Role of social media in mobilization: a case study of egypt spring revolution res...

History, Revolution

Abstract

The emergence and spread of the Arab Spring Revolution has depended heavily on the use of internet and social media to pass on information and create awareness on the need for political revolution that creates the presence of democracy in the Arab countries. According to the rise in the number of social media users such as Facebook and Twitter in Egypt indicates that the political activists and rioters depended on the social media to immobilize people and also to plan and execute rallies and riots with the aim of bringing political changes. The aim of this research is to bring out the theories and roles of cultural organization and tools particularly media in revolutionizing the political status of Egypt.

Key words: Social media, Culture, Political revolution.

Social media plays a major role in cultural relationship as it has created a forum where people from diverse cultural entities are able to interact easily. Social media is also used as a tool of sharing vital information between the social community and this has enabled groups of people to share information and also mobilize one another toward performing a particular action. This was witnessed in the uprising of the Egyptian protestors in early 2011 when protestors passed information on democracy and the need for political revolution in Egypt through social sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and yFrog among others. The number of internet users had risen tremendously during this time especially after social sites were banned from the country for five days. Some researcher have also argued that social media especially Facebook and Twitter was the primary catalyst towards the fueling of the revolutionary movements in Egypt and other Arab countries.

The influence of cultural movements fueled by the use of social media in passing information and ideas has played a major role in revolutionizing the political situations in Egypt and other Arab countries like Libya and other countries that participated in the Arab Spring Revolution indicating that cultural movements plays a direct role in the success of political agendas and movements. This also shows a clear indication that social media was used as a major communication infrastructure that created awareness and as a source of information on the places of riots meetings among other factors. This calls for a need to explore the role that social media cultural tool has been used to strengthen social ties between people of similar and different cultural entities and specifically how it fueled the resistance of the cultural communities towards political movements in Egypt and other Arab countries.

References

- Bhuiyan, S. I. (2011). Social Media and Its Effectiveness in the Political Reform Movement in Egypt. Middle East Media Educator Vol. 1: 14-20.

- Browers, M. L. (2006). Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

- Castells, M. (1996). The Rise of the Network Society. Oxford: Blackwells.

- Eltantawy, N. & Wiest, J. (2011). The Arab Spring| Social Media in the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory. Internationa Journal of Communication, Vol 5. Retrieved from http://ijoc. org/index. php/ijoc/article/view/1242.

- Girard, J. P. & Girard, J. L. (2010). Social Knowledge: Using Social Media to

Know what You Know

- Harb, Z. (2011). Arab Revolutions and the Social Media Effect. M/C Journal, Vol. 14, No. 2. Retrieved from http://journal. media-culture. org. au/index. php/mcjournal/article/viewArticle/364.

- Salem, F. (2012). " Civil Movements: The Impact of Facebook and Twitter". Dubai School of Government.

- Schillinger, R. (20 September 2011). " Social Media and the Arab Spring: What Have We Learned?" Huffington Post.

- Stork, M. The Role of Social Media in Political Mobilisation: a Case Study of the January 2011 Egyptian Uprising. Retrieved from http://www. culturaldiplomacy. org/academy/content/pdf/participant-papers/2012-02-bifef/The_Role_of_Social_Media_in_Political_Mobilisation_-_Madeline_Storck. pdf.

- Wyld, David C.(2007). " The Blogging Revolution: Government in the Age of Web 2. 0." The IBM Center for the Business of Government.