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The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY IN EGYPT:

CASE STUDIES OF THREE MINISTRIES

A thesis submitted to the

Public Policy and Administration Department

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Public Policy

By

Gehad Soliman Sayed Kenawy

Supervised by

Dr. Hamid E. Ali

Fall14

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Dedicated To

My Lovely Family

My husband, Ahmed Shalaby, for his remarkable patience and Unwavering love and support over the course of my research

My grandfather, Mohamed Nassar, who always believed in me, may his soul rest in peace

My father, Soliman Kenawy, my mother, Naglaa Nassar and my sister, Engy Kenawy & Yasmin Kenawy for their endless love and encouragement

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY IN EGYPT: CASE STUDIES OF THREE MINISTRIES

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Supervised by Professor Hamid Ali

ABSTRACT

The use of social media tools in Egyptian government, while still relatively new, is gaining acceptance at all levels of government which is widely reflected in the number of social media pages for Egyptian ministries. By logging on Facebook or Twitter you can follow most of Egyptian ministries updated releases and news. Yet, it is still not clear how Egyptian government is regulating public employees' use of such interactive platforms. The purpose of this study is to answer the main research questions: What are the key elements of a social media policy? How Egyptian ministries are using social media? How Egyptian ministries are managing their social media pages? What challenges are Egyptian ministries encountering as they use social media? To achieve this purpose, the methodology adopted in this study include a review of literature, analysis of existing social media policies in different countries, and interviews with social media officials in a purposive non- random sample of Egyptian Ministries to examine their policies regarding social media use. The sample includes the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, and the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, as they represent Egyptian ministries from different levels; sovereign, economic and service ministries. The study findings indicate that the Egyptian government lacks having social

media policies that regulate the use of social media. After interviewing social media officials in different Egyptian ministries, it has been concluded that there are no concrete written policies that monitor and regulate public employees' usage of social media. Finally, this thesis recommends a social media policy guide for Egyptian government that will assist in setting guidelines that regulate their use of social media.

Keywords: Social Media, Social Media Policy, Policy Analysis, Egyptian Government

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List of Acronyms

MSIT: Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade

MPMAR: Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform

MOF: Ministry of Finance

MCIT: Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Social media has redefined how people interact and communicate across geographical boundaries and exchange information. Due to its large popularity, social media creates great incentive for the public sector to benefit from its potentials. Social media provides a sphere for immediate, interactive, and fast communications among different agencies and individuals (Brenner, 2012; Cardenas, 2013). In contrast to traditional media, social media depends on user-generated content, which is developed by ordinary users who are not necessarily having professional backgrounds as in traditional media. Traditional media such as TV, radio, and newspaper is mainly created to be a broadcast platform (one-to-many), on the other hand, social media is created to be a dialogue (many-to-many communication) (Porter, 2008). This many-to-many communication enables large number of people from different areas to disseminate information, express their opinions and create insightful discussions. Because of these valuable characteristics, social media can offer effective communication channels between governments and citizens.

In the last few years, the use of social media in governments has generated discussions among experts due to its great potential for e-government. Generally, governments use social media for many purposes; to deliver services to citizens, reach out for stakeholders (Chang & Kannan, 2008; Bertot et al., 2012), disseminate information to residents, boost citizens engagement in policy development discussions (Bertot et al., 2012, Chun et al., 2010;) and

achieve transparency, collaboration and service quality (Bertot, et al., 2010; Jaeger & Bertot, 2010; Bertot et al., 2012).

Despite the great benefits and promises that social media offer to governments, several challenges are associated with its use in government. Some of these challenges relate to privacy, security, and legal issues (Bertot, et al., 2012; Bryer & Zavattaro, 2011; Dadashzadeh, 2010; Landsbergen, 2010; Sherman, 2011; vela et al., 2012). To mitigate such challenges, experts believe that government should develop policies that regulate their use of social media and that social media policies should be firstly considered by governments willing to use social media (Vela et al., 2012; Cardenas, 2013; Hrdinova et al., 2010; Freeman & Loo, 2009).

While it seems like an expected progression for public agencies to easily communicate with public via social networks, harnessing the power of social media in the context of government is very complicated (Hrdinova et al, 2010; Mergel, 2012; Magro, 2012). Some countries, including the U.S., Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom have managed to develop social media guidelines and policies that assist public agencies in making the best use of social media (Vela et al., 2012; Hrdinova, 2010; Cardenas, 2013). However, many other countries are hardly trying to find out what a social media policy should include (Hrdinova et al., 2010, Magro, 2012).

In the context of Egypt, although social media has initially been used intensively by citizens as a platform for political mobilization and public opinion expression, they have become important tools used by governments especially after the 25th of January revolution when the

Egyptian government realized the urge to use the exact language and communication tools used by Egyptian youth (El–Khalili, 2013; Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013; Khodeir & Khalifa, 2014). Since the 25th of January revolution, Egyptians' use of social media surpassed all expectations. Statistical data shows that Facebook users in Egypt rose from 4.2 million in 2011(Abdullah, 2013) to 20 million in 2014 (MCIT Research department, 2014). In addition, Facebook became the most commonly used website by government (Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013). While the use of social media in Egyptian government is recent, the development of relationships between government and citizens is growing fast. Yet, there is still no guideline for the use of social media in Egyptian government.

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine social media policies implemented by Egyptian ministries regarding their use of social media. This was accomplished by reviewing the existing research to find out the key elements of a social media policy, analyzing social media policies in different countries, assessing social media policies in a number of Egyptian ministries to examine how they manage and use social media websites and explore challenges they face during implementation, and finally recommending an implementation guide for a social media policy that can lead them into a successful use of social media.

To draw a representative sample I have classified Egyptian ministries into three main categories: service ministries, economic ministries, and sovereign ministries. Based on this classification, I have drawn a purposive –non random sample to represent this classification by choosing the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT), the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform (MPMAR), and the Ministry of Finance (MOF). These

three ministries were purposively selected as they represent different levels of government; in addition, social media plays an important role in delivering their services.

First, MSIT represents a service ministry that touches directly the daily lives of Egyptians. It aims at ensuring citizens' receival of supply commodities. Therefore, it is significant to examine how MSIT is managing its social media pages to reach its audience, receive their feedback and interact with them. In addition, MSIT's social media pages play an important role in raising awareness about the new electronic supplying system by disseminating information about the new service, receiving feedback from citizens about the quality of services, posting the price list of supply commodities, and getting indicators of citizens' satisfaction.

Second, MPMAR represents an economic ministry that is responsible for the formulation of public policies and reform plans for government entities; therefore, it is quite important to examine its role in setting policies with regard to social media. Also, MPMAR's use of social media reflects its significance to the ministry. MPMAR harnesses social media to promote for the ministry's development projects and update citizens with measures taken to reduce administrative corruption in order to ensure transparency and openness.

Finally, MOF represents a sovereign ministry that sets and prepares the government's budget and public debt. According to the director of Ministry of Finance's portal and IT manager, "MOF's social media pages plays a significant role in providing citizens and international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund with monthly

financial reports and the state's budget" .Thus, it is necessary to evaluate how MOF is managing its social media sites to reach its local and international audiences.

1.2 Research problem

The use of social media in Egyptian government has increased in the last few years. Public agencies at all levels of government are adding Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube links to their websites. However, interacting through social media raises many issues with regard to information management, security, legal, privacy, and other information policy challenges. The fast interaction between government and citizens through social media has outpaced the regulatory frameworks adopted by ministries to regulate their use of social media. This thesis examines the current regulatory policies adopted by the Egyptian government, taking three Egyptian ministries as case studies to explore the ways in which they use and manage social media websites and highlight challenges they encounter during implementation, in addition to recommending guidelines for addressing such challenges.

1.3 Research objectives

This thesis aims to identify the key elements of a social media policy from the literature. Based on these elements, the study will examine social media policies in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, and Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform. Accordingly, the study will be able to identify similarities and differences between social media policies in the selected ministries and challenges encountered

by them. Finally, the study will recommend a social media policy guide for Egyptian government.

1.4 Research questions

This thesis will address the following key questions:

First, what are the key elements of a social media policy?

Second, how the selected ministries are using social media?

Third, how the selected ministries are managing their social media pages?

Fourth, what challenges are the selected ministries encountering as they use social media?

In addition, it will address the following sub-questions:

First, what are the policies adopted by the selected ministries with regard to social media?

Second, what are the similarities and differences between the selected ministries ways of managing their social media pages?

1.5 Outline of the Study

This thesis is divided into six chapters that will describe my process for examining social media policies in a sample of Egyptian ministries and designing a social media policy guide for Egyptian government. Chapter one provides an introduction about the topic. Chapter two offers

the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter three reviews the existing literature on social media in government; in addition, it analyzes exiting social media policies, and provides a background on social media in Egypt. Chapter four describes the methodology used for collecting and analyzing data and provides background about the case studies. Chapter five provides the analysis and findings of the study. Finally, Chapter six offers concluding remarks and recommendations represented in the proposed social media policy guide for Egyptian government.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework

This chapter provides a list of definitions of the main terms used in this study and the way in which it will be employed in this thesis.

2.1 Social Media

Social media is hard to define because it is frequently changing as new technologies emerge and develop. Scholars are trying to find out a formal definition for social media. According to Kaplan and Haenlein, Social Media is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

To understand what exactly is meant by social media, it crucial to shed light on the two concepts that are frequently attached to it, which are Web 2.0 and User Generated Content.

Web 2.0 is a term that was initially utilized in 2004 to describe a new generation of the World Wide Web that enables individuals, groups and organizations to collaborate, interact and share information in a participatory manner. Web 2.0 simply refers to the shift from static web pages –upon which web 1.0 movement was based - to a more interactive web that is based on dynamic and collaborative applications which engage users to create, post and share different types of content. Thus, Web 2.0 is considered as the foundation for the development of social media (Chang & Kannan, 2008; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Freeman & Loo, 2009)

While Web 2.0 is considered as the technological and ideological platform of social media, User Generated Content (UGC) refers to different types of content that are developed and shared by users on social media such as texts, video, photos, and audio (Cha et al., 2007; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has identified three major characteristics for User Generated Content: first, it should be publicly available on a website or a social media platform; second, it should include certain amount of creative work; third, it should have been developed away from professional practices (OECD, 2007)

Thus, social media can be simply defined as a part of the Web 2.0 movement, which is characterized by user-generated content developed by active users. Moreover, it provides users with various options for sharing photos, videos, personal statuses, and news. Furthermore, the invention of mobile applications has boosted users' engagement to social media making social media accessible everywhere (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Humphreys, 2008)

Out of too many social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube ranked the most commonly used websites due to the unique communication benefits they offer to their users (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). For instance, Facebook which is considered as the most prominent social media website allows users to share information through various media tools such as videos, photos and news which facilitate communication and improve interaction (Zimmer, 2012). By 2014, Facebook had one billion subscribers from all over the world (Statista, 2014). On the other hand, YouTube is a video sharing site that allows users to upload and share various types of videos for the purpose of entertainment, awareness, or sharing knowledge (YouTube, 2013). Every minute, forty-eight hours of video are shared on YouTube which is equivalent to

eight years of videos being uploaded every day (Cardenas, 2013). Moreover, Twitter provides users with access to information, views, and news that just happens in real life (Twitter, 2011). By the beginning of 2014, the website had 284 million subscribers (Statista, 2014). Beyond these top three websites, there are many other social media sites that enable people to communicate in different ways providing them with various dynamic and interactive tools.

Initially social media was created to help people socialize and easily communicate with each other. Later on, social media has evolved into a major tool agencies use to communicate with customers and clients. Such platforms enable agencies to connect to their consumers in ways they have never been able to in the past. Prior to social media, reaching out to customers was not an easy task; agencies used to depend on traditional advertising tools such as radio and TV commercials, newspaper advertisements and billboards. Such kind of advertising is expensive and not interactive. In contrast, social media allow agencies to reach out to their customers in low to no cost. Moreover, it enables customers to directly interact with their agency with no restrictions or difficulties, and provides agencies with frequent feedback on their services (Zimmer, 2012)

These benefits extended to governments. Prior to social media, governments would connect to citizens through radio and television commercials, newspaper notices, public postings, or other conventional tools that requires huge expenses. Governments used to have difficulty in finding out whether their information have been read by citizens and how was the community feedback on it. Social media enables governments to easily connect with citizens in low- to no-cost. Additionally, governments can directly receive citizens' feedback from their comments,

"likes", and rates of sharing. Thus, social media can be a powerful tool that assist governments in achieving openness, transparency and service quality (Lathrop & Ruma, 2010; Noveck, 2009; Zimmer,2012; Anderson, 2006).

Although social media offers many benefits to governments, several risks and challenges are associated with its use. Social media is mainly unfiltered. Citizens can easily express their opinions and publicly criticize public agencies without any restrictions on their offensive language or content. In addition, there are various legal issues which relate to governments use of social media, one of which is how much agencies can censor content on their social media pages. Moreover, social media is about rapid and dynamic interactions which raise another issue regarding government's bureaucracies and how it can cope with this rapidly interactive medium (Vela et al.,2012 ; Zimmer, 2012; Landsbergen, 2010)

For the purpose of this research, social media is identified as social media tools used by Egyptian ministries to communicate with the public, which were shown to be: Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, according to government officials. This research examines social media policies that regulate Egyptian ministries' use of social media. However, my observation will focus on Facebook in particular because of the website's importance to the selected ministries (MSIT, MOF, and MPMAR) and also because Facebook in general is the most commonly used social media website by government agencies in Egypt (Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013).

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2.2 Social Media Policy

Social Media policy is a shared policy of conduct that sets guidelines for employees who post content online either as part of their job or for a private reason .Social media policies offer assistance on how to regulate employees use of social media to interact with the public (Mergel & Greeves, 2013). Social media policies are crucial as they assist public agencies to reduce legal and privacy issues (Zimmer, 2012). A well established policy is designed to fit with the vision, strategies, and objectives of the government (Mergel, 2012; Hrdinova et. al, 2010).

Social media policies address managerial issues such as employee access to social media sites, account management, definition of adequate use, proper employee conduct, and citizen conduct (Mergel, 2012; Hrdinova et. al, 2010). Moreover, social media policies discuss privacy and legal issues, for instance, copy rights limitations, freedom of speech boundaries, interacting with the public through social media, and security measures (Newman, 2009).

Policies create institutional responsibility, regulations, ethics, principles, and they reduce legal and privacy concerns. Furthermore, they are considered as the first major step public agencies should consider when using social media to communicate with citizens in order to ensure successful communication (Hrdinova, et. al, 2010). Yet, several public agencies do not adopt social media policies or consider adopting them after launching social media campaigns (Mergel, 2012). The reason might be that these agencies do not realize the importance of such policies or did not face certain challenges during their use of social media. However, social media policies should be taken seriously, as they mainly represent preventative measures against

prospective legal, security and managerial challenges. Furthermore; such potential risks can be hard to expect and prepare for, mainly because social media technologies are frequently changing and developing.

In addition, social media policies offer guidance on how government employees should use social media to engage citizens and achieve transparency (Mergel & Greeves, 2013). Based on the agency, policies can be developed as a bottom-up or a top-down initiative. However, it has been found that both approaches have limitations, as social media implementation needs collaboration between all levels of government to be successful and efficient (Mergel, 2012). Thus, multiple levels of government need to collaborate and coordinate to make the best use of social media and overcome its potential risks.

According to Hrdinova et al et. al (2010), governments can deal with most of social media concerns by considering each of the following eight fundamental elements for a social media policy: 1) employee access, 2) account management, 3) acceptable use, 4) employee conduct, 5) content, 6) security, 7) legal issues, and 8) citizen conduct.

In this research, social media policy is conceptualized as regulatory frameworks adopted by Egyptian ministries regarding their use of social networks. These policies will be examined according to the framework introduced by Hrdinova et al (2010) which includes 8 fundamental elements for a successful social media policy and represents the most well established framework for evaluation as discussed and illustrated in the next section.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

This chapter provides the previous studies that focused on governments and social media; in addition, it discusses the elements of social media policy, and offers analysis of existing social media policies in different countries; moreover, this section provides a background on social media use in Egypt.

3.1 Governments and social media

Social media started as a tool for personal communication among friends, groups and families. Nevertheless, as more users began to realize the ease and benefit of interacting via social networks, the use extended to professional communications. Public agencies in particular have received many demands from civil servants to utilize social networks to accomplish their duties (Hrdinova et al, 2010). Thus, governments started shifting to greater engagement and interaction with residents through the web. Researchers defined this new movement as transformation from e-Government to Government 2.0 (Cardenas, 2013; Mergel 2012).

3.1.1 E-Government and Government 2.0

E-Government is identified as "the delivery of government information and services online through the Internet or other digital means." (West, 2004). On the other hand, Government 2.0 is defined as "a more open, social, communicative, interactive and user-centered version of e-government that has the potential to reshape the relationship between government and citizens, in a sense that services, control and policy formulation are designed through a cooperation of citizens, governments and civil society" (Meijer et al., 2012).

E-Government is to a great extent considered as a unidirectional movement in which organizations manage services on the internet as a one- to- many communication with no access given to citizens to be part of the communication process, On the other hand, Government 2.0 movement drives organizations to utilize social networks as many to many communication, which provides more interaction, and cooperation between governments and residents (Pina et. al, 2010).

Initially, studies on e-Government showed that it was not as effective as expected because residents didn't have full access to governments' data on the internet (Magro,2011).Recently, enhanced internet advancements and residents' belief that information will be accessible online, has increased its effectiveness (Reddick, 2009, Mergel, 2012). Research found that residents were ready to participate with public organizations via their online platforms; in addition, they trusted the public sector with their personal information more than the private sector (Chang, A.; Kannon, K., 2008). Moreover, the evolution of Government 2.0 has improved interaction techniques and increased the number of people who interact with governments via social networks. Thus, Government 2.0 can be considered as a more interactive and efficient movement than e-government with regard to governments' engagement with citizens.

Government 2.0 redefined our perception of individuals from being passive receivers to active participants who contributes in assessing government services and programs. Generally, government 2.0 is developed from the term Web 2.0 which indicates new technological platforms that define users as the main content developers who create, post, and share different kind of videos, pictures and texts. Web 2.0 applications are mostly described as social media

platforms since it provides different channels for users to socialize and communicate with others in a more advanced and interactive venue (Chun *et al,* 2010; Frissen *et al*., 2008). The term Web 2.0 is developed from the old terms Web and Web 1.0. The same is for government; Government 2.0 refers to the new version of e-government. These new versions provide greater access to social platforms, information and governments' services.

As government 2.0 is characterized by extensive use of web services and technologies, it is now questionable whether these new advances are suitable to be adopted by different governments. Due to the limited number of studies on effectiveness of social media use by public agencies, this is very hard to determine. Yet, agencies should count the costs and benefits of social networks and create strategies, policies to maintain effective execution (Cardenas, 2013; Vela et al., 2012).

Although many studies addressed governments' use of ICT (Information and communication technologies) and social media (Newman, 2009; Zimmer, 2012; Cardenas, 2013; Bertot, et al., 2010; Magro, 2011) limited studies exist on the efficiency of Government 2.0 in achieving public policy goals and strategies. What government 2.0 might add to public policy process remained a frequently asked question by government officials from all over the world.

3.1.2 Success stories of social media use in governments

A number of success stories can be addressed in the context of government use of social media in different countries. First, the Kublai initiative, which is an online platform launched by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development, enables residents to contribute in the economic development of their communities by generating creative entrepreneurial ideas and transfering them into feasible projects. This platform has improved transparency, openness, and mutual trust

between citizens and the ministry. Residents started to collaborate passionately providing suggestions, guidance and their expertise to develop their communities (Cottica & Bianchi, 2010).This initiative demonstrates that 2.0 techniques can successfully achieve outcomes of public interest that would be difficult to achieve if the public sector decides to depend merely on its own resources, it also exemplifies one benefit of the prevailing advantages that social media offer in policy making, economic development and citizens' engagement.

Second, the catastrophe of Haiti earthquake that took place in Haiti -an island nation in the Caribbean- in 2010 has driven U.S. agencies to use social media as a major information-sharing system. Social media applications resulted in rapid decision processes and comprehensive information resources through creating cooperation channels with different external aid organizations, and rapidly transforming information to be easily used by citizens and decision makers (Yates & Paquette, 2011). This story demonstrates social media power in disaster management by providing an easy, innovative and accessible platform that could be simply used by citizens, agencies and governments for achieving effective dissemination, acquisition, and sharing of information during crisis.

In addition, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention in the U.S. harnessed Twitter to circulate information about the spread of diseases, and discovered that citizens passing along the message through Twitter enlarged the circulation of the information. Moreover, citizens shared their own diseases and experiences which were then examined by the CDCP, put in their records and delivered again via twitter to spread the information to the general public (Nakki, Back, & Ropponen, 2011). This example reflects the great potential of social media in public

health through raising awareness of public health-related issues, educating the public, disseminating health information and helping them live healthier and safer lives.

Also, President Obama has become a strong advocate for the use of social media since he was a presidential candidate. To a great extent, the success of Obama's presidential campaigns goes back to the extensive use of social media (Jaeger, Paquette, & Simmons, 2010). Furthermore, the power of social media in achieving political and social change is unprecedented. The series of uprisings in the Middle East have confirmed the power of social media in achieving social and political change. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube were the main channels for protestors to communicate, coordinate and arrange uprisings. As explained by an anonymous Egyptian activist "We use Facebook to schedule the protests and we use Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world" (Kassim, 2012). Moreover, social media played a remarkable role in Egypt's 2012 presidential elections. Social media websites had a significant influence on the election process. Egyptian Presidential candidates used social networks as a promotion tool. In addition, social media users were using social networks extensively to support their candidates (Elsebahy, 2013).

However, in spite of the success stories, some doubts exist concerning the effectiveness of social media in government. Social media highlights the call for fast interactions, the call to mix what is personal with what is professional, and the call to incorporate advanced technologies. How governments' bureaucracy will cope with these rapid changing interactions represent a major concern (Landsbergen, D, 2010). Contribution, interaction and engagement were the major objectives of governments' social media initiatives, but achieving them

sometimes leads to unexpected costs and risks. Therefore, scholars recommend that to mitigate flaws of social media, policies are essential (Freeman & Loo, 2009; Cardenas, 2013; Hrdinova et al., 2010; Vela et al., 2012).

3.2 Social media policies

This section reviews current studies on the elements of social media policies; in addition it offers analysis of social media policies that are being adopted by governments in different countries.

3.2.1 Elements of social media policies

Studies on what social media policies should include are very limited. Research papers generally address what social media policies should consider. The most comprehensive study on the elements of social media policy is developed by the Center for Technology in Government at State University of New York. After analyzing 26 publicly accessible government social media policies and interviewing 32 government officials, this paper introduces a framework of eight fundamental elements of an effective social media policy (Hrdinova et al., 2010). Through the research analysis, researchers found that there are two kinds of documents that governments design to regulate employees' use of social media: guidelines and policies. Guidelines offer guidance on the best way to utilize social networks to accomplish a required outcome, for example, boosting citizen interaction or giving recommendations for developing an engaging content. On the other hand, policies focus on the official rules and regulations that manage employees' use of social networks, for example, deciding who is responsible for account

management and what are the security measures that should be taken to secure social media accounts. Of the 26 documents they analyzed, 10 were formal social media policies, 12 were social media guidelines, and 4 were a combination of both (Hrdinova et al., 2010). Analysis of the 26 policy documents is provided in Appendix B.

On the same lines with Hrdinova et al. research, Zimmer (2012) has conducted a survey to ask large cities in California about the content of their social media policies. He discovered that the elements covered in their policies include: purpose statements, social media definition, employee conduct, employee access. Also, he concluded that while 46% of his sample had formal policies 52% had not.

Furthermore, Mergel & Greeves (2013) concluded from interviews with officials in federal government, that social networking polices should identify institutional responsibilities, develop a brand to be utilized in different outlets, create materials to be published and develop data management procedures; in addition they must maintain the ease of access to their materials online, and post a commenting policy on their pages for citizens to abide by.

Moreover, Cardenas (2013) analyzed social media policies in nine US cities. She discovered that most of them have statements of purpose and address privacy and legal issues as well as institutional responsibilities. Also she found that most of them are identical since they include the exact elements and some of them are extended to address more issues and concerns as found in Appendix C. In addition, Cardenas offered guidelines to governments on how to efficiently assess, execute, and monitor social media. Moreover, Cardenas developed a social

media policy for Yolo County - a rural county in Northern California- in addition she designed a strategy and a model for future evaluation.

Finally, Mergel (2012) published a textbook which comprehensively address social media use in governments. She conducted interviews in US federal governments with media officials, social media entrepreneurs and IT experts at the state and local levels, and simply concludes that institutions that aim at adopting social media policies should consider the institutional structure and resources. Institutional structure should take account of being mission oriented, defining tasks and liability within the institution hierarchy, and identifying audience; and resources should include possible costs and benefits of social media.

The following part discusses the eight fundamental elements introduced by Center for Technology in Government as found to be covering all aspects of policy with regard to social media use in government. According to Hrdinova et al et. al (2010), governments can deal with most of the current concerns around social media use by considering each of the following eight fundamental elements:

3.2.1.1 Employee Access

Governments have the authority to control employees' access to social media sites by selecting a group of employees to be responsible for managing social media websites and deciding on the procedures for acquiring such access and which social media accounts will be created. In addition, governments have discretion to control access to non-work related sites on the internet; for example leisure Web sites and personal emails. Though, social networks are

blurring the line between official and personal use, raising new concerns around which employee can log into these websites and what is the procedures for acquiring such access. (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013)

Sample policy language for Employee access

"It should be noted that the lines between personal and professional usages of social media sites are blurry, making the issue of granting access to one rather than the other difficult. In principle, access to social media sites shouldn't be banned and they should be used in compliance with this guidelines document and with the existing code of conduct. As such, employees should be held accountable for any improper use of any social media site. Banning employees from accessing social media sites might not be effective as they can access it through other channels including their mobile phones."

~ United Arab Emirates Government

Source: Guidelines for Social Media Usage in United Arab Emirates Government Entities**.** Retrieved 30 December 2014 from: http://www.fahr.gov.ae/Portal/Userfiles/Assets/Documents/884dd373.pdf

The balance between restricted and unrestricted and access is still a problem for many governments. While some agencies value the potential chances for professional improvement when employees are joining collaborative, educational and knowledge sharing activities on social media websites, still many are afraid of security and legal challenges (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013)

3.2.1.2 Social Media Account Management

Account management includes the establishment, protection, and closure of social media pages. The lack of a well defined guideline on account management might lead to a condition where the authority of the agency does not have a control over what kinds of social networking profiles are being created, updated, or destructed. Thus, an essential aspect is deciding who will be responsible for establishing agency's social media page and setting implementation strategies

which should include: Identifying target audience, message development, definition of success, and prospective partners (Mergel & Greeves, 2013; Hrdinova et al, 2010; Cardenas, 2013)

Sample policy language for Account management

"Departments should consider the following before making use of social media tools:

- "Assign a social media communications team: Obtain the appropriate level of authority and approval for setting up the structure for using social media platforms. Identify the person or persons who will have primary responsibility for populating, maintaining and monitoring your social media platforms. Ensure they have the time and enthusiasm to devote to this project. List the team members."

- "Allow for several trustworthy people to respond to user comments promptly: A team of trustworthy people, who are authorized and competent to respond within departmental policy guidelines, are needed to ensure that a flow of conversation is maintained. The team should develop an approach for responding to negative criticism."

~ Government of South Africa

Source: Social Media Policy Guidelines. Retrieved 30 December 2014 from: http://www.gcis.gov.za/resource_centre/guidelines/ social_media_guidelines_final_20_april2011.pdf

3.2.1.3 Acceptable Use

Policies for acceptable use explain how employees are allowed to use agency resources, limitations for personal use, and measures for violating this policy. Yet, many agencies are having difficulty with defining social media acceptable use, especially regarding personal and professional use. Commonly asked question in this regard is how long an employee is allowed to use his/her Facebook account for personal reasons during working (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013)

Sample policy language for Acceptable use

"Employees should recognize that there are restrictions and limitations to use of the Internet and its related technologies. There is a limited amount of personal use that is understood and permissible, but employees should be as conservative as possible in such personal use and understand that public records laws may bring their use under scrutiny by the media and public."

~ City of Chandler, AZ

Source: City of Chandler Admisntrative Regulation, Social media. Retrieved 21 December 2014 from https://sites.google.com/site/munigov20/goodreadingandresources/Chandler_SocialMediaPolicy.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1

3.2.1.4 Employee Conduct

Generally, employee conduct is regulated by policies that address what is accepted and what is not in terms of employees' "online" behavior, and decides on penalties that should be imposed if a violation takes place. In addition, some governments cover more specific matters to social networks, such as ensuring credibility and transparency, being professional in all online communications, and respecting the guidelines of the medium. Other policies ensure that employees must share professional posts both in their private and professional lives (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013)

Sample policy language for Employee conduct

"Be credible: Be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent. Be consistent: Encourage constructive criticism and deliberation. Be cordial, honest and professional at all times. Be responsive: When you gain insight, share it where appropriate. Be integrated: Wherever possible; align online participation with other offline communications. Be a civil servant: Remember that you are an ambassador for your organization. Wherever possible, disclose your position as a representative of your Department or Agency."

~ The Central Office of Information, UK

Source: Engaging through social media a guide for civil servants. Retrieved 29 December 2014 from:
http://www.politicheeuropee.it/file_download/955

3.2.1.5 Content

This element deals with who is authorized to publish official agency materials on social networking pages and who is in charge of confirming its credibility, accuracy and correctness. Some agencies have less control over content by permitting workers to write freely about agency's related issues on various social media pages. Other agencies assign only the public information officer to create and manage agency's social media pages. The question of how to

control employees' professional and personal use of social media represents a major concern for many public agencies (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013)

Sample policy language for Publishing Content

"A government entity is responsible for continuously publishing and managing the contents of their pages on both government-owned and commercial social media websites. This responsibility should be assigned to the organizational unit that is responsible for publishing and managing the entity's content on "traditional media" unit."

~ United Arab Emirates Government

Source: Guidelines for Social Media Usage in United Arab Emirates Government Entities. Retrieved 30 December 2014 from: http://www.fahr.gov.ae/Portal/Userfiles/Assets/Documents/884dd373.pdf

3.2.1.6 Security

Public agencies are working on developing ultimate measures to guarantee the security of their information; for example, requiring page administrators to use difficult and complex passwords, and assigning specific number of employees to be responsible for updating social media accounts. Technology concerns that are covered by different policies includes issues such as virus scans and password privacy (Hrdinova et al., 2010)

Sample policy language for Security management

"Information Standard: Information Security (IS18) requires that agencies employ an approval mechanism to control the access of official personnel representing the agency through its official social media accounts. It is recommended that a central register of official social media accounts be maintained including the account's purpose and the officers with access permission. It is also recommended that agencies nominate a central contact point for social media matters."

~ Queensland Government, Australia

Source: Official use of social media guideline. Retrieved 29 December 2014 from: http://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/products/qgea-documents/547-business/2474-official-use-of-social-media-guideline

3.2.1.7 Legal Issues

Social media use raises the question of how to guarantee that workers are following all the existing regulations. While some policies address general issues of legal risks, other policies address particular law aspects, for example, copy rights, accessibility, freedom of expression, and privacy. (Hrdinova et al., 2010)

Sample policy language for legal issues

"To avoid breaches of privacy comply with the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, for example: 1) link to a collection notice detailing how personal information will be used, who will have access to it and how it is protected. 2) Seek consent before posting photos or other personal information to official social media accounts. 3) Seek the consent to the personal information being transferred out of Australia. Social media by its nature will result in the transfer of personal information out of Australia via official social media accounts."

~ Queensland Government, Australia

Source: Official use of social media guideline. Retrieved 29 December 2014 from: http://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/products/qgea-documents/547-business/2474-official-use-of-social-media-guideline

3.2.1.8 Citizen Conduct

In contrast to traditional media, social media provide interactive communications between public agencies and residents. Residents are allowed to publish text, pictures or videos to diverse social networking websites. Agencies that have chosen to allow users' comments on their pages are encouraged to have a commenting policy that address the appropriate guideline citizens should abide by. In general, this policy refers to restrictions on profane language and encouragement of illegal movements. Regular follow up of users' posts is necessary to guarantee that they are appropriate (Hrdinova et al., 2010; Mergel & Greeves, 2013).

Source: Guidelines for Social Media Usage in United Arab Emirates Government Entities**.** Retrieved 30 December 2014 from: http://www.fahr.gov.ae/Portal/Userfiles/Assets/Documents/884dd373.pdf

To sum up, this part has discussed the main elements of a social media policy. It has been concluded that developing a policy for government's use of social media is not an easy mission. By using social media, governments are facing several legal and security risks; therefore, government agencies should develop policies to overcome such risks. In addition, it has been found that most studies are focusing their analysis on social media policies in US, while social media policies in developing countries and other developed countries didn't get the same level of attention. This shows the great importance of conducting research that examine and analyze social media policies in Egypt – as considered one of the developing countries -to figure out where Egyptian government stands from the international policy standards.

3.2.2 Existing social media policies

The previous section provided a review of the current studies on elements of social media policies. I added to this review by conducting analysis of policies that is currently adopted by governments in different countries (United Arab Emirates, Australia, Canada, India and South Africa). My analysis found that most of them have statements of purpose and include social media definitions. All of them address the eight fundamental elements developed by the Center for Technology in Government. Governments of Canada, South Africa and Queensland in Australia added definition of target audience, risk assessment and web accessibility to ensure that content is accessible to everyone especially for people with disabilities. In addition, Governments of Canada and South Africa added program evaluation to ensure that the use of social media is achieving the desired outcomes. Moreover, Governments of South Africa and Queensland added success measures to evaluate their goals and objectives. Furthermore, Department of Electronics and Information Technology at the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology in Government of India, Governments of Canada and Queensland included communication strategies to guarantee using effective communication tools in reaching their audience, summarized in Table 1. List of all reviewed policies are found in Appendix D.

Table 1: Reviewed Social Media policies

Government/ organization	Date established	Policy details
Queensland Government in Australia	December, 2010	- Includes the eight fundamental elements by the Center for Technology in Government - Added purpose statement , social media definition, defining audience, risk assessment, communication strategies,

Queensland Government in Australia (continued)		success measures, policy benefits, and web accessibility
United Arab Emirates Government	January, 2011	- Includes the eight fundamental elements by the Center for Technology in Government - Added purpose statement, social media definition, and risk mitigation
Government of South Africa	April, 2011	- Includes the eight fundamental elements by the Center for Technology in Government - Added purpose statement , social media definition, defining audience, risk assessment, success measures, and program evaluation
Government of Canada	November, 2011	- Includes the eight fundamental elements by the Center for Technology in Government - Added social media definition, defining audience, , risk assessment, communication strategies ,benefits and risks of use, resource allocation, employee trainings, program evaluation, and web accessibility
Government of India (Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology)	No date	- Includes the eight fundamental elements by the Center for Technology in Government - Added social media definition, social media challenges, defining objectives, communication strategies, creating pilot, and engagement analysis

After reviewing different government policies, it has been concluded that governments in

different countries are taking serious measures to regulate their employees' use of social media

and harness this new technology to deliver their services. Also, it has been found that the eight

fundamental elements addressed by Center for Technology in Government are to a great extent representing major social media policy components in different governments which drives the researcher to adopt this comprehensive model as a framework of assessment to examine social media policies in Egypt, discussed in details in chapter Five.

3.3 Social media use in Egypt

This section provides a background on how citizens and public agencies are using social media to achieve different purposes. Social media in Egypt -before the 25th of January revolution- had been considered as insignificant and marginal due to the low internet penetration rates (Taki, 2013). In 2006, social networking sites such as Hi5 and MySpace started to attract Egyptian users to interact, communicate and get introduced to new friends and maximize their social relations. Personal blogs and websites were the initial forms of the online political sphere, next was Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Facebook in specific has been very popular during the past few years. This popularity has taken increased significantly after the 25 of January revolution (Abdullah, 2013).

Before covering the events of Tahrir, it is first crucial to explain the status of internet activism and social media use in Egypt before the revolution. Indeed, the mass expression of opposition in Egypt on January 2011 did not emerge from nowhere and the use of internet activism to convey that opposition was not something that happened suddenly. There had been a continuous stream of opposition that aimed at expelling Mubarak, with online activism at the front (Eaton, 2013).

In 2005, Egypt had a flourishing blogosphere of devoted political writers who started to confront the state-owned media, revealing main stories that the state-owned media couldn't reveal (Eaton, 2013). There were also continual efforts by small but devoted groups, beginning with the Kefaya (''enough'') movement, that was established ahead of the 2005 presidential elections when it was circulated that President Hosni Mubarak is willing to shift power to his son (Abdullah,2013; Tufekci & Wilson,2012)

In 2007, the entry of social media on the arena provided a new phase of internet activism (Eaton, 2013). The arrangements of protests in 2008 and the evolution of April 6th Youth movement, which was launched mainly on Facebook and Twitter to support striking workers on 6 April 2008, was a sign of things to start (Abdullah, 2013; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Eaton, 2013)

The introduction of Facebook in Arabic in 2009 enlarged this process. In addition, online political content increased, with numerous campaigns by activists addressing corruption, poverty, and human rights abuses. Though, until the Tunisian uprising took place, demonstrations in Egypt were somewhat small and the regime appeared to be tightly in control (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

Shortly after the Tunisian revolution took place in December 2010, there was first a dispersed campaign and later a firm protest date (January 25, 2011), and an invitation in the already famous ''we are All Khaled Said'' page on Facebook (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011). During the demonstrations, protestors continuously created and distributed content in real time. The excessive use of social media

triggered the Egyptian government to try blocking key sites (Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube) on January 25th and cutting cell phone services until the government shut down the Internet services (Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013). The blocking of Internet service between January 25 and February 2 slowed, but did not hinder, the stream of information in Tahrir Square, as technologically savvy group of demonstrators kept on circulating videos and news. In addition, Al-Jazeera channel has focused on replaying videos acquired mostly from social media. After 18 days of nonstop protests, Mubarak announced his resignation on February 11 (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

Since the 25 January revolution began, internet use has increased significantly. As in May 2011, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology concluded that there were over 25 million internet users in Egypt (MCIT, 2011). In August 2014, Internet penetration has made a great leap as the number of Internet Users reached 46.29 million users (MCIT,2014),which represent more than half of Egyptian population -estimated at 87.63 million Egyptian citizen inside Egypt on 9 December 2014 (Central agency for public mobilization and statistics,2014)

Moreover, the use of social media websites has increased drastically during the last four years. Earlier in January 2011, Egyptian Facebook users were 4.2 million. By March 2011, this number had risen to 5.7 million. At the beginning of September 2011, Facebook users numbered 8.55 million, which represented at that time 60 percent of the total Facebook users in the Middle East, estimated at 15 million. By May 2013, the number of Egyptian Facebook users had risen to 13.83 million, ranking 17th in the world (Abdullah, 2013). Finally, on July 2014, the number of

Facebook users reached 20.00 million users (MCIT Research department, 2014) as illustrated in figure 1 below.

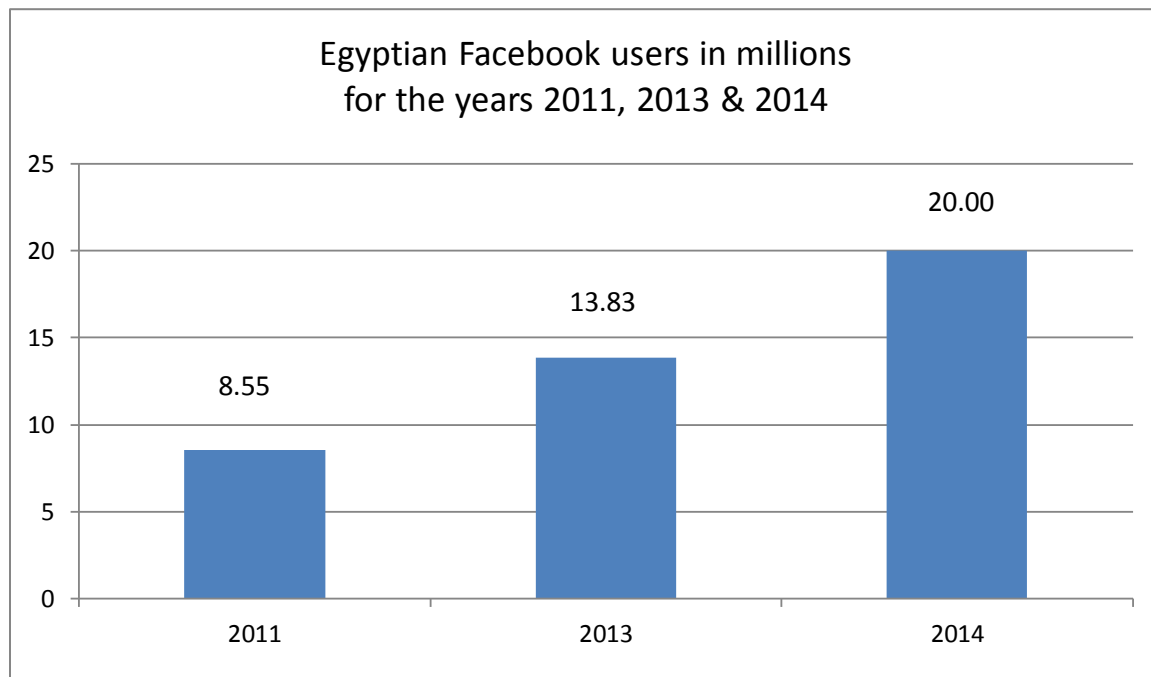**Egyptian Facebook users in millions for the years 2011, 2013 & 2014**

Figure 1: Number of Facebook users in Egypt for the years 2011, 2013, and 2014

According to Alexa.com, the top 10 websites in Egypt in December 2014 are:

1- Facebook

2- Google.com.eg

3- YouTube

4- Google.com

5- Youm7.com

6- Yahoo.com

7- Vetogate.com

8- Albawabhnews.com

9- Blogspot.com

10- El-balad.com

Alexa.com analysis confirms that the most commonly used social networks in Egypt are Facebook, YouTube, and, to a lesser extent, Twitter which reflects the essential role social media plays in the political and social sphere in Egypt.

After the revolution, the Egyptian government realized the importance of social media as an effective channel to rebuild trust between the state and citizens and enhance their interaction and engagement with government. Government's interest in social media was reflected in the administrative changes that happened in government accompanied by dramatic increase in posts and comments on government pages (Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013).

A study which analyzed the use of social media by Egyptian government found that Facebook came on top of websites used by government. The study showed that 23.2% of the government entities have a Facebook link on their official website followed by Twitter (13.4%) and YouTube (11.2%). The number of working Facebook pages was 33 (51.5% of the total Facebook pages linked to active websites). The study also found that only one page, (www.ITI.gov.eg1 Facebook page), was launched before the revolution while the rest of government entities launched their pages after the revolution. These results assure that Egyptian public agencies showed more interest in adopting social media after the revolution as a result of public mobilization (Abdelsalam, Reddick & Gamal, 2013).

To conclude, social media has played a significant role in achieving social and political change in Egypt. Yet, there is very little research on the use of social media in Egyptian government. The concept of government 2.0 is not yet addressed in depth with regard to the Egyptian context. Most studies focus their scope on social media and political change in Egypt

and how it has been the major communication tool used by Egyptians in the 25th of January revolution. Moreover, there is a lack of studies that address social media policies in Egypt. No studies have been found in the literature discussing how Egyptian governments are managing their use of social media. Thus, there is great need for more research in this field. The purpose of this study is to fill this gap in the literature by examining the use of social media in Egyptian ministries taking the MSIT, MOF & MPMAR as case studies and hence provide a clear picture on how they manage their social media pages and the extent to which they are considering implementing effective social media policies.

Chapter Four: Methodology & Case studies

This chapter introduces the methodology of the study; in addition, it provides background information on the selected case studies and their use of social media.

4.1 Methodology

This study is a qualitative study that includes semi-structured interviews with social media officials in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, and Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform. Officials who were interviewed in this research are as follow: The Director of Ministry of Finance's Portal and IT manager, The Manager of the Publishing Department and Director of Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade's Portal, and The Electronic Content Officer at the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform. These officials were selected as they are the executives in charge of managing social media pages in the three ministries.

Moreover, this thesis reviewed the available research on social media policy and analyzed existing policies in different countries, then used the framework in the literature to examine the use of social media in the selected ministries and design a social media guide for future implementation.

4.2 Case Studies

The Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT), Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform (MPMAR) and Ministry of Finance (MOF) were chosen as case studies as they represent three main types of ministries in Egypt; service ministries, economic ministries,

and sovereign ministries. After observing official Facebook pages, websites and interviewing social media officials in the selected ministries, this section provides an overview about each ministry and its use of social media -Facebook in particular- as shown to be the most frequently used social media site by the three ministries.

1-   Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT)

- **Background**

MSIT is a strategic ministry aiming at achieving food security in Egypt. This ministry affects directly the lives of citizens. Its mission is to guarantee citizens' receival of bread, gas cylinders, and supply commodities with the appropriate subsidy and high-quality (MSIT, 2014)

- **Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade's use of social media**

MSIT Started using social media in 2012 by creating three Facebook pages, a YouTube channel and a Twitter account. The electronic publishing department is the one responsible for creating and updating social media pages in the ministry. According to the Electronic Publishing Department's manager, "Facebook is the most significant and frequently used social media by the ministry". The ministry has three Facebook pages; one under the name of the ministry which publish ministry's news and updates, another one under the name of the minister which publish his latest tours and conferences, and the last one entitled "Our rights" "حقنا" which is responsible for posting the price list of supply commodities and raising awareness about the new electronic

supplying system; in addition to receiving citizens' feedback, claims, and questions. Figures on the next page are screenshots for the three pages.

Figure 2: Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade official Facebook page

Figure 3: Minister of Supply and Internal Trade official Facebook page

Figure 4: Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade official Facebook page II

MSIT's Facebook pages are updated 24 hours a day by the Electronic Publishing team. The Electronic publishing department consists of a manager, two editors, and an IT technician. Figure 5 below describes in detail the department's hierarchy and job descriptions.

Minister's advisor
- responsible for writing ministry's press releases and sending them to the manager of the Electronic publishing department , newspapers and TV Channels

Electronic publishing department
- Manager: responsible for establishing and managing social media pages, receiving press releases and sending them to the department editors and monitoring the page.
- 2 editors: upload press releases on the page and follow up users' comments to be collected and sent to the minister weekly
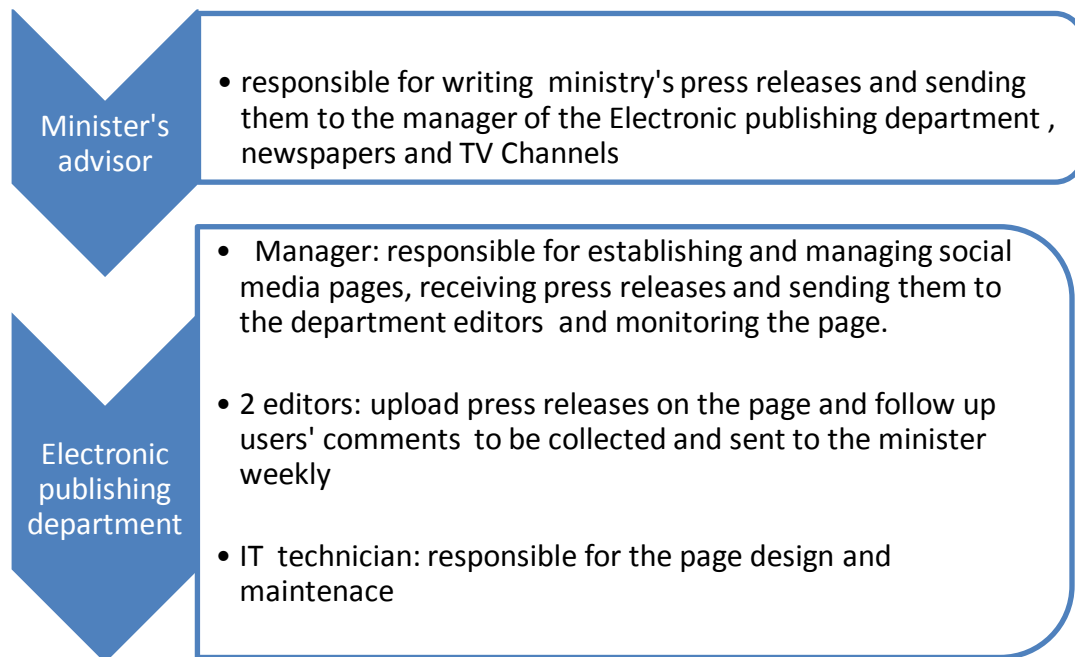- IT technician: responsible for the page design and maintenace

Figure 5: MSIT's Electronic Publishing Department's hierarchy and Job descriptions

2.   **Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform** (MPMAR)

- **Background**

On June 2014, the ministry of Planning has been integrated with the ministry of International cooperation to form the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform. The MPMAR is responsible for the formulation of public policies, plans and programs that aims at improving the performance of government services and simplifies the procedures for obtaining them at the lowest cost; in addition to setting general policies to upgrade the quality of human resources in Egypt (MPMAR, 2014)

- **Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform's use of social media**

Before the integration happens between Ministry of Planning and Ministry of International Cooperation, each ministry created its own Facebook page in 2011 and 2012 respectively. After the integration, the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform initiated a new Facebook page under the new name on September 2014. The electronic content officer is the executive responsible for initiating, updating, and monitoring social media pages and responding to users' questions and comments. The ministry's Facebook page is the most commonly used and updated by the ministry. It provides citizens with information about ministry's projects, press releases, and minister's news; in addition it receives users' claims and complaints.

Figure 6: MPMAR official Facebook page

The electronic content officer under the supervision of the Media department's general manager updates the Facebook page 24 hours a day by. The Media department consists of a general manager, electronic content officer, editor, IT technician, and a photographer. Figure 7 on the next page describes in detail how the media department manages social media pages.
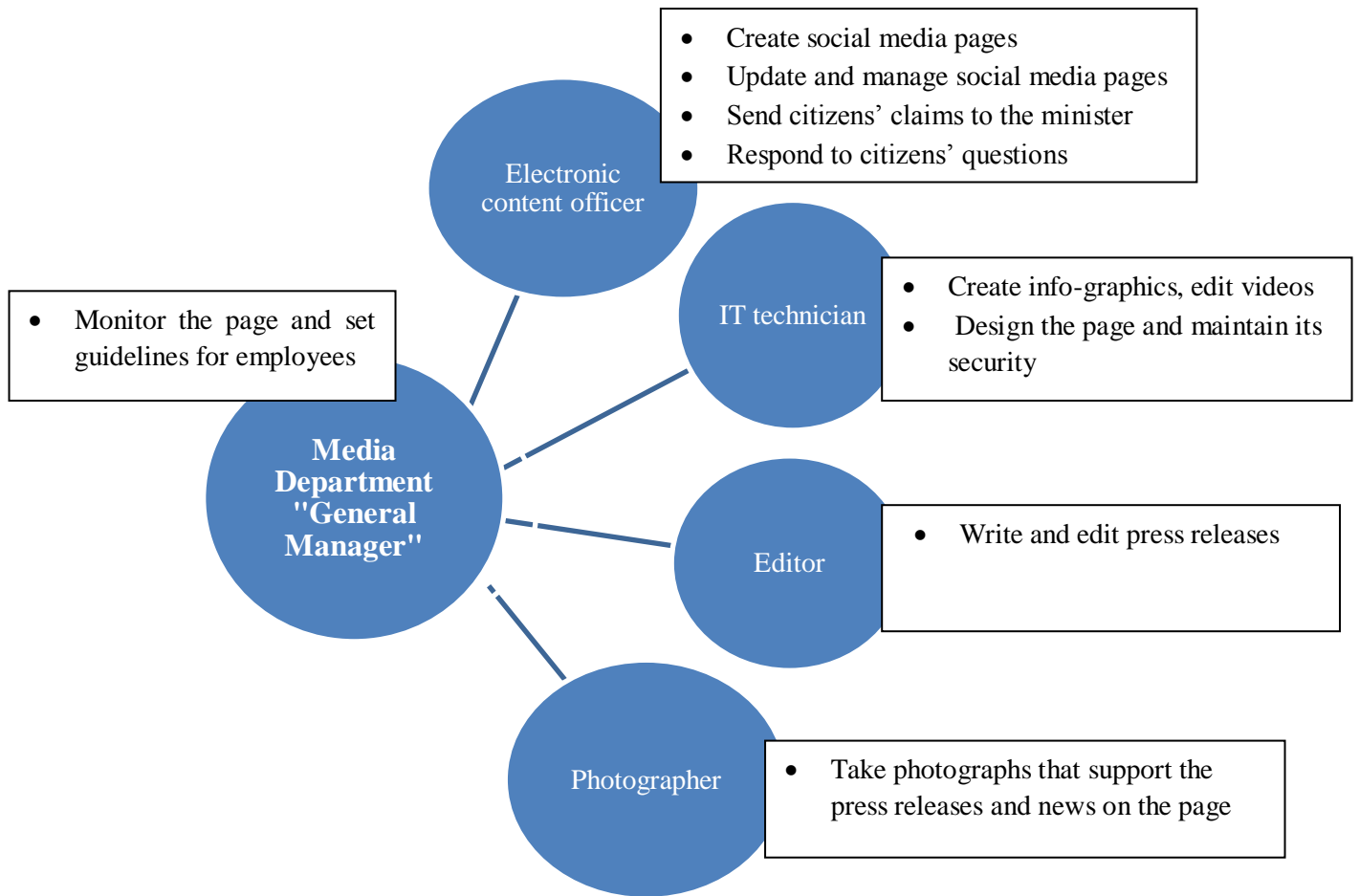
Figure 7: MPMAR's Media department's hierarchy and Job description

2- Ministry of Finance (MOF)

- **Background**

The Egyptian Ministry of Finance is a sovereign ministry which delineates, manages, and prepares and the Government's budget and public debt. This is executed by setting up legislation, planning expenditures and revenues, monitoring the budgetary expenditure system and designing a structure for economic strategy and development (MOF, 2014).

- **Ministry of Finance's use of social media**

Ministry of Finance Started using social media in 2011 by creating a Facebook page, a YouTube channel and a blog, followed by creating a twitter account in 2012. The IT manager in the ministry is the person responsible for updating, monitoring and responding to users' comments and questions on social media. The ministry's Facebook page is the most commonly used and updated by the ministry. It provides citizens with ministry's news, monthly financial reports, and the state's budget; in addition it receives users' claims. The Facebook page is updated 24 hours a day by the IT Unit members.

Figure 8: Ministry of Finance official Facebook page

MOF' Media unit supports the IT Unit with press releases that need to be published. The IT Unit consists of a manager, 4 assistants. Figure 9 on the next page describes in detail how the Media Unit and the IT Unit coordinate to manage the ministry's Social media pages.
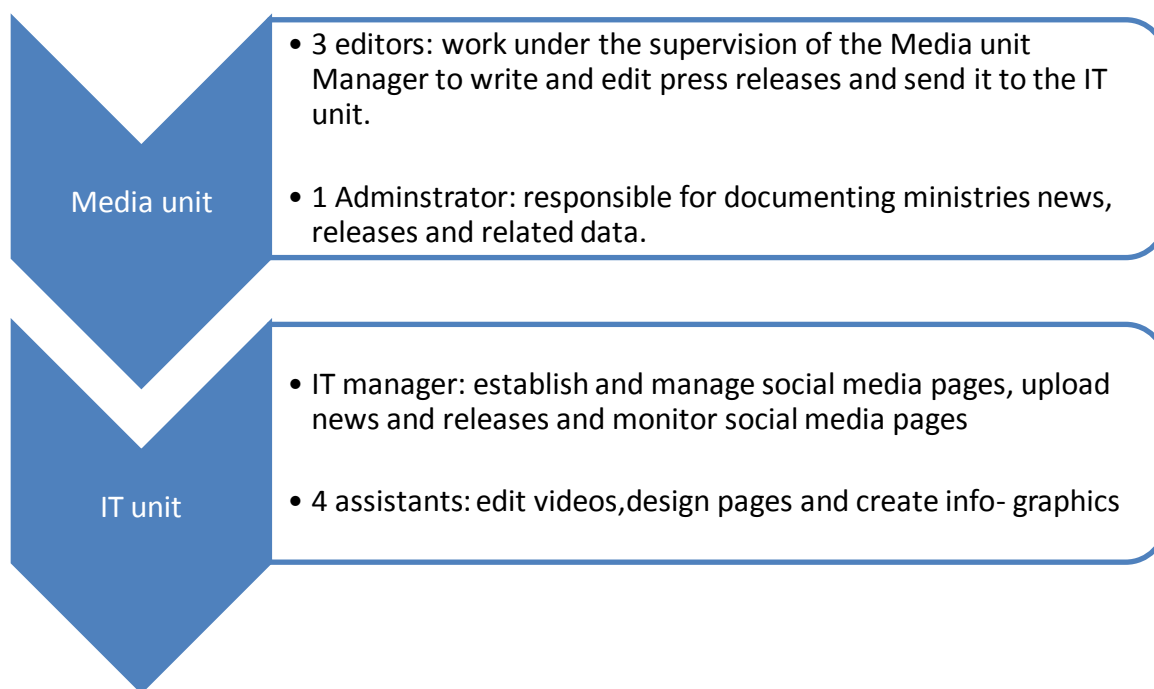
Figure 9: MOF's Media Unit and the IT Unit hierarchy and Job descriptions

Table 2 below provides a summary of social media data for the three ministries.

Table 2: MSIT, MOF & MPMAR Social Media Data Summary (Collected December 25, 2014)

Ministry	Official Facebook page	# of likes	Launched Facebook on
MSIT	https://www.facebook.com/msitegypt	257,315 likes	2012
MOF	https://www.facebook.com/MOF.Egypt	240,507	2011
MPMAR	https://www.facebook.com/ad.gov.eg	18,191 likes	2014

Chapter Five: Analysis & Findings

5.1 Analysis

The main objective of this thesis is to examine policies implemented by Egyptian ministries regarding their use of social media and to propose a guide for a social media policy that will help public agencies efficiently use social media in communication with public.   To accomplish this purpose, I conducted semi structured interviews with social media officials in the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform. I developed the interviews' questions after reviewing the literature concerning social media policies and visiting Facebook pages of the ministries to examine how they are using the website. The interview questions (illustrated in Appendix A) examine the eight fundamental elements for a social media policy introduced by Center for Technology in Government, which are: 1) employee access, 2) account management, 3) acceptable use, 4) employee conduct, 5) content, 6) security, 7) legal issues, and 8) citizen conduct.

5.1.1   Employee Access

Each of the three ministries has an executive who is in charge of managing and monitoring social media pages. Table 3 on the next page illustrates who is responsible in each ministry for approving appropriate social media sites to be used by the ministry and for selecting employees who will represent the ministry through social media. Yet, there is no written policy discussing the procedures for giving such access. In addition, the three ministries give full access for their employees to all websites without any restrictions.

Table 3: Executives in charge of approving social media pages and selecting employees

Ministry	Executive in charge
Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade	Electronic Publishing Department Manager
Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform	Media Department General Manager
Ministry of Finance	Minister's advisor in coordination with IT Manager

5.1.2 Social Media Account Management

Each of the selected ministries has a social media department responsible for managing social media pages. What differ from one ministry to another are the title and the structure of each department as illustrated in the previous section in figures 5, 7, and 9. However, the three ministries don't have implementation strategies that regulate employees' management of social media pages, identify the target audience, or define success. In addition there are no documented policies specifying how employees should manage social media pages and define their tasks and responsibilities. Yet, in the Ministry of Finance there is an online task sheet that documents

employees' implementation of their tasks, date and time of implementation, and by whom it was revised, but it cannot be considered as a policy or a guideline for employees use of social media, rather it represents monitoring and follow-up measures. Figure 10 below is a screenshot of the task sheet taken from MOF database by the IT Manager.

Figure 10: MOF online Task sheet

5.1.3   Acceptable Use

The three Ministries permit personal use for social media websites during working hours; yet, they do not have a policy that defines personal or professional use and regulates how much time employees are allowed to use social networks for personal use.

5.1.4 Employee conduct

In the three ministries, no policies or guidelines exist regarding employee's code of conduct; neither do exist any measures for violations that may occur. Also, there isn't any guideline that addresses employee's online interaction including the professional language they should use or how they should act as government's representatives.

5.1.5 Content

The authorized team for updating social media pages is the only one allowed to update or post any content for each of the three ministries. In order to post any content, they have to ensure its accuracy first and simplify its language to be easily understood by citizens; nevertheless, this process is not documented. In the Ministry of supply and Internal Trade, the manager of the electronic publishing department and two assisting editors are the only ones who have access to post content on the ministry social media pages. The manager monitors the page to ensure adherence to the ministry's news. On the other hand, in Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform, the electronic content officer is the only one who has access to publish content on social media pages and the general manager of the media department monitors and follows up the page regularly to guarantee adherence to the ministry's vision. Moreover, in Ministry of Finance, the IT manager and 4 assistants are responsible for adding content on social media sites and the IT manager monitors the page to ensure that employees' tasks are done and the page content is updated on time. Thus, it is perceived that the three ministries do have a process for publishing content, yet this process is implemented haphazardly without definite policies and guidelines.

5.1.6   Security

When social media officials were asked questions regarding practices that ensure security of their data, their answers ranges between high security measures and low security measures. Yet, these measures are not documented in their ministries.

Firstly, In Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, the manager of the electronic publishing department and the two assisting editors are the only ones who can update the ministry's social media pages from their personal mobile phones but they are required to sign off from their accounts every time to guarantee the security of their information in case their phones were lost. The security challenge the ministry is facing is the existence of fake unauthorized pages that spread fake news on behalf of the ministry by using the ministry's name. The electronic publishing department is working on solving this security issue, but no clear measures have been addressed by the department's manager in this regard. The next figures are screenshots of fake Facebook pages of MSIT.

Figure 11: Fake Facebook page of MSIT

Figure 12: Fake Facebook page of MSIT II

Secondly, In Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform, the electronic content officer is the only one who can update social media pages from his personal mobile phone as he is the only administrator for the page. According to MPMAR Social media officer, "it is easier to secure the page when there is only one administrator and one password used to access the page rather than too many administrators with different passwords which might lead to privacy breaches".

On the other hand, the Ministry of Finance does not allow employees to update social media pages from their personal mobile phones. According to the IT Manager, "It is very difficult to ensure the safety of social media pages if administrators sign in through their mobile phones. Mobile phones could be easily stolen and that would lead to massive security threats; in

addition we require our employees to obtain complex passwords that could not be easily recognized and to change it regularly to ensure safety and security of our pages."

5.1.7 Legal issues

The three ministries expressed the absence of regulations that address their work. None of the interviewed social media officials pointed at the existence of any policy that requires employee's to abide by specific laws or regulations. However, the three ministries focus on monitoring comments posted on social media pages to ensure that they do not include any kind of defamation or profane language. They also transfer irrelevant questions to the department in charge for the specific inquiry, and answer questions that only provide information to all page users.

5.1.8 Citizen Conduct

The three ministries allow two-way communication between them and citizens on social media pages by posting information and allowing citizens to post their comments and questions. Social media managers in the three ministries develop a weekly report with major problems and concerns stated by citizens and deliver it to their ministers to ensure that citizens' claims are well received and considered by their ministries. However, they delete improper comments without posting a specific commenting policy or guideline for citizens that explain the acceptable conduct for citizens and illustrate what makes a comment appropriate. In addition, none of the interviewed officials stated that they have a process for deleting a comment; they delete any comment that has an offensive profane language or content without documenting the process.

5.2 Findings

Upon the analysis of social media policies in the three Egyptian ministries, this section provides the main findings that have been concluded form the analysis. Table 4 below summarizes the policy elements that are covered in the three ministries.

Table 4: Policy elements covered by MSIT, MOF & MPMAR

Ministry	Access	Account management	Acceptable use	Employee conduct	Content	Security	Legal issues	Citizen Conduct
MSIT	√	√			√	√		
MOF	√	√			√	√		
MPMAR	√	√			√	√		

As shown in the table, only four elements out of eight exist in the selected ministries. However, the four elements are not documented or officially addressed in policies by the three ministries. From this analysis, we can conclude the following: 1) The three ministries focus their regulatory scope on the mechanisms for internal control that deals with managerial issues such as who post, who access, and who manages social media while they lack concrete written policies that deal with laws and regulations that define employees conduct, citizen conduct and personal and professional use. 2) They all have media departments which are responsible for managing social media pages; but they do not have social media strategies and assessment tools that improve their implementation. 3) They don't have clear measures for violations that may occur from employees or citizens. 4) Legal issues are not addressed or considered as a high priority. 5) There are no commenting policies on their social media pages and there isn't a clear

policy for deleting an offensive comments or a definition of violations. 6) They all share the same purpose for using social networks which is getting closer to citizens and encouraging a two-way communication; however, they all lack clear principles that guide employees' ethical use of social media. 7) The difference in departments' hierarchy, title and structure in the three ministries reveals that there isn't a unified social media policy among different Egyptian ministries that regulates employees' use of social networks; instead it is decided separately by each ministry according to its own vision. 8) Finally, there is a great need to develop social media policiess in Egyptian ministries to help regulate their use of social media and mitigate potential risks that may occur.

Chapter six: Conclusion & Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to examine and provide recommendations, supported by research and field experience, to governments on how to successfully manage, regulate, and use social media. This was accomplished by reviewing the existing literature, analyzing social media policies in different countries, examining the current situation in a sample of Egyptian ministries and using the framework in the literature to design a social media policy guide.

While social media is gaining acceptance at all levels of government, this thesis found that Egyptian ministries lack having regulatory frameworks that govern their use of social media. After interviewing social media officials in three Egyptian ministries, it has been concluded that social media policies and guidelines do not exist or considered by the selected ministries.

The literature review in this study found that social media policies are the prescription for governments' use of social media, particularly in how they assist governments to overcome potential legal, security and privacy risks. Policies are crucial since they set regulations and tasks and mitigate challenges. Experts believe that governments willing to use social media should firstly consider adopting social media policies before implementation.

The first research question was "what are the key elements of a social media policy?" to answer this question, I reviewed the existing literature on social media policies and expanded on this review by performing analysis for existing social media policies in different countries. Upon

the review and the analysis, it has been found that the eight essential elements discussed by the center for technology in government are covering the major social media policy issues which are: 1) employee access, 2) account management, 3) acceptable use, 4) employee conduct, 5) content, 6) security, 7) legal issues, and 8) citizen conduct.

The second research question was " how the selected ministries are using social media?", to answer this question, I observed the three ministries social media pages and asked social media officials questions examining the purpose of using social media sites in their ministries. The findings showed that social media use patterns are almost identical across the three ministries. The three ministries stated that Facebook is the most significant and the most commonly used social media site. Their Facebook pages are updated 24 hours a day. Also, they share the same purpose of using social media which is to provide citizens with information about ministry's news, press releases, and services; in addition they receive users' claims, questions and complaints through their Facebook pages. Moreover, the three ministries highly consider users feedback and comments. In the three ministries, a weekly report of citizens' complaint is developed and sent to the minister to be reviewed and addressed.

The third research question was " how the selected ministries are managing their social media pages?", to answer this question I used the eight fundamental elements of a social media policy discussed in the literature to develop my interviews questions in order to examine how Egyptian ministries are managing their social media pages in the light of these elements. I interviewed social media officials in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative reform and ministry of Supply and Internal trade as they represent three

major types of Egyptian ministries (sovereign, economic and service ministries). Analysis of the interviews data has shown that the three ministries have mechanisms of internal control dealing with who can access social media sites, who can publish official content and who can manage social media accounts, while they lack having formal policies that address legal issues dealing in particular with employee and citizen conduct and personal versus professional use of social media.

The fourth question was "what challenges are the three ministries encountering as they use social media?" When ministries' officials were asked about the major challenges their ministries are facing, they reported the huge amount of inappropriate comments and posts by citizens. Only one ministry reported a major security issue, which is the existence of fake Facebook pages for the ministry of Supply and Internal Trade. The lack of significant challenges could be the reason behind why Egyptian ministries did not consider adopting policies for their use of social media. However, proactive adoption of policies is quite important to mitigate potential risks of social media, it also helps in setting preventative measures for violations that may occur, and thus make the best use of these new communication tools.

Finally, since there are no policies regulating the use of social media in Egyptian ministries, there are no clear guidelines on who bears liability for the published content. Therefore, the need for social media policies has become clear. Government officials and employees need guidelines in place so they can move forward with responsible and effective initiatives that harness social media power.

This paper has addressed previous studies on social media use, policies and strategies in public agencies and my experience with three Egyptian ministries by interviewing social media officials. Analysis of what I learned from the literature and from the thesis findings guided me to create a social media policy guide for Egyptian government discussed in detail in the following section. Hrdinova et al (2010) policy elements and my analysis of social media policies guided me to write this policy guide. I adapted what I found from the literature and the analysis to fit with the Egyptian context. This guide applies not only for the three ministries that I have examined, but also for any public or private agency that is facing the same challenges.

6.2 Social Media Policy Guide for Government

After reviewing the literature, finding out the fundamental elements for a social media policy, analyzing social media policies in different countries, and examining the situation in Egyptian ministries, this section offers the research recommendations which are represented in the implementation guide for a social media policy found on the next page. This guide outlines issues that governments should consider when designing social media policies. It provides a concise and flexible framework which highlights ideas that can be simply adjusted to the setting of different organizations. The guide is based on the literature review, analysis of different governmental policies and my interviews with ministries' officials. My hope is that this guide could facilitate the process of adopting a social media policy in the Egyptian government.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY GUIDE FOR EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT

1. PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

Many public agencies across Egypt have already started using social media sites as tools of communication with the public, yet, most if not all of these agencies lack guidelines or policies that could help them reap the benefits of social media and mitigate their potential challenges and risks. This guide provides government agencies in Egypt with policy guidelines on how to achieve the best practice in the use of social media to communicate with their citizens and deliver their services to them in secure, responsible, and efficient ways.

2. SCOPE OF THE GUIDE

- This guide applies to all Egyptian government agencies (ministries, authorities, and public institutions).

- To adapt with the speedy and changing nature of social media, this guide is flexible. It can be developed and changed as required to cope with these dynamic tools.

3. IMPORTANCE OF THE GUIDE

Social media sites with their collaboration and engagement powers have changed the static nature of Internet services and turned out to be a new medium that has redefined the way governments deliver their services to citizens (World Economic Forum, 2009).

Particularly, social media assist policy makers in defining priorities, boosting transparency and citizens' engagement in governments programs; consequently social media expands the chances of efficient policy results. As a result of these platforms, residents shift from being passive receivers of government services to active contributors and participants in the policy making process (UN e-government survey, 2010). Moreover, the popularity of social media sites in Egypt has increased significantly, the number of Facebook users alone has reached 20 million users at the end of 2014 (MCIT Research department, 2014)

Besides the great benefits social media offer to governments, they also raise numerous challenges and risks that need to be cautiously considered and addressed. These challenges include:

- Causing reputational harm to citizens or public agencies;
- leaking of private or critical governmental data;
- Security breaches such as malware, viruses, hacking etc…and other security risks.

Such challenges can be reduced by adopting appropriate policy controls and guidelines which are addressed in the following section.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY GUIDELINES

This section provides detailed guidelines for the use of social media by government agencies in Egypt. These guidelines cover eight essential issues: Employee Access to Social Media sites, Account Management, Employee Conduct, Content Management, Security, Legal Issues and Citizen Conduct.

4.1 Access to Social Media Websites

- The cabinet should decide what social media sites are appropriate for the government to utilize and should serve to train ministries on how to best utilize different social media sites to achieve their mission and accomplish their objectives.

- A list of recommended websites should be created and frequently updated. This list should also consider the benefits and threats of social media platforms.

- Social Media managers in various government agencies should assign employees who would suitably speak on behalf of the government on social media

4.2 Account Management

- The social media department should approve the requests of establishing official accounts on social media. This approval should consider aspects like the appropriateness of the site to the agency needs and target audience besides any technology-related issues.

- Social Media managers have the authority to decide who can access social media platforms.

- The following requirements should be considered when assigning employees to manage social media accounts :

- The level of qualification and comprehension of the issues to be discussed with citizens on social media platforms.

- Communication skills and language proficiency.

- Knowledge of social media tools and expertise in harnessing their powers

- His/her willingness to stay online on the social media sites after official working hours and his/her ability to act in situations that requires immediate response.

- Social media managers should set strategies for implementation. Strategies should include: identifying target audience, goals and objectives, success definition, key partners, potential risks and benefits.

- Social media managers are responsible for developing a list of all social media sites domain names in use, the names of all employees managing these accounts, and their passwords.

4.3 Acceptable Use

- Employees should only use Social media for official purposes. Personal use is not adequate behavior during working hours.

4.4 Employee conduct

- Employees should be professional and consistent at all times to guarantee best representation of their agency. Employees who fail to represent their agency in a proper manner will be punished.

- Key principles of ethical social media use should include: credibility, accuracy, transparency , citizen respect, responsiveness

- Moreover, employee's conduct should preserve government's reputation in general, and the agency in which he works in particular. Employees should not use the data acquired during their work for other non work related reasons.

4.5 Content Management

- Social Media Departments' responsibilities are: establishing, posting, and updating social media pages. The manager of the department should approve content before posting on social media sites. Also they must monitor content to ensure adherence to the agency's policy.

- If the page administrator deletes a post or comment, he should take a screenshot first of the post for documentation.

4.6 Security

- Authorized employees can moderate official social media pages from personal mobile phones. But they must ensure protection by having a pass code.

- Employees are required to own complex passwords for their social media accounts to ensure the security of government's data.

- All files that are exchanged with social media should not be opened unless scanned to ensure safety from viruses or hacking.

- Employees are not allowed to use their official email addresses or passwords to log in to their personal social media accounts.

- Social media managers should ban access to unneeded functionalities within social media websites, such as file exchange and messages to mitigate the risk of receiving improper or unsafe documents.

4.6 Legal Issues

- The easiness of copying and pasting materials on social media pages frequently leads to unintentional violation of copyright laws. Therefore, social media departments are responsible for the compliance with the established law no. 82 of 2002 on the protection of intellectual property rights.

- Employees should only interact with citizens on social media pages if their responses are specific and accurate, they are also required to correct misleading information posted by citizens.

- Employees are not required to answer citizens' questions or respond to their comments. Though, a response that offers useful knowledge to all users is required.

4.7 Citizen Conduct

- Social media departments should create a commenting policy that discusses the suitable behavior for citizens on their social media pages.

- This commenting policy should be posted on governments' social media pages. It should clearly state the following:"The government reserves the right to delete posts that contain defamation, spam, sexual content, comments that promotes discrimination and illegal activity, comments that include links to other websites, and content that violates intellectual property rights".

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Appendix A

Semi -Structured Interviews Questions

- What is the purpose of using social media sites in the ministry?

- How is the ministry using social media sites to deliver its news & services?

- Does the ministry have a policy in action to govern the agency's use of social media?

- Who is authorized to create, manage and update the ministry page on social media?

- What are social media employees' responsibilities and tasks?

- What are the procedures taken by authorized employees to post content on the ministry official social media pages?

- Who is responsible to monitor the social media pages?

- Can authorized employees manage official social media sites from personal mobile devices?

- Can employees in the ministry utilize social media for personal use?

- Are there any websites that employees are not given access to?

- How many hours of employee time are dedicated to social media use on average related to content creation, and maintenance of official page?

- How the ministry responds to citizen's comments, concerns and questions on social media pages?

- What are the security measures taken by the ministry to secure social media accounts

- Are there any laws or regulations that are adopted by the ministry and addresses social media use?

- Are there any measures or penalties that employees are subject to if they violate the ministry's regulations?

Appendix B

Table of reviewed documents by issue areas developed by Hrdinova et al., 2010

Institution	Access	Acceptable use	Account process	Content	Employee conduct	Legal	Security	Citizen conduct
International								
Australian public service commission (policy)		•			•			
New Zealand state service commission (brief guidelines)					•			
UK civil service (guidelines)					•	•		
UK government (policy and guidelines)				•				•
Federal								
Air force (policy and guidelines)		•		•	•	•	•	
Federal CIO council (guidelines)		•				•	•	
General Services Administration (policy)		•		•	•	•	•	
General Services Administration (policy and guidelines)			•		•	•		•
US Navy (memo)			•		•	•	•	
US Army Corps of engineers, Jacksonville district (guidelines)					•	•	•	•
US Coastguard (memo)								
US (EPA) (guidelines)				•	•	•		•
State								
California (policy guidelines for agencies)	•	•		•	•		•	
Delaware (policy and guidelines)			•		•	•	•	
Massachusetts (guidelines)						•	•	•
North Carolina (policy and guidelines)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Utah (guidelines and policy)		•			•	•		•

Institution	Access	Acceptable use	Account process	Content	Employee conduct	Legal	Security	Citizen conduct
Local								
Arlington County, Virginia (guidelines)			•	•				
Arvada, Colorado (policy)		•	•		•	•	•	•
Chandler, Arizona (policy)	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Fairfax County, Virginia (policy)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hampton, Virginia (policy with attached guidelines)			•	•	•	•	•	•
Roanoke County, Virginia (policy)		•	•	•	•	•		
Seattle, Washington (social media policy)		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seattle, Washington (blogging policy)			•	•	•	•	•	•
Wake County (guidelines)	•			•	•			

Appendix C

Table of reviewed local governments' policies developed by Cardenas, 2013

Organization	Date Established	Policy Details
Wythe County, Virginia	No Date	Almost Identical to Yolo
Roanoke County, Virginia	No Date	Almost Identical to Yolo
City of Chandler, Arizona	June 8, 2009	Added definitions, limiting personal use
City of St. Louis Park, Minnesota	March 19, 2012	Policy itself is Identical, but it is included in a packet of documents that changes the roles and responsibilities in other policies to address implementation of social technology.
Orange County, Public Schools, California	(2012-2013) Faculty Handbook	Added section on personal use on employees and ethics.
City of Pacific Grove, California	September, 2012	Includes some language from Yolo policy and they added goals, monitoring, information, comment policy and ownership.
City of Bloomington	No Date	Added social media standards
Lyndhurst Township, New Jersey	July, 2012	Added prohibited content and applicability.
Borough of Roselle, New Jersey	April, 2012	

Appendix D

Table of reviewed social media policies

Organization	Policy Name	Online policy Link	Retrieval Date
Government of Canada	Guidelines for secure external use of Web 2.0	http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?section=text&id=24835	20 December, 2014
Queensland Government in Australia	Official use of social media guideline	http://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/products/qgea-documents/547-business/2474-official-use-of-social-media-guideline	23 December, 2014
United Arab Emirates Government	Guidelines for Social Media Usage In United Arab Emirates Government Entities	http://www.fahr.gov.ae/Portal/Userfiles/Assets/Documents/884dd373.pdf	30 December, 2014
Government of South Africa	Social Media Policy Guidelines	http://www.gcis.gov.za/resource_centre/guidelines/ social_media_guidelines_final_20_april2011.pdf	29 December, 2014
Government of India (Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology)	Framework & Guidelines f or Use of Social Media f or Government Organizations	http://www.archive.india.gov.in/allimpfrms/alldocs/16484.pdf	20 December, 2014