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The American University In Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF TWITTER IN EGYPT**  
**AFTER JAN 25 REVOLUTION**

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Journalism and Mass

Communication

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Arts

by Yousra Habib

Under the supervision of Dr. Naila Hamdy

July 2012

## ABSTRACT

In 2011 social media became one of the most powerful tools for socio-political mobilization in the Arab world. “We Are All Khaled Said” page on Facebook helped Egyptians to organize their January 25 protests and Twitter helped them spreading news, photos, and videos of what was going on in Egypt.

After Jan 25 Revolution people realized the importance and the power of Social Media and the number of Egyptian Twitter users dramatically increased. This study aimed to investigate the motives for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users and what the gratifications obtained from using it are. The study also tried to determine whether Egyptian Twitter users consider Twitter a credible source of news and if this is related to their trust in the state-owned media.

A survey was conducted on a convenience and snowball sample of 560 Twitter users to examine the Uses and Gratifications of Twitter in Egypt.

The results of the study revealed that Egyptian users mainly use Twitter to satisfy their surveillance needs, it also proved that Egyptian Twitter users do not trust their state-owned media and do not perceive it as a credible source of news, hence they rely on social media where Twitter is their primary source of news especially in time of crisis and for breaking news.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a platform for transmitting and sharing information among countless numbers of people. Despite being initially developed to help people connect with their friends and families, social media is now used as an informative tool that is not only used to entertain people, but to share valuable information as well, to the extent that actually many people all over the world started relying on it as one of their main sources of news.

This new informative news role of social media has started to spread in Egypt after the Egyptian Revolution took place in Jan 25<sup>th</sup> 2011. After being used for entertainment and spending leisure time, social media is now more used to share news about current events.

Facebook and Twitter sparked and accelerated the Egyptian Revolution; of course they were not the cause, but they were the main tools that helped in spreading the news to people who were not in Tahrir Square, and transmitting the message to the world to gain international support.

The political role of social media is very important and cannot be underestimated, according to Mohamed Jassim Al Ali, former managing director of Al Jazeera, “ The Revolution of communication technologies is bringing democracy to the Middle East. Political leaders can no longer hide information and the truth has to be communicated to people; otherwise, they will not follow them and as a result they will neither support nor obey them” (Seib, 2007).

Social media helped in empowering democracy in the Arab world through offering the different political movements a platform to share their ideas and mobilize people. It also gave the audience another source of information instead of the mainstream media that was controlled by the government.

The April 6 Youth Movement, that created a Facebook page in September 2008 to support Al Mahalla Al Kubra workers who were planning to go on strike on April 6, was one of the very first Egyptian movements that realized the importance of social media in mobilizing people to protest. (“April 6 Youth Movement”, 2012) But it was not until January 25, 2011 that everyone believed in the power of social media in Egypt.

After Jan 25 political activists started relying mainly on Facebook and Twitter to mobilize people during protests, they created pages to communicate with citizens and created Twitter accounts to share important news and instant updates with them.

“Rassd”, an online news network created on Facebook during Jan 25 Revolution with a motto “People’s Media,” gave citizen journalists a channel to share a lot of news. The network that stands for “Rakeb” observe, “Sawer” record, “Dawen” blog, also created a Twitter account for sharing news promptly. (“Rassd news Network”, 2012). Satellite TV channels, especially news channels, started paying more attention to their Facebook and Twitter accounts. They started sharing news, articles and interviews more frequently, while some channels like OnTV created a YouTube channel where they uploaded all their TV shows.

The same thing happened for newspapers, they realized that publishing their printed issue online was not enough, and that they had to be more active and post the news instantly, because with all those news options available online users would not wait till the next day to read the news as they already had many sources online in addition to the news venues on their social networks which reported all the incidents immediately.

The Egyptian government also started creating Facebook pages to communicate with Egyptians after the Jan 25 Revolution, The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, for example,

created a Facebook page where they regularly post and share their statements with almost 2 million fans.

This total change of how people used Twitter before Jan 25 and how their perception and usage changed after Jan 25 are the focal points of this study. And as many studies have been conducted on Facebook in the Arab world, while very few have been done on Twitter, the core of this research will be focusing on Twitter and its uses and gratifications among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution.

## **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

During Jan 25 Revolution Twitter had a significant role in mobilizing people to join the protests, it was a very important source of news and information along with being an instant reporting tool. The importance of this study comes from its novelty, as it is one of the early studies that investigate the uses and gratifications of Twitter in Egypt after Jan 25 Revolution.

Despite the fact that there are quite a few studies on the Uses and Gratifications of social networking sites in the Arab world and in Egypt, most of them focus on Facebook, not Twitter, that is why the researcher chose Twitter to be the focal point of this study.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Motives for Twitter use amongst Egyptian users and their gratifications post Jan 25 Revolution are not known. This study will attempt to identify these uses and gratifications. It will also explore whether those who use Twitter view it as a credible source of news and if so, s that due to lack of trust in their state-owned media.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is mainly the Uses and Gratifications approach, as we need to know how Egyptian Twitter users are using Twitter after the Egyptian Revolution, and if Twitter fulfills their needs more than traditional media outlets. As the Media Dependency Theory is considered an extension to the uses and gratification approach, it will also be included in the theoretical framework of this research.

Living in this digital age has expanded the concept of active audience, as the new communication tools has given the audience the chance to create content and share it on different social media platforms. The audience is no longer limited in their choices when it come to media messages, now they have numerous of media outlets from which they can choose what they prefer, they can also create their own content.

That is why the Uses and Gratifications approach is the best theory to help us study the relationship between the new communication tools and its users, and why they use or prefer certain media outlets than other and how they use it.

Unlike other media theories, which are mainly concerned with the effects of media on audience, the Uses and Gratifications theory considers the audience as active media users and it tries to explain how and why the audience use their chosen media outlets, and how their preferences are driven from their desire to satisfy their cognitive and affective needs (Urista, Dong & Day, 2009).

The importance of the Uses and Gratifications approach comes from it being one of the very first theories that shifts the attention from the effects of media on people to what people do with media (Severin & Tankard, 2001).

The Uses and Gratifications theory is one of the most commonly cited and tested theories of communication. It is one of the most imperative theories of mass communication as well; it has been used for years in order to give an explanation for people's usage of different media outlets to fulfill their needs. The theory is used as a framework for many mass media researches to help in studying how users choose specific media and content that best serves their individual goal (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

The Uses and Gratifications approach hypothesizes that people are more attracted to specific media and its content, which matches their internal beliefs and behaviors (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

According to the theory, audiences differ in the gratifications they obtain from mass media. Generally, the Uses and Gratifications theory focuses on the motives for media use, the factors that influence those motives, and the outcomes from media-related behavior.

In their description of the Uses and Gratifications Katz, Blumer, and Gurevitch (1973- 1974) stated that the approach is concerned with:

“ (1) The social and psychological origins of (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones” (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974, p.510).

### **ASSUMPTIONS OF THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS APPROACH**

According to Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1973- 1974) there are five basic assumptions for the Uses and Gratifications approach, those core assumptions provide a framework for understanding the correlation between media and audiences:

1. The audience is conceived as active, thus an important part of mass media use is assumed to be goal oriented, and that patterns of media use are shaped by more or less definite expectations of what certain kinds of content have to offer the audience member.
2. The audience member is the one who links the needs gratification with the choice of media.
3. The media competes with other sources of need satisfaction, and those needs served by mass communication only form a section of the wider range of human needs. So the degree of satisfaction through mass media consumption certainly varies from one user to another.
4. Many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves, hence people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular cases.
5. Value judgments about the cultural significance of mass communication should be suspended while audience orientations are explored on their own terms. (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory was mainly originated upon three basic norms:

1. People are goal directed in their behavior.
2. They are active media users.
3. They are aware of their needs and they choose the media that will satisfy and fulfill these needs. (Blumer, 1979)

The notion of the Uses and Gratifications approach is that audiences are active users, they are not always passive, and that they have needs or aims, which can be fulfilled through media

use, and their use of media differs based on those needs and goals (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

The theory tries to explain the way people use media messages as one of the sources for fulfilling their needs and achieving their goals among other different resources (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

People use their goals to choose from different media options, they usually choose the media that will fulfill their needs, this choice comes from a match between what people expect to be fulfilled from their exposure to certain media and their perception of what this media will offer (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevich, 1973- 1974).

The main concept of the Uses and Gratifications perspective is that people will choose media according to their expectations and their need for a gratifying experience (Urista, Dong & Day, 2008).

Previous media communication research and studies were mainly focused on the effect, but the Uses and Gratifications theory succeeded in shifting this focus from the effect perspective to the audience perspective (Chan, and Fang 2007).

### **THE MEDIA AUDIENCES' NEEDS**

McQuail, Blumler, and Brown (1972), suggested four categories of media audiences' needs and gratifications:

1) Diversion, 2) Personal relationships, 3) Personal identity or individual psychology and 4) Surveillance.

- Diversion: They see that individuals use media to escape from reality, routine and problems, and they also use it for emotional release.
- Personal relationship: in this category people use media for social utility of information in



conversations or to substitute the media for companionship.

- Personal identity or individual psychology: this category includes value reinforcement, reassurance, self-understanding, and reality exploration.
- Surveillance: includes the usage of certain media to get information that might help the user in accomplishing a certain goal or aim.

On the other hand Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas (1973) classified the audience needs into five different categories.

1) Cognitive needs, 2) Affective needs, 3) Personal integrating needs 4) Social integrating needs, 5) Tension release needs.

- Cognitive needs: which is the desire of getting information to create a knowledge base or to understand something.
- Affective needs: are the needs for the emotional, pleasurable or aesthetic experience and entertainment.
- Personal Integrative needs: those needs represent the individual's desire to strengthen his credibility, confidence and stability.
- Social integrative needs: are the needs to be part of a group and to contact and interact with family and friends.
- Tension release needs: these needs are related to the individual wish to escape from reality to be diverted and distracted from problems.

The theory also hypothesized that media use is related to some psychological motives, these motives are the reason behind audience selection of specific media, which proves that media use is goal-oriented (Alonzo & Aiken, 2004; Haridakis, & Rubin, 2003).

Uses and Gratifications researchers have also found that different media outlets fulfill

different needs, Television for example is more used to fulfill the need for relaxing or killing time and it is also used by people who want to spend time with their family and friends, but newspapers, for another example, are used by those who want to feel that they spend their time in a valuable way (Monieb, Shaira, 2006).

According to Weibull individuals use certain media to satisfy their needs and if this media fulfills their needs they will reuse it again (Weibull, 1985).

## **MEDIA GRATIFICATIONS**

Cutler & Danowski (1980) and Kayahara & Wellman (2007) have categorized media gratifications into two categories: Process Gratifications and Content Gratifications. Where process gratifications are what people gain from using the media and content gratifications are gratifications arise from getting information from the media message (Chen, 2011).

Until the 1970s the Uses and Gratifications research was mainly concentrated on gratifications sought, neglecting gratifications obtained (Rayburn, 1996).

During the 1970s, Uses and Gratifications researchers extended their research to include examining audience motivations as well, and they came up with extra classifications for the different media uses by audience that have been used to gratify their social and psychological needs (Ruggiero, Thomas, 2000).

Blumler (1979) identified three primary social origins of media gratifications: “Normative influences, socially distributed life changes, and the subjective reaction of the individual to the social situation.”

The main element of the Uses and Gratifications remains to be the individual, but that individual’s activity is now analyzed through a psychological and social context including “media dependency, ritualization, instrumental, communication facilitation, affiliation or

avoidance, social learning, and role reinforcement” (Ruggiero, Thomas, 2000).

More recent researches have integrated and emphasized the importance of personal characteristics and personality and how they influence the individual’s needs that consequently affects the gratifications they seek (Alonzo and Aiken, 2004).

### **THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS APPROACH CRITIQUE**

Uses and Gratifications theory has been criticized for not clearly defining some central concepts such as social and psychological backgrounds, motives, behavior, and needs (Ruggiero, 2000).

Rubin A. listed four major areas in which scholars agreed that they were the weakest areas in the Uses and Gratifications approach:

- (a) The compartmentalized nature of typologies, making it difficult to predict beyond these studied or to consider the societal or cultural implications of media use;
- (b) the lack of clarity of central constructs and how researchers attached different meanings to concepts such as motives, uses, gratifications, and functional alternatives
- (c) the nature of the audience and whether the audience was treated as being too active or rational in its behavior; and
- (d) the methodological reliance on self-report data (Rubin, 1994).

One of the important and strongest criticisms that dispute some of the main ideas of the theory, is that some people do not expose themselves to the media intentionally, they do not choose what they watch; they just watch it as a habit or something they get used to do (Monieb, Shaira, 2006).

This is consistent with the study conducted by Palmgreen and Rayburn (1979) that studied the viewers’ exposure to public television and concluded that the Uses and Gratifications

approach was not the main factor for exposure, but it was supplementary to other causal factors like media availability, work schedules, and social constraints (Palmgreen and Rayburn, 1979).

Another critique of the theory is that as audience consumption is the focal point of the theory, the Uses and Gratifications research is often too individualistic (Elliott, 1974), as the theory focuses on the individual's psychological status, disregarding the social context (Abou Zeid, Caroline. 2011).

## **THE USES & GRATIFICATION APPROACH AND NEW MEDIA**

Some mass media scholars believed that the Uses and Gratifications theory is one of the best theories that could be used as a framework for the Internet and new media studies. (December, 1996; Kuehn, 1994; Morris & Ogan, 1996) those four scholars argued that the Uses and Gratifications approach would provide a very useful method to examine the Internet use at this time.

Perse and Dunn (1998) agreed that the Uses and Gratifications approach would help giving a theoretical explanation for the changes of media use that took place after the adoption of any new communication technology. They gave personal computers as an example, as it somehow replaced traditional media like newspapers and television because they fill the same needs, as happened when people started using television it also displaced other entertainment activities like radio and movies (Perse & Dunn, 1998).

According to William, Phillips, and Lum (1985) the Uses and Gratifications approach is remarkably useful when it comes to studying “new media”; what they meant by new media at that time was “ visible media as video cassette or disk, cable television, new telephone services, home computer, video text or teletext services, and ... the less visible technologies of digital switching, satellite transmission, and broadband telecommunications networks.”

They classified “new media” characteristics as follows:

- 1- Making distance all but irrelevant (communication satellite)
- 2- Freeing television from the restrictions of broadcast schedule (Videotape)
- 3- Providing nonlinear access to information (Computers, video disks)
- 4- Offering nearly unlimited availability of two-way voice or text communications (mobile telephone, computer teleconferencing)
- 5- Transporting many simultaneous messages or program choices (coaxial cable, fiber optics)
- 6- Bypassing the printing and transportation requirements for the transmission of textual information (Video and teletext) (William, Phillips & Lum, 1985).

The authors also mentioned that

“There is not so much that is “new” in the aforementioned technologies. To the user, most are merely extensions of existing media. Most important is that the new media offer many increased alternatives for both access to and interaction with message stimuli” (William, Phillips & Lum, 1985).

Now, after more than 20 years, social media and Social Networking Sites include all those characteristics that William, Phillips, and Lum stated. Social networking sites eliminated distance barriers; users can share, comment and chat with each other from all over the world. They can also access many different sources of information online, they can easily get this information from different pages or groups that they are subscribed to and it can even be sent to their mobile phones from the accounts they follow.

Some theories lack the ability to develop over time to cope with the new communication technology but one of the strengths of the Uses and Gratifications approach is its ability to

change and develop over time to become a more sophisticated theory that could be used to study any new communication technology.

Generally the Uses and Gratifications approach was always one of the pioneering theoretical approaches in the preliminary phases of each new communication medium starting from the newspapers, to the radio, then the TV, then the Internet and now the social media. As a result of the interactive digital era that we are currently living in, the active audience concept gained more credibility (Ruggiero, 2000).

### **INTERACTIVITY**

According to the mass communication literature there are six user-oriented dimensions of interactivity: Threats (Markus, 1994), Benefits (S. Ang & Cummings, 1994), Sociability (Fulk, Flanagin, Kalman, Monge, & Ryan, 1996), Isolation (Dorsher, 1996), Involvement (Trevino & Webster, 1992), and Inconvenience (Stolz, 1995; Thomas, 1995) (Ruggiero, 2000).

Ha and James (1998) also added another five dimensions of interactivity, which are: Playfulness, Choice, Connectedness, Information Collection, And Reciprocal Communication. According to them the Playfulness and Choice dimensions of interactivity satisfy self-communication and entertainment needs for self-indulgers. While the Connectedness dimension satisfies information needs for task-oriented users.

For expressive users, the Information Collection and Reciprocal Communication dimensions give them the chance to communicate online with other people whom share same interests with them. (Ha & James, 1998)

Ha and James also divided the dimensions of interactivity to higher level dimensions of interactivity and lower levels dimensions of interactivity, in which information collection and

reciprocal communication were considered the higher and Playfulness, choice, and connectedness were perceived as lower levels of interactivity. (Ha & James, 1998)

We cannot deny that Internet as a communication tool helped in reversing the usual “Sender-Receiver” model which make the Uses and Gratification approach very relevant to online media. (Ko, 2000)

The Uses and Gratifications approach has been used lately in many studies: it has been used to study blogging (Chung & Kim, 2008; Hollenbaugh, 2010; Kaye, 2005); online games (Wu, Wang, & Tsai, 2010); Social Networking Sites such as Facebook (Bumgarner, 2007; Joinson, 2008), MySpace (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008) and Twitter (Johnson & Yang, 2009) (Chen, 2011).

The computer-mediated communication, including Social Networking Sites, like Twitter give the Internet users the chance to fulfill their need for connection with others, in addition to fulfilling their information and cognitive needs. Since Jan 25 Revolution Twitter has become a popular culture and the number of its users has dramatically increased in Egypt, which makes studying Egyptian users’ motives for using Twitter and gratifications obtained from using it after Jan 25 Revolution worthy.

## THE MEDIA DEPENDENCY THEORY

The Media Dependency Theory or Media System Dependency Theory was first introduced by Ball-Rokeach and Defleur in 1976, the theory is usually conceived as an extension of the Uses and Gratifications theory.

The main notion of the theory is that audiences depend on the media that fulfills their needs and helps them attain their goals, the theory also predicts that audience do not depend on all media in the same way and the more the person depends on certain media the more this media becomes important to him (Lane, 2000).

Unlike the Uses and Gratifications theory that focused only on the relationship between audience needs and mass media, the Media Dependency Theory focus on the relationship between audience, mass media and the larger social system.

The theory hypothesizes that how the media actually influence the audience is mainly related to the correlation between those three elements and it suggests that media have cognitive, affective and behavioral effects (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976).

The theory focuses on the relationship between audience, media and social system through two levels: Macro level and Micro level. The Macro level is the relationship between the media systems and societal systems and how they rely on each other for information, while the Micro level focus on the relation between the individual and the Macro level.

This correlation between the three factors can be illustrated as follows: The audience (Individual) needs information to function in society, societal systems depend on mass media to pass on and spread the news and information to those audiences, while mass media aims to have power over societal systems and individuals by controlling the information resources. (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989).



According to Tai and Sun

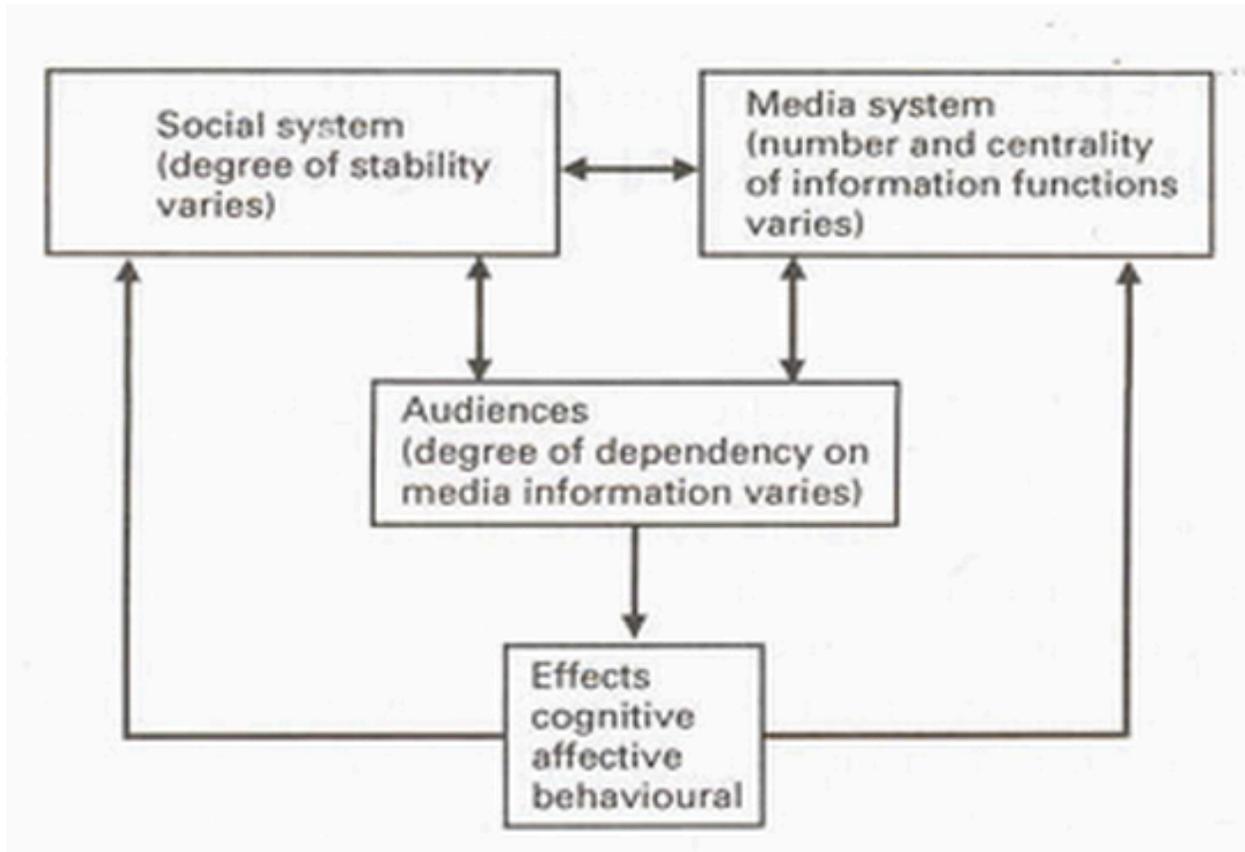
“One unique aspect of MSD is that this theory incorporates both micro and macro level effects by considering macro-level influences on micro-level media consumption. This means that although individuals freely choose the media they consume, they do so in light of conditions in their macro-level social” (Tai & Sun, 2007)

The theory predicts that there are two factors that influence the audience dependency level on certain media:

The first factor: is that the audience will be more dependent on the media that will fulfill more than one need for them, and they will depend less on the media that will be only able to gratify just a few needs.

The second factor: is social stability, according to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976) people will depend more on the media for information in times of crisis or conflicts or social change where they have to make new choices and reconsider their beliefs and practices (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976).

In times like this, audience dependency on the media dramatically increases because they need more information, support and advice. While in time of stability audience will not be so reliant on media information as such (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976).



Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur Media Dependency conceptual model (1976)

That is what makes the Media Dependency Theory very suitable for this research. As Egypt has not stabilized yet since Jan 25, and our society is currently living in a transitional stage where Egyptians are frequently facing many challenges that require them to take decisions and make new choices, this makes them more dependent on the media as source information.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Social Networking Sites are websites that allow online users to form online communities of people who share similar interests. They connect people based on information stored on their user profiles and help them in keeping a close relation with friends, family, colleagues, and offer them an easier way to communicate and socialize (El Nazer, 2006).

The first form of Social Networking Sites started in the 1970s with the BBS (Bulletin Board System), which was the first system that allowed users to communicate within a central system, where they could upload and download data, and post messages to each other either by email or through public message boards. By mid 1980s the BBS became commonly used among students and it reached its peak in 1996 but its popularity declined after the World Wide Web became mainstream ("Bulletin board system," 2012).

The first recognizable social network was launched in 1997, was SixDegrees.com; the site allowed users to create a personal profile and list friends. Then in 2002 Friendster was launched. Friendster was considered the “Granddaddy“ of social networks, in the first three months only, Friendster user-base reached 3 million users (Darell, 2011). After that many networking sites were launched like Ryze, NetLog, MySpace, and then Facebook in 2004 and finally Twitter was launched in 2006 (Chen, 2011).

Since its start, Social Networking Sites have attracted many users, and it has been improving and integrating new features frequently to attract more users. Mobile applications and photo/video sharing applications eased the process of using social networking sites and made it accessible 24/7.

Internet users use social media and Social Networking Sites for searching, blogging, sharing information, pictures and videos, chatting, playing online games and interacting with their online community.

The Internet changed the way users access and retrieve information, the computer mediated communication and Social Networking Sites offer users endless sources of information and knowledge (Seib, 2007)

Other than socializing and interacting with others, social media helps people to spend their time learning and sharing information; as it opens up the world to people worldwide and it helps in raising awareness towards certain issues and increase users' knowledge (Allam, 2011).

Blogs, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are the most commonly used social media tools all over the world. Those Social Networking Sites act as online communities for social media users.

Social media and Social Networking Sites has a group of distinctive characteristics as follows:

1- Participation:

Social media encourage people to participate and send their feedback; it blurs the line between media and their audience.

2- Openness

Social media encourage people to share information with others in which enables everybody to access this information and make use of it.

3- Conversation

Social media is a two-way communication, which give the users the chance to communicate and have conversations with each other.

#### 4- Community

Online communities are one of the most unique characteristics of social media, as users can form online communities where they share their common interests.

#### 5- Connectedness

Social media helps its users to stay connected with each other (Mayfield. 2008).

According to Antony Mayfield there are seven kinds of social media:

##### 1. Social Networks

Social Networking Sites are where users can create personal profile or accounts to connect with their friends and other online communities like fan pages or groups where they share mutual interests.

##### 2. Blogs

Blogs are one of the most widely known and oldest forms of social media; it is an online personal journal where user can write different articles or posts.

##### 3. Wikis

Wikis are online databases that enable users to add and edit information about different topics. Wikipedia is the most common wiki used all over the world, it has over 20 million articles and it is available in 283 languages (Wikipedia, 2012)

##### 4. Podcasts

Podcasts are online audio and video files that are available by subscriptions to certain applications like iTunes.

##### 5. Forums

Forums are online communities that are usually about certain topics or interests.

## 6. Content Communities

Are the communities where users share specific kind of content, like Flickr for sharing photos and YouTube for sharing videos.

7. Micro-blogging is a social networking site where users can only post updates using short sentences or limited number of characters (letters), The prominent micro-blogging site all over the world is Twitter.

According to Ridings & Gefen the most common and frequent purpose of joining Social Networking Sites and virtual communities, is to have access to information. Yet there are many other studies that were conducted to find the motives of joining virtual communities (Ridings & Gefen 2004).

Peerce & Maloney-Krichmar stated that

“Millions of people meet online to chat, to find like-minded people, to debate topical issues, to play games, to give or ask for information, to find support, to shop, or just to hang-out with others” (Peerce et al, 2003).

Hornsby sums up the motivations and reasons for joining online and virtual communities and said, “The Net literature suggests, however, that people can have a wide range of needs met (to varying degrees) by online groups, including the following:

- Feelings of affiliation and emotional support
- Contact with others who share similar interests
- Access to information, technical advice, and expert opinion
- Access to educational opportunities and job leads
- Entertainment, role-playing, and identity experiments
- Opportunities for political and social activism

- Access to the informal economy, such as swap shops and auctions” (Hornsby, 2001)

## **TWITTER**

Twitter is a Social Networking Site that was established on 2006. It is a micro blogging site where users can post short messages or updates up to 140 characters (which are called “Tweets”). Those tweets appear on the users’ profiles and are publically accessible by his followers who can share it or “Retweet” it on their profile as well.

Tweets can be categorized by a hashtag where users use the “#” symbol before a word, phrase or name which help users while searching for tweets about specific topic, like adding #Egypt to your tweets if you are tweeting something related to Egypt.

Twitter users can select unlimited number of users whom they wish to receive their updates, which is known as “Following” a user. Users can follow people they already know like their friends, colleagues or family members and they can also follow companies or brands, celebrities, political activists and news organizations (Jhonson & yang, 2009).

Updates (Tweets) can be sent to twitter via SMS or through different Smartphone’s applications. Media convergence allows the users to post pictures and video links along with their textual updates; they can also share links for news articles.

Since its launch in 2006 Twitter has been growing rapidly and now it is the ninth most popular site in the world according to Alexa.com ("twitter.com," 2012)

According to Katie Stanton, Twitter’s vice president of international strategy, Twitter reached 200 million accounts in April 2011. (Halliday, 2011) Now after only one year, on April 2012 Twitter reached more than 600 million accounts according to Twitter account tracker “Twocharts” ("Twitter accounts," 2012)

What helped in the spread of Twitter is its accessibility and ease of use; any one with an Internet connection or a mobile phone can easily use it, post personal status, pictures, video links or news (Middlebrook, 2007), it became a faster way of communication.

Some other scholars have also noted that one of the things that help a technology to diffuse is its ease of use (Davis, 1989; Schepers & Wetzels, 2007; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000) (Johnson & Yang, 2009).

Java, Song, Finn, and Tseng (2007) stated that the limited number of characters encouraged Twitter users to post updates frequently, because shorter posts or Tweets “lowers users’ requirement of time and thought investment for content generation” (Java et al, 2007) which makes it one of the most appealing features of Twitter.

## **TWITTER THE NEWS SOURCE**

Although Twitter was originally created for more social objectives to help people keep in touch with their friends, many research results have concluded that Twitter is mostly and prominently used as a source of obtaining and sharing information for many Internet users (Johnson & Yang, 2009).

Every Twitter user is an information source, and every user can choose to follow certain users who write, or share information that he/she is interested into. Selectivity of whom to follow gives users the chance to overcome the information overload and helps them filter the news. So if you only follow users who write on specific topics that you are concerned about and some trustworthy news organizations, Twitter could be your “one-stop-shop” to get all the information you need (Johnson & Yang, 2009).



Hans Ibold and Emily Metzgar are conducting a research study at Indiana University that is examining how “politically-oriented” Twitter users are behaving like journalists and how they use and share information.

According to them, traditional news media is no longer the only source of news, as social media became the “go-to source”. They said that people on Twitter “act journalistically” as Twitter offer them a platform to post and share information and news, along with the opportunity to engage and discuss political issues with other Tweepers.

Their primary results showed that regardless of political orientation, tweets were likely to be scandal-oriented with emotional charge. They also found out that when the users try to confirm the news they are sharing they rarely use traditional news media as a reference, instead they link it to another online source. (Ibold & Metzgar, 2012)

According to Robert Jewitt Twitter is “*a real time global communications platform*” and it is a very useful and helpful publishing tool for citizen journalists. Cellan Jones, BBC news Technology correspondent, hinted that Twitter users have succeeded in covering some international news events earlier than traditional Media, which confirms its ability to become a global communications platform in the next few years (Jewitt, 2009).

His opinion is consistent with Evans (2009) as she stated that many users are counting on Twitter now as their primary source of news. (Johnson & Yang, 2009)

However, Twitter cannot replace traditional news media, they complement each other. Different news networks now have Twitter accounts where they use it and update it frequently specially in their coverage of breaking news (Bianco, 2009). For instance The New York Times has a Twitter account with over 5 million followers (nytimes, 2012), while CNN has more than

one Twitter account, one of them is mainly for covering breaking news “CNN Breaking News” and it is followed by more than 7 million followers (cnnbrk, 2012).

According to Twitter.com Twitter is not only about tweeting, as 40 percent of their active users sign in everyday just to know what is happening in their world. (Twitter blog, 2011)

A breaking news story posted on Twitter is more likely to reach millions of users instantly via SMS or different Smartphone’s applications.

Although all Social Networking Sites share almost the same characteristics and uses, when it come to sharing information and news Twitter is the most effective networking site, it is used as an instant reporting tool (Java et al, 2007). People all over the world have realized the importance of Twitter in reporting the news when users tweeted about the China earthquake even before it was reported on CNN (Allam, 2011). Since then Twitter became a source of news for journalists and some traditional media outlets.

During the Jan 25 Revolution in 2011, Twitter was the tool that delivered to those who were sitting at home watching state TV the real picture of what was happening in Tahrir square, and that was the point where many people started realizing how powerful and effective social media can be, and that it is no longer used only to chat and share pictures of birthday parties, but it can be used in a more valuable and influential way.

## **THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Recently the Uses and Gratifications approach has been used in studying the Internet & social media use. Researchers have applied this theory to the Internet use to discover the users’ motivations for using many online websites and Social Networking Sites like MySpace, Facebook and Twitter (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2011; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008) (Smock et al, 2011).

According to Wollfradt and Doll Internet Motivation Scale includes three basic motives for using the Internet which are: information, interpersonal communication, and entertainment (Matsuba, 2006). Stafford and Gonier have also mentioned socialization as one of the motives, as people are more likely to use the Internet to socialize with other people, which is also the same case when it comes to social media and Twitter (Stafford and Gonier, 2004).

According to Hampton and Wellman (2003) online discussion groups strengthen contact between community members. In addition to them Zhao (2006) stated that those who use Internet frequently have more social ties than those who seldom use it (Chen, 2011).

People use Social Networking Sites as it fulfills their entertainment, information, surveillance, diversion and social utility needs. And as the number of social networks increase the popularity of using it for fulfilling cognitive and informative needs will increase. Hence, people will be motivated to use the Internet and social media if they feel that it will satisfy their intentions to socialize with other people. (Urista, Dong & Day, 2009)

On his research “Understanding the appeal of user-generated media: a uses and gratification perspective” Guosong Shao (2009) argued that people use user generated media in different ways for different purposes.

According to his research individuals use user-generated media in 3 different ways: By consuming, participating and producing.

- Consuming: refers to users who watch or read but never share or comment.
- Participating: refers to online chatting, commenting, sharing, ranking, and reviewing.
- Producing: includes personal creation or producing personal content whether text, audio, video or image.

Shao suggested that there are three different motivations for these different uses, he hypothesized that users are consuming user-generated media for information and entertainment, participating in user-generated media for social interaction and community development and producing user-generated media for self-expression and self-actualization.

His research results were as follows:

1. First, Internet users consume user-generated content to fulfill their information, entertainment and mood management needs. Although user-generated media became a vital source of information for many Internet users, yet entertainment was a more significant motive for user-generated media use.
2. Second, Internet users participate on sites like Facebook and MySpace to fulfill their social needs through interacting with others online. This participating activity helps them to be part of an online community and boost their social connections.
3. Third, users create and produce their own content on user-generated site to fulfill their self-expression and self-actualization needs. They write blog posts, post pictures or film videos with personal content as a way of expressing themselves, and at the same time this producing activity is driven by their need for self-actualization.

Shao stated that although the three different usages of user-generated media are analytically separate, yet they are consistent and interrelated as they help users fulfill their social and psychological needs.

The article also argued that “Easy to use” and “Let users control” aspects of user-generated media encouraged individuals to use it and obtain superior gratification, as users can easily create a profile on Facebook or MySpace with minimal effort and in return have access to millions of profiles, pages and groups. In addition to being easy to use, user-generated media

gives users the ability to control what they want, when they want, and where they want which amplifies their gratifications (Shao, 2009).

Control has been recognized by many other scholars as well, as one of the fundamental and primary motivations for using the Internet. (Flaherty et al., 1998; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000) (Shao, 2009).

Another study conducted by “The Pew Internet & American Life Project” on college students’ Internet use, found that college students are heavy users and early adopters of the Internet. They use it frequently for both academic and social needs.

On the academic level, they use it to conduct their researches, to read scholarly articles online, to contact their professors and many other college related uses, and on the social level they use the Internet to communicate with their friends and family, download music, play online games, chat online and share messages or fun posts with their friends. (Jones, 2002) (Mcmillan & Morrison, 2006)

Earlier Uses and Gratifications researches on traditional and new media have revealed two typical motivations for media usage, which are information seeking and entertainment. (Graber, 1993; Katz et al., 1974; Korgaonkar and Wolin, 1999; McQuail, 1983, 2000; Zillmann and Bryant, 1985) (Shao, 2009).

According to “Motivations of Facebook, YouTube and similar website users” A study conducted by Gülnar, Balci and Çakır (2010) on 728 university students, there are seven motives for using photo/video sharing websites like Facebook and Youtube, etc... Those motivations (in order of importance) are (1) narcissism and self-expression, (2) media drenching and performance, (3) passing time, (4) information seeking, (5) personal status, (6) relationship maintenance, and (7) entertainment. (Gülnar et al, 2010)

## THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF TWITTER

Gina Chen (2011) conducted a study in USA to examine how active Twitter users gratify their need for connection with others. 317 Twitter users were surveyed and the main findings of the study were that the more hours the Twitter user spends on Twitter over several months, the more his need to connect with others will be gratified.

She also found that the more frequently the user Tweets, sends DM (Direct message), replies or re-tweets others, the more the need of connection is gratified. (Chen, 2011)

These findings are compatible with earlier researches findings, which revealed that users who are active on Social Networking Sites such as Facebook feel more connected. (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2007; Steinfeld et al., 2008; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009) (Chen, 2011)

Chen (2011) research findings support the notion that Twitter is not just a “virtual noise” of users talking to each other, but it is a medium where they look to gratify their need to connect with other people.

These findings are also reinforcing one of the Uses and Gratifications approach ideas, which is as long as a certain medium is satisfying the individual needs, one will continue using it. And as Chen (2011) research results show, Twitter users who spends hours and hours on Twitter are fulfilling their need to connect with others, otherwise why would they stick with it for months (Chen, 2011).

Another study on the Uses and Gratifications of Twitter in USA, was conducted by Johnson and Yang (2009); they explored Twitter users’ motives and found that there are two groups of motives:

1. Social motives which include: to have fun; be entertained; relax; see what others are up to; pass the time; express oneself freely; keep in touch with friends or family; communicate

more easily; and communicate with many people at the same time.

2. Information motives: to get information (facts, links, news, knowledge, ideas); give or receive advice; learn interesting things; meet new people; and share information with others (facts, links, news, knowledge, ideas).

Johnson and Yang (2009) stated that, “Although it may seem strange that “meet new people” was an information motive, when you meet a new person on Twitter and follow them, that user becomes an additional information source.”

Results showed that although Twitter users expected to satisfy their “Having fun” motive by using Twitter, they had less fun using it, on the other hand they were most satisfied with those six gratifications:

(1) Twitter’s ability to help them pass the time, (2) meet new people, (3) communicate with many people at the same time, (4) participate in discussions, (5) express themselves freely, and (6) seeing what others are up to (Johnson & Yang, 2009).

These results support Chen (2011) results as it shows that Twitter helps people to communicate and connect with each other and give them a channel or medium to share their thoughts, and know what other people are sharing & talking about.

Johnson and Yang (2009) also examined the relationship between gratifications obtained and Twitter use (number of hours per week and frequency per week).

Surprisingly their research resulted that there were no significant relationships between the social gratifications and Twitter use variables. However, there were significant positive relationships between all six information gratifications and Twitter use.

They commented on these results by saying that

“The contradictory assumption that Twitter is used primarily to share status updates with

friends in order to stay more connected and create a sense of social interaction is paradoxical. It may be that users first sign up for Twitter due to expectations of satisfying social motives, but our results indicate that either a) Information motives become more important over time as an individual's use of Twitter increases; or b) social motives were never important to begin with. Users are primarily motivated to use Twitter for its informational aspects.” (Johnson & Yang, 2009, p.19)

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR PROTEST**

### **MOLDOVA 2009**

One of the very first Revolutions that used Social media as a tool for protesting was Moldova Revolution. Moldova Revolution took place in April 2009 and was called “Twitter Revolution”

As soon as the demonstrations started after announcing the winning of the communist party in the parliamentary election, the protestors used Twitter to organize and mobilize people to join the demonstrations. They also used it to report and share the news.

While the state-owned media didn't cover what was happening; news, photos and videos were spreading rapidly via Twitter, YouTube and other social networking sites. (Mungiu-Pippidi & Munteanu, 2009)

### **IRAN 2009**

Then in June 2009 another “Twitter Revolution” took place in Iran. Twitter was the exclusive news source for all the demonstrations and events that were taking place on Tehran streets during the Iranian protests that followed the presidential elections against its fabricated results. (Pavel, 2009)



According to Sascha segan “Twitter has become such a critical tool in Iran that the U.S. State Department asked the company to delay some planned downtime because taking Twitter offline might have a political effect.” (Segan, 2009)

Iranians used Twitter to organize the protests and publicize their Revolution and share with the world all the updates, photos and videos of what was happening in Tehran.

Then “the first three months of 2011 saw what can only be termed a substantial shift in the Arab world’s usage of social media towards online social and civil mobilization.” (Storck, 2011)

The Arab world has lately witnessed how powerful and effective is social media, Facebook and Twitter have proven to be very influential tools to mobilize and organize people during the Egyptian and Tunisian Revolutions. Organizing the protests and mobilizing citizens to join the marches and demonstrations were much more easier through social media, as it offered the protestors “a medium for planning” (Allam, 2011)

Social media allowed the protestors to report what’s going on the streets; it gave them the chance to become citizen journalists, to post the latest updates along with the latest photos and videos and spread it to the world. (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011)

According to Nahed Eltantawy & Julie B. Wiest

“Social media introduced a novel resource that provided swiftness in receiving and disseminating information; helped to build and strengthen ties among activists; and increased interaction among protesters and between protesters and the rest of the world.” (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011, p.1218)

## TUNISIA 2011

The Tunisian Revolution or the Jasmine Revolution was the first Revolution in the Arab Spring. Mohamed Bouazizi self-immolation sparked the protests against President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his government.

A video of Bouazizi setting himself on fire was filmed by a mobile phone video camera and was posted and shared all over the Internet and social networking sites. The extensive use of social media, specially Facebook and Twitter, and mobile phones in Tunisia was the prominent reason for spreading the protests all over the country very quickly.

About one of every five Tunisians has a Facebook profile, and according to a survey conducted by Peter J. Schraeder on March, 2011 on university students in Tunis; 64 percent of the respondents said that Facebook was their first source of news about the demonstrations and protests that were taking place in Tunisia between December 17 and January 14. While almost third of the students said that they first knew about Bouazizi's self-immolation through Facebook. (Schraeder & Redissi, 2011)

After realizing the power of social media and the Internet, the Tunisian government started blocking and filtering some websites including YouTube and Dailymotion. (Schraeder & Redissi, 2011)

According to Joe Sullivan, Facebook's chief security officer, the Tunisian government tried to hack into Facebook users accounts and steal their passwords, but they were stopped. (Schraeder & Redissi, 2011)

Habib Redissi, a Tunisian protestor said

“The sheer volume of shared information across a network of more than three-million Internet-connected Tunisians reached a tipping point where it became virtually impossible

for the Tunisian government to suppress information short of completely shutting down the Internet, which was not an option because the Tunisian economy, which promotes tourism and welcomes the annual arrival of five million tourists, depends on it.” (Schraeder & Redissi, 2011)

Social media played a vital role in mobilizing Tunisians to protest and it was their tool to bring down a dictator in less than a month.

### **SUDAN 2011**

After Tunisia and Egypt uprising, a group of Sudanese students started organizing antigovernment protests through a Facebook page, Twitter and other websites. More than 16,000 joined them online and showed their support and intention on joining the protests by the end of January 2011 (Otterman, 2011).

As protests are not allowed in Sudan without a permit, which is hardly ever given, Sudanese youth protested, and despite the fact that they were only about one thousand protestors, they took an action. They believed they can make a change and they worked towards making it happen, through mobilizing others via Facebook and Twitter (Otterman, 2011).

### **SAUDI ARABIA 2011**

Saudi Arabia is another country that proven that in countries where people are not allowed to protest, Twitter comes in handy for mobilizing citizens and encouraging them to take action.

On April 2011 Manal Al Sharif started the “Women2Drive” campaign on Facebook and Twitter, she called up Saudi women to go out and drive their cars on June 17 and post their photos and videos online to show their government that they have the right to drive themselves whenever and wherever they want. (MacFarquhar, 2011)

Although Manal was arrested after posting a video of herself driving, thousands of supporting comments and messages were posted online, to support her and her cause.

According to Abdulaziz al-Shalan, who tracks Saudi-related Twitter messages, there were more than 30 thousand posts on Twitter related to Manal's arrest, most of them were supporting. Louai A. Koufiah, a Twitter activist said "Saudis cannot go out to demonstrate, so they retweet!"(MacFarquhar, 2011)

Although Saudi activists believe that social media help them expose many issues, they realize that it cannot bring change on its own, yet it is an important tool to mobilize people and link organizers. (MacFarquhar, 2011)

Essam M. al-Zamel, who helped start the municipal election boycott campaign, said that it is not easy to bring 30 people together in a room, but I can easily reach more than 22,000 people instantly via Twitter. (MacFarquhar, 2011)

## **WALL STREET 2011**

Inspired by The Egyptian and Tunisian Revolution, Occupy Wall Street movement took place on September 2011, which was called by the Economist "America's first true social-media uprising." (Boudreau, 2011)

The movement was initiated by Adbusters, a Canadian anti-consumerist organization, through publishing a post on their site that said

"On September 17, we want to see 20,000 people flood into lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street for a few months. Once there, we shall incessantly repeat one simple demand in a plurality of voices." (Ladhani, 2011)

The protestors used Twitter and Tor – an instant messaging application that enables online anonymity (Tor, 2012) – to share live news and updates, in addition to a livestream “Global

Revolution” channel to stream live video feeds of the demonstrations in addition to another social networking sites like Meetup.com and Foursquare that were used to mobilize, organize and plan the protests (Preston, 2011).

According to SocialFlow, a social media tracking agency, one of the main reasons that made this movement popular and a trending topic is the active Tweeps whom shared frequent and constant live updates and photos via Twitter. Those live updates raise awareness about the movement and protests that were taking place in Lower Manhattan, along with being the first and main source of information for journalists (Ladhani, 2011).

Twitter reports showed that there was about 330,00 Occupy-related hashtags posted on the microblogging platform everyday during this period. (Boudreau, 2011)

According to Joanne Coppolino, an "occupier" in downtown San Jose

"If not for social media, 80 percent of our information would not have gone out to get people's attention. Social media helps us to stand as one." (Boudreau, 2011)

Eugene Roy Sherrill, a member of the tech committee of Occupy San Jose also added

"If it were not for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, email, this would have been squashed on Wall Street. Without the open public media, this movement wouldn't have gone national and global. It can't be slowed by big corporate media." (Boudreau, 2011)

The power of social media facilitated spreading the Occupy movement and protests in many different countries around the globe in after about one month only of taking place in NewYork (Boudreau, 2011).

## SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE ARAB WORLD

Social media is one of the main tools that helped in empowering democracy and changing the political scene in the Arab world. And as it is the place where everyone's voice can be heard, it broadens the freedom of expression in many Arab countries.

According to Mona El Tahawy social media and blogs give many Egyptians, specially marginalized groups including youth and women, the opportunity to have a say in what's happening around them; it gave them a channel to express and share their thoughts and opinions. She also added, "Facebook activists are becoming the oxygen and blood of Egypt's civil society" (El Tahawy, 2008).

Research suggests that freedom of expression and the ability to discuss political issues openly on Facebook, are the main reasons that attract many Egyptians to use it. In a study on 400 students from Al-Minya University in Egypt, Abdel Kawy (2009) found that 50.67 percent of the students use Facebook for "Political purposes" (Abdel Kawy, 2009).

Facebook allowed its users to form online communities that support different causes and political movements. On November 2008 Web 2.0 conference Mark Zuckerberg, the founder and Chief Executive of Facebook, spoke about using Facebook as a tool for political change around the world, he mentioned Egypt and Saudi Arabia as an example in the Arab World and said

"In Saudi Arabia, a Facebook group was used to help organize and publicize a national hunger strike against the kingdom's imprisonment of political opponents, while in Egypt, young people used it to organize a nationwide work strike against the government's totalitarianism" (Eldon, 2008).

Social media changed the nature of news and enhanced interactivity between traditional media outlets and its audience in the Arab world. Currently most of the Arab satellite TV

channels and newspapers are keen to create Facebook pages and Twitter accounts as an online channel to post their news and topics in order to reach larger number of audience, stay in touch with them, and get their instant feedback. (Ghannam, 2011)

In his Article “The Power of 140 Characters Twitter in the Middle East” Tal Pavel pointed out that many social movements, political movements, Islamic organizations and cultural centers in the Middle East as well as news organizations like Al-Jazeera have been using Twitter because of its ability to deliver any news and information instantly, which make it the primary source of news to many people across the Middle East. (Pavel, 2009)

A survey conducted by Arab Advisors Group (2009)\* revealed that Internet users prefer online news rather than reading or watching news on other traditional offline news sources. According to the survey 50 percent of 3,348 Egyptian respondents favor reading online newspapers, versus 34 percent who prefer offline sources. (Ghannam, 2011)

These percentages possibly changed in the last couple of years as the number of Social media users in the Arab World in general and Egypt in specific extraordinarily increased after the Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions in 2011.

Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Flickr and all the other Social Networking Sites gave Arab users the opportunity to get information and news that were never published on their mainstream media.

According to Jeffrey Ghannam the days of government allied media have come to an end; thanks to social media, especially in Egypt as it is the leader in social media activism in the Arab world. He also added “These social networks inform, mobilize, entertain, create communities, increase transparency, and seek to hold governments accountable” (Ghannam, 2011, p.4).

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*\*Source: Arab Advisors Group’s Survey of Internet Use and Online Advertising Consumption and Effectiveness in Egypt (September 2009) in (Ghannam, 2011)*

Lawrence Pintak wrote “Even if governments could somehow put the journalistic genie back in the bottle, there is the army of media-savvy activists who have seized on tools like blogs, Twitter, Facebook and other forms of instant messaging as weapons“ (Ghannam, 2011).

Twitter’s ability to diffuse information, mobilize public opinion and not being censored by government, are also some of the main reasons that helped in spreading and increasing its usage in the Middle East.

Pavel stated

“Twitter serves as a speedy and direct platform able to bypass official state media oversight and the limitations on free speech by authoritarian governments. In the Middle East, in particular, it is nearly the only path for different social groups to get their messages across without government interference” (Pavel, 2009).

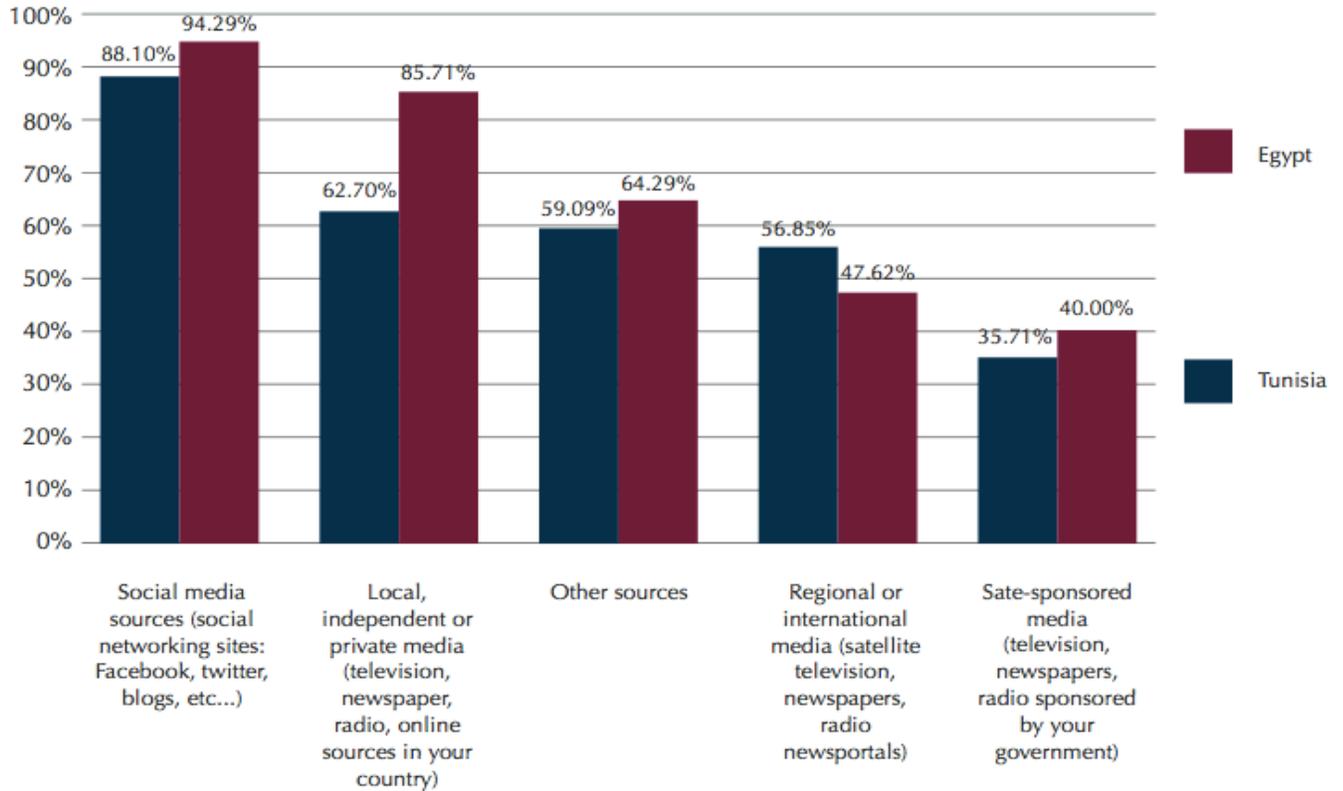
The number of Facebook users in the Arab countries has increased extremely in the first quarter of 2011. On January 2011 the number of Facebook users in the Arab world was 21,377,282, but April 2011 statistics showed that this number has jumped to 27,711,503, which is almost double the number of users at the same time a year before (14,791,972 in April 2010). (Arab social media Report, 2011)

In Egypt for example almost 2 million users joined Facebook between January 2011 and April 2011.

Jeffrey Ghannam, an independent media consultant, attorney, and veteran journalist, is expecting that by 2015 the number of Arab social media users will reach 100 million users. (Ghannam, 2011)



According to the 2011 Arab social media report, 94 percent of Tunisians got their news and information from social media, as the same way as 88 percent of Egyptians did during the Arab Spring.

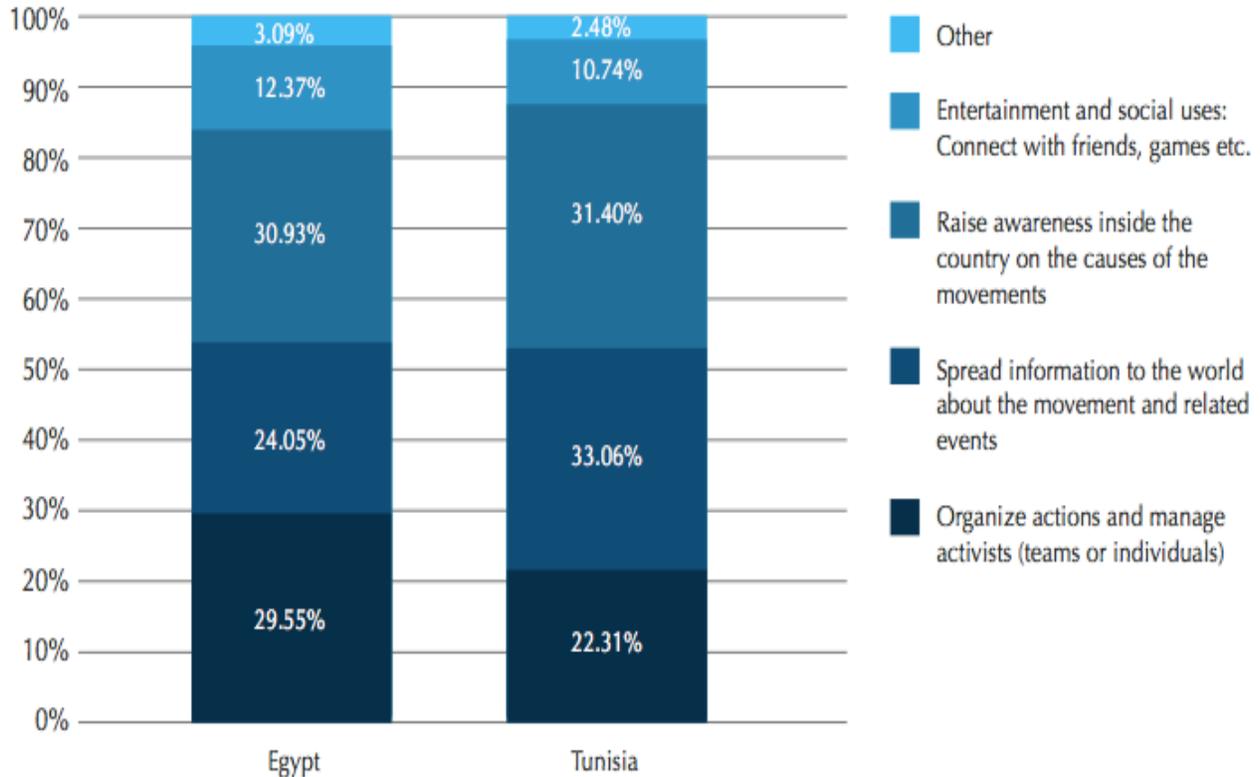


*News/information source during the civil movements in Egypt and Tunisia (Data from Arab social media Report, 2011)*

Both Egyptians and Tunisians didn't count on state-owned media too much, the results shown that it was the least source of news and information to 40 percent of Tunisians & 36 percent of Egyptians used. (Arab social media Report, 2011)

The results of survey conducted by the Governance and Innovation program at the Dubai School of Government on Facebook usage during The Arab Spring showed that in both Tunisia and Egypt Facebook was mainly used to raise awareness about civic movements, spread information to the world about the movements, organize activists and actions respectively, while

the least important Facebook usage for both Tunisians and Egyptians was being used for entertainment or social reasons. (Arab social media Report, 2011)



*The Main Usage of Facebook during the Civil Movement and Events in Egypt and Tunisia Early 2011 (Data from Arab social media Report, 2011)*

Twitter on the other hand has a lower penetration rate in the Arab World than Facebook. According to 2011 Arab social media report, the estimate number of Twitter users in the Arab countries until March, 2011 was 1,150,292 user. (Arab social media Report, 2011)

The report divided the Arab countries into 3 categories based on the percentage of Twitter penetration to the population.

1. Countries with high Twitter user penetration (Bahrain and Qatar)
2. Countries with above - average Twitter user penetration (UAE and Kuwait)
3. Countries with below-average Twitter user penetration (All the remaining Arab countries)

Regardless of the small number of Twitter users in The Arab World, Twitter was very

effective, informative, mobilizing, organizing and reporting tool during the Arab Spring.

On November 2009 Twitter owners realized that it became an important reporting tool and a news platform so they changed the microblogging site's prompt from "What are you doing?" to "What's happening?" (Hounshell, 2011).

Riyaad Minty, head of social media at Al Jazeera says about Twitter "I think of it as a giant speech bubble for what's happening in the world" (Hounshell, 2011).

To emphasize the role of Twitter as a news source for many journalists during the Arab Spring, Sami Ben Gharbia, a Tunisian blogger and Global Voices Advocacy Director, said

“That’s what we were doing: Aggregating, putting the story into context, amplifying and then using Twitter as a main broadcaster, because Twitter is the platform where journalists are following the story, and then pointing them to the right place to find video” (Ghannam, 2011, p.16)

Another crucial role for Twitter during the Arab spring was delivering Arabs’ voices and message to the world. Activists not only used it to mobilize the citizens but they used it to gain international support as well. (Hounshell, 2011)

Commenting on Twitter’s role in the Arab Spring Biz Stone one of Twitter founders said

“The Arab Spring was not caused by Twitter. Twitter was a tool that helped people realize that others felt like them, and it emboldened them and allowed them to feel like, ‘Okay, maybe we can do this.’ And so it has a role as a simple tool.” (Stone, 2011)

The results of a study conducted by a group of researchers on the role of social media during the Arab spring (Howard et al, 2011) showed three main findings:

1. Social media played a central role in shaping political debates in the Arab spring.

2. A spike in online revolutionary conversations often preceded major events on the ground.
3. Social media helped spread democratic ideas across international borders.

*First, social media played a central role in shaping political debates in the Arab spring.*

According to their research young, well-educated people, mostly women, profoundly used Social media, during the Arab spring for political conversation. They used Facebook, Twitter & YouTube to put pressure on their governments.

In Tunisia for example, they published a video for President Ben Ali's wife using the government's jet to go on a shopping trip to Europe. Political activists and bloggers have used their blogs to publish information and videos about their repressive government policies.

Another example in Egypt is Wael Abbas, an Egyptian blogger who have published some videos on his blog "Egyptian Awareness" to publicize Police brutality in Egypt (Abbas, 2012).

By using online technologies and social media political activists spread information about democracy and liberty to a very large number of people, and mobilized citizens to demonstrate for political change, democracy and social justice.

*Second, a spike in online revolutionary conversations often preceded major events on the ground.*

The research results showed that online conversations played a vital role during the Egyptian and Tunisian Revolution. They found that online conversations about democracy, freedom, liberty and Revolutions that took place on blogs and Twitter led to mass protests. And that's why governments blocked Facebook in Tunisia, and shut down the Internet in Egypt.

*Third, social media helped spread democratic ideas across international borders.*

Their research results also revealed that during the Egyptian and Tunisian Revolutions political activists used Social media to deliver their message across the world, which resulted in raising democratic awareness and amplified the call for political change across the Middle East and North Africa.

The researchers studied the tweets that were related to the Revolution and political change during the Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions and found that on the day Ben Ali stepped down, there were more than 2,200 tweets from different Arab countries across the Middle East like Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, and Yemen, about his resignation.

They also found that the number of tweets about political change in Egypt have increased tremendously during the week before Mubarak resignation, as the tweets rate raised from 2,300 a day to 230,000 a day. And on February 11, the day Mubarak stepped down, there were over 225,000 Tweets from many countries all over the world sharing his resignation news (Howard et al, 2011).

## **THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING AND AFTER JAN 25 UPRISING IN EGYPT**

Facebook is the most popular networking site in Egypt; it has more than 11 million Egyptian users (Socialbakers.com, 2012) and ranks number 1 as the most visited websites in Egypt according to Alexa.com (Alexa.com, 2012).

People were invited and called to protest on Jan 25.2011 against unemployment and poverty through an event created on Facebook. But Facebook didn't protest in Tahrir square, people did. (Abdulla, 2012)

Despite the fact that the Internet penetration rate in Egypt was only about 30 percent in January 2011 (MCIT, 2012), Facebook and Twitter were very influential tools in motivating, organizing and directing the Egyptian protestors.

Indicator	Unit	December 2010	November 2011	December 2011	Monthly Growth Rate (%)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
Internet Users	Million User	23.02	28.52	29.01	1.72	26.01
Internet Penetration *	%	29.47	35.19	35.73	0.55	6.27

*Internet Penetration rate in Egypt (Data from MCIT, 2012)*

Tufekci and Wilson (2012) conducted a study on social media and political protest in Egypt, which revealed that quarter of the protestors in their sample initially knew about the demonstrations from Facebook, and that it was their main tool to share photos and videos from Tahrir square, while Twitter and blogs were used by the protestors to communicate with each other. (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012)

Beside Facebook, Twitter has played vital role in Egypt's uprising. Although the number of Egyptian Twitter users is only 129,711 users (Ghoniem, 2012) but it was a very powerful tool for mobilizing the protestors.

Wael Abbas believes that most of Twitter users belong to higher socio-economic status if compared to Facebook users, which is one of the reasons why there is such a difference between Twitter and Facebook penetration rates in Egypt.

Another reason he mentioned is that Twitter users are usually highly educated and intellectual people who use Twitter to discuss and share important information unlike Facebook users who aren't as enlightened. (Wael Abbas, personal communication, April 2012)

While Hossan Saleh see that the reasons behind this gap between the number of Facebook and Twitter users in Egypt are:

- The limited characters of Twitter

- The lacking of visuals on Twitter unlike Facebook
- Twitter is mostly used via smart phones, which are not available for most of the Egyptians.
- Games. Facebook games are addicting and large number of Egyptian Facebook users use Facebook for playing games on daily basis.
- Our culture is more towards norm and Facebook is the norm. (Hossam Saleh, personal communication, April 2012)

The Dubai Arab social media report mentions two other points that might be the reason for this low penetration rate. First, Egyptian Twitter users are mainly from Cairo (51 percent) followed by Alexandria (8 percent), while the other 25 governorates have a very minimal number of users. The second reason is that Twitter was not offered in Arabic (The Arabic interface was launched in March 2012) unlike Facebook, and as Arabic is the main Language in Egypt, and there is a considerably large number of Egyptians who don't speak English, this was a put off for many users who'd joined Facebook rather than Twitter. (Arab social media Report, 2011)

Ahmed Sobeih, Core Virtual & Elgomhorya.tv Marketing Manager, sees that Facebook interface is more entertaining and that's why it is more appealing to many Egyptians who prefer using it rather than using Twitter. (Ahmed Sobeih, personal communication, April 2012)

According to a study conducted by Nahed Eltantawy & Julie B. Wiest on "social media in the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory" promptness and interactivity are two of the most significant characteristics of social media that helps in making it a very effective mobilization tool in the Egyptian Revolution, especially because these

characteristics were not available in the traditional mobilization techniques like posters, brochures and faxes. (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011)

Egyptians used social media to share safety tips and information during the days of protests; they have also used it to send SOS Tweets and ask for help when in danger like this series of tweets by Mohamed Abdel Fattah, an Egyptian video journalist who posted these Tweets during Jan 25 demonstrations.

@mfatta7 Tear gas

@mfatta7 I'm suffocating

@mfatta7 We r trapped inside a building

@mfatta7 Armored vehicles outside

@mfatta7 Help we r suffocating

@mfatta7 I will be arrested

@mfatta7 Help !!!

@mfatta7 Arrested

@mfatta7 Ikve [I've] been beaten a lot. (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011)

During the Egyptian Revolution Twitter was used as a reporting tool, protestors used it to instantly report what's happening, they posted updates, photos and even video links to inform those who were not on the square with what's really happening and to falsify what was being said on state TV.

Using #Egypt and #jan25 hashtags political activists were able to encourage people to join the mass protests in Tahrir Square, and by the end of January 25 the Egyptian government had realized how important and influential is Twitter in organizing the protests, so they blocked



it; followed by Facebook on January 26 and then they shut down the Internet service on January.27.2011. (York, 2011)

Jonathan Zittrain, an Internet expert at Harvard Law School said "The qualities that make Twitter seem inane and half-baked are what make it so powerful" (Stone & Cohen, 2009)

Although the government cut down the Internet, Google cooperated with Twitter and launched their "Speak2Tweet" service, which enabled Egyptians to call an international number and leave a voice message that was then showed on a Twitter account (@speak2tweet) as a tweet with a #Egypt hashtag. (Google Official Blog, 2011)

Hashtags helped grouping Tweets on the same subject, allowed users to interact with each other and reinforced the effect of the message. At the same time it helped activists, journalists and reporters to get instant lifetime updates.

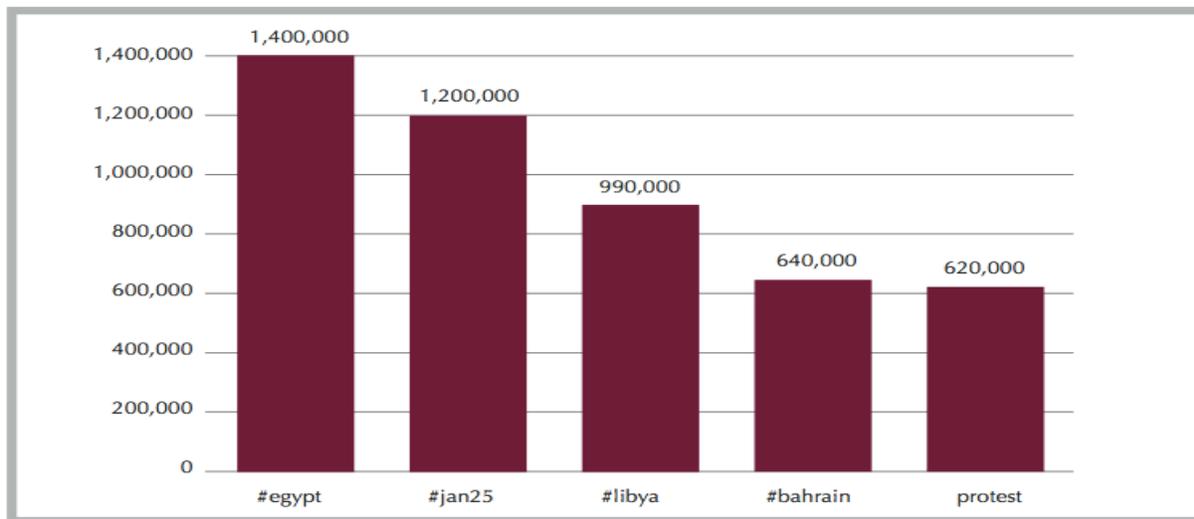
Jillian C. York mentioned that

"Twitter's architecture gives it certain advantages. While Facebook, and similar platforms, are enclosed, with content largely or even wholly placed behind a log-in wall and accessible only to other users, Twitter is inherently public. As science fiction writer William Gibson has observed, Facebook is like a mall, while Twitter "actually feels like the street. You can bump into anybody on Twitter." (York, 2011)

According to Wael Abbas we can easily say that the main use of Twitter in Egypt is always political, and what proofs this, is that all the top Twitter users and those who have a very large number of followers are either politicians, political activists, journalists, or bloggers (Wael Abbas, personal communication, April 2012).

Which is consistent with Sobeih's opinion as he thinks that Twitter users are mainly using it to get political news updates and that the top Egyptian Twitter users are bloggers and journalists (Ahmed Sobeih, personal communication, April 2012)

A survey conducted by The Dubai School of Government revealed that #Egypt hashtag was the most trending hashtag in the Arab region in the first quarter of 2011 (Jan. 1 till March 30) where #Egypt was mentioned in 1.4 million Tweets and #Jan25 was mentioned in 1.2 million tweets. (Arab social media Report, 2011)



*Number of mentions of #Egypt between Jan.1 and March.30.2011 (Data from Arab social media Report, 2011)*

#Egypt was not only popular hashtag in the Arab region, but it was the most widely used hashtag on Twitter in 2011 according to Twitter "2011 Year in Review" while #jan25 hashtag ranked number 8. At the same time Mubarak's resignation was ranked as the first top world news discussed on Twitter. (Twitter Year in review, 2011)

While Facebook and Twitter doesn't make Revolutions happen, they surely have the credit for making it possible to happen. According to Rasha Abdulla "social media prepared Egyptians for the Revolution and enabled them to capitalize on an opportunity for change when the time came." (Abdulla, 2012)

Wael Abbas, a political activist who participated in the Jan 25 Revolution, said that they were using Twitter during the Egyptian Revolutions to know what was happening in Tahrir Square, to collect supplies like food, medicine and blankets, to share the news, photos, and videos to gain international support and finally to ask for help if someone got arrested. (Wael Abbas, personal communication, April 2012)

According to a case study by Madelline strock on Jan 25 Egyptian Uprising, social media had three main roles during the Egyptian Revolution:

- It was used as an organizational tool.
- As an alternative press and outlet for citizen journalism.
- As a tool for generating awareness both regionally and internationally. (Storck, 2011)

In his study “The role of social networking sites (SNSs) in the January 25th Revolution in Egypt” Essam Mansour found out that the most social networking sites that were used during the Egyptian Revolution were: Facebook, YouTube, Blogger and Twitter. The results also showed that Flickr and Hi5 were used as well, but not as heavily as the other four social networking sites

The social networking sites was used to:

- (1) Organize the demonstrations and connect the protestors with each other.
- (2) Mobilizing Egyptians to participate in the protests and raising awareness.
- (3) Sharing news and information in text, pictures and videos.
- (4) Brining down Mubarak’s despotic regime.
- (5) And gaining international support. (Mansour, 2012)

Chebib, and Sohail (2011) see that there are some features and characteristics that made social media appealing and attractive tool among the protesters during the Egyptian Revolution,

which includes:

- Accessibility: social media is easy to use, it decreases communication barriers and it could be used through mobile phones.
- Credibility: social media is perceived as a credible, trustworthy and uncensored source of information.
- Immediacy: as protestors can share all the updates and information instantly onto their profiles and accounts on different social networking sites.
- Social media is a Multidimensional media: it incorporates audio, video, live streaming, text, and images.
- It overcomes social differences and physical distance. (Chebib & Sohail, 2011)

An Egyptian activist described how social media was used during the protests saying “We use Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world.” (Storck, 2011)

This was not only the case in the protests that occurred on the 18 days of the Revolution, this is still the case till now, with all the protests and marches that occur all over Egypt.

According to Sobeih Twitter is the best way to mobilize people because it is more mobile, it is on the go, he also added that Twitter is a leading news source for live news. (Ahmed Sobeih, personal communication, April 2012)

Hafez El Mirazi also agrees that Twitter is a very effective mobilization tool and more importantly a reporting tool, as he said that major news journalists and bloggers mentions news channels like AlJazeera where they retweet it to larger number of audience and by this it reach more people. He also added that Twitter offered Egyptians virtual place to meet and allowed them to connect and assemble. (Hafez El Mirazi, personal communication, April 2012)

According to Hossam Saleh Twitter is an informative communication tool where people can communicate and pass on information to larger number of people; he also thinks that Twitter became more effective after Jan 25 Revolution especially during the parliamentary and presidential elections period. (Hossam Saleh, personal communication, April 2012)

A study conducted by Alia Abd El Aal on the role of Social Networking Sites in mobilizing protests showed that:

- Most of the people knew about the protests through the Internet and social networking sites specially Facebook.
- According to the research results 70 percent of the protestors participated and joined the protests after they knew or read about it on social networking sites.
- About 60 percent of the sample agreed that Social Networking Sites had a very effective role in mobilizing people and encouraging them to participate in the protests.
- Live updates, photos and videos encouraged people to actually go down the streets and join the marches and protests.
- According to the sample the main role of Social Networking Sites are publishing accurate news, providing information and letting them know where the protests are taking place. (Abd El Aal, 2012)

While El Mirazi, Saleh and Sobeih agreed that Twitter and social media helped in changing the Media environment in Egypt by forcing the traditional media to be more subjective and to share the news faster with their audience; Wail Barry see that “No major changes have been induced in the media landscape in Egypt. Still, media monopoly and control exist on a large scale” he also added “social media represent a new source for getting and exchanging

information but this doesn't deny that Egyptian media practices, still, are carried out within the boundaries of a state-run media system. We can't say for sure that we have free press nor free media system" (Wail Barry, personal communication, April 2012)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used in this research, where in-depth interviews were conducted with media professionals and experts, and Web-based surveys were distributed on Egyptian Twitter users.

#### 1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES

Two research questions and four hypotheses were formulated based on the literature review.

##### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the motives for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution?
2. What are the gratifications obtained from being exposed to Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution?

##### RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. Demographic variables are significant variables in Twitter usage among Egyptian Twitter users.
2. The higher the usage of Twitter the lower the dependency on traditional media among Egyptian Twitter users.
3. State-owned media are far less credible than Twitter as a news source among Egyptian Twitter users.
4. There is a positive correlation between Smartphones ownership and Twitter exposure among Egyptian Twitter users.

## 2. VARIABLES, OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS AND LEVELS OF MEASUREMENT

### 1. Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site where users can post short messages or updates up to 140 characters (which are called “Tweets”). Those tweets appear on the users’ profile and are publically accessible by his followers who can share it or “Retweet” it on their profile as well.

### 2. Dependent variable

The main dependent variable in this research is the Uses and Gratifications of Twitter. Which includes the reasons and motives behind using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution, and the gratifications obtained from using it.

Different statements representing different motivations and gratifications obtained were used, and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on those statements using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. (The level of measurement is interval)

### 3. Independent Variable

- Demographic variables:

- Gender (Nominal Variable)
- Age (Ordinal Variable)
- Level of Education (Ordinal Variable)
- Income (Ordinal Variable)
- Type of Education (Nominal Variable)

- Smartphones ownership (Nominal Variable)



### 3. QUALITATIVE METHOD

Since most of the studies that have been conducted on Twitter usage were based on the United States and Europe, in-depth interviews were conducted with 5 technology, media and social media professionals and experts to provide information about Twitter usage in Egypt and Egyptian Twitter users characteristics' and habits. Information gathered helped in adding and reformulating some of the survey questions, also enriched and enhanced the quality of this research.

#### LIST OF EXPERTS

1. *W AEL ABBAS*

An Egyptian journalist, blogger, human rights activist and one of the most active Egyptian Twitter users. Abbas was anti-government even before Jan 25 Revolution, he reported sexual harassment of women on his blog MisrDigital and broadcasted videos showing police brutality, which lead to the closure of his channel but it was restored later.

The researcher chose Abbas as he's one of the most followed political activists on Twitter. Back in February 04, 2011 Abbas used his Twitter account to ask for help and let people know that he was arrested by Tweeting: "Aressted by the army!" (Abbas, 2011)

2. *H AFEZ AL MIRAZI*

The director of Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research at the American University in Cairo. A media veteran and the host of "Btawkeet Al Qahera" weekly talk show on DreamTV. Al Mirazi was chosen as he has been working in traditional media for more than 30 years, and the researcher wanted to know whether there was a change in the media environment with the diffusion of Social media in Egypt or not.

3. *AHMED SOBEIH*

Core Virtual & Elgomhorya TV, the first online TV channel in Egypt, Marketing Manager with more than 8 years of experience in marketing, communication, advertising, and online media. It was important to interview Mr.Sobieh to know about Egyptian's perception of online media vs. traditional media besides the characteristics of social media users in Egypt.

4. *WAIL ABDEL BARRY*

Associate Professor of Mass Communication at the College of Communication, Mass Communication Department. Sharjah University. Dr. Barry's research interests include information technology, online media and the diffusion of new media in the Arab world.

5. *HOSSAM SALEH*

Business management consultant and technology expert with more than 20 years of experience in the communication and Information technology, data communication and Internet services with well-known organizations like AT&T, TE Data and Cisco Systems. He's also the vice president of Trade Fair International the organizer of Cairo ICT 2012 and the co-founder of Vision Tech a business consultant house.

Saleh is one of the most experienced technology experts in Egypt whom has been interviewed by many TV channels to talk about technology's role in the Arab Spring and the role of social media in Egypt.

#### **4. QUANTITATIVE METHOD: SURVEY**

As this research addresses Egyptian Twitter users, a questionnaire was designed in both English and Arabic to avoid any language barriers and to make it easy for everyone to understand the questions and answer the survey.

The survey was hosted online on [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) as the web-based survey was more suitable for the nature of this research.

##### **A. PRETEST**

Fifteen respondents pretested the survey to make sure that all the questions are comprehensible and all the answer options are exhaustive and mutually exclusive, while the pre-test results were excluded from the final data to evade any manipulation.

##### **B. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN**

Twenty five questions were formulated where some questions were added based on the intensive interviews, while other questions' formats and answers' options were changed to make it easier and more comprehensible based on the pretest.

- Filtering question

Question 1 was a filtering question where non-Twitter users were not allowed to complete the survey; they were automatically directed to the thank you note at the end of the survey.

- Twitter habits

Questions 2 through 9 were close-ended questions to measure the Twitter habits for Egyptian users.

- Source of news

In question 10 respondents were asked to rank a list of news sources according to their preferability, while question 11 was aiming to test whether their reliance on traditional media was affected by the diffusion of social media in Egypt or not.

- Social Network preferences

Questions 12 and 13 were added based on the intensive interviews in order to figure out whether respondents prefer using Facebook or Twitter and why.

- Interests

Question 14 was a close-ended question that was added after the intensive interviews to identify the main issues that Twitter users are interested in knowing and following on Twitter.

- Twitter motives and gratifications obtained

The Uses and Gratifications of Twitter were mainly measured through questions 15 and 16 where different possible reasons and motives were listed to respondents to choose from in question 15, and different gratifications were listed in question 16.

A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of agreement of the respondents on the statements.

- Device used to Tweet

Questions 17 and 18 were close-ended questions where respondents were asked to indicate whether they use Smartphone or not, and to rank the devices they use to Tweet and check Twitter updates.

- Demographics

Questions 19 through 25 were demographic questions which included gender, age, level of education, career field and then type of education, work place and income were added after

most experts interviewed by the researcher said they believe Egyptian Twitter users are mostly of higher socio economic status.

### **C. SURVEY SAMPLING**

Both convenience and snowball non probability sampling techniques were used in this research, as the researcher randomly chose some Twitter users and sent them the survey link asking them to Retweet it. In addition to emailing the survey to friends and coworkers asking them to share it with others.

### **E. SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS**

- Gender

56.2 percent of the respondents were males, while 43.8 percent were females.

- Age

33.4 percent representing the majority of the sample were between 18 and 23 years old.

- Level of education

382 respondents representing the majority of the sample were university degree holders, followed by 80 respondents with MA/MBA degree, while 63 respondents were high school degree holders and only 36 respondents were PhD holders.

- Type of education

294 respondents representing the majority of the sample had public education, while 194 respondents indicated that they had private education and only 72 respondents had international education.

- Work place

The majority of the sample, 437 respondents, indicated that they are working in the private sector, while 123 respondents only were working in the public sector.

- Income

The majority of the respondents indicated that their monthly income is between 1000 and 3000 Egyptian Pounds while the least number of respondents (39) indicated that their monthly income is between 5000 and 7000 Egyptian Pounds.

#### **E. RESPONSE RATE**

866 respondents started the survey, while only 646 completed it. 86 respondents were discarded from the sample as they were not Twitter users, leading to a total number of 560 analyzed surveys.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS

The survey results will be analyzed in three sections:

1. Demographics.
2. General Findings
3. Research Questions and Hypothesis

#### 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

##### 1.1 GENDER

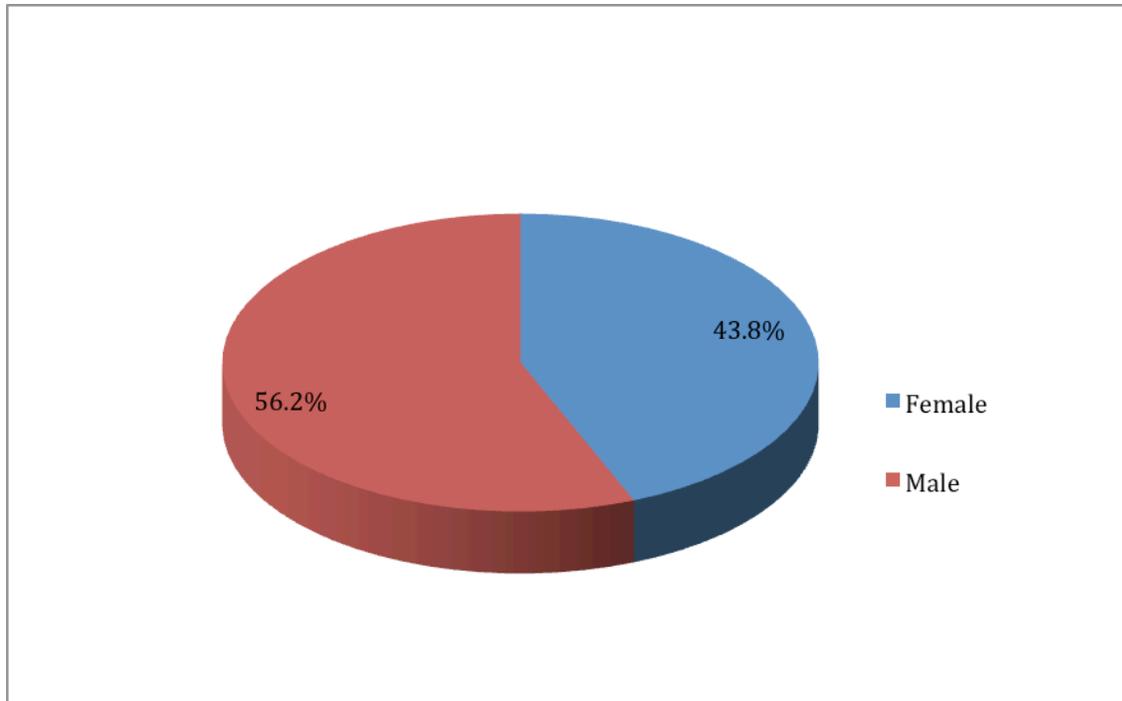
The sample of this research included both males and females.

Table 1 Gender

Gender		
	Percent	Response Count
Female	43.8%	245
Male	56.2%	315
Total	100%	560

As shown in Table 1, the majority of the sample was males. 351 male respondents answered the questionnaire representing 56.2 percent of the sample, while 245 of the respondents were females representing 43.8 percent.

Figure 1 Gender





## 1.2 AGE

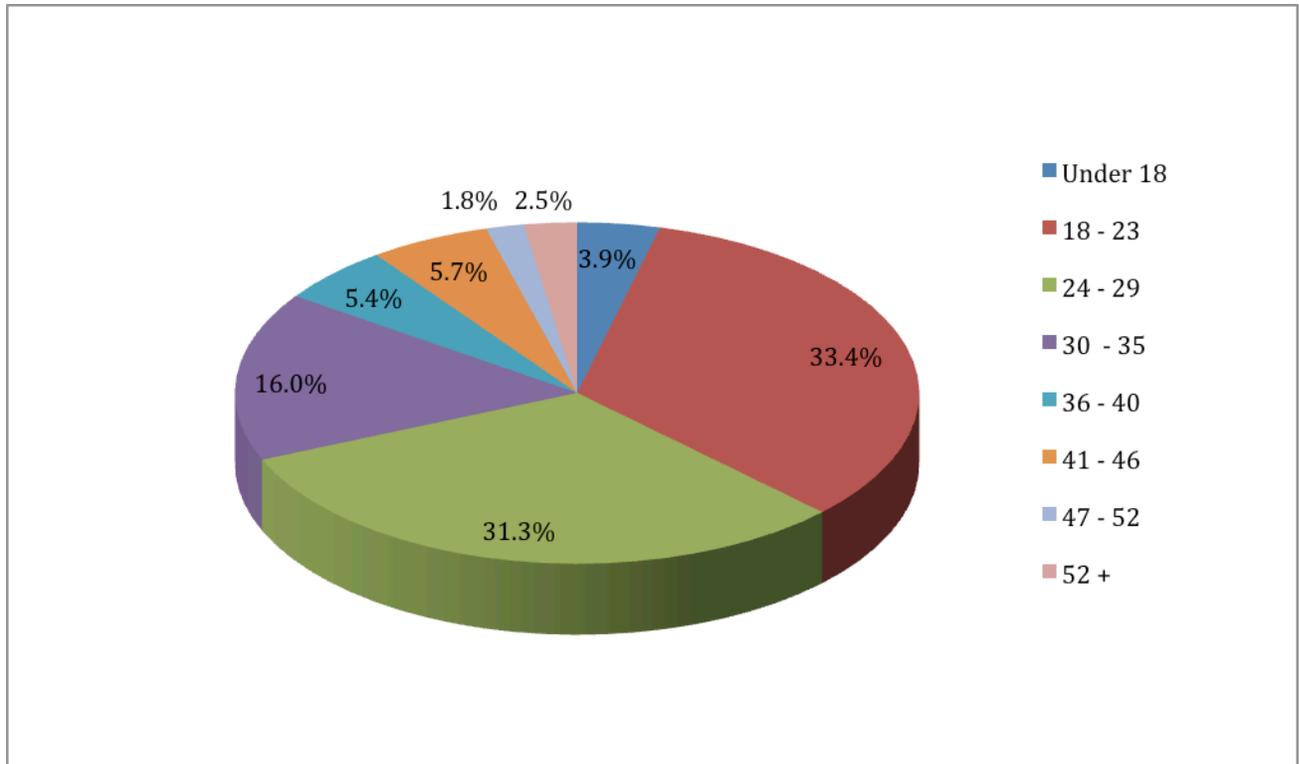
The sample of this research was not restricted on certain age group; anyone who has Twitter account was included in this research sample.

Table 2 Age

Age		
	Percent	Response Count
Under 18	3.9%	22
18 - 23	33.4%	187
24 - 29	31.3%	175
30 - 35	16.0%	90
36 - 40	5.4%	30
41 - 46	5.7%	32
47 - 52	1.8%	10
52 +	2.5%	14
Total	100%	560

As shown in Table 2, the majority of this research sample lies between 18 and 23 years old, 33.4 percent, followed by 31.3 percent between 24 and 29 years old. which indicates that most of the Egyptian Twitter users are youth.

Figure 2 Age



### 1.3 LEVEL OF EDUCATION

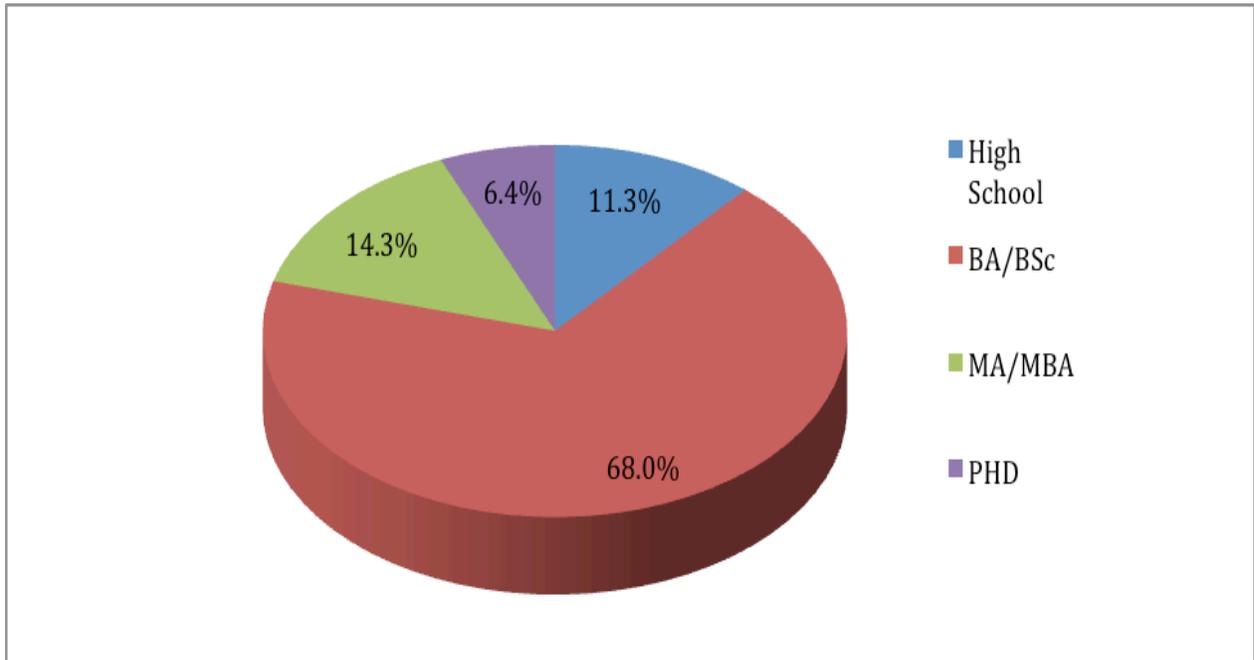
Respondents were asked to specify their level of education through four different categories (High School, BA/BSc, MA/MBA, and PhD)

Table 3 Level of Education

Level of education		
	Percent	Response Count
High School	11.3%	63
BA/BSc	68.0%	381
MA/MBA	14.3%	80
PHD	6.4%	36
Total	100%	560

The majority of the sample, 68 percent, was university degree holders, followed by 14.3 percent with MA/MBA degree, then 11.3 percent high school degree holders and a very small number, 6.4 percent, of the sample are PhD holders.

Figure 3 Level of Education



#### 1.4 TYPE OF EDUCATION

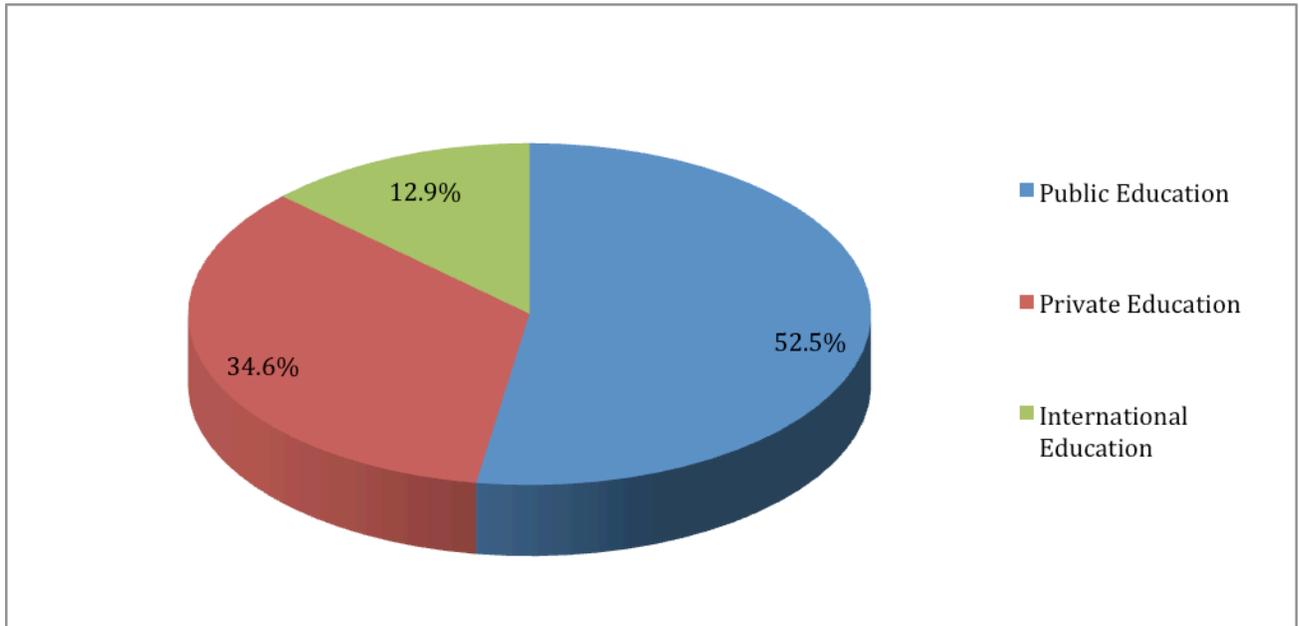
Respondents were asked to specify their type of education, whether it is public, private or International education.

Table 4 Type of Education

Type of education		
	Percent	Response Count
Public Education	52.5%	294
Private Education	34.6%	194
International Education	12.9%	72
Total	100%	560

As shown in table 4, 294 respondent representing more than half of the sample, 52.2 percent, had public education, while 34 percent of the sample had private education and only 12.9 percent had International education.

Figure 4 Type of Education



## 1.5 WORK PLACE

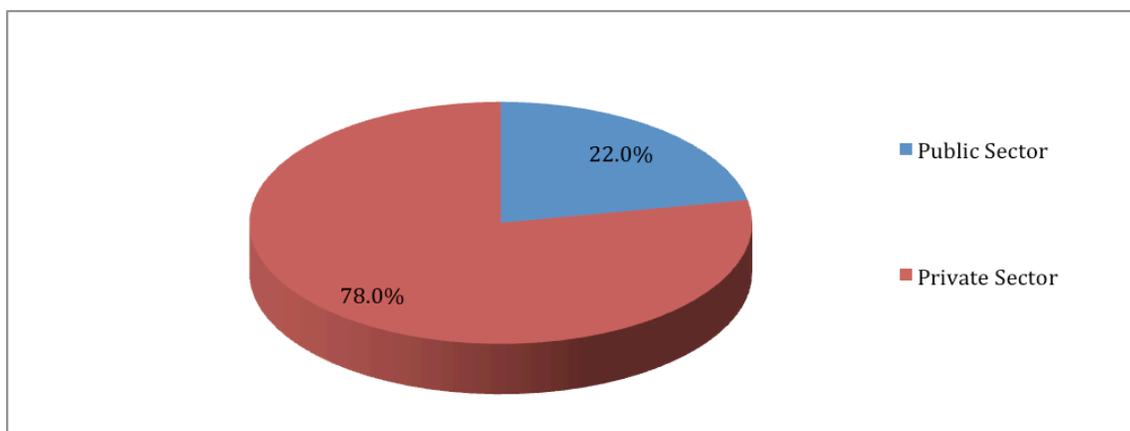
Respondents were asked to specify whether they work in public sector or private sector.

Table 5 Work Place

Where do you work?		
	Percent	Response Count
Public Sector	22.0%	123
Private Sector	78.0%	437
Total	100%	560

As show in table 5 the majority of the sample 437 respondent representing 78 percent are working in the private sector, while only 123 representing 22 percent of the sample are working in the public sector. Which assures the media experts opinions that most of the Egyptian Twitter users have higher socioeconomic status

Figure 5 Work Place



## 1.6 CAREER FIELD

Respondents were asked to specify their career field and they were allowed to choose more than one option.

Table 6 Career Field

Career field (Check all that apply)		
	Percent	Response Count
Banking	6.3%	35
Human Resources	3.4%	19
Sales	7.5%	42
Marketing	11.6%	65
Advertising	9.6%	54
Social media	4.6%	26
Student	19.8%	111
Journalism	5.7%	32
Academic	7.7%	43
Engineering	17.5%	98
Computer Science	8.8%	49
Medical	5.7%	32
Customer support	2.7%	15
Administration	5.5%	31
Unemployed, looking for a job	6.3%	35
Other	10.2%	57



As shown in table 6, 111 respondents representing the majority of the sample, 19.8 percent, are students, followed by 98 respondent, 17.5 percent, working in the engineering field, while the least percent of the sample , 3.4 percent, were working in the Human resources field.

## 1.7 INCOME

Respondents were asked to indicate their total monthly income.

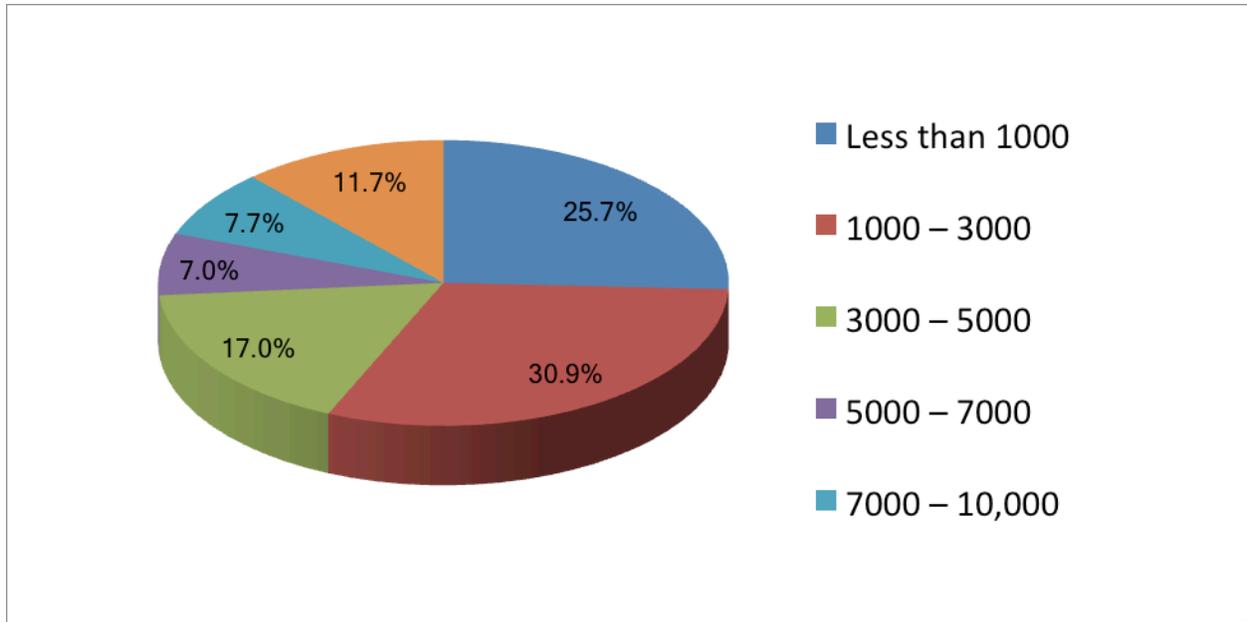
Table 7 Income

Your total income per month		
	Percent	Response Count
Less than 1000 EGP	25.7%	144
1000 – 3000 EGP	30.9%	173
3000 – 5000 EGP	17.0%	95
5000 – 7000 EGP	7.0%	39
7000 – 10,000 EGP	7.7%	43
More than 10,000 EGP	11.7%	66
Total	100%	560

173 respondents representing the majority of the sample, 30.9 percent, indicated that their monthly income is between 1000 and 3000 EGP, followed by 25.7 percent with less than 1000

EGP monthly income, 17 percent, between 3000 and 5000 EGP per month, 11.7 percent, more than 10,000 EGP per month, 7.7 percent between 7000 and 10,000 EGP per month and finally 7 percent with 5000 to 7000 EGP monthly income.

Figure 6 Income



## 2. GENERAL FINDINGS

### 2.1 JOINING TWITTER

Respondents were asked to specify whether they joined Twitter before or after Jan 25 Revolution.

Table 8 Joining Twitter

When did you start using Twitter?		
	Percent	Response Count
Before Jan 25 Revolution	44.8%	251
After Jan 25 Revolution	55.2%	309
Total	100%	560

As shown in table 8 more than half of the sample, 55.2 percent, joined Twitter after Jan 25 Revolution; which is consistent with what most of the media experts interviewed by the researcher have said.

## 2.2 TWITTER USAGE FREQUENCY

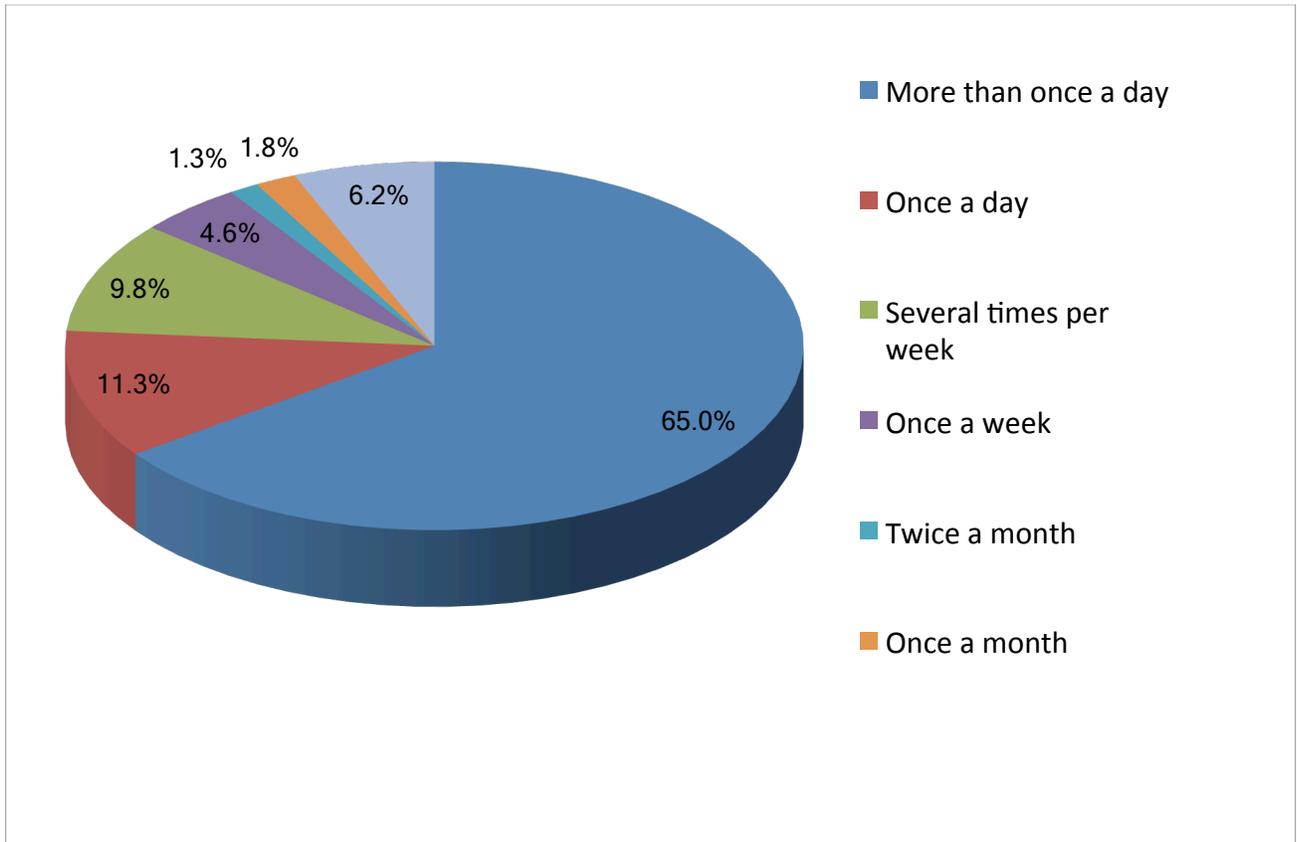
Respondents were asked to indicate how much time they log on Twitter per day

Table 9 Twitter usage frequency

How often do you use/ log on Twitter?		
	Percent	Response Count
More than once a day	65.0%	364
Once a day	11.3%	63
Several times per week	9.8%	55
Once a week	4.6%	26
Twice a month	1.3%	7
Once a month	1.8%	10
I don't use Twitter unless there's something important	6.2%	35
Total	100%	560

364 respondents representing the majority of the sample, 65 percent, have specified that they use Twitter more than once a day, followed by 63 respondents representing 11.3 percent of the sample who indicated that they use Twitter once a day which imply that Twitter became a daily habit to most of the Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 7 Twitter usage frequency



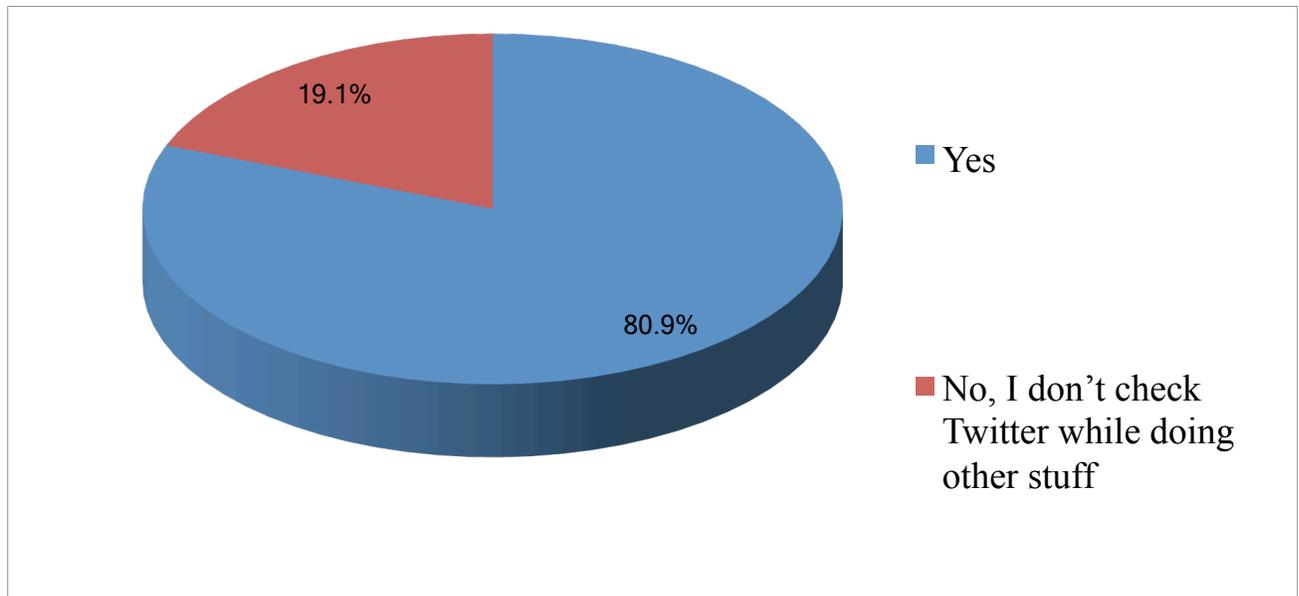
## 2.3 TWITTER HABITS

Table 10 Twitter Habits

Do you check your Twitter account while you're doing other stuff?		
	Percent	Response Count
Yes	80.9%	453
No, I don't check Twitter while doing other stuff	19.1%	107
Total	100%	560

As shown in table 10 the majority of the sample (N=453 - 80.9 percent) use Twitter while doing other stuff, which indicates Twitter ease of use and accessibility.

Figure 8 Twitter Habits



## 2.4 SOCIAL NETWORK PREFERENCES

Table 11 Social Network preferences

Respondents were asked to specify whether they prefer Facebook or Twitter and why.

<b>In general, do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter?</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Facebook	46.4%	260
Twitter	53.6%	300
Total	100%	560

The majority of the sample, 53.6 percent, preferred Twitter than Facebook, some of the reasons for preferring Twitter were:

- It is easier to express your opinion.
- It provides countless bouts of brief comments all at once. Unlike Facebook with a newsfeed page that is slower to update.
- On Twitter you get access to activists, politicians easily.
- Always up to date.
- You can get news with proof (pictures/video/ tweets from many people in same place).
- During breaking news, it is faster to know all details through Twitter.

## 2.5 USERS' NEWS INTERESTS

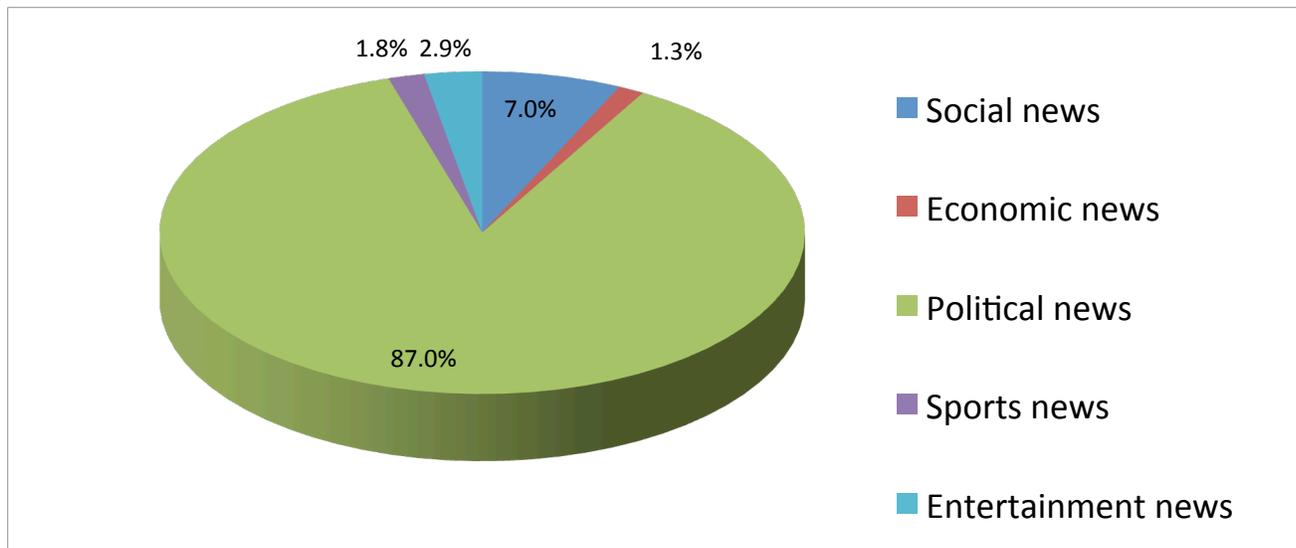
Respondents were asked to indicate their most important issues/news that they're keen on following on Twitter

Table 12 Users' News Interests

What are the most important issues/news that you're keen on following on Twitter		
	Percent	Response Count
Social news	7.0%	40
Economic news	1.3%	7
Political news	87.0%	487
Sports news	1.8%	10
Entertainment news	2.9%	16
Total	100%	560

487 respondents representing the majority of the sample, 87 percent, indicated that they are mostly keen on following political news on Twitter.

Figure 9 Users' News Interests





## 2.6 SMARTPHONE OWNERSHIP

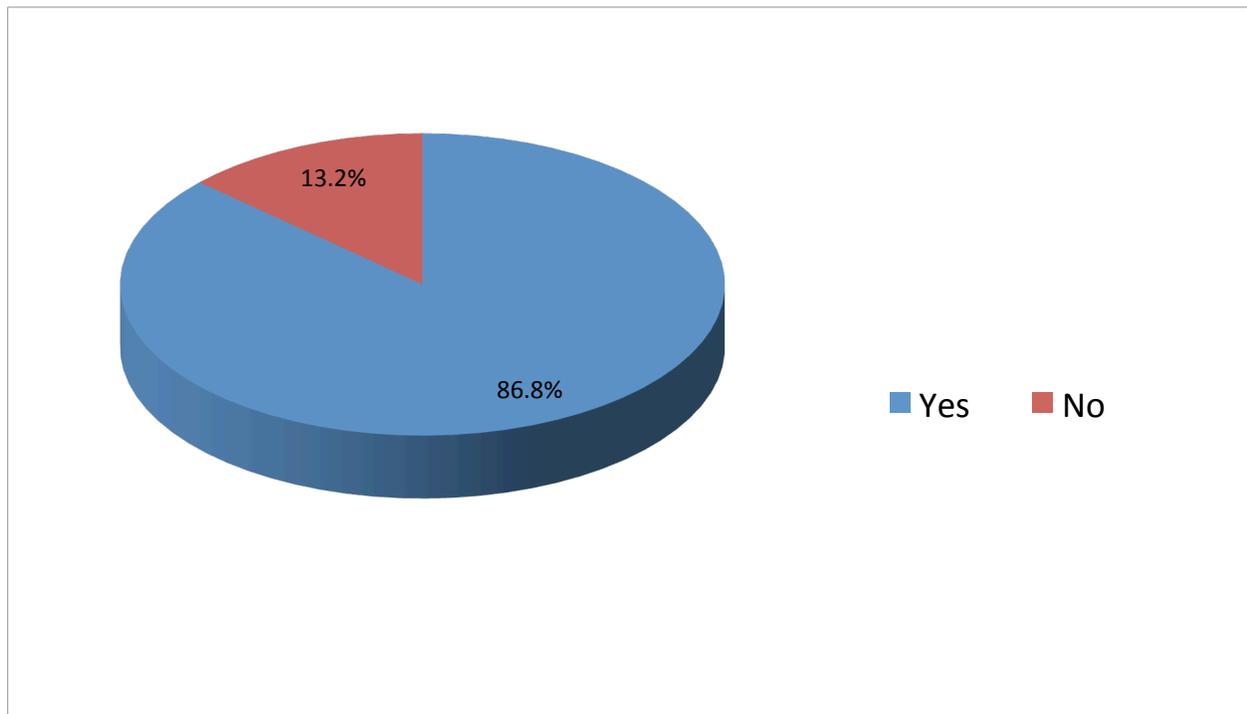
Respondents were asked to determine whether they use Smartphone or not.

Table 13 Smartphone ownership

Do you use a Smartphone (iPhone, BlackBerry, Galaxy, Nokia smartphone, etc... )		
	Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.8%	486
No	13.2%	74
Total	100%	560

The majority of the sample, 86.8 percent, indicated that they use Smartphones.

Figure 10 Smartphone ownership



## 2.7 DEVICE USED TO TWEET

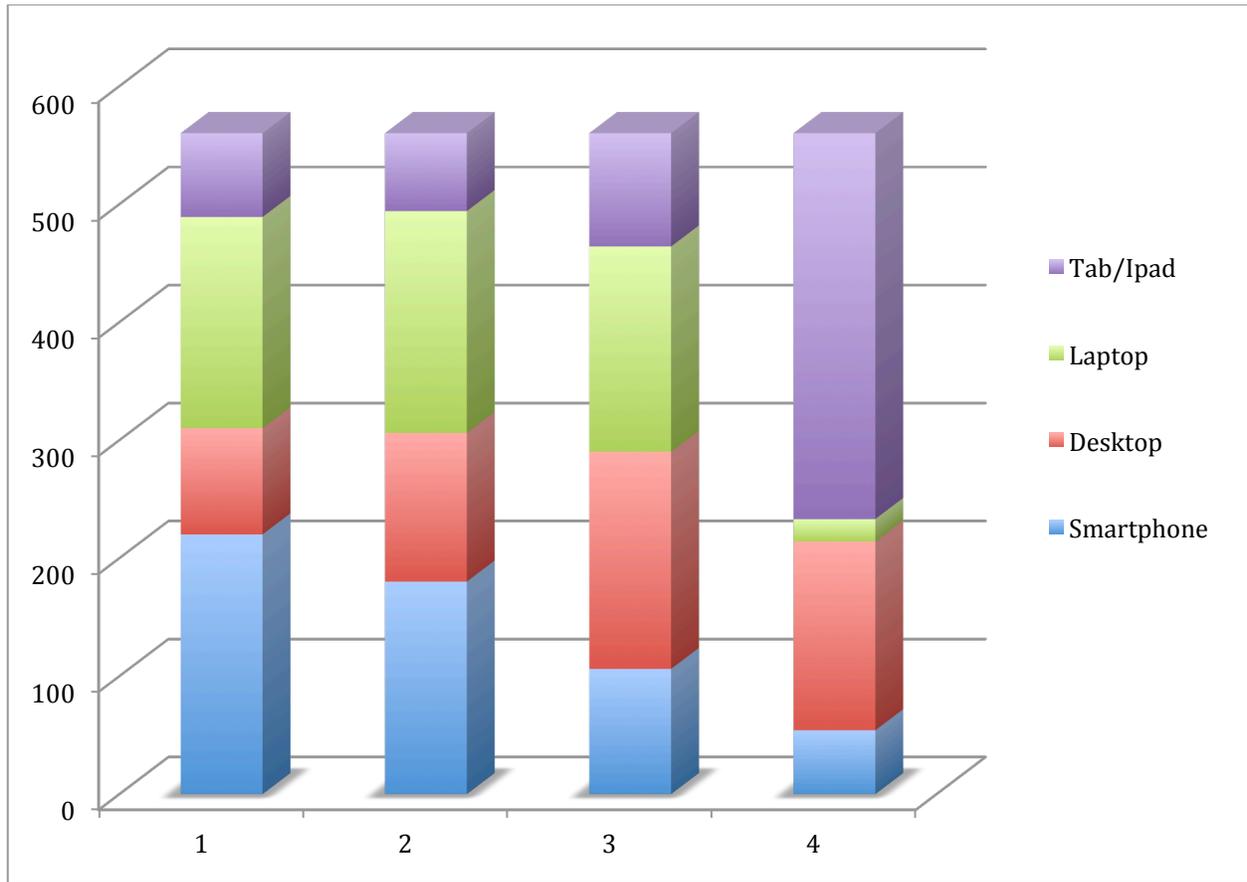
Respondents were asked to rank the device they use to tweet where 1 is the most used device and 4 is the least used.

Table 14 Device used to Tweet

<b>Rank the following devices where number 1 is your most used device to tweet and number 4 is least</b>					
<b>Devices</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Smartphone	39.3% (220)	32.1% (180)	18.9% (106)	9.6% (54)	560
Desktop	16.1% (90)	22.5% (126)	32.9% (184)	28.6% (160)	560
Laptop	32.0% (179)	33.6% (188)	31.1% (174)	3.4% (19)	560
Tab/Ipad	12.7% (71)	11.8% (66)	17.1% (96)	58.4% (327)	560

As shown in table 14, 39.3 percent of the sample ranked Smartphones as the most used device to Tweet which proves that accessibility is one of the main reasons for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 11 Device used to Tweet



### 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

*RQ1: What are the motives for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution?*

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements representing different motives for using Twitter

Table 15 Twitter Motivations

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following reasons / motives for using Twitter							
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Total
To follow news updates (Current affairs)	68.8% (385)	24.6% (138)	5.0% (28)	0.5% (3)	1.1% (6)	4.59	560
To follow sports and/or entertainment news	14.3% (80)	22.3% (125)	32.3% (181)	18.2% (102)	12.9% (72)	3.07	560
To share and/or get reviews about new places, restaurants, movies, .....	25.4% (142)	25.7% (144)	24.6% (138)	13.4% (75)	10.9% (61)	3.41	560
To know the news that were not aired or published via state-owned media	63.0% (353)	21.8% (122)	10.4% (58)	2.9% (16)	2.0% (11)	4.41	560
To get traffic updates	13.6% (76)	18.4% (103)	30.7% (172)	22.1% (124)	15.2% (85)	2.93	560
To express myself and share my personal status	47.9% (268)	27.9% (156)	15.5% (87)	5.5% (31)	3.2% (18)	4.12	560
To share news, photos and/or videos	25.2% (141)	29.3% (164)	28.0% (157)	12.3% (69)	5.2% (29)	3.57	560
To raise awareness, promote and/or support a cause	51.3% (287)	29.1% (163)	12.1% (68)	4.6% (26)	2.9% (16)	4.21	560
For political mobilization & to organize political events and meetings	42.3% (237)	22.9% (128)	17.9% (100)	9.3% (52)	7.7% (43)	3.83	560
To post anything I want to say/report	47.5% (268)	33.2% (188)	12.1% (68)	4.1% (23)	3.0% (17)	4.18	560

immediately	(266)	(186)	(68)	(23)	(17)		
To pass time	19.5%	22.5%	33.4%	14.3%	10.4%	3.27	560
	(109)	(126)	(187)	(80)	(58)		
For social mobilization & to organize social events and meetings	28.9%	23.6%	25.7%	13.8%	8.0%	3.51	560
	(162)	(132)	(144)	(77)	(45)		
To get live updates about events currently taking place	71.6%	21.4%	5.5%	0.5%	0.9%	4.62	560
	(401)	(120)	(31)	(3)	(5)		
To connect and get in touch with others	35.5%	33.9%	21.4%	6.3%	2.9%	3.93	560
	(199)	(190)	(120)	(35)	(16)		
To entertain myself	18.8%	22.3%	31.1%	15.7%	12.1%	3.20	560
	(105)	(125)	(174)	(88)	(68)		
To get in touch with different companies and brands	10.7%	19.8%	26.1%	20.0%	23.4%	2.75	560
	(60)	(111)	(146)	(112)	(131)		

According to the Mean score of the motives, the top three motives for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users are:

1. To get live updates about events currently taking place (M = 4.62)
2. To follow news updates (Current affairs) (M = 4.59)
3. To know the news that were not aired or published via state-owned media (M= 4.41)

While the bottom 3 are:

1. To get in touch with different companies and brands (M = 2.75)
2. To get traffic updates (M = 2.93)
3. To follow sports and/or entertainment news (M = 3.07)

*RQ2: What are the gratifications obtained from using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution?*

Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement on a group of statements representing different gratifications obtained from using Twitter. Five-point Likert scale was used to designate the level of agreement ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Table 16 Twitter Gratifications

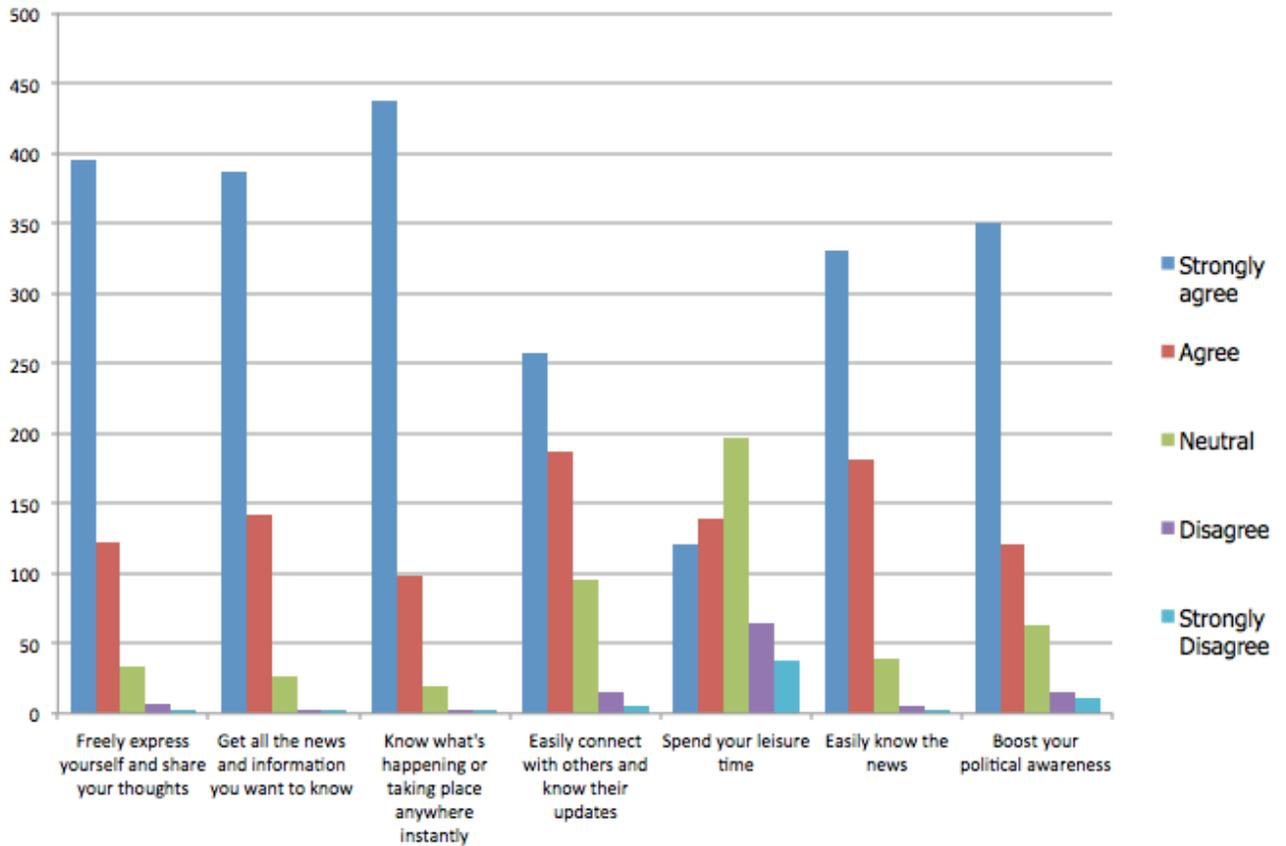
<b>To what extent do you agree that using Twitter enabled you to:</b>							
	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Total</b>
Freely express yourself and share your thoughts	70.7% (396)	21.6% (121)	6.1% (34)	1.3% (7)	0.4% (2)	4.61	560
Get all the news and information you want to know	69.1% (387)	25.4% (142)	4.6% (26)	0.4% (2)	0.5% (3)	4.62	560
Know what's happening or taking place anywhere instantly	78.0% (437)	17.5% (98)	3.4% (19)	0.5% (3)	0.5% (3)	4.72	560
Easily connect with others and know their updates	45.9% (257)	33.4% (187)	17.0% (95)	2.7% (15)	1.1% (6)	4.20	560
Spend your leisure time	21.4% (120)	24.8% (139)	35.4% (198)	11.6% (65)	6.8% (38)	3.43	560
Easily get the news	59.1% (331)	32.5% (182)	7.0% (39)	0.9% (5)	0.5% (3)	4.49	560
Boost your political awareness	62.5% (350)	21.6% (121)	11.3% (63)	2.7% (15)	2.0% (11)	4.40	560

According to the Mean score of the gratifications, the top three gratifications obtained from using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users are:

1. Knowing what's happening or taking place anywhere instantly (M = 4.72)
2. Getting all the news and information they want to know (M = 4.62)
3. Freely expressing themselves and sharing their thoughts (M= 4.61)

While the least gratification obtained is spending their free or leisure time (M = 3.43)

Figure 12 Twitter gratifications



*RH1: Demographic variables are significant variables in Twitter usage among Egyptian Twitter users.*

A number of cross tabulation statistics were made to find if there is a significant relationship between some demographic variables and Twitter usage among Egyptian Twitter users.

For more explicable results Twitter motives were grouped in five different categories as follows:

### **1. Information seeking**

- To follow news updates (Current affairs)
- To follow sports and/or entertainment news
- To share and/or get reviews about new places, restaurants, movies, .....
- To know the news that were not aired or published via state-owned media
- To get traffic updates
- To get live updates about events currently taking place

### **2. Self Expression**

- To express myself and share my personal status
- To share news, photos and/or videos
- To post anything I want to say/report immediately

### **3. Mobilization & organization**

- For political mobilization & to organize political events and meetings
- To raise awareness, promote and/or support a cause
- For social mobilization & to organize social events and meetings



#### 4. Entertainment

- To pass time
- To entertain myself

#### 5. Communication

- To connect and get in touch with others
- To get in touch with different companies and brands

## 1. GENDER

### *1a. Relationship between Gender and motives for using Twitter*

Table 17 Cross tabulation between Gender and Twitter motivations

Motives	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t. (T-test)	Significance P =
Information seeking	Female	245	23.15	3.54	.699	.485
	Male	315	22.94	3.61	.700	.484
Self Expression	Female	245	11.62	2.51	-2.032	.043
	Male	315	12.05	2.52	-2.033	.043
Mobilization & Organization	Female	245	11.22	3.21	-2.235	.026
	Male	315	11.80	2.85	-2.202	.028
Entertainment	Female	245	6.51	2.20	.439	.661
	Male	315	6.43	2.40	.444	.657
Communication	Female	245	6.73	1.82	.644	.520
	Male	315	6.63	1.91	.648	.517

As shown in table 17 there's a significant relationship between Gender and two motivations of using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users:

- Self-expression motives: where males ( $p= .043$ ) ( $M=12.05$ ) were found to be using Twitter for expressing themselves more than females ( $p= .043$ ) ( $M=11.62$ )
- Mobilization & organization motives: where males ( $p= .028$ ) ( $M=11.80$ ) were found to be using Twitter for Mobilization and organization uses more than females ( $p= .026$ ) ( $M=11.22$ ).

*1b. Relationship between Gender and gratification obtained from using Twitter*

Table 18 Cross tabulation between Gender and Twitter gratifications.

Gratifications	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t. (T-test)	Significance P =
Freely express yourself and share your thoughts	Female	245	4.53	.771	-2.373	.018
	Male	315	4.67	.617	-2.309	.021
Get all the news and information you want to know	Female	245	4.64	.616	.496	.620
	Male	315	4.61	.665	.501	.617
Know what's happening or taking place anywhere instantly	Female	245	4.69	.634	-.888	.375
	Male	315	4.74	.583	-.879	.380
Easily connect with others and know their updates	Female	245	4.18	.906	-.562	.574
	Male	315	4.22	.879	-.560	.576
Spend your leisure time	Female	245	3.47	1.125	.667	.505
	Male	315	3.40	1.167	.670	.503
Easily get the news	Female	245	4.53	.680	1.383	.167
	Male	315	4.45	.736	1.397	.163
Boost your political awareness	Female	245	4.44	.906	.917	.360
	Male	315	4.37	.946	.922	.357

A significant relationship was found between gender and only one gratification obtained from using Twitter as shown in table 18.

Using Twitter gratified males ( $p = .021$ ) ( $M = 4.67$ ) need to freely express themselves and share their thoughts more than it did to females ( $p = .018$ ) ( $M = 4.53$ )

*1c. Relationship between Gender and number of hours spent during the day using Twitter.*

Table 19 Cross tabulation between Gender and hours spent on Twitter per day

In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Less than an hour a day	109 44.5%	107 34.0%	216 38.6%
1 to 2 hours a day	60 24.5%	95 30.2%	155 27.7%
3 to 4 hours a day	34 13.9%	42 13.3%	76 13.6%
More than 4 hours a day	42 17.1%	71 22.5%	113 20.2%
Total	245 100%	315 100%	560 100%

**Chi-Square = 7.575**

**P= .056**

**NS**

Non-significant Chi-Square indicating similarity between males and females and the number of hours spent on Twitter per day by both genders.

*1d. Relationship between Gender and Social Network preferences*

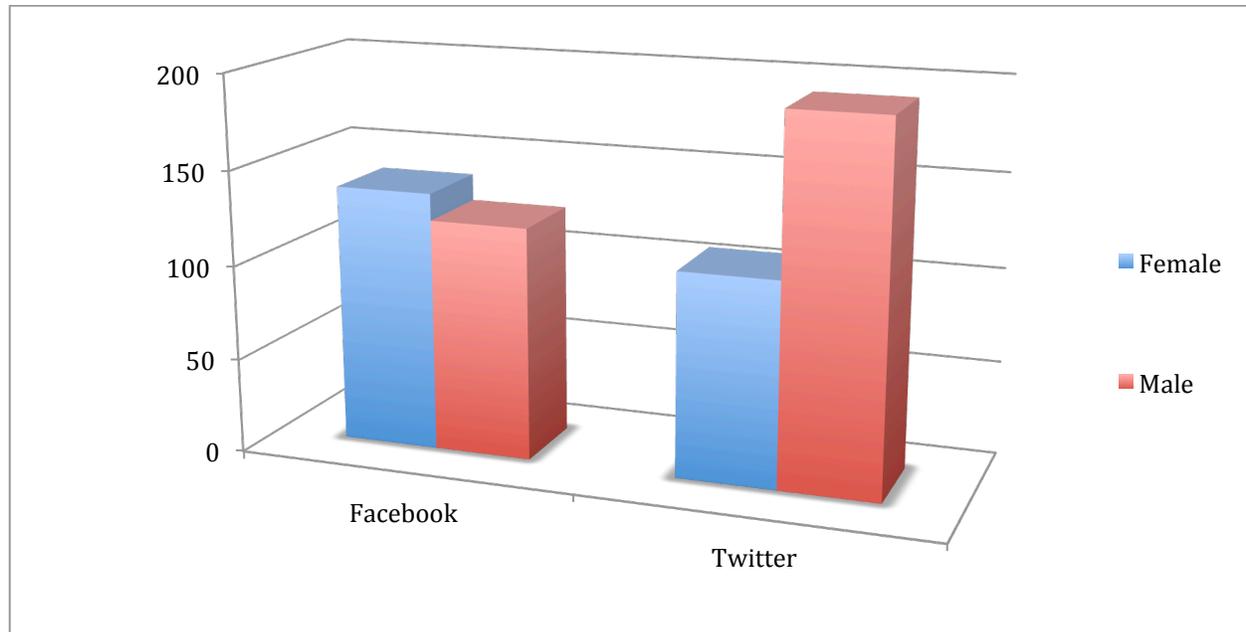
Table 20 Cross tabulation between Gender and Social Network preferences

Do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter?	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Facebook	137 55.9%	123 39.0%	260 46.4%
Twitter	108 44.1%	192 61.0%	300 53.6%
Total	245 100%	315 100%	560 100%

**Chi-Square = 15.770      P= .000      Significant**

Highly significant relationship was found between Gender and Social Network preference where males were found to prefer Twitter than Facebook while females prefer using Facebook than Twitter.

Figure 13 Cross tabulation between Gender and Social Network preferences



## 2-AGE

### 2a. Relationship between Age and motives for using Twitter

Table 21 Cross tabulation between Age and Twitter motivations

Motives	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Significance
Information seeking	Under 18	22	22.86	5.32	.002
	18 - 23	187	23.39	3.05	
	24 - 29	175	23.34	3.67	
	30 - 35	90	22.98	3.63	
	36 - 40	30	23.00	3.73	
	41 - 46	32	21.46	3.33	
	47 - 52	24	20.54	3.57	
	Total	560	23.03	3.58	
Self Expression	Under 18	22	12.50	2.93	.043
	18 - 23	187	12.05	2.12	
	24 - 29	175	11.99	2.67	
	30 - 35	90	11.70	2.54	
	36 - 40	30	11.70	2.70	
	41 - 46	32	10.53	3.07	
	47 - 52	24	11.45	2.60	
	Total	560	11.86	2.53	
Mobilization & organization	Under 18	22	11.90	3.20	.004
	18 - 23	187	11.71	2.82	
	24 - 29	175	11.96	2.87	
	30 - 35	90	11.20	3.26	
	36 - 40	30	11.70	3.16	
	41 - 46	32	9.87	3.13	
	47 - 52	24	10.33	3.44	
	Total	560	11.55	3.02	
Entertainment	Under 18	22	6.77	2.06	.000
	18 - 23	187	6.90	2.25	
	24 - 29	175	6.56	2.27	
	30 - 35	90	6.52	2.34	
	36 - 40	30	5.60	1.95	
	41 - 46	32	5.00	2.44	
	47 - 52	24	4.91	1.83	
	Total	560	6.46	6.46	
Communication	Under 18	22	7.04	2.43	.000
	18 - 23	187	6.95	1.65	
	24 - 29	175	6.71	1.83	
	30 - 35	90	6.64	2.08	
	36 - 40	30	6.50	1.47	
	41 - 46	32	5.93	2.03	
	47 - 52	24	5.25	1.89	
	Total	560	6.67	1.87	

As shown in table 21 there is a significant relationship between different age groups and the different motivations for using Twitter, where entertainment ( $p= .000$ ) and communication ( $p= .000$ ) have the highest significance.

2b. Relationship between Age and gratification obtained from using Twitter

Table 22 Cross tabulation between Age and Twitter gratifications.

Gratifications	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Significance
Freely express yourself and share your thoughts	Under 18	22	4.59	.959	.216
	18 - 23	187	4.67	.654	
	24 - 29	175	4.60	.625	
	30 - 35	90	4.63	.626	
	36 - 40	30	4.67	.758	
	41 - 46	32	4.34	.902	
	47 - 52	24	4.42	.929	
	Total	560	4.61	.692	
Get all the news and information you want to know	Under 18	22	4.23	1.152	.006
	18 - 23	187	4.71	.533	
	24 - 29	175	4.66	.554	
	30 - 35	90	4.53	.796	
	36 - 40	30	4.73	.521	
	41 - 46	32	4.44	.801	
	47 - 52	24	4.50	.511	
	Total	560	4.62	.644	
Know what's happening or taking place anywhere instantly	Under 18	22	4.41	1.182	.065
	18 - 23	187	4.76	.550	
	24 - 29	175	4.79	.475	
	30 - 35	90	4.64	.676	
	36 - 40	30	4.70	.702	
	41 - 46	32	4.59	.665	
	47 - 52	24	4.67	.565	
	Total	560	4.72	.606	
Easily connect with others and know their updates	Under 18	22	4.09	1.192	.089
	18 - 23	187	4.33	.800	
	24 - 29	175	4.19	.889	
	30 - 35	90	4.19	.898	
	36 - 40	30	4.20	.887	
	41 - 46	32	3.94	.914	
	47 - 52	24	3.83	1.090	
	Total	560	4.20	.890	
Spend your leisure time	Under 18	22	3.41	1.221	.000
	18 - 23	187	3.63	1.116	
	24 - 29	175	3.53	1.113	
	30 - 35	90	3.31	1.148	
	36 - 40	30	3.23	.971	
	41 - 46	32	2.75	1.218	
	47 - 52	24	2.79	1.179	
	Total	560	3.43	1.148	



Easily get the news	Under 18	22	4.27	1.077	.221
	18 - 23	187	4.50	.683	
	24 - 29	175	4.58	.591	
	30 - 35	90	4.46	.850	
	36 - 40	30	4.43	.679	
	41 - 46	32	4.41	.798	
	47 - 52	24	4.25	.676	
	Total	560	4.49	.713	
Boost your political awareness	Under 18	22	4.09	1.444	.602
	18 - 23	187	4.40	.941	
	24 - 29	175	4.46	.771	
	30 - 35	90	4.46	.938	
	36 - 40	30	4.33	1.184	
	41 - 46	32	4.28	1.054	
	47 - 52	24	4.29	.751	
	Total	560	4.40	.929	

A significant relationship was found between different age groups and two types of gratifications obtained from using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users, getting all the news and information ( $p = .006$ ) and spending leisure time ( $p = .000$ )

2c. Relationship between Age and number of hours spent during the day using Twitter.

Table 23 Cross tabulation between Age and hours spent on Twitter per day

In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?	Age							Total
	Under 18	18 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 35	36 - 40	41 - 46	47 - 52	
Less than an hour a day	6 27.3%	63 33.7%	72 41.1%	40 44.4%	12 40.0%	13 40.6%	10 41.7%	216 38.6%
1 to 2 hours a day	8 36.4%	60 32.1%	36 20.6%	24 26.7%	9 30.0%	12 37.5%	6 25.0%	155 27.7%
3 to 4 hours a day	2 9.1%	25 13.4%	26 14.9%	11 12.2%	5 16.7%	2 6.3%	5 20.8%	76 13.6%
More than 4 hours a day	6 27.3%	39 20.9%	41 23.4%	15 16.7%	4 13.3%	5 15.6%	3 12.5%	113 20.2%
Total	22 100%	187 100%	175 100%	90 100%	30 100%	32 100%	24 100%	560 100%

Chi-Square= 16.330

P= .569

NS

Non-significant Chi-Square indicating similarity between the number of hours spent on Twitter per day in different age groups.

2d. Relationship between Age and Social Network preferences

Table 24 Cross tabulation between Age and Social Network preferences

In general, do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter?	Age							Total
	Under 18	18 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 35	36 - 40	41 - 46	47 - 52	
Facebook	7 31.8%	88 47.1%	80 45.7%	45 50.0%	16 53.3%	13 40.6%	11 45.8%	260 46.4%
Twitter	15 68.2%	99 52.9%	95 54.3%	45 50.0%	14 46.7%	19 59.4%	13 54.2%	300 53.6%
Total	22 100%	187 100%	175 100%	90 100%	30 100%	32 100%	24 100%	560 100%

Chi-Square= 3.427

P= .754

NS

Non-significant Chi-Square indicating similarity of Social Networks preferences among different age groups.

2e. Relationship between Age and News source ranking

Table 25 Cross tabulation between Age and News source

News Source	Age	N	Mean Rank	Chi Square	Significance
Twitter	Under 18	22	295.66	10.757	.096
	18 - 23	187	295.48		
	24 - 29	175	285.31		
	30 - 35	90	273.34		
	36 - 40	30	204.83		
	41 - 46	32	255.92		
	47 - 52	24	269.00		
	Total	560			
Facebook	Under 18	22	300.09	11.028	.088
	18 - 23	187	289.64		
	24 - 29	175	295.80		
	30 - 35	90	270.04		
	36 - 40	30	247.17		
	41 - 46	32	213.89		
	47 - 52	24	249.46		
	Total	560			
State TV	Under 18	22	264.91	3.723	.714
	18 - 23	187	272.83		
	24 - 29	175	276.60		
	30 - 35	90	290.31		
	36 - 40	30	282.62		
	41 - 46	32	307.20		
	47 - 52	24	308.00		
	Total	560			
Satellite TV	Under 18	22	248.25	17.966	.006
	18 - 23	187	258.02		
	24 - 29	175	267.65		
	30 - 35	90	319.70		
	36 - 40	30	301.67		
	41 - 46	32	335.64		
	47 - 52	24	332.00		
	Total	560			
State-owned Newspapers	Under 18	22	325.89	11.866	.065
	18 - 23	187	300.24		
	24 - 29	175	265.09		
	30 - 35	90	275.37		
	36 - 40	30	299.85		
	41 - 46	32	232.94		
	47 - 52	24	255.96		
	Total	560			

Independent Newspapers	Under 18	22	246.64	3.634	.726
	18 - 23	187	282.25		
	24 - 29	175	275.36		
	30 - 35	90	284.84		
	36 - 40	30	290.28		
	41 - 46	32	317.19		
	47 - 52	24	257.96		
	Total	560			
Online News sites	Under 18	22	268.84	7.605	.268
	18 - 23	187	262.36		
	24 - 29	175	286.70		
	30 - 35	90	274.24		
	36 - 40	30	321.17		
	41 - 46	32	319.50		
	47 - 52	24	308.00		
	Total	560			
Newspapers websites	Under 18	22	258.07	6.106	.411
	18 - 23	187	278.57		
	24 - 29	175	280.87		
	30 - 35	90	271.47		
	36 - 40	30	320.78		
	41 - 46	32	321.20		
	47 - 52	24	242.58		
	Total	560			

Chi Square was calculated for different age groups and their news source ranking. Most of the relationships were not significant except for Satellite TV ( $P= .006$ ), which indicates that Age is not a significant factor when it comes to news sources' preferences among Egyptian Twitter users.

### 3- EDUCATION

3a. Relationship between level of education and number of hours spent during the day using Twitter.

Table 26 Cross tabulation between level of education and hours spent on Twitter per day

In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?	Level of education				Total
	High school	BA/ BSc	MA/ MBA	PhD	
Less than an hour a day	15	148	34	19	216
	23.8%	38.8%	42.5%	52.8%	38.6%
1 to 2 hours a day	25	103	17	10	155
	39.7%	27.0%	21.3%	27.8%	27.7%
3 to 4 hours a day	10	49	12	5	76
	15.9%	12.9%	15.0%	13.9%	13.6%
More than 4 hours a day	13	81	17	2	113
	20.6%	21.3%	21.3%	5.6%	20.2%
Total	63	381	80	36	560
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Chi-Square= 14.900

P= .094

NS

Non-significant Chi-Square indicating similarity in the number of hours spent on Twitter per day between different education levels.

3b. Relationship between Type of education and Social Network preferences

Table 27 Cross tabulation between Type of education and Social Network preferences

Do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter?	Type of education			Total
	Public Education	Private Education	International Education	
Facebook	140 47.6%	94 48.5%	26 36.1%	260 46.4%
Twitter	154 52.4%	100 51.5%	46 63.9%	300 53.6%
Total	294 100%	194 100%	72 100%	560 100%

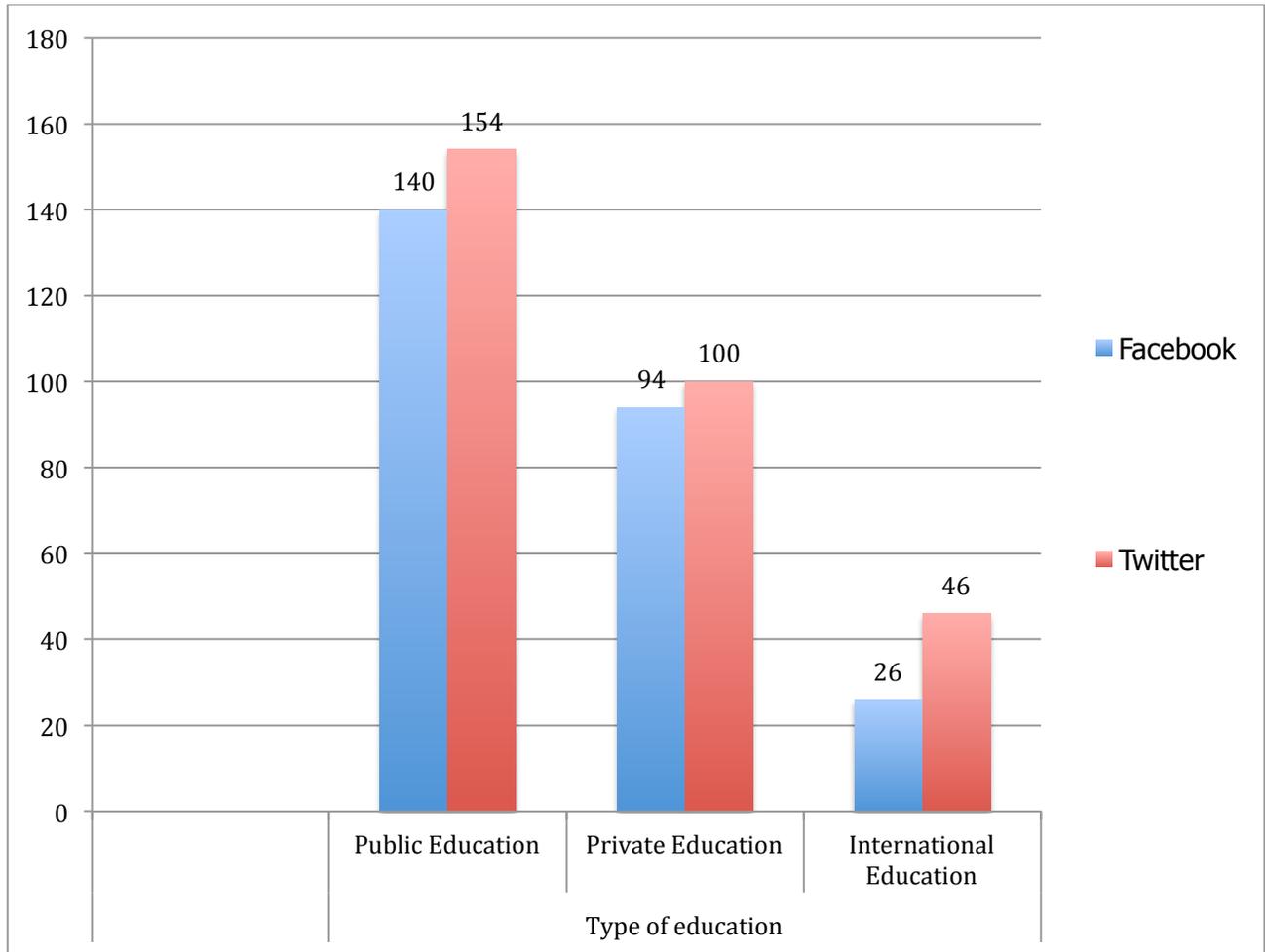
Chi-Square = 3.569

P= .168

NS

Non-significant Chi-Square indicating almost similar distribution of Social Network preferences among the different types of education of Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 14 Cross tabulation between Type of education and Social Network preferences





#### 4. INCOME

##### 4a. Relationship between Income and Social Network preferences

Table 28 Cross tabulation between Income and Social Network preferences

Do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter?	Your total income per month						Total
	Less than 1000	1000 - 3000	3000 - 5000	5000 - 7000	7000 - 10,000	More than 10,000	
Facebook	66 45.8%	95 54.9%	44 46.3%	19 48.7%	13 30.2%	23 34.8%	260 46.4%
Twitter	78 54.2%	78 45.1%	51 53.7%	20 51.3%	30 69.8%	43 65.2%	300 53.6%
Total	144 100.0%	173 100%	95 100%	39 100%	43 100%	66 100%	560 100%

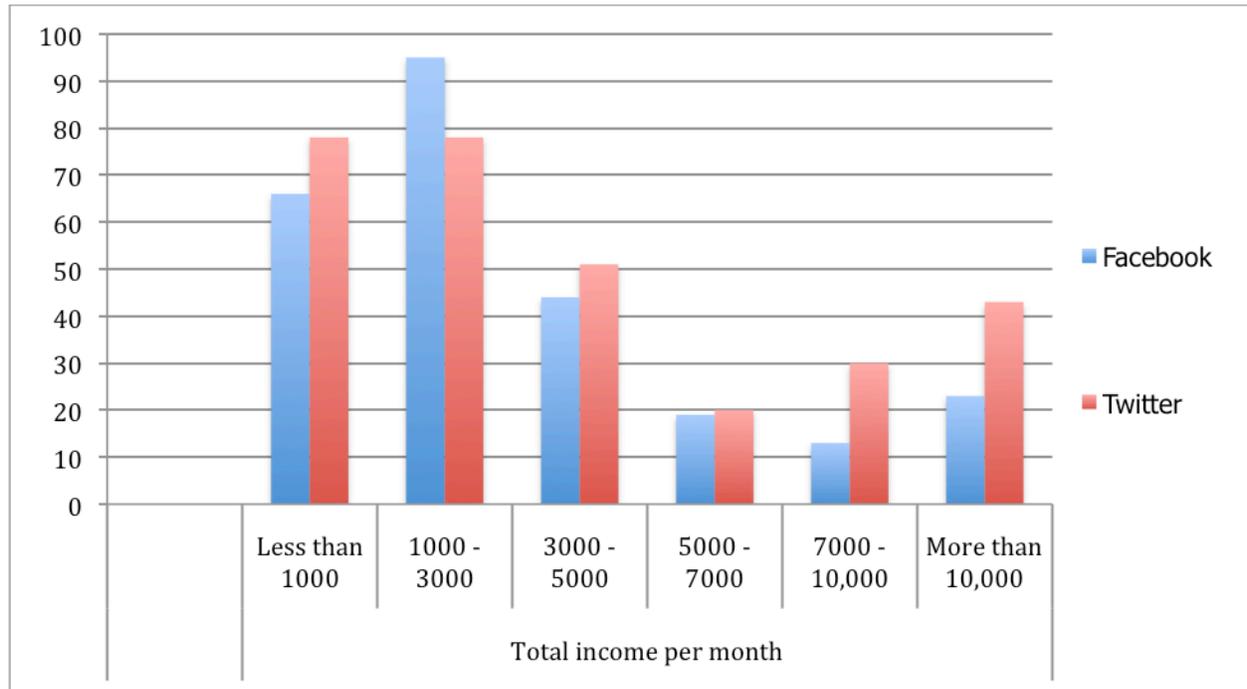
Chi-Square = 13.204

P= .022

Significant

Highly significant relationship was found between different income levels and Social Network preferences among Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 15 Cross tabulation between Income and Social Network preferences



RH1 was partially supported, because not all the demographic variables had a significant relationship with Twitter usage among Egyptian Twitter users.

The significant relationships were only between:

- Gender and self-expression and mobilization & organization motives.
- Gender and freedom of expression gratifications.
- Gender and Social Network preferences.
- Age and different motives for using Twitter.
- Age and two types of gratifications obtained, which are getting news & information and spending leisure time.
- Age and Satellite TV ranking as a source of news.
- Income and Social Network preferences.

*RH2: The higher the hours spent on Twitter per day, the lower the dependency on traditional media as a source of news among Egyptian Twitter users.*

In order to test this hypothesis respondents were asked to specify how much time do they spend on Twitter in a typical day and in time of breaking news, they were also asked to rank some news sources where number 1 is their most favorite and 8 is their least favorite.

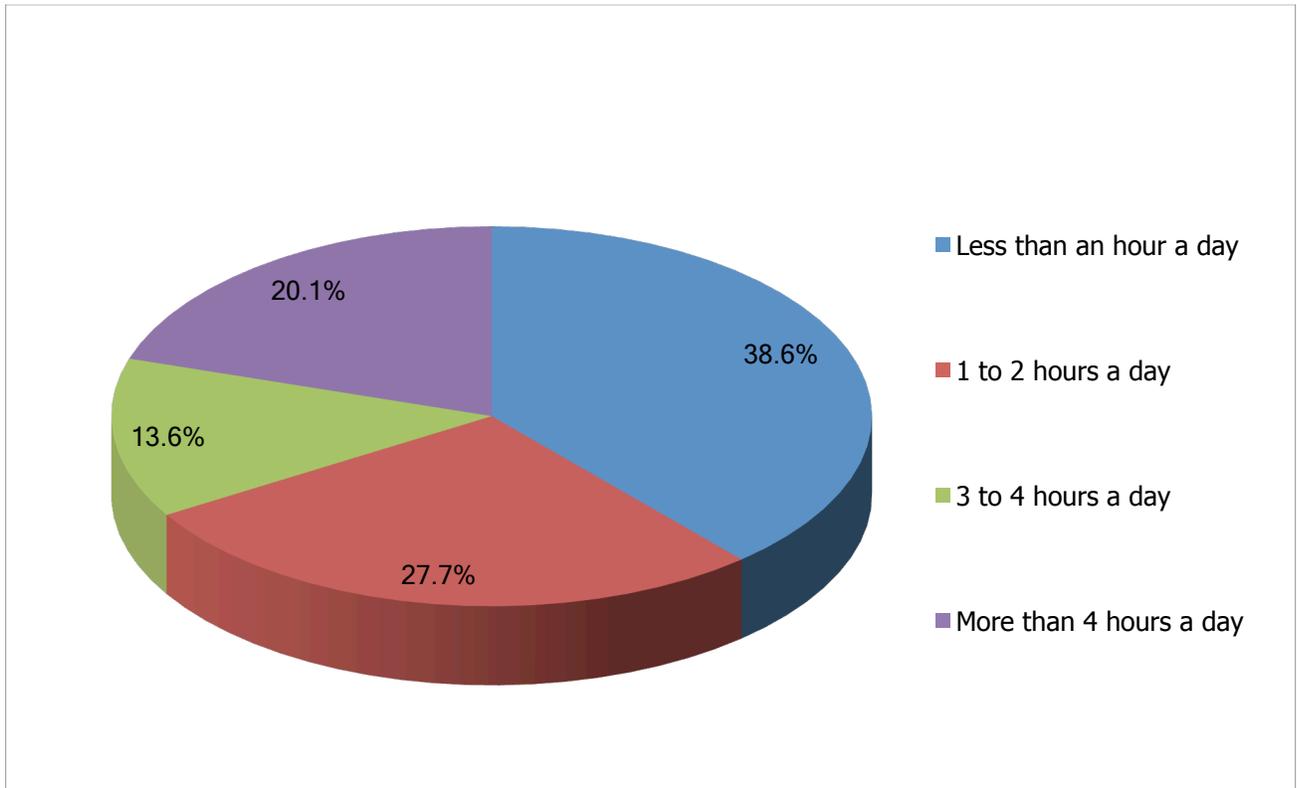
*A. Time spent on Twitter in a typical day*

Table 29 Time spent on Twitter in a typical day

<b>In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Less than an hour a day	38.6%	216
1 to 2 hours a day	27.7%	155
3 to 4 hours a day	13.6%	76
More than 4 hours a day	20.1%	113
Total	100%	560

The majority of respondents (N=216) representing 38.6 percent of the sample indicated that they use Twitter for less than one hour per day, while the least percent of the sample, 13.6 percent, (N=76) indicated that they use Twitter between three to four hours in a typical day.

Figure 16 Time spent on Twitter in a typical day



*B. Time spent on Twitter in time of crisis/ breaking news*

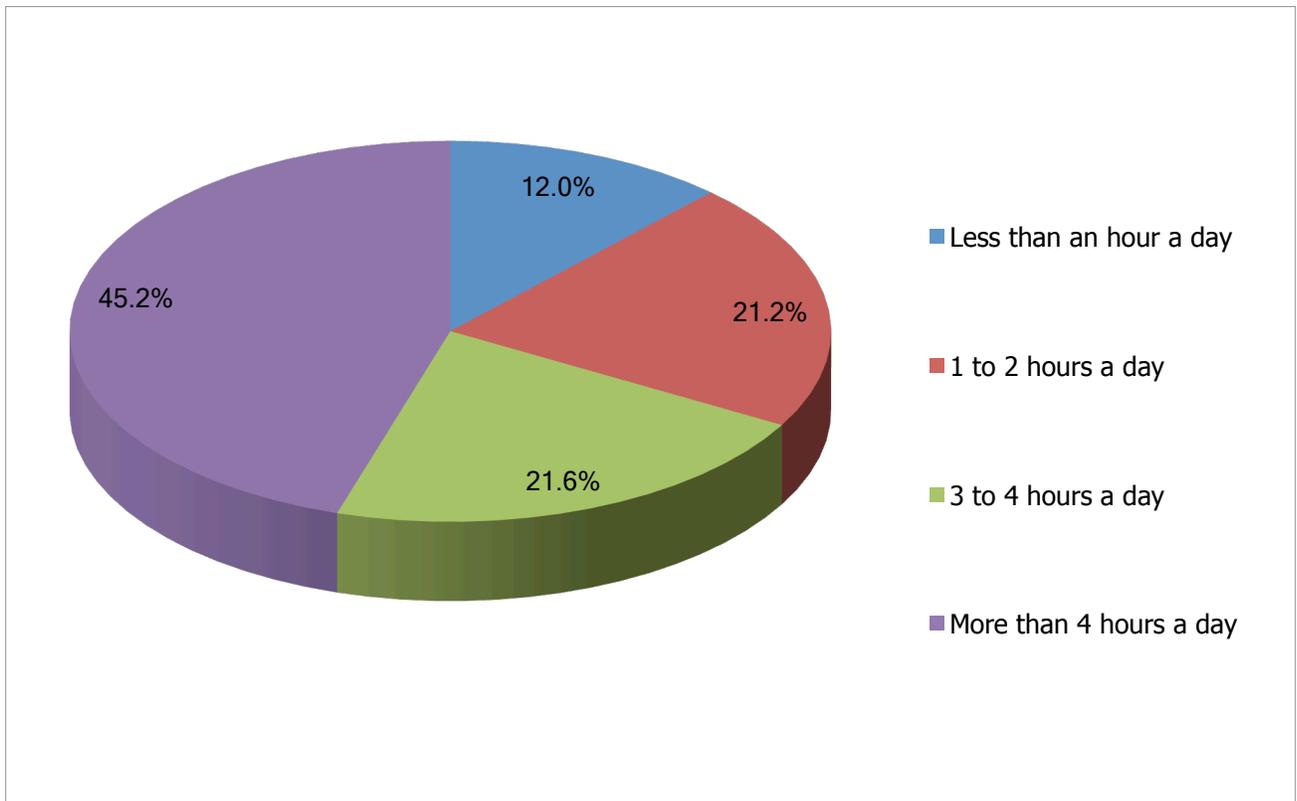
Table 30 Time spent on Twitter in time of crisis/ breaking news

<b>In time of crisis/ breaking news/ or important events, how much time do you spend on Twitter per day?</b>		
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Less than an hour a day	12.0%	67
1 to 2 hours a day	21.2%	119
3 to 4 hours a day	21.6%	121
More than 4 hours a day	45.2%	253
Total	100%	560

The table above shows that the majority of respondents (N=253) representing almost half of the research sample 45.2 percent indicated that they use Twitter more than four hours per day in time of crisis or breaking news, while only 12 percent of the sample (N=67) indicated that they use Twitter for less than an hour per day in time of crisis or breaking news.

This remarkable difference between the numbers of hours spent on Twitter on a typical day and in time of breaking news shows how important is Twitter as a source of news among Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 17 Time spent on Twitter in time of crisis/ breaking news



C. Cross tabulation was made between the news source ranking and the hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis / breaking news.

Table 31 Cross tabulation between news source ranking and the hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis / breaking news.

	Time spent on Twitter	N	Mean Rank	Chi Square	Significance
Twitter	Less than an hour a day	67	149.65	107.047	.000
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	257.40		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	239.49		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	345.63		
	Total	560			
Facebook	Less than an hour a day	67	335.28	18.782	.000
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	308.34		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	277.11		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	254.52		
	Total	560			
State TV	Less than an hour a day	67	316.55	8.479	.037
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	284.13		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	288.98		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	265.19		
	Total	560			
Satellite TV	Less than an hour a day	67	311.32	5.131	.162
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	280.60		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	292.63		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	266.49		
	Total	560			
State-owned Newspapers	Less than an hour a day	67	338.81	11.988	.007
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	275.89		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	267.90		
	Total	560			

	More than 4 hours a day	253	273.25		
	Total	560			
Independent Newspapers	Less than an hour a day	67	266.04	4.818	.186
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	266.69		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	306.50		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	278.39		
	Total	560			
Online News sites	Less than an hour a day	67	280.68	8.776	.032
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	269.03		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	317.57		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	268.12		
	Total	560			
Newspapers websites	Less than an hour a day	67	289.26	.346	.951
	1 to 2 hours a day	119	282.23		
	3 to 4 hours a day	121	275.37		
	More than 4 hours a day	253	279.82		
	Total	560			

As shown in the table above there is highly significant relationship between the number of hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis or breaking news and Twitter ( $p= .000$ ) and Facebook ( $p= .000$ ) ranking as a source of news among Egyptian Twitter users.

A significant relationship was also found between the number of hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis or breaking news and State TV ( $p= .037$ ), state-owned newspapers ( $p= .007$ ) and Online news sites ( $p= .032$ ) ranking as a source of news among Egyptian Twitter users.

While Non-significant Chi-Square was found for the relationship between hours spent on Twitter per day in time of crisis and the ranking of the rest of news sources, Satellite TV ( $p= .162$ ), independent newspapers ( $p= .186$ ) and newspapers websites ( $p= .951$ ).



RH2 was partially supported, as there was a significant relationship between the hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis / breaking news and the ranking of Twitter, Facebook, State TV, state-owned newspapers and Online news sites as sources of news among Egyptian Twitter users.

While non-significant relationships were found between the hours spent on Twitter in time of crisis / breaking news and the ranking of the rest of news sources: Satellite TV, independent newspapers and newspapers websites.

*RH3: State-owned media are far less credible than Twitter as a news source among Egyptian Twitter users.*

To test this hypothesis respondents were asked to rank some news sources where number 1 is their favorite and most reliable source of news and number 8 is their least favorite.

Table 32 News source ranking

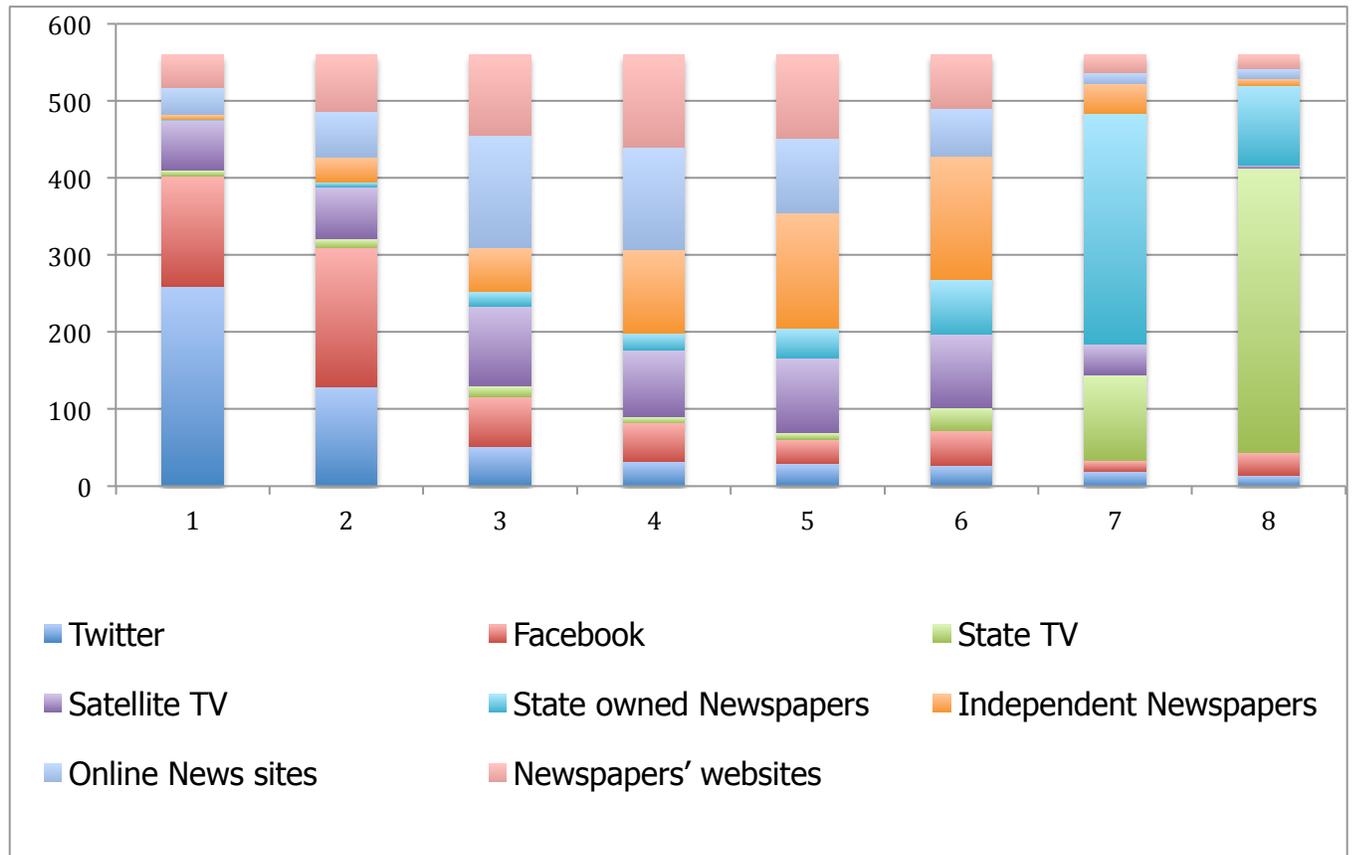
News Sources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Twitter	46.3% (259)	23.0% (129)	9.1% (51)	5.7% (32)	5.2% (29)	4.8% (27)	3.4% (19)	2.5% (14)	560
Facebook	25.7% (144)	32.1% (180)	11.6% (65)	8.9% (50)	5.7% (32)	8.0% (45)	2.5% (14)	5.4% (30)	560
State TV	1.3% (7)	2.1% (12)	2.5% (14)	1.4% (8)	1.4% (8)	5.4% (30)	20.0% (112)	65.9% (369)	560
Satellite TV	11.6% (65)	12.1% (68)	18.6% (104)	15.5% (87)	17.5% (98)	17.0% (95)	7.0% (39)	0.7% (4)	560
State-owned Newspapers	0.2% (1)	1.1% (6)	3.4% (19)	3.9% (22)	6.8% (38)	12.7% (71)	53.6% (300)	18.4% (103)	560
Independent Newspapers	1.1% (6)	5.7% (32)	10.0% (56)	19.3% (108)	26.8% (150)	28.6% (160)	7.0% (39)	1.6% (9)	560
Online News sites	6.4% (36)	10.5% (59)	26.3% (147)	23.8% (133)	17.1% (96)	11.1% (62)	2.5% (14)	2.3% (13)	560
Newspapers' websites	7.5% (42)	13.2% (74)	18.6% (104)	21.4% (120)	19.5% (109)	12.5% (70)	4.1% (23)	3.2% (18)	560

As shown in the table, respondents ranked Twitter and Facebook as the first top two source of news respectively, where 259 respondent representing 46.3 percent of the sample chose Twitter as their first source of news and 180 respondent representing 32.1 percent of the sample chose Facebook as their second source of news.

State-owned media on the other hand was ranked as the bottom two sources of news by the respondents, where 369 respondent representing more than half of the sample, 65.9 percent, ranked State TV as their least favorite and reliable source of news while 300 respondent representing 53.6 percent of the sample ranked state-owned Newspapers as their second least favorite and reliable source of news

These results showed how social media is perceived as more credible and reliable source of news among Egypt Twitter users which supports the research hypotheses proving that state-owned media are far less credible than Twitter as a news source among Egyptian Twitter users. Therefore RH3 is supported.

Figure 18 News source ranking



*RH4: There is a positive correlation between Smartphone ownership and number of hours spent on Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users.*

Table 33 Cross tabulation between hours spent on Twitter per day and Smartphone ownership

In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?	Do you use a Smartphone ( iPhone, BlackBerry, Galaxy, Nokia smartphone, etc... )		Total
	Yes	No	
Less than an hour a day	176 36.2%	40 54.1%	216 38.6%
1 to 2 hours a day	141 29.0%	14 18.9%	155 27.7%
3 to 4 hours a day	68 14.0%	8 10.8%	76 13.6%
More than 4 hours a day	101 20.8%	12 16.2%	113 20.2%
Total	486 100%	74 100%	560 100%

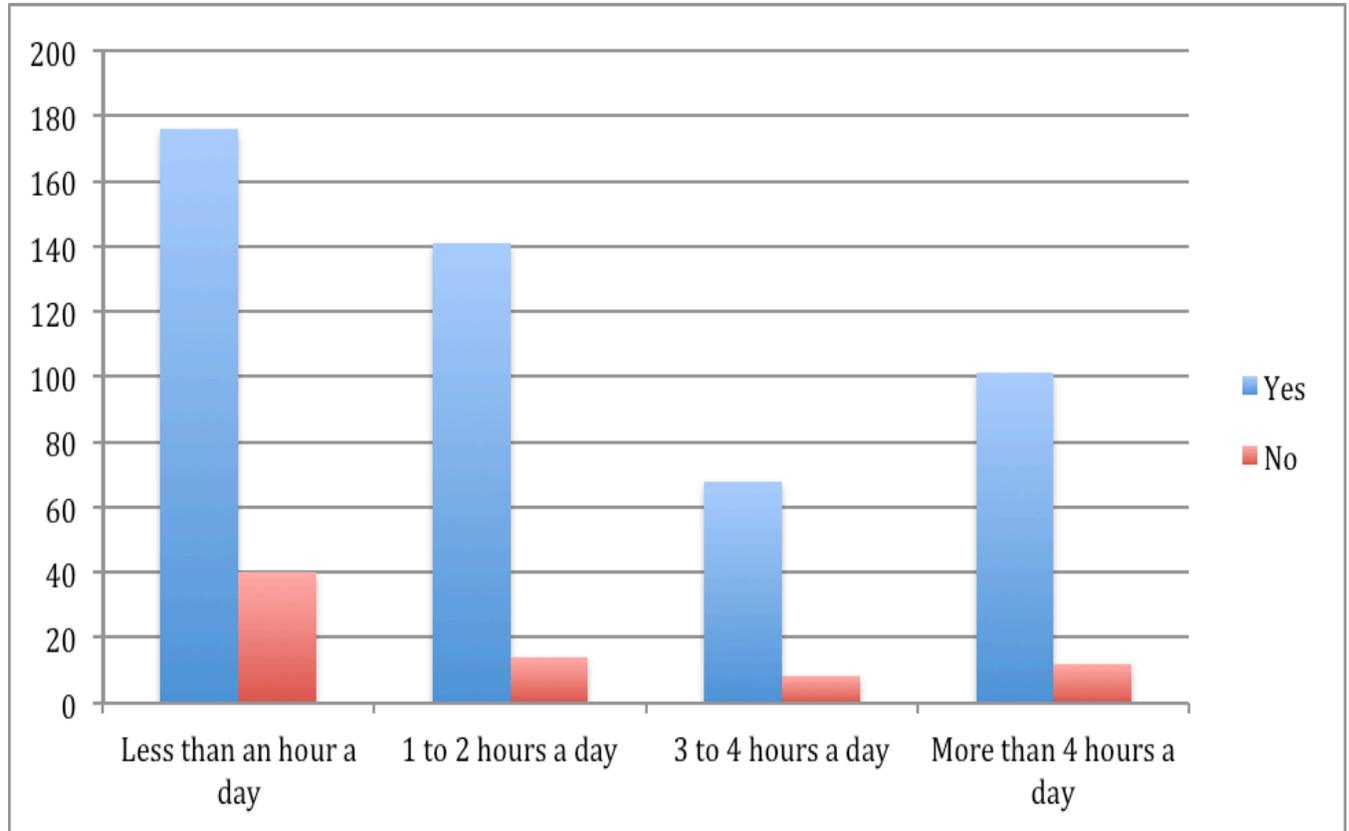
**Chi-Square= 8.805**

**P= .032**

**Significant**

A significant relationship was found between Smartphone ownership and number of hours spent on Twitter per day. As shown in the table above 101 respondent from a total number of 131 respondents who indicated that they use Twitter for more than four hours a day have Smartphones, while only 12 of them don't have Smartphones which supports RH4 approving that there is a positive correlation between smart phone ownership and the number of hours spent on Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users.

Figure 19 Cross tabulation between hours spent on Twitter per day and Smartphone ownership



## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### DISCUSSION

In 2011 social media became one of the most powerful tools for socio-political mobilization in the Arab world. “We Are All Khaled Said” page on Facebook helped Egyptians to organize their January 25 protests and Twitter helped them spreading news, photos, and videos of what was going on in Egypt’s squares. Since then Egyptians started using those Social Networking Sites differently. This research aimed to study the uses and gratification of Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution.

The study examined two research questions and four hypotheses that helped in testing the different uses and gratifications of Twitter after Jan 25 uprising, in addition to identifying the media preferences of Egyptian Twitter users and what news sources they rely on.

A survey was conducted on 560 Egyptian Twitter users, and since there wasn’t enough information about Twitter usage in Egypt, five media experts were interviewed to add valuable information to this research.

Based on the analyzed results, the main motive for using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users is getting information and news.

“To get live updates about events currently taking place” had the highest level of agreement of all the statements by the majority of the sample, 71.6 percent, which shows how important Twitter has become to Egyptian Twitter users because of one of its main and unique features which is its ability to deliver the news instantly.

“To follow news updates and current affairs” was the second highest motive for using Twitter according to 68.8 percent of the respondents, followed by 63 percent who strongly

agreed that their motive for using Twitter is “To know the news that was not aired or published via state-owned media” which indicates how Egyptian Twitter users perceive their state-owned media as a less credible and untrustworthy source of news.

At the same time the study revealed that the top gratification obtained from using Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users is “Knowing what’s happening or taking place anywhere instantly” as the majority of the sample, 78 percent, strongly agreed on this statement, hence fulfilling the users’ surveillance needs which involves the usage of certain media to get information that might help the user in accomplishing a certain goal or aim.

These results are consistent with Johnson and Yang (2009) as their study revealed that users are mostly motivated to use Twitter for its informational aspects.

The research results also proved that the diffusion of social media reduced the reliance on traditional media in Egypt. Accordingly the results showed that Twitter and Facebook rank as the first two main sources of news for the majority of the sample, while state-owned media in both of its forms, TV and newspapers, ranks as the least reliable sources of news.

This affirms Saleh’s opinion, as he believed that after Jan 25 Revolution Egyptians relied more on social media especially Twitter as a main source for news, he supports his beliefs by stating that Al Shorok, Al Youm Al Sabe’ and Al Masry Al Youm news papers’ accounts on Twitter are the most followed accounts in Egypt, and that they provide instant and prompt news updates. (Hossam Saleh, personal communication, April 2012)

These results are also coherent with what Abbas stated, as he said:

“ Twitter is my main source of news as I don’t really trust state-owned media or independent newspapers. But on Twitter I receive updated news from trustworthy people and

journalists whom I follow and trust what they share” (Wael Abbas, personal communication, April 2012)

As stated by Abdulazim Ghoniem (Ghoniem, 2012) the latest statistics by Ministry of Communications and Information Technology indicates that the total number of Twitter users in Egypt is 129,711 users, while the number of Egyptian Facebook users is more than 11 million (Socialbakers.com, 2012). The study tried to discover the reasons behind this huge gap between the numbers of users of the two Social Networking Sites. Some of the reasons mentioned by those who preferred using Facebook to Twitter were:

- It does not have a word limit.
- Facebook's privacy settings are better than those of Twitter. You can share some content with public while other content with a limited number of people. However, with Twitter, you either share with everyone following you or not share at all.
- Facebook is easier to use, it has a lot of features like sharing videos, pictures and chatting.
- Basically because it is used for other social needs in addition to checking news related information.
- More interactive.
- Because most of my friends use Facebook more than Twitter.
- Facebook is more fun than Twitter.

This indicates that people who prefer Facebook usually use it for socializing while those who prefer Twitter use it for getting information and news. Which proves Sobeih and Saleh



views as they mentioned that for Egyptians Facebook is more entertaining and fun (Hossam Saleh, Ahmed Sobieh, personal communication, April 2012).

According to the analyzed results, 55 percent of the sample joined Twitter after Jan 25 Revolution, which shows that Egyptians realized how important social media is especially after the Revolution; they have realized that it's a powerful tool that cannot be merely used for fun and socializing.

The study also revealed that the majority of the sample, 87 percent, are mostly keen on following political news on Twitter, which confirms what was stated by the media experts interviewed by the researcher who believed that in Egypt Twitter is mainly used for getting and sharing political news while Facebook is used for socializing.

According to Hafez Al Mirazi, Egyptians joined Twitter after Jan 25 Revolution as it provided them with a virtual place to meet and assemble, at the same time it allowed them to connect with each other and freely express themselves along with giving them a channel to discuss and debate political issues (Hafez Al Mirazi, personal communication, April 2012).

This supports the notion of Media Dependency Theory, as Egyptians have been facing a lot of new political situations after Jan 25 Revolution, thus they want to have all the information they can get to help them choose and make their decisions. Since Egyptian Twitter users trust Twitter as a credible and reliable news source, they will be more dependent on it and they will use it to get all the information they want. Hence political news and information are the top news followed on Twitter by Egyptian Twitter users.

According to the majority of the sample using Twitter became a daily habit for them, 65 percent of the sample log on to Twitter more than once a day while 11.3 percent at least, log on once a day, the study also found that most of the respondents, 80 percent, use Twitter while

doing other stuff, mainly while they are watching TV, 76.2 percent, stuck in traffic, 52.8 percent, hanging out with their friends, 44.4 percent, and studying, 35.8 percent.

The study found that most of the sample use Twitter via Smartphones, which indicates that accessibility is one of the reasons for using Twitter on a daily basis or for longer hours per day. Hence the results showed that 101 respondents from the 131 who use Twitter for more than four hours a day are Smartphone users.

As for Twitter users' demographics, both males and females were represented in this research sample in close percentages where males represented 56.2 percent and females represented 43.8 percent of the sample indicating that Egyptian Twitter users are similarly distributed between both genders. Different age groups were represented in the research sample as well, but the analyzed results showed that the majority of Egyptian Twitter users, 64.4 percent, are among the youth, between 18 and 29 years old.

This research intended to identify the socioeconomic status of Egyptian Twitter users as media experts interviewed by the researcher believed that most of the Egyptian Twitter users have a higher socioeconomic status, which was proven to be wrong as the majority of the sample have received public education, and when it comes to income, the majority of the sample, 30.9 percent, indicated that their monthly income is between 1000 and 3000 Egyptian pounds.

At the same time the large number of Smartphones owners in Egypt is not an indication of the high socio economic status, as it can be due to the diffusion of Chinese replica mobile phones in Egypt which are far cheaper than original Smartphones.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to find the uses and gratifications of Twitter among Egyptian Twitter users after Jan 25 Revolution. Five media experts were interviewed to help designing the survey and to give more information about Egyptian Twitter users characteristics and their Twitter habits as those information were not available due to the lack of the number of studies about Egyptian Twitter users.

Based on the analysis of the first and the second research questions, Egyptian Twitter users mainly use Twitter to satisfy their surveillance needs. They use Twitter because of its unique features of delivering the news instantly and its ability to satisfy their needs of getting information, news and live updates.

Those results confirmed the media experts' views, as they believed that Twitter is used for sharing news and information in Egypt rather than socializing. The results also supported one of the main notions of the Uses and Gratifications approach which assumed that users are goal directed in their behavior thus they'll choose the media that will satisfy and fulfill their needs, and if their needs were gratified they will use it again.

The research has also shown that there are significant relationships between Egyptian Twitter users' demographics and their Twitter usage. Males were found to use Twitter for mobilization and self-expressions more than females. A significant relationship was also found between different age groups and the different motivations for using Twitter. While neither education levels nor types were found as significant variables in Twitter usage among Egyptian Twitter users.

Based on the analysis of RH2 and RH3 the research proved that Egyptian Twitter users do not trust their state-owned media and do not perceive it as a credible source of news, hence

they rely on social media where Twitter is their primary source of news especially in time of crisis or breaking news.

This research results have also revealed that the number of Egyptian Twitter users has increased significantly after Jan 25 Revolution and for them Twitter is more of an information tool than a socializing platform. They use it to get information and news, to report and share photos from events or demonstrations and they also use it as a mobilization tool to organize protests. Besides, Twitter became their number one source of news, as they do not trust their state-owned media.

These results support the notion of the Media dependency theory, as the research results proved that Twitter gratifies more than one need to Egyptian users, and that they use it in many different uses, also they profoundly rely on it during times of crisis and breaking news, therefore Twitter became their main source of news and information.

As for RH4 the research analyzed results showed that Smartphones gave Egyptian Twitter users the chance to use Twitter anytime and anywhere, thus users who have Smartphones were found to be more active on Twitter and use it for more than four hours per day compared to those who do not use Smartphones who usually use Twitter for less than an hour per day.

Opposing to some of the media experts' views, the research results proved that most of Egyptian Twitter users aren't of high socio economic status as the media experts believed. The results showed that the majority of the sample has received public education, and that their monthly income is between 1000 and 3000 Egyptian pounds. Also taking into consideration the huge number of cheap Chinese replica Smartphones in the Egyptian market, Smartphone ownership cannot be an indication of users' high socio economic status.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### LIMITATIONS

- The results of this research cannot be generalized as the researcher used a non-random convenience and snowball sample.
- Due to the novelty of this research topic, there was a lack of studies on Twitter usage and Twitter users' characteristics in Egypt.
- The research used motivations and gratifications scales as opposed to open-ended questions, therefore we don't know if there are different motivations or gratifications obtained from using Twitter other than the ones mentioned.
- Interviews with media experts resulted to be a difficulty, especially because the researcher was targeting the active Twitter users media experts.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- A comparative research can be conducted between Facebook and Twitter and their news and information role.
- A research can be conducted on the Uses and Gratifications of Twitter for Journalists.
- A study can be conducted to measure the influence of top Twitter users (Twitter Elites) on their followers using the Two-Step flow theory.
- A case study can be conducted on the online news network "Rassd" as it is one of the very first online news networks in the Arab World.
- A study on the role of Twitter as a mobilization tool can be conducted through a content analysis for certain hashtags.

- A research can be conducted on the role of Twitter and decision-making during the parliamentary and presidential elections in Egypt.
- Future Uses and Gratifications study can be done after the political situation in Egypt calms down.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello, I'm a graduate student in the Journalism and Mass Communication department at the American University in Cairo. I'm conducting my Master's thesis on The Uses and Gratifications of Twitter in Egypt after Jan.25 Revolution and I'd appreciate it if you help me by filling out this survey.

This survey is aimed at Egyptian Twitter users, and the information collected will be solely used for research purpose and will remain anonymous and confidential.

Thanks for your cooperation,  
Yousra Habib

#### 1. Do you have Twitter account? هل عندك اكونت على تويتر؟

Yes

No (Please terminate the questionnaire) من فضلك لا تجيب على باقي الأسئلة

#### 2. Approximately, how many Twitter followers do you have? تقريبا عندك كام فولور على تويتر ؟

Less than 50 من اقل	51 200
201 - 400	401 - 600
601 - 800	801 - 1000
1000 - 3000	3000- 5000
More than 5000 اكثر من	

#### 3. Approximately, how many Twitter users do you follow? انت عامل فولو لكام واحد تقريبا على تويتر ؟

Less than 50 من اقل	51 200
201 - 400	401 - 600
601 - 800	801 - 1000
1000 - 3000	3000- 5000
More than 5000 اكثر من	

#### 4. When did you start using Twitter? متى بدأت استخدام تويتر ؟

Before Jan 25 Revolution قبل ثورة 25 يناير

After Jan 25 Revolution بعد ثورة 25 يناير

**5. How often do you use/ log on Twitter? ؟ بتستخدم تويتر كل اد ايه ؟**

- More than once a day اكثر من مرة في اليوم
- Once a day مرة في اليوم
- Several times per week اكثر من مرة في الاسبوع
- Once a week مرة واحدة في الاسبوع
- Twice a month مرتين في الشهر
- Once a month مرة واحدة في الشهر
- I don't use Twitter unless there's something important لا استخدم تويتر إلا في حالة وجود أخبار أو أحداث هامة

**6. In time of crisis/ breaking news/ or important events, how much time do you spend on Twitter per day? ؟ في حالة وجود احداث او اخبار هامة، بتقضي وقت اد ايه على تويتر ؟**

- Less than an hour a day اقل من ساعة في اليوم
- 1 to 2 hours a day من ساعة لساعتين في اليوم
- 3 to 4 hours a day من ثلاث الى اربع ساعات في اليوم
- More than 4 hours a day اكثر من اربع ساعات في اليوم

**7. In a typical day, how much time do you spend on Twitter?**

في اليوم العادي، بتقضي وقت اد ايه على تويتر تقريبا ؟

- Less than an hour a day اقل من ساعة في اليوم
- 1 to 2 hours a day من ساعة لساعتين في اليوم
- 3 to 4 hours a day من ثلاث الى اربع ساعات في اليوم
- More than 4 hours a day اكثر من اربع ساعات في اليوم

**8. Do you check your Twitter account while you're doing other stuff?**

بتستخدم تويتر اثناء القيام باشياء اخرى ؟

Yes نعم

No, I don't check Twitter while doing other stuff. لا (عندما استخدمه اكون متفرغ من اي

نشاط اخر) Skip Question 9

**9. what are those stuff? (check all that apply) (ما هي تلك الاشياء ؟ (يمكنك اختيار اكثر من بديل**

- Working وانا في الشغل
- Studying وانا بذاكر
- Hanging out with friends وانا خارج مع صحابي
- Stuck in traffic وانا في المواصلات
- In class وانا في المحاضرة
- Watching TV وانا بتفرج ع التلفزيون
- Other

**10. Rank the following news sources where 1 is your favorite source to get news updates and 8 is your least favorite.**

رتب مصادر الاخبار التالية بحيث يكون رقم 1 هو مصدرك المفضل للحصول على اخر الاخبار والمستجدات ورقم 8 اقلهم تفضيلا

- تويتر Twitter
- فيس بوك Facebook
- التلفزيون الحكومي State TV
- القنوات الفضائية Satellite TV
- الصحف القومية State-owned Newspapers
- الصحف الخاصة/ المستقلة Independent Newspapers
- المواقع الاخبارية Online News sites
- مواقع الصحف على الانترنت Newspapers' websites

**11. Do you think that the diffusion of social media in Egypt declined the reliance on traditional media?**

في رأيك، هل انتشار شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي ادى إلى تقليل الاعتماد على وسائل الاعلام التقليدية في مصر؟

نعم Yes

لا No

**12. In general, do you prefer using Facebook or Twitter ?**

بشكل عام، بتفضل استخدام فيس بوك ام تويتر؟

فيس بوك Facebook

تويتر Twitter

**13. Please mention why do you prefer this social networking site?**

برجاء ذكر اسباب تفضيلك لهذا الموقع

.....

.....

.....

**14. What are the most important issues/news that you're keen on following on Twitter? ما**

هي اهم الموضوعات الاخبار التي تحرص على متابعتها على تويتر؟

- الاخبار الاجتماعية Social news
- الاخبار الاقتصادية Economic news
- الاخبار السياسية Political news
- الاخبار الرياضية Sports news
- الاخبار الفنية/ الترفيهية Entertainment news

**15. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following reasons / motives for using**

**Twitter:** برجاء تحديد مستوى موافقتك على الاسباب/ الدوافع التالية لاستخدام تويتر

	Strongly agree اووافق جدا	Agree اووافق	Neutral إلى حد ما	Disagree لا اووافق	Strongly agree لا اووافق بشدة
To follow news updates (Current affairs) لمتابعة اخر الاخبار					
To follow sports and/or entertainment news لمتابعة الاخبار الرياضية أو الفنية					
To share and/or get reviews about new places, restaurants, movies, ..... لأنشر رأيي أو اعرف اراء الآخرين في ...، الاماكن الجديدة، المطاعم، الافلام					
To know the news that was not aired or published via state-owned media لمعرفة الاخبار التي لم تنشر في وسائل الاعلام الحكومي					
To get traffic updates لمعرفة الحالة المرورية					
To express myself and share my personal status لأعبر عن نفسي					
To share news, photos and/or videos لنشر اخبار/ صور/ فيديو هات					
To raise awareness, promote and/or support a cause لدعم قضية معينة ونشر الوعي والتعريف بها					
For political mobilization & to organize political events and meetings للحشد أو التعبئة السياسية وتنظيم الاحداث واللقاءات السياسية					
To post anything I want to say/report immediately لنشر اي حاجة شايفها واعرف الناس بها على طول فور حدوثها					
To pass time لقضاء وقت الفراغ					

For social mobilization & to organize social events and meetings للحشد او التعبئة الاجتماعية وتنظيم الاحداث واللقاءات الاجتماعية					
To get live updates about events currently taking place لمعرفة اخر مستجدات ما يقع الان من احداث					
To connect and get in touch with others للتواصل مع الاخرين					
To entertain myself عشان اسلي نفسي					
To get in touch with different companies and brands للتواصل مع بعض الشركات ومعرفة اخر اخبارها وعروضها					

**16. To what extent do you agree that using Twitter enabled you to:**

إلى أي مدى توافق على أن استخدامك لتويتر حقق لك ما يلي

	Strongly agree أوافق بشدة	Agree أوافق	Neutral إلى حد ما	Disagree لا أوافق	Strongly agree لا أوافق بشدة
Freely express yourself and share your thoughts حرية التعبير وإبداء رأي					
Get all the news and information you want to know الحصول على المعلومات والأخبار					
Know what's happening or taking place anywhere instantly سرعة معرفة الأخبار والأحداث فور وقوعها					
Easily connect with others and know their updates سهولة التواصل مع الآخرين ومعرفة آخر أخبارهم					
Spend your leisure time شغل وقت الفراغ					
Easily know the news سهولة الحصول على الأخبار					
Boost your political awareness زيادة وعي السياسي					

**17. Do you use a Smart phone (iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, etc... )**

هل تستخدم تليفون محمول مزود بخاصية الانترنت؟

Yes نعم

No لا



18. Rank the following devices where number 1 is your most used device to tweet and number 4 is least.

رتب الوسائل التالية بحيث يكون رقم ١ هو اكثر وسيلة تعتمد عليها في استخدام تويتر و رقم ٤ اقلها

	1	2	3	4
<b>Smartphone</b> تليفون محمول مزود بخاصية الانترنت				
<b>Desktop</b> كمبيوتر				
<b>Laptop</b> لاب توب				
<b>Tap/ Ipad</b>				

19. Gender النوع

Male ذكر  
Female انثى

20. Age السن

Under 18 اقل من 18  
18 - 23  
24 - 29  
30 - 35  
36 - 40  
41 - 46  
47 - 52  
52 + اكثر من 52

21. Level of education المؤهل الدراسي

High School ثانوية عامة  
BA/BSc مؤهل جامعي  
MA/MBA ماجستير  
PHD دكتوراه

22. Type of education نوع التعليم

Public education تعليم حكومي  
Private education تعليم خاص  
International education

**23. Where do you work? اين تعمل**

Public sector قطاع حكومي  
Private Sector قطاع خاص

**24. Career field (Check all that apply) مجال العمل يمكنك اختيار اكثر من بديل**

Banking المجال المصرفي  
Human Resources الموارد البشرية  
Sales المبيعات  
Marketing التسويق  
Advertising الدعاية والاعلان  
social media  
Journalism الصحافة  
Academic اكاديمي  
Engineering الهندسة  
Computer Science حاسبات ومعلومات  
Medical الطب  
Customer support خدمة عملاء  
Administration عمل اداري  
Unemployed, looking for a job لا اعمل/ ابحث عن وظيفة  
Student طالب  
Other

**25. Your total income per month الدخل الشهري**

Less than 1000 اقل من 1000  
1000 – 3000  
3000 – 5000  
5000 – 7000  
7000 – 10,000  
More than 10,000 اكثر من 10,000

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What's the role of Twitter in Egypt after Jan 25 Revolution?
- What are the main Twitter uses in Egypt?
- What are the characteristics of Egyptian Twitter users?
- In your opinion, why is there a huge difference between numbers of Twitter users vs. Facebook users in Egypt?
- Do you think Social Networking Sites changed the media environment in Egypt?