Social Media and Popular Demonstrations: A Conceptual Model

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Abstract

The intensive use of the Internet and especially social media has been a common denominator in the popular demonstrations that have occurred in the past few years in the most diverse scenarios (e.g. Tunisia, Egypt, Spain, Brazil, etc.). Therefore, popular demonstrations appear to have been influenced by social media, particularly with respect to their organization and communication. Therefore, this TREO Talk seeks to discuss an exploratory conceptual model about the influence of the use of social media on popular demonstrations.

The conceptual model proposed consists of structural and instrumental factors set forth below and identified by means of the main contributions of the extant literature on social movements mediated by ICT that occurred in several countries since 2011.

These structural factors in the conceptual model are the contextual conditions of each country, i.e. they are macro elements that demonstrate the overall living conditions and political activity in the nation, including the technological, political and socioeconomic context of the country under analysis.

These instrumental factors in the conceptual model are those considered closest to the movements per se. They are specific moderating factors, which may help to reveal the evolution and dynamics of popular demonstrations mediated by social media. As such, the following factors can are considered to be instrumental: the agenda of claims; the traditional media; the repression of the demonstration and the international repercussion.

Figure 1 depicts the proposed conceptual model to be discussed in the TREO Talk.

![Conceptual Model of the Influence of Social Media Use in Popular Demonstrations](image)

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Influence of Social Media Use in Popular Demonstrations

Therefore, the authors look forward to presenting this model to the TREO Talk audience, as well as well receive fruitful feedback to go further on this issue.