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The Role of Social Media
& The Egyptian Uprisings

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Your efforts are greatly appreciated.
Abstract

The Egyptian Uprisings of 2011 was established as a vastly innovative media event that conjured the nostalgia of a global audience. This study discovered social media’s role and its initial impact depicted over the course of the insurrection in the country. When the Internet was first introduced in Egypt in the early 2000’s it was distinguished as a marginal leisure activity for the elite members of society. However, as time progressed and the Internet became accessible to everyone it fostered an instrument for various groups to call for alterations in their communities. Twitter and Facebook served as a fundamental communication device for protestors and groups who filtered their message of change of leadership amongst the youth demographic. Specifically, in Cairo, Egypt social media was a primary instrument utilized by a number of online communities, such as the April 6 Youth Movement and The We are All Khaleed Saaed groups. Both groups utilized Facebook and Twitter to inform demonstrators of the march on Tahrir Square on January 25th. This event witnessed a vast number of Egyptian activists and residents who gathered calling for the immediate dismissal of President Mubarak. In the aftermath of the Tahrir Square President Mubarak relinquished his control and withdrew his position as president after 29 years in office. A number of studies immediately ensued in an attempt to ascertain the contributions Facebook and Twitter had in impacting the results of Mubarak’s extraction from office. The purpose of this study explores two research inquires focusing on the role of social media during the Egyptian Revolution. Emphasis centered on how various groups throughout the region adopted social media as a tool to spread its message of change throughout their communities. The examiner conducted the research by implementing a survey questionnaire and conducting interviews with Egyptian citizens who participated or were affected by the events that occurred during the revolution. The results display the mounting reliance societies are having on advanced digital technology, specifically in the Arab community in regards to social movements and future alterations with their national government.

Key terms: Egyptian Revolution, Arab Spring, social media, activism,
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1. Introduction

The current study places detailed focus on the usage of social media sites and how they were implemented during the Egyptian Revolution. Specified importance entails how technological reliance unlocked a pathway for progressive channels of communication for a number of activists involved in the insurgents. In addition the researcher pursued further understanding on why social media was applied during the revolution and how particular groups utilized SMS’s as a primary information site as opposed to the mainstream media.

In terms of increased speed and range, SMS’s harbors innovative movements what printing, the postal system, the telephone, and fax messaging represented for movements in the far and more recent past (Della & Mosco, 2005). Globalization and technological dependency has led to novel and innovative discoveries in the field of digital technology.

In the context of space and time Internet speed connection appears to have altered the distance for how a specified party receives updates from multiple outlets in seconds. According to Douai (2013), communication progression along with the rapid evolution of hand held devices (smart phones, mobile technology, IPad, etc.) has amplified the speed and course of network information.

Thus, such advancement in this era of high-tech evolution has produced a unique voice for progressive channels of communication. Applegren (2007) contends that systematic innovation compromises an assortment of projections for the current era of digital media via globalization. Jenkins (2006) asserts that convergence allows every story important story to get told, and every brand to sell; meanwhile numerous people are courted across multiple media platforms for promotional agendas.

Khamas & Vaughn (2011) states that the expansion of media content through social networks has expanded by circulating across a bevy of channels and is
heavily dependent upon the active participation of the audience. In modern
terms this burgeoning process allows for the construction of one-voice
communities online in addition to marketing specified ideals through various
media networks.

Lindgren (2013) emphasizes how social media employed by citizens of a given
community or a group promoting a movement thus allows them to endorse their
cause, organize protests, and disrupt the official flow of information stemming
from traditional media.

1.1 Problem Identification

The principle role of the media is to deliver credible content that informs the
public on events occurring within any given community. However, government
controlled media under authoritative dictatorships, specifically under Mubarak
in Egypt had been heavily relied upon by inhabitants residing in the region for
many decades.

Most Egyptians believed President Mubarak, who had a regime that expanded
almost three decades was suppressing the privileges and basic human rights of a
number of citizens. Ekw (2012) contends that mounting speculation amongst
the populace centered on the government’s agenda to misinform the people
through mainstream media. Strong (2012) states that various communities
responded by sharing news feeds via social media on local and communal
demonstrations occurring throughout the country. Ultimately, the Egyptian
people took to the social networks and expressed their frustration in Mubarak’s
leadership.

Prior studies contend that social media’s influence was a contributory device in
the success of the anti government protests in Egypt. Eltantawy & Wiest (2011)
declared that social media confirmed the opportunities mobilization offered in
order for social movements to be successful. Their examination concluded there
was little doubt of social media’s significance not only in Egypt, but a number
of revolts occurring throughout the Arab world since late December 2010.
Allam (2012) directed a similar study that assessed social media’s role during the Arab Spring. His case study concentrated on the relationship between social networking sites and users of these websites for political purposes. This investigation infused the spiral of silence theory whereby a number of activists were encouraged against Mubarak’s regime via SNS’s. His findings discovered that social media similarly had a profound effect on various events and protests that occurred throughout the Middle East Uprisings.

Selah (2011) concluded from his analysis that the rebellion began with bloggers voicing their discontent with Mubarak’s regime in 2004. He uncovered how various social networking groups successfully used Twitter and Facebook to push for modification in route to the march on Tahrir Square on January 25th. The following groups were the primary focus for his study:

National Front for Change: 2010
Kefaya Egyptian Movement for Change: 2004
We Are Khaled Saaed: 2010
Alive In Egypt: 2011
SocialEyz: 2011

Selah’s analysis displayed evidence concerning topics debated by social media users via Twitter concerning political and social issues affecting the country during Mubarak’s reign.

Mansour’s (2012) findings produced results focusing on the impact social networking sites had on the January 25th Revolution in Egypt. His focus centered on a snowball sampling of participants of heterogeneous backgrounds that fused select focus groups to explore a range of relevant issues. He asserts how social media served to primarily publicize information surrounding the reasoning behind the protests.

Mansour’s discoveries confirmed that social media played a vital role during the Egyptian Revolution, and played a major role in connecting demonstrators and coordinating their efforts against the existing Mubarak regime. He also states
that SNS displayed news, pictures, and video clips of corruption, oppression, and human rights violation that ultimately resulting in large-scale civilian resistance throughout the country.

The proceeding four examples served as primary inspiration for the current research. The goal of the study focused on discovering the impact and role of social media during the Egyptian Revolution; also, how groups implemented social media as a means of marketing their message for government alteration. The central motive for the examiner during this research was to discover the role and impact of social media as an effective platform for ushering change in the Egyptian government.

1.2 Motivation For Study

The March on Tahrir Square that ultimately resulted in Mubarak’s removal from office served as a primary inspiration for the researcher. The four example studies described how the examiners utilized unique approaches to uncover evidence of how the social networks impacted the revolts. A similar event called the Occupy Wall Street Movement served as a primary inspiration for the researcher to discover the impact of social movements.

The researcher was originally interested in how social media was employed by the various protest groups. Comparably, the Occupy Wall Street Movement provided a platform for a number of activists to post videos on Facebook and stream newsfeeds via their timelines. The examiner recalled during the revolts in New York how he was highly reminded of the Egyptian Revolution that occurred in 2011. The examiner alleged this was a scholarship of interest to pursue for future research.

Originally, drawn by the events that occurred in Egypt the assessor sought various articles, studies, video interviews, and testimonials directly involved with the revolts during the Egyptian Revolution. The investigator elected to pursue a study of the ER, principally with the marches and infusion of social media that assisted in bringing about a rapid resolution within two weeks. The
surveyor believed the Egyptian Revolution could serve as a blue print and inspiration for future social movements, particularly in the west.

The inspector implemented a key feature from each study to conduct the current research. Those features included mobilization, social media’s role, group involvement via social networks, and the impact of social networking sites over the course of the uprisings. Each aspect of the research provided the examiner with the necessary protocols required in conducting the study.

1.3 Background

The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 was a movement that preceded a popular uprising that consisted of demonstrations, marches, plaza occupations, and strikes. A number of activists and protestors ranging from various socio-economic and religious backgrounds demanded the overthrow of Mubarak.

The movement consisted of a variety of elements including Islamic, liberal, anti-capitalist, nationalist and feminist assemblies. Koroteyev & Zinkina (2011) asserts the protestors revolted on topics concerning police brutality, state-of-emergency laws, lack of free elections, and freedom of speech, corruption, economic issues centering on high unemployment, and low paying wages.

The Egyptian government shut down social media for four days in late January 2011 as a means to distort the flow of information on behalf of the people concerning these pressing topics. However, on January 25th, 2011 thousands of protestors gathered in Tahrir Square in Cairo demanding for Mubarak’s removal from power.

Identified as the “Day of Reckoning” many media pundits alleged this act of insurrection had been in development for several weeks. Many groups had informed citizens on Facebook and Twitter of the planned marches in Tahrir Square prior to the government shutdown. After two weeks of countless protesting against his position the activists obtained a prominent victory when
President Mubarak finally conceded his position of power on February 11. Ekwo (2011) agrees that social media had a viable role in the dismissal of Mubarak’s regime.

1.3 Social Media Influence

Recent studies have examined the impact SMS’s contributed in initiating a number of imperative protests in the past. For example, during the anti-G8 protest in Genoa in July 2001 and the European Social Forum in Italy in November 2001 a number of activists used the Internet, social networks and mobile technology to fuel protests over the course of both forums (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005).

Extended analysis was collected in both instances to examine the influence the Internet had on how the conferences were conducted and impacted by the protests. Results demonstrated that case studies interpreted the following; the Internet empowered social movements in purely instrumental ways (as a protest function); symbolically (as a medium favoring identification processes in collective actors); cognitively by informing and sensitizing public opinion (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005).

Gerkin (2011) believes there was much debate regarding whether or not the protests would have been possible without the Internet or if this was truly a “Facebook Revolution.” However, social media was highly influential over the course of the revolution and the events leading up to Mubarak’s dismissal. Hatem Ali (2011) positions how a bevy of Egyptian social media groups led a coordinated effort by utilizing these platforms to endorse a revolutionary message.

One such activist mentioned to Howard (2011) that FB is utilized as a means to schedule protest; TW to coordinate; and YouTube to tell the world. Lynch (2007) adds that the Arab blogosphere gained significant political relevance since the turn of the century, along with grassroots movements that began as early as 2005.
When FB was introduced in Arabic in 2009 the process of public opinion amongst the youth demographic amplified (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Research exhibited and suggested that the media had a potent influence on audience’s behavior in a determined fashion (Howard & Hussain, 2011). Ekwo (2011) advocates that Twitter isn’t the maker of political revolutions, but a vanguard of a media one.

This description emphasizes how TW along with FB are current fragments of a contemporary news ecosystem that constructs a novel communication landscape which is participatory, networked, and accessible to countless links throughout a given community (Ekwo, 2011). Initially, social networking sites became a principal device and voice for the Egyptian activists in the face of oppression.

1.4 Purpose of Study

The primary aim of this study was to discover the role of social media and how it impacted the Egyptian uprisings. The objective centered on exploring how the protestors over the course of the revolt used SMS’s to empower their cause that ultimately led to President Mubarak’s dismissal. The following research questions were proposed for the study.

Research Question:

1. “What was social media’s role in upholding democratic principles during the Egyptian Revolution?”
2. “Did the impact of social media influence the events that occurred during the Uprisings?

The purposes of this study investigated innovative tactics utilized through social media by Egyptian protestors to endorse their message of change. Furthermore, this research explored how protestors participating in the ER infused convergence technology as a voice for alteration in leadership and its contribution to the empowerment of various protests throughout the revolt.
1.5 Benefits of Study

This study takes a fundamental view of how digital technology practices were engaged significantly in empowering a nation seeking alterations in their governmental leadership. This is a very exciting period for researchers in the field of communication, IT, and academia, as this study will provide huge benefits for various parties involved (Khamas & Vaughn, 2011).

The researcher attained a greater understanding of the challenges and benefits of how empowerment has altered the political, social, and cultural landscape within the digital sphere. There are a number of academic studies conducted by various international universities on Egyptian Revolution.

This is a unique analysis focusing on how accessible media and handheld technology can create an opportunity for modification in any given society. In addition the findings display how a number of Egyptian groups utilized social media as a tool to advocate alterations in their country’s leadership.

The marches on Tahrir Square were a landmark social media event. Academics will find the information to be highly valuable for their own studies; specifically, within the realm of digital technology where our society has adopted technology into vital aspects of our everyday living.

1.6 Definitions

The following descriptions entail the key terms discussed in the current study. This purpose serves as an essential procedure in comprehending the principal features of the current analysis.

A) **Social Media**: Refers to technologies, platforms, and services that enable individuals to engage in communication from one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many (Flew, 2014).
This type of media can be exemplified by the immaculate increase of numerous communication services that include MySpace, LinkedIn, Facebook, the micro-blogging service Twitter, the video-sharing Web site YouTube, Google +, etc. (Flew, 2014).

B) **Egyptian Revolution:** *A popular uprising that occurred in 2011 that consists of marches, demonstrations, and seeking of social change.*

D) **Social Movements:** *A type of group action where large, sometimes informal, groupings of individuals or organizations with a focus on specified political or social issues* (Obar, 2012).

Examples for this study will focus on how social movements were organized and carried out during the uprisings in the Egyptian Revolution.

E) **Arab Spring:** *Protest movements in the Arab world that sought the removal of oppressive governments* (Peterson, 2011).

F) **Activism & the Internet:** *Groups involved in various forms of activism using the Internet to advance organizational goals. Most claim social media helps increase the speed, reach and effectiveness as well as mobilizations efforts and has had a positive impact on activism in general* (Obar, 2012).

G) **Democratic Principles:** *Basic human rights centering on the practices established in a democratic community where all members are equal, and have equal rights and responsibilities.* (Stanford, 2014).
2. Theoretical Approach

2.1 Resource Mobilization Theory

Mobilization can be characterized as a process in which a group secures collective control over the resources essential for collective action. The method in which the Egyptian activists implemented social media collectively as an effective source to promote modification is a great example of how resource mobilization works. Eltantawy & Wiest (2011) state that new communication technologies through social media became important resources for mobilization and altered the landscape of collective action.

Numerous scholars have pointed to these novel technologies as important resources for the successful organization and implementation of social movements (Langman, 2005). Communication technologies have displayed itself as a novel instrumental function by supporting political and social movements in more conventional ways by providing opportunities for political, symbolic, and information exchange (Eltantawy & Wiest, pg. 8).

Resource mobilization is a theory based on the notion of a particular movement and its members to a) acquire resources and b) mobilize people towards accomplishing the movement’s goals and agendas (Kendall, 2005). For this study the theory was utilized and inserted as a resource for understanding the implementation of social media during the uprisings in Egypt.

This theory initially supports the ideal of Egyptian protestors implementing a purpose of usurping a corrupt regime and used social media as a means of accomplishing this objective. Social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, along with wiki and blog sites served as important instruments for the protestors to accomplish their goals of change within the region.

However, in recent decades this model has been challenged by other theories on social movements such as the new social movement theory of the 80’s. This theory stakes specific claim that the rise of post-industrial economy is
responsible for the new wave of social movements and that the primary issues and goals centered on matters related to human rights. Criticisms of the theory have been based on the following.

A) Its assumption of the constancy and discontent and collective interests over time.

B) Its overemphasis of the significance of outside resources.

C) The inability to adequately address social movements that begin with fairly substantial resources or those instigated by some minority groups.

D) Its failure to address how groups limited with resources can succeed in bringing social change.

E) Does not assign sufficient weight to grievances, identity and culture as well as other sociological issues.

(Kendall, 2005; Jenkins, 1983; Shin, 1994).

This theory was initially developed during the action in the 1960’s before gaining increased prominence in the 70’s and 80’s; although critics have claimed its popularity has diminished (Eltantaway & Wiest, pg 9). Jenkins (pg. 529) contends such assertions by stating the clash between resource mobilization theory and traditional approaches has stemmed in large part from different conceptions of social movements.

It is for this very reason that resource mobilization should not be overlooked, for it still has much to contribute. The increased utility of mobile devices and social media technologies present an opportunity to reinsert the theory into the Common Era in a contemporary context. This theory states clearly that the availability of assets and actors utilizing these resources effectively are essential.

Resource mobilization theory is an ideal method to explain social movements for it explains the specific actions of the activist party (McCarthy & Zald, 1987). This is primarily because the theory argues that the success of a movement depends on the resource (social media) and the activists’ ability to utilize this instrument.
3. Literature Review

3.1 Prelude to the Digital Revolution

As globalization accelerated into the new century it ushered a new era of development. The Arab Spring spawned a series of revolutionary movements that were unique in that it enabled citizens to utilize social media as an effective means to convey information and promote insurgent agendas (Linsey, 2013). The events of the Arab Spring focused on how a number of citizens used social media to call for change in leadership throughout various countries in the Middle East.

Three months preceding his exclusion from office Mubarak’s National Demographic Party celebrated an awe-inspiring triumph in what many critics believed involved tarnished elections, voter rigging, and repressions. The citizens of Egypt took to social media in an attempt to encourage modification against his administration. Eaton (2013) proclaims that during the marches on Tahrir Square, millions of Egyptians protested in the streets of Cairo as these events were streamed into homes around the globe.

Lerner (2010) proclaimed that along with the introduction of Facebook there followed a radical upsurge of public advocacy groups on various social media sites throughout the region. Taki (2013) states that prior to the uprisings social media had been previously distinguished as marginal; a tool utilized by the elite; and had only minimal impact because of the low penetration rate of the Internet.

Radsch (2008) believed the core to the Egyptian Revolution began in the world of the digital blogosphere. He proclaims there were three primary stages that ushered in the era of blog and pitted political movements against the state. He states, “These episodes by virtual media power transformed moments of political struggle through activism, news making, and online interaction” (Radsch, pg. 1).
A) First, was the Experimentation Stage where early adopters became bloggers and formed the core of numerous Egyptian blog sites (pg. 2)

B) Second, the Activist Phase was a period where a number of bloggers initially became activists. These groups were noted for their involvement with political movements, human rights marches, and speaking out on social issues. (Radsch, 2008).

C) The third phase was labeled the Diversification and Fragmentation Phase. This stage was noted for the number of fractions within the Egyptian digital community that formed numerous movements and communities that were displayed throughout the public realm.

Events that led to the actions displayed by the Egyptian activist were years in the making. On April 6, 2008 an activist political group called the “April 6 Youth Movement” was an Egyptian Facebook group that was initially spawned in spring 2008. The group was designed to support workers in the industrial town, El-Muhalla El-Kubra in support of textile workers receiving low wages, and facing high food prices (Bauman, 2012).

Activists called for the strikers to wear black and remain in their homes on the day of the strike. A number of bloggers, citizens, and journalist used various social media sites as a tool to alert their followers about the progressions made by the protestors during the strike. A Facebook page was created and registered 3000 likes within twenty-four hours (Bauman, pg. 5). The group would inspire and attract hundreds of thousands of members worldwide.

We are All Saaed Khaled was another Facebook page created in the aftermath of a young man’s beating and demise outside his front lawn at the hands of two law enforcement officials. Bradley (2010) states there was an online campaign set on the official Facebook Page calling for the injustices that led to his senseless beating and untimely death.
Photos of his disfigured corpse spread throughout online communities on Egyptian websites and incited outrage amongst the youth demographic, which contributed to the growing discontent in the weeks leading up to the Egyptian Revolution (Bradley, pg. 25). The site garnered the attention of Egyptian Google executive, Wael Ghonim who heavily contributed to the website. His efforts would be a precursor to the events that eventually occurred led to the march on Tahrir Square in January (Eaton, pg. 8).

In response to those events and others various members of both groups went on YouTube, FB, and TW prior to the march on Tahrir Square and urged group members to join them on January 25th to rise up against the government and demand change. Ali (2012) maintains that based on the role displayed by the Egyptians during the revolution social media may become an effective tool in developing nations. Salem (2011) affirms the shift by social media users to civic online and political mobilization played a viable role in empowering people, shaping opinions, and influencing change.

Relative to this research the examiner sought news coverage and postings on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and various outlets of social media to be highly enticing. A few questions were formulated and focused on the impact of SNS’s.

a) Why did various groups use social media to evoke a revolution?
b) Who was the primary demographic involved in formulating such a movement?
c) Was Facebook and Twitter really effective in promoting the goals of the groups who sought political change in their country?
d) How often were these groups marketing their ideals of change through Facebook and Twitter?
e) What content was exchanged by groups via social media channels to cause such an upsurge?

The following inquiries served as principal factors in determining which initiative the examiner would approach for this research. The next goal was to
view the upsurge of content exchanged through FB and TW between the various
groups who were in favor of political revision in Egypt.

3.2 Upsurge of FB Groups

In the days leading up to the march on Tahir Square, President Mubarak in
conjunction with the Egyptian government shut down all social media
connections throughout the country. However, various groups who were
instantly made aware of this attempt intercepted information and their response
was swift and impactful. Fortunately, a number of citizens of the Muslim
brotherhood kept in contact with servers who were located in Europe and were
able to stay connected to the Internet (Mari & Mazaid, 2011). This enabled
users and social media groups to remain informed of group meetings and set up
a number of rallies throughout the country in opposition to the current regime.

Along with Facebook there followed a profound upsurge of public advocacy
groups on various social media sites throughout the region (Lerner, 2010).
Numerous factions endorsed their attitudes of politically sensitive subjects that
were discussed on multiple webpages. Such content witnessed numerous
campaigns by citizens, journalists, and online activists expressing their
discontent with the current regime.

Once introduced to a bevy of liberals, minorities, and religious groups quickly
utilized Egypt SMS’s for dissent and others opposed to Mubarak’s regime
(Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). The factors of social media affecting public opinion,
international support, and rapid dissemination of news globally are relatively a
new phenomenon during revolutions (Lindsey, 2013).

Constant Internet interaction via the social network provided protestors with
evidence on how to counteract noted security forces that were constantly
attempting to disperse their burgeoning activities (Gerkin, 2011). Ali (2012)
believes social media provided activists an ideal instrument to quickly
disseminate information while bypassing government restrictions.
Regarding the proposed questions formulated in the previous section it appears those who felt neglected by the current regime shepherded the movement for political modification. It appears SMS’s were utilized as a reaction to Mubarak’s act to shut down all social media interaction throughout the country. The activists perhaps viewed this as a totalitarian initiative by a leader they viewed as a martyr. The reaction that quickly ensued on Tahrir Square appeared to be a manifestation of years of frustration on behalf of those who felt oppressed.

However, another interesting question was generated in reaction to this movement.

a) What was the language utilized by those through the social network to encourage the protests?

b) How was this event organized?

c) Who were the groups involved in the insurrections?

d) Why was it effective?

The preceding three sections took an in depth view of what past studies revealed of how social media was utilized over the course of the March on Tahrir Square, and which groups and demographic were primarily involved in bringing change to Egypt.

3.3 The Twitter Revolution

Empirical data was gathered by a group of researchers from the University of Washington concerning the volume of Twitter activation over the course of the uprisings in the Arab Region. To start the group focused on Twitter because data was much easier to collect and translate as opposed to similar SMS sites. A majority of the hash tags was exported archived from Twapper Keeper for analysis (Freelon, 2011).

The figure below showcases the number of tweets exchanged according to the TwapperKeeper from seven major MENA hashtags: #egypt, #libya, #sidibouzid (Tunisia), #feb14, #morocco, #yemen, #algeria (Freelon, 2011).
According to their findings the total number of tweets represented on the following chart totaled 5,888,641. The light blue lines represent the number of tweets sent by Egyptians over the period of 01/14/11-03/23/11.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the success of the Arab Spring centered on the amount of users who had immediate access to technical convergence devices such as smart phones, I pads, and smart pods. These devices proved crucial in regards to estimating the time and speed it would take for one party to exchange numerous texts with one another.

According to group findings the obvious statistic, which stands out of the plot is how Egypt and Libya garnered the majority share of attention by attracting several hundreds of thousands more tweets than others (Freelon, 2011). A major theory focused on the amount of accessibility of Internet sites available to certain amount of users within a given region. Cairo’s population of more than twenty-six million contributes to a vast amount of tweets sent on behalf of its citizens based on the city’s population volume.
In the proceeding chart we will view the Egyptian plot. This table displays how the pattern reaches its zenith between the periods of Feb. 6-12, which represents the time period of Mubarak’s resignation (Freelon, 2011). This era witnessed a spike in tweets shared amongst users that totaled more than 50k per day (Howard & Duffy, 2011). It was also theorized that a number of tweets were also attributed to citizens from international observers who were also following the events. However, it was believed that a number of international observers’ re-tweeted content from local users liberally, thus amplifying the voices beyond what the above and below plot charts may imply (Freelon, 2011).

What could be concluded from both plots depict the amount of activity engaged on Twitter during the peak of the ER. In Egypt it was discovered on the day of Mubarak’s resignation tweets from that country spiked to more than 230k tweets per day (Howard & Duffy, 2011). According to Philip Howard (2011) who administered the study stated that data gathered displayed how Twitter provided a window into the broader world of digital conversations, many of which probably involved cell phones to send texts, pictures or voice messages (O’Donnell, 2011).
In the days following Mubarak’s resignation there were an average of 2,400 tweets per day around neighboring countries about the political change and stability in Egypt (Howard & Duffy, 2011). Over the course of time this extended activity initiated debate amongst citizens in surrounding countries regarding social uprisings. Many opponents to the existing regimes, which were particularly struggling middle-class households, used social media to identify goals, build solidarity and organize demonstrations (O’Donnell, 2011).

Additional evidence confirms how Twitter served as a primary platform for communication amongst domestic and international observers regarding the event. The most telling sign of the study suggests Twitter also served as a jumping point for action on behalf of the parties involved in the protests.

3.4 Arab Spring & Technical Empowerment

Digital technology constructs a freedom memo that takes on a life of its own and filters ideas about liberty and revolution to a surprisingly large number of people (Howard & Duffy, pg. 3). The ER was only a fraction of similar movements that occurred throughout the Middle East; Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria also witnessed similar revolts in their regions and outcomes where a number of regimes were ousted as a result of insurrections involving social media.

DeLong-Bas (2014) believed with the addition of the youth bulge in the Arab community where between fifty-five and seventy percent of the population of any given country is under the age of thirty; given the effect social media and modern technology have been used to bring about political change should come as no surprise. What social media had done for the Arab youth and elder civilians is providing a device for underground communities to share their stories to those willing to listen (Kassem, 2012).

Social networking had proven to be a major breakthrough for the region. Howard (2011) states, “Evidence suggest that social media carried a cascade of messages about freedom and democracy across North Africa and the Middle
East, and helped raise expectations for the success of political uprising” (O’Donnel, 2011).

The Arab Spring proved to be a unique circumstance that witnessed innumerable citizens united through the social network and express their displeasure against the oppression of an authoritative government (Lerner, 2010). Digital technology constructs a freedom memo that takes on a life of its own and filters ideas about liberty and revolution to a surprisingly large number of people (Howard & Duffy, pg. 3). Furthermore, the Internet has also presented itself as a principal device in endorsing and implementing social movements. Immediate accessibility to a pivotal commodity did prove vital for the success of the Arab Spring.

### 3.5 Contributions of Mobilization

Constant Internet interaction via the social network provided protestors with evidence on how to counteract noted security forces that were constantly attempting to disperse their burgeoning activities (Gerkin, 2011). Technology’s infusion and role enabled activists to establish a democratic crusade that eventually resulted in the ousting of an oppressive regime had proved essential.

Furthermore, the youth tend to be more likely to seek their news from and express themselves on the Internet generally finding it to be more reliable and accurate and less filled with government propaganda than mainstream resources (DeLong-Bas, 2014). According to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center in Washington, DC results displayed that Arabs used SMS to frequently share their views about politics, community issues, and religion as it relates to the Arab culture (Kohut, 2012). SMS’s tend to gradually appeal towards a younger audience as a new community hangout.

FB & TW (Rideout, 2012) are a parcel of modern adolescence that amplifies the age-old anxieties and rites of passage in ways that yesterday’s communications media was unequipped to provide. Social media allows for more than one truth story to be told, allows for greater transparency and more voices to come
express their disproval or concerns regarding a variety of issues (Gerkin, 2011). Digital technology’s contribution to protestors advocating for democracy in their communities may eventually prove to validate imperative initiatives in regional development. Figure 1 displays the results from the Pew Research study.

![Social Networking Usage Table]

The diagram demonstrates how citizens in the Arab Regions of Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Jordan, etc. use social media as a forum more than sixty percent of the time to discuss issues involving the community or politics (Kohut, 2012). Furthermore, according to the study community issues and politics remain a sensitive and important topic for discussion in these regions in comparison to the rest of the world. In contrast, across twenty of the nations surveyed, a median of only thirty-four percent post their political opinions. Similarly, in

Figure 2: [www.pewglobal.org](http://www.pewglobal.org)
Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan, more than seven-in-ten share views on community issues, compared with a cross-national median of just forty-six percent (Kille, 2012).

The use of mobile technology also contributes to the figures displayed on the graph. Citizens of the younger demographic are more engaged with cell phone usage than their elders. Additional data collected reveal that in Middle Eastern countries 18-29 year olds are at least ten percentage points more likely than those aged fifty or older to utilize their mobile phones (Kohut, 2012).

Wilson positioned (2012) by the later part of the decade cell phone penetration had reached an estimated 80% of citizens in Egypt overall. A massive increase of usage was contributed in Cairo where sales for smart phones in 2010 represented a 24% increase in sales amongst the youth demographic over the previous year (Khamas & Vaughn, 2011). This substantial upsurge displayed how the youth of the region relied on technology and how they remain connected by receiving up to date notices of the ongoing gatherings/events throughout the region.

Further results from the PEW study also depict that the youth were the majority of the demographic that utilized social media during the political unrest. Cell phone purchases mightily increased over the last decade in those regions also. Smart phones became increasingly common and were a valuable source for youth in Egypt in regards to finding information on political and religious information (Kohult, 2012).

Simmons (2013) also noted how mobile technology and social networking is especially popular among the highly and well educated. Freelon (2011) believes there is an advantage in using SMS sites since a number of people are connected and it is highly convenient for protestors to communicate with one another actively.
Figure 3 exhibits the probability of the youth consuming social media websites as opposed to alternate popular media in the region. This figure coincides with how popular social networks have gradually increased amongst the global youth demographic, particularly in Europe. However, a gradual increase is becoming more and more substantial as Internet access continues to increase in the Middle East.

<table>
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<th>Young Much More Likely to Use Social Networking</th>
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<tr>
<td>% That use social networking (based on total)</td>
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<td>18-29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
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Figure 3: [www.pewglobal.org](http://www.pewglobal.org)

Numbers display that nearly two-thirds of citizens ages 18-29 from countries Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, and Turkey are the majority demographic that used social networking sites; meanwhile, on average under 25% of the populous over the age of thirty utilize social media sites. The figures in both charts reaffirm the impact the youth demographic had on the Arab Spring. Statistics for the Middle
East region showcase the youth demographic Internet activity nearly double that of their contemporary counterparts.

3.6 Internet Accessibility

Connectivity and media expansion over the past decade had enabled users in the Arab region, specifically from the youth demographic to preserve interaction within the digital sphere. Salem (pg. 274) maintains the contribution social media had on its impact during the Egyptian revolts was critical. He maintains that television, satellites, and mobile telephone information flows had been rewired in the Arab region, and gave rise to novel opportunities for communication and empowerment.

The ability to get people into the streets was the primary success of social media during the revolts (Eaton, pg. 2). How convergence media was employed during the uprisings created a new threshold for the future in mobile communication. According to the Arab Social Media report more than 27.7 million Facebook users in the Arab world by the end of the first quarter of 2011.

That was more than a thirty percent jump from the beginning of the year (De Leon, 2011). SMS’s have proven to reenergize the public sphere (Douai, 2013; Papacharissi, 2002), enhance civic engagement (Norris, 2001), and build a stronger global social movement (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005).

Perhaps the principal contribution demonstrated by SMS’s was witnessed how it altered and transformed Arab communities newly liberated from state television monopolies (Douai, 2013). A rigid challenge was presented to state authorities in regards to controlling and manipulating the flow of information transferred between users over the course of the Arab Spring movement.

Unlike cable television and satellite feeds the government found it highly difficult to regulate the massive quantity of information streamed amongst users. Eaton (pg. 3) suggests the significance Internet based communication and communication technologies during the events were twofold: 1) Internet was
utilized as a tool for activists to mobilize, organize, and inspire Egyptians to take to the streets on Jan. 25th. 2) Used this platform as a medium to document events in Egypt beyond the inclusion and interference of authorities.

For example, there were videos streamed on YouTube of police brutality, harassment and corruption in a number of Arab communities. A slew of these videos went viral around a number of Arab countries and the volume of users who viewed this sort of injustice outweighed the act.

Citizens responded and shared their feelings or displeasures through Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. Social media offers movements with a cheap and fast means of international communication, which simplifies mobilization and favors highly flexible, loose organizational structures (Della Porta & Mosca, 2005).

Idle & Nunns (2011) quotes a posting from an activists’ stating that without Internet activism the revolution would not have happened or would have been as effective as it was without social media or for that matter at such unbelievable speed. Salem (pg. 274) believes as long as the Arab youth community continues to embrace social media with the primary objective of informing, and influence change in their societies.

3.7 Democratic Values in Egypt

The primary emphasis of the Egyptian Revolution focused on protesters call for Mubarak’s removal from office. The people demanded a change in government and desired to shift more towards a system that placed emphasis on democratic values. According to Beissinger & Mazur (2012) the democratic revolution in Egypt also placed emphasis on social and economic inequality. In terms of defining democratic values for the Egyptian people their protests concentrated on political issues, freedom of speech, unemployment, freedom, justice, and an equal voice in managing Egypt’s resources.

In wake of the revolution the Egyptian people maintained their preference for democracy and believe democratic values were significant for governance.
According to a Pew Research poll (2014) some weeks after the revolution displayed that seven-in-ten Egyptians (71%) believed in democracy over any other kind of government. Although this number has slipped slightly in recent years most citizens sustain that implementing a democratic approach is the best direction for the country.

Many Egyptians believed democracy is the best form of government, and that it was important to reside in a country with basic democratic rights and institutions. The values that Egyptians commonly associate with democracy included a fair judiciary system that treats everyone fairly, uncensored media, improved economic conditions and honest elections. According to the study (2011) many Egyptians believed a democratic government was more significant and vital to the country’s future than a potent leader.

Democratic values are a complex term to define, however in light of the revolution the ideals of democracy appear to those similarly practiced in western societies. According to Bauer (2011) this ideal consisted of the substantiation of fundamental rights, inclusion and the rule of law as a normative core, economic participation, and prosperity as a material base for development and societal modification.

Ghanem (2014) believes the attempt in establishing democracy in a country with weak institutions and no democratic culture could possibly take years, possibly decades to install. The confidence in “people power” through social media provided the Egyptian citizens during the January 25th revolution to demand liberty, prosperity and social justice. This demographic believed social media provided the platform to voice their demand for social justice and equality they had not experienced over the course of Mubarak’s reign.

Overall, the Egyptian citizens felt the insertion of a democratic government where equal rights for everyone was the most important aspect of the revolution. One necessary approach to implementing ideal values of a democratic society perhaps should include drafting a new constitution and election of a new parliament and president. The newly draft constitution should focus on altering
those matters and issues the people of Egypt marched for and against on January 25th. Mubarak’s removal from power opened the door for a new era of government in Egypt. The democratization process could very well be a slow and evolving process; however, despite of its progress the citizens’ ideals of democratic values along with equal human rights remain at the forefront of the peoples’ demands.

3.7 Goals for Research

The marches on Tahrir Square served as a call for renovation in leadership. The research conducted by the groups shared evidence of how social media sites were employed over the course of the uprisings. Also the prior research quantified the use of tweets and identified key terms as a primary inspiration for those studies.

The Pew Research group’s findings were a very helpful discovery for the examination. The researcher found the outcomes to be highly insightful and provided great information. The previous studies took an in depth look at social network usage, and what certain terms, phrases, and hash tags were utilized by the youth demographic and groups.

In addition, the data assembled was measured to specify the actual number of tweets; in addition to those who participated in the march on Tahrir Square. The findings pooled by the researchers displayed how often the youth were utilizing social media. The results revealed how this group was the primary demographic that utilized social media; also, the findings also exhibited that a majority of youth are the group most likely to discuss political and community issues through social media.

Despite the actual depiction of the numbers there remains insignificant information on how groups encouraged members of the community to march with them. Also, there was minimal interpretation regarding social media’s role during the uprisings. Additionally, there is limited evidence showcasing how the each group utilized technology to their advantage.
The examiner recognized the evidence provided from the previous studies were helpful, however there was a need for more findings. The material necessary in initiating this examination required profound evidence of how the groups ushered social media to promote their message.

Substantial data proved resourceful centering on the various groups that used social media to extend their message for change. The April 6th Youth Movement, We Are Khalad Saaed, and various other groups functioned as valued material for the examiner. The focus of these groups to stream live newsfeeds of current events and occurrences provided evidence that allowed the examiner to insert this aspect into the study.

The study previously focused on the implementation of technology as an available resource for the activists; however, there was minimal information regarding how technology was infused in accomplishing the movement’s goals and agendas for the revolt. The examiner’s primary objective was to seek evidence on technology’s role over the course of the Egyptian Revolution.

Moreover, the previous research did provide the examiner with a steady idea of the demographic group prominently involved in the uprisings. The knowledge attained through this segment was appropriate for the assessor to draft a reputable and perceptive approach for the research. This material assisted in providing the investigator with a specific target audience to approach and implement for this research.

The inspector’s goal for this study was to ascertain the roles of the Facebook and Twitter groups during the uprisings. Furthermore, additional research would be essential to discover the impact social media had during the revolts. By delving into this facet of the examination this method permitted the examiner to seek and sort the answers to the proposed research questions.
3.8 Issues & Problems with Social Media

Eaton (pg. 4) states the initial effect of online political activism has sparked a major debate between those who view it as a powerful new weapon and others who downplay the overall impact it had during the Arab Spring. Most critics point out the disparity of information available, to issues of trustworthiness and the reliability of the actual information presented (Flanigan & Metzger, 2007). Keen (pg. 15) argues that social media practices the law of digital Darwinism, were the rule centers on the survival of the loudest and most opinionated.

Flanigan (2011) quotes a noted critic who dismisses the impact of social media as a myth and states a majority of the people on Twitter & Facebook were secular and liberal activists who deceived a number of its fellow citizens to join in on a fruitless coup. Others assert that technology is not a panacea and that Facebook does not make a revolution. Most argue that social media influence has been overrated and highly exaggerated (Ali & Fahmy).

Ali maintains (pg. 63) that it was Ghonim’s appearance on network television in Cairo after Feb. 8 that led to the increased publicity of Saaed’s Facebook page that he publicly supported. Most observers agree by proclaiming it was the traditional media’s advertising of the actual events and updated Facebook pages and Twitter accounts that harbored the increased participation of Egyptian citizens on social media.

Herrera (2014) also believes social media had little to do with the Egyptian Revolution. She states it was the actual people on the streets calling for action who were the actual partakers and influenced the events. She proclaims it was through the citizens’ hard work and call to action that made the real difference, not Facebook.

Bardici (2012) declared that although instrumental in bringing about political change through civic engagement, triggering public mobilization, and promoting a sense of community amongst marginalized groups it is impossible to declare social media as the principle catalyst for the revolution.
He further adds there wasn’t enough concrete evidence or research to support this claim; the problem of assessing its role in influencing social change appears to be compounded by the lack of clear empirical evidence (Bardici, pg. 6). Khamis (2011) argues that political reform was the result of the merger of the determination by the public will and the strength of the Egyptian activists.

Most continue to assert that a number of socio-political and cultural factors were as significant to the development of political events that ignited the revolution (Bardici, pg. 24). Contrary to what sparked the revolution the citizens of the country felt there was a need for imminent change in leadership.

The Internet was once viewed as a tool of negligible leisure for the elite class of Egypt; however the proceeding decade witnessed its transformation into a viable weapon utilized by a vast number of underwhelmed citizens feeling the oppression of an overarching ruling regime.

4 Methodology

4.1 Research Methodology & Procedures

The subsequent section applies to the research methodology and outlines how the process for the proposal is conducted. Principally the study method, how the data collection process is accentuated, participation breakdown, validity, reliability, strengths, weaknesses and limitations; in addition the procedure of articulating the research questions are discussed.

4.2 Research Approach

This analysis was conducted by incorporating a mixed methods methodology. This approach consisted of a set of procedures that transformed into a series of representations; while attempting to make sense of reasoning specific phenomena people bring to them from multiple viewpoints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Morgan (2007) states mixed methods strategies represent an opportunity to transform two
opposing methods by converting them into new knowledge through dialectic discovery.

Cresswell (2013) positions that a mixed method design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing quantitative & qualitative research methods in a study to attain understanding of a defined problem. Also, this method explores the meaning a specific phenomenon from more than a single perspective (Cresswell & Clark, 2011). The objective sought to reach a more profound understanding of how social media impacted the Egyptian Revolution.

A survey questionnaire was employed for the purpose of collecting data. Resource mobilization theory was implemented as a means of verifying how protestors utilized social media throughout the uprisings. The researcher contacted a total of two hundred and fifty participants for the survey and received seventy-five responses from the subjects. The participants were all of Middle Eastern background based in Egypt, Beirut, Jordan, and England.

The characteristics for this mixed methods approach consisted on standard procedures that converted the recorded data into a series of representations; in addition the researcher attempted to make sense of explaining this particular phenomena based on the multiple standpoints specified by the applicants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The questionnaire was created with the assistance of the Survey Monkey website. The chief concentration of the survey highlighted social media’s impact on the Egyptian Revolution. In addition to the investigation a series of interviews were installed upon the conclusion of the questionnaire.

The purpose of the discussions was to obtain additional material and insight on behalf of the participants. The conversations allocated in depth evidence and involved essay styled replies in opposition to the survey that only required answers on a scale that measured their opinions and thoughts regarding the impact social media had on the uprisings in the region.
4.3 Research Design

Appropriate intervals essential for generating an effective study according to Hammersly & Atkinson (1995) centers on how the research strategy should be a reflexive procedure functioning through every phase of a project. Each step should demonstrate a multitude of activities that displays the following; the collecting and analyzing of data; developing and modifying theory; elaborating or refocusing the research questions; identifying and dealing with validity threats are usually going on more or less simultaneously with each influencing all of the others (Maxwell, 2008).

For this study developing a prominent research strategy was imperative to explore various experimental techniques, encompassing a variety of accepted methods and structures. By implementing the mixed methodology approach the examiner was enabled to take advantage of the study by utilizing multiple experimental techniques. This included creating a survey questionnaire through the Monkey Survey website which enabled the researcher to quantify numbers and responses in percentages points.

Quantitative research relies mainly on statistical information and numbers; whereas qualitative research is more interested in personal accounts, and interviews for gathering information. The questionnaire utilized in this study featured such queries that explored both aspects of the quantitative and qualitative research model. Inserting a mixed method stratagem served as a central motive for the examiner to implement within the study as a means to overcome the restraints that would develop if conducting a single design (Biddex, 2014).

The design of this investigation focused on the usage of a survey questionnaire, and data analysis of statistics Furthermore, this research was a case study concentrating on the events that steered numerous groups to implement social media during the uprisings. In the social and life sciences a case study are analysis of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods (Thomas, 2011).

The scheme for this examination fixated on the usage of a survey questionnaire, and data evaluation of numbers. The method drafted is usually associated with the social constructivist paradigm; it is about recording, analyzing and attempting to uncover the deeper meaning and primary significance of human behavior (Dicks, 2009).
The survey sought details regarding the participant’s background, age, and location. In addition it also comprised a bevy of inquiries related to both research questions. The queries included a variety of probes centered on mobile, and SMS usage over the course of the protests. Interviews were also implemented to obtain further understanding and information regarding the impact social media had on the overall revolution. Upon assembling the total data the researcher conducted a conclusive exploration of the research questions to evaluate if the data provided substantial evidence for support.

Data assortment was primarily based on numerical and subjective opinions of the participants based on inquiries pertaining to their personal experience; in this case for the participants of the Egyptian Uprisings the inquiries focused on their individual involvement with social media during the revolts.

First, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to various subjects participating in the process. Next, the examiner broke down the data with the assistance of the Survey Monkey website data analysis feature, which numerically displayed the results by percentage points. Upon assembling the required figures the researcher concluded supplementary in depth interviews were required based on the findings gathered from the questionnaires.

Reliability and validity for this methodology involved special emphasis in regards to the researchers’ reliance on gathering data through a real world setting. The concept of reliability was of the upmost importance in terms of drawing an accurate conclusion. Seale (1999) states that to ensure reliability in a mixed methods research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. Reliability was based on the test-retest approach. Upon completing the survey the researcher resent the survey for a second time to the participants to ensure and conclude the data collected is consistent.

### 4.4 Participants

A major element of research development involves emerging guidelines as to who will be recruited for the proposed study (Eide, 2008). For this specific inquiry, recruitment referred to the process whereby the research identified and recruited participants to join the study (Given, 2008). The subjects sampled were capable of
informing important facets and perspectives related to the phenomenon that was studied (Sargeant, 2012). One principle design for this research involved identifying the proper candidates capable of relating to the dynamics of the examination.

Creswell (2009) asserts the researcher must select the principal participants who can best inform the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study. Selecting an appropriate sample size is not of great importance, however it is considered advantageous to receive various perspectives of the phenomena under investigation.

Subjects in this research hailed primarily from the Middle East region. A number of participants included contacts from a number of Egyptian social media groups who were avid supporters of various causes. Below are the names of the groups recruited for the study identified through which network of social media each group was discovered. Most of the group adherents that participated were either members of were associated with the following groups…

Egyptians in London: Facebook

Egyptian European Revolution Council: Twitter

Egyptian Muslims in the UK: Homepage located in London

My Egypt: Facebook

Egyptian Streets: Homepage located in Cairo

We Are All Khalad Saad: Facebook

April 6 Youth Movement: Facebook

Social Democratic Party of Egypt: Homepage located in Alexandria

The vast majority of applicants primarily hailed from the Khalad Saad, April 6 Youth Movement, Egyptian Muslims in the UK, and My Egypt Facebook groups. The examiner randomly selected members for the study by distributing various text messages to their Twitter and Facebook account in addition to their email addresses.
In total seventy-five subjects participated in the survey questionnaire portion of the study; a dozen subjects also took part in the interview juncture of the analysis. The demographics for the applicants ranged from 18-40. The gender breakdown for each subject resembled evenly for both male and females. The average age for the females were twenty-four, while for the males the average age was twenty-seven. The youngest female to participate was sixteen and the oldest was thirty-four. The youngest male was nineteen, and the oldest male was fifty-four. The examiner also used members of the aforementioned groups as references to recruit additional subjects to participate in the study.

### 4.5 Instrument

Instrument implementation is the generic term that applies to researchers who utilize this feature as a measuring device for an investigative study. Instruments tend to fall into two broad categories; researcher-completed and subject completed (Biddix, 2014). Researchers adopting for mixed methods into their studies often store data in the field through examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants (Marshall, C. & Rossman, G., 2010). The instrument employed for this examination was a questionnaire created through the online website Survey Monkey.

Resource mobilization theory was applied by focusing on the impact social media partook over the course of the revolution. The questionnaire highlighted how the groups utilized social media and achieved their primary initiative by involving the greater community. Numerous inquiries focused on how social media and technology was exploited by various groups via their Facebook homepages. The primary purpose of the survey was to discover the impact of social media revolving around the two research questions driving the study.

1. “What was social media’s role in upholding democratic principles during the Egyptian Revolution?”
2. “Did social media’s role influence major events that occurred during the Uprisings?”
The quantitative portion for this study focused on inquiries proposed in the survey which were ranked from 1 to 5; where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree to the question. A number of additional inquiries were proposed in regards to a participant’s opinion; this enabled shared thoughts on how they perceived social media’s impact throughout the uprisings. The questionnaire was divided into two halves; the first half quantified how much time the participant spent on social media; their views on what impact social media contributed to the insurgents; and if they felt social media provided essential information on issues within their communities as opposed to the traditional media in the region. The second half of the survey focused on the impact social media had on the protests and how behaviors of peers and fellow countrymen expressed through social media encouraged them to become involved in the revolution.

4.6 Interviews

Upon finalizing the questionnaire portion of the investigation a series of discussions were conducted. This section of the analysis comprised of a select few subjects who participated in the study. The discussions were conducted via Facebook, Twitter, Survey Monkey website and by the examiner texting a few inquiries via email. The examiner emailed discussion queries to participants while also conducting live interviews with subjects through social networking sites.

There were a total of ten inquiries in all centering on how social media was utilized during the Egyptian Revolution. The questions also instilled how various groups used Facebook and Twitter to market their messages throughout the community. In addition the dialogues ventured into topics such as the participant’s personal feelings regarding the Facebook groups; how mainstream and social media portrayed the revolution; and how the impact of social media will contribute to future social movements in the country.

Each interview was conducted in less than twenty minutes. A number of inquiries were emailed to most of the subjects and they responded on their own time. For others, the interviews were carried out via social media sites where the researcher proposed the subjects with a few queries who chose to participate in the live interviews. Overall, the
examiner conducted a dozen interviews through Facebook and Twitter, while the remainder of the data was collected via the Survey Monkey website.

4.7 Data Collection & Analysis

Qualitative research tools are aimed at ascertaining the principal themes indicating human motivations and the documentation of activities is usually very complete (Creswell, 2013). The major purpose of a qualitative analysis is to interpret the data and the resulting themes to facilitate understanding of the subject at the center of the examination (Sergeant, 2012). Content analysis can be used when qualitative data has been collected through a bevy of methods that includes; interviews, focus groups, observation, surveys, and documentary analysis (Surrey, 2012).

Data from a qualitative survey consisted of terms and observations that depend on the resources gathered for the study (Powell & Renner, 2003). Quantitative experiments are sometimes referred to as a true science for its use of traditional mathematical and statistical means to measure results conclusively (Shuttleworth, 2012). This measuring tactic proved very useful in the survey portion of the study for this enabled to examiner to quantify the responses shared by the participants.

Cresswell (2013) acknowledges how assorting data collection in a mixed methods study play a vital role by providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results; this method also assesses alterations in people’s perceptions of their well-being (This procedure comprised of collecting, analyzing and administering the material distributed by the applicants and recounting/linking their replies, and quantifying the results). Progression over the course of the study will involve comparing/contrasting the answers with the original theory.

Additional evidence assembled through the assessments permitted the examiner to inspect the documents comprised through the research process. Upon reaching a conclusion the assessor documented his findings and shared the information with faculty from the media department and wrote a detailed report of his findings for the conclusion of the study.
4.8 Strengths & Weaknesses

There are a number of positives that came along with inserting the mixed methods approach; first, it ensured there were no gaps to the information/data collected (Bulsara, 2010). Second, it provided a broad understanding that either qualitative or a quantitative approach could offer on its own (Creswell, 2009). Third, it was highly convenient to describe and report; in addition it aided in generalizing, to a degree, qualitative data; moreover it was very advantageous in crafting and authenticating the instrument employed over the course of the study (Creswell, 2011).

One such criticism involves how qualitative researchers tend to overuse interviews and focus groups (although neither will be adopted for this particular analysis) at the expense of other useful methods such as observation, documentary examination, case studies, etc. (Anderson, 2010). A positive advantage comprised of an increased degree of flexibility in the research design; the ability to avoid a reliance on the researcher’s pre-determined assumptions; and the ability to focus on the meanings of key issues for participants (Griffin, 2000).

There were a number of positives that came along with inserting the mixed methods approach; first, it ensured there were no gaps to the information/data collected (Bulsara, 2010). Second, it provided a broad understanding that either qualitative or a quantitative approach could offer on its own (Creswell, 2009). Third, it was highly convenient to describe and report; in addition it aided in generalizing, to a degree, qualitative data; moreover it was very advantageous in crafting and authenticating the instrument employed over the course of the study (Creswell, 2011).

A negative feature entailed around the over reliance on the survey results. Omitting additional approaches to accumulating data such as additional interviews would have been detrimental and overlooked essential information, which proved crucial for the current research. However, implementing interviews are effective if they are not restricted to specified questions and can be redirected by the researcher at any time (Anderson, 2010). The interview portion of the study added sufficient information for the researcher to further validate the examination.
Another negative aspect focused on the requirement of extensive statistical analysis, which can be difficult, due to most scientists not being, experienced statisticians (Shuttlesworth, 2008). Creswell & Clark (2011) add that additional issues could involve time restriction; unequal evidence which could be generated by the design; and minimal guidance on transformative methods.

A unique challenge for the examiner was conducting an investigation on such a sensitive topic while the researcher’s cultural background and that of the participants are not similar (Eide, 2008). In regards to obtaining material and data the researcher was confronted with innumerable encounters and denials from possible candidates. This feature doesn’t adhere to international tensions, however there was sensitivity on behalf of the participants in regards to sharing their experiences with a westerner; it was later confirmed that a number of western media outlets might have inaccurately portrayed the revolution and its primary purpose. However, the examiner was able to gather a wealth of insightful evidence from the subjects who did participate in both portions of the examination.

4.9 Validity & Reliability

Reliability and validity are highly common for research; however there are communal alterations that should be explored in adopting an effective strategy into the mixed method research paradigm. Reliability is dependent on the resolution of both internal and external research design issues (LeCompte, M., & Goetz, J., 1982). It was extremely appropriate for the examiner to draft and implement an effective method of reliability in order to ensure the enhanced findings of the research proposal.

The purpose of validity is to determine whether or if the research was able to truly measure that which was originally intended to ration and how truthful the research results are (Joppe, 2000). Three approaches to validity in research are validation as investigation, as communication, and as action (Kvale, 1989). Another term that involves validity is triangulation; this involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding (Angen, 2000). Watling cites, “reliability and validity are tools of an essentially positivist epistemology” (Winter, 2000).
As a process, validity involves collecting and analyzing data to assess the accuracy of an instrument (Biddex, 2014). In general, methods of establishing validity in this research involved data triangulation; this method will involve participant feedback, statistical analysis, and experiment review (Kenney, 2008).

Reliability is best explained as seeking for consistency in any given study (Biddex, 2014). For this study reliability will be based on the test-retest approach, and data triangulation. This method contained components of participant feedback, statistical analysis, and experimental reviews. Joppe (2000) acknowledges a problem that could make the instrument used in the study highly unreliable surrounding the test-retest approach. She explained how adopting this method might sensitize the respondent to the subject matter, and hence influence the responses given (Golafshani, 2003). Angen (2000) proclaimed that triangulation facilitated deeper understanding; while using multiple theoretical perspectives to examine and interpret the data.

Triangulation approach assisted in verifying and reviewing the final results. In order to collect the data accurately the researcher saved the work by photocopying the data and results on a worksheet from the Survey Monkey website. In order to ensure no external validity issues prohibited precise depiction of the quantitative findings the researcher duplicated the material from the survey site accurately, along with descriptive analysis from the actual questionnaire. This ensured the evidence gathered was valid for the source composed specifically from the actual website.

To ensure the qualitative information was valid the researcher inserted interviews with a few participants live, face-to-face, and via email to recap each query from the survey. Upon conclusion the researcher determined if the subjects’ had altered their views. This certifies the consistency of the participants’ response. Adopting the triangulation method and utilizing both approaches for evaluating the material permitted the examiner to attain innate understanding of the results.

4.9.1 Limitations

There are certain hazards presented in conducting a mixed method research. The volume of data to analyze and interpret could potentially present time-consuming
challenges. An additional setback may include seeking for any trends in the data; this may occur by pursuing similar statements that are identical transversely dissimilar to research participants (McClain & Madrigal, 2012). Moreover, this arises while conducting interviews with applicants and subjects who may have similar opinions or outlooks on certain phenomena.

There were various recruiting challenges, which were presented while seeking participants for the current research. For example, during the recruitment the sampling process can suffer from a number of problems that may include non-responses, people who are difficult to reach, and those who could alter their mind of participating in the study after originally agreeing in the beginning (Hulley, 2001).

Additional limitations centered on maintaining personal relations that were originally forged online. Gladwell (2010) insists that weak ties online do not lead to high-risk activism; such ties that individuals share via social media is a separate dynamic as opposed to strong ties characteristic of personal relationships. For the examiner it was quite difficult to consistently remain in touch with some of the subjects that participated in the study via online. Most refused to respond after originally agreeing to participate in the research in spite of the efforts on behalf of the researcher.

The uprisings in Egypt involved a group of insurgents who were facing oppression from what they viewed as an abusive ruling authority. The only genuine connection they felt were with citizens and family members who endured the painful struggle alongside of them. It is very difficult to build strong trust with a subject through online communication. It is the obligation of the examiner to address the specific issue to ensure no further distractions would potentially derail the study.

5 Results & Analysis

Upon addressing the approach & methods in the previous section this portion will present the findings discovered and present the in depth analysis of the research. The primary goal of the research was to explore what was the role and impact social media had on the Egyptian Revolution. The findings are presented in the first section and the analysis will be accessed in the subsequent section.
5.4 Findings

Based on both research inquiries proposed by the examiner in the first section of the document a questionnaire was implemented to carry out the method for the study. There were a total of ten questions that centered on the primary focus of this examination:

1. What was social media’s role in upholding democratic principles during the Egyptian Revolution?
2. Did social media’s role influence major events that occurred during the uprisings? The results display the ever-growing speculation of how certain societies are becoming heavily reliant on digital technology.

5.2 Procedures & Participants

The researcher recruited contributors for the study via social networking channels and a few face-to-face conversations. In addition the researcher also approached individuals via person-to-person conscription during his time in Beirut, Lebanon. For the questionnaire a number of the responders were citizens of Egypt, while a few participants were Egyptian citizens residing in England, Beirut, and Jordan.

The eldest participate of the questionnaire was fifty-four, while the youngest subject to complete the survey was sixteen-years-old. The researcher also used Facebook and Twitter as a recruiting tool by sending text messages seeking permission to forward the survey accompanied by a letter which described the study and its purpose. There were a number of Egyptian groups that the researcher used via Facebook to recruit for the survey. Facebook pages for recruitment included the “We are all Khalad Saad” “The April 6th Youth Movement” along with the Egyptian European Revolution Alliance Facebook group. The researcher contacted a total of two hundred and fifty participants for the survey and received seventy-five responses from the participants.
5.3 Social Media Impact on Egyptian Uprisings

The intention of this evaluation was to assemble and analyze in depth material on the influence Twitter and Facebook provided during the insurrections in Egypt. Ten questions were inserted and separated into four distinct sections.

Part one centered on how much of an impact social media had on the revolution; and if the revolt would have occurred if social media existed in the country. Part two focused on their participation during the insurrections and attempts to compare how media is covered on SMS sites to traditional media in the region.

Part three centers on the participants views and attitudes regarding SMS’s minimal or significant effect on the revolution; lastly, part four viewed to what extent social media provided a platform or voice for the participants and includes short answers of their perceptions of the overall experience.

A. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is minimal and 5 is greater, how much of an impact did social media have on the Arab Spring?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 75
Table 1: Question 2: Arab Spring Questionnaire

A. If Facebook and twitter did not exist, would things remain the same as it did before the Arab spring?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 75

Table 2: Question 3: Arab Spring Questionnaire

Both inquiries listed above correlate around the theme of what type of change did social media contribute to the Egyptian Revolution. The first question centers on social media’s impact. Of the responders roughly fourteen percent believed social media had a minimal impact, while on the other hand an overwhelming forty-three percentage of the respondents agreed that social media had a significant impact. However, when questioned if they believed the situation would have remained the same had social media not existed in the region fifty percent of the respondents answered no, while only seven percent stated yes.

This presents an enticing dynamic that serves as a contradiction in viewpoint. If such a massive fraction believed social media had a substantial influence on the rebellions in the region then why would such a menial percentage believe the situation might have been altered without the assistance of social media?
This question was posed to the respondents in an oral interview regarding the inconsistencies. Most believed change was inevitable despite the existence of social media.

What social media permitted advocates and insurgents to achieve was alleviate their message to a larger audience. This answer was universally accepted amongst a majority of the subjects, and brought a sense of clarity to the overall theme of the proposed inquiry.

The theme of the second segment of the survey focused on participation during the revolution.

B. Did you feel socially and politically active when you follow or participate for a certain cause on Twitter or joined a Facebook group prior to the Revolution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices –</th>
<th>Responses –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I feel I am contributing to my society</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel it is worthless. Therefore I never participate</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents: 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Question 4: Arab Spring Questionnaire

A. Did you participate on the March in Tahrir Square on Jan. 25, 2011?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices –</th>
<th>Responses –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents: 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Question 5: Arab Spring Questionnaire
Again, the initial query showcases how the participant’s viewed the topic in regards to their involvement prior to the revolution. Roughly, fifty percent of the respondents answered yes concerning participation and joining a Facebook group preceding the revolution. Another forty-three percent were unsure if their actions made much of a difference, while only about seven percent felt their participation were worthless. The second part of the question demonstrated that only twenty-nine percent of the respondents participated in the events that occurred in Tahir Square on January 25th.

What did the findings display? An oral interview shortly followed after the survey and a majority of the participants agreed they felt they contributed to the cause more by joining advocacy groups and recruiting others to connect as opposed to participating in the marches. This brings about a fascinating wonder for it describes the in depth involvement of the demographics’ overall involvement over time to advocate change in their region.

The ensuing segment concentrated on how mass media was depicted in the region and if the participants felt the mainstream media was a trustworthy source for information. The first section displays answers in a chart while the second part displays responses in essay and short answer form.

C. Do you trust social media (Facebook and Twitter) news more than you trust mainstream media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They both contribute to each other</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I trust neither</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 75

Table 5: Question 6: Arab Spring Questionnaire
D. Why do you trust social media over mainstream media? Why not? Do you believe social media is a viable tool for promoting democracy in the Arab World?

Responses by the participants were particularly appealing for over fifty percent stated they felt receiving news via social media was highly trustworthy compared to information filtered through the mainstream media. Most of the subjects believed news feeds streaming via social networks were by sources that were either reporting live from the actual location of an event and could give a first account status of the events unfolding; while others contested that mass media consumption was misinformed material for it was government controlled.

Responders to the following inquiries that centrally pertained to their trust in social media and their belief in the platform serving as a democratic tool in the community offered a number of mixed reactions and outlooks. An overwhelming majority agreed with this assessment. They believed social media provided more accurate views for the news feeds that are posted directly from people they have a close association with. Others also addressed that social media does not involve the middleman, (major news agencies, etc.) how it creates a sense of community from the reporter to the viewers, and allows them to feel socially and politically engaged.

Complaints centering on the mainstream media alluded to issues such as government controlled media, viewpoints of the liberals and militant groups, and their bias towards the ideologies of aforementioned governments. This result exhibited how people felt that social media was a reliable tool for accurate news, information and ideals that best relate to their own viewpoints.

The drawbacks of becoming too reliable on news feeds via social media are that individuals could portray false information or updates on their timelines. This could lead to a substantial amount of uproar and confusion for the viewing audience. The notion of relying solely on social media for daily newsfeed can
present a slippery slope of challenges and obstacles for the audiences who are seeking for an accurate update on a popular newsfeed from a source who is presenting counterfeit updates.

The fourth segment emphasized the use of social media as a voice for the community and its contribution to harboring modifications to the Arab society.

G. Is social media a viable voice to call for democracy in the Arab world?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses –</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It's one of the tools</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's the only method for people to come together to call for change</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's had no significant impact.</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 75

Table 6: Question 8: Arab Spring Questionnaire

E. Has social media contributed in changing regimes in your country? Kindly give your opinion.

Opinions of this vastly favored the usage of social media as a viable voice for the region and contributed to the modification of leadership in their country. Over seventy-one percent of the participants believed Facebook and Twitter served as one of the tools while another fourteen percent believed social media had no significant impact. A number of respondents who advocates for social media operating as one of the tools addressed their opinions of alternate avenues that contributed to the shift in leadership.

However, the few participants who stated social media provided the only method for people to come together also argued how SMS’s provided a platform for groups of diverse class backgrounds and ideologies to come together. Others believed social media was a place where members of the youth
demographic could exchange ideas with one another while serving as an integral part of their daily lives.

Many stated that Twitter and Facebook provide a platform where the government has the inability to censor or edit information displayed on an individual’s profile page. Free from government restriction was a recurring theme amongst the participants and they felt that was the undermining factor of their faith in social media websites.

Many subjects shared their view of how social media played a significant role in uniting people with diverse social standards and ideologies. Others addressed the belief in how its contribution also ushered modification in their communities by transforming from a military to a civil society. Another fraction of the subjects stated it wasn’t social media per se that brought about the change, but the people and groups who were using them.

A majority of advocacy groups that were around long before social media was introduced in the region used social media as recruiting foundation to obtain citizen support for their principle cause. Additional participants added that credit should also be distributed for how it assisted in helping the general public to become engage and seek change in their societies. Overall, a majority of the participants all agreed that social media played a key role in bringing about Mubarak’s dismissal from office.

5.4 Interview Results

This served as the second stage of the research investigation. The examiner incorporated three distinct sections where sets of three queries were presented for each portion. The first part centered on how social media was implemented and utilized during the Revolution; in addition the queries also concentrated on the role it had in the community and what this purpose could potentially have on social change in the country.
The second segment focused on how Egyptian groups (specifically the April 6 Youth Movement & the I Am Khalad Saaed Facebook groups) took to social media sites and recruited members to join their cause and how they infused their message to incite involvement and postings of news on their websites. The third and final portion concentrated on how social media portrayed the Egyptian Revolution as opposed to mainstream media.

Section One:
1. Did social media serve as a primary instrument for the march on Tahrir Square on Jan. 25th 2011?
2. Explain if you believe the rise of social media elevated political awareness within the community or did not during the Revolution?
3. What role or impact do you believe social media had in Mubarak’s dismissal from power?
4. What is the role of social media for the future of social change in the country?

There were a variety of opinions and the subjects provided some valuable insights. One responder stated that she believed social media played a significant role in both the march on Tahrir Square and Mubarak’s dismissal from office. She states that social media was constantly and consistently taking the lead in any decision making within the community. She also believed social media was innovating and captivated the younger demographic unlike any other communication medium could have during this era. People were embracing for real change and social media provided that voice and was utilized efficiently by those who advocated its implementation.

M. Selim, 28/ London/male

Yes, without social media 25th of January would not have happened. Social media was one of the primary tools used as a voice for democracy during the insurgents. Democracy in meaning as in how the various groups were able to voice what particularly changes and alterations were expected in the community.
Another respondent agreed in the impact of social media. He believed social media did bring a heightened rise in political awareness within the community. He states when the Revolution first sparked there were only a few hundred Egyptian gathering in Tahir Square; however things did elevate when a number of people began inviting their friends and associates through social media to join in on the cause and fight for a change.

This resulted in larger crowds as the government retaliated by deploying firing squads to frighten and discourage the protestors. This resulted in a significant increase of violence and many people were filming these occurrences and atrocities on their mobile phones and posting to their Facebook and Twitter feeds.

*M. Alsh, 26/ Jordan/male*

*Of course, yes. Social media enabled me to gain full knowledge of the happenings going on there. I do believe during the revolution social media was the only way for people to speak about political issues and share opinions without any restrictions.*

More viewers witnessed through social media what was occurring with the authorities during the protests. They viewed as the authorities were harassing and shooting within the crowd of people who were protesting. This in turn resulted in increased opposing on behalf of the activists and larger crowds gathered in Tahir Square until Mubarak’s resignation. Another responder asserted their belief that social media was a primary reason for Mubarak’s ousting from power.

They added that activists used it to display Mubarak abusing the activists who were trying to hold a peaceful rally in the Square, but the demonstrations were escalated into violence as a result of the authorities. Many Egyptians were weary of such negligence on behalf of Mubarak’s regime and sympathized with the activists upon viewing the martyrs through their social media feeds. They decided to join the cause and rallied for Mubarak’s immediate removal.
M. Alsh, 26/Jordan/male

Yes, the social media had significant effect in portraying Mubarak as a threat to the country. I think without social media, Mubarak would still be in power. Social media was instrumental in showing Mubarak’s crimes and murders; in addition it gave a space for people to talk and share their opinions.

Others addressed this by stating social media served as a helpful tool that spread the call for a march by connecting people and their associates by posting updates of the current happenings. Everyone also agreed that social media’s rise during the revolution raised a variety of political views and were posted on a number of people’s social media feeds. They all agreed that having instant access to a number of political information was both convenient and highly innovative. Such planning penetrated the central nerve of a large demographic that was highly oppressed by the current regime.

Annette Woll, 24/ Egypt/female

I think it played an important role and without it the revolution may not have occurred. It connected people, motivating and coordinating them; so without a doubt Mubarak’s downfall had to come by somehow.

Overall, everyone agreed that social media was mainly a communication tool for various protests including the march on Tahrir Square and provided insightful information and up-to-date news on the occurrences during the demonstrations. They alleged the future of social media lies with how news is filtered and if it conjures the awareness of change for the people.

In addition they supposed there is a possibility that social media could come under the control of the government and could post messages from untrusted sources. The future appears to focus on the honesty of sources posting information for the Egyptian public. One responder expressed her concern regarding the potential problem social media could present in the future.
M. Khaled/ Cairo, 25/female
The problem with social media nowadays is that you cannot always know whether the news is correct or not due to Photoshop. For example, one can change the real picture, or post lies of other parties. The spreading of messages should be clear, honest and with real proof. I guess social media also has to spread awareness because we really need it.

Section Two:
1. What was the impact social media had in assisting activists groups in spreading their message for change throughout the community?
2. Did the April 6 Youth Movement bring the Facebook and social media awareness of change to the mainstream news media in Egypt? Are you a member of the Facebook group? If yes, why?
3. Do you feel social media had a significant role in the aftermath of the beating and murder of Al Saaed Khaled? Are you a member of the Facebook group? If yes, why?

There were a number of varying opinions on this particular set of queries. In response to question three one subject stated upon the creation of the We Are All Khaled Saaed page, it attracted such an astronomical number of followers within the first few days that the page crashed. This occurred as a result of the images of the victim’s disfigured carcass shared throughout FB, and not through the mainstream media.

Ali, 19/ Egypt/male
Yes, I am a member of the Facebook group. Social media got more people to be aware of what actually happened during the Khaled Saaed incident. The beating/murder was a trigger for a protest that was called for on Facebook. This protest then grew into huge demonstrations.

Local authorities murdered Saaed because he recorded them performing illegal activities and posted the video online. Soon thereafter the authorities arrested him, and took him to an ally and found drugs on him. They beat him to death, and threw his body onto the main streets in the capital where his remains were
discovered the following morning. The mainstream media stated the police claimed he choked on the drugs, however refused to display his mangled body through network television. The page was created in opposition to this story and called those who worked in the mainstream media liars and demanded justice on behalf of the victim.

Once people went to the FB page and witnessed his dismembered body a number of citizens were highly angered and wanted justice. Other subjects claimed this crime on behalf of the authorities exposed human rights and the ongoing corruption of the very government body which is supposed to protect its citizens. People began joining the FB page and this enabled a number of people to meet new activists and make new friends.

During this time the revolution in Tunisia was occurring and as a result the Egyptians believed they could make the same impact. Another subject believes the creation of the Khaled Saaed page prompted more protestors to rise and participate in the march on Tahrir Square. The images of a fellow citizen posted on FB prompted a reaction of rage on behalf of many Egyptians; they felt the need to protest against the atrocities and harsh treatment of their fallen comrade. Another participant stated how people were fed up with how the media was dismissing the foul act as a random occurrence.

Regarding question one a respondent believed social media was very helpful in spreading awareness, different messages from activists and in addition it provided major updates about events a number of events taking place at different places and times. Another response stated that FB and Twitter were a huge impact because by posting images online resulted in millions of users who log on daily to view the messages posted online.

_M. Abdel, 25/ London/male_

*It was a very helpful tool in spreading awareness; different messages from activists and normal individuals alike. In addition to the updates it also placed*
notices on message boards about the events taking place at different locations at different times.

This type of marketing was a huge advantage for the groups for it allowed users to view political issues and concerns on behalf of people who suffered and experienced life in the same manner the common people were. Another responder had a more vivid explanation of what sparked the events to escalate during the protests.

H. Elaraby, 30/ Cairo/male

When the Egyptian revolution sparked there were only few hundred Egyptians that gathered in Tahrir Square. Because the world media had opinion it functioned on it at the time so it frightened away the authorities. In prompted the police to fire straight on the protesters. Till the third day, which was The 28th Jan when they attempted to send thugs to clear, the square and it caused killings and injuries. When people viewed this online via Facebook, and Twitter the people sympathized with them and upraised after those events. We marched until the 11th of February when Mubarak stepped down!

The April 6 group response stated they were the first and largest group to use social media for political reasons back during 2008. During that era responders stated their group had the most political influence on social media back in 2008. More responders stated they used social media to resist what they believed was a corrupt regime while marketing and suggesting new political ideals on their Facebook timeline. Various other responders noted the group was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2011, which is a very highly and prestigious honor for the group. A number of subjects continued to believe the April 6 Movement was one of the primary contributors to the march on Tahrir Square.

Most agreed that the April 6 movement FB page also contributed to the impact to Khaled Saaed FB page. One responder posted that the beating and murder of Saaed was a primary trigger for protest that was called for on Facebook and the
April 6 Movement was one of the groups that used social media to call out the corrupt regime under Mubarak’s authority. It eventually grew into a significant huge demonstration where all Egyptians came together and believed they could encourage others through social media site to join in on the cause.

Overall, the participants felt the FB groups in particular with the Khaled Saaed group received an overwhelming response by a number of citizens across the country. They believe if it were not for social media sites a number of issues or groups causes may have went unnoticed.

Section Three:

1. Were you able to learn more of the social issues in Egypt through social media or via the mainstream? How does this impact your thoughts of the concerns the country faces?
2. Was social media effective in portraying Mubarak as a threat to the country as opposed to the mainstream, which displayed him as a hero?
3. Do you feel the mainstream portrayed the Egyptian Revolution in a positive light?

The answers to the following inquiries created a separate issue that required further exploration on behalf of the examiner. In regards to questions one and two a number of younger participants had a total different opinion as opposed to a number of older subjects. This phenomenon resulted in what the examiner believed was a generational and digital divide amongst a few participants. Some of the older subjects believed the mainstream media accurately portrayed Mubarak as a hero, while a number remained neutral in their position as to how he was portrayed.

The rest believed the mainstream media was the primary problem and one respondent stated this is where the power of social media is displayed. It provides a platform for those who aren’t listening to the mainstream. The media is state owned and privately controlled and FB is a great alternative to express their discontent. Another participant stated she believed that social media
managed to highlight the many social differences and issues present in Egypt, which was a definitely an eye-opener.

*S. Hussein, 25/ Cairo/female*

*When the Egyptian media, which has got a long history of deceiving and manipulating Egyptian public opinion due to its loyalty to the military or controlled by Mubarak which is military! All they were doing is backing Mubarak and accusing the protestors against the regime like they were foreign funded traitors who were meaning to break up Egypt!*

A number of other responders had a more different insight to the question. Most didn’t blame Mubarak or any politician before his regime for the issues facing the country. One responder states Mubarak was never a threat o the country and it was the job of the mainstream media to display their leaders in a positive light. It is the media that filters the thread of thoughts dragging and driving the population, thus the mainstream lines should always be pro-government.

Another responder further contends it is ethical of the mainstream media to offer legal constructive criticism of their leaders. However, he considered it necessary to highlight the high caliber and ruling classes some realities surrounding their current errors, mistakes, or faults in order to facilitate corrections. Another subject further asserts the MM should display the hard work of its heads and their high caliber society and guide them.

Another elder responder criticized social media for portraying Mubarak as a threat to the country. He states it was inappropriate for FB groups to blame his regime for high poverty levels, and the numerous difficulties the country was facing. He believes Mubarak was one of Egypt’s great leaders and his hard work and efforts to improve the nation should never go unnoticed.
S. Ramzy, 53/Alexandria University/male

I feel sorry for what happened to our leadership here in Egypt. President Mubarak was a professional politician and a part of Egyptian high society. The primary issue that faces Egypt is overpopulation and lack of resourcing. The entire revolution was much ado about nothing and causing mass disorder and disco-ordination negatively affecting the entire population, including Egyptian working abroad.

Another participant agreed with this assessment by stating the Egyptian population is currently residing in an immature political and economic stage where the expanding population makes it impossible to enable job and economic growth within a number of communities.

Most stated lack of education by a number of Egypt’s citizens heavily contributes to the lack of appreciation a number of citizens have for the accomplishments of Mubarak’s regime. Lack of resourcing and overall ignorant viewpoints on behalf of the general public has led people to place blame on Mubarak for much of the concerns facing the country.

F. Shehab, 54/Giza, Egypt/Male

In real terms I am not an anti person of President Mubarak. I do not believe that President Mubarak was a threat to the country at all to be honest! He was one of Egypt’s great leaders and he done a lot of hard work and good efforts to the nation!

One participant states that he believes it is up to the individual to make life better for one another as opposed to dependency on any particular politician to cure the plethora of ills in any given society. He asserts that for every individual life exists a principal of individuality, impartibility, and self-budgeting. Another participant states that people shouldn’t criticize certain aspects of the working class society if they aren’t qualified to full fill those duties; it is up to the individual to take up a trade and become a medical engineer, a lawyer, or politician.
In addressing the issue of the generation and digital divide there was a consensus of agreement by both sides. An overwhelming thought was that the elder generation witnessed the casualties of war, while their generation has yet to experience such atrocities on that level. They believed social media creates a certain image in their mind that doesn’t quite enable the younger generation to view the larger picture. Their opinions about freedom are beheld in social rights and they interpret the lack of this as oppression as opposed to how the elder generation who view oppression in a much different light.

**G. Gadella, 22/ Cairo/Female**

*Of course it does. Older generations have seen real war and things that are worse than what’s happening now. As for our generation we haven’t seen anything that could influence the big picture.*

The elder generation believed the younger generation is largely affected by social media’s take on Mubarak. Most of the respondents referred to him as President Mubarak, while the younger generation omitted the presidential title when referring to their former leader. One respondent believed social media deceived the younger generation into the opinions of Mubarak for some continues to hold him in high regard and believe he was a great man.

**W. Atea, 48/ Alexandria/male**

*Yes, there are generational divides and you are correct in what you are saying, “the younger generations who are more connected to social media were influenced by social media’s take on President Mubarak.” I am feeling sorry for what happened to President Mubarak because he was a great man and I feel social media deceived the people to honest.*

Others believe their country is affected by political hysteria and religious fanaticism and ultimately will result in leaving them behind the rest of the Arab world in the long term. Overall, the elder generations sentiments lie with the fact the young people were influenced by social media politics where those who complained about the politics were neither licensed or qualified to openly dispute the ruling regime.
Nevertheless, one participant believed that social media is highly useful and perfect for the evolution and progress of their society; however it is also very dangerous because empowers individuals who aren’t qualified to speak out on political issues that they are unqualified to criticize. The elder responders also agreed that while the Egyptian Revolution changed the country’s leadership, it did not change the people or their unfortunate circumstances.

Most of the participants agreed that the mainstream media portrayed the Egyptian Revolution in a positive light.

_B. Pharaoh, 32/Cairo/male_

_The mainstream media did portrait the Egyptian Revolution in a positive light._

_In real terms I feel the Egyptian Revolution was a new light within itself and an evolutionary process that happened and now the Egyptians have to learn the lessons and get on with moving on towards the future._

One subject did not believe this and stated the state controlled did not portray it in positive light, but other well-known channels were positive. She insists the state-controlled media did not alter its stance on the Revolution until after Mubarak’s dismissal from power. Overall, the issue of the generational divide amongst the younger and elder respondents introduced a novel development that the examiner felt provided a much deeper insight regarding the impact of social media.

**5.5 Analysis**

_This section offers discussion that includes the researcher’s thoughts and insights on findings revealed from the survey and through the interviews. The examiner will recap the findings uncovered from the survey and in addition give a closer insight of how the views and opinions of the participants were expressed over the duration of the study. Also, there will be an overview of the findings uncovered from the opinions and data collected through the interviews. The examiner will share the findings and analyze the answers with thoughts and opinions in regarding if the discoveries validate the research questions._
5.6 Insights & Thoughts

Results from the survey provided a varied base of understanding that interprets the pulse and feelings of the sampled population. The replies illustrated an assortment of opinions, beliefs and insights to assist the researcher in producing an in depth analysis for the study. The documented findings exhibited how social media is now increasingly being adopted and of primary importance into various facets of our modern day culture. Concerning the results from the Arab Spring survey there was evidence of an increased prominence and dissent regarding the role social media added over the duration of the insurrection.

Past studies revealed and confirmed social media’s purpose over the course of the Egyptian Revolution. The theme of part one of the research surrounding social networking’s impact during the uprisings unveiled that over forty percent of the respondents believed social media had a great influence, while another twenty-one percent believed it had a significant effect during the insurrections.

In comparison to a study conducted at the University of Washington (Couts, 2011) where researchers examined over three million tweets, numerous hours of YouTube videos, and Facebook statues determined that a cascade of the messages took place actually hours before an actual revolution event took place. In Egypt alone the research faction discovered that the number of tweets mentioning “revolution” exploded from 2,300 per day to more than 230,000 per day (Couts, 2011).

However, question 3 determined that well over half the participants believed that a change would have occurred without the use of social media. It could be determined that the use of the social network only enhanced the process and assisted in the removal of powerful regimes throughout the region. According to Howard (2011) contends that the dictators had many political enemies for a very long time. In response to their rule opponents used social media to identify goals, build solidarity and organize demonstrations.
In an interview conducted in 2013, Howard discussed how much of an impact social media had on the Arab Spring and how it affected the current ruling regimes in the region; “Our examination finds that the existence of an online-civil society allowed democracy advocates to use social media to outpace and outmaneuver many authoritarian regimes whom were attempting to intercept or entrap protesters” (Kelly, 2013).

The next theme centered on the Egyptian Uprisings and focused on the subject’s participation throughout the revolution. For question four over half of the responses portrayed that many subjects felt they were active while following a political cause in the region on social media; while a number of responders felt unsure if they felt they were active. According to an in depth interview with Howard he believed that civic groups use the Internet to raise funds and engage with their supporters to publish material they are unable to print in state-owned media (Kelly, 2013).

The proceeding inquiry displayed that only roughly thirty percent of the subjects participated in the events that unfolded in Tahrir Square on January 25th. However, in contrast a survey conducted at the University of North Carolina who were actually present during the protests in Cairo on January 25th demonstrated how Facebook in particular, provided novel insights on how citizens made individual decisions in regards to participating in the protests at Tahrir Square (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Outside of face-to-face communication nearly thirty percent of the study subjects found out about the protests through Facebook & Twitter (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

In comparison to the study the researcher conducted four of the six respondents who were actually in Cairo during the time of the uprisings actually participated in the events that occurred in Tahrir Square on January 25th. Also, all six of the subjects found out about the event through Facebook and Twitter. This demonstration showcased the consistency of not only who participated in the uprisings, but also how much of an impact social media networks had on informing those who participated in the march on Tahrir Square.
The next theme for the study focused on how mass media is depicted in the region and if the participants felt if this was a trustworthy source for information. The results demonstrated that roughly fifty percent of the participants trusted in social media news feeds as opposed to the mainstream media. Only about thirty percent of the subjects agreed that both the media and social media websites both contributed to each other. Of those who answered three of the subjects from Egypt agreed that social networks were a trustworthy source than the mainstream media.

When questioned why they prefer social media networks for news a number of respondents believed the influence of a government controlled news media swayed their opinion. Another fraction of the participants blamed propaganda in the mainstream, whereas it was much easier to seek if the news source via social media was true or not. Others shared how social media spreads people’s stores and create a sense of community and mutual responsibility. They also claim social media allows people to speak their truths, and that at its very worst the mainstream news media becomes a platform not for the substantial, but for the sensational.

The fourth segment emphasized the use of social media as a voice for the community and its contribution to harboring modifications to the Arab society. Over seventy percent of the responders agreed that social media was one of the viable tools to call for democratic change in the Arab world. A number of responders agreed that social media contributed in changing the regimes in Egypt. Howard refers to the government’s reaction in Egypt on monitoring and regulating social networking sites by stating, “The months during which the Arab Spring took place had the most national blackouts, network shutdowns, and tool blockages to date” (Kelly, 2013).

Cyber enthusiast, Hussein agrees with Howard’s evaluation and maintains, “The Internet, mobile phones, and Facebook/Twitter made the difference this time. Using these technologies, people interested in democracy could build extensive networks, create social capital, and organize political action with a speed and on a scale never seen before (Aday & Farrel, 2012).
Overall, the usage of social media during the Egyptian Uprisings centered on trust of the activists in those who were actually posting updates on their timeline; this stands in opposition to the government controlled mass media. The phenomena of digital usage over the course of the Insurrections display the growing movement of how social media is now being utilized as an effective tool for change. Based on a study conducted viewing the aftermath of social media’s impact in the region; Social media technologies are no longer the domain of solely the left, liberal youth, but instead empower different agendas held by parties across the political map (Kelly, 2012).

5.7 Interview Assessment

The interview results presented insightful information regarding how social media and the Internet sparked a heavy debate amongst the different generations of Egyptian citizens. Generational gap is a term popularized in the West referring to differences between people of younger generations and its elders, particularly amongst children and their parents (Howe, N. & Strauss, K. 1992).

The overall opinions of most of the older subjects believed mass majorities of the younger audience were unqualified to speak on political issues and that social media served as the great deceiver and ultimately resulted in the ousting of a leader they considered to be a good man. This statement provides valuable insight of the role social media contributed to the Egyptian Uprisings and the impact a majority of participants believed it had on the country.

The first section focused on the implementation of social media over the course of the uprisings and how various activists utilized this tool. The responders agreed that social media was an innovative tool and provided a voice for a major majority of those who were overlooked within their communities.

The method showcased that social media was both utilized and embraced by various groups. This example displayed the rising dependency the Arab world is
using social media to evoke conversions in their country. The idea that most responders agreed that social media heightened political awareness to a majority of the country’s citizens displays how effective social media played its role as both an innovative tool for the community and information outlet for those who preferred not to listen to the mainstream media.

The posting of videos online to their FB newsfeed brought about a call to action by a number of individuals and their associates. What FB and Twitter timelines provided was a forum where a number of people and groups could post their opinions and filter in depth discussions on various happenings occurring throughout the country.

Also, the fact social media timelines provides the convenience of gathering up to date information in an instant is another resourceful tool provided for the user. Conversations focusing on the issues surrounding the country and the current regime reinforced negative opinions in the view of a number of citizens and this point of emphasis conjured many people to participate in the march on Tahrir Square.

Regarding the future role of social media the concerns expressed by the participants require further research and insight into the potential hazard. Although, the threat of government control and the posting of false information are highly probable it is the responsibility of the user to follow any story, claim or link posted on someone’s timeline and check the validity of the specified claim. Honesty of sourcing is clearly a topic that should be on high awareness on behalf of the working public; however citizens have to educate themselves on news that is valid and others that are potentially liable.

The second section segment placed high emphasis on Facebook groups and how they recruited members to join their cause. The obvious effect this had on the Egyptian public centered on the case surrounding Khaled Saaed, who was the victim of a brutal murder by the local authorities. Citizens were angered when the state controlled media placed their own spin of the case and claimed he died as a result of a drug overdose, and refused to display his martyred remains on
network television. However, social media provided a platform for FB groups to unveil the lies portrayed by the mainstream media and local authorities by placing images of Saaed throughout their timeline.

This resulted in a major uproar amongst the Egyptian communities throughout the country and decry for justice. The effect this image had on a collective body of citizens caused a major movement and angered many people who joined the FB group and organized protests calling for bringing the authorities to justice. The power of an image resonates with people and prompts an emotional reaction that at times can prove powerful. In comparison to the Khaled page, the April 6 movement lacked an event that was so substantial to provoke an outburst or reaction on behalf of a majority of people to join their cause.

The April 6 group responders felt their Facebook page was the foundation for various groups and individuals utilizing social media as a tool to inform citizens regarding the need for change. A number of responders acknowledged the group was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. The primary aim of the group centered on altering the political landscape and advocating change through a peaceful strategy. It would appear that their initial goals were highly acknowledged through justification of their nomination for such a prestigious honor.

Overall, many of the participants agreed that social media was inspiring and helpful in spreading awareness on various group pages. If the FB page of Khalad Saaed did not exist the immediate reaction on behalf of the citizens of the country would not have been as swift and instantaneous as was if not for social media.

News of his actual murder would have taken more time and perhaps a number of citizens would not have believed it for they would have perhaps sought proof of his body. In other words a majority of the population would have believed he was another drug dependent who only got what was eventually coming to him. As one of the respondents stated the revelation of what actually happened to
Khalad Saaed was certainly an eye opener for her and a majority of the Egyptian nation.

Section three concentrated on the mainstream and social media’s portrayal of the uprisings. However, this interview unveiled an existing generational gap amongst the elder and younger population. The elder participants were valid in stating they believed social media deceived in portraying Mubarak in a negative light. Another point that was revealed is how the elder respondents continued to address their ex-leader as President Mubarak as the younger generation only referred to him as Mubarak. There is a sense of respect on behalf of his loyal followers, and a sense of spite on behalf of the younger demographic.

This deep respect and appreciation on behalf of the elder demographic asserts that they lived through the trials and tribulations of the previous regime prior to Mubarak’s rise to power in the early eighties. This group would have a greater appreciation for their ousted leader as opposed to the newer generation who has only lived during Mubarak’s reign. They have yet to experience life under another regime and their ideals of democracy feuded with the actual democratic principles Mubarak’s regime was enforcing amongst its citizens.

Fortunately, the older and younger generation did agree that social media provided some positive aspects for the revolution; however, it did appear the older generation was content with the state owned ramifications of the mainstream while the younger generation had huge issues with the constant misinformation and puppet profiting of the state and private organization to mislead the country’s citizens. Overall, the issue of the generational gap and the opinions of President Mubarak on behalf of both sides creates an interesting dynamic that would require further research for a future study.
5.8 Research Question Assessment

The first research question stated:

*What was social media’s role in upholding democratic principles during the Egyptian Revolution?*

The majority of the participants from this study agree that social media functioned as a vital instrument for a bevy of Egyptian activists. Most of the subjects agree that it assisted protesters in maintaining democratic core values as a media outlet, and provided a voice for democracy for leadership conversion.

In regards to resource mobilization theory the activist made practical use of a source that was readily available and easily accessible. Particularly, Facebook and Twitter were the foremost devices operated by a number of groups to filter their message of change towards the available demographic.

The activist’s accomplishments were pivotal for the citizens who felt they were residing in a country of oppression for decades. Most of the participants based within the youth demographic believed the mainstream media disregarded the truth and misguiding the entire nation. Its primarily purpose was to stream information to the Egyptian people what they felt would portray politicians and the local authorities in a positive light.

Social media provided a platform for numerous groups such as the April 6 Movement and the Kaleed Saaed groups to offer forums and provide information to their target demographic. They utilized this podium to inform their followers of the misleading information the mainstream media was distributing to the Egyptian people.

Most of the subjects agree that this medium enabled many groups to market their ideals for freedom of expression, free speech, and the ability to call for social change and leadership. It should also be noted that one of the respondents
to the interview stated that social media also heightened the political awareness of the Egyptian citizens over the course of the revolution.

The second question proposed for this examination stated:

*Did social media’s role influence major events that occurred during the uprisings?*

Based on the responses regarding the march on Jan 25th in Tahrir Square was an event spurred by social media. Although a number of the participants did not actually participate in the actual event that occurred in Tahrir Square a number of them agreed social media played a vital role in the actual event.

This claim could be somewhat construed given that a majority of the subjects who participated in the study were not involved in the actual marches on Tahrir Square, however most did believe social media had an impact on the event.

When questioned regarding did social media serve as a primary instrument for the march on Tahrir Square:

*M. Alsh, 26/Jordan/male*

*Yes. Of course it did.*

*S. Lasheen, 22/Cairo/female*

*Social media served as a tool that helped spread the call for the marches connect people and post updates of the current happenings.*

*R. Gomaa, 23/ Cairo/female*

*Yes. It was a big contribution to the event.*

*F. Elrify, 21/London/female*

*Of course it was a huge contributor to the march on Tahrir Square. Social media helped give young people the confidence to express their opinions freely.*
Annette Woll, 24/ Egypt/female
Yes. Social media had a role in uniting people. The impact on the march in Tahrir Square became more evident once the government decided to cut off all communication channels to prevent even bigger numbers of people from coming together and join in on the marches.

This group of participants all agreed social media was a primary tool utilized for the activist to inform and encourage citizens to participate in the marches. Results from the interviews revealed that a number of subjects felt various young people were misled and fed false information through Facebook and Twitter in regards to Mubarak’s regime.

In the aftermath of the demonstration on Tahrir Square the departure of Mubarak’s regime from office displayed the key inspiration social media performed on a political level. In addition, the results from the interviews reveal that social media could also be attributed to raising awareness of the events surrounding the Khaled Saaed slayings and provided a stage for the April 6 Youth Movement.

The interview results provided the best insight regarding social media’s impact over the course of the uprisings. The accounts stated by the participants confirmed the research inquiries and provided additional insight and views of those who were largely affected by the results. The examiner found the data collected through the interviews to be very valuable. Overall, the researcher would agree that the interview section was essential for the study.

6.0 Conclusion & Future Study

Facing coercion that included a repressive regime, citizens of Egypt employed social media as its instrument for modification. The Arab Spring captivated a universal audience with the allure of an enticing narrative by utilizing innovative technology. The spectacle seized the media’s admiration through multiple broadcasting outlets via the Internet while the social network served as the primary attraction. Various studies on media coverage of the revolution
displayed the passion many activists portrayed in their belief a change in leadership was essential.

Results from the literature review revealed that social media was a highly effective instrument that provided a voice for a society seeking modification in their communities. The outcomes of the studies also displayed how effective Facebook, Twitter and the contributions both factored into the removal of powerful regimes.

What transpired in Egypt was a phenomenon that the digital public observed and was conveniently accessible for anyone who was virtually connected to the Internet. Various observers dubbed the Arab Spring as the “Social Network Revolution” for its impact in regards to newsfeeds, communication, accessibility, demographics, and speed within the realm of the digital stratosphere.

Newsfeeds in regards to up-to-date news and information regarding events, and occurrences developing in the region; communication for this was an networking event that was constantly covered by local, or national news cycles around the globe; accessibility for its twenty-four hour around the clock availability to anyone who was connected to the Internet; demographics for this was a revolution spawned and led by youth generation of the region; and speed for the amount of time it took for anyone who was an eyewitness or participating in an event to tweet, or post a message on their timeline which would have posted on their feed in mere moments.

The goal of resource mobilization centered on how well the active party utilizes the available resource to their advantage. The Egyptians adoption of social media proved to be a resourceful tool for their primary objective of ousting President Mubarak from office. This was an effective theory to use for the study and the results displayed how social media utilization had a profound effect on dismissing a powerful political figure after nearly three decades.
However, social media’s impact transcends traditional coverage on behalf of numerous networks for it assisted in ushering a change of leadership within the political landscape of an established nation. The world witnessed as the social media revolution was applied efficiently in a given community while marshaling in a novel era with the utilization of mobile, portable, and digital platforms. Although effective in its initial goal there were a number of issues that arose in the aftermath of its accomplishment.

A notable issue exists amongst the younger users who were the primary engineers of social media implementation by encouraging a substantial amount of citizens to join in their cause; however, a number of elder statesmen within the country felt President Mubarak was wrongly cast as a villain by social media. They accused the social network for deceiving a number of young, uneducated, and unaspiring citizens.

They assert that perhaps most would not have gotten involved in the uprisings if not for the egregious images on the Khalad Saaed FB page, April 6 Youth Movement Posts, and the actual postings of Egyptians being murdered by local authorities during the march on Tahrir Square. However, it should be noted that if such atrocities are occurring throughout the country and the government restricts the mainstream media from recounting the actual happening it is the duty of a fellow citizen to expose the truth to their fellow countrymen.

Tragedies such as the Khalad Saaed incident and the martyrs during the march on Tahrir Square are minor examples of the tyranny the younger demographic had been experiencing under the regime for their entire lives. One respondent was accurate in stating she believed in the generational gap because the younger demographic had not experienced war in their country as their elder counterparts, and perhaps social media has spoiled their outlook and ideals of true democracy.

There is evidence that the younger generation’s ideals of democracy are what they view on YouTube, and American television programs. The Egyptian youth were raised in an era exposed to western civilization via social media on various
mediums and through a variety of outlets; including American television programming, political events, American sports icons, Hollywood, etc.

Social media perhaps served as an influential instrument as the web became more accessible and viable for the general population at the turn of the century. This would create a generational gap in that the younger demographic is now residing in an era of an expanding global market where westernized idealism and capitalism is at the forefront of fashioning future societies.

For future study, the researcher would take these critical factors into consideration and apply them to the research process. Placing far more emphasis on the Arab Spring is a goal the examiner would prefer to place under heavy consideration. Additional improvement for the research process would involve a larger sample population along with an improved approach in what questions to add to the process.

A suggestion that the researcher would like to implement is to produce and shoot a documentary film of the occurrences in the Middle East and the effect social media had on the cause. The researcher would prefer to film on location in Cairo, Egypt where political uprisings continue to emerge. In either case the opinions articulated in the results from the study remained truthful, as is the case in how the participants expressed the views. The addition of individual interviews via a documentary film and a revised hypothesis could also prompt an alternate approach on by the researcher to support the original theory.

Overall, social media was the central appeal of a revolutionary crusade that ushered in a new age of scholarship and research. Where it guides our current and future generation of digital users is the attraction for prospective exploration.
Reference


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Appendix I

Thank you for taking the time to complete my survey. I am currently a master student at Karlstad University conducting a master thesis in Global Media studies.

The purpose of this survey is to discover the impact social media websites contributed to the Egyptian Uprisings in the Middle East.

The survey should take no more than 10 minutes of your time and responses are confidential.

If you have any questions or if you are interested in the results, you can contact me at my email address.

Social Media Impact on Arab Spring

*  
1. How often do you log into social media networks (e.g. Facebook, Google+, etc.)?
   
Less than a few times a month

A few times a month

A few times a week

About once a day

More than once a day
Other (please specify)

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is minimal and 5 is greatly, how much of an impact did social media have on the Arab Spring?

1

2

3

4

5
3. If Facebook and twitter did not exist, would things remain the same as it did before the Arab spring?

Yes
No
Maybe

4. Do you feel socially and politically active when you follow a certain cause on Twitter or join a Facebook group?

Yes, I feel I am contributing to my society
I feel it is worthless. Therefore I never participate
Not sure

5. Did you participate on the March in Tahrir Square on Jan. 25, 2011?

Yes
No

6. Do you trust social media (Facebook and Twitter) news more than you trust mainstream media?

Yes
No
They both contribute to each other
I trust neither

7. Why do you trust social media over mainstream media? Why not? Do you believe social media is a viable tool for promoting democracy in the Arab World?
8. Is social media a viable voice to call for democracy in the Arab world?

It's one of the tools

It's the only method for people to come together to call for change

It's had no significant impact.

If one of the tools, or only method, why?

9. Has social media contributed in changing regimes in your country? Kindly give your opinion.

* 

10. Please tell us about yourself?
Name:
City/Town:
State/Province:
Country:
Appendix II

Social Media Impact on Egyptian Uprisings Interviews

* 1. Did social media serve as a primary instrument for the march on Tahrir Square in Jan. 25th 2011?

* 2. Were you able to learn more of the social issues in Egypt through social media or through the mainstream? How did this impact your thoughts of the concerns facing the country?

* 3. Was social media effective in portraying Mubarak as a threat to the country as opposed to the mainstream, which displayed him as a hero?

* 4. What was the impact social media had in assisting activists groups in spreading their message for change throughout the community?

* 5. Did the April 6 Youth Movement bring the Facebook and social media awareness of change to the mainstream news media in Egypt? Are you a member of the Facebook group? If yes, why?

* 6. Do you feel social media had a significant role in the aftermath of the beating and murder of Al Saaed Khaled? Are you a member of the Facebook group? If yes, why?
7. Do you feel the mainstream media portrayed the Egyptian Revolution in a positive light? 

8. Explain if you believe that the rise of social media during the Revolution raised political awareness within the community or did not?

9. What role or impact do you believe social media had in Mubarak's dismissal from power?

10. Name: 
Age: 
Country: 

Name: Age: Country: 

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