

**"There's no politics without communication": The impact of  
social media in political participation of citizen in Peru of  
today**

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## **Abstract**

*We are living in the age of information, turning quickly of mass media to social media. This process has transformed the way where people interact each other, creating a new Policy-Communicative scene in which we have to ask ourselves: What is the impact of social media in political participation? For answer this we're going to determinate the impact of social media in marches against a presidential candidate, Keiko Fujimori, during presidential election of 2016 in Peru*

*This paper is divided in three parts. The first one it's about theory background and definition of key concepts like Social media and Political communication, all this under the Theory of Political Communication in general and the theory focuses of online news in particular. In the second part we will determinate the methodological background and finally, the third part will analyze more specifically the case of marches "NO A KEIKO" with a descriptive research using tables and interviews as sources.*

**Key Words: Collectives, Political Communication, Political Participation, Politics, Social Media.**

## **Introduction**

There are two ways to conceive the Political Communication, the first one is as an enemy we for democracy because It controlled and manipulated the citizens, the second way is based on Politics need of communication for fully be developed (Wolton, 2008: p.7). In this moment we are living in the age of information, turning quickly of mass media to social media, it's why academics research the relation between Medias and politics from 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the time, Internet expands the public space and transforms the nature of democracy (Cardon, 2010: p.7) and now the real challenge is understand the relation between social media and political participation.

Since restoring of Latin American democracy, the continent has suffered differents formes of political participation. Massive protest during the transitions to news regimes; partisan participation in the beginning of youngs democracies and no-traditional formes of engagement in the last years (Catterbegr, 2013). In the case of Peru the forme of political participation most used is the protest, in this paper we analyze the case of marches realised before presidential election of 2016, against Keiko Fujimori.

In view the above, the research question of this paper is What's the impact of social media in political participation during marches against the presidential candidate Keiko

Fujimori in Peru (2016)? For developpe more this problem we raised two specific problems, What social media arrangement used the activist organisation NOAKEIKO<sup>1</sup> to exerce influence on the participation in marches? And In What degree the use of social media influence on marches participation? The reponses are searched using content analyse of an interview to Gonzalo Córdova Mío<sup>2</sup> in the first question and indicated the degree of influence with statistics in the second question.

The scientific importance of this subject is that we'll try to elucidate what is the type of relation between social media – or just media- and political participation; the conclusions obtained will be used for developped online news focus.

## Literature review

The academics of political communication have asked what the relationship between Politics and media is. There are a long tradition about this subject, but until this date nobody has been able to response this question.

As we said in the introduction, we live in the age of information, that's why the question is transformed into the relationship between social media and politics. With the purpose of this investigation, we've searched recent work about the general question: the relationship between social media and political communication.

The sociologist (Boulianne, 2015) published an article about if the researches in social science support believes that social media have effects over political participation. She didn't make a field research, she analyzed all the quantitative researches published about the topic between 2006 and 2013, and also she used a method named meta-analysis. Boulianne looked for studies based on surveys that have as dependent variable political behavior like protest or voting. She chose as independent variable the use of social media like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

The principal resultants of Shellet Boulianne are three, the first one is that there are statistics evidence between the use of social media and political participation, but this evidence is not significant enough. The second one is based in a subgroup of studies about political campaigns in elections period that demonstrate that social media don't influence in the elector's decisions. And finally the third resultant is about protest, studies shows a

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<sup>1</sup> Organization created in 2009 with 500 0000 of followers in his Fan Page of Facebook and 22 0000 followers in Twitter. It is the principal activist organization who have as objective avoid that the *Fujimorismo* come back to rule and in the future dissolve it.

<sup>2</sup> Principal leader of activist organization NOAKEIKO.

relationship between social media use and protest activities, but we can't ensure what type of relation there are because of topic complexity.

Another important research is made by a group of Chilean academics (Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012). They use the case of political mobilization in Chile during August of 2010 when in Facebook people were organized for protesting against the construction of an energy central in a nature reserve named Barracones. Then in January of 2011 another protest happened in Magallanes against the increase of gas prices. Finally they take the case of student protest against the educational system.

The resultants founded were, first the young people who use Facebook have more possibility of participate in protest than they don't use this social media. The second one is that if young use Facebook for read news and develop their social life is more probably that they participate in protest in comparison with the others who just use Facebook as a way of personal expression. The principal conclusion of this study is that Facebook is a significant element, but it's not the only (or the most important way) form of political participation.

Following with the logic of previous research one of above-mentioned academics, (Valenzuela, 2013) make a study from surveys did it during one of the biggest student mobilization. Their study propose examiner three areas of social media, the first one as news source, the second one as political expression and finally as an instrument for join to causes and find information about social mobilizations.

The conclusion was that social Medias are an instrument for political action, not the cause. The study says that social media amplify protest using news, information and expression of views, but they don't create them. That's why (Valenzuela, 2013) think that it is better consider the online word as a contribution for the "real" world, the offline world.

As we indicated, there are a long tradition in political communication for understand the relation between social media and politics. With this studies (Bouliannea, 2015) (Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012) (Valenzuela, 2013) the question is renewed into news media.

### **(Model construction) and theoretical framework**

Political participation is considered fundamental for democracy and this include Political expression. For many authors online media use is a complement to traditional media as television or radio, because it also influence political expression and discussion and this two variables increase our dependent variable: political participation

More broadly, the communication mediation model suggests a clear theoretical basis for the relationship between political SNS use and political participation. The communication mediation model suggests that media use of various forms (television watching, newspaper reading, online news consumption) encourages some type of communication, which then leads to gains in political participation (Bode, Vraga, Porismita, & Shah, 2013).

And more specifically, we will use the online news focus for explain that approximately half of Facebook users get their news through Facebook, but the overwhelming majority of Facebook users are exposed to the news incidentally through social network ties on Facebook (deSilver, 2014) Because of this incidental news exposure, social media users may be exposed to mobilizing information without having to actively seek it out (Xenos, Vromen, & Loader, 2014). The theory draws heavily from studies of traditional media, which shows that those who use media to learn about current events are more likely to be political knowledgeable and engaged (McLeod, Scheufele, & & Moy, 1999)

## **Conceptualization and operationalization**

Themes as social media, political participation, activist organizations and marches have been conceptualized and defined differently by many authors.

In the first case, Social media, derived from the social software movement, are a collection of Internet websites, services, and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation, and sharing (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2010). These technologies now include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds. And for political participation we'll take the definition of (Van Deth, 2016) Political participation can be loosely defined as citizens' activities affecting politics. The list of participatory activities has become virtually infinite and includes actions such as voting, demonstrating, contacting public officials, boycotting, attending party rallies, guerrilla gardening, posting blogs, volunteering, joining flash mobs, signing petitions, buying fair-trade products, and even suicide protests.

The general hypothesis is that: There is an important and causal relation between social media and political participation, but there are other significant causes, which one is supported by conclusions of other works as (Valenzuela, 2013) (Bouliannea, 2015). And as specifies hypothesis we support that the social media arrangement most used by the activist organization is the online news. Finally the second specified hypothesis is responded with tables' bellow which respond at the question In what degree the use of social media influence on the marches?

We chose as dependent variable the political participation and for the case of independent variable we decided to choose social media, but just with educational purposes. The case of independent variable is complicated for the nature of the social media, which one can't be determined as dependent, independent, or correlative variable.

## Methodology

The type of research is descriptive because this does not fit into the definition of any of two qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Inside descriptive research can use information of both. This is a benefit for development of our two specific objects: the first one describes the social media arrangements used by activist organizations to exercise influence on the participation of marches (for answer this we'll use qualitative method) and the second one is to indicate the degree of influence on the marches by social media (for answer this we'll use quantitative method).

## Data

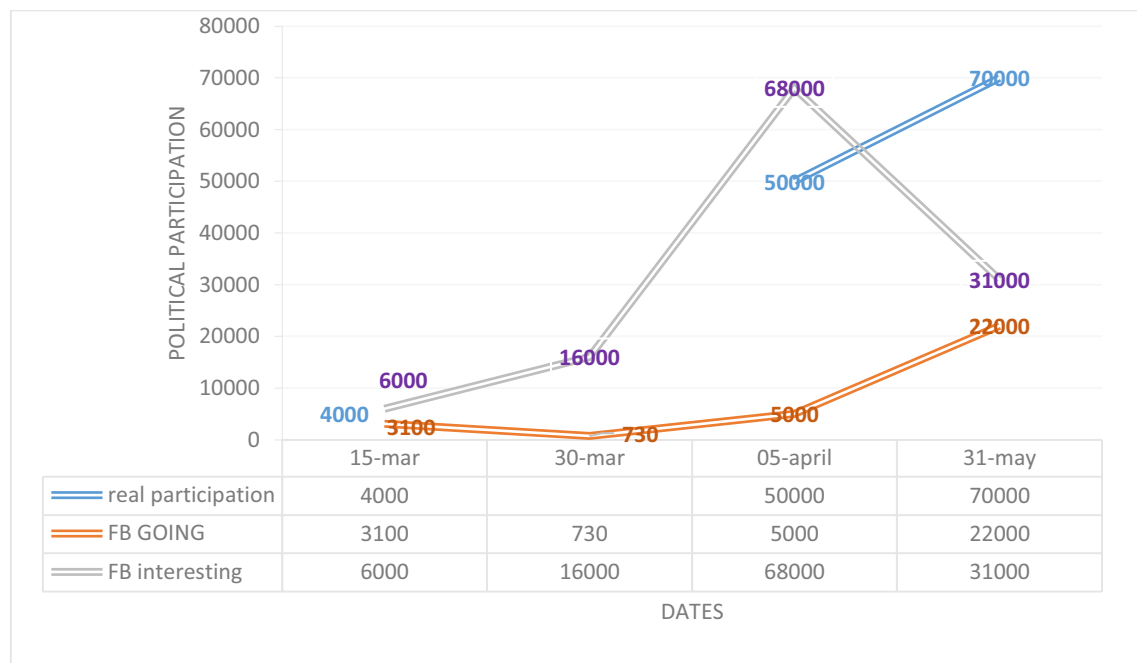


Table 1- Source: Author

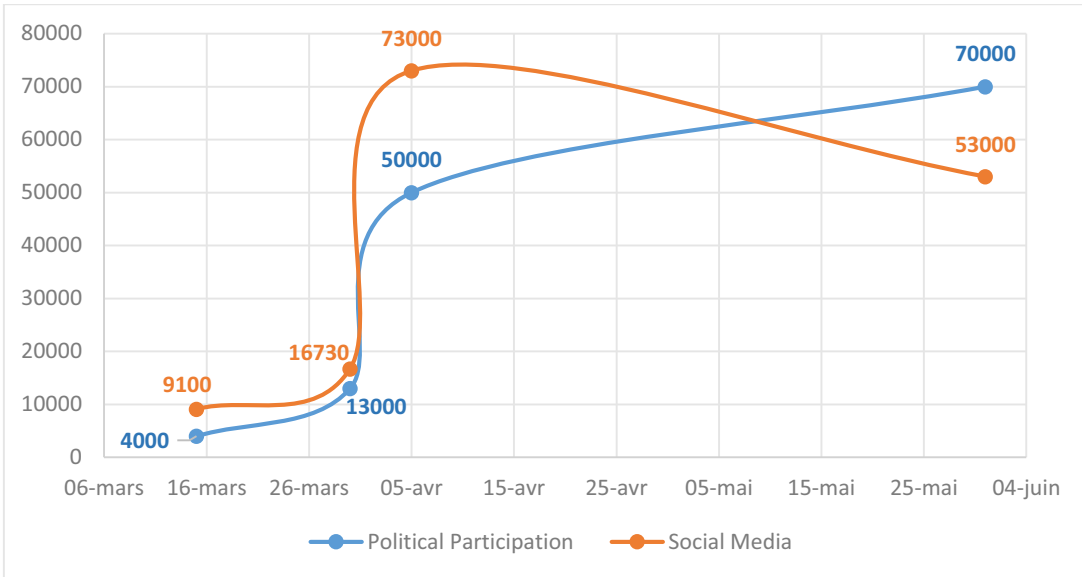


Table 2- Source: Author

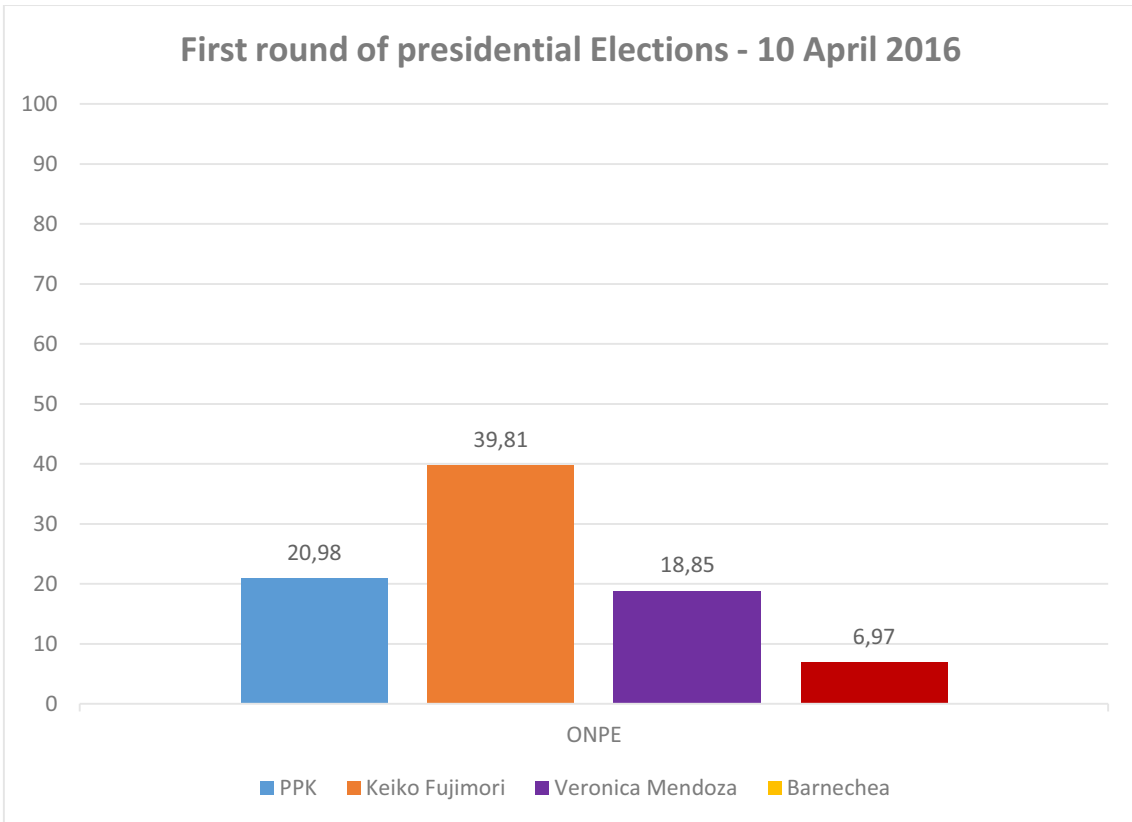


Table 3- Source: ONPE

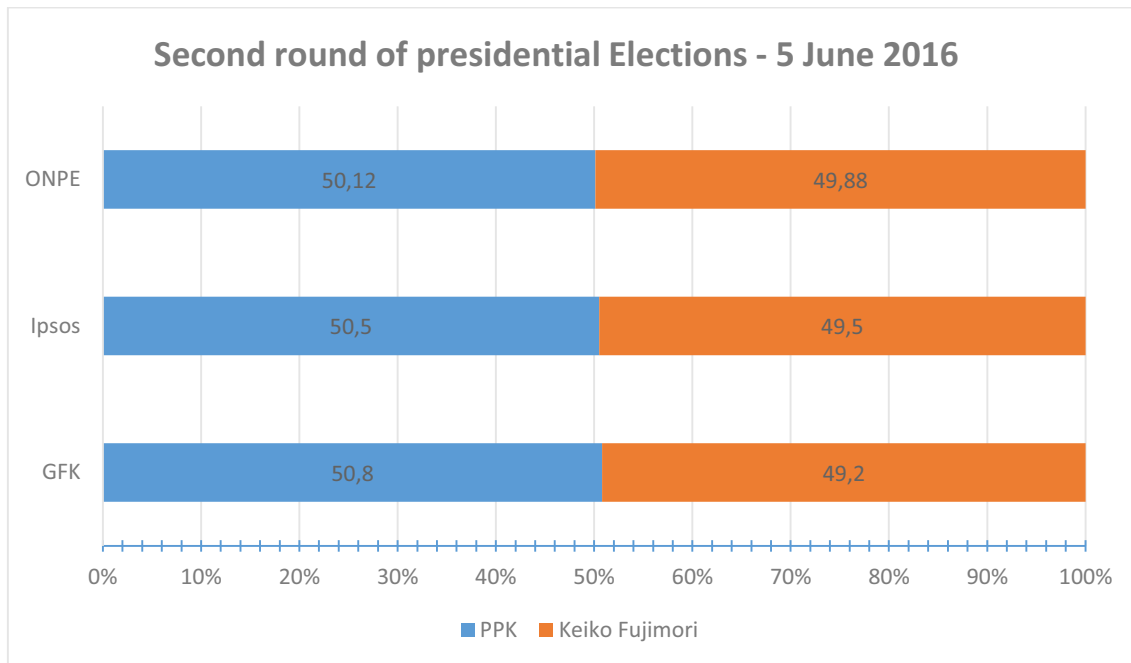


Tabla 4- Source: ONPE, GFK, Ipsos

## Analysis and findings

In the table 1 we can see an increase of political participation (presence in the marches and presence in social media) as we approached to first election in April, 10 and second round in June, 5. We also can see that there are a big increase for April 5, that's it's because the collective NOAKEKIKO organized this marches in the same date as Keiko's father Alberto Fujimori (government period 1990 to 2000) made the "self-coup"<sup>3</sup> in 1992.

For Gonzalo Córdova Mío for choose a day for a marche depends of the context, it's about immediaty, all it's about what's happening in that moment (G. Córdova, personal communication, April 5, 2017). And that it's verified in the table n°1 where the number of march asistant increase of 13 000 in March, 30 to 50 000 in April, 5. We can also look this phenome in the final march did it the May, 30 just 5 days before second round election, here the asistants increase from 50 000 to 70 000 even if there weren't any marches durying two months.

In the table 2, there is a positive correspondence between the political participation (presence in the marches) and the presence in the social media of the event created by the collective NOAKEIKO in each date of marches. We can also see that in every date of

<sup>3</sup> A constitutional crisis where the president Alberto Fujimori dissolved the congress and the judiciary of Peru with the help of military forces.



marches the political participation in social media is a more than the real presence in marches, except for the last one which is made it a day before to second round elections.

One of the limitations of these tables are that they are just take information of the event in Facebook created by activist organization NOAKEIKO<sup>4</sup>. Also we just took in consideration the marches performed in Lima and not in another region or country.

The interviewee Gonzalo Córdova Mío says that the way of they incentive people to participate in their activities ( marches or informative Piquetes<sup>5</sup>) is through the publication of content ( videos, images, post, etc.) in Facebook (G. Córdova, personal communication, April 5, 2017). But there are a variables to take in account: the content have to be clear and simple, it could be ironic or funny and also the schedule.

He also explains what's is the process for make a successful post, the most important things it's –How we said- the moment/context and on base to that they created the message/content, then they published the post in Facebook and how they have so many followers the message is shared by anyone.

The third and fourth table were made just for give some extra information about one of the consequence that this four marches created, but in general results of second round there are not a big difference between each candidate despite the big attendance in marches.

## **Conclusions**

The arrangements used by activist organization can be explained in one way with online news focus, but these theory it's insufficient for understand all the complexity of these process.

The degree of influence on the marches by social media is significant and they are correlated, but they don't determine their successful.

The impact of social media (Facebook post or events make it by the activist organization NOAKEIKO) has an important and correlated relation.

Social media immediacy has made it possible the creation and organization of a social movement – which one came up of activist organization NOAKEIKO – in a very short time.

## **Presentation**

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<sup>4</sup> We took this collective because it was the biggest one and it organizes all the marches and event in Facebook.

<sup>5</sup> It's a democratic dialogue with people in the street, it can be in train stations or squares.

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## APPENDICE

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Variables</b>
<b>General Problem</b>	<b>General Objective</b>	<b>General Hypothesis</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>
What's the impact of social media in political participation during marches against the presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori in Peru (2016)	Determinate the impact of social media in political participation during marches against the presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori in Peru (2016)	There is an important and relation between social media and political participation, but there are other significant causes	Political Participation
<b>Specific Problems</b>	<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Specific Hypothesis</b>	<b>Independent Variable</b>
1. What social media arrangements are used by activist organization NOAKEIKO to exerce influence on the participation in marches?	Describe the social media arrangements are used by activist organization NOAKEIKO to exerce influence on the participation in marches	The social media arrangement most used by the activist organization NOAKEIKO is the explained by online news focus.	Social Media
2. In What degree the use of social media ( Facebook) influence on participation in marches NOAKEIKO?	Indicate the degree the use of social media ( Facebook) influence on participation in marches NOAKEIKO	There is a positive correspondence between the political participation and the presence in the social media FaceBook	