

## Using Social Media To Promote Democratic Transformation

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### **Abstract:**

Democratic transformation cannot be accomplished as required, except with the help of several factors, including fully activating the role of civil society organizations because of their profound impact on achieving democracy. Social media has turned into a platform for expressing legitimate rights and freedoms of citizens. Social media has worked to make the masses aware of the need to confront violations that impair their rights and the need to seek a transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic systems that safeguard rights and freedoms. Work on developing skills through social media by opening direct channels with officials and decision makers to form pressure groups to follow up on pending issues.

**Key words:** social media, democratization, transformation.

### **Introduction**

The accelerated development of the media and communication has led to fundamental changes, a qualitative shift, and a real revolution in the world of communication, as the Internet has spread throughout the globe, and has linked the vast parts of this world with its wide space, which has been called (the small village), and paved the way for all societies to come together, get acquainted and exchange opinions, (*Abdul-Jabbar, 2010*) ideas and desires, we find their events have changed greatly affected all areas of life, at the level of groups and individuals globally or

locally, creating new phenomena and direct effects on various social organizations and structures, (*Balqees, 2004*) that the emergence of social networks and websites Electronic, changed the form and content of modern media, among its users, and thus became an influential means in its accelerating events, so that it allowed the opportunity for members of society at all levels and spectra to transmit their ideas, and discuss their political and social issues completely freely and the freedom of this understanding from one person to another which leads to creating spaces New uncensored results in positive and negative matters according to the human understanding that varies from person to person, and this did not stop there, (*Hilal, 1999*) but even governments and governmental and non-governmental organizations have become using these networks to implement their program and achieve their various goals, and they have come Social networks provide subscribers with the ability to share files, photos, and share video clips, and enabled them to create blogs, conduct instant chats and send messages, at the top of the pyramid and the forefront of "Facebook and Twitter" (viber), (whatsapp), (Instagram and (telegram) ). (*Ahmed, 2014*)

## Literature review

### 1. General concept of democratic transformation

It is the aspirations of societies that have sought and achieved some of its parts through its political institutions with various legislative and executive forms that are formulated in their national constitutions. Democrat, everyone stands behind a set of values agreed upon and the clarity of the references for democratic transformation. The democratic transformation in any existing societal entity cannot be accomplished by chance or away from the national will. (*Mahmoud,*

1987) Rather, it is the result of a long struggle for citizens towards achieving this transformation. It is a result of the will of the human being who is searching for change, rejecting and resisting all frustrations and conspiracies against the will of change, from which the process of democratic transformation is born that transformation that believes in the preference of democratic systems over the systems of tyranny, oppression and dictatorship. (*Burhan, 1993*)

## 2. Definition of democratic transformation

There are several definitions, including the definition of "schmeter" (the process of applying democratic rules, whether in institutions that were not applied before or the extension of these rules to include individuals or topics that did not include them before, then these are processes and procedures that are taken to convert from a non-democratic system to a stable democratic system) (*Mushtaq, 2018*) The definition of "Rosto" (a decision-making process in which three forces of different motives contribute, which are the system, internal opposition and external forces, and each party tries to weaken the other parties and the final outcome is determined later by the changing party in this conflict), the definition of "Charles Andrian" (Shifting from one system to another, i.e. changing the existing system and style (*Ahmed, 1993*) The policy-making adopted by the system, which he calls change between systems, and upon it the transformation means deep changes in the three basic dimensions of the system, the cultural dimension, the structural dimension and policies and these changes result from the existence of contradictions between these three dimensions, which leads to the inability of the existing system to deal with it in (*Abdul-Jabbar, 2010*) The framework and the old style remained), and the democratic transition was also known as (a set of distinct stages that begin with the disappearance of authoritarian regimes

followed by the emergence of modern democracies seeking to consolidate their systems, and this process reflects the redistribution of power so that the state's share of it in favor of civil society institutions including Within a sort of balance between both the state and society, (*Anis, 2000*) which means crystallizing many centers of power and accepting the political debate), and finally it was known as (the process of transition from authoritarian systems to democratic systems, in which the crisis of legitimacy, participation, identity, and development was resolved, i.e. adopting democracy as a method of practicing activities Political, democratic transformation means a fundamental change of power relations in the political field and hierarchical relations in the social field) (*Abdul Ghaffar, 2006*)

### **3. The internal causes of democratic transformation**

**Political leadership:** Many studies that have addressed the causes of democratization indicate that there is an important role for political leadership in stimulating the process of democratization, when there is a political leadership willing, secure, and able to confront conservative forces, the chances of success of the democratization process have increased, where you need The process of converting to a skilled leadership that is able to confront opponents and militants, and expand participation in the decision-making process. (*Mahmoud, 1987*) The leadership is also responsible for the democratic cohesion process and for protecting the individual from state arbitrariness and negotiating with social groups that threaten the transformation process. The need to reach the most acceptable formulas of transformation in society, and in this regard, "Samuel Huntington" believes that the political leadership seeks to promote social, cultural and economic reform and then accommodate

the demands of new groups to participate in political action, in this case the political leadership follows three strategic plans (*Abdul Ghaffar, 2006*) Either trying to diminish the role of the current authority, or end its role, and thus push for a movement towards a modern constitutional monarchy in which power is the right of the people (and the parties and parliaments), or that it initiates a conscious effort to bring the royal and popular powers into one political system. (*Wafik, 2011*) Huntington emphasizes that leaders in totalitarian regimes can put an end to the existing system and take measures to start a process of democratization, either because they believe that democracy is a goal in itself, or because it leads to other goals, or because it is the result of achieving specific goals, or for the reasons why leaders (*Faisal, 2002*) Authoritarian regimes tend to support the democratic option, among them: the deteriorating political legitimacy of the existing system, the leadership's awareness that the costs of staying in power are very high and that it is better to initiate transformation for several reasons, including the division of the coalition that supports its survival in power, leaders may resort to democracy As an alternative to the authoritarian regime that has exhausted its justifications for its existence (*Mushtaq, 2018*) and is no longer able to meet the needs of society or internal and external pressures, the leaders' belief that the democratic transition will result in the acquisition of their state many benefits, such as increasing international legitimacy, and reducing the sanctions imposed by donor countries on their countries And opening the door of economic and military aid, obtaining loans from the International Monetary Fund, (*Salah, 2005*) and the spotlight under the banner of major international gatherings. From the foregoing, we see that the political leadership is largely responsible for achieving democratic cohesion, as it is responsible for entrenching faith in new democratic values for individuals, and providing the necessary economic and

social requirements to enable the masses to participate effectively in the process of democratization. (*Ahmed, 1993*)

**The collapse of the legitimacy of the existing system:** Legitimacy is one of the most important pillars of the continuation of the political system, and there are many reasons that availability or some of them lead to a crisis in the legitimacy of the system, which contributes to bringing about a democratic transition to overcome this crisis, (*Wafik, 2011*) and among these reasons are the following: Exhaustion of the system for the purpose that has arisen from It is postponed, meaning that if a revolution or military coup took place in a country that resulted in an authoritarian regime that occupied itself with the issue of economic and social development, and in the event that this goal was reached, the existing political system would have exhausted the purpose of its existence, leading to a decline in its legitimacy, and on the other hand it might fail (*Ahmed, 2014*) This political system in achieving the goal He, who was created for him, loses his legitimacy as well, the change in social values

that become less receptive to authoritarian rule, meaning that there are certain values that form the basis of the legitimacy of the system of government, but after a certain period these values change and thus the political system loses its legitimacy through changing values, inability The political system is to absorb the new changes in society, foremost among which are the emergence of new groups that the political system is unable to provide opportunities for participation to, and this happens especially in the periods when the political system is witnessing economic or social transformations. (*Balqees, 2004*)

**Factors of political stability:** The problems of legitimacy with respect to a system may not necessarily lead to its collapse, but the leadership of the system can foreshadow many institutional challenges. Legitimacy, even if

it is a necessary condition for the survival of the system, is not sufficient for its survival or collapse; the system may still control the government despite the decline in its legitimacy, (*Abbas, 2017*) as there is not yet an alternative and acceptable system, there are a set of basic elements and capabilities that must be available in any system to ensure its continuity and survival, even if the strength of each element in it varies from one system to another. (*Faisal, 2002*) These elements are as follows: the extractive ability: the extent of the system's ability to mobilize human, material and moral resources with a view to achieving the goals of the system, organizational ability: the extent of the system's ability to control the behavior of individuals within society and influence in the regional and international surroundings, the distributive capacity: which is the extent of the system's ability and efficiency In the distribution and allocation of resources and services between individuals and groups within society, and the extent of consistency and proportionality between requirements and the needs of individuals and what is satiated from them, (*Mushtaq, 2018*) hence the relationship between economic development and democratic transformation is a contentious issue, while some believe that there is no There is a relationship between them, or that the relationship is in the direction that economic development represents the beginning of gradually expanding the scope of political participation, others see a close relationship between democracy and development, and that this relationship is moving in the direction of economic development being affected by the extent of the existence of a democratic pillar to support the process of economic development and the creation of the investment climate And encourage the spirit of innovation. (*Anis, 2000*)

#### **4. External factors of democratic transformation**

In addition to the internal causes of democratic transformation, there are also external causes that affect a positive trend towards democratic transitions in those regimes that have not yet taken democracy. External factors represent the set of political, economic, and ideological changes that emanate from the international community and push towards the transformation toward democracy. It is generally noted that developing countries in the third world are vulnerable to external factors. (*Ahmed, 1999*)

**Pressure from external forces:** The ruling elites were able in the past to ignore the internal democratic demands and practice the types of violations of the civil and political rights of citizens without fearing international protest, but today they are driven to open the file of democracy and human rights, we find that the external forces play an important role in advancing the democratic process (*Muhammad, 2009*)

Whether these powers are states, international organizations, or institutions, as follows: Pressure from donor countries on recipient countries to accelerate the process of democratization, as it was believed by the end of the 1980s that the absence of democracy and accountability The rulers were among the most important factors that led to the crises and the economic deterioration experienced by the countries of the third world. (*Abdul Ghaffar, 2006*) Therefore, the donor countries began to link financial aid to political reforms, the pressure of international institutions, whether financial institutions or other organizations, as these organizations encourage political reforms in (*Salah, 2005*) Other countries in order to establish organizations independent of the state, in the sense of forming an effective civil society, based on the fact that democracy is the cornerstone of development according to the vision circulated in the work of the international institutions concerned; democracy or political reform is not only at the level of God The amount



represented by economic reform, but rather the condition for this economic reform, the impact of the rapid development in the field of information and communication and its prominent role in the process of infection or simulation, (*Amani, 2013*) as this development made the whole world like a small village, and if an event occurred in one country, another country may easily be affected by it And if a serious violation of human rights occurs in a country, other countries rush to denounce the matter and threaten to impose sanctions, but rather to intimidate for humanitarian purposes, and by returning to Iraq's experience in democratic transformation, we find it was the result of the concerted internal and external efforts, so the dictatorial regime that Iraq suffered (*Ahmed, 1999*) There is a great pity in arousing the discontent of the masses, as well as the interference of external forces in helping to get rid of this system in order to achieve a democratic system, and it is worth noting that the democratic system in Iraq lacks a lot and it did not reach the required level, and for the democratic transition to take place properly, it must be Building a basic base of trust between the existing political elites in order to withdraw the matter from the relationship between social, sectarian and religious formations, as well as working to activate the role of civil society institutions as the main ingredient on which the democratic transformation process is based on what they reduce The authoritarian tyranny of the government. (*Hilal, 1999*)

## **5. The concept of social networks**

Some have defined **social media networks** as (a system of electronic networks that allow the subscriber to create his own website, and then link it via a social electronic system with other members who have the same interests and hobbies), (*Abbas, 2017*) as it has been known as

"interactive social networks that allow communication for its users at any time They like and anywhere in the world, appeared on the Internet a few years ago and changed the concept of communication and rapprochement between peoples, and gained its social name as it strengthens the relationships between humans), (*Amani, 2013*) as the International Free Encyclopedia defines it as a website that provides a set of services for users Like instant chatting, private messages, e-mail, video, blogging, file sharing and other services, it has made a great change in how people communicate and share between people and societies and exchange information, and it gathers millions of users today, and recently exceeded its social function to become an expressive and protest medium, and the most prominent networks Social media is (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) and the most important one is the (Facebook) network, and therefore social media networks are a group of sites that provide services that are created and programmed by major companies to collect the largest number of users and (*Bushra, 2013*) For friends and sharing activities and interests in the structure of a virtual community, these services provide features such as instant chat, public and private messaging and multimedia sharing of voice, image, video and files, and these services have attracted millions of users from all over the world. Social networks share basic features (*Salah, 2005*) while differentiating them from other features imposed by the nature of the network and its users, they can be summarized in the following: Personal pages: Through personal files you can get to know the person's name and know basic information about him such as: gender, birth date, country, interests and personal image And other information, friends / relationships: they are the people the person recognizes for a specific purpose, it is called "friend" and it is added to the list of friends while some of the professional social networking sites call this "contact or relationship" to

this person, send messages: *(Muhammad, 2009)* and This feature allows you to send a message directly to the person, whether it is in your friends list or not, Photo albums: Social networks allow their users to create an infinite number of albums and upload hundreds of pictures in it and allow sharing these photos with friends to view and comment about them, pages: an idea The pages create a page in which information about the product, personality or event is put, and users then browse those pages via specific subdivisions, then if they find interest in that page, they add them to their profile, and according to the above, in theory, *(Abbas, 2017)* the concept of social networking is subject I am aware of several theories which are as follows: Structural theory: It is a social approach looking for the globalization of social relations and social networks, and according to this trend is a group of relationships that a group of individuals form, and they have a special and qualitative pattern for example (cooperation, advice, oversight) *(Mushtaq, 2018)* Among a group of actors, social media has made the relationships of individuals more intrusive and dependent on each other than it was in the past. The network of social, political and economic links and lines that intersect and cross borders affect a decisive impact on the individuals participating in it, in theory The social circle: It is an approach that is based on describing and linking networks through internal characteristics (inside the network), and social networking networks according to this theory is the interaction of the total users of this network with each other according to specific codes and codes, provided by these sites for them which results in an internal knowledge system Specific to the latter, social interactions on social media are a framework that is interlinked with elements, objectives, goals, and common needs among members, as well as regulations, rules, policies, and patterns that emerge from these interactions. *(Burhan, 1993)*

## **6. The impact and role of social networks between pros and cons**

**Positive influences:** There is no doubt that technological progress aims to achieve progress for humankind and make life easier. Social media technology has added a new positive dimension to the lives of millions of people from bringing about cultural, social, political and economic changes in the lives of entire societies. Among the most important of these positive effects: Linking relationships across the world and simple communication between individuals: millions of people of foreign (*Bushra, 2013*) and Arab peoples in particular found in social networks a free window for them to see the ideas and cultures of the whole world, and exchange information, pictures, messages, and others. Educational communication and gaining information: exchanging experiences and skills and discussing social issues between students, academics and researchers, as it is a means to access experiences and competencies, and social media has worked to link the citizen to the government, as many of the state's units, departments and institutions have become "locally" communicating with citizens as (*Abbas, 2017*) These news media are smooth and straightforward between the government department or institution and citizens. Moreover, social media has worked to achieve openness to the other and build social relations, so communicate with others, regardless of the difference in Religion, culture, customs and traditions, and tendencies, the individual earns the ability to share ideas and interact in public issues, and finally cannot deny what the means of social communication role in the formation of public opinion also represents a platform for this view. (*Amani, 2013*)

**Negative influences:** It reduces the skills of personal interaction, with the ease of communicating through these sites, this will reduce the time of interaction on the personal level for individuals and groups using these

sites, wasting time: as it is with its entertainment services that it provides to subscribers, it may be very attractive to a degree that you forget *(Muhammad, 2009)* with it Time. Addiction to communication sites: The use of it especially by housewives and retirees, makes it - because of emptiness - one of the main activities in the individual's daily life, which makes leaving this activity or replacing it is very difficult especially that it is ideal in terms of entertainment to fill the free time the long. *(Abdul-Jabbar, 2010)* The majority of social websites face the problem of lack of privacy, which causes a lot of moral and psychological damage to young people and may sometimes reach material damage, because the user's file on this network contains all of his personal information that may easily reach the hands of people who may exploit them for the purpose of abuse and defamation. Impersonation: where the real source remains unknown behind the users of social networks, and this pushes their users to blackmail, impersonate and spread misleading information and discredit, and this amounts to carrying out crimes such as theft or kidnapping. *(Mushtaq, 2018)*

## **Conclusion**

- 1- Democratic transformation cannot be accomplished as required, except with the help of several factors, including fully activating the role of civil society organizations because of their profound impact on achieving democracy.
- 2- Social media has turned into a platform for expressing legitimate rights and freedoms of citizens
- 3- Social media has worked to make the masses aware of the need to confront violations that impair their rights and the need to seek a

transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic systems that safeguard rights and freedoms.

- 4- Work on developing skills through social media by opening direct channels with officials and decision makers to form pressure groups to follow up on pending issues.

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