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**The Influence of Media on Politics: the Case of
President Barack Obama's Use of Social Media
in his 2008 Campaign**

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Dedication

I dedidate this work:

- To my parents who supported and had a stood by me in hard times “ May Allah sustain and protect them.”

- To all my siblings.

- To all my friends.

- To all my teachers who supported me through my studies.

Acknowledgment

I wish to address my sincere thanks to my teachers and the head of the department of English.

No words can express my sincere gratitude, appreciation, and respect to my supervisor, Mr. Salim Kerboua. I am deeply indebted to him for his guidance and help in making this dissertation see the light.

I would also like to express my gratitude to every single person who-in a way or another – backed me up.

Abstract

This research examines an interesting phenomenon which is the use of social media in the political communication. Nowadays, the social networking sites are fast becoming the political candidates' refuge to run their campaigns because they have an increasing popularity. Social media networks are platforms that allow people to communicate online with other people from any place in the world by using the same site. They enable their users to share and exchange information and interact with each other. The importance of social media websites make people very interested in them. In turn politicians resort to people's interest to base on in running their campaigns. So, people's interest is an effective factor in reaching out a huge population who surely shapes the candidate's success. This research shows how the American president Barack Obama used social media websites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and other ones in his 2008 presidential campaign as essential tools to mobilize people.

Keywords: Social media, Social Networking Sites, Presidential Campaign, Candidate, Barack Obama.

ملخص

هذا البحث يدرس ظاهرة مهمة متمثلة في استعمال المواقع الاجتماعية في الحوار السياسي. في زمننا هذا المواقع الاجتماعية أصبحت و بسرعة فائقة ملجأ المرشحين السياسيين لخوض حملاتهم السياسية خصوصا و أن هذه المواقع تلقى اهتماما كبيرا من طرف الشعب. المواقع الاجتماعية هي عبارة عن برامج تسمح للأفراد بالتحاور عبر الانترنت مع أناس اخرين من اي مكان في العالم باستعمال نفس الموقع. إنها تمكن مستعمليها من التبادل والاشتراك في المعلومات وكذلك التفاعل مع بعضهم البعض. ان اهمية المواقع الاجتماعية تجعل الناس اكثر اهتماما بها. وبدورهم السياسيون يلجأون الى اهتمامات الشعب ليجعلوا من ذلك قاعدة لحملاتهم الانتخابية و لذلك تعتبر اهتمامات الشعب العامل الفعال في جلب اكبر شعبية والتي بدورها تضمن نجاح و فوز المرشح. هذا البحث يبين كيفية استعمال الرئيس الأمريكي باراك أوباما للمواقع الاجتماعية مثل الفايسبوك ' يوتوب ' تويتر ' وكذا مواقع اخرى في حملته الانتخابية الرئاسية لعام 2008 كوسائل اكثر اهمية لجلب المنتخبين.

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Introduction

Throughout the history of the United States each four years there is an election cycle. During the period that precedes the election the major parties and their nominated candidates spend huge sums of money to reach, persuade and mobilize voters. More clearly the presidential candidates run a campaign strategy to deliver their message to the citizens. Then to reach all the segments of the population, the candidates take refuge to media that is considered as a best way for political communication. Therefore the politics is parallel with media and it is impossible without it. However, today's political world is based on new media and technologies that play a great role in delivering the message for the public and in reaching out to the voters easily.

Nowadays social media and its networks are increasing more than ever. Generally, Facebook, and Twitter are growing rapidly since their rise, and today more than 51% of all Americans have a Facebook page. Twitter has also 200 million members all over the world. Today the political campaigns are affected by social media and the increase in the online political behavior has been facilitated thanks to the evolution of the new interactive social websites.

After the rise of internet, politicians focus much more on this medium and make it the most used and the effective way in their campaigns. Furthermore, under new media term, social media and its websites were the focus of the 44th president of the United States; Barack Obama in his presidential campaign.

In the light of what has been discussed, the current work intends to examine the questions of media and the political communication, the use of social media in 2008 presidential campaign in the context. Thus the current research will try to give an

answer to the following questions: To what extent has social media contributed in Obama's victory? In other words: How did Barack Obama's 2008 modern campaign affect voters and shape Obama's victory?

Indeed the hypothesis that is discussed in this dissertation is the use of social media and its platforms in 2008 presidential campaign by Barack Obama and his campaign team may be the major factor that shaped his presidential success.

The present research is expected to shed light on a limited period which is the political presidential campaign of the 44th president of the United States of America: Barack Obama. It intends to bring some generalities and realities about new technologies and social forums that are used in campaigns in American politics and it emphasizes the influence of Obama's 2008 modern campaign on voters.

The study of media's role in campaigning and delivering the message is very important for students because it helps them understand how candidates can mobilize voters and influence public by using new technologies.

This work is going to investigate the influence of using social media in campaigns under the case of Obama's 2008 presidential campaign. Thus the appropriate method is critical argumentative analysis by giving some statistics and examining the relevant papers and articles that are related to my subject. This research is based on primary sources and studies made by scientists, historians and scholars.

The current research intends to demonstrate the main role of presidential campaigns, and shows the importance of using media in campaigning. Then it aims to clarify the shift from traditional media to new media in the political communication. Finally it designs to investigate the influence of internet and social sites in presidential campaigns on voters under the case of Barack Obama's 2008 campaign.

This research is intended to examine the effects of using social media in politics in a certain process that is the presidential campaign. It is impossible to speak about politics without referring to media “as a forth power” and the connection between them. Therefore this research is divided into three chapters in addition to the general introduction and general conclusion.

The first chapter provides a coherent account of the theoretical framework about the political campaigns, as a mediated task, and the media versus the politics. It introduces political campaigns and their components, referring to the American presidential campaigns and the role of this later in affecting people. It also covers the mass media looking at their components including, television, radio, newspapers and internet. Finally, and in its last section this chapter focuses more on the media and politics; it demonstrates how media and politics are complimentary, with the reference to the political functions of media and the effects of media on politics.

Then the second chapter will discuss the development of mediating communication with a look to the shift from the old to the new media in the political process. Then it focuses much more on social media under the term of new media with a concentrate on social networking sites and their use in the political communication latterly. Finally this chapter will demonstrate social media effects generally on public life and specifically on political communication.

Finally, the third chapter investigates the President Barack Obama’s use of social media in his 2008 presidential campaign. It emphasizes his power to use the social networking sites and the most effective and utilized ones in his campaign. Then this chapter demonstrates some statistics about the use of social media in Obama’s campaign, in addition to giving analysis to certain graphs that show disparities

between Barack Obama and his opponent in the power of using social networking sites. Additionally it mentions the major steps that were followed by Obama and his campaign team in organizing their campaign.

Chapter One:

Media in Politics and Political Campaigns

1.1. Introduction

Generally, elections and campaigns are seen as a dynamic and vital link between the government and citizens in the United States, and they are considered as major important issues in politics today. In its turn the media contributes in shaping and influencing the public opinion and thereby also the politics. Moreover, television and internet are the major prominent media from which people learn new facts, and take information about the past record of politicians and the kind of government they propose to run.

The present chapter provides a coherent account of the theoretical framework about the political campaigns, as a mediated task, and the media versus the politics. It introduces the political campaigns and their components, referring to the American presidential campaigns and the role of this later in affecting people. It also covers the mass media looking at their components including, television, radio, newspapers and internet. Finally, and in its last section this chapter focuses more on the media and politics; it demonstrates how media and politics are complimentary, with the reference to the political functions of media and the effects of media on politics.

1.2. Political Campaigns

Many scholars define campaigns in different ways but all of them flow in one stream. According to Dave Prentis (7)

“Campaigning is about achieving change. When you campaign you are trying to persuade people to take a particular course of action in relation to a particular issue. You are also trying to change people’s attitudes or opinions.”

Bardy et al, (1-2) argue that to start giving an answer to the question which is about what is a campaign there are two different and linked ways. The first one concentrates on institutional or quasi-institutional conditions. The second regards campaigns as durations of unusual broadness in the political order, which have the ability either to widen or to narrow the period identified as a campaign. In other words, a campaign comes true by the fulfillment of the following conditions:

- The date of election is known
- Candidates’ identity is known.
- Candidates are available to spend virtually all their time for the sake of getting elected or reelected.

A political campaign is a procedure of communication; by making the right message, direct that message to the right group of voters and repeat that message many times (Lynn 8).

In another, hand a political campaign is a process that precedes every election and usually begins months, even years before the elections. A political campaign is a systematic effort by a political party or candidate to attract voters’ support in an election (Berrajel 23).

Then, Wikipedia defines a political campaign as a systematic effort that aims to influence the decision making process in a specific group (“Political Campaign” par 1).

1.2.1. Campaigns in the United States

According to Bartels (1), during each election process the political parties and their candidates spend huge sums of money and enormous amounts of energy on the campaign for the White House. Large numbers of journalists, campaign operatives, pollsters and media consultants derive their living from this yearlong prospect. Therefore, interested persons can read and watch detailed information and analyses about the candidates' strategies, speeches and issues.

Usually, the presidential campaign starts after the Labor Day holiday in September. The tow months of campaign rarely reveals who shall become president, because for many citizens in America, campaigns do not function too much to change minds as well as to reinforce previous convictions (Davies and Mc Keever 113).

The campaign for presidency traditionally starts in early September and ends on Election Day, but today it is impossible to arrange a campaign in less than a year. The candidates rely on party organizers to ensure support from loyal party follow ers, but it is equally important for candidates to raise issues that appeal to undecided voters and those in opposing parties. Most campaigns rely on national radio and television appearances and on press coverage to spread their candidate's message to the nation. In primary election the candidates for presidency organize the campaign state by state and then, if nominated in general election, the campaign takes plac e throughout the nation (Berrajel 23).

During the presidential election campaigns, political parties and their nominated candidates run an expensive campaign, thus they start looking for different sources of money. The candidates increase and spend money to help win the votes from their own partisans during the primary elections, when the differences between

the candidates are very few. So campaigns should spend large amounts of money on polling data to help conduct and direct their campaign on media advertisement to persuade voters, on voter contact to get the voters to the polls, and on frequent travel to early primary election states. In short, during the primaries the funds come from individual and personal contribution (Wilcox 1-2).

The presidential candidates during the general elections are eligible for public funding that obliges them to respect a general election spending limit. What is essential is that political parties can contribute to presidential campaigns, but more importantly, they can spend unlimited amounts to make their candidates win. During this campaign, the political parties set up and create media ads on television and radio, communicate and get in touch with voters by phone and mail in order to make voter mobilization campaigns. In addition, interest groups can contribute in the general election in a different ways, relying on how they are ordered under tax law. Therefore in the general election, there are three varied types of campaigns. The first type is in which the candidates spend money on polling, advertisements, travel and other tasks. The second is in which the political parties run a parallel campaign and especially focus on communication with voters and mobilizing them. The last is the one that ran by interest groups. In short, during the general presidential elections, the candidates wish to control their messages and to be free from party structures, thus, very different types of support intervene in fundraising and campaigning by different measures (Wilcox 1, 3-5).

Since, the political parties are neutral during the primary elections; the candidates should collect money on their own and appeal to win support from different party groups and interest groups. In primaries, most of the money comes from single contribution and individual help, which are limited to \$ 2300 per candidate. Candidates

can also collect money from small donors in small amounts, and this is usually done out of impersonal demand like direct mail letters, telemarketing, or internet solicitations. Moreover, the candidates can accept federal funds and contributions by interest groups through political action committees. In general campaigns call up a group of fundraisers and also develop solicitators who ask to give and solicit others (Wilcox 2-3).

1.2.2. Campaign's Main Components

Pestikova (39) argues that any political campaign is composed of three main elements; message, machine and money.

The first element which is the most important one in making up a political campaign is the message. It is the expression that shows to the people why they should vote for a particular candidate or party. Parties spent big amounts of money to find out the right, the influential and the persuasive message to win the elections.

The machine is another important feature of a successful campaign. It is the human capital; the candidate's partisans and helpers. This group of people is in need for managers to make the tactical decisions and guide the volunteers.

The last important component of a successful campaign is the money. During this step the candidates send e-mails and organize meetings with givers of money to collect money for their campaigns because the campaign costs them too much.

1.2.3 Campaigns' Effects on Voters

According to Hillygus and Shields (3-4), the campaign information may have an influence on voter decision making, when the voter has a conflict in the factors helping him doing his final decision. In other words, the most persuadable voters by

campaigns are those persons with predispositions pulling them in different directions. Thus, to know the influence of presidential campaigns on voters we should ask two questions: when can campaigns affect voters? And how campaigns affect voters?

So to answer the first question, Haselswerdt and Sides (11, 12), argue that, to recognize the campaigns' effects, it is helpful to know when exactly campaigns matter. Two factors are prominent; the number of confused voters and the equality of resources among the competing candidates. First campaigns can have large affects when there are more voters who are hesitant or have not made up their minds. The more these voters are numerous, the more campaigns have a greater potential to influence voters' decisions. As a result, when the campaign starts, the information that voters learn through news and advertisements will typically lead them to aware decision. The second factor that helps campaigns influence voters is the inequality of information that comes from both parties candidates; more clearly when both candidates have approximately the same amounts of money to spend, or to by similar numbers of advertisements in important media markets and receive parallel amounts of positive or negative news coverage, it is difficult for both candidates to have any advantage. But when there are certain disparities in the sums of money that each candidate spends or in the number of advertisements, this makes the campaign matter and affect voters.

Then to answer the second question, how campaigns affect voters, scholars like Henry E. Bardy, Richard Jonston, John Sides and Larry M. Bartels assert that campaigns can affect voters in many and different ways, but they consensus on the major ones which are priming and persuasion, mobilizing and informing, then reinforcement (Haselswerdt and Sides 12).

There are two types of potential campaign effects Priming and Persuasion. Priming refers to any organized change in the masses related to expected voters attitudes and conceptions in the shaping of vote intention over the system of the campaign. The persuasion means any organized change in the mean values of electorally related attitudes and conceptions over the system of the campaign (Bartels 5).

Persuasion and Priming are maybe the most striking factors in campaign effects. Priming is not just a procedure with results for voters. It also may affect the equilibrium supporter forces and, eventually, the election as whole. As voters come to weight specific conceptions more heavily, the probability of their choice to the candidates who have motive to shape the election agenda as possible. Then, priming reinforces the support of candidates' supporters and possibly attracts and pulls voters into their camp as well. Moreover there is reason to believe the existing minimal effect [persuasion] is based on just American presidential election. In addition even if the eventual vote decision does not change, campaign can surely shifted other attitudes, like voters issue positions, where they set parties and candidates on these issues, and how they valuate candidates' characteristics and traits all of which will still be in relation to the possibility that a voter will support a given candidate (Bardy et al 8-10).

Informing is the factor by which campaigns can affect voters start the campaign in a case of proportional ignorance. From a standard opinion, we hope that the campaign will attract their attention and inspire them to know about and think on the choice in front of them. Thus a number of studies have demonstrated that campaigns inform voters about the candidates and in specific issue (Bardy et al 10).

Mobilizing voters is another way by which campaigns matter. Mobilizing means assisting and supporting voters to register to vote (Haselswerdt and Sides 20).

The fifth form of basic effects of a campaign is reinforcement. Reinforcement happens when campaigns support the preference of voters. Some voters may have a native trend to vote for one party but still be unsure how they will vote in some elections. Campaigns attempt to pull voters into the partisan fold, leading them to a decision that is in welfare of their party. This can be seen in polls, when voters move from the undecided column into a candidate's camp (Haselswardt and Sides 16).

Furthermore, campaigns may change voters' considerations. We may mention two types of strategic issues that a campaign can influence. One is electoral viability, which looks especially relevant under the plurality formula but may also be related to the doorstep requirements under proportional representations. The other is an integrated signal, which looks most relevant under proportional representations (Bardy et al 10).

1.2.4. The Role of Political Campaigns

According to Hillygus and Shields (3), the political campaigns play a mutual and intermediate role between the governed and the governors in US democracy. This role relies on information about both candidates and voters. Candidates make their issue agendas and campaign strategies relying on information about the voting public, in turn, the voters choose their preferred presidential candidate depending on information learned during the campaign. The role that campaigns play between the voters and the candidates is leaned on translating information; and this is considered the key mechanism by which elections are thought to serve a democratic function.

During political campaigns, political parties intensify their work to get information out to the public....They try to gain citizens support, so they communicate with the public directly by advertisements in newspapers, by running ads on television, by distributing flyers, or by walking on the streets and talking to voters. But it is important to take into consideration that voters do not accept any information. Therefore, presidential campaigns play a great role in shaping the public opinion and in increasing the supply of political information (Lefevere 51).

1.3. Mass Media

Wikipedia defines media as communication means through which data and news are spread. It is also defined as a various devices of communication such as television, radio, and news papers.

Media is derived from the Latin word for middle. This signifies that the media are in the middle of communication process, specifically, in between the sender and the receiver of the message. The early use of the term media was as part of the phrase mass media of communication. We long ago dropped the explicit reference to communication in everyday language and talked of mass media- and in some cases simply the media (“Media Technology” 287).

Dye and Ziegler (93) argue that, the mass media are all communication’s channels that transmit messages to the general audience. The mass media consist of eight principles [and tools] which are television, books, newspapers, motion pictures, magazines, radio, internet and recordings.

1.3.1 Media Types

To gain knowledge about their daily life and especially about politics and politicians, citizens, do not trust one medium. They rely on various enormous types of media to gather essential and believable information and news such as, radio, television, newspapers, and magazines and so on (Pestikova 20).

Radio was a very powerful instrument for politicians, and the power of this tool is proved by the use of Franklin Roosevelt to it to speak directly to the nation, for both assuring a nervous public and explaining his policies to encourage support of his positions (Hanson 2).

Television is considered as the most popular medium. Its use started in the late 1930s, but the World War II postponed its evolution (Davis 2). So television is the most important means among mass media in American politics. It is also regarded as a source from which Americans get their knowledge of political elections (Davies and Mc Keever 134). Moreover television remains the most believable source of political [information and] news (Davies and Mc Keever 134).

Another very influencing means of mass media is newspapers. They are seen as the first medium which aims to convey new information to the people. Nowadays in America, there is about 70 percent of the population is interested in reading newspapers and about 800 newspapers are published every day (Dye and Ziegler 94).

The following highly important device of media is the internet. It is seen as an uprising in communication way that has evolved in the early 1980s and its development begun with the spread of personal computers (Shea et al 403).

According to Barron (sec.2) Internet has become a means of media like no other. It brings together the audio attributes of radio, visuals of television and the depth of text with a compliant way like no other means before. Internet utilizes a huge computing and transmission powers to send data all over the world in a moment.

Magazines, recordings and motion pictures are considered less important media, but they still also used by millions of Americans [to gain knowledge] (Pistekova 25).

1.3.2. The Power of Media

The media is indicated as “The Fourth Estate” assimilated to a branch of government because of the power it handles and the pursuit function it exercises. Although his abominate against journalistic criticism, Thomas Jefferson celebrated the press arguing that the exchange of information and opinion through the press is the only means which contributes in the emergence of truth. Thus he declared: “Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government I should not hesitate to prefer the latter” (Coronel 4).

According to Robert Y. Shapiro and Glenn R. Dempsey, journalists, reporters and commentators had a major influence on the public opinion change. They also argue that a popular president, for example, own the ability to influence the public, unlike the unpopular president who do not have much success as opinion movers (Pestikova 26).

“The press has become the most powerful force in Western countries. It has surpassed in power the executive, the legislative and the judiciary” (qtd in Pestikova 26).

It is evident that the mass media has a great power. Critics announce that the media has become so powerful and influential... Media could also be helpful; this can be applicable to the media that try to support and encourage different and varying charity projects, search for lost people and so on. The power of television [for example as the most important form of mass communication] is not hidden in persuading watchers to vote for one candidate or for another; yet, its power lies in determining which issues will be given more interest and which will be disregarded. Mass media's power can also be embodied in its influence on the decision makers, which is even seen as more important than its influence on mass audience (Pistekova 26- 27).

1.4. Media and Politics

Because it keeps people involved in governance's actions, the media plays a vital role in supporting the participation of citizens of any democracy by informing, educating and mobilizing the audience. As an example, the radio has been considered as the medium of choice in new democracies, because of its cheapness and availability. Moreover FM (Frequency modulation) and community radio have been effective tools for reinforcing grassroots democracy by adapting local issues and supplying substitutional source of information to official channels, and demonstrating linguistics and ethnic diversity. Then, the internet also may express such a role because of its interactivity, comparatively low costs of entrance and joining and freedom from the control of the state (Coronel 1, 2).

Georgia Chondroleou (361) argues that:

The relationship between the media and democratic political process is viewed as axiomatic by most scholars on politics and the media. The media is viewed as a means of political communication and a facilitator of political information. It also

acts as a guarantor for political liberties and as a watchdog of governmental accountability and of the democratic operation of political institutions and processes.

According to Linda Lee Kaid (par 2), the media, particularly television, has certainly been justified to have enough identifiable effects on the political process. It is important to mention that there are many and different theories, studies and interpretations about the role that television and other media really play in affecting voters information, opinions, and behaviors.

1.4.1. Media and Politics in the United States of America

America is considered as incomparable among western democracies, in its adoption to commercial media in presenting comprehensive information that are related to government and politics. The PBS (Public Broadcasting Service) and the NPR (National Public Radio) invented in early 1970s were a simple effort to provide more public affairs to the media content balance. It is obvious, that lately the cable television and the internet have added other ways for public affairs (Benson and Powers 8).

Jonas Lefevere argues:

The mass media is the prime source of political information for most citizens. Though newspapers may offer more in depth information, the ability of television to reach large parts of the public, gives it a dominant position in informing the public. This holds true in both Western Europe and the United States, though the culture of campaign coverage differs to some extent. However, to a large extent the differences between countries are not specific to campaign coverage, but are a consequence of a larger and more fundamental institutional differences....Due to the limitations that most West-European

countries impose, the possibilities for parties to publish advertisements in the mass media are limited compared to the United States (Lefevere 54).

1.4.2. Political Functions of Media

Media has political functions through which it creates the political issues for the large audience and contributes in making shifts in public opinions, attitudes and decisions. Furthermore, some political tasks need the use of media more than others, whereas, the media gives interest and more coverage to some tasks and subjects than others. For example, elections, presidents and national relations are more covered by media than the Bureaucracy and the Supreme Court. These functions include: news making, interpretation, socialization, persuasion and agenda setting (Pistevoka 29).

Most of organizations make media as their focus to make effective media events to support news reporters and journalists to cover their stories (Sandman 39).

News making makes decisions about what and who will be appear in the news. Thus, the media coverage helps the general public to know and be informed about organizations, incidents and personalities. In addition it gives more importance to the description of events, stories and people on whom the audience has little or no experience. News making gives more opportunities to what the public is ignored or have less experience about (Pistekova 29).

The interpretation is the role of the reporters and journalists; they give an interpretation to what will be shown in the news. They place the events in context and dispute about their causes, consequences and effects. Moreover, news interpretations have a free tendency which means that they support liberal policies and positions. The example of that is the American interventionism in Iraq 2003. At the first the media

demonstrated that this invasion is positive, but after the post invasion chaos, the support of public to the war and to the president started to decrease, the media also started to report stories about what is happening (Shea et al 409).

Political persuasion is another role of media. It is direct efforts that aim to change public's attitudes and behaviors through communication. All the state the representatives as candidates, political parties, corporations, unions and governments feel responsible to persuade the public to adopt their political beliefs. The function of persuasion includes another form which is propaganda. It is referred as a high designed form of convincing communication through reporting information, facts, op inions and allegations (Pistevoka 31, 32).

1.4.3 Media Effects on Politics

Media has become the refuge of the political campaigning. Among the clear functions of television as the most important means of media are the political advertising and the campaign and the election coverage (Pistekova 35).

According to Schramm (20), the media can be more helpful in some tasks than in others, so whoever aims to use media communication as supporter of social change firstly, he should well know the culture he is attempting to change. Media as well as face to face communication is needed in campaigns and whenever it is possible, campaigners employs as much as mass media channels to mobilize and inform the large public.

As Pistekova (37) argues, one of the key issues of a good and successful presidential campaign is the media coverage, because the more the candidate appears on the television screen, the more he has chance to win.

According to Dye and Ziegler (137) another effect of media is the power to decide who will be the winner candidate in the election. Furthermore, elections are the cornerstone of any democracy and the media has a vital role in informing the public about what the politicians are promising and in telling the politicians what ordinary people want, or do not want, and also in ensuring that the polls are “free and fair” (“The Media and the Election Process” 3).

It is obvious that the main chance for a candidate to introduce himself to the people is the paid television advertisements. In this case the candidate or his counselor has almost the total control over the presentation. The political advertisements aim to illuminate the candidate’s image and character. Furthermore, they hope to entertain and to produce a preferable response to the product- candidate by calling for an emotional instead of a rational response. Here the political advertisements purpose is to make the audiences favor a candidate for the same reason that they prefer, for example, a news presenter or a game-show host (Davies and McKeever 140).

1.4.4. Media and the Most Modern Medium: Internet

The use of Internet in its early years was ambiguous to certain extent, and a study by Robert Klotz demonstrated that the assumptions that the Internet would level the playing field with open access for all not come true, but the candidates still wanted to stick to the Internet whether they thought it would help or not...By 2000, candidates recognized the benefits and the privileges of Internet of persuasion. Benoit and Benoit state that candidates realized many advantages by 2000, among which, the Internet can propagate and publicize information like many other media, then, the Internet public is huge and continually growing, moreover, the use of Internet is less cheap than the use of television, also the Internet permits the campaigns to reply quickly to charges from

other campaigns. In addition, the Internet permits the candidates to offer longer and complete messages to voters, and it gives voters the chance to give their impression on campaign information (Barron 3-4).

The internet as a campaign medium has been quickly adopted by candidates and their group of supporters and campaign team. It is considered to be an effective and efficient tool to lure funds from potential supporters and to further and strengthen one's policies and experiences. Blogs, Email and social media such as; Facebook and Twitter were major and conspicuous in late elections. Campaign organizations work hardly to develop the rising power of social networks and mobile devices like smart-phones and tablets (Olson 52).

1.5. Conclusion

All in all the media is seen as a medium of political communication and a means that facilitates the political information, thus the practice of politics is impossible without media. Moreover, the political life in the United States of America is dominated by the close relationship between the media and politicians. This domination is made of the mutual services between them; the media covers politics extensively, and it reports almost, what is concerned with politicians. In turn, politics relies much more on media in its great tasks such as campaigning and elections.

In short, the politicians are in most cases interested in public opinion, thus they rely on the media that became the focus of political campaigns and the way how to deliver the message to voters and the means which helps them to make the rational decisions. As a result, governors always look for new media devices and rely on more influential and effective means in their policies.

Chapter Two

The Shift from Old to Modern Media

2.1. Introduction

Throughout the history of the American politics, the presidential nomination campaign cycle always sees some change in the process. This change could be found each cycle in a different primary agenda as states shift their dates for strategic purposes. This change also can be even the introduction to new tools that helped nominate candidates to find, communicate with, and persuade voters.

With the emergence of new media, presidential candidates have shifted to internet and have utilized it as the main medium in their campaign. Candidates do not ignore the traditional ways of campaigning such as televised debates and advertising because they know that people still watch television, but they know also that the same persons visit the internet for entertainment and for getting new information also. So today candidates are able to air ads and make advertisements via new media as they were airing them at television and radio in the past but at much less cost. Moreover they can interact and communicate with citizens personally and receive feedbacks instantly by using social networking websites.

Therefore the current chapter will discuss the development of mediating communication with a look to the shift from the old to the new media in the political process. Then it focuses much more on social media under the term of new media with a concentrate on social networking sites and their use in the political communication latterly. Finally this chapter will demonstrate social media effects generally on public life and specifically on political communication.

2.2. The Development of Mediating Communication

Regardless to their function as a mechanism of communication media technologies are different. Media has two important forms of development; they are what we call traditional mass media and new media. Before the emergence of Internet, media is considered to belong to the traditional mass media, which typically involved: one to, many communications, with anonymous receivers, through one way communication channels, with a clear distribution between producers and receivers. More clearly, some forms of media have one to one orientation such as landline telephone; it connects one individual with another single individual. However, mass media can provide communication from one source to be received by a large audience anywhere and this is meant by one to, many orientations. For instance a newspaper is produced by a news organization and is received by many which mean all the readers. Moreover, music and films are similarly produced, and they are spread through different channels to often large audience (“Media Technology” 287).

Another feature of mass media communication is that the sender is known but the receiver is unknown. As an example, the readers know the author of the book they are reading but the author cannot know who exactly is reading his work. Then traditional forms of mass media typically assert one way communication which does not allow direct feedback from receivers of the message. So the traditional mass media are not interactive. This means that when we listen to music, read a book or watch a television program, there is no way to use those media to respond to the messages we have received. But if we want to do so, it takes time to write or call the author,

producer or the director to make him know our feedback, and this would be by using another form of mass media (“Media Technology” 288).

The emergence of Internet has drawn the boundaries between media types and changed the broad parameters that used to be associated with all mass media. So, it is important and significant to speak about the new media. More clearly, the internet is the communication forum on which digital media content can be divided into a wide variety of devices including desktop computers, wireless laptops, smart-phones and other mobile devices. Rather than being one way communication, with the new media, communication is interactive. For instance readers of news papers websites can provide immediate comments on a certain story, and also viewers can comment or vote to like or dislike a video on YouTube. Thus, the interactivity of the new media can also mean that its users have the ability and the chance to communicate with each other by using these media. In short, new media interactive capacities wipe up the distinction and the gap between the producers and the receivers (“Media Technology” 289).

2.2.1. From the Old to the New Media

Elections are considered as a corn-stone of any democracy. In the United States of America, every four years there is a presidential election cycle during which the candidates try to reach all the eligible voters. To do so and to reach all the factions of the population (gender, ethnic, age, and special interest group), the candidates run a political campaign strategy through media to inform the public about their message and their intentions. Until the mid 1990s, the candidates were using primary means of media to reach out to the public. They were relying on print media, town hall meetings, mass mailing, phone banks, and radio and television ads. But recently, the emergence

of internet and media convergence has made the traditional media in decline (Anderson 1-2).

Brockman et al (sec. 2) argue that social media enable people to exchange knowledge, experience, opinion, and ideas among each other. Social media play a role of a good helper in participation in democracy among citizens. In democratic countries, the political parties feel the responsibility of canalizing and participating in the political communication. Traditionally, politicians and journalists bring up and mitigate the political discourses, but traditional mass communication used in the political context has changed. The development of Web 2.0 technologies and internet association of social media enable the users of internet to interact with the politicians. As a result, by creating weblogs or discussion platforms, people can express their opinion, participate in the discussions and think politically like minded individuals.

Furthermore, unlike traditional media and under the umbrella of new media, social media has special characteristics. These characteristics are the main cause that makes it more effective and the refuge of both the governed and the governors. Firstly, social media has a great power in reaching a huge number of people in an instant and it has technologies that provide forum which allows for two-way communication. Secondly, social media is valid and useful by any person who has ability to uses a computer or a smart phone. This high conductivity is realized by two factors: first because social media is cheap, second because -unlike traditional media production- social media does not require specialized skills from its users. The third feature of social media is the immediacy. This means that social media can spread immediately and reach its users quickly and sometimes in just an instant by contrast with traditional media that often sustains a time retardation of several days or may be months before their message reaches their audience (Harwood and Stuart 2).

2.2.2. What is New Media?

According to Haynes (3), new media often refers to many varied types of electronic communication that have risen since the primary text-based and non interactive forms of online communication. When we speak about new media, we are referring to things like streaming video and audio, virtual reality environments, interactive user interfaces, online communities, live internet broadcasting and so on. In addition to new forms of communication such as weblogs and social networking sites as Digg and YouTube, cell phones and iPods could be seen as a part of new media.

Peter argues that in the most common sense new media is a wide term for “emerging communications technologies” and it is most commonly fits those technologies that are suitable for the internet (Hamilton 3).

New media is a term meant to encompass the emergence of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies in the later part of the 20th century. Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being manipulated, networkable, dense, compressible, interactive and impartial. Some examples may be the Internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMS, and DVDs. New media is not television programs, feature films, magazines, books, or paper-based publications (“New Media Branding” sec. 1 par. 1).

According to Flew, new media are digital technologies that almost seem to be manipulated, networkable, dense, compressible, and interactive. Manovich argues that new media examples can be the internet, websites, computer multimedia, video games, CD ROMs, and DVDs. New media exclude television programs, feature films,

magazines, books, or paper based publications. New media are the technologies that allow digital interactivity (“New Media” par. 1).

2.3. Social Media

According to Harwood and Stuart (3):

Social media is the broad term describe the latest evolution of internet and web based communication platforms which enable users to rapidly connect and interact in a variety of different formats. A social media site is a platform that allows user-generated content to emerge through interactions and collaborations in a virtual community.

Alex Newson argues that social media is the online tools that allow people to communicate and interact with each other online and also allow them to participate and the collaborate (Storck 11).

Safko argues:

Social media is the media we use to be social. That’s it. The first part of the terminology; social refers to the instinctual needs we humans have to connect with other humans... The second part of that term refers to the media we use with which we make those connection. (qtd in Goodman 5).

Wikipedia defines social media as online forum that aims at building social works and social relations among people of the same interest and activities (“New Media” par 1).

2.3.1. Social Networking Sites

According to Boyd and Ellison, social media sites are defined as: online services that help individuals to build a public profile within a restricted system, join a

list of other users of the same service and share with them connections and exchange information (Hamilton 3-4).

Shebib and Souhail argue: “social media tools are Websites that interact with the users, while giving them information” (qtd in Stork 11).

Castells defines social network sites as systems that include our societies’ social morphology, and the spread of networking regulates procedures and outcomes in a certain process of production, experience, power, and culture (Stork 10).

According to Das and Sahoo (222), social networking sites are all instruments that enable people to communicate with each other and to be social. The first social forum was SixDegrees.com that launched in 1997. It helped its users to create profiles, number their friends and surf the friends list. From 1997 to 2010 there are some 1, 5 billion user of social networking sites. Social networking websites allow people to communicate and interact with each other and enable them to express their opinions, make them feel independent and make them feel self esteem. With just a click way people may create a feasible profile and interact with millions of users in the world. This is a table that lists the ten most known social networking websites in the world (see Figure 1).

Figure1: Top 10 Social Networking Sites in the World (Das and Sahoo 222).

Rank	Sites	Estimated Unique Monthly Visitors
1	Facebook	550,000,000
2	Twitter	95,800,000
3	MySpace	80,500,000
4	Linkedin	50,000,000
5	Ning	42,000,000
6	Tagged	30,000,000
7	Classmates	29,000,000
8	Hi5	27,000,000
9	Myyearbook	12,000,000
10	Meetup	8,000,000

So, among social media networking the most effective and influential ones are: MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter.

The first website we mention is MySpace that is a network which has its head office in Beverly Hills, California. It obtained the state of the most popular social networking before the coming of Facebook. Its only characteristic is that it enables individuals to utilize their profile to give detailed personal information and their interests. In addition to a special feature for artists which enables them to download their entire music into mp3 songs (Edosomwan Sec.4 par 1).

The second network of social media we address is Weblogs that according to David C. Wyld is an easy tool to use content management. When you blog you are immediately joining new content to your site via a web interference (Stork 14).

Thirdly, YouTube is a site that created in 2005. It is the most popular online video community in the world. YouTube gives the opportunity to millions of people all over the world to watch and download originally created videos. It is stated in San Bruno, California and utilizes the technology of Adob Flash Video to portray a wide variety of user generated video content (Edosomwan sec. 5). YouTube is considered the first site created to upload and share personal videos. It is found that 3 billion videos are viewed daily on this site and it reached 700 billion playbacks in 2010. In addition to viewing and uploading, YouTube allows people to comment on videos (Stork 13).

Facebook is the most famous and popular social network that found in February 2004 by a Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg. Initially, the site was limited to Harvard students, later the privilege extended to high school students and then to every person who is 13 years or old. In 2010 Facebook grown to 845 million active users worldwide, with approximately 161million active users monthly in the United States. So that what make it the most popular social networking in the world (Safranek 1). Facebook has many and good features that enables its users to interact with each other and allows them to send messages for “Facebook Friends”. Moreover, Facebook allows its users to join and create interest groups, search for contact with people and give them the chance to upload videos and photos (Stork 11). According to Goodman (5), these are some statistics about Facebook:

- More than 3 billion photos are uploaded each month.

- More than 35 million users update their status each day.
- More than 5 billion pieces of content including blog posts, news web links, notes, photos and so on are shared each week.
- More than 3, 5 million events are created each month.

The final social website we address is Twitter. Twitter as it is cited in Stork (12) is a real time information network that created in 2006. It links individuals to what they consider interesting. Moreover, it is a social networking that helps its users to change with other users, messages, videos, and photos of 140 characters or less. Twitter has grown to 300 million users by 2011 (Safranek 1). Twitter has a lot of popularity because of the feature that distinguish it from the other networking. Twitter enables its users to subscribe to the updates of the other users and it was used by some celebrities (Stork 12-13).

2.3.2. Social Networking Sites in Political Communication

Internet is fast becoming the instrument of election communication. The political parties all over the world appeal the internet in their campaigns, and the political system and voting behavior, have witnessed the impact of this medium. The most impacting and interesting phenomenon in political communication is the use of social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, that are seen as beneficial means of election and campaigning (Karan et al 2).

According to Karan et al (5-6), Turkheimer considers social networking as most powerful applications of the internet in political communication as a means to spread information and share with others.

According to Connors, the direct affect of social networking sites on election results is not sure though they are used increasingly in political campaigns, but there are already contributions from these sites that guide voters in making decision (Karan et al 7).

In an investigation has been made by Williams and Gulti about the extent of Facebook use by presidential candidates in their election campaigns, they deduce that the number of Facebook users can be seen as an admitted sign of election success. Furthermore, Utz explains that social network sites give an opportunity to the politicians and help them to reach individuals that are not or less interested in politics. So, making a look on a candidate's profile enforces individuals' attitudes. In addition, candidates who respond on the users comments are seen the most favorable. In a study of Facebook use for online political discussion, Kushin and Kitchener conclude that Facebook is the legal means for political discussion and, to certain extent; the discussion seems to have succeeded in overcoming polarization of online discussion that has dominated online political discussion in the past (Brockman et al 3).

2.3.3. Social Networking Sites Effect on Public Life

The great increase in social network sites presents a crucial change in the social and personal behavior of internet and specifically social media users. The popularity of social network sites is increasing every day, although it has an effect on daily activities. Moreover they have become a very interesting medium of communication and amusement among people specifically young adults (Das and Sahoo 227).

According Nicky (sec.1), social media has changed peoples' lives and affects them in more than one way. Nicky shows that social media can affect personal life positively. First, social media networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and so on are

very helpful in bringing information to individuals' blogs. Nicky asserts that: "with millions of tweets sent per day, excluding the noise tweets, one can only imagine how much info is being constantly generated and shared". She argues: "It is impossible not to come across something new and interesting on social media". Then social networking sites allow the connection with clients and friends. Through social networking sites much of businessman can find clients and friends; as an example Facebook functions as a great friend finder. In addition social media in general contributes in the quick spread of news; "social media works faster than earthquakes". This quick spread of news proves the power of sharing. Although social media has positive effects on public lives, there is another way by which it affects people which is the negative side. First social networking sites cause break ups because of misunderstanding on social networking sites such as Facebook. Moreover, social networking sites have negative effects on peoples' activities (studies and works), in this point Nicky argues: "Initially, when I had just gotten addicted to Twitter, I couldn't control my eagerness to tweet and hence, my studies were affected". Nicky then added: "people try various ways to tweet from their workplace. If on social media is a part of your job then it is okay, but if your attention span at work reduces then it might be a problem". Then, among social media negative effects on personal life there is the limited or the no time devoted for family. Social media makes addicted people keep thinking of their blogs and that is what deprives them from enjoying their times in general and specifically their holidays with their families.

2.3.4. New Media Effects on the Political Process

Since the internet becomes the most obtained medium, the influence of new media on candidate evaluation has become a very important issue. According to Tolbert and Mc Neil the internet is becoming a source for people to be informed about

the political candidates. Thus the voters are more eager to be well informed and participate in the political process. In short, Tolbert and Mc Neil stated that making the internet as a source to get information about political candidates encourages voters to participate in the political process. They added internet can be used as a medium to fill the gap that is left by broadcast and cable news. Furthermore, they stated that the increased participation of people in the political process is considered as a result of increased use of internet in the political campaign. Finally they concluded that new media specifically the internet contributes in the diffusion of information and it provides a great opportunity to influence voters' choice (Hamilton 8).

It is important to recognize that while social media may fall under the wide umbrella of new media, it has its own distinguishing effects on political process. Social media has been taken as a satisfactory way for candidates to diffuse information in the presidential election of 2008. In an attempt by Kushin and Yamamoto, to determine whether the use of social media had an impact on political self- efficacy and involvement, they realized the tough rise in the use of social media by political candidates during the presidential election of 2008, and the rise in the number of people who used social media networks. They recognized that: 27% of adults younger than 30 get their campaign information from social media networks with a comparison to 4% of adults aged between 30 and 39 and only 1% older than 40 [this means that the most influenced people by social media websites are young people aged between (18 and 30) and so they are the most influenced by politics through social media networks]. As a type of social media resources, Facebook is seen as a head in terms of peer to peer interaction. In a political campaign, social media resources such as Facebook have enabled voters to be engaged politically with the candidates. Johnston and Perlmutter argue that since the prior elections gave candidates the opportunity to

control their message and image, social media gives them the opportunity of a new type of political campaign (a one that still using traditional campaign strategies and techniques, however corporate and take in its arms the digital uprising of social media) (Hamilton 10-11).

2.4. Conclusion

It is possible to conclude by saying that the political world is based on media and technologies to deliver the messages and reach out to the public. Earlier politicians based their politics on traditional mass media, and to reach to the audience they rely on old technologies including newspapers, television, cable, radio, phone, and fax. Then with the rise of internet the political communication became more available and easier. More specifically, the availability of new technologies and the use of social media like blogs and social networking websites have reshaped the way how the presidential campaigns are carried out.

Moreover social media is considered as an enabler for individuals to share many values, knowledge, experience, opinions, and ideas among each other. Therefore politicians utilize it as the main medium to deliver their messages, communicate, and interact with electorates personally and with much less costs.

Finally, we can say that the 2008 presidential campaign is the first one that uses new technologies and social media in the virtual and expanded space. So the President Barack Obama's successful campaign of 2008 can be attributed to his ability to use social networking sites.

Chapter Three

The President Barack Obama's Use of Social Media in 2008

presidential Campaign

3.1. Introduction

Worldwide the communication process always sees developments whenever there is a development in the media and technologies. Few years ago social networking sites evolution has contributed in changing the way people communicate in all life aspects. Generally social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter have become almost profound and dominant. More clearly nowadays social life is approximately based on these websites; people communicate, interact, share and exchange information with each other relying on them.

Additionally social media is a new way for politicians to communicate and interact with voters especially the young ones during their campaigns. As a result of using social media tools in his 2008 presidential campaign, Barack Obama won the election and became the 44th president of the United States. His victory in the election was shaped by the contribution of many factors. However, the major factor that contributed in Obama's success is the way he, and his campaign team used social media and its platforms.

Thus, this third chapter investigates the President Barack Obama's use of social media in his 2008 presidential campaign. It emphasizes his power to use the social networking sites and the most effective and utilized ones in his campaign. Then this chapter demonstrates some statistics about the use of social media in Obama's campaign, in addition to giving analysis to certain graphs that show disparities

between Barack Obama and his opponent in the power of using social networking sites. Additionally it mentions the major steps that were followed by Obama and his campaign team in organizing their campaign.

3.2. President Barack Obama's Use of Social Media in the 2008

Presidential Campaign

President Barack Obama's use of social media in his 2008 campaign changed the way that internet used for political purposes. Obama's use of internet, specifically social media in his campaign has been compared to John F Kennedy's use of television. According to Miller "One of the many ways that the election of Barack Obama as president has echoed that John F Kennedy is his use of a new medium that will forever change politics. For Mr. Kennedy, it was television. For Mr. Obama it is the internet" (qtd in Smith 12). In addition to using email and website, Obama concentrated on social media to mobilize supporters and reach young adult voters (Smith 12).

The large use of social media and its tools is considered as the main factor in Obama's victory over his opponent candidate John Mc Cain. Disparities in the use of social media between Obama and Mc Cain were wide. For example Obama had 2 million friends on Facebook, while Mc Cain had just 600,000 and the same disparities with the other social media networks such as YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, Digg and Black Planet. In 2008 presidential campaign, Mc Cain focused on television advertising unlike Obama who spent millions on Facebook advertising and he focused much more on social network sites in order to reach people and mobilize and persuade millions of volunteers as well as solicit donors. This campaign's focus is the social media to interact and communicate with voters and supports. According to Natch

Greyes "... the Obama campaign used social media platforms to encourage voters to participate in organize campaign activities such as house parties where like – minded voters gather to watch campaign events or participate in phone banks" (Smith 13-14).

Among social media sites used by Obama, Facebook is seen as the major one. Obama's Facebook page, currently with more than 19 million "likes", relays information about his whereabouts, as well as posts relevant new from the White House. Obama's campaign team also created Facebook pages designed to certain populations like Wonan for Obama, Latinos for Obama, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for Obama. These pages consists posts with links and videos to means that relates to these groups. In addition to these pages that are created by Obama's campaign team for Obama, voters and supports in turn created groups that played a great role in Obama's campaign. Moreover Facebook groups such as "One Million Strong for Barack" played a role in mobilizing volunteers and fetched support for Obama. This Facebook group was one of the first pro- Obama groups on Facebook. Each member of "One Million Strong for Barack" has used the groups' discussion in order to "coordinate political action with one another in order to propel Barack Obama to victory in the presidential election" (Aregbe). "Students for Barack Obama" is another group that was an online agenda to push Obama to stand for president in 2008. Later the group has become "the official student organization of Obama for America" (Smith 14)

In addition to Obama's use of Facebook in his 2008 campaign, YouTube is also seen as a good contributor in his campaign through social media. According to Graber, Obama's supporters have uploaded more than 1800 videos to the "Barack Obama.com" channel. Unlike Obama, Mc Cain supporters have uploaded just 330 videos to his YouTube channel. Based on what has been said in an article written by

Joe Trippi in a November 7, 2008 New York Times, viewers prefer to watch videos that are sent for them by their friends than watching their television shows. Thus Obama's YouTube videos had more effects on voters than television ads. Trippi adds that advertising on YouTube is cheaper than on television. Then he asserts "To buy 14, 5 million hours on broadcast TV is \$ 47 million" (Smith 13).

In addition to Obama's use of for social networking sites separately, he also used them unified. According to Greyes, Obama's campaign based on connection with voters through integrated online presence. As an example, in Obama's campaign YouTube videos were used as Facebook posts and Facebook posts were tweeted. Then he asserted "By doing this the Obama campaign delivered the content supporters wanted in format they wanted it." (Smith 12-14).

3.3. The Most Effective Websites in Obama's 2008 Campaign

According to Komal (sec. 4), during the 2008 campaign respondents relied more on social media sources to stay informed about the campaign. There are certain social media platforms that were most utilized: First Facebook was the most utilized site by respondents on which they have based their daily information. Then for them, Facebook is seen as a means of showing loyalty more than contributing in learning and having knowledge about the campaign. "Primarily, social networks such as Facebook were used to see recommendations posted by friends of interesting blogs, videos and articles." Additionally, as it is quoted in Komal (sec. 4) Meredith argues:

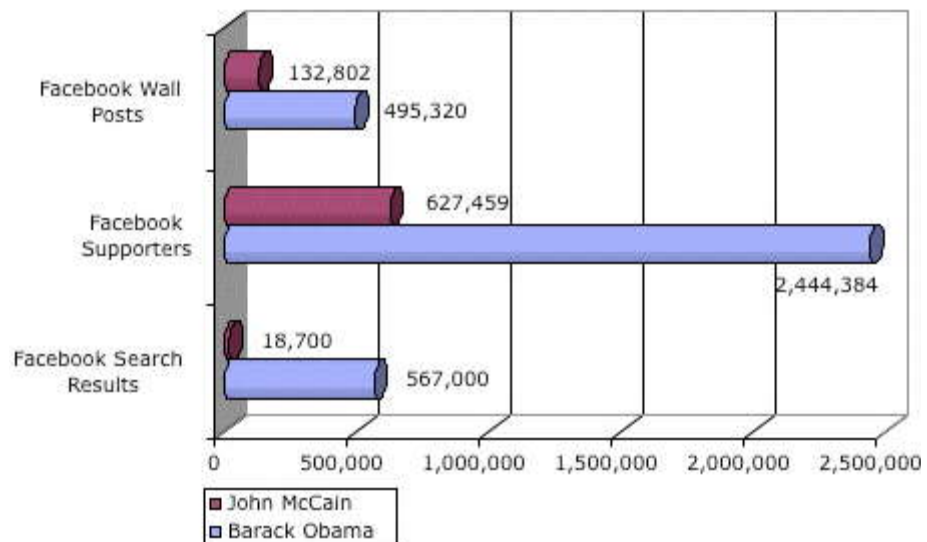
I would say Facebook keeps you in touch with zeitgeist and with what everyone is talking about. I feel there is a buzz around a certain topic if people keep posting about it. So it's not the quality of information but the notion that if the quantity is there, which it was then it is an important thing to keep

discussing. I think Barack Obama did this well. He had his finger on the pulse of something that was very common and related to everyone. He had his finger on the pulse of technology and in turn he was quite connected to what people thought and felt.

The following graph shows Obama's power to use Facebook website successfully more than his Republican opponent John McCain.

Figure 2: Barack Obama vs. John McCain on Facebook

(Chang 24).



Komal (sec. 4), asserts that unlike Facebook that is considered as a medium of expressing allegiance than learning about the facts of the campaign. That argues that YouTube and Blogs were the best social media forums that provided the respondents with enough information that guide them in making their decision. More clearly Tammy says:

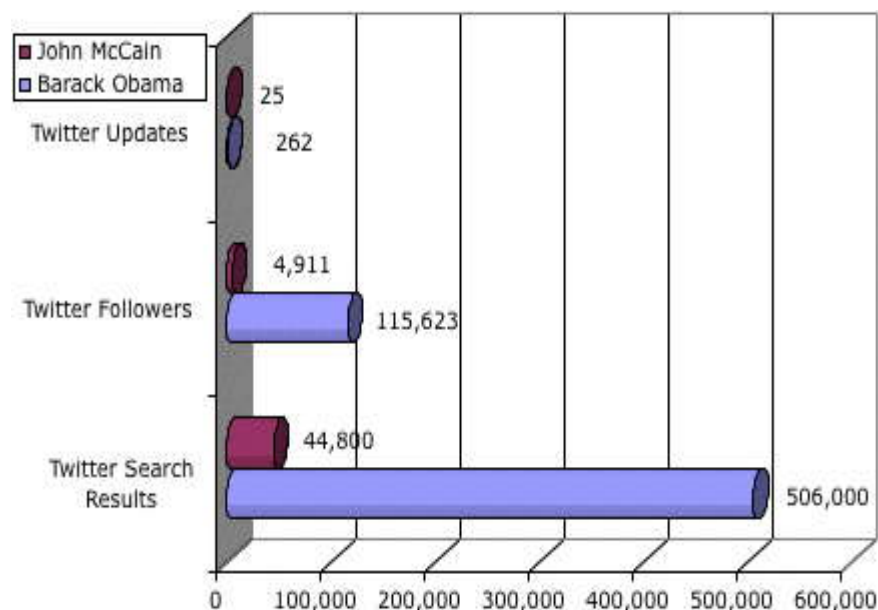
I followed him on Twitter, I felt like someone was writing for him. So I didn't feel like Twitter really connected me to Obama. But I

turned to blogs, which had clips people would upload of him. One recently came out where Obama is holding a baby and couldn't quite him down. But then Obama picks her up and she becomes quite. And I'm like, yes, I love it! Throughout the campaign, I would constantly look up videos of him and Michelle. It is through him and the videos that I started liking Michelle too. It was really the blogs that caught my attention and is what I remember. I mean I can't remember a particular newscast. It's not even in my memory bank. But I remember the videos and the blogs, and that's what stands out to me. (qtd in Komal sec. 4).

Then as result of people using Twitter as an interesting website to know more about Obama's campaign information, Obama had 115,000 followers on Twitter. Obama surpassed John McCain by nearly 23 times. So the Following graph shows the large difference between Obama's and McCain's use of Twitter (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Barack Obama vs. John McCain on Twitter

(Chang 26).



To support the idea that shows that social media networking sites are the most utilized means by Barack Obama in his campaign, James, who was abroad during the campaign and the election day declares that social media has a large share in keeping him informed and updated (Komal sec. 4). For more explanation James declares: “I wasn’t able to watch C-Span or watch long broadcasts online or talk to people individually where I was. So my sole interaction with Obama and the campaign was through social media.” (qtd in Komal sec. 4).

3.4. Statistics about the Use of Social Media in Obama’s Campaign 2008

In 2008 Obama’s campaign, the most targeted population was the young adults (adults younger than 30 years old) specifically through social media. In a study by Kushin and Yamamoto in “Mass Communication and Society” they show that the focus of social media to get information about the campaign was very crucial during 2008 Obama’s campaign, specifically among young adults. They argue that in 2008 campaign 27% of adults younger than 30 obtained their campaign information from social platforms with comparison to 4% of adults age 30 to 39 and just 1% older than 40. So to reach out to this demographic, the social media is the effective way (Smith 14).

During the 2008 election, the use of social media by the Democrats was more than the by Republicans. Then according to the Pew Research Center’s Internet and American Life “some 55% of all adults and 74% of all internet users said they went online for news and information about the election or to communicate with others about the race” (qtd in Hamilton 19). So as a result Hamilton (19) said: “Democratic

voters, and especially young Democratic voters, were simply initiated in to the culture of social media campaigning before Republican voters”.

Fisher asserts that social media was the most profound means in 2008 campaign specifically the social sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. In the point of mobilizing the youth, Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson say that the mobilized segment in Obama’s campaign is the young people group. They argue that 66% of those young adults voted for Barack Obama. According to Lutz, among 15 varied social media sites Barack Obama had 5 million supporters. Then Vargas argues that Obama had 2 million user that created profiles on Obama’s own social website, Mybarackobama.com, or MyBO (Komal sec. 3).

When we want to evaluate Obama’s use of social media tools in his 2008 presidential campaign statistics and numbers is the most credible way. (Chang 1-2) states that Obama’s campaign of 2008 generally gathered 5 million supporters through 15 different social media sites beginning with Facebook and ending with MySpace. Obama had at most 2, 5 million Facebook supporters by November 2008 exceeding his opponent John McCain by nearly four times. Then in Twitter Obama had more than 115,000 followers, outperforming the Republican candidate John McCain by twenty three times. When we come to YouTube and clips, there are 50 million viewers to Obama’s videos on YouTube and people who are interested on watching videos related to Obama’s campaign spent 14 million hours in doing so. This outcome is outperforming McCain’s one by four times.

In addition to his use of social media websites, Obama used other technologies like email and texts. In of numbers Obama’s campaign team sent over 1 million emails. Then they sent 8,000 to 10,000 unique email messages to certain

factions of their 13 million member strong email list. Furthermore 3 million mobile and SMS subscribers are gathered by the campaign (Chang 1-2).

In term of the official site of the campaign, Obama's team created a social network, www.my.barackobama.com or (MyBO). This latter has enabled people to use technology and web forums to communicate and interact with other and have a stood by Obama's campaign. In term of numbers there was 2 million profile that were created on this official campaign web site, in addition to 200,000 offline events that are planned by the site users and volunteers. Furthermore the site has 400,000 blog posts that are wrote by the users and the volunteers that created also 35,000 groups through this site (Chang 2). For more details about numbers see Figure 4.

Figure 4: The Numbers (Chang 2).

E-mail	13 million people on the e-mail list Who received 7,000 variations of more than 1 billion e-mails ⁴
Donors	3 million online donors Who contributed 6.5 million times ⁵
Social Networks	5 million "friends" on more than 15 social networking sites 3 million friends on Facebook alone ⁶
Web site	8.5 million monthly visitors to MyBarackObama.com (at peak) ⁷ 2 million profiles with 400,000 blog posts 35,000 volunteer groups that held 200,000 offline events 70,000 fundraising hubs that raised \$30 million ⁸
Video	Nearly 2,000 official YouTube videos Watched more than 80 million times, with 135,000 subscribers 442,000 user-generated videos on YouTube ⁹
Mobile	3 million people signed up for the text messaging program Each received 5 to 20 messages per month ¹⁰
Phone calls	3 million personal phone calls placed in the last four days of the campaign ¹¹

3.5. How did Barack Obama Work on Social Media?

Marruggi and Metzgar (sec. 5) argue that in 2008 presidential election, there were certain reasons that made a difference between Obama and McCain's use of social media. Certainly these differences in using social media are the major reasons that created Obama's Achievement in social media and e-campaigning.

According to Victoria Chang (2), Obama used social media as the rest of candidates, but with his special way. Obama used social media websites effectively to organize, communicate and fundraise. He also integrated the instruments to stand by its bottoms up grassroots campaign strategy that reached out to the hearts of voters. To achieve all that, Obama built his campaign on specific organized steps.

First Obama hired some specialists in social media as Joe Rospars as a worker on the tools and the systems for Obama's campaign. Malover Kevin was another hired specialist in new media. Then Obama with these tow specialists hired a number of talented and specialized persons to make a group leaders such as Chris Hughes, one of Facebook confounders and determined as the director of internal organizing. Graham Felsen was another hire as a director of the team content. His focus is to make content for MyBO's blog and to relate human and emotional stories of the supporters of Obama. Then as the director of video team, they hired Kate Albright- Hannah. Her work has been to use the video tool to pass on campaign human stories. The design and production team direction led by Michael Slaby. Her focus with her group is to plan the design and the production of the websites and so on. Stephen Geer was the leader teams that are in charge of the online advertising and the email. The analytical group headed by Dan Siroker. Goodstein argues: "I think part of our success was that

Joe [Rospars] made a bunch of very smart hires... we were a different type of new media team than had ever been assembled in the past” (Chang 5).

The second step is launching websites to the campaign. After announcing Obama’s candidacy, the team hired by Obama launched the sites of the campaign: www.BarackObama.com and www.My.BarackObama.com. Obama’s campaign added a new element which is time, to the traditional campaign elements (votes and money). In other words, additionally to the campaign focus on getting votes and money from supporters, Obama asked his supporters their time by which he meant their involvement and engagement. So to reach their goal which people’s involvement they realized. So Obama’s campaign team realized that to reach their goal which is people’s involvement, there is a need to provide a different ways. First MyBO enabled registered users to create a profile, connect with the other users of MyBO, create offline events, raise funds, download tools and find local events. Then MyBO site included large amounts of materials and user generated content such as videos, speeches, photos (“Chang 5-6).

Another element on which Obama built his campaign is that Obama with his team concentrated on going to where people are. Since the social networks are the young adults’ interest, so the campaign team focused on them. The director of the social networks team, Goodstein made a large concentration on the external social websites as Obama’s MySpace, Facebook, Linked In, Black Planet, Eons, Asian Ave, Flickr, YouTube... and so on (they limited their campaign on 15 external websites). As a result of the concentration on the external social networks, Obama was the first presidential candidate to create profiles on Asian Ave, Black Planet and on MiGente.com. In this point Rospars noted that: “The external social networks were never a driver of fundraising. They were really more about starting the relationships.

We viewed them as sort of embassies where you go in and you speak the language and you're respectful of the culture..." (Chang 6-7).

3.6. Conclusion

To sum up we can say that, Barack Obama was the first candidate to destroy the traditional campaign by using social media and new technologies successfully. Obama's 2008 presidential campaign has established new expectations for future campaigns through the use of MyBO site and other external social media networks.

Barack Obama sketched his achievement by concentrating on what people like and feel more interest. He run his campaign focusing on new technologies and social media since it is the interest of all segments, specifically the young people who were the most mobilized group by Obama's campaign. As a result he drew a new and successful way for candidates to run their campaigns and to mobilize people.

In short Obama's 2008 presidential campaign is considered as a turning point in the history of political campaigns, thanks to his power to utilize social media and new technologies.

Conclusion

Throughout its history, the media is seen as a best way for political communication in the world wide. Then as in all democracies, the political life in the United States of America is based on the media coverage. Politics relays completely on media to diffuse its events and to cover its tasks as campaigning and elections.

It is referred to media as the fourth power that comes after the legislative, the judicial, and the executive ones. It is very needed in politics as well as it plays an important role in the political world. Moreover media presents the major contributor in influencing and shaping the public opinion. It is seen as the politics pillar that is why politics is unfeasible without it.

Early, the traditional media flowed in one way that enabled the citizens only to consume the information. However the internet and social media flow in many directional ways which allow the users to communicate and enable them to interact. In addition to the entertainment service that provide, social media networks provide also spaces for the individuals on which they can share political information and opinions with each other and with politicians themselves.

With the decline of traditional media and the evolution of Internet use and social media became the most appropriate way for the political communication. The emergence of new media motivated people to leave the traditional way of communication. They have shifted to the use of social media sites to practice their tasks especially the political ones.

The availability of social media has given the people new opportunities communicate and interact politically. It has given them the chance to join groups,

interact with political institutions and candidates and in the same time it has enabled them to exchange and discuss information with other citizens.

As a result of its conductivity and availability, the politicians have adopted social media as the main medium to deliver their message. In other words, social media became the most appropriate and effective way to mobilize electorates and to run a political campaign.

From what has been discussed in this research, we can conclude that social media and its platforms have played and may continue to a very interesting role in the political campaigns and in politics in general.

The best role that has been played by social media platforms including all new technologies is presented by the 2008 presidential campaign. During this campaign both candidates used social media to interact and mobilize voters. However the way that the candidate Barack Obama used social media is so effective. It is seen as the major factor that has pushed the voters to give him their votes which shaped his winning to the 2008 election.

Through social media sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, the political candidate interacted with his supporters and received support in the form of donations and volunteers.

Eventually Barack Obama did not take place in the history as just the first African American President for the United States, rather he also represents the point of change in the way that the 2008 campaign and election are run and the future ones would be run.

The candidate Barack Obama and his campaign team have showed the world that people have the ability to make change if they are just given the right tools. Furthermore Obama's use of social media tools has showed to all their power and impact on all life aspects, specifically the political one. So the Barack Obama's success in 2008 presidential campaign is attributed to his power to use social media websites.

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