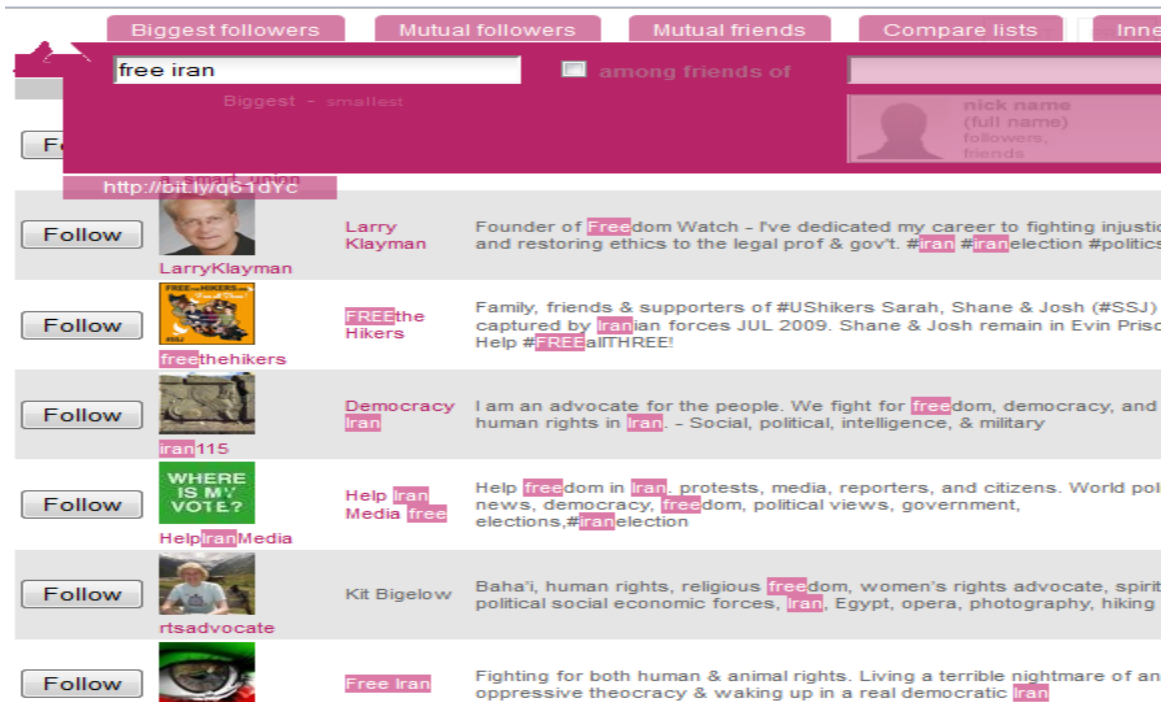


Figure 3.15.1 List of Twitter accounts of "Green Revolution" of Iran

3.15.2 Digital Revolutions 2.0 Worldwide

Since the 1990s, the rapid diffusion of new electronic communications ("new media") and technological advancements in this field have changed the role of these media in society. This trend also impacts on the opportunities for political mobilisation and protest. Unlike the traditional mass communications, with newspapers and TV as lead media, the use of the Internet via computers and mobile phones facilitates individualised mass communication, allowing user-generated content to be shared with a virtual community. In this way, users can bypass governments and the mainstream media, in their established roles as conceptual, commercial and organisational gate-keepers and agenda-setters, and use the World Wide Web to transcend the local and, indeed, the national public spheres. In the debate about the political significance of modern communication tools in general, one question which arises is what the Internet's evolution into Web 2.0 means for political communication and participation, and what has actually changed. The fact is that the Internet whose scope and usage have increased exponentially since the 1990s was not a new medium in the strict sense, but rather a convergence of all the previously known formats into a hypermedium.

Generally, though, hypotheses that the Internet, to all intents and purposes, automatically facilitates political mobilisation and promotes democracy, fall short of the mark. The same applies to technology-indifferent positions which regard the Internet as merely a new (mass) medium which leaves the business of politics essentially unchanged. Web 2.0 in particular is not just a new social and political arena; new forms of political culture are clearly also emerging here, reshaping the political space in relation to the usual dichotomies of public vs. private, institutional vs. civil society, professional vs. grassroots politics/volunteering etc. and thus increasing the significance of what is, from a professional political perspective, the "pre-political space". In the relationship between technology and society, it was long assumed that social relations would determine the technology; in reality, however, the relationship tends to be one of interaction, with technical communications infrastructure also influencing the structures of social organisation and providing a format for political participation and activism (Leistert/Röhle 2011). In this sense, it is appropriate to talk of an evolving (political) culture of the Web 2.0. The Internet is now more than just an online media platform; its networked structure which lacks any formal or thematic nucleus and does not depend on the membership-based organisation which was previously so important for political mobilisation influences social relations and personal and collective identity constructs alike (Bieber/ Leggewie 2012).

For that reason, new social media such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter have become a particular focus of attention in analyses of the recent upheavals in the Middle East as well as earlier protests elsewhere in the world (e.g. Myanmar in 2007; Moldova in 2009). To most observers, it seems obvious that these new media have played a role in the organisation and reporting of the uprisings and protests. However, their precise role and significance in the events as they unfolded are unclear and contentious: "Internet enthusiasts" talk about the dawning of a new age of political mobilisation and even claim that the new media are a catalyst for social and political change (Jarvis 2011; Shirky 2008). Although he does not completely disregard the negative impacts, Diamond (2010, p. 70) explicitly refers to "liberation technology", which, he says: "...enables citizens to report news, expose wrongdoing, express opinions, mobilize protest, monitor elections, scrutinize government, deepen participation, and expand the horizons of freedom." More skeptical observers have their doubts about this, however: they draw attention to the negative impacts of new technologies and the potential for their misuse, and caution against excessive optimism (Morozov 2011; Gladwell 2010; York 2010). Some evidence for both positions can be found in the

recent upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East, which the Western media in particular have often described as the "Facebook revolution", especially as Internet usage figures show that the number of languages being used in the Internet has also increased. After years of stagnation in ossified authoritarian structures, North Africa and the Middle East experienced the formation of democracy movements in 2010/11, following on from the fledgling movements which emerged in the 1980s (Algeria) and the early 21st century (Khalid Saied and Kefaya movements in Egypt). Although discontent had been simmering beneath the surface of the region's societies for years, the timing, speed and above all the initially rapid success of the movements in Tunisia and Egypt took most observers by surprise.

The key characteristic of the mass movements was their social and ideological breadth. In the successful protests in Tunisia and Egypt, but also in countries such as Bahrain, Yemen and Syria, economically and socially disadvantaged and weak sectors of society protested alongside intellectuals, civil servants, old and new middle classes, members of the business community and trade unions. Urban and rural communities, women and men, young and old were all represented, as were the right and left of the political spectrum and religious and secular movements. The use of the new media appeared to play a particularly significant role in organising the protests and bringing them to the world's attention (Hanrath 2011).

Even before this, the phrase "Twitter revolution" had been coined to describe the protests against the rigged elections in Iran back in 2009. A former member of the USA's National Security Council even went as far as to say that Twitter should win the Nobel Peace Prize. It soon became apparent, however, that some of this was wishful thinking and that in reality, it was the traditional forms of communication, such as word-of-mouth and flyers, which played a far more important role than the new media in organising local protests and mobilising the urban masses. Compared with most other countries in the region, Iran has a high Internet penetration rate and a lively blogosphere. In their book *Blogistan: The Internet and Politics in Iran*, Sreberny and Khiabany (2011) argue that the widespread practice of blogging must be contextualised and analysed in relation to the wider socio-political and cultural environment. They make it clear that blogging cannot be equated with political activism, although they acknowledge that many forms of Internet usage in an authoritarian and highly regulated context can have a political dimension.

They therefore categorically refute any characterisation of the 2009 protest movement as a "Twitter revolution". "There is little evidence that Twitter and Facebook or YouTube

played a major role in organising demonstrations. They did become channels through which messages could be sent to international media organisations that had little access and first-hand information about what was happening in Iran. These sites also attracted messages and actions of international solidarity as well as mobilising the Iranian diaspora." (Sreberny/Khiabany 2011, p. 175). For the diaspora, the role of the new media was key. The green wave showed how much can be achieved within a repressive context. But it has also shown "that technologies in themselves are insufficient substitutes for political strategy, goals and discourse" (Sreberny/ Khiabany 2011, p. 181). The same applies, by extension, to the Arab democracy movements in 2011.

In Tunisia and Egypt, the importance of social networks in organising protest increased significantly; for example, within a very short time, tens of thousands of people in Egypt "liked" the Facebook page "We are all Khaled Said" which urged people to join the protests. But here too, flyers and traditional modes of communication contributed significantly to mass mobilisation. This is borne out by statistics on media usage in Arab countries. Although regular Internet usage has increased here in recent years, the majority of the population continues to obtain much of its information from international news broadcasts on TV, with the Internet trailing far behind in second place. Internet coordinated protests were important in gathering an impressive crowd for the initial protests in Tahrir Square in central Cairo. However, the mobilisation of millions of people across all the regions of Egypt was only possible with traditional structures to which certain trade union movements, the well-organized Muslim Brotherhood, and the "ultras" groups of hardcore supporters of various Egyptian football clubs who were accustomed to clashing with the security forces had access after they had joined the protests (Amar 2011; Montague 2012). Yet again, however, it was the interplay between the new and the traditional media which proved to be the key factor: the traditional media seized on information from the new media and thus acted as a loudspeaker and "amplifier" for news from individual Internet activists. The two forms of media relied on each other for success or to make a significant contribution to the revolution. The protests as a whole were more difficult to organise in contexts where this interplay was impossible to achieve (Richter 2011).

The protest movements in the Middle East are a good example of how the new media are being used, not only by protesters. They also show that the use of these media is fraught with risks. Regimes have a wealth of opportunities to limit the use of the new media, at the very least. Some governments attempted to block Internet access and restrict the use of

mobile phones. On 27 January 2011, the Egyptian government under ex- President Hosni Mubarak imposed an almost total Internet blackout across the country for several days. The security forces and secret services in various countries also attempted to identify activists from YouTube videos and encouraged users to denounce members of the protest movements. The regimes also used the new media themselves to get their message across and mobilise support. Protest in more general terms. Finally the impact of the new media on politics can be better understood through the framework that considers the five levels of analysis (Aday et al. 2010):

1. Promoting individual transformation,
2. Changing intergroup relations,
3. Facilitating collective action,
4. Garnering external attention,
5. Changing regime policies.

3.15.3 Kony 2012

The Kony 2012 campaign is now using the global reach and the visibility potential of social media. The producers are trying to make the fate of children in Uganda visible to the rest of the world. Through this they hope to force the US government into taking further action against Kony, just like videos of President Bashar Al-Assad's violent crack-down on Syrian protesters increased international pressure on Assad.

It takes many people to induce this kind of change because its effectiveness lies in the hands of the masses. If there are too many people going one way, it makes it hard for governments to justify going the other way. Problems that have not been a priority of the ruling elite suddenly become topics of national interest. Citizens make these topics problems for their governments.

There are several complaints made against the Kony 2012 video. Some are less valid than others. The Ugandan prime minister, Amama Mbabazi, tweeted to several celebrities, inviting them to visit his "proud nation" to see for themselves the "peace and stability that exists". He included the hashtag #KonyisnotinUganda. It is clear that the places celebrities and tourists visit will certainly not be the Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps where approximately two million people were put by the Ugandan government at the height of

the crisis. The conditions in the camps led to acute malnutrition and diseases spread quickly.

Uganda is more than just Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA now only comprises of a couple of hundred people and Kony is probably no longer in Uganda. Do these facts make the matter less urgent? Do these arguments in any way invalidate the aim of the video? Kony's past crimes speak for themselves and a militia group of a couple of hundred is only a small number in comparison to how big his army once was. This puts one question in the spotlight even more: if the LRA is so small, why has the government not been able to arrest Kony and his officers?

There is a second point of contention about the video. The Ugandan journalist Rosebell Kagumire and assistant professor of political science Adam Branch complain that the video makes the Africans look like "helpless children in need of rescue by white Americans". The fact is that the Ugandan army is trying to capture Kony, but it has been unsuccessful for the last 26 years. Uganda needs help, and nationalist pride or allegations of racism are weak arguments against bringing Kony to justice.

There were several attempts to negotiate with Kony which were fruitless. Kony and his officers stated from the beginning that they would not surrender if they were not granted immunity from prosecution. Given the severity of their actions this should never have been an option. Kony is number one on the list of the International Criminal Court, so despite all the arguments against the campaign, there is a valid case for international intervention

3.15.4 Occupy Wall Street

Occupy Wall Street has spread around the country at Internet speed as participants tap into Twitter, Facebook and microblogging site Tumblr to call Americans to the streets to protest what they see as a broken global financial system. What would have taken months to unfold in a different era has occurred in days and hours.

The Economist magazine calls it America's "first true social-media uprising." "If not for social media, 80 percent of our information would not have gone out to get people's attention," said Joanne Coppolino, an "occupier" in downtown

San Jose. "Social media helps us to stand as one."

And in just six weeks, the movement has moved beyond the nation's shores to cities such as Hong Kong and Buenos Aires. In all, more than 900 cities around the world have expe-

rienced Occupy protests, although most haven't drawn the thousands of participants seen at events such as Occupy Oakland or Occupy Wall Street in New York City.

“To draw attention to the fact that the Bank of America received \$45 billion in government bailout funds while funneling its tax dollars into 115 offshore tax havens [...] And to highlight the fact that the poor and middle class are now paying for this largess through drastic government cuts.”

Occupy participants say they have already scored victories, from raising a national outcry about income inequalities in the United States to taking partial credit for Bank of America dropping plans to charge a \$5 monthly fee for debit card purchases in the face of consumer outrage. Whether the movement actually changes major policy and the financial system -- or dramatically dwindles as winter sets in -- remains to be seen. But how Americans rally around issues will never be the same.

"We'll never again see a mass movement that doesn't make extensive use of the state-of-the-art social media and communications," said Kirk Hanson, executive director of the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University.

In the 1960s, "The tools of social protest were mimeograph machines and postage stamps," Silicon Valley futurist Paul Saffo said. "Now it's cyberspace. You have the exponential growth of the World Wide Web and social media and velocity (of the Internet) as things move much more quickly."

3.15.5 Iran Uprising

The 2009 Iranian election protests is the name given to the protests following the 2009 Iranian presidential election against the disputed victory of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad whereby Iranians also used the social media tools to encourage people to protest against “the miscount of votes.”, and to support the opposition candidates Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi. The “Iranian Uprising” occurred in major cities in Iran and around the world starting 13 June 2009. The protests were given several titles by their proponents including the Green Revolution, Green Wave or Sea of Green, reflecting presidential candidate Mousavi's campaign color, and also Persian Awakening

The creation of the Iranian Green Movement was developed during these protests. The events have also been nicknamed the "Twitter Revolution" because of the protesters' reliance on Twitter and other social-networking Internet sites to communicate with each other. Widespread editorial analyses assert that the 2009 election marks the official end of the

Islamic Republic and the beginning of the Islamic emirate or an imamate regime. Islamic politician Ataollah Mohajerani blasted the election as "the end of the Islamic Republic"

As protests swept Tunisia and other Arab countries, prominent Iranians start a debate claimed that both of the Iranian precedents as inspiration for the Arab uprisings. Mir Hossein Musavi, the Green Movement's leading presidential candidate, suggested that

The starting point of witnessing on the streets of Tunis, Sanaa, Cairo, Alexandria and Suez can be undoubtedly traced back to days of 15th, 18th and 20th June 2009 when people took to the streets of Tehran in millions shouting "Where is my vote?" and peacefully demanded

The response from Arab activists to these Iranian claims of influence was: neither. During the first two weeks of Twitter postings with hashtag #Jan25—the main keyword

for the Egyptian uprising that began on 25 January 2011—only 69 out of 42,466 tweets referred to Iran, and only 3 of these were in Arabic. Most were postings by Iranians or links to Western news reports, and none gave credit to Iranian precedent. If the Iranian Green Movement was not the sole or main inspiration for the Arab Spring, as Musavi suggested, it was one of many inspirations, including the whole series of "color revolutions" of the past decade. Sayid Yossif, an Egyptian activist, included the Green Movement in his list of precedents:

[We learned] how to become a revolution in name, like the Salt March (India), the July 26 Movement (Cuba), Solidarity (Poland), the Movement of Lawyers and Judges (Pakistan), and the Green Movement (Iran), and how to make a revolution really alive and active like the Orange Revolution (Ukraine), the Cedar Revolution (Lebanon), and the Lily Revolution (Kyrgyzstan).

"We have learned from you guys," Ghonim told Iranian activists, "that at the end of the day with the power of people, we can do whatever we want to do." Among the lessons of the Green Movement, it appears, was the tactic of cellphone, photography and videography, uploaded to the Internet or forwarded to friends to bypass government censorship. Virtually every image of the Iranian Green Movement included, somewhere in the frame, a picture of someone taking a picture. So, too, in Cairo's Tahrir Square and many other protests of the Arab Spring.

But in some ways, the successful uprisings of the Arab Spring replicated the Iranian Revolution of 1979 more closely than the Green Movement of 2009. They succeeded through

general strikes, which the Green Movement never managed to spark. During the Iranian Revolution, the general strike was so widespread that the government did not have enough troops to force everybody back to work, and workers in the oil industry shut down the monarchy's primary source of income.

The uprising that is taking place in the Middle East is clear evidence that people lost their tolerance and that they are not just demanding "civil and political rights but economic and social opportunities." Most Arabs are not just demanding political freedom and economic wellbeing; they are also demanding the basic human rights that they are deprived from under these autocratic regimes. Examples of the rights they are demanding are freedom of expression, right to use Internet and social media without any sort of censorship (Praag, 2011).

3.15.6 African Uprising

The revolts of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya were in North Africa and they set off chain reactions across the Arab world as far as Syria and Yemen. African citizens are suffering even from harder circumstances than those of the Arab countries. For example, Zimbabwe has been ruled for 31 years by Robert Mugabe, Cameroon for 29 years by Paul Biya, Uganda ruled by Yoweri Museveni for 25 years and Jose Dos Santos has been ruling for 32 years and is preparing to pass the presidential power to his children (Gumede, 2011).

Some African countries show signs of a revolt, such as Senegal and Uganda, but most others don't. Some African cities show a thirst for change and others don't. And, most importantly, most African leaders use lots of repressive measures to prevent mass demonstrations.

For African people, social media especially Twitter represent the only mean of acquiring information and knowing what is happening worldwide. The state whether in south or north Africa is almost fully controlling the public and private ones. This is to prevent the dissemination of information regarding government corruption. The state is controlling media by being the only and most essential advertiser, so losing the state means losing your only source of advertisement. Also, the state can indirectly control the private media through restricting the licenses given to private companies (Gumede, 2011).

The same goes for the radio as the government controls most radio stations and licenses are given only to the stations that do not cover any political issues. Thus, most Africans are deprived from any source of information about their government corruption. Yet, the rise

of the Internet, social media and mobile phones give these people another medium to communicate and share information without the state control (Gumede, 2011).

Although, the Internet is not widely spread among African people as it is among Egyptian and Tunisian, mobile phones are more widely spread especially among poor people in African countries. For example, in Zimbabwe's last elections, mobile phones were used to "text witnessed attempts at vote rigging by Zanu PF strongman at voting stations in remote areas." Thus, expected revolutions in the African countries primarily south of the Sahara will be through mobile phones and not through the Internet (Gumede, 2011).

3.15.7 Yemeni Uprising

After mass protests in Egypt and a popular uprising in Tunisia that ousted its long-time leader, thousands of Yemenis demonstrated in the capital Sanaa, calling on Ali Abdullah Saleh, president for more than 33 years, to step down. A major demonstration of over 16,000 protestors took place on 27 January in Yemen's capital. Saleh announced he would not run for reelection in 2013 and that he would not pass power to his son. More people invited on Facebook and Twitter and protested against the government in Sana'a and Aden, in a "Day of Rage." demanding the resignation of the president saying slogans such as "Get out get out, Ali. Join your friend Ben Ali" (Marshall, 2011).

As a result of all of this oppression that the Yemeni's people kept suffering from for almost 33 years, their anger and frustration were the main motivators behind their success. In February 2012, Yemen's revolutionary movement achieved its first victory: the removal of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

3.16 Arguments for and against the Social Media Tools in Politics

According to "The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, The Public Sphere, and Political Change" report from Ministry of Foreign Affairs in USA:

There are, broadly speaking, two arguments against the idea that social media will make a difference in national politics. The first is that the tools are themselves ineffective, and the second is that they produce as much harm to democratization as good, because repressive governments are becoming better at using these tools to suppress dissent.

The critique of ineffectiveness, most recently offered by Malcolm Gladwell in *The New Yorker*, concentrates on examples of what has been termed "slacktivism," whereby casual

participants seek social change through low-cost activities, such as joining Facebook's "Save Darfur" group, that are long on bumper-sticker sentiment and short on any useful action. The critique is correct but not central to the question of social media's power; the fact that barely committed actors cannot click their way to a better world does not mean that committed actors cannot use social media effectively. Recent protest movements — including a movement against fundamentalist vigilantes in India in 2009, the beef protests in South Korea in 2008, and protests against education laws in Chile in 2006 — have used social media not as a replacement for real-world action but as a way to coordinate it. As a result, all of those protests exposed participants to the threat of violence, and in some cases its actual use. In fact, the adoption of these tools (especially cell phones) as a way to coordinate and document real-world action is so ubiquitous that it will probably be a part of all future political movements.

This obviously does not mean that every political movement that uses these tools will succeed, because the state has not lost the power to react. This points to the second, and much more serious, critique of social media as tools for political improvement — namely, that the state is gaining increasingly sophisticated means of monitoring, interdicting, or co-opting these tools. The use of social media, the scholars Rebecca MacKinnon of the New America Foundation and Evgeny Morozov of the Open Society Institute have argued, is just as likely to strengthen authoritarian regimes as it is to weaken them. The Chinese government has spent considerable effort perfecting several systems for controlling political threats from social media. The least important of these is its censorship and surveillance program. Increasingly, the government recognizes that threats to its legitimacy are coming from inside the state and that blocking the Web site of The New York Times does little to prevent grieving mothers from airing their complaints about corruption.

The Chinese system has evolved from a relatively simple filter of incoming Internet traffic in the mid-1990s to a sophisticated operation that not only limits outside information but also uses arguments about nationalism and public morals to encourage operators of Chinese Web services to censor their users and users to censor themselves. Because its goal is to prevent information from having politically synchronizing effects, the state does not need to censor the Internet comprehensively; rather, it just needs to minimize access to information.

Authoritarian states are increasingly shutting down their communications grids to deny dissidents the ability to coordinate in real time and broadcast documentation of an event. This strategy also activates the conservative dilemma, creating a short-term risk of alerting the population at large to political conflict. When the government of Bahrain banned Google Earth after an annotated map of the royal family's annexation of public land began circulating, the effect was to alert far more Bahrainis to the offending map than knew about it originally. So widely did the news spread that the government relented and reopened access after four days.

Such shutdowns become more problematic for governments if they are long-lived. When antigovernment protesters occupied Bangkok in the summer of 2010, their physical presence disrupted Bangkok's shopping district, but the state's reaction, cutting off significant parts of the Thai telecommunications infrastructure, affected people far from the capital. The approach creates an additional dilemma for the state, there can be no modern economy without working phones and so its ability to shut down communications over large areas or long periods is constrained.

In the most extreme cases, the use of social media tools is a matter of life and death, as with the proposed death sentence for the blogger Hossein Derakhshan in Iran (since commuted to 19 and a half years in prison) or the suspicious hanging death of Oleg Bebenin, the founder of the Belarusian opposition Web site Charter 97. Indeed, the best practical reason to think that social media can help bring political change is that both dissidents and governments think they can. All over the world, activists believe in the utility of these tools and take steps to use them accordingly. And the governments they contend with think social media tools are powerful, too, and are willing to harass, arrest, exile, or kill users in response. One way the United States can heighten the conservative dilemma without running afoul of as many political complications is to demand the release of citizens imprisoned for using media in these ways. Anything that constrains the worst threats of violence by the state against citizens using these tools also increases the conservative dilemma.

3.17 Social Networks Sites Hacking

Another form of e-mobilization can be defined as a direct action that exploits the technical properties of the Internet to achieve a set of political goals that is hacking. Politically motivated 'hacktivism' as mentioned by Chadwick (2009) draws upon the resources of the hacker community and the hacker culture. In the past hackers have always been seen as the

mischief trouble creators who are trying to bring down the computer system, but it is important to understand that hacking has often been combined with broader social and political goals. As Chadwick mentions, ‘hackers operate against the authority figures, closed centralized system of control and against those who attempt to restrict access to information through intellectual property law. Hacker culture has always been portrayed to be individualistic, although when it comes to politically motivated hacking, group collaboration is often the norm. (Chadwick 2009:131)

In the past hackers have collaborated to make useful contributions to the development of various technologies, not least of which is the Internet itself (Nissebaum 2004: 211). Hence, it is given that hackers sometimes emerge as political participants. The most known example of hacktivism came in the form of the online action in support of Tunisian and Egyptian revolution. The hacker’s movement “Anonymous” was trying to hack the governmental sites in both countries to stop the censorship and to defend activists accounts in Facebook and Twitter in order to protect the organised events on Facebook and major accounts in Twitter.

In same time the regimes in both countries used the hacktivism to access activists Facebook and Twitter accounts in order to publish posts to calm down the protesters and to stop the major activists accounts. But the “Anonymous” movement from all around the world help the activists and start a war on internet to hack the governmental sites and to defend the activists accounts.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Research Methodology

The new Social Media tools, as described above, have the possibility to change concept of traditional news environment. It is a part of the online public opinion, where the digital interactivity facilitates new and rapid modes of news exchange, marketing communications, social movements, mass mobilizations, activists and protesters. The new Social Media tools facilitate an environment where political powers are being re-structured. This research aims to investigate the role and impact of the new Social Media tools in Egyptian Revolution and how the new Social Media Networks Sites (SNS) might impact the traditional media after the Egyptian revolution by analyzing role of Egyptian activists and how the CNN and AlJaz reports on social movements and new media. Previous research suggests that social media have neutral and ineffective attitude towards revolution and just a little impact on the demonstrations, where they dismiss its potential of Social media networks sites to influence on revolutions. This research offers an explanatory approach to the social media influence on the protests in Egypt revolution 2011, which resulted in the fall of the dictator Mubarak. Some experts named the Egyptian Revolution the Facebook or Twitter revolution, experts seems being very enthusiastic about the role of social media in the uprising towards the dictator. How does this relate to previous research that argues that social media have a have neutral and ineffective attitude towards protest groups? Did the new traditional media's position within the social media frame influenced their audiences on the protests in Egypt

4.1 Research Questions

This research aims to give a deeper understanding of how the social networks sites play a significant and important role in the Egyptian protests in terms of organising the mass mobilisations of the protesters and the impact of social networking sites on CNN and AlJaz channel news. Since there is no clear theory nor previous research that correspond with this research, a set of research questions has been set up to function as focus points and guide for the design and execution of the content analysis. The research questions aim to link the variables and focusing on the role and impact of social networks sites on traditional media and the protests in particular.

The main research question is:

What was the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?

This thesis is divided into the two questions which should be seen as complementary to one another, the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis will provide the answer to the main question.

RQ1: What role did social media sites play in the Egyptian Uprising according to the Egyptian activists and experts?

RQ2: What was the impact of social networks during the Egyptian Revolution according of the CNN & AlJaz news channels and how did these channels used the social networking sites to broadcast?

The first research question focuses on the framing of the activists and experts, aiming to provide data explaining role and impact of social networks sites in the revolution according to activists and experts. Previous research suggests that social media didn't have a big impact on the revolution protests and just a little impact on the demonstrations also as it shouldn't be named Facebook revolution, previous research suggest that the torture, poverty, corruption, unemployment and activists in the field, were the main reasons to the success of the revolution.

Therefore the first research question will provide a more detailed description as to the nature of the analyses. The first research question will further deal with a second level of qualitative analysis. The in-depth interviews with activists, experts and journalists. The reason for choosing these people in particular was due to the nature of the research. The exploratory nature of the thesis requires the researcher to contact people who were actively participating in the revolution and who were most actively utilizing the social media tools. Based on the gathered material in the literature review, the researcher has a reason to believe that activists, bloggers have utilized the social media tools during the revolution for various purposes and they were actively participating in the Uprising. It seemed fairly reasonable to try and contact the people who were personally involved in the Uprising and were active in writing/blogging about it online.

All the interviews will be recorded by the researcher. The interviews will deal with three main topics, which according to the researcher will provide with in-depth understanding of the Uprising and will help in answering the research question. The three main topics are: the socio-political factors of the Egyptian Uprising, the role of social media as seen by the interview participants and what these participants have to say about the depiction of Egyptian Uprising. Hence having gathered data on three thematic levels this research will help

in understanding the Uprising in depth and it will shed light on the role that social media played in the events.

The second research question looks at how the CNN and AlJaz cover on the Egyptian revolution, and to what extent they depend on social media as a source. Previous studies indicate that CNN and AlJaz have a weak coverage towards revolution, which is interesting given the observation that the traditional media has been seemingly positive in the sense that they have labeled the protests in Egypt as the Facebook- and Twitter revolution.

4.2 Research Design

This research project is focused on contemplating the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution. The Master thesis seeks to explore two topics. The role of social media in the Uprising as seen by Egyptian people involved in the movement and the role of social media as depicted by AlJaz and CNN news websites. To be able to deconstruct the Uprising and understand the role of social media sites in it, the researcher feels the need to use collected data of theoretical and empirical nature.

The background of Egyptian Revolution, its factors and characteristics, people involved in protests and documents regarding the movement, delivers the main data sources. The goal is to get the insight into the complexity of its nature and to understand to what extent social media tools can be held responsible for an event of such a scale.

The focus of the research is to understand the role and impact of social media during the Egyptian Revolution. The methodological part of the research is comprised of both qualitative and quantitative analyses. The qualitative part examines the role and impact of Social Media during the revolution in Egypt from different viewpoints and case studies to get a better understanding of the role of social media. The quantitative part will analyze the role of social media as described by two English news sites CNN and Al Jazeera, and the role of social media as described by people who participated in the protests and mobilizations, such as activists and bloggers.

To analyze how important social media sites were according to Egyptian activists and experts to CNN and AlJaz channels news. An analytical approach known as multidisciplinary, integrates marketing communications, political communications and politology, will be done to improve understanding of the complexity of the Egyptian Revolution.

The process of multidisciplinary will require the researcher to collect data on multiple data sets and then compare the results to one another to find similarities or differences which would validate the research.

The justification of using this method in the current research lies in the fact that the topic under exploration is wide and is on multiple levels dissimilar. Due to the vastness of the topic, and the fact that the research question wants to explore two topics, there is no single data source available to answer all the topics. Although the topics are related to one another and together will depict the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, the method of multidisciplinary will enhance the ability to answer the research question on the bases of synthesis and integration of the collected data.

The reason for doing that is to understand the real role of social media according to Egyptian experts and what the two news websites have to say about the role of social media in the Egyptian revolution.

4.3 Pilot

Before distributing the survey research among the chosen activists and experts, a face validity test was conducted where the survey was distributed to cyber activists to check whether any of the questions needed to be refined to get the required correct measurements. Also, a pilot research was conducted in order to make sure that the questions were well-structured and clear to answer. The survey was distributed to six activists and four researcher experts in the Digital Marketing, Journalism, Economic, Political field and their comments and modifications were taken into consideration to make sure that the questionnaire is clear, easy and understandable.

Reliability and validity are essential to be ensured before analyzing the data in order to get reliable and valid data.

4.4 Case rationale and objectives

The reason for selecting the Egyptian Uprising as a topic for Master Thesis was personal interest. It is important to mention that the researcher's perception on this topic was quite different at the beginning of the research and after in depth studying of the topic the perception has been changed. It is due to the fact that as a consumer of mainstream media the researcher saw the Egyptian Uprising as it was televised and believed that social media was responsible for making this Uprising happen. As the researcher stated in the

introduction of the thesis the statement by Wael Ghonim resonated the most as it was repeatedly telecasted on mainstream media. The question that kept coming back was, how can a movement of such a scale be initiated and carried out by social media tools, can it be called a Facebook Revolution?

The interest in the two topics: first being the role of social media as depicted by people of Egypt and second being the role of social media as depicted by CNN and AlJaz lies in the fact that the researcher perceives mainstream media as a watch dog for the people.

Studying media has given a realization that there is a great control and manipulation over what people need to see and what is being shown to them. Hence the willingness to talk first hand to activists and experts from Egypt utilized the social media tools during the Uprising seem as a most credible and valid option to comprehend the importance of these social media tools in political activism in Egypt. The interview results will be combined with the quantitative analysis of the news articles to see what importance did the news channels (CNN and AlJaz) give to social media tools. The comparison between the opinions of the Egyptian people with the opinion represented by these two news websites will provide the research with a comparative analysis.

4.5 The Data Collection of the Interviews

The qualitative data can provide research with a chronological flow, make a connection with events and show how one event led to which consequence and how it explains these consequences. But then one must not forget that a good qualitative data is more likely to lead to new findings and integration. The process of qualitative data can help the researcher to generate or revise the conceptual framework (Mathew & Huberman, 2008)

Interviews were scheduled for explorative study of the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Uprising. As Blee and Taylor state that, “semi structured interviews provide greater breadth and depth of information, the opportunity to discover the respondent’s experience and access to people’s ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. (Blee and Taylor, 2002; 93)

The interviews were formulated with the help of an interview guide which was prepared by the researcher beforehand. This guide served as a per interview briefing for the

interview actors, it informed them about the topics that will be discussed and the confidentiality of the interview. (Appendix A)

An interview guide further provided the researcher with a direction for the interview. The basis of the interview was the theoretical concepts that were understood before preparing the interview guide. So the interview provided with questions which were in context to theoretical claims. On this matter Marshall and Rossmann state the following, “the researcher explores few general topics to help uncover the participants views but otherwise respects the ways the participants frames and structures the responses” (Marshall & Rossmann, 2010; 144)

Guided by the research question the selection of the interview participants focused on Egyptian activists and experts. The researcher approached people who were working in the mentioned field. The aim was to obtain diversity amongst the interviewees so for the researcher the current location of the interviewee was not significant, but their presence or active participation during Egyptian Revolution of 2011 was essential. However, as the search for interview actors went on, it evolved into snow ball effect as he asked activists and experts to spread the request and provide with more contacts.

In order to avoid the danger of sampling too narrow, he felt it important to talk to people at the peripheries as well. This sense came to him later as he went on with the research and felt that talking to people who are residing outside of Egypt now will give a more comparative and contrasting information. This was due to the fact that he wanted to avoid biasness from the Egyptians who could be over powered by the sense of nationalism and pride over their achievements. Hence talking to someone Egyptian but who was outside of Egypt during those days but was still using social media tools actively could give the research a more dynamic view. This sense came to him in the process of interviews as Kvale (1988) says “The interviews sometimes result in much interpretation occurring along the way.” This worked out really well because he learned a few important discoveries.

Finally, after much networking, waiting, scheduling and rescheduling due to their busy routine, the method succeeded and a mixture of Skype and e-mail interviews could be conducted. The number of interviews conducted was ten. The number ten was seen to be in accordance to the qualitative research method. The interviews were analyzed constantly and the data provided with themes and categories which were under scrutiny from the re-

searcher over a period of time. This process can be called ‘constant comparison analysis’ (Marshall and Rossmann, 2010; 220), constantly comparing the data by the researcher gains additional findings and it only comes to an end if the researcher notices that the same patterns have started occurring in the results and not much more can be found through additional data collection.

In the case of this research, it can be said that the point of saturation of the qualitative data was achieved after having collected and analyzed a number of ten interviews. The interviews guide and all the relevant data can be found in the Appendix A.

On the following page a list of all ten interviewees, including their profession, is added. Before each interview the participants were assured that their answers for study purpose only :(Appendix A). The activist or expert name, gender of the interviewee, the connection method with which the data were captured and the professions are listed below.

Table 4.4: Six Activists – Interviewees

Interview, activist	Gender	Connection method	Profession
Fady Ramzy	M	E-mail	Activist Expert, E-Marketing Consultant.
Bassem Sabry	M	E-mail	Activist, writer, commentator, tweep
Hafsa Halawa	F	E-mail	Activist, NGO worker , National Democratic Institute, Blogger
Rawda Ali	F	Skype	Activist and defendant in NGO trial heavily involved in politics/community, member in a political party

Ahmad Sabri	M	E-mail	Activist, University Student, radicals political view
Adam Taylor-Awny	M	E-mail	working for alleviation of poverty & social justice, Oxfam GB

Table 4.4.1: Three Experts – Interviewees

Interview, Expert	Gender	Connection method	Profession
Fady Ramzy	M	E-mail	Activist &Expert, E-Marketing Consultant.
Mohammed Al-badry	M	E-mail	Journalist, PhD student in Political Science
Ali Ahmad Rabah	M	E-mail	Journalist, Alanba newspaper
Lara Sakr	F	E-mail	News Coordinator, reports writer ar youkal.net, Political Science student

Chapter 5

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative Findings

This research project aims to explore the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Uprising according to the experts, activists and journalists who were active during the protest days. In order to understand the concept the researcher feels the need to look at how these people utilized the social media tools. This chapter represents the analysis of a number of activist interviews with the actors of the Egyptian Revolution and Tunisian Uprising. Analyzing the activist and experts interviews seeks to answer the research question:

What was the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?

RQ1: What was the Impact of social media networks sites on the Egyptian Revolution, according to the Egyptian activists and experts?

The exploration of how social media sites were utilized by the interviewee actors during the Uprising provides the researcher with many aspects that should not be seen as exclusive but on the contrary they are all connected to the same concept of understanding the role of social media sites during the Egyptian Revolution.

5.1 The case of Egyptian Revolution 2011

“A young Internet executive called Wael Ghoneim helped organise a call for a demonstration for 25 January in Cairo’s Tahrir Square through a Facebook page entitled We Are All Khaled Said. Fifty thousand people came, not just the dedicated hard core, but fresh faces, old and young. They came back the next day, and the next and the next, swelling to millions, and the rest is history.” (Johnny West: London: Heron Books, 2011)

The Arab world has been moving towards change in successive events since the beginning of 2011. This change resulted in successful and semi successful revolutions. It started in Tunis, where dozens were left dead and President Ben Ali escaped with his family to Saudi Arabia. The events in Egypt, which began on 25 January 2011, came to an end on 11 February 2011 when President Mubarak stepped down. Regional bloody revolutions in Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Bahrain have yet to see their results. The domino effect continues to be accompanied by serious unrest in Jordan, and Algeria.

In Egypt, millions turned out in cities on 25th January, especially in Cairo's Tahrir Square. At first tensions were high between the police and protestors, with violence breaking out not only in Cairo but also in Suez and Alexandria. The government took a hard line, using riot-control tactics, and shutting down all forms of communication. By the 28th, however,

the protests had resumed and the police had retreated. The security role was taken over by the military, leaving major gaps in the everyday security pattern. As pressure increased on Mubarak, the scale of the protests continued to grow, especially on organised Friday rallies.

5.1.1 Reasons of the Egyptian Revolution

The 25th of January Revolution is a consequences of long-term dictator regimes that deprive the majority of the Egyptians from their basic human rights. Mubarak ruled for almost 30-years whereby many people kept suffering by being deprived from their basic needs to live a moderate and secure life (Hartman, 2011).

Despite that economic and social conditions have improved in Egypt in recent years (from 1990 – 2009 *Source: Holding its Breath: A Special Report on Egypt, The Economist (17 July 2010): 4*). The Egyptians nonetheless took to the streets calling for the end of Mubarak's rule and for the following reasons (Betz, 2011):

- High unemployment rate especially among the youth.
- High FMCG prices.
- Political corruption.
- Poverty.
- Demanding democracy.
- The persistent rule by terror for thirty years through the emergency law.
- The prohibition on political rights and civil freedoms and lack of free and fair elections.
- Torture and police brutality against activists– namely the case of Khaled Said.
- The spread of virtual-opposition through social networking sites and the Arabic satellite,
- The success of the Tunisian revolution as a bloodless and fast change, the sacrifice of Mohammed Bouazizi,
- The spread of wikileaks scandals that threw more mud over the regime's face

On the economic level, the GDP was a sign of improvement; however the gap between the rich and the poor was enormous. Prior to the revolution, the Egyptian economy grew,

but this growth did not trickle down, as it only benefited the regime's narrow social base. There were areas in Upper Egypt and Sinai that were completely deprived of the fruits of development leading to the marginalisation of large sectors of society. Unemployment rate reached 9.7%, which is concentrated mostly among young people with university degrees. Corruption reached an extreme, with Egypt rated 80th in the world.

On the political level, the death of Khaled Said prompting several Egyptian youth to adopt the defense of that case on the social networks sites and create a page named "We Are All Khaled Said". The system insisted to pave the route to hereditary rule, and huge numbers of constitution articles were amended in 2005 to suit the November 2011 presidential elections' needs for former President Mubarak's son, thereby eliminating any chance of competition.

On the social level there are several factors that led to the 25th January revolution, thereby accelerating its outcome. First, the demographics: an explosive mix of high population growth reaching 83 million, living in a congested 6% of geographic space in Egypt had its negative impact. A population characterised by young age, joblessness growth with rapid expansion of university education that has produced graduates with an inadequate level of quality education, leading to no hope in the future. In fact, two-thirds of Egyptians are under 30, and each year 700,000 new graduates compete for 200,000 new jobs.

These reasons behind the revolution were expressed by serious signs of discontent prior to the revolution taking place. In 2004 there were about 266 acts of protest; and by 2008 they reached 630. On one account, the daily protests in 2010 averaged 5 a day. However, the government reacted arrogantly by using excessive force, and indulging in human rights abuse. On the night of February the 10th, Mubarak gave a speech which led many to believe that he would step down. Anger erupted when he only stated plans to delegate some of his power. By the next day, 11th February 2011, he had resigned.

5.1.2 Concept of Citizen Journalism Online Protester

According to Goode (2009) the term citizen journalism refers to a range of web based practice whereby 'ordinary' users engage in journalistic practices. The process of citizen journalism includes activities such as current- affairs based blogging, posting commentary on current events, sharing photos and videos. Goode (2009) relates the citizen journalism to the use of the Internet stating that social news becomes part of the term citizen journalism. He elaborates on that by stating that social news websites "allow users to submit, rate,

recommend, and comment on news articles.” (Goode 2007: 1287) In contrast to some scholars such as Kaufhold who feel that content published by citizen journalists is ‘amateur’ Kaufhold (2010), Goode considers that citizen journalism is not so different from journalism. He further states that citizens participate in the news process without always acting as content creators. Rather citizen journalists are mostly involved with activities such as “re-posting, linking, tagging, rating and commenting upon news produced by professional journalists.” These activities online by ordinary protesters demonstrate the interactive nature of the internet.

5.1.3 The Egyptian Revolution

The most important factors of #Jan25 revolution is that it was arranged and implemented through the use of social media specifically social networking sites mainly the Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Following will be a detailed description of the revolution with the dates and what took place in each day (Postill, 2011).

5.1.3.1 Before the Revolution

On June 6, 2010, 28 year-old Khaled Saeed was brutally beaten to death by police after circulating a video showing Egyptian police divvying the remains of a drug bust. Police claimed that Saeed had choked to death, but photos of Saeed’s beaten body soon surfaced online, sparking public backlash against police corruption and torture. It also led to the creation of Facebook group “We Are All Khaled Saeed,” moderated by 30 year-old Google executive and cyber-activist Wael Ghonim. By 2011, the “We Are All Khaled Saeed” page had attracted more than 400,000 members, who rallied around their common frustration with abuses of power by Egyptian authorities

The starting point for a movement of mass action usually cannot be pinpointed to a single moment or person. This is true of the 2011 Arab Awakening, despite the temptation to credit Mohamed Bouazizi’s self-immolation in Tunisia or Wael Ghonim’s prowess on Facebook in Egypt; such struggles defy simplistic explanations of origin. For the past half-decade, Egyptian workers, journalists, and bloggers have increasingly, and bravely, been standing up to their government. And as mentioned in this thesis, before January 2011, protesters through social media websites such as Facebook especially “we are all Khaled Said” page arranged that on January 25th the annual celebration for the Egyptian police a protest movement should arise opposing the cruelty and torture that the Egyptian police is using against citizens. Yet, the protesters do not know that it will be a revolution. Adding

to this, the Muslim Brotherhood on January 23rd announced that they will not participate in the protest movements on Jan. 25th and actually they only started to participate on Jan. 28th after it turned to be a complete revolution (Sarhan, TV program).

5.1.3.2 Timeline of the Revolution

According to Al Jazeera English site, and during the 18 days of the revolution starting on January 28th 2011 “Day of Rage” as after being inspired by the Tunisian demonstrations, huge protest movements erupted across Egypt, whereby protesters in Cairo congregating on Tahrir Square.

Following are the key events in the more than two weeks of protests that led to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's ouster, ending three decades in power:

On January 2011: Online activists in Egypt call for an uprising on “We Are All Khaled Said” Facebook page and using #Jan25 on Twitter, to protest against poverty, unemployment, government corruption and the rule of president Hosni Mubarak, who has been in power for three decades.

On 25 Jan, The annual “Police Day” holiday becomes the “Day of rage”. Thousands march in downtown Cairo, heading towards the offices of the ruling National Democratic Party, as well as the foreign ministry and the state television. Similar protests are reported in other towns across the country. After a few hours of relative calm, police and demonstrators clash; police fire tear gas and use water cannons against demonstrators crying out "Down with Mubarak" in Cairo's main Tahrir Square. Hours after the countrywide protests begin, the interior ministry issues a statement blaming the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's technically banned but largest opposition party, for fomenting the unrest and a claim that the Muslim Brotherhood denies. Protest organised small groups, heavily relied on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The interior minister announced death of three protesters and a police officer during the anti-government demonstrations. By midday Twitter became inaccessible. In a Tweet, Twitter Global PR confirms the block. Reports come in that Facebook is being blocked as well. Bambuser confirms that its live mobile broadcasting service is also blocked inside the country. Many Egyptians turn to proxies to bypass blocks so they can continue to share news. And by nightfall, a large crowd has amassed at Tahrir Square.

On 26 Jan. Police continue to attack and fight protesters. The Egyptians begin reporting that mobile networks are down. The @Jan25 voices launched, in order to using

phones and other means to speak with Egyptians behind the blocked internet and Tweet their messages.

On 27 Jan. Mohamad ElBaradei, former director of the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency, returns to Cairo to join demonstrators. The internet is shut down. Only one smaller ISP—Noor—works. Leaflets are being distributed around Cairo sharing practical and tactical information for tomorrow's protests, and multiple reports indicate SMS service is down. Vodaphone releases a statement saying that they complied with government requests to suspend mobile service.

On 28 Jan. "Friday for Martyrs and Political Prisoners" demonstrations are held with demonstrators gathering at mosques following Friday prayers. Meanwhile Mubarak orders the army to enter the streets and quell demonstrations and enforce the curfew. Police, for the most part, leave the streets. The NDP headquarters is set on fire. Google exec Wael Ghonim goes missing. Internet access had been blocked almost entirely across the country. "Terrified of the new tools of Twitter and Facebook, and the uncensored visual media of yFrog, Flickr and YouTube, the regime chose to pay the price of millions of lost dollars to the economy in order to deprive protesters of a key weapon- the means of communication." (Idle & Nunns 2011). Multiple deaths are reported, and Obama makes a brief statement calling for human rights to be respected. The activists who organized the protests had already predicted this response by the Egyptian government. Despite the Internet blockade, protesters were able to continue organising demonstrations due to the organisational infrastructure that had already been established. "A Facebook event, set up days in advance, received tens of thousands of attendance confirmations and a Google document posted to a Facebook group collected email addresses of the group's members in case of a blockade." (Chebib & Sohail 2011). That evening, Mubarak appeared on television, announcing that he had dismissed his entire cabinet, but would be remaining in power. He then proceeded to impose a curfew, to little effect.



Figure 5.1.3.2: Egypt: Internet Traffic Between January 28 and February 2, 2011 – Sample of all Google Products

On the 31st, an estimated 250,000 people gathered in Tahrir Square as Mubarak continued to express his intentions to remain in power. By the 1st of February, it is estimated that nearly one million protesters had gathered in Tahrir Square, while preparations begin for another protest on the following day. On 3 February, security forces open gunfire on the protesters in Tahrir Square, killing at least five. Wael Ghonim was released from state custody on 7 February, bringing thousands more into Tahrir, reaching the highest number in the square by the 8th.

Finally, on 11 February, Omar Suleiman announced that Mubarak has resigned as president at 16:00 GMT passing ruling power to the army. And the people in Tahrir go wild.

5.1.4 Contributions of Social Media in the Revolution

The following features made social media an attractive tool for the Egyptian protestors

5.1.4.1 Accessibility

One of the many reasons social media played an important role in the Egyptian Revolution, 2011 was its accessibility. The following factors make social media easily accessible:

Low Barriers to Entry

Social media accessibility is free of charge/licenses/affiliations; it is granted to everyone. Social media is the newest in a long line of information sharing innovations. Nonetheless, it is the most accessible and thus significantly impactful.

Free access to social media has democratized influence and control, to shift the power from authorities to regular citizens.

Social media is widely accessible uncontrolled media; the barriers to entry are almost non-existent. These tools are truly revolutionary and have been used to support activists' key tasks: amassing support, communicating with like-minded people, and spreading the word.

Low Communication Barriers

Social media has been useful in breaking the communication barriers that hinder transmission of a message. Whether it is a political campaign, a manufactured-product publicity campaign, or even an emergency-response service, now different industries are employing social media to their best advantage.

Since online interaction requires no interpersonal skills, the number of people socializing online is sharply increasing. People can treat each other as a bunch of online protocols. Communication becomes easier by transcending many codes of behavior; one can approach a complete stranger, he/she can discuss private issues with much less hesitation, disclosing even the most private secrets. Online users can engage in the hottest debates assertively to defend their views, what many cannot do in the real offline world. With a few clicks, they can cross out whomever they don't like. With less interaction barriers, they can get pretty communicative to express their outlook, and even attract supporters.

According to Helen Farrar, head of internal communications at Virgin Media, social media is moving "water cooler conversations" into the public arena, making it easier to understand people's messages and emotions. In summary, barriers of communication are fading. This is bringing dry topics to life, coordinating the work of people at different departments.

Easy to Use

Connecting on social media networks with family and friends is fairly simple. Most popular social media tools are easy to figure out, even without instruction manuals.

Mobile Phone-enabled Technology

According to Facebook statistics, there are more than 200 million active users currently accessing Facebook through their mobile devices. People who use Facebook on their mobile devices are twice as active on Facebook as non-mobile users. Additionally, there are more than 200 mobile operators in 60 countries working to deploy and promote Facebook mobile products

5.1.4.2 Credibility

Truth from Compelled Youngsters

Egypt's Facebook community is one of the youngest in the Middle East. 78% of Egypt's Facebook users are between the ages of 15-29 years and 22% users are above the age of 30 years. Wael Ghonim, a 30 year old Egyptian, was chosen as the most influential personality of 2011 by Time Magazine. Wael is a Google executive who is considered the mastermind of the Egyptian revolution. Ghonim started a group on Facebook "We are all Khaled Saeed" in memory of an Egyptian who was brutally killed by the Egyptian police. Using his Facebook page, he helped in organizing protests and motivating the youth to continue protesting against the government.

5.1.4.3 Instantaneous Updated Information Sharing

In his blog, Riyaad Minty, responsible for social media services in Al Jazira, affirms that the social networks helped Al-Jazira in staying "Updated". "Facebook and Twitter helped us foresee in advance, when and where future manifestations might happen", said Minty. "They also made it easy for us to find contacts to respond live and discuss the latest developments with journalists

5.1.4.4 Multi-Dimensional Media

According to Facebook statistics, there are over 900 million objects that people interact with (pages, groups, events and community pages). An average user creates 90 pieces of content each month (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.)

The social media network includes a variety of interfaces that are interrelated and mostly complementary. Some of the different services provided by social media and the websites that provide them are given below:

- Blogs: Blogger, ExpressionEngine, LiveJournal, Open Diary, TypePad, Vox, WordPress, Xanga.
- Microblogging: FMyLife, Foursquare, Jaiku, Plurk, Posterous, Tumblr, Twitter, Qaiku, Google.
- Buzz, Identi.ca Nasza-Klasa.pl.
- Location-based social networks: Foursquare, Geoloqi, Gowalla, Facebook places, The Hotlist.

- Social networking: ASmallWorld, Bebo, Cyworld, Diaspora, Facebook, Hi5, Hyves, LinkedIn, MySpace, Ning, Orkut, Plaxo, Tagged, XING, IRC, Yammer.
- Events: Eventful, the Hotlist, Meetup.com, Upcoming.
- Information Aggregators: Netvibes, Twine (website).
- Online Advocacy and Fundraising: Causes, Kickstarter.

5.1.5 Advantages of the #Jan25 and “We Are Khaled Said” in the Revolution

A major advantage of social media in the Egyptian revolution was its capacity for swiftly exchanging and disseminating information to millions of people inside and outside of Egypt. For instance, as Egyptians were carefully watching events unfold in Tunisia while also planning their own movement, activists from both countries were exchanging information, ideas, and words of encouragement online. During the Tunisian revolution, Egyptian bloggers were on Twitter, Facebook, and personal blogs posting updates and uploading images and videos of the Tunisian protests. On January 17, 2011, Egyptian female activist and blogger Nawara Negm posted a video message from an Egyptian actress with words of encouragement for Tunisians. Negm also posted information and cell phone numbers, urging Egyptians to send text messages to encourage Tunisians during the protests (Negm, 2011).

On January 21, Negm posted an entry titled “Be noble and demonstrate on January 25,” calling on her followers to join activists in the street. She posted a YouTube video of a young Egyptian activist who was joining the movement, saying, “Do you see this girl? She is going to demonstrate.” Negm encouraged people to invite friends or other Egyptians they would meet in the street to join as well. At one point, she wrote: “walk . . . walk in the street. Walk walk walk . . . and talk talk talk . . . and sing sing national songs, sing Beladi Beladi [my country my country]” (ibid.). In concluding her entry, Negm wrote:

If you can take pictures, take pictures . . . if you can use Twitter, send tweets . . . if you can blog, blog from the street. There are people demonstrating for our cause in Tunisia and Jordan, and I just found out that there are people demonstrating in Paris too. All of these people have faith in us.

Other social media initiatives that illustrate the newfound interactivity and speed in mobilization include multiple Facebook pages, such as the previously mentioned “ElBaradei for

Presidency” and “We are all Khaled Said” pages, which provided outlets for interaction, information exchange, and encouragement among users. Another Facebook page, created by three Egyptian teenagers on January 16, was known as “January 25: The day of revolution over torture, poverty, corruption & unemployment” (translated by co-author from Arabic). The “January 25” page administrators posted a video introducing themselves to the public and explaining their feelings of encouragement after the achievements in Tunisia, so as to implement a successful revolution in Egypt. Thus, these Facebook pages allowed activists to immediately address millions of users from diverse walks of life, as well as from different areas across Egypt, all at one time.

The speed and interactivity of social media use not only united protesters, but it also provided the means for disseminating important safety information during the revolution and an outlet for seeking help when in danger. When the Egyptian revolution began on January 25, activists posted messages on their blogs and Facebook pages from Tunisian protesters that contained words of encouragement, along with advised their Egyptian counterparts to protest at nighttime for safety, to avoid suicide operations, to use media to convey their message for outside pressure, to spray-paint security forces’ armored vehicles black to cover the windshield, and to wash their faces with Coca-Cola to reduce the impact of tear gas (Facebook page: Mohamed ElBaradei; Negm, 2011).

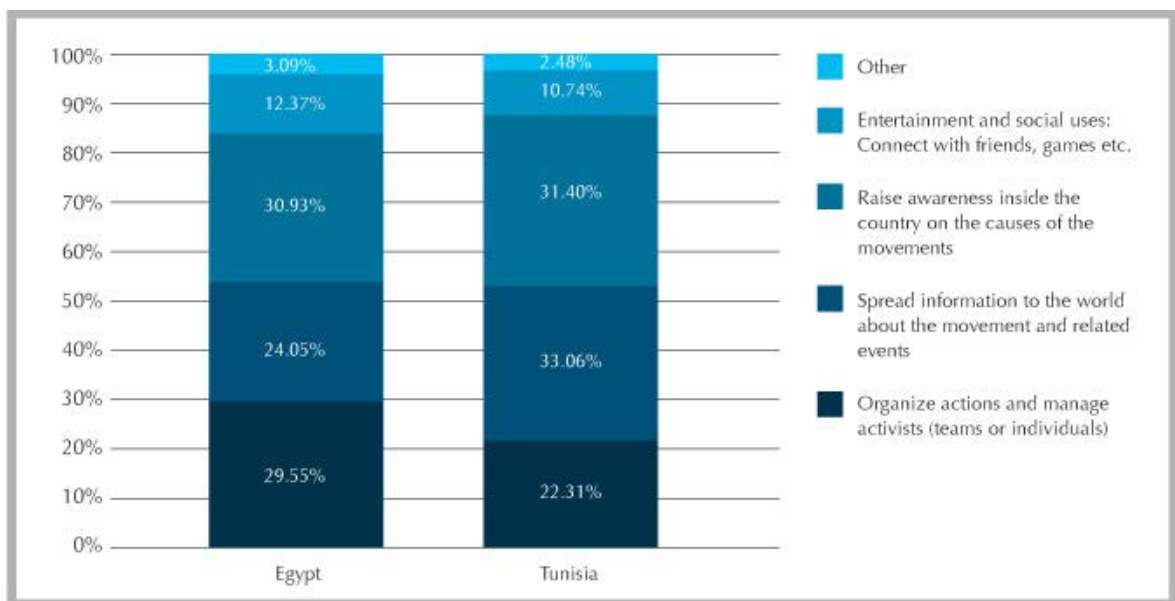


Figure 5.1.5: Main Usage of Facebook during the Civil Movements and Events in 2011

Egyptian protesters also used social media to draw attention when in danger, as well as to provide activists and the outside world with minute-by-minute updates. The Guardian cites tweets by Mohamed Abdelfattah, an Egyptian video journalist, who on the evening of January 25, 2011, released a series of disturbing tweets in short succession during ongoing protests (Siddique, Haroon, & Gabbatt, 2011):

@mfatta7 Tear gas

@mfatta7 I'm suffocating

@mfatta7 We r trapped inside a building

@mfatta7 Armored vehicles outside

@mfatta7 Help we r suffocating

@mfatta7 I will be arrested

@mfatta7 Help !!!

@mfatta7 Arrested

@mfatta7 Ikve [I've] been beaten a lot

Whereas traditionally, one would have to send a fax, make a phone call, or relay information through a messenger for help, many Egyptian activists were able to reduce response times and increase personal safety by using cell phones to send immediate SOS tweets.

Other activists used Twitter and Facebook to generate international attention and interest in the revolution. They posted pictures and videos depicting revolution events and updates, as well as information about police torture of protesters—and the world paid attention. UN Dispatch News published an online article entitled “10 must-follow Twitter feeds for Egyptian protests” (Albon, 2011). Because of activists’ minute-by-minute updates via social media outlets, many Egyptians and foreigners abroad stayed informed of the developments in Egypt. For example, one activist, who tweets and blogs under the name 3Arabawy, tweeted: “first video up, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3IEhQMPyWE> Crowds avoiding oncoming tear gas and police in Tahrir #jan25 #egypt” (Baraniuk, 2011). Another Twitter user, @weddady, tweeted a plea to foreign media to bring international attention to the protests: “URGENT:

REQUEST to ALL EUROPE & US tweeps on #Jan25 PLEASE ASK YOUR MEDIA TO COVER #EGYPT NOW” (Baraniuk, 2011). Once again, social media introduced a power-

ful mobilization resource that protesters utilized to address the world while events were unfolding. This is a significant development in social mobilization, as it was the protesters themselves who disseminated information, pictures, and videos—not just reporters and group leaders. When the government banned reporters from Tahrir Square in an effort to prevent news from spreading to the world (Fisher, 2011), social media technologies enabled protesters to become citizen journalists.

Although significant, social media clearly were not the only force driving the revolution. This became especially evident when government efforts to weaken the protesters' efforts through a mass communication blackout appeared to only strengthen the protesters' determination and increase the numbers of Egyptians joining the struggle. By that point, social media were not as critical to the protests, given that the majority of protesters were already out on the streets and able to utilize other, more proximate resources. Beaumont (2011) reported that “what social media was replaced by then—oddly enough—was the analogue equivalent of Twitter: handheld signs held aloft at demonstrations saying where and when people should gather the next day.” In other words, this revolution might have been nurtured online, but it was never reserved to a single communication medium. Social media played a major role throughout the planning and organization phases, and also throughout the revolution, but other means of communication contributed as well. A BBC report explained:

I was in Tahrir Square on Sunday: everywhere you look there are mobile phones, handwritten placards, messages picked out in stones and plastic tea cups, graffiti, newspapers and leaflets, not to mention al-Jazeera's TV cameras which broadcast hours of live footage from the square every day. When one channel of communication is blocked, people try another. (Alexander, 2011)

Yet, one negative impact of the communication blackout was the inability to call for urgent care for those injured during the protests. Negm (2011) expressed feelings of anger and helplessness on her blog: “I will never forget that we couldn't call an ambulance when we were on Kasr-el-Nil bridge. Why? Why? Why did these faces have to die so early?”

Written messages and images circulating on Facebook, Twitter, and blogs appeared to strengthen the collective identity of Egyptians worldwide, who may have already supported the fight against a dictatorial regime. Once the revolution began, multiple Facebook

pages were created to include Egyptians abroad, including “Voice of Egypt Abroad,” “Egyptians Abroad in Support of Egypt,” and “New United Arab States.” Other social media initiatives included a series of virtual protests in support of the Egyptian protests, like the Facebook-organized February 1 event inviting users to a virtual “March of Millions” in solidarity with Egyptian protesters. Administrators of the event explained on the page: “As one million march on the streets of Egypt, our goal is to reach one million voices in support of their march” (Saad & Mohamed, 2011). Such initiatives brought both Egyptians and non-Egyptians together to support and experience the protests in cyberspace.

Collective identity in cyberspace seemed to reach an apex for Egyptians worldwide immediately after the announcement of Mubarak’s resignation. Within seconds, tweets streamed in that expressed jubilation, pride, and emotion. ElBaradei tweeted: “Today Egypt is free. God bless the people of Egypt.” Other messages were exchanged on Twitter and Facebook, with comments including variations of “Congratulations Egypt, you are free”; “Feb. 11 is Historic day in Egypt. We will celebrate it forever :) Jan25”; and “lift your head up high you’re an Egyptian’ pride in Tahrir. Jan25” (Praetorius, 2011b). Social media technologies enabled the rapid spread of the news of Mubarak’s fall and were major factors in the palpable unity expressed by Egyptians, both on the streets of Egypt and in cyberspace.

5.2 Arab Spring Case studies

To discover more about the Social Media impact on Arab Spring, the researcher will present cases of four Arab Spring Countries to answer the following qualitative questions:

1. How did organizers utilize social media?
2. How does social movement theory explain the role of social media, or other more traditional methods, in mobilizing protesters?
3. How did regimes make use of social media in response to opposition movements?
4. What was the role of social media in influencing international opinion and policy?

The Table below aims at providing the researcher with a brief summary of how did the social media tools play “The role” in successful mass protest in four Arab Countries and why did they use social media tools during the Uprising. This in researcher’s opinion constitutes an important value to more understanding the role of social media.

Table 5.2: Overview of Protests in four Arab Countries

Country	First Large-scale Organised Protest	Largest Protest	Date	City	Principal Organiser
Tunisia	Monday, Dec 27	1,000s	Tuesday, Jan 11	Tunis	Trade Union activists
Jordan	Friday, Jan 28	7,000-10,000s	Friday, Feb 25	Amman	Islamic Action Front
Syria	Thursday, Feb 17	10,000s	Friday, April 22	Damascus	Syrian Revolution activists
Morocco	Sunday, Feb 20	10,000s	Sunday, Mar 20	Casablanca	Feb,20 Movement

5.2.1 Tunisia

Protests in Tunisia first flared in the city of Sidi Bouzid on December 17 after “Mohamed Bouazizi”, a 26-year-old unemployed university graduate working as a street vendor, set himself on fire outside a government building. Demonstrations then spread throughout the country. Ordinary Tunisians who were fed up with unemployment and corruption took to the streets and were later joined by labor unions and a group of 300 lawyers. Students, professionals and youths were also quick to follow. The protests quickly escalated into violence and spread across the country to capital city Tunis by December 27. President Zine al-Abidine bin Ali initially delivered strong messages against the unrest, claiming, “The law will be applied in all firmness.” However, by 14 January the protests could no longer be contained, and bin Ali ended his two-decade rule by fleeing to Saudi Arabia.

While local protests began in Sidi Bouzid immediately after Bouazizi was taken to a medical facility. Facebook played a large role in mobilizing Tunisian educated activist’s youth. Later, videos of police clashes with rioters fueled the country’s anger. Apart from organizational purposes, social media sites also served the important role of information provider. As one activist stated, “Protestors took to the streets with a rock in one hand, a cell phone in the other.” Past protests in Tunisia have rarely been able to grow because the state-owned media tightly controls the news. However, as more and more videos of protests appeared online, they were eventually picked up by international media such as Al Jazeera and disseminated worldwide.

Tunisian activists focused on “breaking the media blackout” and spreading a constant stream of information using social media tools. It’s not just the Facebook role. Thanks to YouTube, videos of Bouazizi’s suicide quickly appeared online and sparked the first demonstrations, also Flickr, and Twitter, which was banned by the government. Twitter hash-tags evolved from #Bouazizi to #sidibouzid to #tunisia.(Ibid) The majority of Tunisians, fearing repercussions, did not actively participate on Facebook or Twitter sharing or “liking until bin Ali’s departure appeared imminent and definite. However, with one of the highest levels of Internet penetration in the MENA region (roughly 30%), citizens were able to follow the news provided by “a solid core of activists.” (Ibid) These included bloggers Messou T7Essou and Ben Mhenni, whose blog is named “A Tunisian Girl.” In March 2011, “Reporters Without Borders” awarded the 2011 Netizen Prize to the popular Tunisian blog Nawaat.org. In May of the same year, the blog received the 11th annual Index on Censorship Media Award, supported by Google

Tunisian state television reported that the protests were “isolated events.” This narrative, however, was completely shattered when Al Jazeera satellite television aired Facebook and YouTube videos, as well as Flickr images showing that the demonstrations were anything but isolated. Ironically, Al Jazeera and other Arab television networks were forced to turn to social media videos because non-state media were banned from reporting from Tunisia.

The Tunisian government’s attempts to block social media sites were largely unsuccessful. However, authorities did manage to arrest prominent bloggers and online activists. The government also hacked into Facebook and deleted the Facebook pages of some of the most vocal activists in the Tunisian cyber-community such as Sofiene Chourabi, a journalist for Al-Tariq al-Jadid magazine and a strong critic of the government, and also hacked email accounts in order to block their access to sites and prevent their obtaining of usernames and passwords. Phishing attempts backfired when protesters learned of government actions and produced slogans such as “Free from 404.” The Tunisian government soon became victim itself to a hacking organization called “Anonymous”.(Ibid)

“Anonymous” hackers temporarily shut down at least eight Tunisian government websites, including those for the president, prime minister, ministry of foreign affairs and the stock exchange, reports Al Jazeera.

Recent U.S. court order demanding that Twitter release information linked to WikiLeaks highlights the additional dilemmas faced by protestors. As cyber-activism grows worldwide, social networking sites must decide their role in state censorship.

Although Chourabi and others do not accuse Facebook or YouTube of collaborating with the Tunisian government, they feel that more could have been done to protect Internet independence. "I think it is high time for Facebook and Google to take serious steps to protect Tunisian activists and journalists," Chourabi told an Al Jazeera journalist.

While social media was an important tool in mobilizing protestors in Tunisia, a range of civil society groups including trade unions, education unions, human rights groups and opposition groups, were clearly instrumental in organizing their members to demonstrate against the regime. The involvement of these groups resulted in the mobilization of a large swath of Tunisian society including students, teachers, journalists, human rights activists, trade unionists and opposition politicians.(Ibid) This is a striking example of the power of civil society groups to increase participation in broader social movements.

5.2.1.1 Tunisia's Twitter Revolution

Tunisia's so-called Twitter Revolution is different than the Iranian and Moldovan ones that preceded it: Some say Twitter saved lives in Tunisia. There were tweets warning of sniper locations, tweets asking for blood donation, and tweets organizing protests. At least one man, known on Twitter as @BulletSkan, says he is still breathing because of the social network. Indeed, in some ways, Twitter was used as a way to navigate the tumult on the ground. Here, the National Post's Kathryn Blaze Carlson offers some examples (Tweets):

"Twitter saved my life" @BulletSkan's experience:

Bullet skan@BulletSkan

Bullet skan

Aucun numéro de l'armée répond ! des gens armée dans le jardin de notre maison !!! ON A BESOIN D'aide !!!!! WARDEYA 1

Translation: The army is not responding to calls! There are armed men in our yard! We need help!

January 15, 2011 4:14 pm via TweetDeckRetweetReply

Bullet skan@BulletSkan

Bullet skan

Passez le message svp je dois sortire ! des gens armée dans le jardin de notre maison 72 avenue 3 Aout ! RT PLZZ

Translation: Spread the word! I must escape! There are armed men in our yard at 72 Avenue 3 Aout!

January 15, 2011 4:15 pm via TweetDeckRetweetReply

Bullet skan@BulletSkan

Bullet skan

BulletSkan sur TF1 : Tunisie : "Twitter a sauvé ma vie" <http://bit.ly/i7KM93>

Translation: Twitter saved my life.

January 17, 2011 7:24 pm via webRetweetReply

Snipers/safety

Sarah El Sirgany@Ssirgany

Sarah El Sirgany

#tunisia #sidibouزيد RT @hadeelalsh: <http://twitpic.com/3rom2q> – If u look v closely u can see a police sniper on top of the int minoistry

January 20, 2011 6:08 am via TweetDeckRetweetReply

Slim Amamou@slim404

Slim Amamou

.@Astrubaal @nawaat @Selim_ @yassayari flics autour de la maison hier et chez un ami ce mat, coup de fil au bureau ce mat

January 6, 2011 6:13 am via twiccaRetweetReply

TninTn@TninTn2011

TninTn

#tunisia #sidibouزيد #Lac2 #USEmbassy #USA snipers gunfire near BAD reT

January 16, 2011 3:46 pm via Twitter for iPhoneRetweetReply

Sou Hammamet@hammametsou

Sou Hammamet

From sources in hammamet. people are looting "le magazin general". you can smell burning from town centre... #tunisia #sidibouid

January 12, 2011 12:46 pm via webRetweetReply

Kristen@tunisiadotcom

Kristen

curfew in Bizerte gunfights bab mateur and hospital. Dont go outside/try and drive as fighting reported near bridge. #tunisia

January 17, 2011 8:29 am via webRetweetReply

ann@kindw

ann

in Tunis free shooters these places @MarieNeigeG Snipers à Gafsa: Sidi Ben Yaakoub/GardeNationale/Tunisiana /el Maamoun

January 15, 2011 10:03 am via webRetweetReply

melanie@bsm3134

melanie

RT @nawaat #sidibouid Lyon street (Tunis) police snipers killing citziens in Tunis [video] 15H30 13.01.11 في... <http://post.ly/1UH0Q>

January 15, 2011 9:57 am via PosterousRetweetReply

Erik@LaMarsaexpat

Erik

Things are heating up again downtown. Gunshots heard on Mohammad V boulevard. Big protest in progress. #tunisia #tunis

January 20, 2011 6:15 am via webRetweetReply

Marie Neige Guérin@MarieNeigeG

Marie Neige Guérin

Snipers à Gafsa: mosquée Sidi Ben Yaakoub / bâtiment de la Garde Nationale/Tunisiana (ammara Karoui) /Hôtel el Maamoun #SidiBouزيد

January 13, 2011 1:51 pm via webRetweetReply

Bouazizi Mohamed@Bouazizi_II

Bouazizi Mohamed

RT @LiberateTunisia: PLZ RT, STATE TERRORISM: Ben Ali Militia Snipers Firing on Unarmed Crowd in Bizerte, 17 01 2011. #Tunisia #SidiBo ...

January 19, 2011 5:04 am via webRetweetReply

Hospitals/health

boneshaker@Boneshaker_tn

boneshaker

l'hopital elyasminet à ben arous appelle aux JEUNES DE YASSMINET A SE DEPLACER SUR LES LIEUX POUR LEUR PRETER MAINS FORTES #Tunis

January 15, 2011 11:10 am via webRetweetReply

Yasmine Ayari@MimicheTN

Yasmine Ayari

RT @CherifaBM: Le comité SCORP de l'ASSOCIAMED organise une collecte de produits alimentaires de base, dons en nature aussi acceptés ! C ...

January 18, 2011 8:35 am via Twitter for iPhoneRetweetReply

sana ben said@SanaBenSaid

sana ben said

Toute personne prête à être bénévole en hôpital à Tunis, prend contact avec Monique Vassart au 23 437 999 RT SVP #sidibouزيد

January 17, 2011 8:05 am via webRetweetReply

david dietz@davidpdietz

david dietz

all hell has broken lose – reports are coming in that hospitals are overwhelmed with the injured

January 13, 2011 2:22 pm via webRetweetReply

Dima Khatib أنا ديمة @Dima_Khatib

Dima Khatib أنا ديمة

RT @yasmineey URGENT HOSPITALS NEED BLOOD THEY HAVE RECIEVED MANY INJURED PEOPLE MANY HOSPITALS HAVE RAN OUT PLEASE DONATE #tunisie #tunisia

January 15, 2011 10:42 am via webRetweetReply

Protests

سوسوسو xələ @alexcomninos

سوسوسو xələ

RT @alihabibi1: #Tunisia: SMS messages confirm there will be protests every day at 11AM until the RCD is demolished! #SidiBouزيد

January 20, 2011 10:46 am via webRetweetReply

Dima Khatib أنا ديمة @Dima_Khatib

Dima Khatib أنا ديمة

Protesters have just broken into the RCD (ex ruling party) building downtown Tunis #sidibouزيد

January 20, 2011 11:22 am via Twitter for BlackBerry®RetweetReply

Ben Karim @karim2k

Ben Karim

Tomorrow: 1 million Tunisian will strike peacefully in av Habib Bourguiba downtown #Sidibouزيد.

5.2.2 Jordan

Echoing events throughout the region, Jordanians took to the streets in 2011. The relatively small size of the protests belied their significance in that this time they were dominated by segments of the regime's historical support base, East Bank Jordanians. Over time, these protests evolved to include a wide spectrum of the population, including citizens of Palestinian origin, Islamists and unaffiliated youth.

In 2011, and with the wind of the Arab Spring at their backs, Jordanians stepped up their protests. The Jayeen movement –an East Banker coalition of day workers, pensioners, teachers, students and nationalist and left wing groups was created in the early days of January and emerged as an important actor. It called for a march in Amman on 14 January, labelled a“Day of Anger”to decrythe rising cost of living and spread of corruption.

Seeking to mollify the public and hoping to dampen support for the 14 January protest, the king took some preemptive measures. On 10 January, he summoned the government to implement a JD160 million (€170 million) emergency plan, capping food prices and cutting fuel taxes. The march nonetheless went ahead, and protesters denounced a narrow business-state elite perceived to be enriching it-self through corrupt privatisation deals.

The largest mass demonstration gathered on Friday, February 25th when the IAF led 10,000 people from 19 other political parties in the central streets of Amman. A series of protests followed, mainly in the capital, in which protesters clashed with government forces.

In April 2011, a prominent IAF leader appeared frequently on television and in print media to bolster support for further protest against the Jordanian government. The 24 March Movement consisting of Islamists, leftists and independents on the other hand has often used Facebook pages like ([facebook.com/Amman](https://www.facebook.com/Amman)) to call for protests.

Given the diversity of these protest groups, social movement organizers are likely using the conflation mechanisms described by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, which require establishing a wide base that consists of diverse elements by focusing on the lowest common denominator that is of interest to all parties.(Ibid 22, 318-9) Since much of the frustration that galvanized people to join the protests initially was linked to economic conditions and rising costs for staple items, the IAF linked this near-universal discontent to a call for political reforms, one of their main goals. They therefore focused on highlighting the economic problems in the country, a message that resonated with a diverse number of constituencies,

and emphasized that political reform was key to fixing these economic problems.(Ibid) As a result, by emphasizing economic issues, they were able to establish a broad base of support for mobilization in support of reform, despite differences among the diverse groups of protesters.

5.2.3 Syria

Syria presents a very unique case in the analysis of Arab Spring movements in that its opposition has continued for nearly two years, with little progress made against the al-Assad regime, and rising casualty counts in the face of brutal repression by military forces.

Syrian use social media to organize and protest in the beginning but after few months, the Syrian ‘Citizen Journalists’ use social media tools to spread the news, and social media networks have come to play an important part in the political unrest in Syria. Many Syrians have turned to social media like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter to help spread reports about what is happening in the country, after the Syrian government barred most media from the country after the unrest began almost two years ago.

That is the sound of explosions from a video on YouTube. The video is said to show shells falling on the city of Homs.

This is one of hundreds, possibly thousands of similar videos placed on social media websites in the past few weeks. With few foreign reporters in Syria, social media have become a major tool for telling the world what is happening. Many news organizations have had to depend on reports and videos from people they call citizen journalists.

In December 2011, the regime banned the use of iPhones after videos of violent crackdowns by security forces on protesters began to surface. But the ban was limited and poorly enforced. Instead, activists spread widely videos of the protests and violent attacks by security forces. Thus, in this 36 month battle in Syria, YouTube and Facebook have played a more powerful role than other social media platforms like Twitter as a way to share such footage.

The videos were not shared with just other Syrians—they were spread deliberately to the outside world to cultivate empathy and support. As such, social media has been used less to help assemble the Syrian people and more to appeal to the international community. As videos continue to surface, largely aided by a Facebook group called: “Syrian Revolution : (facebook.com/Syrian.Revolution) ” they have made the world witness to the unfolding

crisis. This was crucial for the opposition, operating in a country with decades-long restrictions on media and information flow.

While in Egypt, social media was used primarily to gather people in protest in Tahrir, in Syria social media became a crucial platform through which to share stories, connect with the Syrian diaspora, raise funds from international donors, and inform a global audience with the rebel side of the story.

The international element of social media and the international connection with Syria that it has strengthened is perhaps what makes the Syrian context most unique. While Facebook pages from domestic activists are already quite numerous, others have been created by groups representing countries worldwide, showing unity with the Syrians. One of the more notable ones, “The Syrian Revolution/Suriye Devrimi” comes from Turkey. Founded earlier this year, it attempts to inform Turks of what is happening in their neighboring country. Meanwhile, other Facebook pages aim to educate, update, and share videos and photos of the crisis as it progresses, keeping people informed in a more direct fashion. This closed a crucial gap between the news reported by the government-owned media and foreign media. Without these groups, it would be more difficult for Syrians to seek other likeminded individuals, discuss the events in Syria openly, and to share stories of atrocities with the outside world.

The owners of the most popular of these pages wield much power. When they share a piece of information to be shared, it spreads like wildfire across the online world, bouncing from browser to browser until enough eyes are witness to the injustice. A video of the Houla massacre in May 2012, for example, was spread from activists to the mainstream global news media. Photos of deceased children spread rapidly and shocked the world.

They were also supposed to give a sense of urgency to end this conflict. But though the conflict has continued to advance without an end in sight, social media continues to serve a crucial purpose: it galvanizes people to become activists. In the Arab world, this is a major change. It has completely transformed how people go about inciting change or forming a strong community.

Arab youth are taking advantage of this new technology and have capitalized on the immense power of sharing and voicing opinions online. Social media has provided the ideal platform for people to develop their own opinions and have an open space to voice them,

and be heard by millions. In essence, it has recreated an “Arab street” that had previously been restricted by authoritarian regimes.

The Syrian regime is not ignorant of the power of social media. It tried to infiltrate the social media universe by creating pro-Assad Facebook pages, and government Twitter accounts, such as that of Walid Al Muallim, the Syrian foreign minister. Al Dounya TV, government owned news network, had an active Twitter account, but it has recently disappeared. Luckily, the fighting between Assad and activists on the ground has not been reflected in the online world—the opposition is dominating in the virtual field.

Never has the world been as interconnected as it is today, and what has become apparent in the case of Syria is that the rebels, the youth, and activists have all capitalized on that fact, mobilizing faster than the government could stop them. Most importantly, it has allowed them to share with the world a brutal regime that had been protected from the gaze of the world for the past half-century. Now that the social media spotlight is on Assad, one thing is clear: he doesn't have anywhere to hide.

5.2.4 Morocco

Protests in Morocco have not been uncommon. The primary organizer of the protests was a youth group called the February 20th Movement, which used YouTube and Facebook as its primary means of communication, and according to Facebook's information for advertisers, there are 2.7 million Facebook profiles in Morocco, of which one million are women. One of its first posts was a YouTube video that featured several young Moroccans explaining their reasons for joining protests to pursue democratic reform; their reasons included more opportunities for equality, education and employment. The topic gained some traction on Twitter and Facebook, and the Feb 20 Movement page attracted nearly 1,000 members. Protests began in Casablanca and Rabat on February 20th. Compared to other MENA regions, demonstrations were relatively peaceful. More than 30,000 citizens took to the streets of capital city Rabat to call for political reform, but the crowd quickly dwindled, leaving only a few hundred by evening with little need for police intervention.

The Moroccan government chose to communicate with the Feb 20 Movement via social media, sometimes as a preemptive measure. Three days before the scheduled protests, the Minister of Youth and Sports responded to the campaign with a widely read Facebook post calling for dialogue instead of violence. In his post the Minister also blamed foreign actors for orchestrating the unrests as a way to weaken the country. Pro-government organiza-

tions launched social media campaigns urging citizens to stay home. Rumors that the protests were cancelled also began appearing online. (Ibid) Although the movement in Morocco has not reached levels seen in other areas, small-scale demonstrations have continued with the help of social media organizers. Despite a relatively widespread use of social media there are some 4 million Facebook accounts in a population of 35 million and Internet penetration amongst roughly half of the population, the future of the movement remains uncertain.

5.3 Social Media in the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is notably characterized by the fact that social unrest in any given country was never an isolated event, and the first protests in Tunisia quickly crossed the national border and initiated a chain reaction of similar activities throughout the MENA region. In this section the researcher focus upon the role of social media in enabling social unrest to ricochet from one country to another. In particular, the researcher ask whether social media achieved anything that could not have been achieved by more traditional means of communication TV, newspapers, radio, etc. Here the researcher address two different channels by which social media has helped social unrest to spill over beyond the national border by examining

1. The people-to-people aspect
2. People-to-international media aspect.

First, social media may have been instrumental in initiating a chain reaction of events by widening and strengthening direct lines of international communication between individuals across borders. While in the pre-social media era, stories of revolution and social unrest in neighboring countries crossed borders via traditional media such as TV, newspaper, and radio, the emergence of social media has tremendously accelerated the speed with which information can travel. Just as in any other form of new ICT, the communication capabilities of social media have not only enabled the transfer of information to occur at a faster pace and cheaper cost, but they have significantly reduced the constraints of national borders in their ability to contain information by providing means for an individual in one country to communicate with another in a different country on a virtual platform. The stories of simmering discontent towards the repressive regime and inspiring success in over-

throwing such regime have reached directly to individual readers across the region to play an important role in encouraging neighbors to follow on and participate in political action.

The second important role of social media was its facilitation of spreading information from those on the ground in areas of social unrest to international media outlets, such as AlJaz. Indeed, many international media outlets were quick to seize upon the potential of social media. Newspapers and TV stations have utilized videos, photos, and other primary source information highlighted in social networks in order to obtain information for their own media coverage. Valuable eyewitness reports on Twitter and blogs also played an important role in providing traditional media with more accurate and up-to-date information about local events. This in turn broadened the opportunities for protestors to actively influence the international narrative of the Arab Spring through influential media without being passively reduced to sound bytes.

This mutual complementarity of two different types of media was particularly important because traditional media reporters were often sensitive targets: they were denied access to dangerous areas or, once allowed in areas of social unrest, occasionally harassed, injured, or even killed. For example, when the on the ground reporting became increasingly difficult after AlJaz office in Cairo was assaulted and its reporters were arrested it had to heavily depend on information coming through social media such as Facebook, YouTube and blogs. According to an interview conducted by Aouragh and Alexander with one of the local activists, international media frequently looked for their hashtag and made contact with them through Twitter. In another instance, CNN reporter Anderson Cooper was punched in the face at a pro-Mubarak rally in Cairo, the news of which was immediately tweeted to social media channels. Reliance upon social media avoided such risks by allowing those at ease on the ground to essentially cover stories that would be hazardous to explore or that may have gone unnoticed because of the limited access by traditional media. Such news stories were then distributed across the world via established international news services.

However, it is also true that social media brought non-negligible change to the mode of international communication that would have been difficult by traditional means of communication. As briefly discussed, social media has brought changes, both quantitative and qualitative, in two major channels:

Increasing the volume and decreasing the cost of international people-to-people communication

Changing the pattern of people-to-international media communication by:

Allowing story to be reported from the places where the traditional media has limited access.

Paving the way for a bottom-up and decentralized process of news formation.

5.4 Conclusion

The analysis of Social Media on the events in MENA countries indicates the presence of several general themes:

- Protesters have been motivated by Social Networking Sites (SNS) Tunisian activists utilized Twitter in mass mobilizations and for organizing the multiples demonstrations
- Protesters found that Social Media is a golden chance to liberates them from dictators.
- Protesters generally have had the same socioeconomic concerns over high unemployment and rising costs of living.
- Protesters move from level demanding jobs and better life to demonstrate for democracy , human rights and to stop the torture
- Activists have made great use of social media in organizing themselves, planning protests, and spreading information both in their countries and around the world.
- Social movement theories demonstrate not only the ways in which traditional mechanisms of mobilizing protesters were used successfully during the Arab Spring, but also how social media bolstered some of these traditional mechanisms to create a strong force for driving and mobilizing collective action in a variety of political environments.
- Social media successfully garnered significant international attention to protest movements within countries.

The individual heterogeneity of protest movements in each country suggests that further generalization should be made with caution. While social media demonstrably facilitated

organizers' abilities to organize themselves, particularly in regimes in which censorship and arrest of dissidents are common, this online organization did not necessarily translate to direct action. Furthermore, direct action did not necessarily translate to political change. Finally the country-level case studies show that any presumed correlation between high social media usage and successful mass protest is far too simple and is necessary tool for the organization and implementation of protest movements.

Chapter 6

Quantitative Findings

Quantitative Findings

In this chapter, the researcher will analyze the coverage of Al Jazeera Arabic and CNN channels news that were selected as the focus for research for this study, given their popularity and in reaching the world. Al Jazeera launched as a service for the Arab world but has expanded its offerings, in multiple languages, for a global market. Like the CNN, the Al Jazeera Network positions itself as a “global broadcaster” working to universally held journalistic standards

The researcher think that choosing CNN and Al-Jazeera will provide this research on Egyptian revolution a deep look how these social and political movements was covered during the uprising. Analyzing these two channels news reports seeks to answer the research question:

What was the role of social media sites in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?

RQ2: What was the impact of social networks during the Egyptian Revolution according of the CNN & Al-Jazeera news channels and how these channels use the social networks for broadcasting?

The research question, RQ2: “What was the impact of social networks during the Egyptian Revolution according of the CNN & Al-Jazeera news channels and how did these channels used the social networking sites to broadcast?” The aims here are to provide with an insight into the views of these two news channels. The justification of looking at these two news channels lie in the fact that they are viewed as the traditional media which act as a ‘watchdog’ or a gate keeper for its audience: bringing news from around the world and informing people but at the same time trying to present events in the most unbiased manner possible. Hence, if social media played an important role in the Uprising, these two news channels would have affirmed that. Another reason for selecting these two news channels is that both the channels have wide audience viewership.

According to Alex Sherman (2012) CNN relies on “the story” to drive its audiences, rather than opinions. It’s a strategy that works well when news breaks: CNN’s 25- to 54-year-old prime-time audience topped Fox’s and MSNBC’s when music stars Whitney Houston and Michael Jackson unexpectedly.”

Al Jazeera, which produced a lot of footage that was counter to enhancing the image of the United States. Al Jazeera which won a loyal following among its 50 million Arab-language

viewers launched in Doha, Qatar, in 1996 and spawned competition from a slew of Arabic-language satellite channels, most notably Al Arabiya. These networks, not unlike U.S. network television, told stories with a recognized nationalist perspective; in the case of Arab-language media, they reflected the interests and concerns of the audience. By definition, this meant that at times the stories were perceived as anti-American and anti-Israeli in tone and scope to U.S. leaders, especially coverage by Al Jazeera, which had come under considerable criticism by the Bush administration in the immediate aftermath of September 11 (9/11).

To answer **RQ2**. The researcher will analyze the news channels depending on the following reasons:

Political: if the news channels have gone beyond news and journalist professional limits and was an active maker of events.

Social: if the activists or Social Networks Sites (SNN) news appears in the news channels

Social – Political: if the news channels mixed between Social and Political news

6.1 Analysis of Al-Jazeera articles

The first signs of the Egyptian Revolution was broadcasted by Al-Jazeera channel after Al-Jazeera Arabic and English news start warnings about the beginning of the Egyptian Revolution and continued the mass mobilization when Al-Jazeera support the Freedoms conference in Egypt which was held on 20 Jan-2011, when Egyptian experts warned of the dangers of a revolution coming from Tunisia to Egypt. After that Mubarak regime “black-out” the channels news and ask the foreign journalist to leave Egypt because the airport will close soon.

6.1.1 The beginning of the Egyptian Revolution Coverage

During the days of the January revolution, Al-Jazeera’s coverage was indispensable. On 23, January 2011. “April 6th Youth Movement” created a Facebook page. This page starts to organize the mass mobilization and protests against Mubarak regime. The first protests of this page was announcement of “The Day of Anger ” On 25 January 2011 in the festival day of police in front of the Interior Ministry and Al-Jazeera was among the first news channels which covered the Egyptian Revolution news in Social Networks Sites and start to make a brief reports about the impact of social media in the Egyptian Revolution at the

end of the news. Al-Jazeera covered the explosion of social anger in a perfect way and bring the uprising news from all Egypt depending on Facebook and Twitter thru a big networks from Al-Jazeera reporters to Egyptian activists and experts and during the block of broadcasting, Al-Jazeera start to broadcast via satellite

6.1.2 Political Coverage of the Revolution

Al-Jazeera coverage on the political level was quite different than CNN coverage. According to Salon.com, *“Al Jazeera's coverage of the 2011 Egyptian protests was superior to that of the American news media, while U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton also opined that the network's news coverage was more informative and less opinion-driven than American journalism”*. And Al-Jazeera declared from the beginning of the Revolution that : *“We follow the coverage of one of the biggest political protests in Arab history.”* The effect of the Al-Jazeera channel during and after the Egyptian revolution was on the daily basis covering all the revolution activities of political parties via Facebook, Twitter, Skype. This role enforcing Political Change in the Arab Spring Countries in general and particularly in Egypt.

6.1.3 Social Coverage of the Revolution

Al-Jazeera Cameras was the eyes of the Revolutionaries. Al-Jazeera's Live Egypt was the preferred choice of revolutionaries during the Egyptian Revolution. Al-Jazeera gave legitimacy to the activists by covering that the all aspects of the Egyptian people participating in the Revolution for civil and political rights. It describes the demonstrations and protests in detail and explains that they are demanding the ouster of the current regime;

For the first time in more than three decades, hundreds of Egyptian demonstrators moved from different places in Cairo and joined with thousands of others in dozens of demonstrations in different cities of Egypt. While the other demonstrations moved from several areas toward Tahrir Square in the heart of Cairo, Sunday afternoon, the total number of protesters reached to about 20 thousand. Demonstrators chanted for the step down of President Hosni Mubarak, in front of the High Court in Cairo. They also called on his son Jamal by saying, ‘Oh Jamal, tell your father all the people hate him!’ (Aljazeera, 2011).

Marches in the millions of people all over Egypt is a popular revolution inclusive of all shades of the Egyptian people: Muslims and Copts, Seculars and Islamists, youth and the elderly, artists, clergy men, men and women and even children all calling for freedom,

dignity and to put an end to despotism and the injustice of the existing regime (Aljazeera, 2011).

AlJaz reports that the protests that swept through the largest Egyptian cities are not created by a call from a political party. Every mass mobilization was announced on the Social Networks Sites (SNN) and these protests do not have a real leadership that represented it or that would state its specific demands, but are more empowered by the wrath of the Egyptian people. Protesters demand more attention to the living conditions, the economic and social developments. However, it evolves into a political slogan just as the revolution in Tunisia did. Aljazeera even went further by giving examples from the history of revolutions in Egypt against colonialism and occupation.

Al-Jazeera mentioned on the second day of the revolution, January 26th that the protesters use of the Internet and more specifically Social Networks Sites (SNN) in order to communicate with the rest of the protesters and to urge the people to continue their protest. The Social Networks Sites (SNN) is also used by the protesters to learn about the most up-to-date movements of security forces in the region and to advise the protesters of the easiest way to get to the places where the demonstrations take place.

Through the social networking site of Facebook emerged three main groups used by thousands of people urging a continuation of demonstrations and used it as a news platform. Mohamed El Baradei's group had joined these groups, involving three hundred thousand people under the slogan: "Together we will change."

Al-Jazeera mentioned that another Facebook group called the "Latest News" group with a slogan of: "I'll get my country's right back" and "We are all ready for EGYPT" called on young people to raise slogans of national unity in the daily demonstrations to gain sympathy and lobbied the army and police. Among those slogans for the Facebook groups where people are incredibly increasing every minute and reached 22 000: "*Muslims, Christians, we all ask for change*" (Aljazeera, 2011).

In same time, another Facebook group emerged called "And Egypt's Revolution Continues" posted on the January 25th Revolution Day was about torture, poverty, corruption, and unemployment. This group contains around 21 thousand activists and supplies the protesters with daily slogans such as "*Bread-freedom-human dignity-and in the honor of you my country, it is only a cloud and it will pass*" (Aljazeera, 2011).

Abdul Hussein Shaaban in referring to Social Networks Sites (SNN), said;

From the semantic uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt is the great role that was played by the media and the communications technology. One could no longer find any means of oppression able to shut down the modern technology, which was able to overcome the time and place and to transport the whole picture with voice and the actions to the rest of the world within just a few moments of any ongoing events. This is possible through the use of Facebook, Twitter, the Internet, and the mobile phone. Tunisians and Egyptians succeeded with excellence in achieving a peaceful revolution. By this kind of an effective approach of non-violence indicates that the Tunisians and the Egyptians have a high level of awareness of national culture to protect the homeland from the combustion and the preservation of the national blood (Shaaban, 2011).

Finally, on the 25th of January, Friday at Tahrir Square. Protesters demand Hosni Mubarak and his corrupted regime to leave. And Al-Jazeera mentioned that the protesters stress in their chanting that the revolution is a popular and youth-based revolution, by saying, "*our revolution is a popular revolution, our revolution is a Youth revolution, we are young, we'll free Egypt, the change is coming, and we will get our country back by our hands*" (Aljazeera, 2011).

6.2 Analysis of CNN articles

CNN covered the Revolution in Egypt with a number teams on the ground in Cairo: Ben Wedeman (@benCNN), Arwa Damon (@arwaCNN) and Fionnuala Sweeney. CNN coverage was different than Al-Jazeera. Juan Cole, a Middle Eastern historian at the University of Michigan and blogger, and Abigail Hauslohner, a writer for Time.com in Cairo. Both agreed that Egypt will not follow Tunisia because the situation is much different for Egypt.

Well, both analysts were wrong and on January 25, 2011, the start of the Egyptian Revolution, CNN published an article entitled "Will Egypt follow Tunisia's lead?" Mamoun Fandy was interviewed and he shared his opinion about the future for Egypt as he saw it. He stated that he was not "seeing a turning point or tipping point yet" (CNN, 2011). Additionally there was media confusion in CNN and they have stopped the Egyptian revolution articles section on CNN news site: <http://articles.cnn.com/keyword/egyptian-revolution> and asking to remove all references to this resource.

6.2.1 Political Coverage of the Revolution

Because the CNN is only restricted to the English channel, its role and news coverage of the quick events since 25 January has been restricted to the foreign viewers or those who master the English language. In general, it has not enjoyed a high percentage of viewership among the Egyptians. Probably this was due to the fact that many other channels are available (while noting the difference between the Gulf war when the Egyptians and the Arabs used to watch the CNN when it was the only television channel available on which to follow the war developments in the early 1990's and the media arena which is full of channels in 2011). Perhaps, this is also due to the advance stands adopted towards anything that is American (the evidence is that Al-Hurrah Channel has not been among the names that were strongly present during the events in spite of its good coverage).

Additionally CNN was trying to satisfied the western viewers and bring the old conflicts with Muslim Brotherhood to the Egyptian Revolution which had a bad effect on the political coverage and changes the facts which lead to a weak coverage on the political level

However, this does not mean the absence of some professional coverage that has been characterized with a great deal of ability to analyse and understand. Most of this coverage has been from CNN journalists who lived for a long time in the region, and who mastered the language or who are Arabic speakers, and who absorbed the culture that stands behind the language. Among them are Halah Ghurani, Arwa Damon, Ben Wedeman, and others.

Contrary to the phrase always seen on the CNN, which says "brought to you by CNN, the channel seemed to be away from Egypt's revolution and what was behind it and its real dimensions. However, it covered in detail the official US stand on what is going on in Al-Tahrir Square, whether through focusing on the statements and news conferences of the US State Department or through the analysts who have US tendencies due to their birth, work, or sympathy.

According to Al-Hayat website the CNN Political Coverage of the developments of the January revolution has reaffirmed that it lost the crown of the television news, its coverage of the attack on its team, including newscaster Andersen Cooper, near Al-Tahrir Square by demonstrators carrying pictures of President Husni Mubarak, and rescuing the team by the real revolutionaries has been excellent. One of the team members managed to film the details of the attack while the attackers were unaware of what he was doing.

The CNN has viewed what is going on as "a crisis in Egypt." Perhaps the title means the crisis that concerns Egypt, which would be followed by similar titles in the following days such as "the crisis of Libya," "the crisis of Algeria," and "the crisis of Iran."

6.2.2 Social Coverage of the Revolution

January 25, 2011. The start of the Egyptian Revolution, CNN published an article entitled "Will Egypt follow Tunisia's lead?" Mamoun Fandy was interviewed and he shared his opinion about the future for Egypt as he saw it. He stated that he was not "seeing a turning point or tipping point yet" (CNN, 2011). Juan Cole, a Middle East historian at the University of Michigan and blogger, describes Tunisia as "a little bit unique."

"There have been lots of civil wars. There's been lots of societies in turmoil. But this kind of phenomenon where you had crowds peacefully coming into the streets to demand a change in their own contract with their government -- in the Arab world proper, this is the first time it's happened and it's the first time since 1979 in the Middle East," Cole told (CNN, 2011)

On the second day of the revolution in Egypt, the 26th of January, news stories in CNN described the protesters as a few thousand antigovernment individuals.

The Interior Ministry put the size of the Tuesday demonstration in Cairo's Tahrir Square at 10,000 at its peak, falling to 5,000. CNN estimated that demonstration peaked at 15,000 to 20,000 (CNN, 2011).

CNN news stories also described why the Egyptian protesters took to the streets which caused a wrath among the security forces because of the rising cost of living, failed economic policies, corruption, and finally the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak was the most important of their demands. These complaints were not new to Egyptian authorities, as reported by CNN, and protesters believe they were given the simple lip service to their grievances.

CNN mentioned that a Facebook page that has served to help organize Tuesday's protests in Cairo says, *"Many young Egyptians are now fed up with the inhuman treatment they face on a daily basis in streets, police stations and everywhere. ... Egyptians are aspiring to the day when Egypt has its freedom and dignity back, the day when the current 30 years long emergency martial law ends and when Egyptians can freely elect their true representatives."*

6.2.3 Sharing “Chaos”

On the 30th of January, five days after the revolution, CNN shared the fear and chaos evident on the streets of Cairo during the night. Many streets in the capital were left without security forces and were left with community leaders to protect themselves. Kareem Amer told the *CNN* that houses were being robbed and looted. Gunshots were heard throughout the nights disturbing the sleep. As with most revolts and rivalries, looting and robberies were present in Egypt. *CNN* released stories from the Egyptian-State-run Nile TV on January 30th of individuals confessing of their acts of crime. It aired images of men confessing to involvement in looting. “A school teacher said he had been involved in looting at a Cairo museum. Three others said they had stolen items from a supermarket in a suburb of the city” (*CNN*, 2011).

6.3 Conclusion

According to Heidi A. Campbell and Diana Hawk, in their report : “Al Jazeera’s Framing of Social Media During the Arab Spring” they mentioned that in the news stories surrounding the Tahrir Square protests of January and February 2011, the most common term used by Al Jazeera in their broadcasts related to social communications was "Internet" (n=31 mentions in 16 clips). It is described as a tool and site for communication between people involved in the protests. For example, a story airing 27 Jan 2011 at 16:24 states "...the Internet sites communication and social networks play a significant role in the need for people to participate in movements"². Throughout these references the Internet is presented as a neutral technology leveraged by different groups for strategic purposes such as the "Internet a prominent role in the revolution of the People in Egypt was a tool for coordination" (10 Feb 2011 13:43:46). This clip also highlights a sub-theme found amongst about a quarter of these references, that is the linking to the Internet the notion of revolution or suggesting that the protests could be described as an "Internet revolution" (n=7 mentions in 5 clips). This Internet revolution highlights the use of the Internet for connecting people and drawing wide-spread attention to the protest. One story reported that the Internet revolution aids the spread of protest which seek to address social ills: "Movement started protests in Egypt at the invitation to Syria via the Internet revolution days on corruption and poverty, torture, a call which received a response from the parties to non-politicized by the Egyptian society." (28 Jan 2011 01:03:14).

According to Campbell and Hawk Facebook was the second most common social communication reference by Al Jazeera (n=17 mentions in 15 clips). In 10 of these mentions, Al Jazeera highlighted that Facebook was specifically being used by protesters in Egypt as a means of communication with others about their cause, such as raising public awareness of human rights violation and the torture of prisoners (e.g., 18 Feb 2011 05:50:08). It was also noted that Facebook was not only a source for organizing protests in Tahrir Square, but a site itself in which the protest against Mubarak must be voiced and raised: "The battle in Egypt fought on the pages of Elvis Bok [Facebook]" (05 Feb 2011 05:54:18). Reports also mentioned that Facebook users in Egypt networked with friends in other countries to spread news of their activities and encourage other to join in, such as reporting that the February 7th protests in Libya were spurred on by Egyptian youth via Facebook (07 Feb 2011 07:36:15). It is also important to note that in over a third of the mentions, Facebook (6 of 17) was specifically connected with discussions of the role that young people played in the Egyptian protests. This point is discussed in more detail under category three. Overall, Facebook is presented as a tool which brings with it action and social change.

They added that a number of general terms were also referenced in the data set including social communication (n=7 mentions in 7 clips), social networks (n=3 mentions in 2 clips) and social media (n=2 mentions in 2 clips). Social communication was used to describe the kinds of interactions taking place on the Internet, Facebook or social networks. It was also used to highlight the unique nature and potential of these new mediums, e.g., "proactive waging a war is in the language of traditional media a new ... warning of the use of the sites of social communication" (16 Feb 2011 14:16:27). Social communication seemed to also suggest the interconnectedness and interpersonal nature of new media, e.g., "This comes in the wake of the appeal made by the Movement of the youth of 20 February to a network of social communication ... to get out in peaceful demonstrations for change". Here the referencing of social networks seen as connections created through these new media tools.

According to Campbell and Hawk that a number of other social communications terms were given single mentions in various stories including "websites" and "world wide web", but due to this infrequency they were not given special consideration here. It is important to note that while, Twitter was mentioned twice verbally by Al Jazeera reporters in two broadcast clips, for some reason this was not picked up by the machine translation. Overall these different references present social communications as a tool, a site, resource

and channel for protestor's communication and connection with others. Interesting claims also can be inferred or in some cases directly made about the impact, these seemingly simple actions, facilitated by social communications, had on the Tahrir Square protests.

Chapter 7

Project Part

Politics 2.0: Usage of social Media in Political Marketing

Political communication has been an important element in American history (Mayer, 2008). For instance, it was through political communication that America's founding fathers declared independence from the British, Americans united after Pearl Harbor, and people from across the world learned about the election of America's first African American president. These historic events relied on traditional forms of media (e.g. newspaper, radio, and television) to distribute political messages to a large amount of people. With that said, mediated political communication is currently going through some radical changes because of new technologies, such as the Internet (Mayer, 2008). One reason for the radical changes is because of the emergence of social networking sites (SNSs) on the Internet. Over the past decade SNSs have become a popular online destination for people to visit. For instance, SNSs like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest have captured the interest of millions. As a result, the rapid rise of SNSs has brought changes to the communication realm, including political communication. A reason for the change to political communication is because SNSs provide a way for anyone with access to the Internet to produce and be exposed to mediated forms of political communication. As a result, political candidates and ordinary people no longer solely rely on traditional forms of media to produce and be exposed to mediated political communication. For instance, a politician can use SNSs to bypass traditional forms of media to fund-raise and recruit volunteers (Zima, 2006). However, academic research is limited about the effects SNSs have on its users during an election year (Vitak, Zube, Smock, Carr, Ellison & Lample, 2011). Even so, there is initial support for the idea that political communication on SNSs can encourage political participation (Gueorguieva, 2008). As a result, the researcher took advantage of a presidential election year to examine the relationship between political communication on the popular SNS Facebook, and political participation.

Since the beginning of Arab Spring. The dictatorial regimes try to block AlJaz, CNN and other channels news in order to hide what's going on from killing activists and protests, to stop the voices of activists. They succeed in blocking the traditional Medias but they failed in Social Networking Sites (SNS). The political parties, activists, bloggers in Tunisia and Egypt didn't find another way than Social Networking Sites (SNS) to post and publish the news, protests and to organize the mass mobilizations and sharing news about the places to protest. And since the world influenced by the American high-Tech and specially the Obama victory in 2008. Social media marketing became a must in most polit-

ical campaigns in order to influence the voters and in Uprisings to share the voice of activists.

Savvy political strategists nowadays using Internet monitoring to gain an edge in tight political races The recent U.S. presidential campaign in 2008 has shown that Web 2.0 has become an important tool for political communication and persuasion (Towner et al. 2011; Hoffner & Rehkoff 2011). It became obvious, that particularly social networks could be successfully adapted to contact and discuss with voters as well as to disseminate important information to them. Especially young people were inspired to political topics after getting in touch with them by using social software as the communication platform (Chen 2009; Kushin & Kitchener 2009). Wattal et al. (2010) investigate the contingent impact of related Web 2.0 technologies on the campaign process. The success of the Obama team and the way this team used social media to spread their message will be a guide for every political campaign. A few of the reasons Obama's team made social media so effective. The campaign used social media to publicize every speech and event online, recorded clips were edited and posted to YouTube within hours of a speech or event. Blogs were used by the campaign for massive distribution, outreach to bloggers resulted in more than 22 million posts to independent, Web sites and blogs, including the Huffington Post over the course of the Presidential campaign. Twitter was used to further spread the Obama message. Tweets with links were immediately posted to campaign and Ustream Twitter accounts (at the time he was elected, @BarackObama had 165,000 followers. Their results show that in particular the blogosphere can influence the campaign process and the election outcomes. They also argue that information systems as a discipline has an important role to play in understanding e-politics.

According to an article in MarketingProfs: "*Ustream viewers—close to 5 million unique users—logged a combined sum of almost a million hours over the course of the campaign watching Obama's videos on Ustream.tv.*" (MarketingProfs, 2008)

In democratic countries, political parties feel responsible to canalize and participate in public political discussion. Traditionally, politicians and journalists bring up and moderate those political discourses. However, the traditional structure of mass communication in the political context has changed (Chadwick 2006; Gil De Zúñiga et al. 2012). Based on the rapid development of Web 2.0 technologies and associated social media, internet users are enabled to create content on their own. By using political blogs or discussion forums, people express their opinion, participate in discussions or find politically like-minded indi-

viduals. As a consequence, professional journalists act no longer as an institutionalized “gatekeeper” who measures and selects information for publication in newspapers or television. It has been argued that the diffusion of the usage of Social Networking Sites (SNS) as well as other factors (e.g., discussion culture, average age, etc.) have a strong impact on the relevance of public internet based discourses within the political landscape in specific countries (e.g., Howard 2006; Papacharissi 2002; Tewksbury 2006).

Recently, more than 1.06 billion people worldwide are members of the Facebook network (Facebook, March 2013) while Twitter counts more than 500 million users in total (Twitter, March 2013). With this tremendous growth, these platforms allow both citizens and politicians to participate in political discussions or to share political content publicly. Furthermore, it is argued that from the perspective of politicians and political parties it is important to actively join social media based political communication, in particular during election campaigns. Already, U.S. politicians are said to have a leading role in this regard with the most prominent example of Barack Obama being able to successfully employ social media within his last election campaign (Wattal et al. 2010).

However, the relevance of social media for political actors in other countries than the U.S. is unclear. It seems that most politicians are reluctant to integrate the use of social media into their daily business. For example, studies have shown that a majority of German politicians do not support political communication by social media (e.g., Beckedahl et al. 2008; Christmann et al. 2010). However, there is a lack of academic research investigating the reasons for this reluctance of politicians as well as the problems politicians might face to contact (mostly young) voters via the internet. In general, the research field on social media in the political context is still young and has been focusing mostly on the political landscape of the U.S. Little is known about the relevance of social media for politics in other countries as well as factors of success for the application of social media for political purposes.

In this chapter, the researcher will seek to contribute to Social Networking Sites (SNS) by examining the relevance of social media in political communication from the perspective of Arab Spring political institutions including political parties and politicians. The researcher explored in this thesis the role of social media in Arab Spring during the last two years. Thus, the researcher will identify key aspect for a successful usage as well as concerns that might impede a wider adoption of social media in political context.

Nowadays it's not just votes that count. The usage of Social Networking Tools should spread and used wisely from political parties. They should put into their consideration that the voting behaviour is exactly consumer behavior. Political parties must seek to establish direct links with citizens, and not depend totally on the traditional communications. And to do that, politicians must communicate directly with citizens thru social media tools to give a feeling that they are near the citizen everywhere and they are not just advertisements of a political party in TV or newspaper. In addition to that direct contact thru Facebook pages or a hashtag on Twitter will give a feeling to the voter that his vote count and he can give his opinion about politics and development.

So after that, there will be a personalization of electoral systems by the spread of social media and politicians will have the opportunities to give a personal statement with voters and to speak to citizens directly with them, additionally the social media tools will allow for interactivity and listening from the voters.

In specific details, there are some points the political party who run a social campaign should take care about, because the impact of social media on voting for a candidate can have a bad impact if the political party didn't give an attention to:

The political party who run a social media campaign should be aware of the direct effect of the number of people being social media friends or followers of a candidate and exactly number of "Likers" on a Facebook page because the "digital" voters concern about the total number of followers or Likers that each candidate have it, For example if a candidate running a Facebook page and have around 1 M "Likers" that will give him a possibility of advancement in comparing of another candidate have only 750 K "Likers" and this advancement will allow him and give him the priority of more "posts" and "Share" on Facebook, and in same time this advancement will allow him for more "RT: retweets" on Twitter and more "Share" on YouTube . This point could be the most optimistic expectation and rests on their understanding that Social media are particularly suited for a more personal and informal relationship with voters. It's obvious that if no voter follows you, you cannot show that you "are like them". And the larger the group of followers of a candidate, the more preference votes he receives'

The political party should make an interaction effect with followers and social media networks users. The merely owning big numbers of "Likers" or followers is not enough to get voters to vote for candidates. The candidates having a Twitter account but not using

it as 'Twitter zombies'. Followers only interact and vote when a candidate actively mobilizes them. The more a candidate makes use of her/his social media account and interact with followers, the larger the effect of the number of followers on the number of votes he/she receives.

There is an indirect effect where social media use increases the conventional media exposure of a candidate. In this regard, the researcher should make a study to consider 'the impact of social media on old media'. Because if a candidate have a big number of followers and interact with them in a positive way, this will give him advancement and make him/her "talk of the town" resulting in draw attention to him/her from journalists amongst the followers and the more journalists who follow a candidate, the more preference votes he/she receives

Thus, companies or agencies that run a political marketing campaign on social media for candidates should put in their consideration that followers may act as "ambassadors" and use information received from the social media to influence their friends and peers. In regard to the direct effect, there indeed seems to be a limited direct effect of the number of (Twitter) followers on the number of preference votes, and considering the interaction effect. Those politicians who actively use their accounts reap the harvest of social media, while non-active users enjoy far smaller benefits. As for the indirect effect, having more journalists amongst followers has no added value. Finally, in social media, and Twitter in particular, there's a direct but limited effect on the number of preference votes a candidate receives. This effect is strengthened by how often candidates use social media. But there is still a need for study the content of campaign messages to ascertain "what exactly it is that convinces public-opinion on social media". And "Do candidates who 'listen' and respond to voters do a better job?", and would be beneficial, if politicians were to use social media to keep in touch with citizens in-between elections?

To create a successful political marketing campaign, and to influence the voters and public-opinion on social media, five steps must be followed:

Political Marketing Campaigns for supporters, not for candidate, it's about the voters not candidates, and because no campaign staff in the world could create and "Share" the millions of stories of content and in order to allow for followers to share candidate stories and movements, a political campaign must provide on candidate website or on Social Media

Networks (SNS) a unique content for the web, applications for sharing and for interacting with other followers

A candidate campaign should be where the discussion already is and stop depending on Email because it stops being effective a while ago. So the campaign should convert E-mails accounts and convert the Likers to Facebook fans, because the growth of Facebook vs. all other social networks, and there's a hidden role of Google must be clear that majority of searches on Google research engine and for that there should be SEO employee to monitor the ranking of the candidate website and keep it on the first search page.

The political campaign should focus on relevancy; neither candidate nor the fans can be on all social networks sites at once. So the campaign should pick 1 or 2 social networks and focus on them. And the candidate website should be simple and not many options because it will distract the fans. The focus should be on what the candidate wants from the fans to be 'first' and the main focusing should be reflected on candidate website .

Finally, the secret for every successful Facebook page is a passionate content that drives community because this is an easy way for fans to "post" and discuss physical events. And the campaign budget should take into consideration the advertisements on Facebook, and especially in "news Feed". To consider voting behaviour as consumer behavior, and because Political marketing campaign should be effective as a consumer marketing campaign to influence the voters, the content of the fans should be the most important and every commercial, advertisement and message should drive to one call to action: "Join the discussion" first, "Invite others" second, "Help fuel the fire (donate)" third, and every political goal should be put in terms of what that goal means for the individual for example : "Hope, change, Jobs, money. All this tactics of the political marketing campaign should be applied as well on email marketing, SEM, streaming video, file sharing sites, blogging, and mobile marketing.

The benefits of social media for political Marketing campaign are impressive; however, I believe that all politicians should have a social media expert on their side, preventing them from making very public and irreversible mistakes.

Politicians need to realize social media should never be taken lightly as it carries the power to amplify the message, or seriously damage politician career. A well-prepared and thorough social media crisis management strategy would be a wise tip for all politicians engaging in the social world. Politicians have recognized the importance of social media en-

agement and are now competing in a way the audience has never been able to witness before. Social media have a many benefits for political marketing campaign if all the tactics mentioned before been applied wisely, Social media allows voters to directly respond and communicate with candidates on a very public level, which makes it a lot easier for other voters to follow conversations and discussions and help them shape their opinions and ideas about politicians. All of these tactics regarding the engagement if been applied wisely will generates outstanding benefits:

Reach: Social media is available around most part of the world and all the citizen need is reliable internet access with no serious restrictions. There are no state borders on social media, politicians can reach voters all over the country. This also means that people who live outside the U.S. are able to follow them on Twitter or Facebook as well. This can result in global opinions and a possible sense of pressure. Having a wide reach increases the chances of content being spread.

Cost-effective: This is probably one of the most important benefits of using social media as it generally does not require paid subscriptions for anyone to participate. In that regard, the investment one would have in social media would consist of time and assuring this time is well-spent. One tweet can go viral and can possibly leave a bigger impression with voters than any TV commercial could; this is where the power of social media lies.

Generating campaign donations: Getting positive online publicity is also an effective way to gain donations. How? By simply adding a donation application button to the networks, politicians enable supporters to easily make an online donation. According to the Washington Post, President Barack Obama raised half a billion dollars using this online method during his campaign, which I believe to be quite remarkable. In his 2012 reelection campaign, he is adding the Square technology to donation methods and this is likely to raise more money for the campaign as it enables iPhone and Android users alike to make donations.

Building trust: Building trust is strongly related to the connection politicians create with their voters in a social network. For example, the more a politician tweets on Twitter, the more people will feel like they know the politician and this is ultimately what they aim to gain from voters.

Finally, well-prepared social media strategies are not impossible to develop, especially if a politician has a competent social media community manager by his side. No new social

territories should be entered without proper preparation, as President Obama so well understands when he started hanging out on G+ (Google+). Being prepared and having a solid plan will lower the chances of crossing any socially acceptable lines. My last word is to advice politician's start using social media because it's much better than traditional campaigns.

Chapter 8

Discussion

Discussion

The chapter five and six provided the research with data which was analyzed to provide coherent results for answering the research question. This chapter will aim to analyze and relate the analysis to theoretical claims that were made in chapter two. Connecting these analyses with the theoretical data might finally be interpreted in light of the main research questions:

What was the Impact and Role of Social Media Sites during the Egyptian Up- rising of 2011?

Keeping in mind the fact that the main research question will be answered by combining the two questions. This final chapter will discuss the link between the two sub questions and how they complement each other in context of this broad research.

In the qualitative part, I conducted ac interviews in accordance with the method of qualitative content analysis developed by the social researcher, Philipp Mayring. This means, it was essential to use existing studies and theoretical assumptions as a starting point for my own methodological approach. The interviews I conducted were built on a clearly defined category system.

After transcribing the conversations about the Egyptian revolution, I start to analyze and put a structure for the large amount of text. This allowed me to explore key aspects, and to identify variables and relationships between them.

8.1 Impact of Social Networks Sites usage by Activists and Bloggers

The qualitative research of the various factors influencing social unrest in MENA, as well as quantitative findings to support this research, suggests that social media was a useful facilitative tool but by no means a cause of the Arab Spring. The country-level case studies indicate that there is no consistent correlation between social media use and successful mass protest.

Analysis of events in five MENA countries, the activists and experts interviews highlights the importance of the destabilizing political and socioeconomic issues shared by these countries. Most were governed by authoritarian regimes that provided people with few opportunities to voice their concerns, participate in political parties, or vote in free and fair elections. Stagnant growth, high inflation, rising unemployment, and heavy government

subsidies also characterized many of the countries in the MENA region. These destabilizing factors likely contributed to the social unrest of the Arab Spring.

According to experts, social networks sites played a distinctive role in two separate ways that experts believe are particularly salient to our policy recommendations. First, it served to boost international attention to particular events by facilitating reporting from places where the traditional media has limited access to, and by providing a bottom-up, decentralized process for generating news stories. Second, the positive use of social media by many protesters during the Arab Spring to discuss ideas and plan protest activities is being increasingly countered by its use by governments eager to repress the activities of protesters and stymie democratic movements. After analyzing the activists and experts' interview the researcher will address recommendations to "Next stop for the Arab Spring", and promote its positive function for protest organizers in the next section.

I interviewed 6 social media activists and 4 experts in total and found other interesting interviews I conclude it in my analysis. The majority of them were young professionals of Muslim faith. The crucial factor for my research is that all of those I talked to had taken part in political protests both on the Internet as well on the streets during Egypt's revolution.

Among others, I interviewed the marketing manager of a leading online news site, an activist heavily involved in NGO community head of a human rights organization and journalist at Egypt Independent news website. By conducting research with people from a mix of traditional and new media, I had a broad spectrum of perspectives which enabled me to draw conclusions about the Egyptian media system in a wider sense.

The first question in my mind was if these activists have a leader. Interestingly, there are differing opinions about this. Even though the people I interviewed could themselves be considered central figures in the Egyptian protest movement, they don't see themselves this way. Rather, if anything they are modest and prefer to stay in the background. Fundamentally, this aspect is very controversial. Some believe that the protest, at least on the Internet, didn't need any leaders and that the egalitarian forms of organization and communication of Facebook groups are decisive characteristics of social media. Others believe that there were indeed so-called 'leadership figures' who were often created and highly stylized by the mass media. My interview partners mentioned famous bloggers such as the Egyptian blogger Hafsa Halawa from NDI (National Democratic Institute) and

the Egyptian writer and blogger Bassem Sabry who wrote “Egypt and the Rewriting of Mubarak”

By analyzing the interviews it seems that the protesters in Egypt used many social media platforms, primarily Twitter and Facebook. And that was a very important point because it was necessary to differential the roles of the individual platforms. Technical requirements alone meant that different platforms are used for different purposes.

In a question about if this statement, “Social media sites provided Egyptians with space to have political conversation online which resulted in offline participation.” Is true Hafsa Halawa answered:

“I think this argument is true - to an extent. certainly within the groups that used social media, the gateway to political discussion provoked & fueled the anger that started the protests in January 2011. However, it is important to note that the uprising saw all walks of Egyptian life pour into Tahrir square & other governerates, and internet penetration at the time was less than 20M of the 83M calculated population at the time. furthermore, FB & Twitter penetration was very low - so this discussion was always, and continues to be on a elite level, and very cairo based. whilst internet penetration has increased greatly since the revolution & FB users have increased, it is important to note the disparaging gap in wealth, and resources between Cairo, Alexandria (that saw the largest protests), and other governerates across the country. It is also important however, to put these numbers into context of those who protested - at its peak Tahrir square saw probably in the region of 7M people crowd the square, palace & other areas of Cairo - a far cry from even half the estimated population of greater cairo (about 22M) - certainly political discussion in places like Suez, Mahalla etc was not fueled by online discussion as internet penetration was very low - this was purely a grassroots movement. And it arguable that it was actually these governerates that pushed the downfall of Mubarak/soft coup by the army as Suez was arguably the most violent place for the whole 18 days, and the labour strikes across Mahalla in the last days of the uprising are what are argued to have 'tipped the balance' into the army supporting Mubarak stepping down.”(Interview with Hafsa Halawa)

While Facebook was used to exchange enormous amounts of audiovisual content and to form networks and discussion groups, Twitter was primarily used for logistical purposes in Egypt. For example, people exchanged information on how to deal with a tear gas attack. On the streets people could use Twitter to rapidly exchange information in real time about

actual incidents. In that way, protesters reacted quickly and evaded attacks by security forces or bypass blockades. While the wider population used Facebook, it was primarily those activists who were extremely engaged that used Twitter inside and outside of Egypt.

“Twitter is usually used for instant communications, news and updates from people on the ground (whether in Tahrir square or other places), facebook is better used to gear up people and plans especially when planning for fridays's marches. Youtube serves both ways”. (Interview with Fady Ramzy)

Thus, it's possible to say that Twitter and Facebook helped topple president Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled Egypt for 30 years and my research results show that Twitter and Facebook played a significant role in the process of mobilizing protesters and in the Egyptian context, Facebook in particular helped accelerate the protests.

However, that doesn't necessarily mean that the revolution wouldn't have happened without these online platforms. The majority of the social media activists I interviewed believe that it would have taken a few more years to overthrow Mubarak's government. In general, the virtual networks enabled the dramatic growth of what was initially a small protest movement. Especially in the year preceding the 18 days of mass protests in January and February 2011, the number of Facebook users increased rapidly. The Arab Social Media Report illustrates this numerical growth exceptionally well.

Additional to the online social media role, I explored also the organizational aspects of the protests. There were some 'real' organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the Ultras who played a central role in coordinating the mass protests in Egypt in January and February 2011. Social media had a very restricted role in this respect.

Some experts even believe that social media was responsible for causing chaos and anarchy. Experts don't necessarily view this as something negative. People were being mobilized and wanted to actively contribute to political change. However, the organizational potential of Facebook and Twitter to coordinate protests in the long-term, to define collective goals and to create effective structures seems to be limited.

Essentially, there is a need to differentiate between the diverse functions that Facebook and other social media networks have. For example, when you discuss the organizational function of a specific platform, then you need to analyze the coordinating aspect and not the networking function or how it generates growth. Unfortunately, because people fail to de-

fine and specify concepts, they often reach non-scientific conclusions. As a result, the role of social media has been, and still is, often overestimated.

Regarding the social media effects, during the Egyptian revolution, there was an affect of the social media on the formation of collective identity. It was photos and videos more than anything, which helped develop a collective identity, or more precisely, helped develop a form of solidarity. In particular, images of police brutality and police assaults, which were distributed on Facebook and other platforms such as YouTube and Flickr, made people more willing to take to the streets and risk being injured or even killed. This is because as well making people more angry, the images also lowered people's fear threshold.

Overall, social media networks made people feel as if they were part of a bigger protest movement. As a result, they could then collectively dare to move from the online world to the offline world, to the streets and public places of their country.

8.2 The role of traditional media inside and outside Egypt in the Egyptian Revolution

The analysis of the interviews showed that the participants of the Uprising did not trust their national media at all. The respondents did mention the fact that the majority of the Egyptians who have no Internet access were consuming national television as their primary source of news. But all of the interview actors expressed their distrust towards their national media. Regarding the personal news source of the interview actors, most of them mentioned using social media sites as one source of news and the other source of news were channels such as CNN, CBC, Al-Nahar, Al Jazeera, and Al Misr.

“Internationally - I watch Al Jazeera English & CNN International mostly. For local news on Britain (where i was raised) I follow Sky News - and for Egypt news I mostly watch talk shows, if at all (i rely more on print & social media for Egypt news), however when breaking news is emerging I watch CBC, Al-Nahar & occasionally ONTV. Talk shows in Egypt - when I watch them, which isn't that often: Lamees El Hadidy on CBC, Mona El-shazly on MBC Misr, and very occaisionally Yosri Fouda on ONTV or Mahmoud Saad on Al-Nahar TV.” (Interview with Hafsa Halawa)

Although the mainstream media serves as a watch dog for the public and provides unbiased information, it is seen that even with large corporations like CNN and Al Jazeera that is not the case. According to one interview actor, Al Jazeera was seen to be

pro revolution and it was visible in their coverage. Regarding the coverage of the protests by CNN several interview actors had a negative tone. According to one respondent:

“What’s the difference between CNN and Al Jazeera?” Answer: “CNN shows the missiles taking off, Al Jazeera shows them landing.” Farheen Hussain

In comparing of the usage of social media between AlJaz and CNN. The researcher found that during the first two days of the Egyptian protests, live stream viewers Al-Jazeera over the internet increased by 2,500 percent to 4 million, 1.6 million of them in the United States, according to Al Anstey, managing director of Al Jazeera's English-language channel. Al-Jazeera enters every Arab home with their nonstop coverage and live internet streaming in English and Arabic. AlJaz offices were looted and ransacked, journalist arrested. AlJaz’s image as a News leader for Arab Spring coverage grew because this channel was among the first few networks to successfully broadcast spotty images from Cairo after the Mubarak regime cut Internet and phone signals on 27 January 2011, in a failed attempt to stifle the Tunisian-style protests from spreading. It was a big victory for the network, since many Western organizations, scrambling to get reporters into Egypt and struggling to communicate with those on the ground, were forced to rely on AlJaz’s Arabic and English networks for information, citing it repeatedly in copy and on the air.

"This is our story," says one Al- Jazeera English journalist, who asks not to be identified because he is not authorized to talk to the media. "This is the story that proves to the naysayers of the world what we can do. We took the lead and everyone followed: CNN, Christiane Amanpour -- in spite of harassment, having our tapes stolen, people being beaten up. If you want to know about Egypt in the U.S., you're watching Al Jazeera."

The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated on March, 2nd 2011. “You may not agree with [Al-Jazeera], but you feel like you’re getting real news around the clock instead of a million commercials and arguments between talking heads and the kind of stuff that we do on our news, which is not particularly informative to us, let alone foreigners.”

CNN coverage for the Egyptian Revolution was from an American view” “ What does this mean to us?” It means asking about the meaning of what is going on in the world to the Americans in terms of interests. It can be said that the CNN coverage has reflected this to a large extent, particularly concerning the analytical points and files related to the incidents in Egypt. "What does the revolution mean to the US economy?" "What do the Egyptian incidents mean for the US interests in the Middle East?" "What does the anger of

the youths in Egypt mean for the Egyptian-Israeli relations and the position on the peace treaties?" "What is the meaning of what is going on in Al-Tahrir Square concerning the developments of things at the White House?" This vision that can be described as "narcissism" has been the clear feature of the channel's coverage, which contributed to its failure in having prominence in a clear way.

CNN's Arab reporters had different views during the coverage of the people revolting in Egypt. They keep mentioning these particular words over and over again: fear, chaos, anarchy, violence, terror, safety, security. There was a lack of mentioning of live ammunition being used even after showing a man shot to death (only was it aired once and never again). Not mentioning police in civilian clothing are the main looters either and instead speaking of their violence and mass looting to discredit the people. CNN focused on Muslim Brotherhood more than the revolution news itself, and that's what wasn't understood from the Arab audiences, and this coverage also split the views of CNN Arab reporters, and in comparing CNN reporters' points of view, Khaled Fahmy shares his views in the following passage;

Since the eruption of the Egyptian revolution last month, I have been on Tahrir Square with millions of other Egyptians calling for freedom and dignity. Over these weeks the square has been filled with people from all walks of life: young and old, Muslim and Copt, rural and urban, rich and poor, secularists and observant Muslims. As a secularist, I am not in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood coming to power in Egypt, and I remain deeply skeptical of its political program, believing that much of it is vague and impractical. But as an Egyptian hoping for freedom and justice for my country, I am deeply convinced that the Muslim Brotherhood has a place within a free and democratic Egypt (Fahmy, 2011).

The CNN has viewed what is going on as "a crisis in Egypt." and although the CNN coverage of the developments of the January revolution has reaffirmed that it lost the crown of the television news, its coverage of the attack on its team, including newscaster Andersen Cooper, near Al-Tahrir Square by demonstrators carrying pictures of President Husni Mubarak, and rescuing the team by the real revolutionaries has been excellent. One of the team members managed to film the details of the attack while the attackers were unaware of what he was doing.

The channels news undoubtedly feels threatened by Twitter, Facebook and amateur blogs. Who will need to watch television news in the Middle East, the cause to which he has ded-

icated his professional life, if the next generation of Arabs get their news or current affairs fix from Twitter and Wikipedia? . The activists wants to be engaged in the events and “Citizen Journalism” concept grew and to contain the activists, Al-Jazeera established new service to upload pictures and videos of protests and CNN did the same with “CNN-iReport” service to contains the activists engagement and to allow these channels to appear as a key-players on the Social Networks Sites (SNN). Watchers no longer want to be told the news or lectured endlessly by experts; they want to participate in the news-media production and consumption. The internet has speeded up the space-time continuum such that people no longer want to simply watch history unfold on the tube; they want to help create it and are capable of doing so in real-time. People send in video footage; call in to radio news shows, send pictures and offer street commentary; they want to contribute to history’s unfolding on 24 hour satellite cable news, from CNN and AlJaz.

Overall Al-Jazeera seems as through social media will help democratize media production in a way that contributes to the transparency of television news broadcasts. It became glaringly obvious that other television news outlets such as Egyptian state television, which for a long time denied that protests were occurring and continued to offer Mubarak unwavering support, were being less than upfront about protests in Tahrir Square and elsewhere in Egypt. Egyptians in Egypt didn’t have to wait for state television to tell the truth any more than Egyptians living in the U.S. had to wait for FOX News to show them what was actually happening. Social media was taking care of that long before people took to the streets. CNN certainly couldn’t have toed the same line Egyptian state television did during the run-up to Mubarak’s resignation even if they’d wanted to. Al Jazzera, relied heavily on Youtube, Facebook and Twitter for networking and accessing events in Tahrir square.

8.3 Conclusion

In describing the relationship between social media and traditional media in Egypt. There was a clear interplay between new and traditional media during the protests in Egypt. Instead of having to create their own content, traditional media, both within Egypt and in other Arab Spring countries, could access user-generated content produced by the protesters. And vice versa, the effect of social media was dependent on television and the daily newspapers because those people who didn’t or rarely use the Internet received the majority of their information from private television stations.

There was a five-day Internet blackout during the protests. The blackout can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, protesters still went out on the streets to demonstrate even though they had no Internet access. On the other hand, many believe that it was the social media blackout that caused people to be so angry that they went out and protested in every-increasing numbers.

And some of the experts I interviewed voiced their frustration about national and international reports on the revolution lacking neutrality. In contrast, the content posted on Facebook and other platforms was often viewed as being much more reliable. But also certain independent Egyptian newspapers such as El Shourouk, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Doustour were used as important channels of information

“Egypt has over 90 million people so you cannot generalize, since most of 50+ generation rely 100% on TV & then print, totally on the contrary of the younger 20s/30s generation I would say in high social class they rely 100% online. So basically depends on demographics big time.” (Interview with Fady Ramzy)

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Conclusion

In this thesis, the researcher focused on the Impact and role of social media networks in the Egyptian Revolutions from the view of Egyptian activists, experts, and from analyzing the coverage of the main news channels AlJaz and CNN, also in this research the researcher provide a brief study about the starting of social media impact in the uprisings Arab Spring countries.

The primary survey conducted from analyzing the Egyptians activists role and impact of social media on channel news for measuring the role of social networking websites during political crisis in Egypt, and from the in-depth interviews conducted with media experts and social media activists, the research showed the following results:

- Majority of activists and bloggers in the range age from 18 to 35 and the majority of them are students and the rest of them graduated.
- An interesting point in Egypt that around 75% of social networking sites are females, and spent time on social networking sites of females exceeds the spent time of males
- English was the most used language from activists and bloggers, and Arabic came after English, and majority used Arabic and English languages in same time.
- The majority of activists were using the social networks sites for more than two years.
- Around 99% depend on the media like Al-Jazeera, ON TV , BBC , CNN to get news and posting these news on Facebook and Twitter for organizing the mass mobilization and warning the activists.
- The majority interviewers indicate that the coverage of social networks sites was good, and majority of interviewers believe in the credibility of the social networking sites as a news source during and after the political crisis.
- Facebook was the most used social media site in political communication, political discussion and organizing the demonstrations among networks sites followed by YouTube and Twitter.
- Nearly half of interviewers first heard about the protests from face-to-face communications. "Traditional mass media were far less important for informing people

about the protest than were more interpersonal means of communication (face-to-face, telephone, or Facebook).”

- Nearly half of interviewers engaged in citizen journalism, sharing video or photos of the protests. “The leading platform for producing and disseminating visuals was Facebook, and mobile phones in second place. These were not mutually exclusive options; many who used their phones also used Facebook (70% of those who used their phone also used Facebook), presumably uploading videos and pictures taken on their phones to Facebook. About 5% of the interviewers used Twitter.”
- The first motivation for activists and bloggers of using Social Networks Sites was the enjoying freedom environment of expression and taste of liberty. They find in social media the best place for political discussion, political engagement and to criticize the regime.
- The time of political participation in the digital revolution was bigger than participation in the revolution in Tahrir square.
- Activists and bloggers agreed that the revolution changed the concept of political communication between the political parties and the voters changed and the future of the political marketing will be on Social Networks Sites (SNS).
- Mass mobilization was affected by social media but the Uprising occurred due to the economic, social and political injustice that people were facing for years, role of social media sites cannot be ruled out. And nowadays Social media is no longer the fourth estate, but became the first power. The users of Social Networking Sites (SNS), like Blogs, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter spawned a lot of angry responses from the Egyptians that pushed them to rise against the system.

Although the reasons for the Uprising itself was spontaneous in terms of how people were Organizing the protests, co-coordinating with one another etc, it is vital to understand that the motivation for mobilization was going on for years. And understand the full story of the Egyptian Revolution the researcher had to study the historical aspect of Egyptian social, economic and political condition.

Coming back to the role of social media sites during the Revolution, it is worth mentioning that new Social Media Networks (SNS) technology is changing the manner Political Communication. This change was seen last three years in Syria, Egypt and Tunisia and

according to some activist's predictions, it will be seen in other countries where the political situation is stagnant and people are unhappy with their governments. The politicians and policy makers should not underestimate the power of social media tools. And in comparing the social media and the traditional media, two central characteristics that make social media different from traditional media are the transparency and interactivity they provide. The events of 2011 in Egypt confirm the significance of social media sites to create awareness amongst people who have access to such sites.

The results of this survey are quite essential to include in this research as it confirms the reason as to why the Egyptian youth was so active in the demonstrations and it shows that the youth is an essential "consumer" of social media sites, using these sites to engage in political discourse. According to the Moaaz Al Khatib speech he lectures Arab leaders in Arab Summit Saying , "Fear God as you run your countries, Arab regimes need to introduce political change that takes into account the aspirations of young Arabs". (Arab summit, 27.03.2013)

And as for CNN and AlJaz analyzes. It seems that the traditional media highlighted the role of social media in the Egyptian Uprising. The results confirmed that the CNN news website promoted the role of social media in the Uprising much more than the Al-Jazeera did. This difference is significant because the reach of these channels is enormous so the ideology they promote is reaching the people and influencing their mentality, thought process regarding an issue or a story.

Although the aim of this thesis was not to comprehend the role of traditional media in the Egyptian uprising. The researcher focus on this role because this could help for another research area.

I want to say that my research may differ from the multitude of other studies on the social media impact on Egyptian revolution topic. Beginning, in the past few years, there has been a great deal of hype surrounding social media and its role in the process of political transformation. Cyber optimists and social media skeptics have been debating each other for years over the Twitter revolution and the Facebook effect.

The mass media has often pursued these debates in highly speculative ways. In light of this, in my master's thesis I wanted to compile and analyze my own empirical data about what concrete roles social media platforms really played in the revolution in Egypt.

User statistics and network analysis clearly demonstrate the fundamental significance of certain social media tools in processes of political transformation. Previous studies indicated that there was a real need for studies on collective identity formation and organization mechanisms. I wanted to dig deeper and find out why and how people used social media to mobilize protests in a country like Egypt.

Last but not least, by analysing the way the activists utilized the tools of social media tools through established theories of communication, one can see how the inherent characteristics of social media tools were able to foster the necessary requirements for collective action. The founders of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube did not create their products with the intent of starting revolutions and ousting dictators, and though they may feel they have played a role in the process by providing these tools for change, these revolutions begin in the minds and imaginations of those driving them. They choose their tools and their mediums for communication, whether it is print, radio, blogging or just word of mouth, but the strength of a movement lies ultimately in the will for activism.

Finally, Social Networking Sites (SNS) opened new horizons for minorities who oppose Mubarak autocratic regime find that most Egyptians are supporting them, so they were more encouraged to speak out and go to the street. However, without the blood, the willingness and persistence of the protesters in democratizing and liberalizing their country, the Egyptian revolution would have never succeeded.

At the same time, the success of the Egyptian revolution and other Arab revolutions in the world forced social networking websites to change their initial purpose from being a medium to socialize with other people worldwide into wider scope. Social Networking Sites are now an essential medium for people to express political opinions, seek out political information, propagate for candidates and give political advice.

In last words, Arab Spring uprisings are NOT BLUES (referring to Facebook and Twitter) as Wael Ghonim said: ‘The heroes are the ones who were in the streets, the heroes are those who got beaten up, the heroes are those who got arrested and put their lives in danger.’

9.1 Recommendations for the “Next step for the Arab Spring”

While western governments discussing which political party they should support. The people made their own decision depending on Social Networks and that’s what we saw it in all

uprising and nowadays in Syrian Uprising. Syrian activists announced that only the God helps them, and also the Facebook and Youtube.

Research suggests that protests, when effective, are the end of a process, rather than a replacement for it. Political freedom has to be accompanied by a society literate enough and densely connected enough to discuss the issues presented to the public (Shirky). “The real lesson is that the cyber-verse gives no side a decisive, unassailable advantage” (Carfano). For groups that have felt powerless against repressive regimes, social media’s technological leveling of the political playing field provides one of the most important components of any successful revolution hope.

According to Etling “the activities of social movements will gain influence only to the extent that they are able to avoid the scrutiny and controls of the state. A challenge for improving the prospects of digitally-assisted political reform in closed societies that must rely on decentralized networks is to adapt, emulate and transfer the benefits of highly organized civil society groups, as bottom-up de-centralized organizing is more likely to survive in repressive regimes.”

Most of Uprisings started without supporting support from the west. But still, any next movement will cost too much for ordinary people and activists if they didn’t get benefits from the uprisings before two years. High unemployment and lack of economic opportunities are sufficient reasons for uprising in Central Asia and other Arab countries and here some recommendations for the next uprising

- When activists use Facebook to post a “status” for demonstrations. They shouldn’t make it in fixed places. Some of places should be “fake” and the demonstrations should be in different places in the city and after that they should agree on a place to demonstrate.
- Simple and clear: The "Events" option on facebook easy way to call for protest, there shouldn’t be a lot of descriptions. The Call should be simple and clear.
- Avoid using long sentences on social media networks sites, because people are not interested in long speeches
- Social networks have broken the psychological barrier of fear by helping many to connect and share information. But in same time not everything online. There’s

field work and posting live and directly from demonstrations influences people and make them excited to join the protests

- The activists should upload all demonstrations video to YouTube, to let people know what's going and to raise awareness regarding political participation
- Twitter doesn't allow you to type more than 140 characters, so it should be used wisely. Bloggers and activists should agree on #Revolution, like #Jan25, to organize the protests and make it easy for all activists.
- Be Ready for it before you do it. As they say "Revolution is made by the brave, stolen by the opportunists and enjoyed by cowards".
- Empower and arm yourself with knowledge and get ready for the consequences and for the transition period because they are tough.
- Finally the golden rule: Facebook to schedule protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SMN	Social Media Networks
SNS	Social Networks Sites
MENA	Middle East & North Africa.
RT	Retweet
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
Ultras	Type of Sports fans
ALJA	Al-Jazeera
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
G+	Google +

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, Source: <http://usabilitynews.usernomics.com/2007/11/social-networks-totem-pole.html>

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

This survey is part of a study conducted to obtain a Master of Arts degree in Marketing Communications at Tomas Bata in Zlin. This research examines the role of social media in the Egyptian revolution and **for study purpose only**.

Your input is quite valuable for the completion of the survey. Your responses will be totally anonymous.

It will not take more than 10 minutes of your time. Thank you for your time.

PART I

Background Information of the interviewee (app 5 minutes)

1. Since when have you been an activist/blogger/journalist?
2. What is your motivation for blogging/engaging in political discourse online?
3. Do you belong to any NGO (non-government organization) in Egypt? If yes, can you please provide me with a brief description of the NGO and what is the role of this NGO in Egypt?

Now I would like to talk about the role of social media in the Uprising.

4. How did you use social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook and (or) YouTube during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?
5. Could you please start by giving me some background information of how you got involved with the Uprising?
 - When did the events that led up to the Uprising begin?
 - What were you expecting to achieve in the beginning of the Uprising?
 - Have your expectation been met?
6. How important were social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube in creating awareness regarding the Uprising to the people of Egypt?
 - How important was it in creating participation?
 - How important was it in promoting motivation amongst people?

- Do you personally feel that this Uprising relied heavily on new media technology?

7. What is your opinion about this statement: “Social media sites provided Egyptians with space to have political conversations online, which generated offline participation during the Uprising.”

8. One important characteristic of this Uprising was, “Spontaneity”. Do you agree?

- If yes, in what way do you think social media sites affected this characteristic?

9. How different do you perceive things could have been if protestors in Egypt had no access to social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube?

- Would the Uprising still have taken place?

-Would the intensity of the Uprising be different?

- Would everything have happened just as it did?

PART II

Now I would like to ask you questions regarding the Egyptian Uprising and the factors that affected this movement.

1. How could you describe the events that occurred in Egypt?

2. Western media has given the Uprising several names in the past one year, what do you feel about the name, “Facebook Revolution?”

3. What is your news source? Where do you prefer to get your news from?

- Which print media?

- Which television channel

- Which online source?

4. Now I would like you to tell me what in your opinion were important factors that triggered the

Uprising in Egypt?

- Role of the Egyptian Army

- Role of the Labor in Egypt (Mahalla Factory protests)
- Role of the general public
- Any other Factors

5. How would you describe the relationship between new media (social sites) and traditional media in the Egyptian Uprising? Do you for instance feel that they were combined or one dominated over the other?

6. What was the role of the United States in Egyptian Uprising, in your opinion?

7. Do you feel that western mainstream media has highlighted other factors mentioned in Q: 4 to the public? Do you feel that people know the real picture of the Egyptian Uprising of 2011?

We may now conclude our interview. I would like to mention that if you have any suggestions, questions and remarks regarding the interview you may state it here.

Appendix B

Below is the list of Activists for the conducted pilot research. A pilot research was conducted to test face validity from top activists and experts in the field.

Appendix B – List of activists who conducted in-depth interviews:

Activist 1:

Fady Ramzy

Political activist and E-marketing consultant

Activist 2:

Bassem Sabry

Political activist, writer, commentator, tweep

Expert & Activist 3:

Hafsa Halawa

Activist, NGO worker, National Democratic Institute, Blogger

Activist 4:

Rawda Ali

Political activist, defendant in NGO trial heavily involved in politics/community, member in a political party

Activist 5:

Ahmad Sabri

Political activist, University Student, radicals' political view

Activist 6:

Adam Taylor-Awny

Political activist, working for alleviation of poverty & social justice, Oxfam GB

Appendix C

Below is the list Experts list for the conducted pilot research. A pilot research was conducted to test face validity from top experts and experts in the field.

Appendix C– List of experts who conducted in-depth interviews:

Expert 1:

Fady Ramzy

Activist & Expert, E-Marketing Consultant.

Expert 2:

Mohammed Al-Badry

Journalist, PhD student in Political Science

Expert 3:

Ali Ahmad Rabah

Journalist, Alanba newspaper

Expert 4:

Lara Sakr

News Coordinator, reports writer at Youkal.net, Political Science student

EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW 3:

-
-
-

Hafsa Halawa

Hi Ahmed,

I'm so so sorry, I have had a crazy week. Will reply tomorrow ASAP :)

Sent from my iPhone

Ahmed Fihaili

ThanksHafsa

Youaresoawesome)

Good night

Hafsa Halawa:

Dear Ahmed,

Sorry for the late response, but please find my answers below with some contacts that I have:

When did you become an activist in the Egyptian Uprising?

I wouldn't call myself an activist per se, but certainly I was involved in my own way from the very beginning of Jan25. I wasn't present in Egypt myself during the 18 days, but attempted to do what I could from London (where I was studying my masters when the uprising began). I attended protests at the Egyptian Embassy in London & was very active on social media, aware that the communication lines were inactive in Egypt for most of the 18 days. However, my role really began when I returned on my several trips back to Cairo between Feb-June, before moving back permanently upon completing my masters in June 2011.

Could you please tell me how did you use social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube during these days of protests?

Mainly, my goal was to relay as much information as i could from what was happening on the ground to social media sites. there was no communication during the 18 days, except for phone lines, and I had friends/family actively involved in the protests - so I would use their accounts of incidents & information about when & where protests were gathering & simply post them & spread info about protests - either in Egypt or elsewhere, to promote awareness of what was happening. I used it as a tool to raise awareness to try to create international feel to the uprising, with its heart in central Egypt.

Could you now please provide me with a little background information regarding the situation in Egypt before the Uprising?

Egypt was what most will say: a stagnant political atmosphere. Whilst the economy had boomed in the past 10 years, since the Gamal Mubarak era of free market had entered, bringing in billions of dollars of foreign investment, there was a massive issue of distribution of wealth, mainly provided for by large-scale corruption, however, Mubarak had so much money flowing into the country, that he was able to stave off, (for the most part - isolated incidents of people being killed in the bread line etc were happening from time to time), any 'hunger protests' etc due to his ability to continue to financially support Egypt's heavy subsidisation of the country's imported commodities & basic food stuffs, fuel, wheat etc...

However, the parliamentary elections of October 2010 (dubbed by Egyptians as the 'Ahmed Ezz elections'), were a turning point. Whilst most will say the revolution took everyone by surprise, for economists & people paying close attention to these elections, it was not. Without a doubt, Tunisia was a catalyst for Egyptians to stage their uprising now (jan 25 2011), but the uprising was completely inevitable. the blatant & outright corruption & rigging of the 2010 elections, saw violent reactions from people - who had been unable to vote, turned away, etc and with a growing private media influence, these channels have become more popular, more watched & more independent than the state-owned channels,

and so people were beginning to understand the disparaging gap between rich & poor, and the widescale corruption that was hindering progress in their lives. There was also growing calls politically from the Muslim Brotherhood, who, having done well in the 2005 elections, winning 83 seats in the first 2 rounds of the three round elections (overseen by the judiciary, not the ministry of interior as was in 2010), they were well placed to call the elections rigged, and cried out against the government, interior ministry & mubarak officials for rigging the elections. Back in this period, the Brotherhood was the only real source of opposition to the Mubarak regime, and so had been able to gain widespread support amongst all ethnic, economic & religious bases in Egypt.

Furthermore, whilst Egypt as a country was functioning, there was growing discontent on Egypt becoming a 'syria' of sorts, regarding its quasi-monarchy in Hafez al-Assad giving power to his son, Bashar. There was strong sentiment, across many Egyptians, including some % of its elites, that power shouldn't and couldn't vest in the Mubarak family, and see the presidency transfer from Hosni to Gamal Mubarak - which was quite obviously the plan that was being put in place.

Economically, things were going very well. GDP was growing at a steady & high rate annually year on year - predicted growth for 2011 was placed to break 10%, however the revolution halted this. However, many economists will tell you the economic climate was inconsistent with free market principles (due to the corruption), and more importantly, unsustainable. The government ignored the growing budget deficit by continuing to spend simply because they were selling projects, land & almost anything, to foreign owned entities, who enjoy good tax incentives, looking to invest in Egypt. Land contracts for real estate, malls, contracts for oil excavation, construction, transport, cement etc were all signed for billions & billions of dollars - to this day most have never materialised & now, in 2013 - contracts that had begun have been stalled, revoked, defaulted on etc and this is why the country now finds itself in economic ruin. On the ground, economically, prices were rising, inflation was becoming a problem, but only for those indulging in luxury goods. basic commodities continued to be subsidised & so generally not affecting everyday life, however bear in mind I'm not a member of those who are under the poverty line, or even the basic middle class living in Egypt. As a member of the upper middle class, I was unaffected by economic problems as I had a good corporate job, was able to easily

pay for my basic & luxury goods & basically really enjoyed a great life pre-revolution, despite all the corruption issues, traffic, bribes etc...

And do you believe that the Egypt Uprising heavily relied on Social Media Networks ?

No. not at all. the international media certainly did & they used it to their advantage in order to report on the events etc. but as an uprising itself, no-one in Egypt knew what was happening on social media for most of the 18 days. communication lines & internet went down on the 27th Jan at night, and internet only returned over a week later - long after all the major events of the revolution had occurred. In Egypt itself, the revolution was spurred on by old-school tactics of flyers, graffiti & posters to organise protests, and in fact many took to the streets, simply because they were unaware of what was happening, due to lack of social media that they wanted to see for themselves what was happening. Private media in Egypt was the driving force for the protests, particularly channels like Dream 2 & ONTV - who owned the revolution from day one. On an international level, it is no doubt Al Jazeera English in particular played it's part in making this an internationally un-ignorable issue with their 24/7 coverage of the uprising, which kept this story in the news & on the agenda of world leaders, particularly the US, in considering how influential media was in the uprising

however, this is not to take away from the influence of social media in the run up to the revolution. certainly sites & pages like the Khaled Said page on FB & 6 april galvanisation on social media worked fully in helping to organise the first days of protests - after 28 Jan however, I feel this argument is very moot.

What do you feel about this statement, “Social media sites provided Egyptians with space to have political conversation online which resulted in offline participation.”

I think this argument is true - to an extent. certainly within the groups that used social media, the gateway to political discussion provoked & fueled the anger that started the protests in January 2011. However, it is important to note that the uprising saw all walks of Egyptian life pour into Tahrir square & other governerates, and internet penetration at the time was less than 20M of the 83M calculated population at the time. furthermore, FB & Twitter penetration was very low - so this discussion was always, and continues to be on a

elite level, and very Cairo based. whilst internet penetration has increased greatly since the revolution & FB users have increased, it is important to note the disparaging gap in wealth, and resources between Cairo, Alexandria (that saw the largest protests), and other governorates across the country. It is also important however, to put these numbers into context of those who protested - at its peak Tahrir square saw probably in the region of 7M people crowd the square, palace & other areas of Cairo - a far cry from even half the estimated population of greater Cairo (about 22M) - certainly political discussion in places like Suez, Mahalla etc was not fueled by online discussion as internet penetration was very low - this was purely a grassroots movement. And it is arguable that it was actually these governorates that pushed the downfall of Mubarak/soft coup by the army as Suez was arguably the most violent place for the whole 18 days, and the labour strikes across Mahalla in the last days of the uprising are what are argued to have 'tipped the balance' into the army supporting Mubarak stepping down.

Do you feel that this was a spontaneous Uprising?

Yes & No. It was spontaneous in that the Tunisian success helped gather momentum that spilled over into Egypt, at a time when people were not expecting a revolt of any kind in the real sense. However, was this a spontaneous sudden burst of anger? no. this is a sentiment that has been building for several years in Egypt, and many economists and political analysts had predicted an uprising of some sort to occur soon - however, the original prediction of the 'uprising of the hungry/poor' gave way to a popular uprising on the wave of the Tunisian revolt against their leadership, and the momentum continued from Tunisia and certainly helped 'spark' the abolishment of the fear factor with regards to the people rising up against the leadership.

How could you and activists call the events (gathering and protesting) in one word?

liberating.

My next question to you is that you may have heard the western media give this Uprising, many different names. One was “Facebook Revolution”. Have you heard this name? How do you feel about this name?

i hear it a lot. two years on we are still discussing it and it angers me. I do not pretend to be able to speak for the poor, represent the middle class, the unemployed or those below the poverty line. but this was in no way a facebook revolution. this was a complete cross-section of all types of egyptians.

having said that, it is still my strong belief that the outpouring, particularly into the squares of Tahrir in cairo & sidi gaber in Alexandria, of the more wealthier, richer elitest % of the populations, was important. After a week of protest, and particularly after the infamous 'camel battle' the richer/wealthier part of society lost faith in Mubarak his leadership & his government & this triggered many more of them to come to the square. Yes, many didn't, but many egyptians across the country did not actively participate. however, i believe this new addition to the protest movement of the rich, etc attending protests, spurred on the removal of mubarak from power (particularly as they arrived more in the 2nd week of the uprising). However, this, i believe, is more due to the intense focus of private television & print media on the protests, giving people an insight into the protests & what was happening rather than anything happening online, even tho their appearance in the square coincided with the return of internet lines in Egypt. In particular the interview held by popular TV host Mona El-Shazly with Wael Ghoenim, as soon as he was released, was very emotional, perfectly concluded, from a journalistic point of view, and drew much sympathy from everyone, especially the upper middle class. my experience was that all my friends parents friends etc who were against the uprising continuing & wanted a political compromise rushed to Tahrir square the day after that interview & were spurred on to push for the regime change after his emotional message to the people. (having said that, unlike international media I do not praise Wael Ghoneim with beginning & making this uprising - he was being held in prison for over 10 days of the uprising, and had no connection to the outside world - it is what happened whilst he was in custody that spurred on the uprising).

Could you tell me what is your news source? Where do you get your news from?

Many sources - mostly newspapers: particularly Egypt Independent/Ahram Online in Egypt; the NY Times, Guardian, Telegraph, Economist for international coverage on Egypt & world news. Twitter is also an important news source for me, however mainly for commentary & breaking news.

And what about television channels?

Internationally - I watch Al Jazeera English & CNN International mostly. For local news on Britain (where i was raised) I follow Sky News - and for Egypt news I mostly watch talk shows, if at all (i rely more on print & social media for Egypt news), however when breaking news is emerging I watch CBC, Al-Nahar & occasionally ONTV.

Talk shows in Egypt - when I watch them, which isn't that often: Lamees El Hadidy on CBC, Mona El-shazly on MBC Misr, and very occasionally Yosri Fouda on ONTV or Mahmoud Saad on Al-Nahar TV.

What would you say about Mubarak and his relations to the States? What was that like during and before the Uprising?

It was a perfect relationship from the standpoint of the two administrations. Egyptians had made it very clear early on they were unhappy with the status of the relationship - protests first swept Egypt in 2003 against the planned American invasion of Iraq, and then very large widespread protests were seen during Israel's war in Lebanon in 2006 & the Gaza war of 2008 - these were more aimed at Mubarak for supporting the US blindly & refusing to send aid to the Palestinian civilians caught up in the wars, and in particular in 2008 for refusing to open the Rafah crossing to allow for medical aid like the Red Cross etc to enter Gaza.

It was a recipricol relationship, where the powers in Egypt were protected by finance & political immunity from the US administration - particularly in the form of army funding & no questions of supporting democracy (although Bush's administration in 2005 did attempt to push Mubarak to work harder on more democratic reform, which did result in 'open' presidential elections - eventually rigged)

in return Egypt has kept the borders of Israel safe & peaceful & has staunchly protected & supported US middle east policy, even where it has been an unpopular move to do so. Egypt is a key political player in the region, if not the most important ally to the US with regards to its foreign policy & its policy to protect Israel, and so it has always been in the US interests to keep Egypt content (in terms of an administration) and to support Egypt's administration to keep the status quo. For Egypt, the aid is of incredible importance, and it cannot be stressed enough the important both administrations place on keeping the Egyptian Army happy - arguably the real power force at play in Egypt's political life.

What do you think about the future of social media networks after the Egypt uprising ?

They are already increasing & their influence increasing. The president, armed forces, government, Muslim Brotherhood and opposition political parties all now use social media to release statements, orders decree's etc & it is becoming the first port-of-call for information & official statements from all politicians. However this is very dangerous - as it turns the media into a social media dependent source based news, rather than dictating the news that then spreads on social media, therefore making political decisions & movements more reactive not pro-active to political situations. It is important to stress the sensationalism that has overtaken certain social media sites, particularly twitter in recent years since the uprisings began. Journalists no longer need to be professional educated as such, many are now 'citizen journalists' which is a handy way of saying 'glorified activist' - bias has taken over all sources of media - either pro-government or against, and the idea of neutrality & independence is becoming lost in the array of media outlets that support twitter activists (eg) or are promoting the ruling government or president's office. Media outlets are dependent on what they read on social media, which is neither accurate, verified nor reliable & the tendencies of activists to exaggerate on twitter at any point in time is destructive to the process & hinders the transition to create & promote impartial & independent media - the cornerstone (along with flourishing civil society) for a fully fledged democracy.

Nevertheless, it is a change that has evolved that can no longer be taken back & social media is now the outlet for all official documents & statements. which is a shame - it should be remembered that twitter users in Egypt barely surpass 500,000 people, and FB users are in the country now number about 20M - a far cry from reaching anywhere near the 90M of Egypt's growing population. Internet population, on new numbers has now reached almost half of the population - which shows these numbers are on the rise (when comparing to pre-revolution numbers), but the original source base of news should still be print & TV news. and with the country still in dire economic situation & poverty in such high numbers, and also illiteracy, TV remains & will remain the main source for news for the country, with print media following after it.

What's your advice for the next country in Arab-Spring ?

I can't not in any way comment or try to implore any advice to these people - notably we're talking about Syria. It is a situation no can relate to or understand, the horrible crimes committed & danger they live in is incomparable to anything anyone who has been involved in any uprising has witnessed, even Libya. Their uprising is not a revolution anymore, it is a civil war - one that will (if it hasn't already) ultimately fracture & divide the country & my worry is only that opposition powers come together to contain the divisions & ensure by all ways possible Syria does not become another Iraq (regarding the sectarian war that broke out after the Americans removed Saddam forcefully from power). there is no advice to give them, none that I could offer anyway & I would never insult any of them by attempting to advise them on their conflict.

As for other countries, I won't comment either (notably gulf countries: saudi, kuwait, bahrain etc) - Egypt is not these countries & the failure constantly is to lump the region as one. Each country is significantly different regarding the power at play, the reasons for the uprising, the politics involved, religious base, population, economics & state of its institutions - just looking at 'successful' revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt & Libya highlights that.

It is unfair on those countries, and abhorrently lazy of anyone to try to create comparisons & 'predict' how each country will react or how any revolution will be staged. No one country is the same & no one country will have the same revolution. Certainly, taking Saudi as an example - many predict their revolution might begin with the death of the king, which could escalate a power-grab battle between the many heirs of Al-Saud. there is also the incredibly important factor of women's rights & issues, which others argue will be the spearhead of any revolt in Saudi. Nevertheless, the regional politics at play: namely Iran and the US involvement & support of the Saudi regime will play heavily in how, if at all, a revolution plays out there - we already saw highlights of this in Bahrain. Egypt, Libya & Tunisia, notably, were not the same. They were also, in themselves, very different from eachother. Libya descended into civil war and Gadhaffi was killed, Egypt's army staged a soft coup & Tunisia's leader fled the country - the reasons for this, the causation for each different outcome in each country is the highlight that no one country can influence, dictate or be compared to the results of another - if only in a comparative study of each different revolution, not in similarities.

Hafsa Halawa

Sorry for the long-winded answers! I hope this is enough for your study & I'm available to elaborate on anything you need clarification on,

again sorry it took me so long to answer: here are some contacts for activists I know:

Deena Adel (activist/journalist at Egypt Independent): deena.adel@gmail.com

Nada Mahdy (activists & heavily involved in NGO community): dodyart@aucegypt.edu

Rawda Ali (activist & defendant 27 in NGO trial - very heavily involved in politics/community): rawda.s@gmail.com

Bassem Sabry (writer, activist, commentator, tweep): bassemfsabry@gmail.com

Mahmoud Salem (writer, blogger, tweep, activist): sandmonkey@gmail.com

that's all I have, if i find any more I'll send them along,

Thanks a lot & good luck!

Ahmed Fihaili

Dear Hafsa

Thanks Hafsa so much for answering and also for the list of contacts of activists

Nice to meet you

Have a nice Day!

With kind Regards,

Ahmed.