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The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**The Impact of Social Media Outlets on the Presidential Elections: A Case Study
on Egypt's 2012 Presidential Elections**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

by Nourhan Elsebahy

under the supervision of Dr. Hussein Amin

May/2013

DEDICATED TO

My lovely family

*My father: Eng. Mohamed Elsebahy, my mother: Ms. Moushira Hathout and
my sister: Dr. Soha Elsebahy*

You are my reason for my success

This thesis is dedicated to my father who has been encouraging me for my whole life; he is such an ideal and understanding father. I wouldn't have been able to finish my MA journey without his continuous support.

It is also dedicated to my lovely mother, the best mum ever. She has been that unique mother who is patient and caring with me. She has dedicated her whole life for us and so I am dedicating this thesis to her just little something compared to her tremendous efforts with me.

The thesis is dedicated to my sister also, who has been that cooperative, helpful and advisable sister. She is my soul mate who shares with me all my life experiences.

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ABSTRACT

The American University in Cairo

Thesis, Master of Arts, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

Title: The Impact of Social Media outlets on the Presidential Elections: A Case Study on the Egypt's 2012 Presidential Elections

Author: Nourhan Elsebahy

Research Adviser: Dr. Hussein Amin

Month/Year: May / 2013

The ongoing debate over the impact of social media outlets on the political events that are taking place in Egypt, have fostered the research field to be headed towards analyzing that impact. History of online activism where its growing seeds are the social networking sites shows the great role played by these sites in the political life in Egypt. Being marked as the first freely democratic elections, Egypt's 2012 presidential election was considered to be one of the most striking events at that time. Thus, understanding all the common factors that affected the whole process of elections comes into importance. As social networking sites have been playing a great role in political events, it is presumed that it would have played a role also before and during the elections. Therefore, this descriptive study aimed at describing the role of social media during the elections' process as well as observing the candidates' usage of social networking sites while campaigning. Also, the research tried to highlight the voters' usage in the whole process of elections. In order to achieve these objectives, the research applies the uses and gratification approach to be able to examine the social media impact on the elections. A Case Study method is applied in order to dig deeply into the impact of social media and describe its role. These questions were raised in order to identify that role, what was the role of social media outlets during the campaigning of the presidential elections in Egypt

2012, how did the candidates use social media while campaigning? , How did voters use social media during the elections' process? , How did Mr. Ahmed Shafiq and Dr. Mohamed Morsi use social media during the first and second round of the elections?

In order to gather a large amount of information, the researcher conducted intensive interviews with political experts and the candidate's campaigns' coordinators. Candidates Facebook pages have been observed from April, 2012 when some candidates began promoting their campaigns through Facebook till the day of announcing the victory of President Mohamed Morsi.

One of the primary findings is that social media tools have been used before and during the elections as a double face technique. Presidential candidates got benefited from social networking sites as they used it as a promotion tool, but at the same time they were attacked through these sites from their competitors. In general, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and YouTube videos have been extensively used by the candidates through campaigning before and during the elections. Also, social media users have been very active in the whole process of elections where they supported or opposed certain candidates through social networking sites.

The study concludes that social media played a great role and Egypt's presidential elections marked as the first elections witnessed a great use of social networking sites. The findings indicate that social networking sites had a remarkable impact on the whole process of the elections.

However, the study didn't undermine other factors that contributed to the elections' results. It didn't also advocate that social media alone impacted the elections.

Keywords: social media, Egypt, presidential elections, online activism, Arab spring, Egyptian revolution, political participation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“Build it, and they will come” only works in the movies. Social Media is a “build it, nurture it, engage them, and they may come and stay. *“Seth Godin, sethgodin.com*

1. Introduction

Internet nowadays has been such an important medium to many people especially for youth. Some people rely heavily on the Internet in many ways. Social media outlets which have been so popular now tend to be important to users as they used them as a way of entertainment as well as getting information

1.1 Overview of the internet and Social media usage

Since the internet was discovered, and people began to use it as an attractive medium that compete strongly other traditional media. The number of internet users has been increasing tremendously worldwide. Accordingly, when social media outlets showed on the surface, people got obsessed about them. Some people spend times on these outlets more than any other activities.

1.1.1 History of evolving the internet worldwide

The Internet has been nowadays a great network of spreading information .It’s history is complicated and it involves several aspects - technological, organizational, and community. The internet affects not only the technical fields of computer communications but also it has an impact on society the world is moving toward increasing use of online tools to achieve many goals including acquiring information, electronic commerce , and also community operations.

(Leiner, B. M., 2009). Due to the rise in the personal computers and many computer

technologies' development, the internet revolution came out at the late 1980's. It was companies like IBM, Merit and MCI in 1986, that took over the United States government's role in investing in Internet development and established it to be the internet as we know it today: a medium that people can gain online access to in order to learn, gather or spread information freely (El Gody, 2000). The term "online" was derived from the preposition "on" meaning being connected to an electronic device or supply and "line" refers to the telephone connection or cable (El Gody, 2000).

1.1.2 History of evolving the internet in Egypt

Internet was first launched in Egypt in 1993 with a cable connection to France of a 9.6 kbps bandwidth to the Egyptian Universities Network (EUN) and the Cabinet Information & Decision Support Center (IDSC) with the National telephone organization that was providing the infrastructure. The number of Egyptian users was estimated to be between 2000 and 3000 at that time. (Rashad, 2005).

In 1994 the Egyptian domain (.eg) was divided into 3 sub domains, .eun.eg for the Egyptian Universities Network, .sci.eg serving scientific research institutes and .gov.eg for Governmental institutions. The IDSC was acting as an Internet service provider. Accessing digital data has been provided to the end user using digital multiplexors. Then interconnectivity has been largely improved by the setup of many digital multiplexors as the first digital backbone for data communication in the country. (Rashad, 2005).

In 1996, the gateway speeds have been increased by ABOUT 20 times. The number of users has increased to reach 20,000 users. IDSC/RITSEC began to provide connectivity to private service providers under the .com.eg domain, whereas some providers had their own

international gateways. ISPs had reached 40 by the end of 1996 and it provided Internet services to end users in Cairo, Sinai, Alexandria and the Red sea area. (Rashad, 2005).

Finally, In 2000 ISDN service has been introduced in Egypt. ISDN is an additional feature to the already existed normal telephone line. Its role was converting the normal, slow and analogue telephone line to that fast and digital telephone line. At that time the available speeds were only 64kbps and 128kbps. (Rashad, 2005).

1.2 Role of Social media in political participation in elections

Social media act as a new window for political participation and it is playing a great role in letting people politically participate .It has double face role one is complimenting traditional offline ways of participation such as posting videos from candidates campaign online. The second one is offering exciting new outlets such as writing personal blogs or notes that tackle political issues. (Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C. T., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C., 2011). Some advocates argue that some activities in elections cannot be accomplished online such as voting online, however, they believe that social media help voters gather a huge amount of information which would be hard to do through traditional media. (Tolbert and McNeal, 2003). Some arguments advocate that there is a great potential of the future of social media to increase the political participation in elections especially with specific categories including low income level as they are less likely to vote. (Krueger ,2002) . However, these arguments should not be taken for granted and should be taken with some skepticism (Han, 2008).

Social media doesn't act alone as motivator to political participation as there are other forms including campaigns' donations , rallies' attendance and convincing people. But , there are

many signs prove the internet ability to foster participation online such as on websites that encourage political interaction through providing news and information as well as allowing readers to interact through commenting and joining discussion boards .(Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C. T., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C., 2011).

Social media has many advantages in fostering political participation. One of which is that it is cheap and affordable. And so social media could increase general political knowledge and, subsequently, foster political participation. In Facebook, for instance, users can become a “fan” of a candidate and then be able to download and review his program online. Users also might share their political opinions through many tools such as writing status, sending messages as well as wall postings. Facebook friends can view all of these types of information through their news feeds which shows the actions of each member’s friends. Friends are also able to comment on news feed postings, and so they got engaged in active conversation with other friends about political issues. .(Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C. T., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C., 2011).

1.3 Overview of the Social Media usage in the Arab Region

Over the past few years the Arab region has witnessed a radical shift in their lives from confinement to freedom. Arabs succeeded through social media to penetrate the Authoritarianism of their countries and initiate what is called the “electronic revolution”. Facebook and Twitter seemed to be the most effective tools in this process marking the most popular revolutions among Arabs the Tunisian and the Egyptian revolutions.

The number of internet users in the Arab world has been skyrocketing. In 2007, the percentage of Internet usage in Egypt was 6.90% whereas the average usage of the Middle East was 7.38% (Iskander ,2011).

In the late of 2009, it was found that there were between 40 and 45 million Internet users are among 16 Arab countries that were surveyed (Ghannam, J. 2011). In addition, it is expected that the number of internet Arab users will reach 100 million by 2015. Regarding Facebook, in 2009 it was estimated that there were about 17 million Facebook users in the Arab world with 5 million in Egypt alone (Ghannam, J. 2011).

According to the International Telecommunications Union that did a research in 2009 of the percentage of the population that use the internet, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) estimated to be the highest as it had 75 % users, Oman estimated to have 51% users, Morocco had nearly 41% users, Tunisia had 34 % users, Egypt had 24 % users, Iran had 11 % users, Yemen had 10 % users, Libya had 6 % users and the lowest country estimated to have 1 % users which was Iraq (Kavanaugh, A, 2011).

1.4 Overview of the Social Media usage in Egypt

Some observers believe in the powerful effect of the social media as the main factor behind the famous movement against authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North African region (Cohen, 2011). In Egypt, social media played a great role in changing the history of a country that has been suffering from dictatorship for so many years.

Social media provided a wide space for oppositional movements as it acted as a tool for building a community that opposes the regime through which it couldn't be easily controlled by

the government (Lim, M. 2012). Also, these movements were supported by labor opposition and new network of middle-class youth who opposes the regime (Lim, M. 2012).

Regarding the political participation, social media gives more space to it, especially from those who have biographical availability such as unemployed youth. And so these media that were out of control served largely the fall of the former president of Egypt Mohamed Hosni Mubarak (Lim, M. 2012).

That extensive usage of social media might be justified by the increase of Egyptians who have internet accesses and so they get encouraged to participate online on diverse issues including political concerns. (Lim, M. 2012).

As for Egypt, it tends to be the most populous Arab country with a population of 81 million. Youth represents nearly the third of the country's total population grouped between ages 15–29, reached about 23 million. The number of young people has been increasing highly from 1988 – 2011. Egypt shares about 22% of total Internet users among Arab countries where 78% of them are between ages of 15 to 29 (Arab Social Media Report ASMR, 2011).

Pertaining to social media youth is one of the most active age group to use social media (Spot On, 2010). Many studies justified why youth are more likely to use social media in Egypt. Their biographic availability especially in Cairo seemed to be one of the most important reasons. Also, social media provided networks of opposition movements, which is a very tentative motive for youth (Lim, M. 2012). In general, the penetration of Internet among youth in Egypt is much higher than any other category as they grow up having the concept of socialization through social media (Price, 2010). Although, there are lots of obstacles in using the internet in Egypt such as the literacy and poverty, there is now a considerable percentage that uses the internet. It

is estimated that there are 40 million Egyptians between the ages of 10 and 25 who are familiar with the internet usage (Price, 2010).

Regarding Facebook, it is considered to be the second most popular website in Egypt after Google where the number of Facebook users exceeds newspaper readers (Spot On, 2010). Also, YouTube is very popular among young people where it ranks the fourth most visited Website. In 2008, it was estimated that about 150,000 to 200,000 videos were uploaded on a daily basis (Lim, M. 2012).

Usage of Facebook has increased tremendously in Egypt especially those who aim at social activism. As of May 2011 Facebook penetration in Egypt reached about nearly 5.5% (ASMR, 2011). Also, blogging tend to be very popular as by mid- 2008, the number of the Egyptian blogs reached 160,000 (Open Net Initiative, 2009). Egypt becomes the leader of the African countries with an Internet penetration rate of 15.4% (Open Net Initiative, 2009). About gender differences in Egypt, it is estimated that there are 63% of Facebook users who are male versus 37% of the users are female (Socialbakers (2011).

According to the Program of Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR), Egypt is considered to be the most Arab country that is witnessing a fast and growing usage of the internet. (Iskander , 2011).

1.5 Social Media usage in Egyptian elections 2012

Generally speaking, Egypt has witnessed a growing process of raising a political awareness as well as growing the seeds of activism in which social media occupies a big part of it (Iskander, 2011). Social media is considered to be an important stage in the development of

the social and political activism in Egypt. Its main impact is embedded in the opposing movements to the old autocratic regime (Iskander, 2011)

Facebook in particular has been an important routine for many Egyptians as it penetrates their lives impacting their ideologies, habits, way of thinking, and even more it affects largely their political decisions. Although Facebook is widely known for being a social community where people can build new relationships and know new friends, the 2012 Egyptian presidential elections turned these social aims to political ones. (Fisher, 2012)

For this reason, the 2012 Egyptian presidential campaigns tend to be the first campaigns where social networking sites were widely available to voters. And so, the campaigns offered the first opportunity for them to post whatever they want and say what is used to be banned. That's why examining the social media effect on politics in general and on the presidential elections in specific, seems to be a new area of research.

1.6 Statement of the problem

The unique nature of the social media makes it an important material to study and investigate. Affecting other traditional media such as television, newspapers, and radio, social networking sites have become a significant new medium that should be put into consideration. That is especially true when it comes to politics where social networking sites nowadays began to play a big role in the campaigns of the presidential elections worldwide.

That's because social media tools differ tremendously from traditional media as they are more textual and enhanced with the ability for interpersonal and social communication. What is even more, they focus on the users more than its traditional media counterparts, which allow

voters to interact politically with their candidates unlike before in the traditional elections that used traditional media. (Hanson, G, 2010).

According to the Arab Social Report, 2012, Facebook has recorded the most popular among other social media as there are over 901 million 'monthly active' users worldwide with 500 million access the Facebook through mobiles. Add to 500 million Facebook users on a daily basis and 80 % of them are located outside North America. (ASMR ,2012).

About the number of Twitter users in Egypt, it was found that between January and 30 March, 2011, there were about 1,131,204 Twitters. One of the most wide spread hashtags pertaining to the Arab region at the beginning of 2011 was #egypt with about 1.4 million mentions in the tweets that were created during this period and #jan25 with about 1.2 million mentions in the same time period .(Chebib and Sohail, 2011).

As the global attitude reinforces the increase in the of Web 2.0 technology use, the Arab region in specific has witnessed a radical shift in the use of social media. For example, Arab states have surpassed many of the Top 20 nations such as United States of America and Australia in the increase of Facebook penetration. (Bailly, J., 2012).

Considering that increase in the social media usage in Egypt and Arab world, it is inevitable to research whether the social media affects people's political decisions. Considering also the huge impact of social media in initiating the 25th revolution and other political activism movements such as Kifaya and Khaled Said, it will be beneficial to research the impact of the social media outlets as powerful tools during the presidential elections that took place in Egypt 2012. Additionally, the candidates usage to social media outlets before and during the elections,

seem to be quite important to be investigated. Add to examining the candidates' actual usage to those outlets and what benefits they gained through this usage.

And so, the Uses and Gratifications theory will be applied to figure out how people used social media during the elections process and how candidates got gratified from social networking sites. As such, the research will be able to identify how both users and candidates use social media during the elections. By doing so, the impact of social media on the presidential elections would be identified.

1.7 Reasons for choosing the topic under study

The reasons why this topic was chosen is that Egypt's 2012 presidential elections was considered to be the first democratically elected elections after 30 years of bureaucracy, and so it is important to examine all the factors surrounded this elections and might affected the results. As, 25th revolution gave an example of how a great uprising could be headed through Facebook, it is evidently clear that social media plays a role in political decisions. And so, this "Facebook revolution" gives a possibility of the impact of social networking sites on the presidential elections. Therefore, knowing the role of social media during the elections would be very interesting and useful to know how far that impact affected the whole process of the elections.

1.8 Objectives of the study

This is one of the early studies that describe the role of social media in the Egyptian presidential elections. This research focuses on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube as according to previous studies and recent reports; those particular social networking sites have become very popular among Egyptians.

The study observes how the Egyptian voters used social media outlets during the elections, so as to measure on what level people rely on social media as a source of information. Also, it examines whether social media have fostered people to be politically participate on the elections or not. Additionally, the study assesses gratifications which the candidates get from social media as new medium that allowed interactivity with the voters. Also, the research analyzes the disadvantages and the advantages of that medium while the candidates were campaigning during elections.

In this respect, this study describes how voters and candidates use social media during elections and how it impacted the whole process.

From this point, the purpose of the study is to describe the role of social media on the elections' process to assess its impact negatively or positively. Also, the study examines whether voters got convinced by specific candidate because of his Facebook pages and Twitter accounts or not. Also, it analyzes the candidates' usage through Facebook posts, Tweeter tweets, and YouTube videos.

CHAPTER TWO: BACKRGOUND

2.1 History of Social media and political participation in Egypt

Introduction

Egypt has witnessed a great development in the political awareness as well as great grow to the seeds of activism in which social media occupies a big part of it. (Iskander, 2011). As Egypt has been suffering from an autocratic regime for so many years, the rise of mass protests came into place. Opposition movements are also a consequence for fighting the old regime. And so, activists are using social media tools in order to convince and urge people to oppose and protest. Beginning from the opposition movement *Kifaya* and ending by the 25th January revolution, social media proved to be a great supporter for political opposition. The effect of social media didn't stop at just organizing strikes or forming opposition movements. It has now extended to raising the people awareness to the necessity of political participation during the election process. People now have been eager to participate in parliamentary elections, vote on the referendum and also vote on the presidential elections.

2.1.1 History of Social Media activism in Egypt

The Egyptian society has been witnessing a tremendous suffer from a mixture of problems. The thing that made a lot of people specifically youth use social media as a way out for their problems. They organize events such as strikes, street protests, general gathering, meetings, and conferences through Facebook pages and groups. They also share instant news about critical issues on Twitter where people know what is happening on the moment. Additionally, they can post a scandal which an official makes or cover a disaster that a citizen may encounter through YouTube, the big fighter to governments and authoritarian regimes

because it acts as a strong evidence of any corruptions. All these powerful tools are done under the umbrella of social media. The arise of the phenomena of the revolution of social media has resulted the launch of opposition movements and strikes that were formed and organized mainly from social media that helped in spreading each movement's ideas.

A. *Kifaya* : the growing seed of online activism

Kifaya “Enough” is the Egyptian Movement for Change; it had a great role in triggering the political reform in Egypt since its foundation on 2004 and also during the Egyptian elections on 2005. (Lim, M. 2012).

The movement began by 300 Egyptian intellectuals from different ideologies who were gathering at a meeting at the home of the party leader of Al-Wasat Abu al-Ila Madi, which aimed at discussing political concerns regarding the 2005 parliamentary elections. The meeting members set up a small committee consisted of seven members, and then they organized a conference that was attended by more than 500 people to end up with a conclusion which was the foundation of *Kifaya* movement. The main goal of it was to fight the rule of the Egyptian former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak's. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (a) [CEIP], 2010).

Kifaya had a lot of achievements as it called for political reforms and criticized largely the anticipated coming president Gamal Mubarak, government corruptions, and the Egyptian nightmare, the emergency law that has been taking place since 1981. *Kifaya* also organized many unauthorized demonstrations which were criticizing the Mubarak's regime. (CEIP a, 2010).

Their first protest was organized by approximately 300 political activists gathered in front of the building of the High Court in downtown Cairo in December 2004 .Then the movement

began a series of protests various areas such as the Cairo Book Fair, university campuses, and Tahrir Square in the downtown. By April 2005 protests began to evolve largely outside Cairo in fourteen cities in Egypt fighting the current regime (CEIP a, 2010).

- ***Kifaya's usage of Social Media***

Just by its name, “enough”, *Kifaya*, could spread its perspectives and attracted diverse groups such as lawyers, journalists, workers, writers, judges, women, farmers, youth, and even children (Oweidat et al., 2008). The movement proved its efficiency nationally and internationally because of its success usage of social media. The popularity of *Kifaya* comes from its allowance to the members to post their complaints anonymously, which made the antigovernment people interact freely. (Lerner , 2010).

Additionally, the movement succeeded in unifying many political parties from different perspectives such as the Islamists (e.g. the Muslim Brotherhood), communists, secularists, and liberals. Following the steps of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, *Kifaya* could also organize peaceful street protests that confronted strongly the authoritarian regime and corruptions. (Al-Anani, 2005).

One of the most key successes of *Kifaya* resulted from their professional use of internet through transferring information (Oweidat et al., 2008). This usage enabled the movement to organize well their activities, to handle challenges, and to become less dependent on traditional media when communicating with people. (Lim, 2004). The movement through the internet has succeeded in developing a long-term vision. This vision statement was posted on the movement website as well as published in hard copy. The statement was titled “Toward a New

Sociopolitical Contract,” and it gave a comprehensive view of the political reform. (Shorbagy , 2007).

Additionally, *Kifaya* took from the anti –war Iraq protests in 2003 as a role model in using the emails and text messages in order to transfer its ideologies. It confronted the government’s rules through publicizing its campaigns, distributing materials, and airing online about corruptions. (Oweidat et al., 2008).

All these efforts were empowered by Youth for Change group within *Kifaya*. That group aimed at attracting young people through the internet. And also, it strived for communicating with the Egyptian people by correlating street activism with the online one. (Oweidat et al., 2008). In order to meet its goal, *Kifaya* used social media to promote its ideology, so it used YouTube, blogs, e-mails, Flickr and text messages. (Lim, M. 2012).

- ***Kifaya’s* duel decline**

Just as many opposition movements *Kifaya* faced many problems and encountered many obstacles. Some if these problems could be reflected through into two main challenges. The first challenge was from the government as it tried hard to oppress the movement whereas the other challenges resulted from internal conflicts between the movements’ members themselves.

- 1. Government repression over *Kifaya***

The Egyptian old regime responded quickly to the movement actions as on May 4, 2008, government blocked the movement’s website through TE-Data, a state-owned Company. (Egypt, 2008). However, the government was aware about the fact that block would tackle only half of the problem of the popularity of *Kifaya*. After a while, the government began the process of

physical abuse to the members of the movement as the protestors have been detained and tortured. (Oweidat , 2008) . In addition, the government started to chase journalists using both traditional and non-traditional media to publish their reports. (Lerner , 2010).

2. *Kifaya's* internal problems

Although *Kifaya* acted as the leading movement that called for government opposition, it failed to extend its network that was consisted of a small group of intellectuals who are resident in Cairo. (Azimi, 2005; Shehab, 2005). Other possible interpretation of the movements' failure was its members disconnect with the normal people who most of them live in poverty. (Oweidat, 2008)

Additionally, its main focus was on religious violence, women's rights, and discrimination. And so, problems which the Egyptian people encounter on a daily basis have been sidelined. (El-Sayed, 2006). Also, the movement had a lot of conflicts between its members through which it faced difficulties to reach an agreement with the Islamists and liberals. (El-Sayed, 2006). Moreover, *Kifaya* encountered financial problems. The Muslim Brotherhood has assumed that the movement was depending on donations from its individual members. *Kifaya* refused to take any foreign donations, so as to avoid any sort of accusation as well as to attain its legitimacy. (Oweidat, 2008)

• *Kifaya's* usage of social media after decline

Although *Kifaya* as a movement has been declined, its bloggers didn't decline as they continued to communicate with people and post news online. (Lim, M. 2012). After a while, the number of bloggers has been skyrocketing to form street protests that condemned police brutalities and illegal actions. (Lynch, 2007). Those were arrested not because of their protests,

but because of their blogs. (Lim, M. 2012). The term “War on Bloggers” was first risen when Karim Amer , the 24-year-old guy, got arrested in November 2006 (Lim, M. 2012).

That Bloggers War shifted the *Kifaya*'s perspective to think beyond the human rights and democracy issues and to take actions towards Egyptian torture and abuse from government. (Lim, M. 2012). And so, bloggers began publishing news stories about the police brutalities through posting photos and videos of policemen torturing citizens. As a consequence, Wael Abbas' Misr Digital blog has been spread quickly to dominate the Egyptian blogosphere and become the main source of information to many people. (Lim, M. 2012)

B. The Muslim Brotherhood online activism

The Muslim Brotherhood's took the *Kifaya* usage of social media as a role model and started using blogs as a social network site to promote their ideas. The group has been using blogging tremendously to the extent that the term “Muslim Brotherhood Blogging Phenomenon” evolved. That phenomenon began after the huge arrest of Al-Azhar students and Muslim Brothers which led to creating a lot of the blogs and websites. The blogs relied heavily on photos, videos, interviews, which were all featuring the government abuse towards the Brotherhood. (Lerner, 2010).

“I am Ikhwan” blog written by Abdel Monem Mahmoud tended to be one of the most powerful blogs that triggered the Brotherhood blogging movement. It was launched in October 2006 and was available in both languages, English and Arabic. It was pretty successful as it had over 2000 readers in the first 6 months. He was criticizing government, and so he was put in jail for 45 days in 2007. (Lerner, 2010).

Regarding the Brotherhood role in 25th Revolution, it wasn't among the main organizers, but it promotes the idea of revolution beforehand. After a while the group joined the revolution and so its members began to post information about the protests on their website. Since the revolution, Brotherhood has called for the formation of a single wide list in the country that has opposition groups, so as to hinder any single group from controlling the first parliament. (CEIP e, 2011).

C. The foundation of the April 6th Youth Movement

This movement began in the spring of 2008 by a Facebook group that had 100,000 users, which was created to support workers protesting in the Delta industrial city of al-Mahalla al-Kubra. (CEIP b, 2010). That movement has been represented by group of young Egyptians from various political views. (April 6th Youth, 2011). After a while the protests developed to become a nationwide strike, then the group gained popularity ,so it was turned to be a political movement known as the April 6th Youth Movement. (CEIP b, 2010).

The movement is considered to be the first opposition group that made use of Facebook in organizing protest and confronting regime. (April 6th Youth, 2011).In addition, the strike organized by April 6th Youth which triggered a huge mass of labor protests, was considered to be the strongest and biggest protest that has taken place in Egypt since 1950s. (Bassiouny, M, & Said, O. 2008).

The movement made a great use of online networking tools, through which it encouraged its followers to support its cause and call for the workers' right. That is by staying at home, wearing black and boycotting products on the strike day. (CEIP b, 2010).

D. April 6th Movement online activism

The April 6th Movement used extensively social media following the Kifaya strategy that used largely YouTube, blogs, e-mails, Flickr, and text messages. That is plus two main additions which were Facebook and Twitter. The Facebook group began with only 300 users who were invited via e-mails, but within 3 days the number of users escalated to reach 3,000 users. (Lim, M., 2012). As a result, the April 6th Youth Movement has been marked as the first Egyptian group that employed strongly Facebook for social movement. (Lim, M., 2012).

Although that strike encountered attacks from policemen, it urged the closure of main events and activities in Egypt and also it succeeded in attracting the national and international attention. (Faris, 2009).

By the early of 2009, the Facebook group had 70,000 members, which was considered to be a remarkable number given that the total number of Facebook users in Egypt at that time was less than 900,000. However, most of these members weren't politically active before. (Lim, M., 2012). The popularity of the group got by the arrest of movement's cofounder, Esraa Abdel Fatah who became a public figure and a role model to many youth. (Lim, M., 2012). She symbolized the political activism confronting the current regime. In addition, she acted as a digital celebrity for young people by drawing a great attention. (Faris, 2009). Some young people was just joining the group because it was a trend that time to become a member created by "Esraa the Facebook girl". (Lim, M., 2012).

Furthermore, April 6th Youth movement followed the strategy of the Iranian revolution on 2009 in using twitter extensively. The movement's usage of twitter introduced a new strategy

in the political activism in Egypt. Consequently, the future of digital activism was enriched due to the April 6th Youth usage of twitter. (Lim, M., 2012).

E. We are all Khaled Said (Kolona Khaled Said) Facebook group

The Arabic Facebook launch in 2009 attracted many of the Facebook users in Egypt as the number of Facebook users escalated highly from nearly 900,000 in January 2009 to 5 million in late 2010. (The Telegraph, 2009). At this time, the Facebook group “we are all Khaled Said” has been created in June 2010. (Lim, M., 2012). The Facebook page quickly gained publicity after a while as the number of members reached more than 473,000 members by July 2010. (CEIP c, 2011).

This group aimed at condemning the death of Khaled Said, a 28-year-old Said educated, middle-class, young Egyptian who got seized by the Egyptian police on 6 June 2010 at an Internet cafe in Alexandria and he was beaten to death by policemen in the street. The police claimed that Said was involved in drug dealing which caused his death. (Lim, M., 2012).

On the other hand, online sources reported a different view which was that Said was seized and died because he possessed a video that was showing a police officer dividing a spoil of a drug bust. (Chick, 2010). Images and videos portraying the injuries of Said’s face were circulated quickly on Facebook, YouTube, and blogs to prove his innocence.

After that, the Facebook page turned into a tool for calling for protests and organizing strikes and also it becomes a source of information about any policemen’s brutalities and pending issues. (CEIP c, 2011).

F. ElBaradei presidential campaign usage of Social Media

Mohamed ElBaradei is the former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency and a 2005 Nobel Peace Prize winner. He was supported strongly and after a while he became one of the effective leaders in the uprising of the revolution. (Gubash, 2009).

When he returned back to Egypt in February 2010, he was hoping to change the autocratic regime through founding opposition movement. And so, at the same month, nearly about 30 activists, politicians, public figures, and intellectuals were gathered at ElBaradei's home in Cairo.(Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011). The group ended at a decision which was forming an opposition movement called the National Association for Change (NAC). After a while, NAC and ElBaradei signed a petition demanding constitutional amendments as well as guarantees that assure the 2010 parliamentary elections' integrity. Millions of Egyptians joined the movement and signed the petition. Also, ElBaradei got united with the Muslim Brotherhood to collect more signatures for the petition. The old regime rejected the NAC's demands which made ElBaradei boycotted the elections in august 2010. (CEIP d, 2010).

In order to achieve his goals, ElBaradei used social media extensively to communicate with his supporters. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011). ElBaradei seemed to be one of the most public figures who used social media to fight the old regime and urge people to oppose the government. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

ElBaradei was a strong fighter to the autocratic regime and so called for implementing democratic system that assures the principle of social justice. (Gubash, 2009). He became gradually an important enemy of the government because he used to criticize strongly the dictator regime. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

ElBaradei was extremely angry towards the old regime as just after two days of the Egyptian revolution on January 27, 2011 he joined protests in Tahrir Square. And after Mubarak's downfall, ElBaradei has announced his desire to join the presidential elections to become the coming president. (CEIP d, 2010). He was fostering Egyptians to oppose the constitutional amendments in 19th March and he asked for a new constitution in the coming elections. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) rejected the idea of forming a new constitution. Since then, ElBaradei has been opposing a lot of the SCAF policies specifically the continual of the emergency law till June 2012. (CEIP d, 2010).

2.2 “Facebook Revolution” in Egypt

The political events that have been taking place in Egypt since last year proved that the socio-political change should be put into consideration. The new media has supported strongly what is called by “Facebook Revolution”, which seems to be the main reason behind the social changes that are taking place in the MENA-region. Egypt's social media, civil society, and pan-Arab satellite TV is getting more interconnected. (Lutz , 2012). For instance, twenty years ago Egyptian girls were not permitted to contact millions of people, however, Esraa Abdel Fatah became one of the most famous girls just by creating a rebellious Facebook page (Samuel ,2012).

By the beginning of 2011, a mass public uprising was occupying the Egyptian street which was triggered by Motivated by the Tunisian revolution that ousted the president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Millions of Egyptians were protesting against the former autocratic regime. Although the protests were peacefully organized, there were a lot of violent actions that led to the deaths of 846 people and 6,000 injuries. (BBC, 2011). The extensive usage of social networking websites including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, have increased the number of

political activists into millions of people who opposed Mubarak regime. Also, these sites helped political activists to be in direct contact with normal and organize protests in and outside in Egypt. (Allam, 2012).

Young political activists including Wael Ghonim, the Egyptian Google marketing executive, have played significant roles in the Egyptian revolution. On 14 January 2011, Ghonem founded a Facebook page encouraging Facebook users to take part in the protests on 25 January 2011 and demonstrate against the Mubarak regime. (Lutz , 2012).

During the revolution, Facebook happened to be the last way out for people as other mass media were not working. On January 25, 2011, anti-Mubarak regime were protesting and gathering in their millions, which made the authorities to finally realize the significance of social media. And so, they shut down the internet and the phone service for a while and began attacking journalists. Anti-Mubarak protestors are considered to be one of the largest political protests in recent Arab history. (Prokhorov, 2012)

2.3 Relationship between Social Media and the Uprising

There is a strong link between social media outlets and organizing protests that led to the 25th of revolution which caused the ousted of the former president. Social medial played a great role in the uprising and helped in connecting people's ideas. People from different ideologies got unified through Facebook to go on the streets and call for freedom. Social media role was effective before, during and after the revolution.

2.4 Role of Social Media in the 25th Revolution

The 25th January revolution has been considered one of the most significant social movements that possess what is called by “social power”. That power comes from the direct interaction on many levels including the communication, economic, social knowledge, and political interaction. (Samuel,2012). The selection of the January 25 day as the “Day of Rage” when the protestors decide to protest is meaningful as it is the National Police Day in Egypt. The protestors wanted to deliver a message to the policemen who symbolized the icon of repression and torture. (Iskander ,2011).

Just before the organization of the 25th Revolution, Tahrir square has witnessed a lot of protests. On the day of revolution, the April 6th Youth Movement organized a protest named by “Day of Mourning” via Facebook to condemn police brutalities and tortures on 25th January, 2010. National Police Day (January, 25) in specific was a day of protests against policemen and regime. (Lim, M., 2012). At first, these protests weren’t aiming at the falling down of Mubarak. But, the Tunisian revolution encouraged Egyptians to think about the matter as they felt that overthrowing Mubarak was possible. Ahmad Maher the leader of the April 6th Youth Movement said in an interview that was conducted with him on 27th January, 2011 “after the revolution in Tunisia, we are able to market the idea of change in Egypt. People now want to seize something” (Fleishman, 2011).

During the Tunisian revolution, Egyptian bloggers used social media extensively as through their personal blogs, Facebook, and Twitter, they were posting news and uploading videos and images portraying the Tunisian protests. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

The Revolution Day began by a call for participation to protest on 25th January by the April 6th Youth Movement and we are all Khaled Said Facebook group. That is through different social media where online posters and videos were circulated through Facebook, blogs, and e-mails. In addition, the hashtag #Jan25th was used to foster people to protests via Twitter. (Lim, M., 2012). And when Wael Ghonim invited the followers of We are all Khaled Said's to protest on January 25, more than 50,000 followers clicked "yes". (Lim, M., 2012).

On January 17, 2011, Nawara Negm , the Egyptian female activist and blogger uploaded a video message from an Egyptian actress supporting the Tunisian protests. Additionally, she posted on January 21, a blog titled "Be noble and demonstrate on January 25, fostering her followers to join protests. (Negm, 2011).

Egyptians have witnessed a "buzz" of using social media in the period of the 18 days of buildup the revolution beginning from January 25 till February 11, 2011. Bloggers were active in posting blog that confronted the current regime and youth people were organizing groups through Facebook, Skype and MSN Messenger. (Samuel,2012).

Egyptians were pretty active in using social media even when the government block out the internet access during the revolution's days, online activists succeeded in posting news' updates via twitter as well as uploading videos through YouTube. That is to send a message to the government that there will be no oppression or control again over the freedom of expression. (Samuel,2012). Authorities for the first time recognized the significance of social media where people were communicating even through the shutdown of the internet and mobile service. The Egyptian online activists were also fighting worldwide resisting the old regime crackdowns. (Prokhorov, 2012).

2.5 Social Media advantages during the 25th January Revolution

On January 25, 2011, protestors who were anti – government gathered in millions after being unified through Facebook pages. Facebook seemed to be the last hope for such a frustrating community suffered from autocratic system for years. (Prokhorov, 2012). People during the revolution took advantage of ‘Facebooking’ of ‘tweeting’ and ‘videoing’ the revolution (Prokhorov, 2012). A main advantage of social media in the Egyptian revolution was its ability of exchanging information and spreading news to millions of people inside and outside of Egypt. Activists were able to encourage people to participate in the protests through various ways. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

Rebellious, activists, anti-government people made a great use of social media specifically Facebook. For instance, three Egyptian teenagers created a Facebook page on January 16, named by “January 25: The day of revolution over torture, poverty, corruption & unemployment”. The administrators posted a video to introduce themselves to the public and to show their strong support towards the Tunisian revolution, which they wanted Egypt to imitate. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

Furthermore, Egyptian protesters had benefits from social media as they could through it provide comprehensive view of what was happening on the spot and also they used to notify people when they encountered danger and accusation ,so as they could help them out. *The Guardian* mentioned tweets by Mohamed Abdelfattah, an Egyptian video journalist who wrote a bunch of disturbing tweets during current protests during the revolution such as .(Siddique, Haroon, & Gabbatt, 2011)

@mfatta7 Tear gas

@mfatta7 I'm suffocating

@mfatta7 We r trapped inside a building

@mfatta7 Help we r suffocating

@mfatta7 I will be arrested

@mfatta7 Arrested

Also, many activists took an advantage of using Facebook and Twitter to draw the international attention to the revolution. They posted images and videos portraying revolution events and news about policemen tortures to protesters. Because of the activists' updates through social media tools, many Egyptians and foreigners who were staying abroad, kept informed about the current developments. (Eltantawy, N., & Wiest, J. B. 2011).

Even more, normal citizens got benefited from social media as when the government prevented reporters in Tahrir Square from doing their work, that is to stop spreading the news worldwide, normal citizen have become reports. Thanks to social media that aided protesters to work as journalists. (Fisher, 2011).

2.6 Social Media role after 25th January Revolution

After the Mubarak's resignation people were sending greetings to each other through Twitter and Facebook. Jokes and sarcastic postings were circulating among social media. Also, people were celebrating through sharing photos and videos featuring the victory of the Egyptian because of the revolution. (Beckett, 2011). What's more, a lot of the Facebook users changed their profile pictures and put pictures that show them participating in the protests as a sign of

patriotism. Also, users tend to upload personal photos of them while they were holding the Egyptian flags to reflect their agreement and engagement in the revolution. (Iskander, 2011).

Additionally, social media played a great role even after the success of the revolution and the resignation of the former president, Mubarak. It continued to be the channel of the oppositional movements to voice their demands.

Just after the success of the revolution, there was a tremendous increase of Facebook groups holding debates over the revolution. Youth organizations believed that political forces such as Muslim Brotherhood and other public figures should be leading the revolution because they thought that they couldn't be representative of their revolutionary aims. (Iskander , 2011).

Because of the huge impact of social media, Al- Jazeera announced at that time its plans to post its content through Social Network Site. Also, the Supreme Military Council decided to create a Facebook page to post its statements and after less than 24 hours, the page had about 89,627 fans whereas by March 15, 2011 the number of fans reached 818,107. (Iskander , 2011).

2.7 Social media impact on the Egyptian Presidential Elections (2012)

Social media which was the key player of forming opposition movements and was the growing seed of the 25th January revolution has also a role in the political participation during the elections process. Moreover, it acted as a powerful aid to the presidential candidates who made a great use of social networking sites while campaigning.

Social media is considered to be an important stage in the development of the social and political activism in Egypt. Its main impact is embedded in the opposing movements to the regime. (Iskander, 2011)

Generally speaking, candidates in Egypt tend to use traditional media to market their ideas and convince people to vote for them. They used to increase their publicity using lots of billboards, television campaigns, and advertisements published in newspapers. But, the idea of creating a Facebook page or Twitter account specifically for campaigns was not commonplace.

Consequently, candidates during the Egyptian presidential elections 2102 used social media including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as tools for promoting their campaigns. Al-Dostour newspaper asserted that the government is considered electronic voting, so as to give the Egyptians who are living abroad, the opportunity to elect. That confirms the radical shift of the government policy towards the significance of the electronic media in elections. (Iskandar , 2011).

In Egypt's 2012 presidential elections, social network sites specifically Facebook and Twitter allowed users to share their political beliefs, support or attack specific candidate through promotion or criticism to the candidates' campaign, and also users were allowed to interact freely with the candidates Facebook pages and Tweets and that what people newly gained at this elections as this "interactivity tool" was missed all over the Egyptians elections. (El- Barmawy, 2012).

The uniqueness of the Facebook in the web 2.0 age is that it facilitates this interactivity to the voters as they do not simply watch or hear posts and they are not negative listeners or readers. Instead, they can participate and express their opinions, take attitude, press share or like or give a comment. Facebook alters the way people communicate with each other and interact with certain issues. (Strock, 2011)

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Uses and Gratifications theory is used describe the usage of the candidates to the social networking sites during the presidential elections 2012. And the candidates' usage to social media while campaigning. Also, it helps in identifying the ways through which voters used social media during elections. The theory applies to the purpose of the study which is analyzing the impact of social network sites during the elections process as whether candidates used social media as a tool of marketing to their presidential campaigns or not. Uses and gratifications approach helps in studying the political use of social media outlets by candidates during the elections' process. In addition, it helps in analyzing people's usage to the sites and whether they used them as source of information during the elections process or not.

3.1 The Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G) Overview

The main goal of the U& G theory is to investigate what people do with the media while shifting the attention “from the purposes of the communicator to the purposes of the receiver,” (Severin, & Tankard, 2001, p. 293).

The Payne Fund studies are considered to be the origin of the U&G theory in the early 1920s, as people at that time were considered to be passive receivers who get influenced by any media content because it had a powerful effect (Ruggiero, 2000). The U&G theory was developed as an opposed approach to the tremendous effect theories of mass media; however, it has not yet been a part of the mass media research at that time. In the early 1940s, media scholars began to apply the U&G theory (Katz, Blumler et al., 1973) to examine the reasons that attract listeners to specific kind of music in soap operas and radio. The U&G theory began in the 1940s, when scholars focused on understanding the reasons why audiences get used to certain

behaviors related to media such as reading newspapers or listening to the radio. And so, the theory was developed in order to examine the audience's gratifications from the mass media contents which meet their psychological and social needs (Ruggiero, 2000 and Rubin, 1993).

The U&G theory is based on five basic assumptions: (Ruggiero, 2000)

1. Communication behavior, as the audience is considered to be active receiver.
2. The audience chooses media contents which fulfill certain needs.
3. Psychological and social factors impacted social communication behavior.
4. The attempt of people to satisfy certain needs is correlated with the relationship between media and interpersonal communication.
5. The U&G bases part of its conceptualization on the psychological process according to which people's purposes of media usage justify their choices of specific media contents.

A lot of research done in the 1940s suggested that mass media are means of gratifications to the audience. Many media researchers identified five different ways in which social situations are correlated with needs, which are the creation of conflicts and tensions, attention and awareness to different problems, the provision of real life situations that satisfy certain needs, the rise of specific values, and providing familiarity with specific mass media contents (Katz,1974).

In addition, uses and gratifications is viewed as a psychological communication perspective by many scholars as it focuses on how people use mass media and other forms of communication , for example, how they use the interpersonal communication to satisfy their needs .(Rubin, 2002). According to the uses and gratification perspective, media use is determined through specific factors including people's personal motives to communicate, the

psychological and social environment that surrounds audiences, the available alternatives to media usage, and finally the communication behavior and its consequences. (Rubin, 1994, p. 419).

Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas (1973) believed that mass media acts as a tool through which people can communicate with others. And so, they listed 35 needs taken from the psychological and social functions of mass media. Then they classified them into five categories. These Categories were:

1. Cognitive needs: seeking information and gaining general knowledge.
2. Affective needs: the emotional, entertainment and pleasurable experiences.
3. Personal integrative needs: gaining trust and credibility personal status.
4. Social integrative needs: keeping in contact with family, friends, and acquaintance.
5. Escapist needs which is escaping from problems and tensions.

Other scholars have divided gratifications into two groups which are process and content. Process gratifications resulted from the users' activity's performance such as Web browsing or adding content on profiles , on the other hand , content gratifications arises from seeking information. In general, process of selection and usage of media is a deliberative, purposive, and dependent action. (Urista, A. M., Dong, Q., & Day, D. K., 2009). Additionally, the theory of uses and gratification has been defined as, it focuses on the social and psychological origins of needs that generate mass media expectation leading to different approaches to media exposure which results a need of gratifications. (Katz, E., Gurevitch, & M. Haas, H. 1973 and Cho, J., De Zuniga, H. G., Rojas, H., & Shah, D. V. 2003).

3.2 The significance of the Uses and Gratifications approach

The uses and gratifications theory is very important in mass media research. It specifies the reasons why people use a specific medium and it helps in understanding media effects on people's decisions. (Severin, W. J., & Tankard Jr, J. W. 1997).

U&G theory approach provides new perspectives especially with the quick development of new media. Because new technology offers the interactivity tool, personal factors should be highly considered when selecting the media. People have many options from different media contents to satisfy their needs. The new media affirms that the audience is active in choosing their ways of receiving information (Bouwman & Van De Wijngaert, 2002). That's why the uses and gratifications theory seems to be very significant because of it focuses on what people do with media instead of how media affects people (Katz, Blumler et al. 1973). Researchers, who explored U&G theory, believe that audience is such active communicators and so understanding their behaviors is very important (Rubin, 1993).

Uses and gratifications has been one of the most effective theories on the audience's ideologies. That's why it has been applied in the studies that examine the use of media and its effects for 35 years. Uses and gratifications approach assures the significance of the individual in the relationship between media use effect and individuals. And so, the main focus of the theory is to examine what people do with the media and not the opposite. (Klapper, 1963).

3.3 Uses and Gratifications and Social Media

“Social Networking that matters is helping people archive their goals. Doing it reliably and repeatability so that over time people have an interest in helping you achieve your goals.” –

Seth Godin, Seth's Blog

When audiences find a new medium that serves the same purpose of the older medium, the new one is probably an alternative to its counterpart. They might compare between them through determining which better satisfy their needs. Internet seems to be a perfect tool to satisfy people's needs. (Cho, J., De Zuniga, H. G., Rojas, H., & Shah, D. V. 2003).

Scholars differ in determining the reasons why people use the internet as December 1996, for instance, classified the reasons of the internet usage into three categories: communication, information, and interaction. (December, J. 1996) .Other media scholars have justified the usage of internet as it is due to the main diversity of contents available online which something that the traditional media lacks .(Cho, J., De Zuniga, H. G., Rojas, H., & Shah, D. V. (2003).

Some researchers found the gratifications gained from accessing the Internet. They found that the main reasons why people use the internet are that they can escape from everyday problems, they can control which type of information to get, they can interact freely with others, and finally they can socialize easily. (LaRose, R., Mastro, D., & Eastin, M. S. 2001).

Additionally, Uses and Gratifications approach helps in knowing the motivations behind using social networking sites. It has been proven that the most dominant motivation is socialization where users can talk and chat with their friends. Also, users like to view other users' photos and profiles. Gossip seemed to be one of the primary reasons for using where users find a lot of materials for gossip such as status, relationships developments and photos. Politicians also seem to use social media to interact with people. (Bumgarner, B. A. 2007).

3.4 U & G theory and Presidential Elections in Britain

In a study conducted about the general elections that took place in Britain in 1969, the researchers Blumler and McQuail used the Uses and Gratifications as the overall approach in their research. That study aimed three goals, exploring the reasons people watch or avoid television programs that featured political parties, knowing the gratifications fulfilled through their exposure to these programs, and examining the audiences' preferences among the ways through which politicians were presented in television. (Blumler ,J.G., and D. McQuail ,1969). Also, the study's main focus was to specify the mass media role in elections as there was a debate at that time challenging that role. The researchers were trying to prove that mass media had a huge impact on voters during elections as they were following television regularly. They ended up in their study by three main reasons for watching political programs. Those reasons were the most frequently mentioned among the respondents who were interviewed in the research. The reasons were, using political programs as a source of information about current political issues, getting more information about candidates' campaigns, and getting informed about the part's strength points. (Blumler ,J.G., and D. McQuail ,1969).

3.5 Criticisms to Uses and Gratifications Theory

Despite the significance of the U&G theory, some scholars have criticized the U&G theory because of many reasons, first, it relies heavily on self- reports, second, it is naive, third, it is very uncritical about the possible dysfunction for society and certain types of audiences' satisfaction, and finally it focuses on the audiences' diversity that are aware to the constraints of the mass media contents (Katz, 1987).

In addition, there is contemporary criticisms of the U&G theory through which it opposes some of the theory assumptions such as the belief that individuals could initiate the process of media selection, the speculations of mass media usage that are resulted from individual biases, social interactions, and environmental elements, and also the idea of that audience is active audience who target particular media behavior (Ruggiero, 2000).

3.6 The compliance of U&G approach with the topic under study

The U&G approach is very useful in this case study as it helps in answering the research questions as it describe how and why voters used social media during elections. Also, it helps in identifying the relationship between mass communication tools and audience, and so it assists in figuring out the impact of social media on the voters. That is leads to describing the role of social networking sites during the elections process.

Despite the criticisms of U&G theory, it is very helpful in different areas especially during the digital age which we live in nowadays. That is because it can help in improving media contents online and the types of online messages delivered to the target audience, so as candidates would figure out the convenient online tools to communicate better with voters.

CHAPTER FOUR: LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Background of Social Network Sites “SNSs”

SNSs are defined as sites that allow individuals to (1) build a public profile within a bounded system, (2) form a great list of other users to share with them connections, and (3) view their list of connections and other connections within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

SNSs profiles basically consist of three important elements: a description of the profile users, their friends' list, and the communication exchange between profile users and their friends which is labeled as “Comments” on MySpace and a “Wall” on Facebook. But still, the friends list tends to be the most significant feature in every SNS because it enables users to view their social connections.

SNSs are virtual world where people who have similar interests gather to communicate and interact with each other while sharing their beliefs and ideas. (Raacke, J.2008). The uniqueness of SNSs is not in its feature that let people meet strangers but it is the idea that these networks enable users to build and make their social networks visible to others. Many SNSs users do not necessarily form a network to meet new people ,but to communicate more with people whom they already know and are a part of their network .(Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Facebook in particular is the most popular among other SNSs; its main aim is to make the world one entity that is connected with each other. People are getting used to it as a part of their daily routine as many of them get addicted to it. That's because Facebook keeps them stay connected with their friends and family, be aware of what's going on in the world, and they can share and express their opinions.

4.2 Characteristics of Social Media

Social media is defined as a group of new types of online media that share most or all of the following characteristics (MayField, 2008):

- Participation: Social media foster users' feedback and contributions which establishes a strong correlation between people and media.
- Openness: Most services on social media encourage users to participate and give feedback. Users can vote in elections, give comments and share information without any barriers.
- Conversation: Social media is a two – way conversation process. Unlike traditional media which sends messages only to passive receivers, social media allows for more mutual conversations between audiences and media.
- Community: Social media is the best place where communities can be created quickly and users can communicate and share common interests.
- Connectedness: Social media allow users to post links and use other users' links to websites and resources.

Additionally, there are six Basic forms of social media, but they could be innovated and developed quickly, which are (MayField, 2008):

- Social networks: The most leading social network sites are Facebook, MySpace, and Bebo. They allow people to communicate with others and share diverse contents
- Blogs: It is very popular form of social media. They are online journals appears by date as with the most recent blog.

- Wikis: The most famous wiki is Wikipedia⁴, which is an online encyclopedia that includes over 2 million English language articles. Wikis allow people to add or edit a specific content as they act as “communal document or database”.
- Podcasts: They are audio and video files which accessed through subscriptions such as Apple iTunes.
- Forums: They are websites that provide areas for online discussion about certain topics. The concept of Forums has risen before the idea of social media and they tend to have a powerful effect.
- Content communities: They are those communities that share and organize certain contents .Popular examples of them are: Flickr that is used mainly for sharing photos, bookmarked links, del.icio.us, and YouTube that is used for posting videos.
- Micro blogging: Twitter is a famous form for Micro blogging which is a social networking that is combined with bite-sized blogging as small amounts of content “updates” are transmitted and widespread online through the mobile phone network.

4.3 Background on the Social Network Sites usage

Once the social networking websites have been introduced, millions of users got attracted to them to the extent that many of them got addicted to them. That is reflected though number of users that access these sites. After a while the usage to these sites didn't limit to entertainment, but it exceeds to the political reasons such as political awareness and political participation. When looking at the number of people who use social media for political issues, the effect of this new medium could be determined.

4.3.1 History of Facebook Constitution

The thing that we are trying to do at facebook, is just help people connect and communicate more efficiently. Mark Zuckerberg

Facebook began in early 2004 as a Harvard-only SNS as users had to have a harvard.edu email address to join as a user. This exclusivity feature was one of the main reasons why college students got attracted to this website. (Ancu, M. 2009).

After a while Facebook started to support other schools where users also were required to have email addresses associated with their institutions, the thing that made the website nearly closed to users' perceptions of the site as an intimate and private community (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 8).

Later in 2005, Facebook opened its access to high school students and in 2006, it was for the general public and it provided communities for commercial organizations. In 2006, over 2,000 United States colleges used Facebook and it ranked the seventh most popular site on the World Wide Web in comparison with total page views. (Ancu, M. 2009). And it was estimated that the number of Facebook users was 9.5 million users in 2006. (Raacke, J.2008). By 2007, Facebook witnessed to have more than 21 million registered members who view about 1.6 billion pages. (Ancu, M. 2009).

4.3.2 Facebook Usage Worldwide in Numbers

The Facebook spread quickly around the world and it became a trend as many young people were eager to create have a Facebook profile to be able to communicate with other friends.

As of February 2008, Facebook had about 65 million active users worldwide. (Ancu, M., 2009). And by 2010, Facebook had more than 500 million users worldwide and it was second to only Google in term of worldwide Internet traffic. Even more, it was considered as the most widely used form of social networking (Woolley, J. K .2010).

Whereas at the end of June 2012, the number of monthly active users reached 955 million and approximately 81% them are outside the U.S. and Canada. Add to 552 million daily active users on average in June 2012 whereas about 543 million monthly active users who used Facebook mobile products in the same year. (Ancu, M. 2009).

4.3.3 Facebook Usage in Egypt during Political Events

Egypt was not far away from the increase in Facebook usage, specifically during the 25th January the revolution which is considered to be the “Facebook Revolution”. According to the Arab Social Media Report (2011), at the beginning of 2011, the number of Facebook users in Egypt reached 4.7 million, and by first of April the number reached 6.65 million to be ranked among the highest number of users of any Arab state. The report also stated that between 5th January and 5th April, there were almost 2 million Egyptians joined Facebook which is considered to be the highest number in users in the Arab region. The highest percentage of Egyptian Facebook users is between the ages of 18 and 24 years old as their percentage reached 41%. That quick increase was four times greater than the same period last year, when only 500,000 new users joined Facebook. (Mubarak, 2011).

4.3.4 History of Twitter Constitution

“At Twitter, mobile is in our DNA ... For us, it’s all about mobile, and it always has been.” *Biz Stone, co-founder of Twitter*

Twitter was first launched in 2006. It is defined as “real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting.” (About Twitter). Twitter users are able to communicate with each other via “Tweets” that are defined as short posts which are limited only to 140 characters and they allow for embedded media links. Twitter users can “follow” or subscribe to the updates of other users. Some of these users include conventional sources such as Aljazeera, or they might be celebrities such as movie stars or politicians, or normal friends. Moreover, tweets could be categorized using “hashtags” were group posts together by topic or type. (Chebib and Sohail ,2011) . For example, one of the most popular hashtags in the Arab world between January and March 2011 were #egypt as it had 1.4 million mentions, #jan25 with 1.2 million mentions. (Chebib and Sohail, 2011).

The Arab Social Media Report traced the volume of daily tweets in Egypt during the period between 1st January and 28th February, specifically the peak of usage in Twitter use mainly about important events in the Egyptian uprising including the Tunisia uprising on 14th January and the fall down of the Egyptian former president , Mohamed Hosni Mubarak on 11th February. The report found that the number of Twitter users reached about 131,204 users in Egypt between 1st January and 30th March 2011. That usage generated an average of 24,000 tweets a day during this time period. It also indicated every user in Cairo generated 60,000 words solely during the 18-day revolution which is considered a total of 1,500 tweets.

4.3.5 YouTube Constitution

YouTube is considered to be the first website that is dedicated only to uploading and sharing personal videos. There are over 3 billion videos that are being viewed on a daily basis on YouTube reaching about 700 billion playbacks in 2010. (YouTube Statistics).

Besides the availability to upload and view videos, YouTube has other features as users can also post comments on certain videos. YouTube has also gained popularity especially among young people. Videos are usually circulated along Facebook users who tend to upload videos on their Facebook profiles and share it till it dominated the whole online community. Many users are watching YouTube videos extensively as it is ranked by Alexa (the web information company) as the third most frequented website online.

4.4 SNSs and Presidential Elections Overview

SNSs seem to be a fast way to exchange new information and current values (Gibson, 2001). Many researchers have asserted the huge impact of the Internet in the political process , they argued that the Internet fosters further political participation as it enhances voters with information , allows them to discuss certain issues and also it allows them to communicate with candidates' representatives. Studies prove that the Internet users who use it for exchange information are more willing to be civically engaged than their counterparts. (Hanson, G., 2010). In addition, it was found that people who get engaged in online social environments such as SNSs are more likely to have better understanding about issues and get connected with people who participate in these environments. (Brown, J.2007).

Many countries have witnessed the substantial use of social media during the presidential elections. For example, the presidential elections in the United States of America 2008 has been marked as one of the most elections that used Facebook and other social networking sites as tools of political communication between people and the candidates.

4.5 Historical Background of the Role of Social Media in Elections Worldwide

The first usage of internet in the political campaigns was in 1996 as it was the first year that political campaigns used the internet for mass campaigning. Political websites were used as a marketing tool and had the same effect of a printed brochure or billboard. Once a website was created, the information got circled to become universal. (Pollard, T. D., Chesebro, J. W., & Studinski, D. 2009). Internet and web 2.0 technologies has been used nowadays in many countries worldwide including Australia, United States of America, and Romania.

4.5.1 Role of Social Media in Federal Elections in Australia (2007)

According to Goot, 2008 who analyzed the usage of both new and traditional media during the Australian federal elections, the news posted on the Internet had less impact than news broadcast on television and radio. However, the internet played a great role in promoting the Prime Minister opposing the Leader of Opposition in the elections as it was proved that the internet had powerful effect during the elections than the old media.

Goot, 2008 provided in his research analysis, the first comparison of candidates' campaign coverage in an Australian federal election that was featured in the traditional media versus the internet. He proved that the news coverage to the independent candidates and the minor party was heavily reported on the internet whereas it was slightly reported across all types of media.

4.5.2 Role of Social Media in the Presidential Elections in U.S (2008)

In 2008 elections, Facebook made a radical shift in the history of US Politics as it stored profiles for all U.S. congressional candidates online. And then Facebook took the initiative and

created these profiles by designing a standard template with only the candidate's name, his office, and basic contact information. Candidates were able to open discussion topic, post comments and notes, post event information, upload videos and photographs. Also, Facebook users who added a candidate to their friends' list were able to show their support on their own profiles and post materials and comments (Williams, Christine B. and Gulati, Jeff, 2009).

4.5.3 Role of Social Media in Presidential Elections Romania (2009)

In the presidential elections in Romania 2009, the political candidates used social media to convince and inform voters by their campaigns. Romania political parties proved to be initiatives in using blogs and Facebook in marketing their plans (Momoc, A. 2012).

Candidates created blogs for their campaigns which explained the main themes of the electoral campaigns. Some of the candidates used Facebook as a communication tool during the elections through which they posted news about the presidential administration whereas others used Facebook to give speeches and post social and economic posts (Momoc, A. 2012).

Some of the famous candidates organized campaigns that were pretty successful on Facebook that had many friends on the friends' list large and a lot of content uploaded including photos and videos (Aparaschivei, P. 2011) .Also, there were unpopular candidates who were more active online than their counterparts. They built communities in their blogs and set a database for online political information about the campaigns (Momoc, A. 2012).

4.6 SNSs Impact on the presidential elections in U.S (2008)

Experts called the 2008 presidential campaign “the first Internet election” (Levenshus, A. 2010). It formed a trend in political campaigning through which candidates sent their

message through new communication tools. The popularity of SNSs such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and MySpace specifically among the young population, created a new interactive environment for candidates to promote their campaigns, explain their goals in detail, and more importantly interact with voters in different ways (Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C. 2009.).

Pew Internet data reported that 65% of SNS users are between the ages of 18-29 and were engaged in at least one of five political activities on a SNS during the 2008 elections, that is including joining a political group and gaining information about a candidate (Smith, A. 2009).

In addition, the number of young voters has increased tremendously as since 2000 the rate of voters among 18-24 year-olds increased by 11% between the years 2000 and 2004 of presidential elections (Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C. 2009, May).

Also, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) reported that about 23 million people under the age of 30 voted in the 2008 election which surpassed 2004 by over 3.4 million, the thing that ranked the 2008 election as the highest youth voter turnout since 1972 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008; "Youth Turnout Rate," 2008).

Barack Obama's usage of SNSs in his campaigns has proved to be unique because he let his supporters got involved deeply and gave his campaign organizers a direct line of contact with the voters. (Fernandes, J., Giurcanu, M., Bowers, K. W., & Neely, J. C. 2010).

During the high season before the elections until the Election Day, there have been more than 1, 000 face book groups that focused on the two selected candidates Barack Obama and John McCain. (Woolley, J. K. 2010). In addition, the number of users that seek political news

online has been skyrocketing since 2000 ,as in this year they were only 30 million Americans ,then they reached 62 million in 2004 (Pew ,2004) , by 2008 the number skipped highly to reach 120 million which is equalizes 40 % of the entire population during the 2008 elections (Pew ,2008b).

Additionally, about two thirds of the Americans who were younger than 30 got subscribed to a SNS, half of them shared information about campaigns through SNSs, and 8% of them added political candidates as “friends” . Nearly 10% of all Americans, 14% of all Internet users, and 40% of all SNSs’ users used Facebook and My space to gain information about the 2008 campaigns. (Ancu, M., & Cozma, R. 2009).

Obama campaign in particular, relied heavily on SNSs as they are interactive media through which he could communicate with voters (Carr & Stelter, 2008). Many news organizations asserted that the Obama campaign usage of the Internet was more powerfully than the McCain campaign usage during the elections season. (Woolley, J. K. 2010).

Moreover, Obama as a candidate had more positive support than McCain in the Facebook community where groups and pages that featured McCain were overwhelmingly negative. (Woolley, J. K. 2010). When comparing numbers of users that were interested in both campaigns online, studies found that on Facebook, Obama had 2,379,102 supporters whereas McCain had 620, 359, on Twitter, Obama had 112,474 followers versus McCain who had 4,603, on YouTube; and there were more than 18 million channel views for Obama, while there were just 2 million channel views for McCain. (Metzgar, E., & Maruggi, A. 2009).

4.7 Role of social media outlets on Egypt's 2012 presidential elections

Introduction

Egypt's presidential election was unique elections in many ways not only in being the first democratic elections, but also in having used social media extensively. Candidates were using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube videos to promote their campaigns and convince people to vote for them. On the other hand, people was using social media to voice their opinions freely , to share information about the candidates' campaigns and to raise political awareness about the importance of voting in this critical election.

4.7.1 Candidates' usage of Social media during the elections' process in numbers

There are a few reports that monitored social media usage by candidates. One of which was compiled by Interact Egypt, it monitored the Egyptian Presidential candidates and their usage to the social media found that during the first stage of the elections, about 150,000 records of online political discussions have been analyzed. The findings of the report found that genders as a demographic factor has an effect as males were using social media outlets more than females as males percentage was 84.3 % versus 15.7 % of the females. Also, it was found that Twitter dominated the political discussion and Sabahy was the most candidates that people talked about him online as he had around 29% of users' comments, Ahmed Shafiq ranked the second with over 27%, and Mohammad Morsi ranked the third with about 26% of user's comments. In the second stage of the elections, it was found that Shafiq surpassed Morsi as he had 1.4 M online mentions versus 575, 045 online mentions of Morsi. And Shafiq's was tripled mentioned on Twitter than Morsi. Regarding Facebook pages ,Shafiq 156, 352 fan pages and 53 ,157 talks whereas Morsi had 467, 814 fan pages and 176 , 318 talks in 7 days (Interact Egypt, 2012).

Pertaining to social media in general, Facebook and Twitter in specific, the top three candidates that used social media were the same. Also, Sabahy was on the top list lead as the percentage of his usage reached about 35% of comments. Social media have been used extensively after the first round as there were around 2 million online posts. One of the striking figures that Twitter exceeded Facebook in the candidates' usage to be the most used tool as it had about 90% of users' comments. (Interact Egypt, 2012).

Regarding both candidates Ahmed Shafik and Mohamed Morsi, Shafik exceeded Morsi in the online activity as at least twice as many talking about him as about Mohammad Morsi. Pertaining to the Twitter mentions in the countries, both candidates had the same share. (Interact Egypt, 2012).

On the other hand, a study conducted by VJ Um Amel, he found that social media tools are very useful in gaining new perspective on political events. He analyzed the role of Twitter during the elections process particularly in the period of 10 April 2012 till 24 May 2012 which is considered to be the first stage of the elections. One of the most important finding was that Shafiq has been mentioned on Twitter double and triple times than other candidates' mentions.

The study also, anticipated that both candidates Morsi and Shafik would probably move to the next stage of elections because Morsi had 99.83 % of positive online posts and Shafik because he shared the greatest volume of posts whether they were positive, neutral, or negative. Other significant finding was that the three candidates Shafik, Morsi, and Sabahy were at the top of tweets over the last two weeks of the first stage and Morsi in specific witnessed to have an increase of the volume of the tweets a week after a week. Also, it was found that Morsi had the highest percentage of positive tweets among the candidates at the first round of the elections.

However, the study concluded that Shafik was the leader of Twitter talks. The study also, concluded that Twitter had a great role in the first round of the elections.

Hashtag (#)	Description	Daily Tweets Weighted Avg.
#egypt	a country in North Africa	40,860
#مصر	Arabic word for "Egypt," a country in North Africa	12,045
#شفيق	Ahmed Shafiq, ex-prime minister and presidential candidate	4,163
#حمدين	Hamdeen Sabbahi, Nasserist Party presidential candidate	2,040
#egyelections	shorthand for "Egyptian elections"	1,969
#ابوالفتوح	Abdelmoneim Abou Fotouh, Former MB and Presidential Candidate	1,733
#مرسي	Mohamed Morsi, Muslim Brotherhood presidential candidate	1,726
#خالد_على	Khaled Ali, youngest Egyptian presidential candidate	1,168
#موسى	Amre Moussa, ex-foreign minister and presidential candidate	1,303
#عمر_سليمان	Amr Soleiman, former presidential candidate	1,238
#egyresident	shorthand for "Egyptian president"	814
#العباسية	Arabic for "Abbaseya"	803
#انتخابات_الرئاسة	Arabic for "presidential elections"	229
#abbaseya	a neighborhood in Cairo and HQ for the Ministry of Defense	80
#abassiya	a neighborhood in Cairo and HQ for the Ministry of Defense	56
#abasiya	a neighborhood in Cairo and HQ for the Ministry of Defense	3

Amel, V. U. (2012, May 25). *Egypt's Presidential Elections and Twitter Talk*. Jadaliyya.

About the Muslim Brotherhood role in social media during the elections, they have proven to play a great role in Morsi's success. It was obvious through their online activities on the election night (17 June 2012).



The Brotherhood members tended to provide recent updates about the results that were posted on social media sites such Facebook and Twitter. That updating has been continued throughout the night until they the victory of their candidate Morsi was affirmed. (Lutz, 2012).

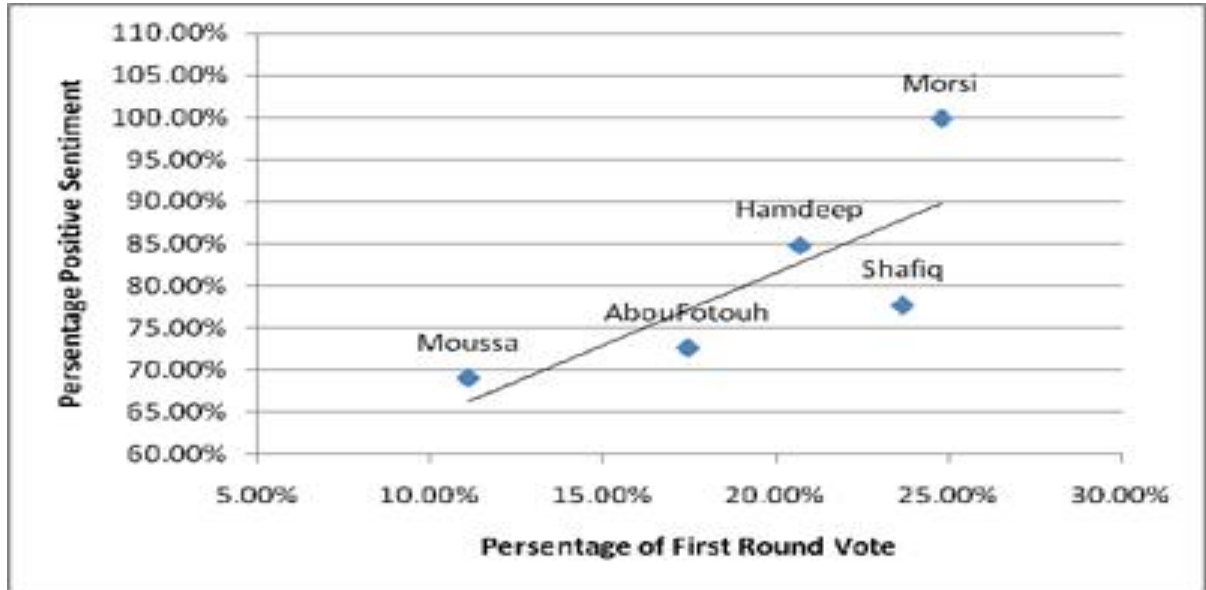
Lutz in his paper the victory of Morsi through Twitter positive mentions when compared to other candidates. He believed in the fact that social media could help in providing useful insights about future political events. The table below shows the top five candidates according to number of votes in the Egypt's 2012 presidential election. The column of “*average mentions*” represents the average number of mentions that each of the candidates received daily through Twitter during May 2012. Whereas the column of “*positive sentiment*” represents the degree to which these tweet mentions were positive as a percentage. (Lutz, 2012).

Candidate	1st round	2nd round	Average Mentions in Tweets	Positive Sentiment in Tweets
	%	%		
Mohamed Morsi	24.78%	51.73%	3128	99.83%
Ahmed Shafiq	23.66%	48.27%	7460	77.66%
Hamdeen Sabahi	20.72%		3912	84.84%
Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh	17.47%		2457	72.60%
Amr Moussa	11.13%		2978	69.05%

Lutz, B. (2012, August 16). *The role of social media in Egypt's 2012 presidential election. Consultancy Africa Intelligence - Assist | Inform | Empower.*

Lutz also made a correlation between the wave of positive sentiments towards Morsi and his victory over the elections. He used Using data and results of the first round of the presidential election to identify a correlation between Twitter positive sentiments about a candidate and the

percentage of vote which the candidate received during the election. And so he linked between Morsi's victory and positive sentiments mentioned through Twitter.(Lutz,2012).



Lutz, B. (2012, August 16). The role of social media in Egypt's 2012 presidential election. Consultancy Africa Intelligence - Assist | Inform | Empower.

Another research that tackled the Egyptian elections case, it concluded that social media had a large impact on the elections. The results were based on the analysis of 9,105 posts out of 95,443 posts, in both languages Arabic and English. The research was conducted in Egypt between June ,10 till June ,25 and across the Middle East between June 24th and 25th. The research found that the Egyptian presidential elections ranked the second most discussed topic in social media in Egypt in the week of 10 – 16 June. It was also found that 86 % of the social media users were active users by criticizing and convincing others by certain candidate whereas 12 % were not active at all and felt desperate. At all social media forms, most users supported Morsi whereas Shafiq was only supported by 19 %. As for Twitter, Morsi had the largest share of supporters. On the other hand, most of Shafiq's supporters were from the news websites as he

was supported by at least 35 % of users' comments. Morsi users were advocating him by posting positive ideas such as that the Egyptian revolution wants someone who is not from the previous regime. That is compared to Shafiq's users who were convincing people not to vote for a Muslim Brotherhood regime. (Social eyez, 2012).

Additionally, the results revealed that the users' support to Morsi and Shafik haven't changed since the first round of the elections. But, when the first round results were announced, around 23 % of the users called for boycotting the elections. During the week of June 17 - 23, presidential elections dominated social media sites to be ranked at the top of the most tackled topic. About 7 % of the users expressed their concerns if Shafik would win. June, 24 was considered to be the dominance of the social networking sites. Before the declaration of the results, a lot of rumors and desperate scenarios that might happen after the official results. Social media users were optimistic and fostered people not to believe rumors. Also, Arab media users they were very enthusiastic about the future and so they shared their dreams and ambitious. One of the most striking finding of the research was that when Morsi won the elections, his presence on the social media sites was dominant. He gained 15, 000 followers on Twitter and his first tweet just after the declaration of the official results, has been re- tweeted over 1600 times.



On the day after announcing Morsi's victory on June 25th, the new president was also dominating the social media sites where four out of five of the topics of discussion tackled the outcomes of this victory. In addition, Morsi has become the star of Twitter and he marked one of the most discussed issues on social networking sites. Also, after Morsi's speech attracted many people specifically social media users.



The research found that nearly 70 % of the topics had positive attitude towards Morsi's victory. Users tended to share their ambitious towards seeing the country in better shape. (Social eyez, 2012).

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Overview of the Descriptive Research

Introduction

This study is a descriptive research. Descriptive research can be defined as the research that is conducted to collect information without changing the environment as nothing is manipulated by the researcher. Sometimes descriptive studies are being referred as “correlational” or “observational” studies. In human research, a descriptive study can give information about the specific attitude, behavior or any other characteristics of a particular group. Descriptive studies may also be conducted in order to demonstrate relationships or associations between things. (Office of Research Integrity (n.d.).

5.1.1 Descriptive Research Uses

Descriptive studies can be done through two ways. The first is doing the study while the researcher interacts with the participant which might conduct or interviews or distributing surveys to collect the required information. Also, descriptive studies can be done in which the researcher does not interact with the participants and he relies on observation of people in an environment or relies on data collection using already existing records. Descriptive studies are the best technique to collect information that will help in demonstrating relationships and describe the world as it exists. (Office of Research Integrity (n.d.).

Descriptive studies can be either quantitative or qualitative. It might include collections of quantitative information that can be put along a continuum in numerical form, or it might describe categories of information such as patterns of interaction. Descriptive studies include collecting data that describe events and describes the data collection. Descriptive research is very

unique technique because of the number of variables that are employed. Descriptive research might include multiple variables for doing analysis. Descriptive research has three main purposes which are to explain, describe, and validate findings. Descriptive research might be more analytic and it often focuses on a particular factor or variable. (The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 2012).

5.1.2 Descriptive Case Study

Case study approach is one of the descriptive research types. It is an in-depth study of an individual or a group of individuals. Case studies are very helpful in terms of studying a unique phenomenon. Case study helps also in demonstrating relationships between things. (Jackson, S.L. 2009). And so, it is helpful to the topic under study as it helps in defining the relationship between candidates' campaigns during elections and using social media.

Descriptive case study is the type of research that is detailed and focused in which questions and prepositions about a certain phenomenon are carefully articulated from the beginning. The power and effectiveness of a descriptive case study exists in its ability of mining accurate interpretations of data. Descriptive case study main aim is examining a specific sample in depth and in detail. (Mills, A. J., Durepos , G., & Wiebe, E.2012).

For this reason, descriptive case study has been applied in this thesis, where the topic under study has been researched in detail and in depth. Also, it helped in mining interpretations about the role played by social media during the elections.

5.2 Research Methodology (Case Study)

This descriptive study uses the case study method because it fits well the purpose of the study. As case study helps in demonstrating relationships between variables, it helps in identifying the association between social media usage and the success of the candidates' campaigns during the elections' process.

5.2.1 Reasons for choosing Case Study Method

This research study relies mainly on the basis of the case study method. Case study research aims at exploring and depicting a setting with giving a broad view to better understanding to a particular event (Cousin, 2005). And this fits the aim of the study which is having a broad view of the role of social media during the elections.

Bennett (2004) defined the case study method as it is the investigation of a well-defined aspect of a historical event that the investigator chooses for analysis that is instead of analyzing the historical event itself. That is applied to the main idea for this research study where the researcher analyses the impact of the social media on the presidential elections and not the elections process itself.

Also, case study has been defined as it is an empirical inquiry where the researchers use multiple sources to investigate a current phenomenon within its real-life context, where the boundaries between this phenomenon and its context are not clearly proven. (Wimmer & Dominick p.141). And in this research study multiple sources were gathered including newspapers and magazines articles, research centers reports, experts' analysis and opinion pieces, academic articles, academic papers presented at conferences, research studies, MA theses and dissertations, and books. In addition, the researcher used his own accounts on both Facebook

and Twitter to get information about users' usage of social media before and during the elections. Also, these accounts helped in analyzing Facebook pages and Tweets about the presidential candidates.

5.2.2 Case Study Categories

Stake's (1995) put three categories of case study research:

➤ Intrinsic Case Study

Intrinsic case study is done when the researcher wants to understand a specific case in hand. It fits the purpose of the evaluation research as it can be done about examining a specific set of activities and experiences. Intrinsic case study is very appropriate when studying a particular person as a case.

➤ Instrumental Case Study

In this category, the researcher explores a case as an instance, so as to be able to highlight a certain issue. Instrumental case study tries to make generalizations from a case study whereas intrinsic case study aims at generalizing within the context of the case study itself.

➤ Collective Case Study

In this category, the researcher selects more than one case to form a kind of representation. However, the researcher in collective case studies is not interested in the formal process of sampling. That is because these cases should be selected according to their availability to research access which does not always result a representative sample.

Case study research aims for depth and if a site cannot deliver this owing to limited access to actors, events and settings, it will not yield a sufficiently ‘thick description’ of a case.

The case study category used in this thesis is the intrinsic case study that is because it fits the purpose of the study. As, Intrinsic case study is the study of a particular case that is of the main interest of exploration, it helps in achieving the study’s aim which is exploring the impact of social media outlets on the Egyptian presidential elections 2012.

5.2.3 Characteristics of Case Study

The case study research has four main characteristics. The first one is particularistic which it focuses on a particular event, situation, or phenomena making it a perfect method when studying practical and a real life issues. The second characteristic is that it is descriptive which gives a detailed description of the topic under study. The third one is that it is heuristic in where new it helps people in understanding what is being studied by giving new interpretation and the main goal is that it provides news insights and perspectives. The last one is the Inductive where most case studies rely on inductive reasoning. In this characteristic, generalization and principles are emerged from data examination. (Wimmer and Dominik, p.141).

Because of all these characteristics of case study, it has been chosen as a method for this research as the impact of social media during Egypt’s presidential elections is a new phenomenon that needed a variety and wealth of information gathered to be well investigated. As one of the characteristics of case study is descriptive, it fits well the purpose of the study which is describing the role of social media during Egypt’s 2012 presidential elections. Also, characterized by being heuristic, case study helps in understanding the impact of social media

during elections as well as giving new interpretation and insights about the candidates' usage of social media while campaigning.

5.3 Qualitative in-depth interviews

To complement the Case Study research, a qualitative method was also used through the in-depth interviews. A variety of interviewees were selected in order to gain a wide vision of the social media impact on the elections. Media experts, political activists, writers, journalists, political analysts were interviewed about their perspectives towards the role of social media in political participation. And also, they were asked about their point of views regarding the impact of Facebook as a tool of marketing the candidates' campaigns. The interviewees were very insightful and had a beneficial background on the topic under study. Their answers were supported by evident and certain events which add much to their level of credibility.

The process of interviewing was divided into three sections, the first one targeted general experts on the topic under study including political analysts, journalists, political writers, activists, and Journalism and Mass Communication Professors. That is to get opinions towards the impact of social media and also to gather a large amount of information about the topic under study.

The second section targeted the elections' campaign managers and social media specialists of the most popular candidates who are Dr. Mohamed Morsi, Mr. Ahmed Shafiq, Mr. Hamdeen Sabahy, and Dr. Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh. That is to know how candidates used social media during campaigning and to figure out the advantages and disadvantages they found when using social media outlets.

5.4 Research Questions

RQ 1:

What was the role of social media outlets during the campaigning of the presidential elections in Egypt 2012?

RQ2:

How did the candidates use social media while campaigning?

RQ3:

How did voters use social media during the elections' process?

RQ4:

How did Mr. Ahmed Shafiq and Dr. Mohamed Morsi use social media during the first and second round of the elections?

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

“Monitor, engage, and be transparent; these have always been the keys to success in the digital space.” *Dallas Lawrence, Levick Strategic Communications*

Analysis has been classified into five main categories, the first one targeted observation of candidates Facebook pages and groups, the second one targeted voters' personal Facebook pages and tweets, the third one focused only on analyzing Morsi and Shafiq usage of social media, the fourth one linked between previous research and the impact of social media on the elections and finally the fifth one analyzed in-depth interviews answers that complement the data given. Every section stated on the analysis answer a specific research question.

6.1. Findings in Relation to observing Candidates' Facebook pages and Twitter accounts

The researcher observed candidates personal Facebook pages and tweets and also campaigns Facebook pages and tweets. That is adding to other Facebook pages that supported or attacked Ahmed Shafiq and Mohamed Morsi.

6.1.1 Social Networking Functions during the elections

RQ 1: What was the role of social media outlets during the campaigning of the presidential elections in Egypt 2012?

The impact of social media goes beyond launching opposition movements or organizing mass protests and strikes. It is extended to the political participation during the elections. And also, social media has become a marketing tool for the candidates to promote their campaigns. Egyptians have never seen as caring and enthusiastic as their participation during the Egyptian

presidential elections which has proven to be a strong competitor to the Turkish series that the Egyptian people addicted of watching them. That huge impact of social media is a natural consequence as the Egyptians were experiencing their first and free elections. Moreover, the most unique feature of the elections was that social media has been used as a marketing tool to the candidates campaigning. The social media usage in June 2012 Egyptian presidential elections is a great example of the great role which the social media is playing in the political life in Egypt.

In addition, social media had a powerful effect during the elections process as it had a double faces role. The first was the voters' usage as a medium through which they could express their opinions freely. The second one was the candidates' usage of Facebook pages and twitter accounts to promote their campaigns.

One of the most exciting advantages of social media is that it provides easy access to other's opinions for anyone who is interested to know what others think about a specific topic. That access to this type of information gives the feeling of really being able to become that ordinary Egyptian as a lot of the authors of blogs, tweets and online groups are Egyptian people and were experiencing the impact of political change and observing the candidates' campaigns.

6.1.2 Campaigning through Social media

RQ2: How did the candidates use social media while campaigning?

When observing candidates' Facebook pages during the whole process of elections, it is evidently clear that social media in general and Facebook and Twitter in particular had a great role during the elections. The most significant function of Facebook that it provided through candidates' Facebook pages, loads of information about candidates' campaigns and their goals.

Facebook played a promotional role during the elections even before the official beginning of the

campaigns as on March, 2012 candidates began their unofficial online campaigns challenging the Egyptian law that prohibits any kind of presidential campaigns until the registration ends which was settled on 30 April. Hamdeen Sabahy created a Facebook page which announced the launch of his campaign under the title "One Egyptian pound from every Egyptian" , that is to foster his supporters to donate even with 1 LE to finance his campaign. Sabahy's page directed users to another Facebook page titled "We make Egypt's president with Egyptians' money" that is to register their contact information for contributing to this page. The campaign also urged university students to sign signatures for Sabahy, asserting that the campaign representatives have been assigned to private and public universities to collect the proxies. On the other hand Aboul Fotouh created a Facebook page campaign and a website which criticized largely to the performance of state employees that were responsible for collecting the signatures. The Facebook page and website claimed that those employees were biased towards Sabahy.

Additionally, Ahmed Shafiq created a Facebook page fostering his supporters to participate in his campaign titled by "Be effective". It encouraged young people to travel outside Cairo in order to support him.

The war on Facebook began between candidates even before the official start of campaigning. Candidates and their followers began creating Facebook pages to promote their campaigns and to attract a large number of people to vote for.

Among the most famous pages which were created to promote the presidential candidates Mr. Ahmed Shafiq own page and another page titled "the campaign that supports Shafiq". Dr. Moahmed ElBaradei was one of the most candidates that used social media outlets to convince people about his campaign. ElBaradei created a page called "ElBaradei for

presidency”. Another page called (together to become Amr Moussa, the first civilian president of the Arab Republic of Egypt), and a fifth title page (Amr Khaled nomination as president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2011), and sixth (Sheikh Muhammad Hassan, president of Egypt).

Also, during that period Facebook was used as a tool of spreading rumors attacking several candidates. For instance, some candidates have been attacked strongly including Mr. Amr Moussa as some people assumed that he has a brother from another Jewish woman that is just before closing the nomination process. Also, there were allegations about Dr. Abd Elmonem Aboufotoh that he has other nationalities. In addition, there were rumors circulated that the father and grandfather of Dr .Mohamed Selim Elawa holds the Syrian nationalities.

As for Twitter every candidate tried to propagate his ideology through short tweets. As for Hamdeen Sabahy, he was very active in tweeting and he used to tweet quickly and had many tweets before and during the elections. Hamdeen was stressing on specific ideas on Twitter that is to attract voters to his campaign and ideology. These ideas included the revolution aims that must be achieved through the new president who should be one the revolution men. He also advocated other candidates that were revolutionaries and he was tweeting n Arabic, so as he could reach all categories and to reassure his slogan which was “Hamdeen Sabahy, one of us to be our president”. He tried to send the message of voting for revolution men as he said in one of his tweets “I totally support revolutionaries’ candidates and voters need specific measurements and prefect timings to choose their president”.

Other idea that Sabahy stressed on was the 25th revolution martyrs and their rights that had to be taken by the new president. He focused so much on this call, so as he could convince

voters by him as he was the faithful person to the revolutionaries. Also, he was calling for the necessity of backing financially the martyrs' families.

Dr. Abd Elmoneim Abolfotouh was stressing through tweets on the necessity of voting for respectable candidates that didn't kill the protestors during the revolution. Also, he was urging people not to vote for the former regime men who are not illegible for presidency. He didn't mention names, but it was clear that he was targeting Ahmed Shafiq and Amre Moussa. In one tweet he said "your vote is an individual responsibility, so don't ever vote for a corrupted and killer person". . Aboufotouh was focusing also on many issues such as Palestine and the necessity of supporting it. He also was tweeting on the issue of workers' rights in Egypt and how the new president should handle it fairly. Moreover, Abolfotouh on his tweets tried to show himself as humble and he would not be an arrogant president. He stressed on the idea of that the new president must act as being a "servant" to his people. As for Amre Moussa, he was also using Twitter extensively. He focused on main issues that of interest to the Egyptian people such as poverty and high prices. One of his Tweets called for establishing banks for financing small projects and industrial projects with offering facilitations. He used to tweet targeting the poor problems and offered ways to overcome them. His tweets was a try to reflect his ideology which is eliminating poverty and offering better lives for people with low level income. The tweets were complimenting his photos that were included in his campaign about peasantries and poor people. Economic crisis was one of the main issues which Moussa stressed on because Egyptian care about their financial status and so he stressed so much on the new government ability to reform the economy and save it from deteriorating.

His tweets also included the dates and timings of his visits and press conferences. Moussa also tried to propagate his ideology by tweeting on his ability to achieve reforms in short years, so as to have better Egypt.

About Khaled Ali, he wasn't tweeting so much to propagate his campaign. He used to tweet during elections about general issues. One of the main ideas he focused on was the revolutionaries and their rights. One of his tweets, he announced his hunger strike as he was supporting protestors.

6.2 Findings in relation to voters' usage of social media during elections

Online users in Egypt have become very interested in accessing social media outlets especially during political events. Egypt's 2012 presidential election was such a unique event and so they used to log in Facebook and Twitter in order to share information and express their opinions.

6.2.1 People's reaction towards candidates through Social media outlets

RQ3: How did voters use social media during the elections' process?

Social media allow people to express their opinions freely, which the Egyptian people have been striving for. As finally they found themselves sharing their experiences and talking about their political concerns through Facebook and Twitter.

Egyptians have gained the opportunity for the first time in 7000 years to choose their president democratically. Since the launch of 25th of revolution, Egyptians have been escaping to social media to express their opinions, point of views and concerns freely.

Upon observing voters' Facebook profiles and personal tweets during the elections' process, it is clear that the Egyptian people were very enthusiastic to use social networking sites during elections. They tended to like Facebook pages and follow Tweets for the Presidential candidates. During the elections process, the number of likes, fans and followers was increasing tremendously.

➤ Facebook

During the elections process, a lot of Facebook users updated their profile pictures by putting images of their favorite candidates. They tend to post images sending political messages supporting and defending their own candidates or criticizing their opponents. The thing that also fostered for political participation and voting for specific candidate. Additionally, people used to changing and updating their status updates on their profiles at Facebook. That is to express their anger or happiness towards specific candidate act. Status included positive and negative commentaries towards candidates. Freedom of speech was taking place where people were using their new right to voice their opinions online and offline.

Another function of Facebook was that it was a mean of publishing news of popular online and print Egyptian newspapers as they have Facebook pages. These newspapers were updating their pages with regular statuses linked to articles regularly. They were sharing news about what was happening on Tahrir Square as well as news about candidates in specific and elections in general.

Also, social networking sites played a great role in terms of providing a great network of information to the Egyptians living outside Egypt. As Egyptians who live abroad were following up the elections' process through social media outlets as they are easier and more accessible to

follow when compared with other traditional media such as Television channels that might not be accessible.

➤ **Twitter**

Twitter has also been used as a quick way to spread short news. Twitter users tend to follow famous political activists such as Nawara Negm and Wael Ghoneim, that it to update themselves about the latest news about the elections. Also, these public figures have been so reliable to the Egyptian people especially the 25th of revolution advocates. These activists were very active in tweeting from the early beginning of the election's process till the day of announcing the final results.

There were a lot of hashtags that were used in Twitter users such as #Egypt, #Shafiq, #Morsi, #SCAF, #Tahrir. Twitter users were sharing information about

People also were tweeting about popular newspapers headlines, news and articles, so as to inform each other about the elections' process including the elections' committees and corruptions that were taking place in them. Twitter users were also tweeting candidates' tweets and then commenting on them. The number of tweets before and during the elections was increasing tremendously.

Facebook tends to be a wider place for sharing videos, photos, notes, status and long posts. On the other hand, Twitter seemed to be more applicable for short and hot news.

➤ YouTube

YouTube videos have been circulated and shared extensively during the elections' process. Videos included candidate's interviews that were broadcasts on Television channels, press conferences, and speeches.

When ordering the candidates by the most ones that people followed on social media:

- ✓ Aboul Fotouh had on his Facebook page [533K fans](#) and [232K followers](#) on his campaign Twitter account.
- ✓ Sabahy had [444K fans](#) on his Facebook page and [269K followers](#) on his personal Twitter account.
- ✓ Moussa had [249K fans](#) on his Facebook page and [143K followers](#) on his personal Twitter account, and [26K followers](#) on the campaign Twitter account.
- ✓ Shafiq had [109K fans](#) on his Facebook page and [4K followers](#) on his personal Twitter account.
- ✓ Morsi had [94K fans](#) on his Facebook page and [20K followers](#) on his personal Twitter account.

6.2.2 Using social media as a sarcastic role during elections

RQ3: How did voters use social media during the elections' process?

Egyptians are famous of having high sense of humor regardless the political situation or the general atmosphere. Egyptians would joke no matter what. Social media facilitate being sarcastic as many people posted images and jokes on their Facebook profile and Twitter accounts mocking at candidates. There were specific pages that were dedicated to humor and people liked these popular pages and began sharing jokes through them.

During the first round of the elections, voters found Facebook and Twitter a great place to mock at candidates and make fun of them freely. They began creating sarcastic characters that attack candidates. One of the most famous character is “Asa7by” which is a cartoon character always laughing and criticizing with a high sense of humor. “Asa7by” was used to criticize candidate’s decisions, moves, and speeches and its quotes and comments were circulated heavily. The name “Asa7by” was then used as a name of many Facebook pages used it such as “Asa7by Alsh” and “Asa7by XD”. But, still there is one that is the official page of the character that has now over 47 hundred fans. One of the most famous quotes of “As7yby” is that it criticized the Muslim Brotherhood policies during elections saying “Muslim brotherhood is mainly tourists in Egypt and what proves this is that they have a guide”

Other Facebook page called “As7abe Sarcasm Society”, this page made endless sarcastic comments and jokes that attacked candidates. One of the most effective joke was targeting Shafiq, it said “if Shafiq wins, the first Friday after his presidency would be the day of getting Passports” .The joke meant that people would get annoyed from having Shafiq as president and so people will have their visas and immigrate out of the country. Other joke targeted Shafiq commenting on his job as a ministry of Aviation and criticizing Shafiq’s talks about his achievements in the ministry , it said that “Mubarak was a pilot and has been ruling Egypt for 30 years, so what would the ministry of Aviation would do”. The joke meant that Shafiq would definitely rule the country double or triple the duration of Mubarak.

Also there were jokes targeting Morsi as one of which was a caricature posted on a Facebook page titled by “Kolona Fadaky ya Misr”, it said that the first decisions Morsi would take if he won, he would announce his resignation of being a president to pass the presidency to

the office of the supreme guide of the Muslim Brotherhood rule the country and god bless you all”.

Some voters went to using famous actors and actresses quotes from movies or soap operas or plays to mock at candidates. One caricature used the character of the famous Egyptian actor Mohamed Negm while he was mocking at his play “saying Shafiq, the man”, the caricature featured Negm while saying his famous quote replying to other guy when asking about the candidates’ names. The caricature meant that Shafiq , the unqualified man has been one of the candidates.

Also, there was a famous play called “*Weghet Nazr*” “Point of view” it featured blind patients, Facebook users used a photo from this play adding a sarcastic comment on it said “raise your hands if you will not vote for Shafiq, then, the manager lied and said it is weird that one only raised his hands”, that is in spite of appearing in the photo all the actors and actresses raising their hands. The message in this joke wanted to say that Shafiq is not transparent and not credible person.

Other joke included the famous presenter Hala Sarhan and “*Asa7by*” while she was interviewing Shafiq, the joke criticized Shafiq responses as he said that the national security still exists, the joke meant that Shafiq will reveal secrets in coming interviews.

Mocking has reached the extent of insulting candidates as one of the jokes targeted Shafiq mocking at his slogan that says “actions not words” , it said that Shafiq doesn’t know how to speak reasonably as if he is a stupid man.

People were focusing on canddiates even on the their body language as one of the jokes targeted Shafiq’s way of sitting. It featured “*Asa7by*” character mocking at the way he puts his

hand on his nose comparing to Mubaraks and it said “Shafiq’s says that Mubarak his role model, “*Asa7by*” then said it is clear that he is your role model even in putting your hands on your nose, then he insulted both saying you are disgusting.

Another insulting joke featured Shafik , it put a picture of Shafiq behind shoes , mocking at the inceindet of beating him by shoes durin a conference held on Aswan ,”it said we won’t vote for (*felol*) with another (*felol*) and referring to the shoe”. (*Felol*) refers to the people who advocatedt he former regime and against the 25th of the revolution.

Voters who were opponents to Shafiq were criticizing those who support him by saying “if you are going to vote for Shafiq because you afraid of the Muslim Brotherhood to act like the National Democratic Party (NDP), you will be like the one who fears anyone see him while he in the bathroom from the perforate, he opened the whole door”. , the joke had “*Asa6by*” character in it. It meant that Shafiq’s supporters misunderstood the whole situation as if they would elect Shafiq as he wouldn’t be like the NDP; they are wrong because he would be worse.

Other joke targeted both candidates and was posted on “*As7abe Sarcasm Society*” said that the most significant results of this elections would be whoever wins the elections will sentence the other to the prison”. The joke meant that the two candidates are not fair ones and would act with subjectivity.

Not only jokes that appeared on the stage, also creation of Facebook pages and Twitter accounts attacking Shafiq and Morsi, was common place. There were Facebook pages specifically for mocking at Shaiq’s pullover, as people were mocking as he never changes his pullover. Nearly about 6 Facebook pages titled by Shafiq’s pullover (see Appendix F, B). All of

these pages were created by Shafiq's opponents whether they are other candidates or voters as it is hard to figure out who are the real creators.

During the runoff between Shafiq and Morsi, many jokes appeared urging people to boycott as both are the same would do nothing for the country. One of these jokes featured "Asa7by" saying "choosing between Shafik and Morsi reminds me when I was child and had to choose between taking injection or suppositories".

6.3 Findings in relation to comparing between Shafiq and Morsi

As Shafiq and Morsi where the two candidates that went to the run off of the elections, it is very important to know how they both used social media to reach their people.

6.3.1 Ahmed Shafik versus Mohamed Morsi in terms of media usage

RQ4: How did Mr. Ahmed Shafiq and Dr. Mohamed Morsi use social media during the first and second round of the elections?

On the run off of the elections, two polar opposites' candidates went head which Ahmed Shafiq, the last Prime minster for the former regime and Mohamed Morsi, a former Muslim Brotherhood member. The first candidate was perceived by some social media users as the "liberal" candidate whereas he was perceived by revolutionaries as he was a part of the autocratic system. On the other hands, Morsi was perceived as a part of the Muslim Brotherhood policy and he would pose the religious state while others perceive him as that religious candidate that would solve the people's problem through implementing Islam's fair rules.

Every candidate tried hard to throw away the negative image that some people had it.

And so, Shafiq through Facebook tried to show how religious he is by posting prayers and versus

from Quran, so as he let people think of him as a religious candidates. Shafiq was also stressing on the importance of the military on saving and protecting the country. So, he used to posting old incidents form history assuring the military role in protecting Egypt. He was attacking Muslim Brotherhood by posting reports that prove their falseness. Shafiq posted also stories and pictures of the army when they won the war in 1973 against Israel. That is to show how the important role played by the army in protecting the national security.

Shafiq was attacking any journalist who opposed him. For instance, he was so biased towards the famous journalist Hamady Qandil because he opposed him. Shafiq's campaign used Arabic-language content to promote about his campaign. He also was used to posting pictures of him as well as voting results that advocates his victory over Morsi. Shafiq gave lots of promises towards having a better Egypt in all aspects. He also promised that if he won, he would ensure that Egyptians live in a climate of freedom through encouraging speaking out freely. Also he promised to retain justice in the country as he said, "To the generous people of Egypt, justice is the rule of law".

Shafiq was acting politely through his posts as he expressed his gratitude to all voters who chose him over of two days of voting, so as he showed how much he appreciated their votes. He said: "All thanks and appreciation for your efforts in supporting me as a candidate".

On both Twitter and Facebook Shafiq's stressed on the idea that Muslim Brotherhood members are "liars" and "unreliable" persons. His latest tweets before declaration of the results urged Egyptians to go to the polls so as to "protect the Egyptian civil state". Shafiq's tweets focused on informing people about his activities, visits and press conferences and statements. He

also focused on propagating his campaign through tweets that were linked to his program. Additionally, he was tweeting so much about the poll's results.

Shafiq appeared to more active on Facebook than Twitter and had dozens of posts than tweets. Generally speaking, he made a great use of social media including especially for Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. He had a YouTube website specifically for his campaign that broadcasted all his interviews and conferences. (See Appendix F).

On the other hand, Morsi was trying to convince people by him as that religious man that was one of the victims of old regime as he was prisoned. He tried to prove this through Facebook posts. He used to post lots of religious posts such as prayers and Quran versus. He also posted many pictures of him when giving his speeches and attending press conference. He put posts featuring "Sheikhs" religious men and *Salafi* party that announced their support to him. He stressed mainly on the revolution and the rights of the martyrs that must be achieved through the new president. Also, he posted about his achievements as he wrote that he was chosen as the best parliament at 2000 till 2005. Morsi focused mainly on his statements and press conference and he used to post videos about his interviews. Over his Twitter account, Morsi's campaign used to sending links to voting results that is to reassure his victory over Shafiq. Many of Morsi's tweets were links directing to posts on his Facebook page.

6.3.2 Shafiq versus Morsi in terms of rumors circulated through social media

RQ3: How did voters use social media during the elections' process?

One of the serious disadvantages of social media is spreading rumors quickly without checking out the source of the rumor. When being interviewed, all the campaigns' coordinators of the candidates complained about this outback. Also, other coordinators complained about this

through other press or television interviews. Facebook and Twitter were the perfect place when someone needed to attack specific candidate by telling a lie about him, so as to lessen his credibility and make people not to vote for him.

During the presidential election runoff a lot of Egyptians were still uncertain about the perfect candidate. They were hesitant and stuck to choose between Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood candidate and Shafiq, Mubarak's later premier Ahmed Shafiq.

Competition then between the two candidates has been rigid and so campaigning tended to be playing on the voter's fears. As for Shafiq's campaign, it tried make voters fear from the Muslim Brotherhood-dominated religious state if Morsi won, whereas Morsi's campaign frightened people from the military state dominated by autocratic figures from the former regime.

When observing Facebook pages and Tweets during that period, a wide range of rumors resulted from the hot competition between the two voters.

6.3.3 Rumors targeted Morsi

One of the most circulated rumor that frightened voters was that if Morsi was elected, the Brotherhood's supreme guide would be the real president and so Morsi won't fulfill his promises. The state then would be turned into Islamic strict state. That thing freighted many categories, especially for Christians and liberals who opponents to the Muslim Brotherhood rule. Consequently, another rumor related to this which was that Morsi government would force all women to wear veil and stay at home as religious say. About men, the rumor got circulated about men would be forced to wear traditional Islamic cloth and grow their beards.

About life style and daily life situations, rumors focused on that based on the Muslim Brotherhood ideology, Morsi would impose segregation in the workplace as the mixture between women and men at workplace is not prohibited in Islam, according to them. Also, it was believed that Morsi would ban foreigner tourists to visit Egypt as they are not Muslims and so the business industry would be affected negatively. Consequently, another rumor stated that beach tourism would be banned also add to banning swimming as it is not prohibited in Islam wearing revealed cloth.

Other rumor was that cinema, theatre and all forms of arts and entertainment would be also banned because it is not prohibited in Islam. Nepotism was one of the rumors as it was believed that Morsi would only provide job opportunities to members of Muslim Brotherhood.

Moreover, the national security wasn't far from rumors, as there was a rumor stated that Mors would buy Suez Canal to Qatar. And he would buy Sinai or rent it to Palestinians, or open the borders with Palestine to facilitate Palestinian immigration to Egypt. About freedom of speech and protesting, there was a rumor stating that Morsi would attack his opponents and arrest and torture protestors that might strike against him.

6.3.4 Rumors targeted Shafiq

Shafiq wasn't also apart from rumors especially that some considered him one of the former regime's men. And so many rumors were circulating around this issue as he was one of Mubarak's men. One of the most circulated rumors was that his wife is acquainting to the former president Hosni Mubarak. His sister is married to a member of Mubarak's family. Suzanne Mubarak announced her support to Shafiq as he was loyal to Mubarak.

Other rumor stated that the main office of the campaign was a villa that his owned by Ahmed Ezz, a business tycoon and former head of Mubarak's National Democratic Party, who is in prison for corruption and symbolized as one of the most corrupted person in the former regime.

Shafiq's job was a target of rumor also as some said that he was involved in corrupted decision and illegal deals related to Cairo International Airport and Egypt Air

As Shafiq was the opponent candidate to a Muslim Brotherhood one, he was attacked by rumors targeting religious issues. As there was a rumor stating that he would remove Quranic verses from the school educational syllabus. Also, he is not a religious person as he was drunk or got high before doing television interviews.

6.3.5 Rumors targeted both Morsi and Shafiq

One of the most famous rumors was that both candidates have American citizenship. Both of them were not transparent as they buy votes. Both candidates are not respectful candidates for presidency. These rumors aimed at fostering people to boycott elections.

When comparing number of rumors that targeted both candidates, it is noticed that rumors targeted Morsi were double rumors that targeted Shafiq. Some believed that was because of Shafiq's campaign that was so active in terms of attacking Morsi and spreading lies and rumors about him .Others believed that former regime was definitely against Morsi and so its men attacked him through rumors.

6.4 Findings in relation to literature review

Previous studies and reports have shown how far the impact of social media outlets was during the elections' process. Previous articles are very helpful in figuring out others' analysis towards that impact.

6.4.1 The impact of social media on the elections

RQ: 1: What was the role of social media outlets during the campaigning of the presidential elections in Egypt 2012?

Previous research studies and official reports have proven that social media played an effective role before and during the Egyptian presidential elections. As Fisher (2012) said that social media had a huge impact on the elections and he focused on three areas where this impact was evidently clear. The first one was that youth groups in Egypt were mobilized through social networking sites, so as they tended to circulate ideas and spread information about the candidates. The second impact was that these sites provided a wide source of information about the candidates and their campaigns. And the third and the most influential impact was the free climate which the social media created where people could communicate with each other freely while expressing their opinions without being threatened. Also, Amel (2012) in his study concluded that Twitter was such a main player during the elections process as there were about 2 million Tweets beginning from 10 April till 24 May, 2012. Additionally, Lutz (2012) stated that social media played a big role during the elections process and it also acted as a predictor to the winner in that election.

Fisher (2012) also said that social media has many advantages as it helped in raising the international community awareness especially the expatriated Egyptians towards the elections.

And also, it succeeded in contributing to what is called “national dialogue” that was surrounding the elections. However, Fisher argued that the social media outlets were not the only source of information and is not the only motivator for people. Fisher focused on the main functions of social media during the elections. He believed that the main role of social media was it provided a systematic and comprehensive source of information about the candidates’ campaigns and also it enabled a critical view of the political life in Egypt to the international community. He also urged that the fact that people knew that the international community was focusing on the elections and social media sites fostered them to follow these sites to acquire the information.

Fisher stated that some candidates have used social media to reach their audience. Morsi in particular was among those candidates as he uploaded a video on YouTube where he addresses a speech to the Egyptians who live abroad. Speaking in English, Morsi asserted his commitment to provide a democratic and free system in the country. Additionally, social media gave a wide network of information and opinions which helped in understanding the political events that are happening in Egypt that are affecting the elections process. Fisher also argued that the social media impact also where in providing what he described “circles of impact” as the information didn’t stop at a particular point, but rather it is extended through circulation by users.

What support more the idea that social media have been so effective during the presidential elections, Lutz (2012) paper that proved that social media sites had a huge impact in the elections process. He argued that Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube contributed largely to the political participation during the process of elections. Lutz also argued that social media outlets acted as a predictor to the winner. Lutz concluded in his results that social networking sites anticipated the victory of Dr. Mohamed Morsi. One of the most important results by Lutz is that Muslim Brotherhood was proven to be a perfect social media user in order to convince people by

Morsi. Their extensive usage to social media was evidently clear on the election night, June 17, 2012.

As Selvik & Stenslie (2011) noted in their study “ Stability and change in the modern Middle East” , that social media including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogging sites , have enabled people to get re-connected. Those people who previously found it hard to communicate and interact with each other. And so, they share ideologies and perspectives in all fields .Additionally, they began to obtain information from diverse kinds of social media. According to Samuel (2012), in his research “The Egyptian revolution, Al-Jazeera, Twitter and Facebook”; social media played a significant role in Egypt as it is the foundation of the online political activism beginning from “*Kifaya*” movement and ending by the 25th January revolution. Samuel also, thinks that social media has facilitated and empowered the success of the revolution. He believes in the fact that social media triggers a lot of social and political changes in Egypt as people are able to interact and share ideologies freely.

That is applied to the case of the Egyptian Presidential Elections, 2012, when the Egyptians tend to post any news story they like and comment freely on whatever they dislike. Unlike the Elections, 2005, a lot of Fans to the Facebook pages and tweets have been dominated Facebook and Twitter. Opponents and Supporters of any candidate would discuss with each other on the wall of Facebook page or in a tweet where there were no limits.

Furthermore, Egyptian people are becoming much bolder as the political events that have been taking place in Egypt have led them to blow up using social media. As Lutz (2012) in his article “[The role of social media in Egypt’s 2012 presidential election](#)”, he says that Egypt has been witnessing a socio- political change and “Facebook Revolution”, is one of the most striking

changes that happened in Egypt, which political leaders should put into consideration. Pintak (2011) also agrees on this fact as he said in his article “ Arab media revolution spreading change”, that Egyptians don’t fear anymore from the police state , thanks to the internet with its fast flow of information. Pintak added that social media acts now as a weapon which the Egyptians call it “Massbook”, and it is ready to fight any autocratic regime as well as it acts as a guide to people when making political decisions.

Pintak’s critique applies to the case of the Egyptian presidential elections, 2012 where people get backed with media revolution and could elect freely without any sort of fear. In addition, social media outlets had a role in enabling people make decisions on who is the most suitable candidate to run the presidency.

Also, Lutz (2012) concluded in his study that social media through the presidential election, 2012 succeeded to play a vital role just like the 2011 uprising. There has been an ongoing dialogue regarding the election on various social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and even Wikipedia.

Additionally, Tufekci (2012), in her study “Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Teaches a Lesson in Elections in the Age of Twitter and Google Spreadsheets”, she proved that people from all parties were active users to social media during the elections. In particular, the Muslim Brotherhood established a complicated online presence through which they posted narratives during and before the elections’ process. That interactivity ensured a high level of transparency which the Egyptian society was striving for.

All these studies ensure the social media plays a role on the foundation of the online political activism and revolutions in Egypt .That role has been extended to the presidential

elections, 2012 through which people could share ideologies and perspectives in order to make decisions on voting for the most qualified candidate.

6.4.2 The parallel between U.S elections 2008 and Egypt's elections 2012 in terms of social media usage

Literature review shows that Obama have been using social media extensively to convince people especially youth ones. Using Facebook as a strong promotional tool, Obama built wide network of supporters. The previous research studies advocate that Obama's usage of Social Networking Sites has surpassed McCain and that was reflected upon the elections' results. The data given by research studies proved that Obama's campaign using social media outlets was more successful than McCain.

When comparing the U.S elections to the Egyptian one, a very few similarities might appear on the surface. Egyptian candidate took from Obama's campaign, a role model to follow. Having used social media extensively that helped in winning the elections, candidates tried to imitate Obama hoping that they would win. However, it is not applicable to put an analogue between Morsi and Obama because Morsi relied on social media as well as other promotional traditional techniques whereas Obama relied heavily on social media more than other traditional techniques. That might be because in Egypt there is a high illiteracy rate compared to U.S where it has low illiteracy rate. Also, the number of American people who uses Social Networking Sites surpasses the Egyptian people. Also, MySpace has been proven by research studies that he played a great role during the American presidential elections whereas in Egypt MySpace hasn't been used during the elections process. Additionally, previous studies indicate that there are a few numbers of users who use it which means that it is not that popular among Egyptian users.

6.5 Findings in relation to in-depth interviews with media experts

In-depth interviews helped in the analysis process. Political experts' responses helped in knowing the impact of social media outlets during the elections. On the other hands, candidates' campaigns coordinators' responses helped in knowing how candidates used social media while campaigning.

6.5.1 The presidential candidates' uses and gratifications of social media on the Presidential Elections, 2012

RQ 1: What was the role of social media outlets during the campaigning of the presidential elections in Egypt 2012?

All the experts agreed on the fact that social media outlets had a great role before and during the elections process. The role has been classified through the expert's answers as:

➤ Facebook

Facebook pages were very effective and had a great role during the elections process especially among young people. Both sides used Facebook during the elections, the candidates, and people. Candidates used to post information about their campaigns convince people by the benefits gained if they voted for them. Some candidates use Facebook as a place to attack and criticize their competitors.

Experts stated that social media as a mass medium had a greater impact than other traditional media including television, print newspapers and radio. That is because of many reasons, firstly it is such a fast medium and so it spreads the word quickly with a blink of an eye, secondly it is advantaged with the sarcastic style which people like, thirdly a mass of activists,

analysts and experts are on Facebook posting information and news stories, fourth it has gained credibility since the arise of the opposition movement and the success of the 25th January revolution , as they have been relying since then on the social media as a wide network of information, fifth, people were comfortable in discussing the elections issues freely online where some people encourage to vote for specific candidates while others called for a boycott.

All the experts agreed that the Muslim Brotherhood used Facebook extensively and created Facebook pages to foster people to support them. Mr Goubayel agreed on that Dr. Mohamed Morsi had gained benefit from Facebook at the second stage when he changes his slogan and posted it on Facebook to spread it. And, so he had a great popularity through Facebook as people knew his new slogan and perspective.

Additionally, experts said that Hamdeen Sabahy was one of the most candidates that used social media in general and Facebook in particular and that is because he had no sufficient budget for other marketing tools in campaigning such as billboards, outdoor advertisements and television advertisements.

➤ **Twitter :**

Experts believed that Twitter had a great role in making candidates tweets about their latest decisions and plans. Also, there were a lot of tweets that were mainly attacks to other candidates. People used their Twitter accounts to inform others about latest news of candidates.

➤ **YouTube :**

Experts agreed on the effective usage of videos posted on YouTube during the elections. YouTube have been merged as a part of the candidates' campaigning as candidates tend to

upload their videos on Facebook to promote their campaigns. Additionally, some candidates used YouTube to present their historical actions which they are proud of. For, example, Sabahy posted videos which he is proud of showing him while joining the revolution protests. Another example, Morsi also got advantaged with posting videos witnessing him while addressing interrogation when he was a parliamentary member. Moreover, some candidates and users got advantaged from YouTube when they uploaded videos showing Ahmed Shafik while he was a part of the old regime.

Finally, the YouTube videos according to experts have benefited candidates as they were trying to show off using videos that appeared them while sitting with a majority of people, so as voters would be convinced that they were popular candidates.

6.5.2 The voters' users and gratifications from social media during the elections process

RQ3: How did voters use social media during the elections' process?

Some experts said that social media have been encouraging to participate in political decisions since the formation of *Kifaya*, the first opposition movement that was mobilized through Facebook. And nowadays at elections, social media usually fosters people to vote or boycott elections. Mrs. Sara Al Mojaddidi and Ms. Maggie Michael believed that people were encouraging each other to the necessity of votes. That was through posting quotes about the importance of voting and participation on the elections. Also, some users tend to upload profile pictures that had encouraging words to foster people to go voting. Others used to upload videos of long queues of voters who were standing for so many hours waiting their turn with patience, by these photos users were encouraging each other not to get bored. Mojaddidi and Michael

added that after voting, users on Facebook were proud of voting and so they tended to post photos showing their finger tipped with ink as an evidence of voting.

According to some experts, people relied heavily on social networking sites during the elections as a source of information. Dr. Ahmed Anwar said that voters used to get information about the candidates' achievements, campaigns and history from Facebook. Also, they were informed about the latest news about any candidate from Tweets. In addition, they watched any broadcasted program or debate between two candidates through YouTube videos that included all the candidates' television shows. But, not all experts found that the information included on social media outlets were accurate. As Dr. Mohamed Fathy Younis said, unfortunately, social networking sites information lacked somehow accuracy where the traditional print media still has. Younis believed that Twitter and Facebook were less accurate than YouTube. However, there were some misleading and fabricated videos that were either video edited falsely or were stated in false timing. Also, Mr. Sayed Goubayel believed in the lack of accuracy on the information circulated through social media. Goubayel said that although there was plenty of information, they weren't that accurate or true and there were lots of rumors rather than facts.

Additionally, Facebook has been used as a sarcastic way to attack specific candidates. As Younis said that there were negative sayings and name calling to some of the candidates such as mocking at Morsi's symbol "*Estebn*", and using the word "bonbon" which Shafiq said during the elections. And also, the word "pullover" tended to have lots of jokes as Shafiq used to wear a certain black pullover during the elections process.

Mr. Assem Elqersh said that opinions were flooded through Facebook as users used to update their statuses that reflected their perspectives whether they were angry or happy. And

also, they were used to writing positive and negative comments. Anwar, Younis, and Almojaddidi said asserted that Freedom of speech was one of the most advantages that people get from social media and that was they were striving for. Moreover, many users were posting posted jokes on their Facebook pages about the candidates. And there were pages specifically created for humor and mocking.

6.6 Findings in relation to in-depth interviews with candidates' campaigns managers

RQ2: How did the candidates use social media while campaigning?

All Experts said that candidates made a great use of the social media before and during the elections. First, they used social media as one of their marketing tool of the campaigns as the online world is cheap and marketing ideas have become common place through Facebook. That is especially for Sabahy and Abolofotouh, according to their campaigns' coordinators.

Second, they let their supporters to post materials that attack other candidates including videos, news stories that contained criticisms and also sarcastic quotes. In consequence, candidates' images were affected negatively, Mahmoud Ibrahim who was the manager of Ahmed Shafiq campaign said that although social media was used as a sarcastic tool, Shafiq had the most jokes and has been mocked intensively by voters and other candidates which definitely affect the results. Also, Mohamed Roshdy, the coordinator campaign of Morsi said that his candidate was attacked enormously and his credibility was suspected through social media.

Third, candidates were able to fight each other through social media and that was by informing people about their competitors' points of weaknesses on Facebook and Twitter. Mohamed Shahawy, one of the coordinators of Dr. Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh campaign said that Abolfotouh has been attacked falsely through social media that originated the rumor that accused

him being still a member of Muslim Brotherhood group. Also, Hoda Abd Elbaset , the coordinator of the social networking sites at Hamdeen Sabahy campaign said that Sabhay have been attacked through social media and accused of being a supporter to the former Libyan leader, Moamar Elqazafy and the Syrian Leader ,Bashar Elasad and that was definitely false.

The campaigns coordinators agreed on the fact that the most candidates that got advantaged from the social media were Sabahy, Abulfotouh as they were using social networking sites effectively and extensively more than other candidates. Sabahy and Aboulfotouh campaigns' organizers said that they are more eligible to deal with what so called "the new media".

Every campaign manager viewed his candidates as an angel who was the most attacked candidate and the most credible ones. Also, every campaign manager stated that the large number of rumors targeted his candidate, especially for Morsi and Shafiq managers' campaigns.

Shahawy and Roshdy agreed on the most effective tools of social networking sites were jokes, sarcastic caricatures and circulated quotes. Abd Elbaset believed on the positive relationship between political participation and social media. They said that social media has been fostering people to participate in the elections where online users were convincing each other through this new media. However, Ibrahim believed that social media had a negative role in fostering people to politically participate.

They all criticized misusing social media as they said insulting candidates was one of the main disadvantages of social media as it is not respectful to insult them. They added that freedom of speech doesn't mean using name calling.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

7.1 Conclusions

The data analysis and findings show how great the impact of social media on the Egyptian elections was. However, there is nothing perfect and still every medium has disadvantages, as for social media, it does have disadvantages. One of which, social media targets literate people and so illiterate ones couldn't be able to access contents posted online. That is a significant outback as still Egypt suffers from high illiteracy rate.

Another disadvantage is that social media is mainly used by middle and high classes in Egypt who can access the Internet. While in poor countries areas and rural areas, people cannot afford that luxury of having personal computers and Internet subscriptions. And so generalizing the impact of social media on all categories is not applicable. That is not to say that social media doesn't have an impact, but it is just to state subjectively the disadvantages of this new medium.

Based on the research analysis, it was found that there is a strong correlation between social networking sites and political participation. Also, it was proven that the usage of both voters and candidates to social media outlets before and during the elections was extensive and has somehow affected the results.

Based on the study analysis, it was found also that social media played a crucial role in the whole process of the elections and there were active candidates than others in terms of using social networking sites in campaigning.

Since the social media impact on Egypt's presidential election 2012 has been proven from the masses of fans of candidates Facebook pages and those millions of Tweets that were

circulating during the elections, the research conclude that the social networking sites were of effect. Additionally, it was found that these sites changed the way candidates organize their campaigns, used as a marketing tool; social media was able to provide a new way for promoting candidates' campaigns.

Moreover, the research analysis confirmed the fact that social media had a role before and during the elections. Since this relationship is proven, the researcher concludes the following results:

First: The research analysis proved that Sabahy was the most candidate that got benefits from social media specifically, Facebook and Twitter. Also, it was found that he was the dominating candidate in terms of users who talked about him and that during the first round of the elections.

Second: When comparing Morsi and Shafiq, it was found that Morsi's official Facebook page and Twitter account has almost triple fans and followers than Shafiq's .

Third: Data analysis proved that the number of people who talked online about Shafiq was at least double the number of people that talked about Morsi.

Fourth: Since it was found that there were 1.4 M mentions of Shafiq versus 575,045 tweets that mentioned Morsi just before the second round of the elections, the researcher concludes that pertaining to twitter mentions, tweets that mentioned Shafiq was tripled those mentioning Morsi.

Fifth: Based on the research analysis, it was found that more than 70 % of the photos that were shared on Facebook were sarcastic and comic about candidates, elections, and the whole process.

Sixth: Data analysis proved that the Egyptian presidential elections ranked the second most discussed topic in social media in Egypt in the week of 10 – 16 June.

Seventh: Since the flow of contents through social media had no limit as there were over 2 million increases of the online posts during the elections' process, the researcher concludes that, the online activity has changed tremendously after the first round of the election.

Eighth: Since the data given that Morsi gained 15, 000 followers on Twitter and his first tweet just after the declaration of the official results, has been re- tweeted over 1600 times, the researcher concludes that Morsi's popularity among social media users increased after winning the elections.

Ninth: As it was proven that on June 25th, the day that followed the official declaration of the results that announced the victory of Morsi, Morsi dominated the social networking sites where four out of five of the topics of discussion that tackled the outcomes of this victory add to his dominance in Twitter talks .And so, the researcher concludes that Morsi got highly privileged with his usage to social media.

Tenth: Since the data given as Twitter users were tweeting negatively and Facebook posts held negative sentiments towards both candidates Morsi and Shafiq and users called for boycott on the second round, it is concluded that many the of online activities specifically Facebook and Twitter attacked Shafiq and Morsi.

Eleventh: As the data showed that people were able to express freely their ideas through Facebook and Twitter, that dialogue which was taking place before the uprising(2011), the research concludes that the one of most significant advantages of social media outlets was providing “ national dialogue”.

What is more the research analysis asserted that the social media role was dominating during the elections process. Also, it was found that the candidates have been using social networking sites extensively as a way to convince people by their campaigns and also a way to attack their competitors. Since there were millions of fans on Facebook pages of the candidates and millions of users’ tweets before and during the elections, the researcher concludes that people were interested in sharing political ideas on social media outlets.

Additionally, findings and analysis showed that social media had a huge impact on the elections process as a whole as it had a role before and during the elections and even after the official declaration of the results. Whether that role seemed to be positive or negative to some people, it shouldn’t be underestimated. As what is called by “Facebook revolution” is really a concerning matter that must be put into consideration. Also, Facebook is the growing seed of the online activism of Egypt. The opposition movement *Kifaya* wouldn’t have been such successful without Facebook. The 6th of April movement wouldn’t have been formed or organized without Facebook groups. More importantly the 25th January revolution wouldn’t have been organized and prevailed without Facebook. That history of the strong relationship between political movements and social media has also been extended towards the presidential election that is considered to be the most freely democratic elections that happened in Egypt.

The analysis proved that the advantages and the disadvantages of social media in terms of the candidates seemed to play two opposite roles. For instance, Shafiq opponents who criticized him aggressively through social media that was considered to be a disadvantage of Shafiq, but at the same time Morsi got advantaged. The common disadvantage was the lack of the accuracy on some of the information posted on Facebook and the news circulated through tweets. Moreover, it was found that the credibility issue was questioned before and during the elections' process, thanks to the lies and rumors that were prevalent. Research analysis confirmed that the most obvious benefits gained by the candidates that they promoted their campaigns. Facebook pages where that perfect place to market the candidates' ideas whereas Twitter was that quick tool to send the latest news and finally YouTube was the candidates' video world where they showed their heroic actions. On the other hand, people tended to encourage each other during the elections process by the necessity of voting. Activists' quotes, statuses, and notes fostered a lot of people who would prefer to remain silent. Also, after the first round of the elections, many activists and experts called for boycott where they tended to convince people to join this boycott. That boycott affected the whole process of voting.

Research analysis confirmed the strong relationship between social media and the elections , and so the researcher concludes that social media contributed to some extent to the winning of Morsi, that is because the data showed how popular he was among Twitter and had millions of fans on his Facebook official page ,especially during the second stage. Additionally, the analysis confirmed the dominance of Morsi pertaining to the online activities throughout the elections stages. So, it is concluded that such dominance might be one of the forcing reasons behind his success.

It was also found that people were very active users during the elections process as the analysis showed their continuous updates statuses, their profile pictures that were changing quickly according to the political event, and their circulated quotes as well as their fast tweets about latest news of the candidates. So, the research concludes that that this online presence shall be one of the motivators that fostered them to vote as they have become more politically aware through their online activities.

Sarcastic was one of the strong weapons during elections. Facebook pages mocking at candidates were flooding on the internet. Shafiq, in specific seems to be the most targeted ones, considering the masses of Facebook pages and jokes that attacked him. That might contribute to the final results as people might get affected by all these waves of attacks. Shafiq was attacked mainly for being a member of the former autocratic regime and he killed protestors. Social media contents were headed towards convincing people towards the fact that Shafiq wouldn't be different from Mubarak's age and he would follow the same steps in ruling. Also, social media contents advocate that Shafiq is against the revolution and killed innocent protestors and so he was not eligible to be the coming president.

To sum up, the research concludes that the role played by social media through the process of elections was crucial. That role was played positively through providing a wide range of information about candidates as well as through encouraging voters to vote. On the other hand, the role was played negatively through using social media outlets as a sarcastic tool to attack candidates and also through providing sometimes inaccurate information.

However; the study is not advocating that social networking sites are the main reason of Morsi's victory or the only motivator to people to politically participate.

7.2 Recommendations

7.2.1 Recommendations for political candidates:

Based on the research conclusions, the researcher recommends that, in order to address a vast majority of the Egyptian people, political candidates should be aware by the best way to target the online community especially youth. That is because they have become a large sector in Egypt. So, the significance of doing pilot studies through social media users before organizing any campaign should be put into consideration. That is to get a sense of what people is thinking about.

Since the conclusions found that there was a lack of news credibility during the elections process, the researcher recommends that political candidates must try to tackle the lack of the credibility issue on the online community, as it is easy to spread a rumor and let people believe it quickly on the online community. So, they must hire persons that work specifically on social media issues and be ready to post documents that show the truth. This could be achieved through monitoring social networking sites and keeping updated about the issues that are posted online.

Based on conclusions percentage that there were 70 % of the Facebook posts were sarcastic about the candidates and their campaigns, the researcher recommends that political candidates must know that social media outlets have disadvantages as there are nothing that could be kept as a top secret like before, and so they must be cautious and be honest because social networking sites reveals the unknown secrets.

Based on the conclusions' number that there were over 2 million increases of the online posts during the elections' process, the researcher recommends that political candidates must learn new techniques in appealing the online community, so as if they wanted to be elected, they

must have tactics of how to use social media outlets effectively. That could be done through many ways such as watching the American presidential elections where candidates are used to using social networking sites effectively and know how to target the online community cleverly.

According to the literature review, it was proven that there is a strong correlation between political participation and social media usage, so the researcher recommends that political candidates should consider the history of online activism in Egypt while campaigning.

The researcher recommends that political candidates should read research studies and paper done on the relationship between social media and political participation as well as studies that tackles the impact of social media on the political events in Egypt. That is because these academic sources include reliable information and provide evidence and cause of the relationships between variables. The thing that would definitely help candidates to know how to target their people through knowing their needs that are specified in the research analysis.

7.2.2 Recommendations for further studies:

- Further study should be replicated by focusing on only one social networking site such as Facebook pages, Twitter tweets, or YouTube videos.
- Further study needs to be conducted to compare the tactics of campaigns of both Shafiq and Morsi during elections.
- Further study could be conducted focusing only on the disadvantages of the social networking sites during the elections' process.
- Further study might be conducted on comparing between social media as a new tool on campaigning and other type of medium such as talk shows on television or privates

owned newspapers. That is to assess the difference between traditional media and new media while campaigning on elections.

- Further study should be replicated using a quantitative method, especially survey questionnaire as due to the time limit; the research was tackled only by the qualitative method.
- Further study should be conducted on the impact of social media on the debate around the constitution draft.
- Further study might be conducted on the impact of social media on the upcoming parliamentary elections.
- Further study might be replicated using other theoretical framework such as cultivation theory or agenda setting theory.

CHAPTER EIGHT: LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Due to the novelty of the topic, there is a scarcity of academic studies that tackled the relationship between social media outlets and Egypt's presidential elections.
- As this research study relied mainly on the qualitative approach, the results cannot be generalized.
- Due to the instability in Egypt, the researcher found difficulties in interviewing most of the media representativeness of the candidates as they are busy with the ongoing demonstrations and strikes.
- The research focused only on specific social networking sites which are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.
- Lacking of transparency in the interviews with candidates' campaigns coordinators as each one tried to show that his candidate was an angel and other candidates attacked him. That is of course affects the credibility of the data given. Also, they seemed to be very cautious while talking and revealing and piece of information as the instability of the country made them afraid to talk freely due to the sensitivity of the topic.

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APPENICES

Appendix: A:

List of experts' interviewers

1. Dr Ahmed Foad Anwar: Political activist, writer at Al- Ahram newspaper, and Professor of Journalism and Mass communication, Alexandria University.
2. Dr .Mohamed Fathy Anwar: Political Activist, writer and Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, Mansoura University, and he is the vice president of the Opinion department at El-Watan newspaper.
3. Mr. Sayed Goubayel: Head of Foreign Affairs department at El- Watan newspaper.
4. Mr. Assem Elqersh , former Editor on Chief of Al- Ahram weekly newspaper.
5. Ms. Maggie Michael , Political reporter and a Journalist at Associated Press
6. Mrs. Sarah Al Mojaddidi , Media trainer, political analyst , social media expert.

Experts must meet the following criteria

- ✓ First criterion: Experts must have political background as they their work must be focusing on political current issues.
- ✓ Second criterion: Journalists and writers should have written opinion pieces targeted political issues.
- ✓ Third criterion: political activist they must be active users on Facebook.
- ✓ Forth criterion: political activist must be active users on Twitter.
- ✓ Fifth criterion: Head of departments in newspapers must be head of political departments.
- ✓ Sixth criterion: scholars must be teaching on mass communication departments or political science departments.

Appendix: B:

List of candidates' campaigns' organizers and social media specialists.

1. Mr. Mohamed Roshdy , one of the coordinators' at Dr. Mohamed Morsi campaign.
2. Mr. Mahmoud Ebrahim , the campaign manager of Mr.Ahmed Shafik campaign.
3. Mrs.Hoda Abd Elbaset , the coordinator of the social networking sites at Mr. Hamdeen Sabahy campaign.
4. Mr. Mohamed Shahawy, one of the coordinators of Dr. Abdel Moneim Abolfotoh campaign.

Appendix C:

List of experts' interviewees' questions

1. In your opinion, to what extent did the social media outlets play a role before and during the Egyptian presidential Elections 2102?

في رأيك ما هو تأثير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي " فيسبوك ، تويتر ، يوتيوب " قبل و اثناء الانتخابات الرئاسية في مصر 2012؟

2. What is your assessment towards the information that was posted on social network websites during the elections process?

ما تقييمك لدقة المعلومات التي تم ترويجها عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي اثناء فترة الانتخابات فيما يخص مرشحي الرئاسة؟

3. Did social media outlets contributed to the political participation by people during the elections?

هل أثرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي على نسبة المشاركة السياسية لدى المصريين؟

4. Do you think that the social networking websites succeeded in being a political marketing tool during the elections?

هل تعتقد أن مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي نجحت في أن تكون أداة من أدوات التسويق السياسي للمرشحين؟

5. Who were the most candidates that made a great use of the social media outlets?

من أكثر المرشحين استفادة من مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي اثناء فترة الانتخابات ؟

6. What are the most promotional social media tools that were used during the elections videos, quotes, status, caricature, or jokes?

ما الطرق الاكثر أهمية في الرسائل السياسية الانتخابية للناخبين ، الفيديو ، المقاطع الترويجية المباشرة ، اقتباس الاقوال ، النكت ، كاريكاتير ؟

7. In your opinion, what were the most powerful social networking websites during the elections, Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube?

في رأيك ما هي أكثر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي تأثيراً أثناء فترة الانتخابات ، الفيسبوك ، تويتر ، أم يوتيوب؟

8. What are the disadvantages of the social media outlets during the election?

ما هي عيوب مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة إعلامية أثناء سير عملية الانتخابات الرئاسية؟

Appendix D

List of questions of interviews conducted with candidates' campaigns' organizers.

1. As a campaign organizer, what do you think of the role that social media outlets played before and during the presidential elections process in 2012?

كمسؤول عن الحملة الانتخابية ، في رأيك ما هو تأثير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي " فيسبوك ، تويتر ، يوتيوب " اثناء الانتخابات الرئاسية في مصر 2012؟

2. What is your assessment towards the information that was posted on social network websites during the elections process?

ما تقييمك لدقة المعلومات التي تم ترويجها عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي اثناء فترة الانتخابات فيما يخص مرشحي الرئاسة؟

3. Did social media outlets contributed to the political participation by people during the elections?

هل أثرت مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي على نسبة المشاركة السياسية لدى المصريين؟

4. Do you think that the social networking websites succeeded in being a political marketing tool during the elections?

هل تعتقد أن مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي نجحت في أن تكون أداة من أدوات التسويق السياسي للمرشحين؟

5. Who were the most candidates that made a great use of the social media outlets?

من أكثر المرشحين استفادة من مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي اثناء فترة الانتخابات ؟

6. What are the most propagative social media tools that were used during the elections videos, quotes, status, caricature, or jokes?

ما الطرق الاكثر أهمية في الرسائل السياسية الانتخابية للناخبين ، الفيديو ، المقاطع الترويجية المباشرة ، اقتباس الاقوال ، النكت ، كاريكاتير ؟

7. In your opinion, what were the most powerful social networking websites during the elections, Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube?

في رأيك ما هي أكثر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي تأثيرا أثناء فترة الانتخابات ، الفيسبوك ، تويتر ، أم يوتيوب؟

8. What are the disadvantages of the social media outlets as a medium tool during the election?

ما هي عيوب مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة إعلامية أثناء سير عملية الانتخابات الرئاسية؟

9. How far did your candidate use social media outlets to reach voters before and during the elections?

ما مدى استخدام المرشح الفريق أحمد شفيق لمواقع التواصل الاجتماعي للترويج لحملة الانتخابية قبل و أثناء الانتخابات ؟

10. Did your candidate find difficulties when using social media outlets when campaigning?

هل وجد مرشحك أي صعوبات في استخدام مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي ؟ و ما هي ؟

11. In your campaign, did you use social media outlets more than other media tools? Why?

هل قمت بالاستعانة بمواقع التواصل الاجتماعي للترويج لحملة أكثر من أي وسيلة إعلامية أخرى ؟ و لماذا ؟

Appendix F

List of Facebook pages under study

➤ List of Candidates' Facebook pages

Dr. Mohamed Morsi: official pages

<https://www.facebook.com/Egypt.President.Morsi>

<https://www.facebook.com/mohamedmorsy2012>

<https://www.facebook.com/m.morsy.Egypt.President>

Mr. Ahmed Shafiq : official pages :

<https://www.facebook.com/masr.shafik>

<https://www.facebook.com/Hamlt.da3m.ahmed.Shafiq>

<https://www.facebook.com/ahmedshafikeg?fref=ts>

Dr. Abd Elomen Abolfotoh: official page

<https://www.facebook.com/DrAbolfotoh>

Mr. Hamdeen Sabahy : official page

<https://www.facebook.com/Hamdeen.Egypt>

Dr. Mohamed Selim Elawa : official page

<https://www.facebook.com/el3wwa>

➤ **List of other sarcastic pages on Facebook**

Facebook pages attacking Shafiq

Facebook pages that mocked at Shafiq's pullover

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%88%D9%81%D8%B1-%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%82/149799918413402>

<https://www.facebook.com/hate.a7med.shafi2>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D9%83%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%88%D9%81%D8%B1-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%82/197354046960900>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%88%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%82/149799918413402>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D9%86%D9%83%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A8%D9%89/147852931978584>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%84%D9%88%D9%81%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%82-%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%84/241412405966953>

Facebook Pages that called for not voting for Shafiq

<https://www.facebook.com/No.Sh3feek>

<https://www.facebook.com/25MASR>

Facebook pages attacking Morsi

<https://www.facebook.com/morsyla2>

<https://www.facebook.com/LaLkhyrtAlshatrRyysaLmsrLaLlakhwan>

<https://www.facebook.com/yaskotelstebn>

Facebook pages featuring “Asa7by” character attacking candidates

<https://www.facebook.com/AsahbyAlrsmyt>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A7%D8%B6%D8%AD%D9%83->

[/D9%81%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B4-](https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B4-)

[/D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A8%D9%89/169059393128870](https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A8%D9%89/169059393128870)

<https://www.facebook.com/asa7bess>

<https://www.facebook.com/As7abiiii>

<https://www.facebook.com/asa7be.7abibe>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%80%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A8>

[/D9%8A-](https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D9%8A-)

[/D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%80%D8%B3%D8%A7/422693524408986?filter=1](https://www.facebook.com/pages/%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%80%D8%B3%D8%A7/422693524408986?filter=1)

List of Twitter accounts about candidates that have been followed

Dr.Aboufotoh @DrAboufotoh

عبدالمنعم أبو الفتوح Verified account @DrAbolfotoh

Ahmed Shafik @DrAh_Sahfik

Ahmed Shafik @LordShafik

Ahmed Shafik @NotShafik

Plaid Mohamed Morsi @Plaid_Morsi

MohamedMorsi_Ar @MohamedMorsi_Ar

Mohamed Morsi @digressing

Mohamed Morsy @NotMorsy

@MohamedMorsi_Eg د.محمد مرسي

Khaled Ali @Khaledali251

Amre Moussa Campaign @moussacampaign

Amre Moussa Verified account @amremoussa

@HamdeenSabahy حمدین صباحی

@Hamdeencampaign حملة حمدین صباحی

Verified account @HamdeenSabahy حمدین صباحی

List of Candidates' websites

<http://www.abolfotoh.net/site.html>

<http://hamdeensabahy.com/>

<http://www.drmorsy2012.com/>

<http://www.ahmedshafikeg.com/>

<http://www.amremoussaforegypt.com/>

List of YouTube candidates' websites

<http://www.youtube.com/amremoussaforegypt>

<http://www.youtube.com/ahmedshafikeg>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/abolfotoh>