

Hashtagging as an Identifier of Political Transformations in the Digital Age

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<https://doi.org/10.46272/2587-8476-2020-11-4-91-103>

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of the protest movement on social networks. The novelty of the study is in its comparative analysis of protests in different regions of the world. Its relevance is determined by the need to identify the main trends of the protest movement that began a few years ago and continues to play a huge role in the life of society today – particularly during this period of integration and digitalization – which is confirmed by the statistics given in this article. Special attention is paid to autopoietic organizations: loyal to the regime, limitrophe and radical communities. We emphasize that activism in social networks is characterized by cyclicity and orientation towards international recognition. The work presents universal patterns of the formation of lexical units, expressed in the form of hashtags. It provides information on specific political techniques for using social media platforms in the United States, highlighting the most effective ways of constructing social media posts and using slogans and text that attract the attention of the audience. The paper also reveals the vital role of social networks in the political agenda of African countries such as Uganda, Kenya, etc. The paper highlights the protest movements that took place in Muslim countries during the Arab Spring and provides a brief description of the Hong Kong Umbrella Revolution. And it is the totality of lexical units, expressed in the form of hashtags, that fully reveal the nature of protest movements, providing an opportunity to analyse a specific protest not by one word, but by a set of lexemes to view a subject in various ways.

KEYWORDS

protest movements, digitalization, social networks, hashtag activism

The modern world is striving to integrate many spheres of today's society: politics and economics, culture and technological progress, sports and art. Interaction seeks to erase boundaries, ensuring the wellbeing of society as a whole, regardless of the region. However, such integration processes often have negative consequences, leading to the interests of some states being catered to, while those of others are ignored.

It is apparent that this trend continues to develop today. In the 21st century, humanity has entered a new era of the information space, where digitalization is becoming the main source of knowledge. The internet, which unites countries and continents, plays a significant role in this process. A separate place in this context should be given to politics.

Indeed, the form of communication both among politicians and in their interactions with society has transformed completely over the past decade. With the advent of social media platforms, the process of providing information has moved to a qualitatively new level. Moreover, the emergence of Twitter has meant that politicians now react to world news in almost real time. In addition, the dissemination of information has acquired a more convenient form through the transmission of messages to the target audience. A phenomenon has thus appeared that in the past only indirectly concerned the media – reader backlash and interactive communication between politicians and their audiences, an understanding of their reaction to specific actions. In this regard, the question of the politician's competent use of his or her image on social networks is an important one.

The second factor that affected the second-generation internet was the protest movement. The process began in 2000–2010 with the flourishing of social media platforms. Some of the first countries to feel the influence of social networks were the Muslim states, where the Arab Spring unfolded with the active participation of users of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Subsequently, the experience of these protest movements began to spread throughout the world, affecting Asia, Africa and many other regions. Consequently, the emphasis in this work will be on social networks as an integral means of forming the modern political system.

The second-generation internet has radically transformed the process of virtual communication. High technologies have provided us with a means for engaging in prompt interactive communication both on the internet in general, and on social networks in particular. Transferring and exchanging information has become a two-way process, creating new forms of social interaction. In a relatively short period of time, social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) have become one of the main platforms for accessing the internet for millions of users alongside search engines (Google, Baidu, Yahoo, Yandex, etc.). According to O. Dyachenko, in certain situations, groups on social network act as an independent component of converged media in terms of their target content and audience.¹ An increasing number of users employ their social media feeds to monitor the news, a practice that has begun to spread to the field of professional media communication. Today, the number of subscribers to news communities on social networks is gradually overtaking the number of readers of offline versions.

1 Дьяченко 2016, 30

Through the study of individual cases, we test the hypothesis that protest movements in the modern world acquire their scale thanks to hashtags, which, in turn reflect processes in society, and that the most reliable data is not one hashtag, but a combination of lexical units that form a common semantic field. Thus, hashtags represent for material for research, amenable to relatively quick verification due to the transparency of their use on many social networks. Moreover, in our study, we investigate the diachronic aspect of the use of hashtags in the first half of the 2010s (as a stage in the formation of the hashtagging process) using as the example the slogans of the Arab Spring (December 17, 2010 to December 2012), #kony2012 (2012), #BlackLivesMatter (2013) and its 2020 iteration, and the hashtags of Hong Kong demonstrators (#HongKong, #OccupyCentral, and #UmbrellaRevolution) in 2014 and 2019. All the hashtags analysed were processed manually, with no added software.

These hashtags were selected so that we could monitor the chronology of transformations and because they are strong indicators of the largest demonstrations in the world at those specific times. We also pay special attention to the fact that only a combination of various hashtags can give the most complete picture of protest movements, which the above cases confirm.

The Nature of the Hashtag and its Role in the Further Digitalization of Society

One of the important attributes of most large social networks is the hashtag. The first hashtags appeared in the 1990s in the IRC network (Internet Relay Chat). However, they did not start to gain widespread popularity until 2007, when they were used on the Twitter social network to organize messages. C. Messina, a former employee at Google working at Twitter's San Francisco headquarters, suggested using keywords that combine major posts, identified by the hash symbol. The hashtag has enjoyed a widespread currency on social media, simplifying the process of virtual communication. It was S. Boyd, a senior researcher at GigaOM Media, who coined the new term "hashtag." To date, hashtags have already gone through a long evolutionary path, and their main function (text indexing for quick search in the context of a specific topic) has been relegated to the background.¹ The hashtag is gradually becoming an identifier of socio-political transformations, a tool for advertising and image building.

The lexical unit expressed by the hashtag has become an integral part of the media text that is broadcast through the channels of social networks. The form of integrating text or a key lexeme with the pound sign transforms the hashtag into a hyperlink that includes a complex of textual information, audio and video content.

This makes it possible to acquire an extensive layer of information on the target topic. In addition, the interactive nature of the hashtag lies in the fact that communicators on social networks autonomously post a corresponding lexeme, in the form expressed by the hashtag. "Hashtagging" also facilitates operational navigation in the media discourse in order to select the right information. Currently, in connection with the

1 Патрушева 2018, 471

development of graph theory and the analysis of big data, this phenomenon has become the prerogative of users of social networks, and is of key interest to marketing professionals and political strategists.

Within the framework of communication theory, the communication system is differentiated into elements that are defined as “units.” This system consists of transmitting devices (or addressers) that encode the text of the communication channel (a translator of information) and receiving devices (or addressees) that receive and decode the text. A complete unit of communication, as defined by the linguist G. Kolshansky, must satisfy two criteria: it must be organized structurally and it must provide complete information.¹

In this regard, a lexical unit expressed in the form of a hashtag is a unit of media communication, since it reflects a specific segment of speech that independently conveys a message.² This study presents four main cases of protest movements and their correlation with hashtag activism. We established that single hashtags are not enough to provide a complete picture on a given topic, and that combinations of hashtags should be investigated. We have thus identified the main slogans on social networks related to specific socio-political processes, which are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1.

**SOCIO-POLITICAL PHENOMENA IN HASHTAGS
СОЦИАЛЬНО-ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ ПРОЦЕССЫ, ОТРАЖЕННЫЕ В ХЭШТЕГАХ**

Event	Corresponding hashtags
Arab Spring	#Tahrir, #Lulu, #Bahrain, #Egypt, #Libya etc.
Kony 2012	#kony2012, #findkony, #stopkony, #stopatno(thing), #makekonyfamous etc.
Black Lives Matter	#BlueLivesMatter, #BlackLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter, #WhiteLivesMatter etc.
Hong Kong Revolution	#HongKong, #OccupyCentral, #UmbrellaRevolution etc.

Source: Compiled by the author.

Use of Political Hashtags on Social Media

Before hashtagging and social media became firmly established in society, there were fewer opportunities in politics to create, develop and maintain a person’s image, or to strengthen his or her status. In the past, this role belonged to the traditional media. Media communication has expanded the scope of resources for the abovementioned purposes. Social media platforms directly facilitated the establishment of interaction between society and government, and the second-generation internet radically modified the situation in the media sphere. In this regard, special attention should be paid to the political strategies of using these platforms and the search for relevant tactics for both forming and maintaining the positive image of a politician.³

Since the emergence of social networks such as Instagram and Twitter, politicians have striven to expand their influence on the internet in order to broadcast their

1 Кольшанский 1984, 176.

2 Филин 1979, 80.

3 Хецелиус 2019, 93.

political views and convey them to audiences by increasing the number of subscribers who are adherents of the politician's ideas and who may vote for them in elections. Thus, the formation of a positive image in modern virtual communication is becoming an integral part of the political programme of modern politicians.

One of the most prominent examples of a world leader using Twitter is the 44th President of the United States, B. Obama, who used the platform extensively during his 2008 campaign. The trend of world leaders using Twitter really caught on among world leaders from 2009 to 2012. In 2015, H. Clinton announced on her Twitter account that she intended to run for presidency, a fact that once again confirms the importance of social media in the political life of society. D. Trump during his term has been the most ardent supporter of Twitter in the political arena. He was an avid user even before he ran for president. Trump's tweets have repeatedly served as information to highlight his position both on radio and television, and in print media. The scandal following the ban of his personal account even raised the profile of this social network.

Currently, around 85% of the state representatives of the 193 member countries of the United Nations have a Twitter account, and approximately 66% of heads of state are personally represented on the platform.¹ In addition, it should be noted that many officials are more actively using Twitter, both as a resource to highlight their point of view, and as a tool for political propaganda. And hashtagging on these social networks acts as a priority source, not only for shaping a politician's image.

Hashtags in modern society are, by their very purpose, multi-tasking lexical units. To a certain extent, they appear as translators of political slogans of the past, modified in the context of the information society into a type of capacious, catchy and informative message. According to S. Fedorchenko, political hashtags in modern virtual communication have a "viral character" and demonstrate hypertextuality, targeting, psychological profiling and coding.

So, hashtags should be viewed as analogues of slogans that dictate the political agenda. This is of particular importance today, when in one capacious phrase on social networks you can instantly outline both your opinion on a certain political topic and influence your subscribers, forming a certain attitude towards the current situation in them. An interesting study on the shaping of the political agenda was carried out by M. Grachev, who, based on the works of M. McCombs and D. Shaw² on identifying the first level of the political agenda (which ranks texts in the context of the semantic differential³), focused on the second (concentration of the audience's attention on a certain message) and third levels of the political agenda (correlation of the attributive agenda with frames fixed in the minds of recipients).⁴

The thesis of the third level of the political agenda interprets the world of social networks in the best possible way, where lexical units expressed by hashtags act as system-forming components. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram have become a kind of experimental platform where politicians compare

1 Яковенко, Н. Почему политики полюбили Twitter // ИноСМИ. 16 июля 2015. [Электронный ресурс]. URL: <https://inosmi.ru/world/20150716/229132082.html> (дата обращения: 8.02.2021).

2 McCombs, Shaw 1972; 1976.

3 Construction of individual or group notional spaces with assessments on a number of rating scales. In this case, the system "main-minor-insignificant" becomes the scale. See: Osgood et al. 1957.

4 Грачев 2018, 146.

newly formed frames with the existing ones, which are actively used in society in the form of political slogans. In this regard, politicians should only correctly establish the current interests of society and, by broadcasting the hashtag (in accordance with their principles), adapt their own point of view to the needs of the audience.

According to German sociologist N. Luhmann, a political message implies accessibility for communication.¹ He distinguishes three autopoietic organizations: loyal to the regime, limitrophe and radical communities.² Groups on social media platforms can also be classified under this categorization. Particular attention should be paid to network limitrophe communities, which are in a balancing position between the two remaining binary systems.

Hashtags that take part in the work of self-referential network structures act as political codes. Hashtags can unite communication actors and transform and grow communities on social networks, endowing them with a value-symbolic component that attracts new users.

According to V. Tsybursky, network limitrophe communities not only smooth out conflicts between pro-government and radical groups, but also provide an opportunity for the regime to appeal to the impartiality, honesty and democratic nature of the current political system without rigidly censoring content.³ So, we see that in addition to forming a politician's image and serving as a platform for his or her slogans, social networks give the population access to the thoughts and positions of the opposition and actively promote it in the process of media communication.

Thus, an active protest movement can, using hashtags in modern virtual communication in an attempt to rally the support of society, act as a means of socio-political transformations in real life. Contrary to traditional means of expressing political positions, hashtag activism does not force users of social media platforms to take any risky action. The purpose of protest activity is reduced to the simplest actions that they can perform through subscriptions, likes and retweets.

Certain social and political movements have enjoyed popularity and success in many countries around the world over the last decade. In fact, the use of lexical units expressed in the form of hashtags during protest actions has significantly changed the situation in various regions, with governments even turning off the internet during episodes of mass unrest in order to maintain stability in the country. The expansion of the hashtag protest movement is directly related to the increase in the number of social networks and their diversity.

Hashtag activism, despite its short history, has captured the media's attention, engaging a large number of users on issues such as reporting on legal injustices and human rights violations, as well as for the purposes of fundraising and building opposition. The social media protest movement also runs political campaigns that seek to enact regulations and laws aimed at suppressing crimes that are ignored by the courts. Hashtag activism has transformed into a macro-text of defending a specific position, integrating users of social media platforms to participate in the campaign by promoting a capacious, concise and informative message.

1 Луман 2001, 116.

2 Луман 2007, 27.

3 Цымбурский 2011, 45.

J. Ndavula, A. Munuku, and H. Mberia identified¹ how the context in which a hashtag is formulated influences opinions on socio-political issues. Hashtags covering such problems as the political crisis in the country, ministerial scandals, collapsed buildings, terrorist attacks, social unrest and others were studied. The sample included hashtags with more than 100,000 mentions. It was found that most of the hashtags (51%) relate to the political context; 40% to the social context; 6% to security or terrorism; and only 3% to the economic context.

A significant percentage of the use of political hashtags indicates that political life causes more controversy on the internet. The number of tweets under these hashtags indicates that when trouble is brewing, people want to be heard if the nature of the problem is political. Statements, slogans and appeals can reflect both individual and group judgments, at times based on belonging to a particular political party.

Turning to the diachrony of the protest movement on social media, T. Small's work is worthy of note here. Small believes that hashtag activism emerged during the presidential elections in Iran.² In 2009, activists from the Democratic movement used the hashtag #iranelection on social media. This technique was used for positioning political statements, organizing mass protests and delegitimizing the political regime in country.³

History of the Emergence of Hashtag Activism in the Context of Political Transformations

When studying protest movements in modern virtual communication, we should keep in mind that the Arab Spring was key in the formation and spread of this phenomenon. From December 17, 2010 to December 2012, revolutionary movements took place in such countries of the Arab world as Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, Libya and others. Social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) have become a means of rallying the population around a common cause in these countries.

The governments of the countries tried to restrict the population's access to the internet, as the coverage of protest actions became wider and the users of social networks became more united. Hashtags in this context have become a macro-text that unites citizens and illuminates relevant data on the results of revolutionary actions. In addition, the coordination of movement processes was entrenched in many hashtags, often bearing the names of the squares where the movement of activists was directed.

It thus established lexical units expressed in the form of hashtags. The most notable were #Tahrir and #Lulu, with the first hashtag marking Cairo's main square (Tahrir) as the venue of mass protests. The second, #Lulu, was used to discuss Pearl Roundabout or Lulu Roundabout – a traffic interchange in Manama (Bahrain).

Regarding the toponymic nature of hashtags, it should also be noted that the coordination function is only one of the factors in the emergence of new lexical units based on a proper name, with the addition of a hash key in front of it. The populations of the countries accorded much greater importance in the lexemes #Bahrain, #Egypt, #Libya, drawing the attention of the global community to the situation in the region,

1 Ndavula et al. 2017.

2 Small 2011, 872.

3 Федорченко 2019, 24.

and the English version of the spelling once again emphasizes the protesters' intention to assert themselves at the international level within the framework of transnational social networks.¹

Having realized the high level of influence of social networks after the events of the Arab Spring, people and politicians began to gradually use this tool to achieve their socio-political goals. The next surge in protest movements based on hashtag activism was the events in Africa, or rather the coverage of these events in the United States in 2012, which once again underlines the international scope of this phenomenon. In this case, a group of activists from the United States drew the attention of the citizens of their country and the entire world to the oppression of children in Uganda in particular, and in the Central Africa in general. Human rights defenders have accused Ugandan war criminal J. Kony of murdering and mistreating Ugandan children.

The next stage in the deployment of the political campaign was to attract politicians and people who were popular, not only in the United States but all over the world. This is due to the large number of celebrity followers on social media. The campaign attracted a large number of people, which allowed the U.S. authorities to control the situation in Central of Africa moving forward.

Of course, hashtagging was not the only reason for the widespread coverage of this political campaign. In addition, internet platforms such as YouTube played an important role. However, the growing use of video was facilitated by the hypertext component, the main carriers of which were lexical units expressed in the form of hashtags. The difference is that while not all the goals of the Arab Spring were achieved through social media, because the governments of the countries involved opposed the protest actions, in the case of the Kony 2012 political campaign (with the hashtag #Kony2012 and others such as #findkony, #stopkony, #stopatno(thing), #makekonyfamous), the plans were implemented in full.²

However, researchers offer an opposite point of view that takes the real effect of protest movements on social networks into account. Thus, according to M.T. Bastos, C. Puschmann and R. Travitzki, a number of media outlets, political institutions and organizations are becoming the subject of widespread deception. The Twitter accounts of political movements in the United States such as Occupy Wall Street and Occupy U.S. spoke only in the role of sock puppeteer. In other words, internet accounts were used to mislead people. In addition, scholars claim that Twitter or media accounts of CNN, The New York Times, Reuters and HuffPost had a fairly large number of retweets without active involvement in a particular information flow.³

This fact indicates that well-known and reputable Twitter accounts are being tagged in all sorts of information streams in order to draw the attention of the media to socio-political phenomena and highlight a specific purpose or opinion.

Nevertheless, the situation surrounding the hashtag activism of the Kony 2012 campaign has shown American society what can be achieved using social media platforms. On the other hand, there is also a critical view of this problem. In particular,

1 Steinert-Threlkeld et al. 2015.

2 Joshua S. White, "Final-Retweets-Containing-KONY-Hashtags-for-graphing," Research Gate, accessed October 30, 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235764178_KONY2012_Retweet_Directed_Graph_Data.

3 Bastos et al. 2013.

M. Chossudovsky expressed the opinion that the struggle for human rights was only a cover for U.S. geopolitical ambitions¹.

The following year (2013), political life in social media was no longer concentrated outside the United States, but within the country. In July 2013, a court decision acquitted G. Zimmerman of the murder of African American teenager T. Martin, an event that provoked outrage from both the black community in the United States and human rights activists. This protest reaction was supported by a significant part of the Democrats, which subsequently resulted in the appearance of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag, a succinct and laconic protest on social networks. Looking at the history of hashtags in 2020, we can see a repetition of the situation at a higher level. This tells us that the protest movement that originated at a certain point in time and then began to decline also needs research in order to understand its causality and the ability to predict the consequences for society.

The peculiarity of this political campaign in the context of hashtag activism is also expressed in the expansion of the structure of the use of one lexical unit, expressed by a hashtag, with a complex of lexemes focused on opposing the initial one: #BlueLivesMatter, #AllLivesMatter and #WhiteLivesMatter.² In this way, part of the U.S. population reacted to the protest movements, speaking out against the discrimination of the majority and the destructive protests, and only in extremely rare cases trying to justify violence. The situation that we currently observe in the United States underlines the fact that the belittling of the role of social networks in the protest movement, and the disparaging name of hashtag activism as slacktivism, has little to do with the state of affairs that arises as a result of virtual protests turning into real ones and vice versa.

In the time between the first mention of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag and its use in 2020, a flash of LivesMatter movements occurred in July 2016 following police killings in Dallas. This is noted in detail in Figure 1. As we can see, the protest movements can be analysed solely on the basis of all lexical units expressed by hashtags and which form a single semantic field of protest movements in the United States. This trend reflects all cases of protest movement analysis, when only a combination of hashtags can provide a complete picture of demonstrations.

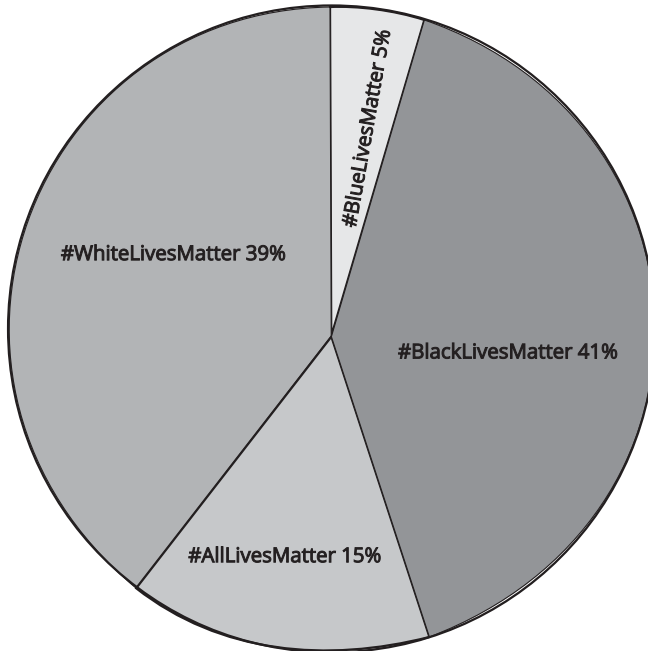
Regarding political events in the United States in 2020, it should be noted that D. Trump was an active user of social networks. He had no rivals among politicians on Twitter in terms of usage. Competition from Joe Biden in this area during the 2020 presidential campaign, even if meticulously coordinated, would be perceived by voters as more than artificial. Thus, a number of political scientists and journalists believe that the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement on social networks acquired its scale precisely thanks to the work of the Democrats during the presidential campaign to persuade electors who used social networks and who, in turn, contributed to Joe Biden's victory, primarily in the media space of the second-generation internet. On 8 January 2021 the leadership of the American social network Twitter announced that it decided to finally block the account of the U.S. President.

1 "Joseph Kony, America's Pretext to Invade Africa: U.S. Marines Dispatched to Five African Countries," Global research, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://sur.li/limn>.

2 Emma Madden, "The BTS Army and the transformative power of fandom as activism," The Ringer, July 11, 2020, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://www.theringer.com/music/2020/6/11/21287283/bts-army-black-lives-matter-fandom-activism>.

Figure 1.

PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN THE U.S. IN JULY 2016 (BASED ON GOOGLE TRENDS)
ПРОТЕСТНЫЕ ДВИЖЕНИЯ В США В ИЮЛЕ 2016 г.
(НА ОСНОВЕ ТЕНДЕНЦИЙ GOOGLE)



Source: Compiled by the author based on Google statistics.

Hashtag activism in the modern world, as we can see from the example above, is cyclical. However, this does not mean that cyclicity manifests itself only in the case of repeating a lexical unit expressed in the form of a hashtag. In a broader sense, this process borrows not only patterns that are characteristic of the protest movement, but also their style, direction and even structure. In addition, the experience of previous protests protects demonstrators from possible actions on the part of politicians against whom the actions were directed in the first place.

A prime example of all of the abovementioned aspects is the hashtag activism that was witnessed during the Hong Kong Umbrella Revolution. In many ways, this revolution repeated the history of the Arab Spring. The main hashtags were #HongKong, #OccupyCentral and #UmbrellaRevolution.¹ In this case, the first two hashtags can be traced back to those used during the Arab Spring: #HongKong and #Egypt (the country of the protest in order to notify the world community) and #OccupyCentral and #Tahrir (the location of the protests and the direction of movement of social media users towards the main square).

The second important point was the level of preparedness on the part of those who took part in the Hong Kong protests. Protestors downloaded the FireChat app, which allows users to distribute messages even without an internet connection thanks to Bluetooth and

¹ Griffin Leow, "Analysis of Tweets on the Hong Kong Protest Movement 2019 with Python," Towards Data Science, November 18, 2019, accessed October 30, 2020, <https://towardsdatascience.com/analysis-of-tweets-on-the-hong-kong-protest-movement-2019-with-python-a331851f061>.

Wi-Fi. The demonstrators of the Arab Spring did not prepare for the protests in this way, since this was the first time such large-scale actions on social networks had been held. It should also be noted that, like the BlackLivesMatter protest movements, the protests in Hong Kong also took place in two stages with a significant break in time: in 2014 and 2019.

Conclusion

Based on all the above examples, it should be noted that political activism is an integral part, not only of social media platforms, but also of real political events taking place in all regions of the world. For a better understanding of the nature of this multifaceted phenomenon, it is necessary to establish the regularities of the functioning of lexical units expressed in the form of hashtags.

Many political phenomena covered in social networks become an important part of media communication, which subsequently also influences the situation in a particular region. Interactivity is a distinctive feature of the second-generation internet; social media platforms allow users to not only to see the information, but also to actively discuss, challenge or support it.

The ambivalence of modern existence (in the framework of constant competition between international and regional social platforms) is an integral part of globalization as a process of strengthening the interconnectedness of different parts of the world, the ever-growing impact on the social reality of individual countries, and various factors of international significance: information and cultural exchange, political and economic ties, art and social movements. A true revolution took place in the information space with the introduction of and connection to the second-generation internet, which made it possible for people to communicate online.

Active use of the internet serves to shape worldviews and facilitate interaction among people. Making adjustments to the value picture of global society, cross-cultural behaviour and behaviour models, the lack of censorship, anonymity, various types of contacts, and the pragmatic orientation of internet interaction all contribute to the development of media communication for the purpose of socio-political protest.

Digitalization has undoubtedly changed the life of modern society, and made communication international. Political transformations in one country instantly become news to the whole world. To date, the function of indexing a message to search for a publication on a given topic is gradually fading into the background. In this work, we emphasize the relevance of hashtag activism. With each new case, this process becomes less and less trivial and, therefore, requires a deeper analysis. Statistical data helps scientists to assess the situation transparently in order to identify the main features of this phenomenon. And it is the totality of lexical units expressed in the form of hashtags that fully reveal the nature of protest movements, providing an opportunity to analyse a specific protest not by one word, but by a set of lexemes to view a subject in various ways.

Based on a number of examples provided in this paper, we see that social media activism is cyclical and internationally recognized. The similarity of the forms of slogans and messages expressed by hashtags, and the algorithm of subsequent actions provide an opportunity to extrapolate new emerging ideas and movements both in the field of modern virtual communication in general, and on social media platforms in particular for the timely adoption of constructive decisions.

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Additional information

Received: October 13, 2020. Accepted: February 15, 2021.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interests was declared by the author.

For citation

Alekseev, Aleksandr V. "Hashtagging as an Identifier of Political Transformations in the Digital Age." *Journal of International Analytics* 11, no. 4 (2020): 91–103.
<https://doi.org/10.46272/2587-8476-2020-11-4-91-103>

Анализ примеров использования хэштегов как средства координации протестных движений

АННОТАЦИЯ

Статья посвящена исследованию протестного движения в социальных сетях. Актуальность исследования детерминирована необходимостью выявления новых форм протестной активности, сформировавшихся в период цифровизации и глобализации. Исследование построено на эмпирическом анализе конкретных случаев применения хэштегов.

Подчеркивается, что активизм в социальных сетях характеризуется цикличностью и ориентацией на международное признание. В работе представлены универсальные паттерны образования лексических единиц, выраженных по форме хэштегами. Исследуется чрезвычайно важная роль социальных сетей в политической повестке таких африканских стран, как Уганда, Кения и др. Также в тексте освещаются протестные движения в мусульманских странах в период Арабской весны. Именно совокупность лексических единиц, выраженных по форме хэштегами, в полной мере раскрывает природу протестных движений, предоставляя возможность анализировать конкретный протест не по одному слову, а по набору лексем для того, чтобы рассмотреть вопрос с разных сторон.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

протестные движения, цифровизация, социальные сети, хэштег-активизм

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Дополнительная информация

Поступила в редакцию: 13 октября 2020. Принята к публикации: 15 февраля 2021.

Конфликт интересов

Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Цитирование

Алексеев, А.В. Анализ примеров использования хэштегов как средства координации протестных движений // *Международная аналитика.* – 2020. – Том 11 (4). – С. 91–103.

<https://doi.org/10.46272/2587-8476-2020-11-4-91-103>