Young Egyptians Use of Social Networks and the January 2011 Revolution

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Abstract

The 2011 Egyptian protests began on Tuesday 25 January in Tahrir,
one of Cairoøs biggest squares. On January 25 and 26, the Egyptian government
blocked Twitter in Egypt and later Face book was blocked as well.[1] Most
observers of the Egyptian scene at that time, claimed that the responsible
governmental authorities did this, in an attempt to stop mobilization for
anti-government protests.[2]
A report in March 2011[3] highlights a significant increase in the use of the
Internet in Egypt in the wake of the January 25 protests. "A large increase in
the number of web surfers and users of social networking sites reported to
change the pattern of use and the interests of the of the Internet contentsö0"
According
to the report, the number of Internet users in Egypt prior to January 25
was 21.2 million users, increased by almost 9% after this date to reach 23.1 million
in two months. The time Egyptian users spent online was doubled from
900 to 1800 minutes per months after 25 January 2011. Still, Egypt's Internet
penetration rate is less than 25%.
This paper investigates cultural issues in human computer interaction. The
paper explores the specific experiences of young Egyptian Internet users and
their interaction through social media during and after the Egyptian protest in
25 January 2011. The paper aims to reveal some the cultural characteristics of
this user group in interacting with the Internet.

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