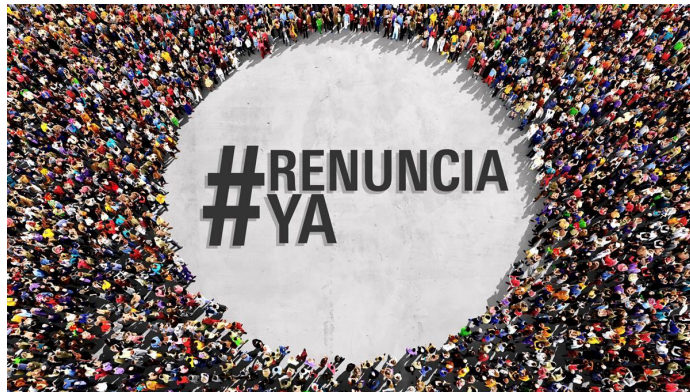


Social media in a social mobilisation – a shift in Guatemala

A research on how #RenunciaYa influenced a whole nation.

By

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This master's thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

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ABSTRACT:

This research looks at the role social media played in a political situation in Guatemala in 2015. Both the President and the Vice-President are now in jail because of a corruption scandal named “la línea”, and because of the joint pressure from #RenunciaYa, university students, newspapers and international government officials. It explores how social media was used to create a social mobilisation by the help of a civic organisation named #RenunciaYa. In addition to looking at social media in social mobilisation, the role of the students and the difference between students at private universities and public universities are discussed. Qualitative method is applied, with the main information extracted from personal interviews. The study concludes with social media playing a big part in this social mobilisation, but only as a supportive tool. Students from the public university show more knowledge about the corruption scandal, but the participation in the social mobilisation show many similarities.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Corruption, human rights and social media are three subjects that have interested me for years. The idea that Social Media might be a positive factor when it comes to a change in a country, in politics, in corruption and in human rights triggers me, and it makes me curious. Social media is also increasing its importance when it comes to development. In many occasions, social media have played a part towards development in a country, and we can see several different movements organized or promoted by social media. Many development agencies are using social media to easier communicating with supporters and people in need (Highfield, 2015).

“More social media content aimed at development purposes can, and should, be created by the targets of development themselves. The benefits of this shift towards local media creation are clear. Social media enhances the ability of poor populations to voice their own concerns and priorities, and publicize their own vision and purpose” (Highfield, 2015, n.p.).

That is why I travelled to Guatemala in the spring of 2016. 2015 in Guatemala was a historic year, with how they handled a corruption scandal. They became a living example on the local people that shared their wish for development. The people was done with corruption and they showed the government this by arranging an online protest that soon after hit the streets and became an offline mobilisation. This situation in particular was interesting for me because according to Guatemalan history, it was something new. It lasted for about six months and within this time there was several protest, all of which were peaceful.

Main Objective and Research Questions

My main objective (MO) was to figure out how social media influenced a political situation in Guatemala in 2015. Two informants from #RenunciaYa became my main informants and had first-hand knowledge on how they used Facebook as a tool to create a social mobilization. This created the interest for the people behind this movement, and they personally became a part of my objective, to see how #RenunciaYa worked to support and be a part of this social mobilisation. From my MO I created four research questions(RQ):

1. How did the social mobilization that happened in Guatemala in 2015 start?
2. How did social media influence this social mobilization?
3. What factors helped this social mobilization stay peaceful?
4. Students was a big part of this social mobilization; was there any difference between private and public universities?

Thesis Outline

I will start by giving an overview of my study area, with the main focus on politics and previous corruption scandals in Guatemala. From there I will present concepts and a literature review, here social media in social mobilisation will be thoroughly discussed. In chapter four, I will present my methodology. In chapter five is were I will present my own empirical framework, where all findings to my RQ will be presented. After the presentation, I will move on to discussion in chapter six: look at my finding next to the literature review and background information about Guatemala. At the end of the thesis I will supply the reader with a short conclusion.

Chapter 2: Study Area: Guatemala City, Guatemala

Guatemala is a relatively small country in Central America bordering Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Belize. The population is approximately 15 million (Central Intelligence Agency, n.p., 2016) people and consists of about 60% Indigenous people. The remaining 40% is of a European origin or a mix between Mayan and European (Ladino) (FOKUS: 2011, n.p.). The signing of the peace agreements in 1996 ended the civil war between the Guatemalan government and the Marxist rebel army (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit). The Peace Accords marked the ending of the 36-year long civil war and opened up a new chapter in the country's history. Guatemala's war was the longest and bloodiest of Latin America's civil wars. This armed conflict left between 150,000 and 200,000 civilians' dead or "disappeared" (Holocaust Museum Houston, n.y., n.p.).

Guatemala have struggled with violence for years (also after the civil war) and is currently considered to be one of the most insecure countries in the world. “Since the late 1980s, Guatemala has continued to consolidate its transition not only from decades of military rule, but also from a centuries-long tradition of mostly autocratic rule, toward representative government” (Taft-Morales: 2014, p. 4).

There has been a democratically elected civilian government for 28 years. This have showed some benefits; like carrying out significant military reforms and exerting effective control over the military in the country. Not everything have changed and there is still democratic institutions that have remained fragile. Guatemala is also still struggling with military impunity for human rights, other crimes, corruption, and drug trafficking. Taft-Morales also states that “...grossly inequitable distribution of resources make political and social development difficult” (Taft-Morales: 2014, p. 4).

The World Banks country overview of Guatemala says that “...Guatemala, the biggest economy in Central America, has one of the highest inequality rates in Latin America, with some of the worst poverty, malnutrition and maternal-child mortality rates in the region, especially in rural and indigenous areas” (World Bank, 2017).

The middle class in Guatemala is still small, and the working class is mostly unskilled workers which gives few opportunities for social mobility (Diaz, 2012, p. 46). He also writes that

“In Guatemala, children’s education is determined to a considerable extent by that of their parents, with little educational mobility. Males have greater educational mobility than females. Similarly, the educational mobility of non-indigenous ethnic group is greater than that of the indigenous group” (Diaz, 2012, p. 46).

Diaz also states that the likelihood of a son from uneducated parents going to the university is very small, but that a son from parents who have a primary education is eight times higher. He also stresses that on the contrary, that a child from parents with an university education to be illiterate is close to zero and that even that that child only attend primary education is very low (Diaz, 2012, p. 46).

“The incidence analysis indicates that parents’ education and occupation have a substantial effect on their children’s education, indicating the inheritance of cultural

capital from parents to children. The effect of education on occupation is greater in the child's case than the parent's, which reveals a major change where function of education in determining employment opportunities is concerned" (Diaz, 2012, p. 46).

2.2 Corruption scandals in 2014-2015

To get a greater view on the situation in Guatemala, I find it important to talk about other corruption scandals that happened shortly before the biggest corruption scandal in the country's history. From what my research has showed me, the happenings right before "la Linea" was of great importance to how people reacted, and is therefore important to explain.

2.2.1 Corrupt judges

Claudia Escobar was the former magistrate of the Court of Appeals in Guatemala. She is also known as a respected legal scholar, and a whistle-blower. She has spent years working against the interference between high-ranking political officials (including ex Vice President Baldetti, and ex President Molina) and Guatemala's Judiciary. She spent her time speaking up against corruption, and after a series of threats she took her family with her, and left Guatemala. Her travel went to United States of America where she in the year 2015-2016 went to "Harvard University as a Scholar of Risk Fellow at the Radcliff Institute for Advanced Study" (NED, n.p., n.y.).

It is explained that when she got her second term as a judge there was a strings attached to this. Meaning she would have to do something in return. It is said that she would be guaranteed this position if she helped ease the sentencing of Roxanna Baldetti's scandal (believed to be the magic water scandal) she would get the term. This conversation was recorded by Escobar and she soon used it in the news to inform the people of Guatemala about the corruption that was going on in the country. She got the second term, but less than one week later; she quit the position. She told Insight Crime in an interview that "I've been re-elected for another five years, but in light of how seriously corrupted the process is, and out of respect for the job that I've been elected to do and respect for the Guatemalan people, and after a long period of reflection, I quit" (Pachico, n.p., 2014).

Since that time there has been other big changes in Guatemala's judiciary. 8th of February 2017, Supreme Court Magistrate Blanca Aida Stalling Davila was arrested for pressuring a judge that was handling her sons case. A recording of her threat surfaced in February, and the judge shortly after fled the country. She is now in custody. CICIG is continuing their work to bring down the Judiciary. It says that

“The latter two entities [CICIG and Attorney General's Office] have successfully confronted corruption in various powerful institutions, including the Interior Ministry, the Social Security Institute and even the presidential palace. But these efforts will be trivial and their legacy short-lived as long as Guatemala's judiciary remains but a tool for elites to enjoy impunity, allowing them to illegally assert or maintain their control over the state and the country's economy” (Clavel, 2017, n.p.).

2.2.2 The “magic water” scandal

For the former vice president Roxana Baldetti, it was not her first time being accused of corruption. Lake Amatitlan in Guatemala, was known as a beautiful place to travel, and it was especially popular for rich families. This ended in the 1960s, when they discovered how polluted the water of the lake was. People stopped traveling there, and the area have searched for a solution since. Now people are warned about swimming in it, and they don't eat the fish that swims in the lake. Restaurants in the area serve fish that comes from Rio Dulce River, which is a six-hour drive from Lake Amatitlan (Guy, 2016).

In the beginning of 2015 Baldetti stated that she had a solution for the pollution in the lake, and that it was a product they could add into the lake and it would clean itself. The product was from Israel and costs 138 Guatemalan quetzals (approximately \$18 million dollars). Many scientist were sceptical, and demanded that the government did research and showed what the “magical” product that was about to clean the lake contained. After a lot of discussions, and back and forth with the government, they finally had the product tested. It showed that, in fact, it was just salty water, and that it would not have any effect on the polluted water.

In the period offer; Baldetti have stated her innocents and told the press that she was just following orders. She told Vice News that “I have a letter in which he, the president, gives

the all clear... What I do is follow orders and I delegated to Rina Sanchinelli so that she would be responsible” (Guy, 2016). She also stated that she did not receive any money from this scandal.

2.2.3 “La linea”

The investigation by CICIG started in May 2014 (CICIG, 2017), with suspicion that a group of importers were involved in smuggling together with a network of custom brokers to avoid the real amount of taxes to pay.

To make this possible, the network of custom brokers provided the importers a phone-number, and named it “La Linea” (the telephone line). After months of investigation and interpretation of the information collected from the phone calls, CICIG discovered that part of the structure was including members of SAT (National Tax Office in Guatemala).

There is 64 people accused of being involved in “La Linea”. In the time that they used “La linea”, the people involved managed to collect \$328,000 every week. The guilty party included several officials within the SAT, various importers, lawyers, politicians and even a former intelligence agent (Mitchell & Cameron, 2015, p. 1).

CICIG has been in charge of all the investigation, and now most of the people involved are captured by the police. Both the ex-President and the ex-Vice President are now in jail, waiting for their trial.

2.3 Ex-President Otto Pérez Molina

Ex-President Molina is a former army general of the rightist Patriot Party (Partido Patriota, PP) and is known for being the commander of military groups in the 1980s-1990s. He has also been linked by International Human Right Groups and the press to several violations of human rights, this including death squads and major political assassinations (Taft-Morales, 2014, p. 1). He was the militaries negotiator during the Peace Accords that ended the 36 year long civil war in 1996. He has been accused of involvement in the conveying of state

fund. This is only a few examples from ex-president Molinas past, so it is clear to state that he is a controversial figure in Guatemalan politics (Taft-Morales, 2014, p. 1-2).

In the beginning of Ex-President Molinas term he showed a focus on reducing crime, strengthen Guatemalan institutions and increasing social spending. “Early actions in support of judicial, social, and fiscal reform showed “surprisingly liberal inclinations,” as one analyst put it” (Taft-Morales, 2014, p. 2). Ambit several events have indicated that some people in the government have been working to slow or reverse the positive progress.

“The intimidation of judicial officials, widespread corruption, and the involvement of organized crime in violence and extortion are all widely seen as contributing to high levels of impunity and public mistrust in institutions. The Economist Intelligence Unit predicts that these characteristics, plus “a persistent failure of the state to provide basic public services to large parts of the population, ...will sustain the risk that public discontent results in widespread protest and social unrest in 2014-18.” Opposition to mining activities in rural areas, and the limited advances made in reducing Guatemala’s high levels of poverty and inequitable distribution of wealth may also contribute to instability” (Taft-Morales, 2014, p. 2).

The former president and other parties have been connected to several corruption scandals, but the biggest corruption scandal yet ever to accrue was revealed in April of 2015, later referred to as “La Linea” and is the case that was the reason for the protesting discussed in this thesis.

2.4 Comisión Internacional contra la Impunidad en Guatemala – International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)

It is important to know about what CICIG is to understand the importance of their work. The information here is translated from Spanish to English and the information is from the official CICIG webpage.

The International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala is an international body in charge of investigating and prosecuting serious crime in Guatemala. It was created December 12th, of 2006, when the United Nations and Guatemala signed a treaty-level agreement setting up CICIG as an independent body to support the Public Prosecutor’s

Office, the National Civilian Police and other state institutions in the investigation of sensitive and difficult cases (CICIG, 2017, n.p.). Their goal is to strengthen national judicial institutions, to allow them to continue to confront illegal groups and organized crime in the future (CICIG, 2017, n.p.).

CICIG has the legal ability to support the Public Prosecutor's Office in criminal prosecutions, and participate as a complementary prosecutor, in conformity with Guatemala's Code of Criminal Procedure. CICIG also has legal standing to make administrative complaints against public officials, when the officials have committed acts intended to obstruct its mandate, and it can act as an interested third party in disciplinary procedures initiated against such officials (CICIG, 2017, n.p.).

On March 24, 2009, Guatemala's Minister of Foreign Relations, Haroldo Rodas, requested, through a personal letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the extension of CICIG's mandate for an additional two years. The extension was confirmed on April 15, 2009 when Secretary General Ban Ki-moon sent a personal response to the Minister of Foreign Relations, expressing the UN's desire to have CICIG continue its work supporting national institutions for another two years. In January, Guatemala's president Otto Pérez Molina announced that he would extend CICIG's mandate until the end of his term. The mandate was renewed again in April 2015. The CICIG'S current mandate runs till the end of 2017 (CICIG, 2017, n.p.).

Chapter 3: Clarification on concepts and literature review

3.1 Social Mobilization

When speaking of social mobilization in this thesis I use the definition used also by UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund).

“Social mobilization in UNICEF is a process that engages and motivates a wide range of partners and allies at national and local levels to raise awareness of and demand for a particular development objective through dialogue. Members of institutions, community networks, civic and religious groups and others work in a coordinated way to reach specific groups of people for dialogue with planned messages. In other words, social

mobilization seeks to facilitate change through a range of players engaged in interrelated and complementary efforts” (UNICEF, n.p., n.y.)

As we can see from the definition written by UNICEF it is way for people to show opinions and to make change. It is also a way for the residents in the country to show discontent towards a countries politics or other issues at hand. We have seen many demonstrations like these through the years, some of these are mentioned further down in this chapter.

Social mobilization is seen as a primary step towards community development in areas of conflict or were a natural disaster have happened. A community is seen as a group of people that share the same problems and issues, and also people that live in physically identifiable areas (Unhabitat, p. 5, n. y.)

Unhabitat also states that an physically identifiable area can contain all between 10 to 250 families. In my thesis it will consist of the people of Guatemala City, the number of habitants are difficult to know for sure, but it is said to be around 5 million people by people I know in Guatemala. This includes the cities that has grown out of the city center. This amount is a much greater number than what unhabitat argue is a physically identifiable area. I will argue that Guatemala City can be defined as a physically identifiable place, because all people there live in similar areas of a big city with the same rules, and the same government. They also got together to protest for the same cause, which I will argue is the most important aspect of social mobilization.

3.2 Social Media:

Oxford dictionaries defines social media as “Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking” (Oxford dictionaries, 2017), this definition will also be used in this thesis, but with the main focus on Facebook. The reason for this is because Facebook was the networking site most mentioned among my respondents.

Social Media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram is very popular and millions of people use them on a daily basis. It is a platform were everybody can operate as their own editor and easily upload their own stories and photos to digital platforms open to most people with a

smartphone or a computer. You can use the platforms to create pages and discuss issues that is important for you, but you can also use it to monitor the actions and postings of others. By entering other people's pages accessible to you, the person's postings will enable you to see their opinion on certain matters, see what their interests are and you can develop an idea on people's personality. People use the social media in many different forms. In this part of the chapter, I will talk specifically about how social media can be used by citizens in political situations and how it can benefit voters and citizens as well as politicians. How it can benefit the common people but also benefit the politicians. It is a platform where you can express your opinions, but it also a platform where the politicians can monitor the people's opinions and actions.

"Globalization as a complex social, economic, and technological process can be viewed in terms of the spread and wider availability of communication technology which intensifies connectivity." (Khondker, p. 675, 2011).

Social media has changed politics drastically, for better and worse. Take campaigning for example, you have direct contact with your voters, free publicity and advertising, platform for discussions and sharing of opinions, this with supporters and non-supporters. Politicians can tailor their message through a thorough investigation on who is following them on social media. This means they can also monitor, and see what is appropriate to discuss with certain group of people. These are some of the many benefits that social media can bring to politics and to campaigning.

There are also negative aspects with social media; due to everyone have the possibility to post their opinions and texts. Sometimes there is therefore "fake news" that is transferred between a lot of people. An example from Norway can illustrate what is meant by fake news; Some years ago there was a "news article" in Norway that stated that the Norwegian people had to change the national flag because it displayed a cross inside it. The article stated that it was offensive for Muslim people, and we had to change it for better integration of refugees into Norway. This article was, of course, not true, but it got a lot of shares and hits on social media in Norway. People reacted in a very angry manner, which

from there created a greater distance between the Norwegian people and the foreigners entering Norway. It also created a gap between the people supporting foreigners entering Norway, and the Norwegians who did not support it.

The term “go viral” is also an important term in this setting. It means when something turn very popular in a short amount of time, it happens when many users “retweet” (Twitter), “regram” (Instagram) or “repost” (Facebook and general term) something important, funny or provocative. The Rosenberg case discussed in this chapter is the perfect example of something “going viral”. It was spread to thousands of people within hours, and people talked about it for days. This event in particular also created action, something I will give more examples of within this chapter. Everyday you see new stories that goes viral, and most of the time it is not of such important matter as for example the Rosenberg case. In many occasions, you have cute cat stories, or rescue stories. It is simply stories that get many hits (likes, shares, or comments) in a short amount of time, this often internationally, but it is also seen as “going viral” if something gets a lot of hits within one country. As the world develops and phones get cheaper to buy, Social Media is becoming more and more normal. Even in the rural areas, the access for smartphones and internet have increased.

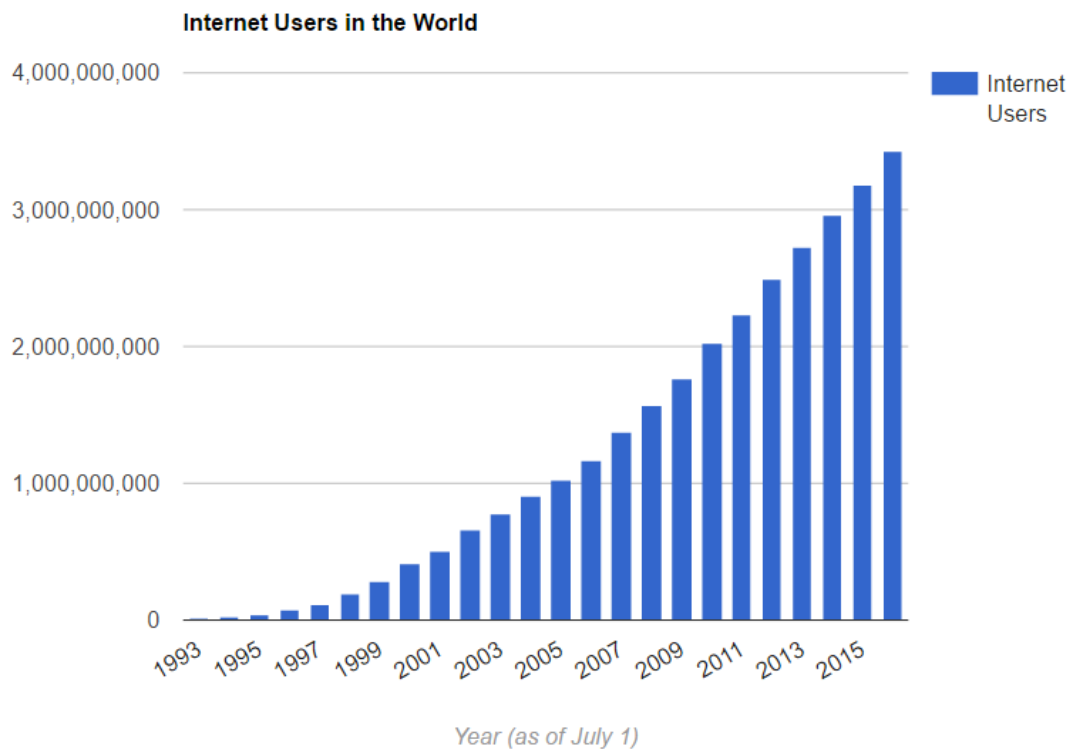


Figure 1: Source: *InternetLiveStats.com*

According to Internet Live Stats (2016, n.p) around 40% of the world population has an internet connection today, and among them there is 22.8% using Facebook (Internetworldstats.com, 2016, n.p.). These numbers are increasing at all times, and there is no way of knowing the importance of the internet in a few years. The only thing we can see with certainty is that it is growing and is of more importance every day. It gives a lot of new opportunities for all people, here you have for example ICT, and the possibility of schooling through the internet. My master thesis is a great example of this, and shows people from all over the world finishing with a degree they might not have had if it had not been for the internet, and of course the Norwegian support system. The point is that the internet gives opportunities to people.

3.3 Social media in social mobilization:

Since 2002 there has been many examples of social and political mobilizations organized by social media, and the case in Guatemala is no exception to this. It was an online protest that turned into an offline mobilisation.

From the beginning of the use of the Internet there is done research on the impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the relationship between these and democracy.

“Particular technological characteristics of the World Wide Web have been associated with a democratic potential, mainly its decentralized nature and interactivity. Some approaches propose that there is a certain continuum between those characteristics and some dimensions of democracy and the public sphere, such as its interactional and deliberative dimensions, while at the same time, technological decentralization could be associated with the destabilization of political communication systems” (Dahlgren, 2005, cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 1).

When social media arrived, the potential and relationship between ICTs and democracy was highly strengthened. This because the resources and the ideas social media provided was giving an richer user experience and more openness and freedom. It also showed early on that it gave collaborative action with people supporting each other by sharing, pushing the “like” button, and commenting (Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 1). Social Media opened the opportunity for people to collaborate in an easier manner, and opened up for participating in political discussion and give opinions. It also gave the opportunity to give many people invitations to events at the same time, distribute knowledge and encourage participation.

Bacallao-Pino did a study on the use of social media in situations of social mobilisation, especially focusing on “how the focus on visibilisation or articulation of dissent shifts with the transformation of social mediated mobilisations into sustained participatory processes” (Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 2). He focused on three cases, 1. Occupy Wall Street, USA, 2. Taksim Square, Turkey, and 3. #Yosoy132 (#Iam132), Mexico.

I will present these three cases in short, and present some of Bacallano-Pinos findings, and common traits. This is done in the belief that it will shed some light on the situation in Guatemala in 2015, and give points of discussion.

1. Occupy Wall Street, USA:

The Occupy Wall Street protests started with members of Adbusters magazine that registered a domain named – occupywallstreet.org and emailed all subscribers of the

magazine to encourage them to participate in demonstrations. The demonstration began 17 of September 2011, after help from the Anonymous and other actors. Within 24 hours every five-hundred tweet was #OccupyWallStreet (Berkowitz, 2011, cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 3).

2. Taksim Square, Turkey:

The demonstrations started in the capital of Turkey, Istanbul, the 28th of May 2013. Originally it was a protest against the urban development plan for the park “Istanbul’s Taksim Gezi Park”, but soon spread across the country which uncovered a range of other concerns as well. Freedom of press, expression and assembly was among the other concerns. Some researchers said it was a reaction to a perceived lack of coverage from the other media (newspapers, television, radio). Barberá & Metzger stated that over a 24-hour period, there were more than 2 million tweets related to this protest (cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 3). They also used the reference #occupygezy, which I would believe to refer to the earlier protest; Occupy Wall Street.

3. #YoSoy132 (#Iam132), Mexico:

This protest happened on the 11th of May 2012, and it was a protest against the then Mexican presidential candidate. After the first protest, a video surfaced online, but the media wrote that there was no students protesting. Shortly after 131 students uploaded their video from the protest, identifying themselves with their university identification number. This created the hashtag #YoSoy132, were other students and members of the society support by saying that they were student number 132. They questioned the quality of Mexican democracy (Bacallao-Pino, 2014, p. 3-4).

Even though these three cases have very different motivation and contexts, Bacallao-Pino saw many common traits when examining the cases closely. He writes in his report that, “no centralized leadership, a certain level of spontaneity, similar repertoires of dissent (sit-ins, popular assemblies, encampments) as well as a wide use of ICTs” (2014, p. 3) is characteristics he saw in all of the cases mentioned. What I found to be his most important findings were; All of the cases above is protesting for better democracy, and they are representing a new form of democracy which gives the people more involvement. They all

gave critique to the current government, and all argued for change. Some people stated that all this came from a previous lack of space to share discontent with the government, others who had never protested before also argued that it was because it felt like “more than politics” (Calatayud, 2013, cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.).

As mentioned earlier, social networking media played a central role in the emergence and spread of the analysed mobilisations and in this section we analyse how participants understood their role. Social networking media were described as a resource for touching “some sensitive emotional chords inside (...) citizens”, making it possible to connect “away from mainstream media”, as part of the “miracle of solidarity and the power of the many” (Müştereklerimiz, 2013, cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.). So-called “hashtag politics” figures in participants’ repertoire of action given the current environment that “encourages absolutely everyone to participate in conversations about current events”. Hashtags are considered “powerful tools for conveying a conversation around a strategically chosen subject”, thus stressing that action cannot be limited to “send[ing] a message, but through social media like Twitter and Facebook, it will also convene a conversation” (Meisel, n. d., cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.).

Bacallao-Pino explains the importance that the participants felt that social media played and some participants explicitly stated that this was the only reason that they even participated. Many participants also expressed their awareness of moving the online protest into the streets.

Even though the participation at the beginning was very high, and interests was highly visible, the numbers of people engaged to the cause decreased drastically after the “face-to-face” with the issue part was over. This was something Bacallao-Pine noticed in all the three cases mentioned above, and I believe it to be a common challenge with social media and political cases in general. He noticed that in some pages they tried to keep the motivation and interests up for some time, but at the end it is only one political post a day, and then eventually stops.

Bacallao-Pino states that “...while democracy is a central dimension at the historical macro-level of the discourse level and social media are seen as important technological resources for social participation, at the organisational level, there are

tensions between the importance of social media and the development of social action as well as the general impact of such media on society and their role in enabling conditions of continuity – i.e. social mobilisations developing into social movements” (Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.).

One of these tensions are the digital divide that prevents many people from participating and even seeing that there is an online protest going on at the time. In all the cases analysed by Bacallao-Pino participants have made a big effort to develop a strategy to secure a long-term survival of the mobilisation. There are much effort put into making it more than just protests, the wish seems to create a movement. “The two-step development could be summarised as from social networking media to social mobilisation, and from social mobilisation to social movement, taking place within the tense continuum of online-offline collective action” (Bacallao-Tino, 2014, n.p.).

Emotional and visual dimensions are important tools used in social media, and is easily seen in active collective actions. An example of this is the iconic photos used on Social Media when people were encouraged to participate in the protest of Taksim Square.



Figure 2: The woman in red, in Turkey.

The woman you see in this picture became the symbol of the movement in Turkey, and for many protestors this photo created a lot of anger and discontent. It gave the movement a feeling, which from there again create interest and participation. It is about rising the participants “emotional energy” (Collin, 2004, cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.).

Another case that is important to look at is the case of Rodrigo Rosenberg, this because it is a case from Guatemala, and it created a lot of attention on social media, also by creating “emotional energy”.

In May of 2009 a video of Rodrigo Rosenberg surfaced online. The video surfaced shortly after he was killed and he stated that the current President at that time, Alvaro Colom, was responsible for his murder (Harlow, n.y., p. 2)

At the beginning of the investigation, it seemed that it was just another brutal shooting in one of the most dangerous countries in Latin America. This changed during his funeral when a 18-minute long video was distributed to all the participant in the funeral. The video was filmed only a few days before his murder, here Rosenberg looks straight into the camera and says “If you are watching this message, it is because I was assassinated by President Alvaro Colom.” (Harlow, n.y., p. 2)

Within a few hours of the funeral, the video was published on Facebook and YouTube, it became viral and reached millions of views from all over the world. Facebook users in Guatemala started to changes their homepage statuses, demanding justice for Rosenberg. Fan pages, and other groups to support Rosenberg was also quickly developed, this allowed other Guatemalans to become a “fan” or “join” the groups and pages created for discussion and action. One of the online groups gathered more than 28,000 friends in three days, and they decided to go offline. The first big demonstration happened on the 17th of May 2009 with more than 50,000 participants (Fernandez, 2009, seen at Harlow, n.y., p. 2). They were called tsunami blanco (the white tsunami) by the press because everyone was wearing white t-shirts. The offline movement continued for weeks, and there was several thousand on each protest.

In the same time period, President Colom stated his innocents and demanded a thorough investigation. The investigation stated that Rosenbergs morning after his dead girlfriend had

led him to suicide, and to blame Colom for it afterwards. It was said that he hired his own hitman, and organised so the video would be distributed in his funeral.

Not everyone believed this explanation, and several groups on Facebook kept demanding justice for Rosenbergs murder. At least one of the Facebook pages then developed into a page for justice and anti-violence (Harlow, n.y., p. 3). Today this page (Movimiento Cívico Nacional) has more than 61,000 likes/followers and is still active.



Figure 3: source: IMDB.com

This story got so much attention that a documentary was created after the protests. They also received two awards from their presentation of the story of Rosenberg. This can also be seen as a very good example of “emotional energy”, in this setting not to create participation in protests, but to keep the interests for the case.

Chapter 4: Methodological Approach

This chapter will discuss and justify the methods applied in this study. It will be discussed the research strategy as well as the research design, sampling, ethical considerations and the data analysis process. It will also have a great focus on the cultural challenges I, as the researcher, encountered in Guatemala.

4.1 Qualitative methodology: Cross-sectional design with case study elements

Personal experiences and interest is the base for many research papers, and for me it was my interest for the Guatemalan culture. This started more than three years ago when I did my bachelor in Guatemala, and I have been there three times since (nine months in total). This has given me the possibility to notice change in people and in their culture. That was the main reason why I chose to travel back to Guatemala. Many newspapers around the world was writing about the political situation there, the corruption, the people gathering to protest, the influence one message on Facebook had on one population, and how peaceful it all went by. This was when I decided to travel to do some research about this revolution. In my previous experience, and when reading about the history of Guatemala, I wanted to know what had made it so peaceful. My thesis is based on an inductive research, meaning that my theory was created after my findings. When going to the field, I came in without expectations from something I had read in previously written texts, but I also went into the field with previous experiences that might have coloured the reason for me being there in the first place.

As explained before, the main objective (MO) is to see what role social media has played in the long peaceful demonstration in Guatemala. When finding my research method of choice, it was easy to decide on qualitative methodology. This opened up for a deeper understanding of my MO. When it comes to epistemological consideration, an interpretivist term is applied. Bryman (2012, p. 28) writes that “the term subsumes the views of writers who have been critical of the application of the scientific model to the study of the social world and who have been influenced by different intellectual traditions...”. With applying qualitative methodology I opened the possibility to look at why and how people behave the way they do.

My main objective have always been very broad and therefore it has been important for me to narrow it down by only focusing on two groups of people (University students/professors and the founders of #RenunciaYa) when it came to my use of semi-structured interviews. I would state that my main source of data comes from my semi-structured interviews. The survey was solely used to point me in directions of better questions, and to get use it as

discussion points in my thesis. The survey have not been analysed as extensive as my qualitative data, and is therefore only supportive information.

When finding my design, I struggled quite a bit. This was because my research did not fit perfectly into any of the design mentioned by Bryman in the book “social research methods”. He states that

“However, it also needs to be appreciated that, when specific research illustrations are examined, they can exhibit features of more than one research design” (Bryman, 2012, p. 69).

He also writes that the important factor of a case study design is that it is focused on the specific features of the specific case at hand (idiographic approach) and that the cross-sectional approach is focus on gathering statements that are not dependent in a case or a time or place (nomothetic approach). I will argue that my thesis and my research is a combination of these two approaches. To some extent, my focus is on one case; the political situation in Guatemala, but as you will see in my findings and in my discussion, it will be argued that even though these are statements from one specific case, we can also apply them in to other situations in the world where social media can possibly play a part. The political situation in Guatemala, and how social media affected that situation is the part that I argue to be my case study design. How they used social media to get the results and participation that they got, is the part that take inspiration from the cross-sectional design and which I am arguing is applicable elsewhere. I will draw parallels to other similar situations, and look at common feature among these and my own research. I believe my findings can help us understand the value social media can possibly have on political situations in other parts of the world as well as in Guatemala.

4.2 Sampling

I used two levels of sampling; sampling of context and sampling of participants (Bryman, 2012, p. 417). When going into the field, I knew what questions I wanted to have answered, and I knew what theme my thesis would evolve around. I wanted to see how social media influenced the social movement in Guatemala that was going on at that time. I also wanted

to see if there was any difference in participation and involvement between the public university and the private universities, therefore I used sampling of context (one private and one public university, both in Guatemala City), and I used sampling of participants with choosing the people I interview at the school. Additional to this, I had two interviews with professors and two interviews with the founders of #RenunciaYa. These individuals was people I picked out because I knew that they would be able to enlighten me on the questions I had and give me more depth, than what I expected the students to give me. My entrance to the university was a couple that I know. One went to a private university, and the other to a public university. They helped me find people of interest among their friends and known once at the universities after hearing what I was looking for, and what questions I had. I have a total of 11 interviews, two of these where with professors from the Rafael Landivar University in Guatemala, two interviews with the founders of #RenunciaYa, and seven interviews with students (two from the public university; San Carlos de Guatemala, and five from the private university; Rafael Landivar University). I used purposive sampling with most of my participants, but some of the students were found using the snowball effect.

4.3 Data collection methods

In this section, I will discuss the specific methods that were used in my research, and it will be explained how and why they were used.

4.3.1 Semi structured interviews

In my research, I used semi-structured interviews, also called in-depth interviews. It gave me a flexibility that was needed due to my RQs and MO. It also gave the informants the chance to express what they saw as the most important part of their situation and for me to ask follow-up questions from there. The order of my questions was also possible to change which I saw as important because of time schedule and interest. For example; if I knew a person had a certain knowledge of one of my lines of questioning, I would ask these questions first. This to know that the informant was not tired of the interview situation, and

to give motivation because we were talking about something he or she found interesting. When I was interviewing the professor of marketing and the anthropological part of marketing I did not start the interview with asking how much he used social media, but I started with trying to understand how he saw the situation from an anthropological perspective.

I used the same interview guide in all my interviews, but I did small changes along the way, this was because my informants were different. The students got the same line of questions as the professors and the #RenunciaYa founders. The teachers got most of the questions that were given to the students, but there I focused less on the section about the university students, and more on their position at the university, and how they saw that the situation influenced the students in their classes. For the #RenunciaYa founders, I also had the same framework but with a lot of follow-up questions and also a few more questions that were prepared beforehand. It was a general feeling that the two #RenunciaYa founders did not need that many questions, and often answered questions before they were asked. This I believe stem from being used to being interviewed by different researchers and journalists from around the world. This helped me find questions that I did not know that I had, and to understand what they felt was important to talk about. For this reason a semi-structured interview was conducted, and the method that helped me understand the situation from how they saw it. It allowed them to speak about what they felt was important.

4.3.2 Survey

The survey I conducted lasted for 2 weeks and it gave me 272 responses. 51.5% were female and 48.5% were male within all age groups, but the majority came from the group between 21 and 30 years old. Most of my participants in this survey is living in Guatemala City, but some in other parts of Guatemala or outside Guatemala. All of the participants, except for one, stated that they used Facebook regularly. It was also on Facebook that the survey was published, in addition, it was sent by email.

The purpose of the survey was to give an overview of the situation in Guatemala, and for me to ask better questions when it came to the semi-structured interviews that was done after the survey was fully conducted. It has been a very helpful tool to use, both before the interviews and during the analysing process.

4.3.3 Documents as a source of data

The documents I talk about here, is newspapers and magazines that are published in Guatemala. This is not a major part of my research, but it is used to further understand the context as well as how the political situation, the manifestations and corruption scandals were portrayed in the media. As such, it also provided me with an idea of what questions to ask when I was conducting the semi-structured interviews. The documents were discussed before writing the survey and the interview guide and is therefore a part of my research method, but it will not take up a major part of this thesis.

4.3.4 Participant observation

I did not use participant observation as a big part of my research, but I see the importance of always being observant of what is going on around you. To some extent I will argue that participant observation is and should be a part of all social research. When arriving to a different country, with different culture, norms and language, it is important to keep your eyes open and observe all parts of the situation. It is not only to do a interview, but also to see how they react to the questions. From my interviews in Guatemala, I learned a lot, not only about other questions that might be interesting to ask, but also about events and how the events were. In the time period when I was in Guatemala, there was scheduled two protests, and almost all of my informants had told me about how peaceful they were, and that it was a place for everybody; old, young, kids, families, homosexuals and transsexuals. This grabbed my curiosity and I wanted to see this for myself. It was not because I doubted the informants, but because I believe that being able to see and feel what your informants are explaining you can be a very important part of social research.

4.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data consist of words and observation and is therefore analysed in a different manner than quantitative data. You analyse your information to create a greater understanding, and an order in the big masses of text (Powell and Renner, 2003). In my analysis, I focused on the transcriptions from my in-depth interviews and my notes from my

participant observation, which was my attendance at one of the protests held in Guatemala City during my research. All my interviews were recorded and then transcribed, in addition to that I also wrote some notes. These contained mostly of reactions to questions, or if there was something special I noticed during the interview - if we were disturbed, if the person seemed stressed, any special clothing. There are no straightforward way of doing data analysis, and it highly depend on your questions, the information you received, and also the resources of the researcher (Powell and Renner, 2003). At the beginning of my research my main interest was the university students and their role in the social movement. After some research and visiting the universities, it was one group they all talked about. The group was named #RenunciaYa and the fact that I noticed that it was mentioned so many times in the field, gave me the interest and opportunity to seek information from this group as well. I started to listen and observe selectively, with my main focus on what my informants deemed important, and topics I found particularly interesting. The data collected in these interview was the starting point for my development of codes, theories and concepts. From here the data formed my research and the thesis presented today.

Techniques applied for my data analysis

At the beginning of this process it is easy to feel that you are swimming in an ocean of information, and therefore it is important to have a plan on how to find the data that is useful and important for your research.

Powell and Renner (2003) have given a very useful five-step plan for systematize and manage the data collected. In the first step they stress the importance of really getting to know your data. This meant that I went back to my transcriptions and recordings several times and re-read, and re-listened. When doing this I also wrote down impressions that I had of the interview, this focused on the quality of the data. Powell and Renner (2003) states that "... just because you have data does not mean you have quality data. Sometimes, information provided does not add meaning or value". In the second step, I identified a few key questions that I wanted to further analyse and have answered. Here I gathered the answers for the question at hand from all my informants. This created a pile of answers for one question and made it easier to analyse, and look at what stood out as different, or if it was a mutual agreement among participants which was done in step number third. The third

step was about organizing the data into categories and subcategories. Here I discovered themes, connections and patterns - both similarities and differences. In step four, I was able to discover connections and patterns both within and between the different categories created. The last step was about connecting the literature review to my findings, this to explain them in a greater way and to find common features as well as differences (Powell and Renner, 2003).

One aspect that Powell and Renner did not account for, and a challenge with this process was to minimize my own preconception and pre-knowledge. These two aspects do influence both the data collection process and the data analysis. I was an “outsider” in this community, and I did not grow up in any similar circumstances as my informants did, it was always important for me to try to understand what they told me from their point of view. Even though I was an outsider in their community, all my informants seemed eager and happy to share their knowledge with me. Still it is important to take into consideration that this is my version of the truth. I have also addressed the issues of credibility with using several sources of data. Powell and Renner (2003) explains that;

“Using data from different sources can help you check your findings. For example, you might combine one-on-one interviews with information from focus groups and an analysis of written material on the topic. If the data point to the same conclusions, you will have more confidence in your result”.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Before going to the field, it is important to think about the ethical considerations one has to take. At first I did not think much about it, because I have been in Guatemala several times before, and also done research there for my bachelor. Then it occurred to me that I had a very different topic from the last time I did research there, it went from domestic violence to the use of Social Media in a political situation. Therefore, I decided to refresh on my study on ethical considerations before going into the field.

I spent time explaining who I am and what I was doing in Guatemala, they were also asked if they had any questions for me and many of them asked several. This was a way for me to

make the person feel comfortable in the situation and comfortable with me as a researcher without creating a top-down relationship. I informed everyone that participation in this research was voluntarily, and that the informants could withdraw their participation at any time. I believe that this tactic helped to ensure honesty in my informants and confidence in me as a researcher.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Guatemala is a country that has a lot of corruption, and according to history quite a lot of violence. Therefore, I felt it necessary to maintain all the information I got confidential. This was to make my informants comfortable in the situation I put them in, and I reassured them that all they said to me would be confidential. Some of my informants told me that they would not mind for me to use their names and information in my thesis, but others were happy to hear that.

Another aspect that is important for me when it comes to ethical considerations is that I, the researcher, has done everything I can to present and understand the findings as my informants have presented them throughout the study. It is important for me to do my absolute best to ensure that my presentation of the findings and my analyses are consistent with the reality and the feelings of my participants.

4.6 Language barrier and the use of a translator

There are always considerations to take when you do research in a language that is not your mother language.

In the field, I had prepared one Spanish and one English interview guide, which I brought along everywhere. All my interviewees got the choice if they wanted the interview in Spanish or in English. Most people choose Spanish, which was, as I realize now, the clever choice. In all my interviews where I spoke Spanish I had a translator with me in case I were struggling with asking follow-up questions or understand what they said, this went by very nice due to my level of Spanish and I was not in need of much translation in the field. I also did some very good interviews in English, but not all of them. In one interview, I gave the informant the choice between English and Spanish, and the informant insisted in doing the interview in English. I understood early on that there was a language barrier and that we did

not fully understand each other, for that reason, I suggested to switch over to Spanish as a way to have a better communication and a better understanding. The informant said that it was no problem with English, so we kept going in English. As a self-criticism I should not have given that choice to any of my informants, because then I would not have created that barrier and situation of misunderstandings in the first place. Luckily, this only happened in one interview, and was therefore discarded as a part of my research.

Chapter 5: Presentation of empirical findings

In this chapter I will discuss all the empirical findings taken from 11 interviews and 272 survey sheets. As stated in the methodology chapter, my focus is the personal interviews and the survey sheets are used to get a greater understanding of the general idea from the public. It was also used to ask better questions, due to the survey was done before the personal interviews. All the information in this chapter is from personal interviews and the survey conducted by the author in Guatemala in 2015/2016.

The focus will be on answering my three research questions, and further on discuss them in chapter 6: Emerging issues, Analysis and Discussion.

5.1 The triggers – the start of the mobilisation

My informants were all asked what they thought was the reason for the social mobilization to start, and the most common answer was that people were tired of corruption. An important fact to have in mind is what was mentioned in Chapter 2, that 2015 was a year where one corruption scandal followed the other in Guatemala. From the “magic water” scandal to corrupt judges, this only being two of many major examples. All my informants expressed that corruption seems to be the norm in Guatemala, and hence corruption itself was not surprising. The difference with the “La Linea” scandal compared to other scandals was that there had never been proof of the Presidents or Vice-Presidents involvement in any scandal before, but *“finally CICIG presented some actual proof, which connected them to “La Linea””*, according to one of my informants (personal interview, 2016). Another informant stated that the biggest reason for the protest was that the Guatemalan people were tired of

all the corruption scandals. They normally talked to their friends about the scandals, but this time it was not enough. They felt that they had to do something more. For this particular informant this was when she got the invitation to be one of the organizers for #RenunciaYa.

Most of the respondents that answered the survey stated similarly:

¿Cuál crees que fue la razón por la que se llevaron a cabo las manifestaciones (Escoja la opción más cercana a su opinión)
(272 responses)

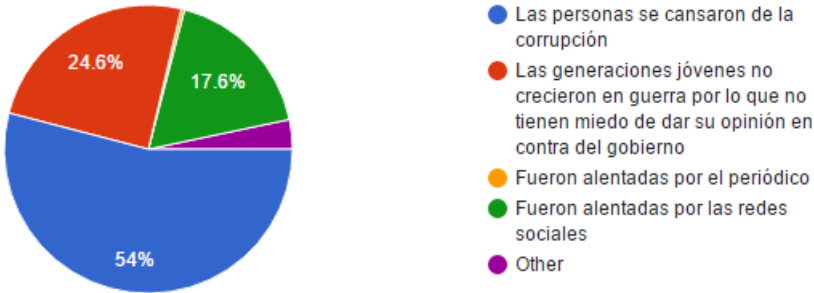


Figure 4: Survey conducted by author.

The question was: What do you believe was the reason for these manifestations/protests to occur? The respondents were given 5 different options were 54% answered that it was because people were tired of corruption, 24,6% answered that the young generation did not grow up during the war, and therefore are not afraid to give their opinion against the government, 17,6% answered that it was because it was encouraged by social media. Only 0,4% answered that it was because it was encouraged by the newspapers, and the rest of the respondents answered that it was none of the above. The general feeling of being “tired of corruption” does not really tell me, as the researcher, very much; other than a tiredness in the population of a specific action. It does not tell me exactly how they felt though, and therefore it was important to also apply qualitative interviews. Here my informants could specify and they explained to me that:

“...before we were scared. We were scared this time as well, but we were more angry than scared. It was this sign that said “Nos quitaron tanto, que nos quitaron miedo”

[They stole so much, that they stole our fear] and I think that was so true for us at that moment as Guatemalans.” (Personal interview, female, age 54, 2016).

The “sign” that my informant is referring to is posters that a lot of the protestors made, and displayed during the protests. The informant explained that she also thought that the reason for so many participating in the protest was that #RenunciaYa was not involved in any political party.

5.2 Why social media?

Social media is argued by my informants to be the starting point for this social mobilisation and great protests that lasted for more than 6 months. It gathered several thousand people in front of the national palace, and engaged the world in an interesting twist in the Guatemalan political history.

I started out focusing on students and had an entrance through some friends that study in Guatemala City. One common feature that we came back to in many of my interviews was social media and one woman who started this mobilisation. I was told that she was the leader of the group RenunciaYa, but that they did not know her name. From the first moment I heard about her I started searching for this woman, and eventually I manage to get in touch with someone in RenunciaYa. I set up an interview with one of the members (woman age 52), and from there I manage to get the contact information of the much talked about woman that started this mobilisation (Referred to as my Main Informant). To be honest, I had some expectations when I learned the story about this one woman who started an online mobilisation, and organized so the mobilisation eventually hit the streets and became an offline protest as well as an online protest. When I was waiting for her to show up for the interview I was imagining a woman about my age (25 years old), with technical skills and maybe with some design or marketing experience. When I met her I was very surprised. I met a very nice 54 year old woman that worked as a real-estate agent the last years but her main occupation was working in a bank. The interview started with her telling me “As you can see, I am not a politician, but we are all political animals. We have to live in a society and we have to know what is going on”. When I asked about the reason for her involvement she explained, *“I went to facebook, and I said “OK, this is an invitation to everybody, I am proposing to vote blank and to go and do something about this. Let us go*

protest in the streets." I published it on my wall, and I published it in a page called "politicamente incorrecto" (politically incorrect), were I am an administrator, but I did not know what being an administrator meant" (personal interview, age 54, 2015). Apparently, she is not a very experienced Facebook user, as she explained that she did not know everyone would be able to see her message on Facebook, and was therefore surprised when the responds and likes started rolling in. She explained that this message received a tremendous amount of attention. People were asking her when and where she suggested meeting. She stated in the personal interview that she had forgotten that if you invite people to something, you are the one who is supposed to organize it. She said that after all this attention, she even called her mom to say "I think I broke something, what should I do". Her mom suggested to invite other people to help organize the event she had invited people to. Her mom also said that if there was more people connected to the organizing of the event, it would be safer for everybody, it would not leave my main informant as the only protestor in the public eye, and especially in the governments eye. My main informant agreed on this idea and invited friends and active commenters to organize the event together with her on Facebook. This started the "civilian organization" #RenunciaYa.

In general when all my informants were asked why social media, and why Facebook as a platform for this mobilization, the answer was that this is the platform people use today. That Facebook was the way to reach people. This question did not get a lot of attention and was answered in a way that made it seem that the answer was something obvious. It simply was.

5.2.1 #RenunciaYa



1 Source: Google.com. Design made by one of the members of #RenunciaYa.

#RenunciaYa translates into “resign now” in English and this statement was directed at ex-Vice President Roxanna Baldetti after CICIG exposed her involvement with “La Linea”. The first protest that #RenunciaYa organized was to ask Vice-President Roxanna Baldetti to resign her post as Vice-President.

The group #RenunciaYa started with one angry woman’s message on Facebook, but soon after became a group of seven people, also talked about as “el grupo de los siete” (the group of seven) by many of my informants from the university. When I asked my main informant (woman, age 54) about how she decided on these seven people she stated that it was quite random, and that she contacted people that she believed could help her organize the event, and people that actively commented on her post. She also contacted a friend to help her. At that time they were 3 woman around her age, and one younger man. They figured that they needed more young people that could help with publicity and design their logo. The younger man contacted some friends and from then on, they were seven members. All of these people spent day and night organizing the Facebook page and the Facebook events, although they never met until the evening after their first event. My main informant also told me that their plan was to meet at the event, but it simply was not possible to find each

other in the amount of people in the street. The wish to meet at the event was simply to present themselves in person, and to look at what they all manage to organise together. Since they did not manage to meet at the demonstration, they decided to meet after the event. This was their first meeting face-to-face, and all their contact before this point was on Facebook or by phone.

They spent a lot of time answering questions from members of #RenunciaYa's Facebook-page. They spent time ensuring their followers that their only intention was to prevent corruption, and that they wanted Ex-Vice President Baldetti to take responsibility for her wrongdoings. They told me that people in general was very sceptical of their intention, but that when they had told them a few times who they were, people were eager to help. Both of my informants from the group #RenunciaYa told that they had to write numerous times that they were not a political organization, and that everyone was welcome to look into their Facebook-page to read about who they were. My two informants explained to me that they felt that everyone in Guatemala wanted them to decide on what to do, what to wear and what to say. This was something they did not feel right to do, and therefore encouraged people to use their own voice, and decide for what they wanted to ask for. They expressed that they did not have any right to say what people should wear or say. *"We said that we are going to be colourful as we are colourful in Guatemala. That is us, we are different colours, different races, different everything."* (Personal Interview, age 54, 2016).

Before my interview with my main informant, I searched everywhere for her information online. This was mainly to be prepared for my interview. It surprised me when I did not find any information except for her name, and no photos of her. The only things I could find on her Facebook-page was photos of Snoopy (the cartoon character) and some political posters encourage people to "hit the streets" for the protests. When I first met her I asked about this, and she explained that she removed all photos of herself and her family from her personal Facebook-page as a precaution, because she was afraid that someone could do her harm. Her name was still there, and with that she responded, that she simply had to take some risks to share her message and discontent. From the very beginning, she stated that she was not a politician, but that she was a political animal. At the beginning of the

interview, I was not sure of the difference, and from my understanding in the interview, she had an above normal interest in politics. After some time with her, she explained that she saw all politicians as “dirty and corrupt” and that this was something she wanted to change. I also believe this to be one of the reasons that she would not call herself a politician, in addition to not follow a Guatemalan Political party.

Both of my informants from RenunciaYa had to stop working their regular jobs in the time of the protests. My understanding was that for the six-month period they simply did not have the time for their regular jobs. This tells that organizing RenunciaYa was time consuming, and there are not many people in the position to stop working for this amount of time in Guatemala or anywhere for that matter. My main informant explained that the reason for her being able to do this, was because of her husband, and that they both worked as real-estate agents. He therefore took on more work when she was working with #RenunciaYa. One day after my main informant published the invitation to the protest on Facebook, *“...Siglo 21 (newspaper) published that there was going to be a protest; from that moment on the numbers started growing a thousand times, because then, you know, other newspapers and media started commenting it”* (personal interview, female, age 54, 2016). From this moment on, #RenunciaYa became the civilian group that led the whole country through this protesting period. Everything that #RenunciaYa did was organized through Facebook or by phone calls, one informant explained. Their only goal at the beginning was to invite their friends on Facebook and gather, what they thought would be a small group of people. As we also can see from their statement, other media also helped a lot with informing people about the protest. It is safe to say that Facebook was not the only place where people heard of the protests, and therefore it is difficult to give a concrete statement about how important it actually was for the participation rates.

El escándalo de corrupción

¿En dónde se enteró por primera vez del escándalo de corrupción que ocurrió en 2015?

(272 responses)

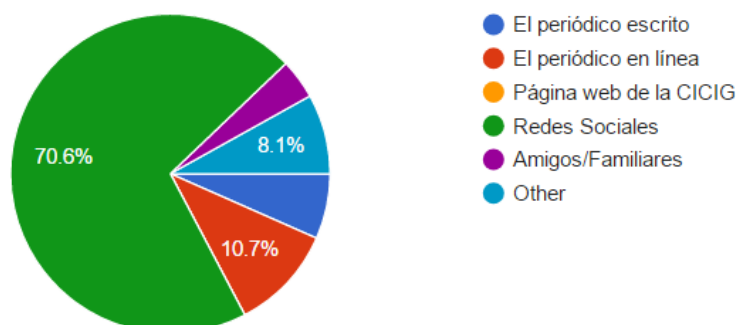


Figure 5: Survey conducted by author

This question asks where people heard about the corruption scandal for the first time, and 70.6% states that they first heard about it on social media. The other alternatives was (from top to bottom) physical newspaper, newspaper online, webpage of CICIG, friends/family, or other. From this question, we can see that most of my survey participants used social media and was informed through this channel, but it must be said that this survey was also mostly distributed on social media. My main form of distributing the survey was uploading it to my Facebook-page, and then ask my Guatemalan friends to share, some was also distributed by email. Therefore, it might not give an objective idea on the amount of people seeing it for the first time on Facebook, even though it was confirmed by most of my participants in the in-depth interviews.

None of my two informants that was a part of #RenunciaYa had any idea that this protest and their commitment would get that much attention. In my interviews with them, it was important for them to express that they did not have any goal at the beginning, other than express discontent and gather the Guatemalan people. They explained that they did the best

they could with the knowledge and equipment they had available. *“A day before the first manifestation we spoke on the phone, we saw that around 20,000 people had push “attend” on FB, but in Guatemala the people say that they will attend and they never appear.”* (Personal interview, age 52, 2016). So even though they saw that 20,000 people wanted to attend, they never expected that amount to show up for the protest. This was expressed as massive and a bit scary. The younger people in the group wanted to create a new protest, but the older people in the group was a bit more sceptical. In the end, it was the younger people that “won” the discussion, and they created a new event in May of 2015.

“It was at this meeting when the young ones were enthusiastic about arranging a new protest but we were a bit scared because we lived through the repression during the civil war 20 years ago, and the young ones had not experienced that. But at this day we decided to convene a new manifestation/protest/demonstration in May were more than 50,000 people participated. It was raining that day and this usually never encourage people to continue with a manifestation. Sincerely, we never expected something so big.” (Personal Interview, age 52, Translated from Spanish, 2016).

Both explained that they were scared during to whole period of the manifestation and organizing. It was important for them to keep a low profile. *“Actually we were scared, the media was calling us, thousands of people texted us on Facebook, we were not available to work, all day long we had to answer the messages. In the morning of the protest I received 200 phone messages and I don’t remember how many on Facebook.”* (Personal Interview, age 52, translated from Spanish, 2016). They explained that there was both positive and negative messages and that they had to delete, what they called, “bad language” from the Facebook page of #RenunciaYa. Even though they both received a lot of calls and messages, both stated that nothing very scary happened to them. They were careful, and made sure not to take any big chances or risks. After this explanation, my main informant remembered one episode that scared her a bit though. She explained that it was a person contacting her trough Facebook because he wanted to take part in the organizing of the protests. He wanted to meet her, and said that it would be safe and that he knew a friend of her. She double-checked with her friend, but he had never heard of him. My main informant

expressed that this was something that scared her, and that she was particularly careful after this episode. Her fear was that something could happen to her, here she referred to kidnappings and murders that happened during the 36-year civil war, but never expressed in particular that this was what she was worried about.

#RenunciaYa did not only arrange and invite people to the protests, they also spent a lot of time to encourage people to protest in a peaceful manner. *“We set some rules of respect, prompting to not cause any damage to the place, to not fight with the police and we asked for a peaceful demonstration”* (Personal Interview, age 52, translated from Spanish, 2016). They also told me that they had asked people to bring their own trash bags, so that the central park was not left with garbage. Almost all of my informants stated that they wanted to do something different, that the violent that happened during the repression did not solve anything. For every corruption scandal that happened, they got angrier but they knew they would not be able to solve it with anger. My main informant talked about how the police and the government usually was the people that started the violent conflict, and it was important for them (#RenunciaYa) to do everything in their power to keep it peaceful. At least from the protestors’ side.

Recommendations from the participants was something they were used to, and my main informant explained that this was something she really appreciated. The #RenunciaYa Facebook-page was deleted shortly after their last protest, and for that reason I can only refer to my participants in the in-depth interviews when referring to the #RenunciaYa Facebook-page. My main informant stated that they deleted the Facebook-page for security reasons, but did not elaborate exactly what she meant.

In addition to encouraging the protestors to keep the protests peaceful, without garbage in the streets and in a respectful manner, #RenunciaYa also looked at how they could make the government react in a peaceful manner as well.

One wrote that they needed to inform the president that they would protest in front of the palace, and another one suggested that they could make President Otto Perez Molina

responsible for all the protesters security during the protest. My main informant did not know what this paper was called, but explained that with this paper, ex-President Molina was lawfully bound to protect them, and that if something happened to them, he, personally, could be held responsible. My main informant stressed that this was of great importance to the peacefulness of the protests, and that this paper made it so the police officers were there to protect them, and not to create trouble.

This was a letter that it did not seem like most of my informants knew about, only the leaders of #RenunciaYa. Other people commented that they were surprised that the government did not use any power to remove them, others said that everyone was just too sick of violence, and that it had not taken them anywhere in the past. Some people that I talked to also suggested that young people today had not experienced the violent 36-year long civil war, so they did not have the same fear as older people in the country.

Even though the protests got a lot of attention from all over the world, one of my informants expressed that she always said to the younger people in the group that this demonstration was not the reason for the President to be incarcerated, and that this was something that was important to realize in this process.

“We were aware that we were not able to remove the president from the government. After the United States vice-president Joe Biden arrived to the central palace to talk with president Otto Perez, we had the resignation of Roxana Baldetti; they pressured. The movement helped to open the eyes of the international community and then they pressured the government. I always told the young ones that we (the group of 7) were not the ones who overthrew the President, it was all of us, CICIG and the international community, everyone together, not only the demonstrations.” (Personal Interview, translated from Spanish, age 52, 2016).

After the approximately 6 months protesting period was over, and both the President and the Vice-President was in jail waiting trial, some of the young people in #RenunciaYa wanted to keep working to show the new government that the people of Guatemala was still paying attention to what they were doing. The older members of the group, including my two

informants did not wish for more attention, and said no. Therefore they had to create a new group called #JusticiaYa (#JusticeNow). The reasons for making a new group was many, but the main reason was because if they had kept the old one, all the previous organizers would be legally bound to any action that the new organizers took, even if they were not a part of the group anymore. This, again, I think stem from the older people in the group experienced the repression, and this made them want to exit the spotlight. The younger people in the group did not experience this, and had therefore probably more energy and were not afraid at all times like my main informant and her friend. Similar to what Bacallao-Pino explained with the three cases of social mobilization through social media, the young people in #RenunciaYa wanted to create something that was long lasting, something bigger than a protest. This was already done when #RenunciaYa finished their contribution, but the younger people wanted to continue fighting for justice and for a better democracy in Guatemala. Therefore, #JusticiaYa was created. This is a page I have been following on Facebook ever since it was created in 2015; I wanted to see if the group #JusticiaYa managed to uphold people's interests for a longer period. Unfortunately we see again that Bacallao-Pinos' statements about upholding interests in a longer period of time, is very challenging. There are still activity on the page, with approximately one post every second day, but we can see that readers and people that like this page have stopped participating as much as before.



Figure 6: Screenshot from #JusticiaYa Facebook-page.

This is a screenshot from #JusticiaYa's Facebook-page, here we can see that the post has been online for 15 hours, and there are no comments and only 13 likes. This is a big indicator that Bacallao-Pino was correct in his statement that it was a challenge to keep the movement going after the offline protests were over. Another aspect to think about here is also that they changed the name of the movement, which, for many, felt like an ending of the movement. They did not notify the people that followed #RenunciaYa that some of the people in the group wanted to continue the social movement, but that they would change the name. This means that it is very few people that actually know that it is mostly the same people that now have #JusticiaYa, that had #RenunciaYa now. Both of my informants did not want to participate actively anymore, but my main informant also stated that if they ever asked for help or advice, she would be happy to supply with that.

5.2.2 Participators use of Social Media

In this study, all except one said that they used social media on a regular basis, and that it was an important part of their daily life. One of my informants from the university explained, “young people today do not read newspapers anymore, we only use Social Media” (personal interview, age 20, 2016). This was something that was a link between all my informants, especially the younger ones, but also the older saw the great importance of the use of Social Media. One of the questions I asked all my informants was what they think would have happened with this protest if social media did not exist, or was not used in this context. All stated that there would not have been a protest this big if not, that social media managed to gather all the people, and uphold the interest of the situation.

One professor (50 years old) at the private university had a different view on the way social media had effected the protest. When asked about the role of social media in this protest period he responded “I think that the trigger was the social media and that the people in response to social media went and gathered, like an effect of “if I don’t go, people will criticize me” a fashion effect... My perception is that a lot of people participated just to be “in” and not “out”.” (Personal interview, age 50, professor). My impression was that he talked about a commonly known expression: following the stream. This means to follow the trends, and to do as everybody else is doing, just to feel like you are a part of a bigger group. Later in the in-depth interview he also talked about that he felt that many people participated, but they were not fully aware of why or how this was really important. Even though he expressed that the fashion effect created by social media was quite sad, he also acknowledged that there would probably not have been a social mobilization had it not been for social media. He also expressed that he was happy with the changes they had accomplished and that he believed them to last.

Several informants from the universities stated that social media helped keeping the protest in a peaceful manner, not only because of the recommendations from the organisers of the group #RenunciaYa, but because they also had access to cameras and the possibilities to post photos online if something happened. Most people these days have access to smartphones and therefore have the possibility to document if there is any violations on

human rights or if there is any riots. There was some sort of transparency in what was going on. At least from the side of the protesters, and therefore it gave the President pressure to treat them in a respectful way.

From my online survey, the data supports the importance of the social media. 70,6% out of 272 people that responded in my survey answered that they discovered the corruption scandal on social media. 67,6% also answered that they went to social media to look for more information about the corruption scandal. In my survey, the participators got the question “How important do you think Social Media was for making this manifestation peaceful?”. The importance was measured in a scale, were 1 was no importance, and 10 was crucially important. 55,9% answered 10 in importance, and 90,8% of all the answers was between 7-10.

¿Qué tan importante fueron las redes sociales para que las manifestaciones se realizaran de manera pacífica?

(272 responses)

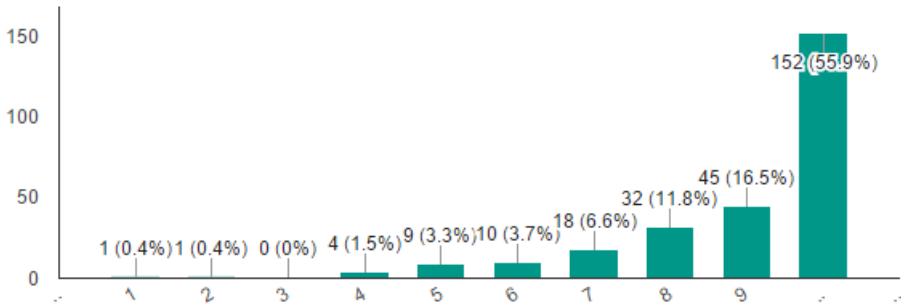


Table 2: Source: Personal survey

From the diagram above, we see the importance that social media played for the respondents. Other news pages also referred to the situation in Guatemala and commented on the importance of social media. “People-power and the ‘Guatemalan Spring’ - Fed up young people using social media have galvanised Guatemalans angry at corruption - and helped oust a president” (Lakhani, Al Jazeera, 2015), was the sound of the headline by Al Jazeera. Here referring to the Arab Spring were social media played an important part to keep participants connected (Arab Social Media Report, vol. 1, 2011), as it also did in this mobilization.

DW Akademie also published an article about a media dialogue they had had after the social mobilization in Guatemala in 2015. Here they expressed some important impacts social media can have on the political system, and they also expressed the possibility of creating news themselves, without relying on newspapers and other conventional media (Khon, 2016).

“Participants at the media dialogue also discussed their current situation, where they stand today and how things will proceed from here. They also looked at how to use social media to increase transparency in the political system and to make democracy a more participatory process. One conclusion was to continue to work on bringing civil society members together on digital platforms... Given that civic organizations no longer depend on conventional media for deciding the news stories, they could start generating news themselves via new media.” (Khon, 2016).

Two participants in this research also stated that they did not participate in any of the offline protests. They explained that they were afraid and that their family did not want them to go. For them Facebook became the solution, with the possibility of uploading photos or post that were supportive of the cause. This was something that was also done by Guatemalan people that live abroad, and also other people that wanted to support the Guatemalan people.

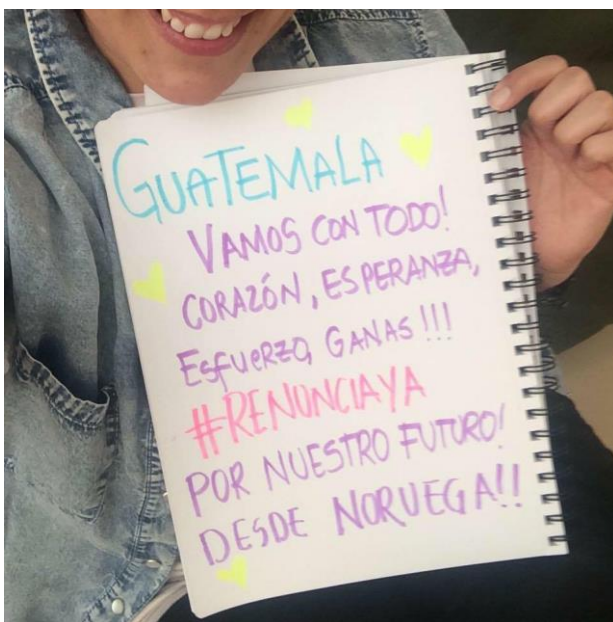


Figure 7: source: Facebook

This photo is taken by a friend of mine that lives in Norway. For her it was important to show support by uploading an photo of herself with her message “Lets go, Guatemala! Heart, hope, and effort. #RenunciaYa (#ResignNow). For our future! From Norway!!”. When asked about it, she explained that this was the only way for her to show support for her people, and that this was her way of being there.

5.2.3 The diversity and acceptance

At the protests, there were thousands of people together for one common cause. The gender, age, sexuality, political background and ethnicity did not matter. This was something that surprised many, and was talked about by almost all my informants.

My informants expressed that this was something different and that they had seen nothing like it before in Guatemala. They explained that all people were welcome, and that all groups were peaceful towards each other; at this protest, everyone was just Guatemalan people. One woman in #RenunciaYa expressed that the reason for this was that the protests was arranged by civilians and that they did not have any connection to any political party, as we also discussed a bit in the part about #RenunciaYa.

“People were asking who we were; they really wanted to make sure that we were not a political party. Even though most people had their doubts about it, they still said that they wanted to participate... If it was a protest called from the left-side, then the other side would stay home. This country is very polarised by these thoughts, even to this day. People felt that you could not show up to a protest of another party than the one you followed.” (Personal interview, age 54, 2016).

One of the organizers from #RenunciaYa expressed that this was something that made them different. They were not connected to any political group, and did everything they could to express this; open up their Facebook-profiles, not hiding who they were, expressing that everyone is welcome, and the importance of being themselves. They stated that they did not want to decide anything for anyone, that their only goal was to keep the protests peaceful, and at a civilized matter.

“We decided to let people speak for themselves, not to use any microphones. It was about time we learned that everybody should speak for themselves.” (Personal interview, age 54, 2016).

This work from #RenunciaYa, was of great importance for the protests to be as peaceful and diverse as they were. Most of the people I talked to expressed that this was a protest for the whole family, and that they felt safe to go there with their kids and grandparents. This was something I wanted to experience for myself, to see if I saw as many diverse and peaceful people as I had been told. Therefore I went to one protest right after the new president, Jimmy Morales, was elected in 2016. This protest was about showing the government that the Guatemalan people still was paying attention to what they were doing, and that they would keep doing that for the future. It was one of the first protests organised by #JusticiaYa. As this was after the renunciation of both ex-President Molina and ex-Vice President Baldetti, the amount of people had decreased tremendously. Yet it was several thousand people there showing their faces to let the government know that the Guatemalan people were present. At this protest, also I, felt and understood everything that I had been told. I saw families, old people, young people, university students, homosexual groups and political groups; all standing there together – agreeing to put an end to corruption in Guatemala.



Here are two photos taken by me during this protest. In the first one you also see an LGBTQ flag, which shows some of the diversity at this protest as well.

All my informants could agree on that cause – to end corruption. Their gender, age, ethnicity and sexuality was never talked about, and it did not matter for the cause at hand. They could also see for themselves that people were dying in the hospitals and schools did not get the

equipment that they needed. This was something that involved everybody, even though I will soon argue that one group was more affected than the other. This brings us to the university students, where I talked to both people from a private university, and people from a public university.

5.3 The University students

A common saying from most of my informants was that there was no difference between the universities in Guatemala at the period of the protesting. Many of my informants also mention that the universities of Guatemala had had some conflicts, and they were always competing on which one was the best. There has been, what one of my informant called “trash-talk” between universities for years, and finally they had a case, which united them. By “trash-talk” he meant that the students from different universities had always stated that the university they went to was the best. An example could be that “on your university there is only poor people”. Another informant argued that only the students from the public university could know the situation fully, because they were affected by the corruption and the “la linea” scandal.

“I think the main difference was that the public university (USAC) has students that aren’t afraid of many things because they know the situation, they see it on a daily basis, including their campus which isn’t all “castle-like” with security guards or safe parking slot or closed campus where no one can enter without an ID. Private universities are used to be in their little bubble where, if something goes wrong, you go to someone that most of the times fixes it, so when it all started we were a little bit dubious, we didn’t know exactly what we were capable of doing or the magnitude this impact could reach. Later on, all universities morphed into one and got incredibly strong-willed, which is exactly what Guatemala needed” (Personal interview, female student at public university, 2016).

When she says, “they know the situation” it is my understanding that she referred to that the students from the private university actually saw that there was no more school equipment, and did not have the resources to supply with new ones. Here she talks about a class difference between the poor and the rich, which is a very important topic when it comes to the discussion on whether it was a difference between the university students or not. As we

could see in the contextual chapter there is a lot of diversity in Guatemala, and the university you attend is highly affected by what kind of education and occupation that your parents have.

All informants was asked if there were any difference between private universities and public universities. All, except for one, answered that there was no difference at all, but many informed me that some of the universities got involved in the protest before others. The public university was the first one to get involved. It was mentioned by two of my informants that it was the public university that usually got involved in political protests first, and then the private universities sometimes followed. That depended on if it was a situation that affected them. In the protests organised by #RenunciaYa, all universities were involved, and the private universities joined very soon after the public one. I was also explained that the universities closed the days of the protests; giving the students the opportunity to participate. The students from the public university walked in a big group down to the park in front of the national palace where the protest was located. One informant explained how beautiful it looked with that massive group of students entering the protest area. "It was massive and energetic" (Personal interview, female, age 54).

Another aspect pointed out to me by an informant was that the university students encouraged people not to wear any headwear (hat, cap, hoodie) during the protesting. The informant explain that this was to make everybody there feel safe. If something happened, they would be able to see the faces and also the possibility of catching it on camera.

Chapter 6: Emerging issues, discussion and concluding remarks

In this chapter, I will discuss and analyse the key findings also presented in chapter 6. I will focus on important themes and concepts and connect it to the literature review and the background information about my study area. I will first address some of the reasons for this social mobilization to happen in Guatemala at this exact time. From there I will discuss the influence that social media had. Here the three previous cases of social media in social mobilization presented in literature review will be important comparing tools. The third key theme I see important to present is the different factors that helped this social mobilisation to stay peaceful. At the end, I will discuss the difference between the private and the public university students.

A theoretical discussion and analysis of the empirical findings enables us to get a deeper understanding of the case.

6.1 The start of the social mobilization

When looking at the reasons for this social mobilization taking place, there are many. At first it is important to realize that the Guatemalan people are in general used to corruption scandals, and the examples of the corrupt judges and the “magic water” scandal is merely the most recent ones. The importance of including these in was to get the reader a understanding of what kind of state of mind the Guatemalan people were in, when CICIG presented the newest scandal; “La linea”. For lack of better words, my informants explained that they were tired of corruption, and that they had had enough. These statements alone would not make any sense without the background information about the past in Guatemala. It was also stressed that this was the first time that the proof of corruption had reached the very top of the countries government; the President and the Vice President. When analysing my notes on how they reacted when explaining me this situation, I got the feeling on two different occasions, that they were happy and shocked at the same time of the revealing. There had been suspicion on the involvement of high-up politicians being involved in corruption scandals before, but never any real proof. Both the “magic water” scandal, and the Rosenberg case is fine examples of this. Finally, there was real proof provided by CICIG in early 2015. A mix of joy and anger was shown by my informants and from there, many stated that they had to do something. This created the feeling of unity, and is a feeling often created when a group of people feel really strongly about one or several causes. This was something that was also seen in the other social mobilisations #OccupyWallStreet, #Yosoy132, and Taksim Square, explained in the theoretical framework.

It was first after the Facebook-post by my main informant that the planning for the first protest started. Her story is fascinating because it was all along very clear that her intention was never to create something this big. She was not even aware of who was able to read her Facebook post. This is tells us something about the power of social media, and how easy it is “go viral”. It is no set of rules on what will trigger people to repost, comment, or like something you have written, but, as discussed in the theoretical framework, cute memes or something that is important for a lot of people at the same time is triggers. My main informant said that if she had not written that post in exactly the time she did; someone else would have. It was a coincidence that it was exactly her. This, of course, is something that is not possible to know for sure. From the research done in Guatemala, and the theoretical framework about social media both points in this direction; that if she did not publish at this time, someone else would.

From this we can draw the conclusion that one of the main reason for this social mobilisation to start was that people had experienced one too many corruption scandals, and that they finally could prove that the President and the Vice President was involved. We can also suggest that the social mobilization would probably have happened even if my main informant did not upload her Facebook-post in that very moment. If it had any effect in how the social mobilization evolved, we will never know for sure.

6.2 The influence social media had on this social mobilization

There are many ways that social media influenced the social mobilisation that happened in 2015. It is also important to know that it was not before some time had past that this situation even turned into a social mobilization. It started out as one protest, but from there evolved into something bigger and a process that lasted much longer. In my thesis I have applied UNISEFs definition of social mobilisation, in short, they stated that people “...work in a coordinated way to reach specific groups of people for dialogue with planned messages. In other words, social mobilization seeks to facilitate change through a range of players engaged in interrelated and complementary efforts” (UNISEF, n.y.). With this definition I find the word “coordinate” very important when discussing the use of social media.

Social media was used by to coordinate and to motivate people to participate. The use of social media, in particular: Facebook, was used in different ways for the university students and the two informants I had at #RenunciaYa. For the two members of #RenunciaYa, coordinating became a major part, while for the university students it might not have been equally important. We also could see in my findings that almost all my informants used Facebook as a source for information, this was also the place were you could find the plans and dates for the next demonstration.

As presented in the literature review, the use of the Internet and social media is increasing at all times, and it is becoming a more frequently used tool as seen in the three other cases present in the literature review. Bacallao-Pino also present the so-called “Hashtag politics”, and this is used to encourage people to participate in an given event or discussion. It is also known as “powerful tools for conveying a conversation around a strategically chosen subject” (Meisel, n. d., cited in Bacallao-Pino, 2014, n.p.). #RenunciaYa became the hashtag for this social mobilisation, and was known by all my informants. It was of great meaning, and was always talked about with pride. Meaning it was something associated with something positive, a change. Their logo was a circle of people around the hashtag #RenunciaYa, and became the symbol for the movement, a symbol for change and unity. The

photo of the woman with the homemade poster, showing support by using the hashtag #RenunciaYa, is one signal about the importance of the hashtag, and the unity it helped create.

All of my research and the literature review support that social media played a very important part in this social mobilization, but as a supportive part, and not the sole reason for getting both the president and the vice president incarcerated. From looking at my background information, the literature review, and my own findings I am agreeing with one informant that pressured the importance of the joint effort that made this result and social mobilisation happen. Her words stayed with me throughout the research process, and was supported by the literature review and another informant that talked about not forgetting to look at the newspapers, television and radios role. In addition to this, there were pressure from CICIG, who started their investigation already in 2014 and outside political parties. All of these efforts ended up creating an historical social mobilisation in Guatemala.

6.3 Supportive factors that created peacefulness

There were many factors in the social mobilisation in Guatemala that helped to promote peaceful protests. #RenunciaYa played a big part. They focused on informing everybody of their intentions, and promoted people from all groups to participate just as they are. It was important to them to explain that they were solely the organisers of the event, and did not want to decide on colours of t-shirts, nor the message to the government. People could wear and ask for/demand anything they felt like, which gave the people the actual opportunity to be themselves. This created a welcoming and non-intimidating sentiment over the protests, and did not create rival groups. #RenunciaYa focused many of their Facebook-posts to inform that they were not connected to any political party, and there were “no centralized leadership” which is similarly featured in the case of #Yosoy132, #OccupyWallStreet and Taksim Square.

Another very important and very interesting thing #RenunciaYa did, was sending the letter to the president. This letter made him responsible for the protestors, and the police was therefore there to protect them. I did not find any support literature on this claim, and the only source I have is my main informant. Having that said, I found her trustworthy and I believe the information about the letter was too important to exclude. This might have been a crucial letter when it comes to the peacefulness of these protests and the social mobilisation.

The fact that much of this social mobilisation was online, through social media created some transparency where everybody had the possibility of uploading photos and statements. High usage of smartphones also gives the opportunity of document what is going on around you at all times. This

had a double effect; it gave the feeling of security, and also encourage more people to participate. By showing the Guatemalan people that the protest was safe and therefore also create an invitation or encouraging people to join the mobilisation.

Many people were nervous and afraid of participating in these protests. Some of this most likely stem from the 36 year long war, living the repression. The war ended in 1996, and there was many participants, that also experienced the war. As presented in the background information, many people died or was abducted during this war. My research suggest that their fear of the government stem for this period, this is argued because it was only my informants above the age of 30 that mentioned the war and the repression. I believe that for many of the people above 30 years old, that the photos and posts uploaded during the protests were very important for the sense of security.

6.4 Difference between private and public universities in the social mobilisation

Guatemala has the highest inequality rates in Latin America (World Bank, 2017), for that reason I wanted to see if there were any difference between the public universities (free) and private universities (not free).

Many of my informants informed me about a rivalry between all the universities in Guatemala. Especially between the private universities against the public university. I have yet to find supportive literature about this, but due to many comments about it, I included it in my research. They explained that this rivalry disappeared in the time of the protesting, and it was expressed as something significant. That all the universities were cooperating. All my informants, except for one, stated that there were absolutely no difference between the universities at this time. Yet, it was the one person who disagreed that made me notice a difference between the universities in my own finding. When doing my data analysis, I split the answers I got from the students into two groups, one for the private university, and one for the public university. At first, I looked at what they answered to the question about the role of the universities, and there it was only the one person mentioning a difference. From there I went to look at the knowledge that they had of the corruption scandal itself, and found that my informants from the public university seemed much more informed than the students from the private university. They explained the scandal in a much more comprehensive way, and seemed to know much more details. One of the professors I interviewed at the private university supported the assertion that students from public universities knew more about the corruption scandal than students from private universities. He argued that the private students only participated because they wanted to be “in” and not “out”, that they did not fully understand what and why they were protesting.

The fact that the education and occupation of the parents has a substantial effect on whether the children attend university or not (Diaz, 2012, p. 46), makes me also look at the difference of the universities itself. It is obvious that the private universities charge a lot of money, as to the public universities do not. This suggest that the students from the private universities grew up in families that has money, whereas the students from the public university did not. The public sector was the area that was most affected by the “la linea” case. My theory is that public students most likely had public healthcare, and was even more exposed to the scandal. It became a topic of conversation at home, and it gave them a reason to really investigate the situation. As for the students of private universities night also have private healthcare, and therefore less exposed.

After looking at what my informants have explained to me, I do clearly see a difference in the knowledge the different groups of students had. Something I did not see though, was a difference in participation in the social movement. If this was because all students, no matter what university, wanted to be included in the unity that this social mobilisation created, or if it was because they really knew the political situation at hand, is no way of knowing.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This research have showed the importance of social media in an social mobilisation, this in particular concern to participation both offline and online. The mobilisation started by a post online that soon after being published went viral, and attracted a lot of attention from the whole country. The fact that there had been many corruption scandals in Guatemala right before “la linea”, and that this scandal reached the top of the government were important triggers that helped contribute to the social mobilisation that happened.

Social media was of great influence to this social mobilisation. Gathering of people, the planning process, encouraging participation, and make protestors feel safe was the main contributes by social media. Even though it was of great importance to the mobilisation, it was only as a supportive tool.

The social mobilisation stayed peaceful throughout the protest period, and several factors helped with that. #RenunciaYa’s work towards creating a place where everyone felt welcome, and their letter to the president, making him responsible if something happened to the protestors.

Social media and smartphones also played a part in keeping the protests peaceful due to the possibility of documenting everything. This created transparency.

Students were a big part of this social mobilisation, and we could see that the knowledge of the students from the public universities was greater than the students from public universities. Even though the knowledge was better, there was no significant signs of the public university contributing in a greater manner than participating in the offline protests a little bit earlier.

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Appendix:

Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. About you.
 - Gender?
 - Age?
 - Name? (Only info for me, the identity of my informants will be confidential)
 - University?

2. What was the main reasons for this social mobilisation?
 - Where did you first hear about the big corruption scandal?
 - Where did you hear about the movement/demonstrations?
 - Did you participate?
 - What was the reason for you to participate?
 - How did you participate?
 - `There has been several corruption scandals in Guatemala before` why do you think people decided to protest now?
 - `Guatemala has a long history of violent protesting` why do you think this protest went by very peacefully? – What has changed?

3. How was the universities involved in the social mobilisation? (something that stood out?)
 - Was there any difference between private and public universities? – if so, what?
 - What was the involvement of your university?
 - What do you think about the roles the students played in the demonstrations?

4. How was social media a factor in the social mobilisation?
 - Did you use social media during the period of protesting?
 - How did you use social media in this situation?
 - Why did you decide to use social media?
 - How do you think the situation would be different if it had not been for social media?

5. What do you think about what all of you managed to achieve during the protesting?
6. Is there anything you wish would be different?
7. Is there other information, that I have not asked for, you think I should know?
8. Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix 2: The survey

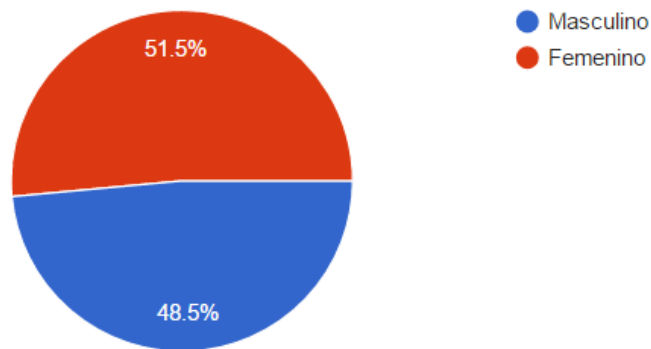
#RenunciaYa

272 responses

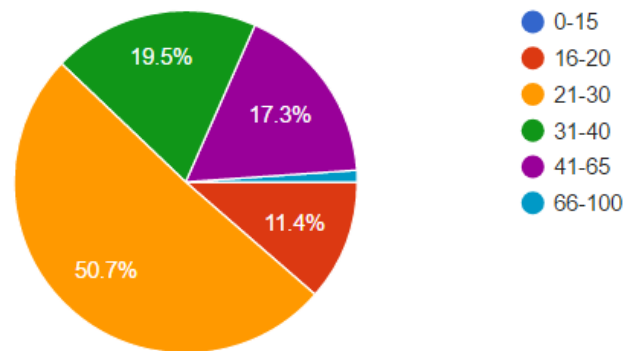
[Publish analytics](#)

Información personal

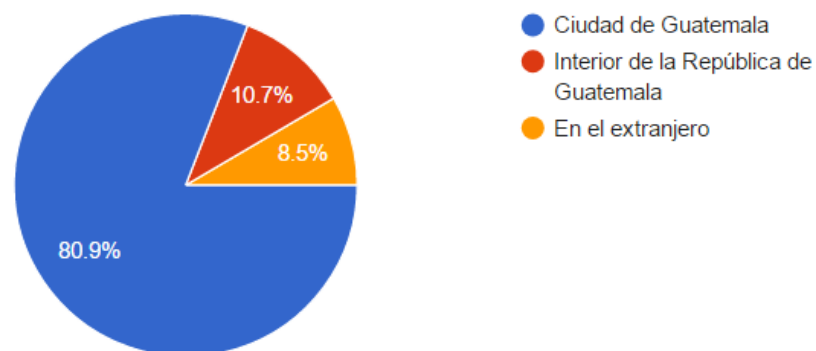
Género (272 responses)



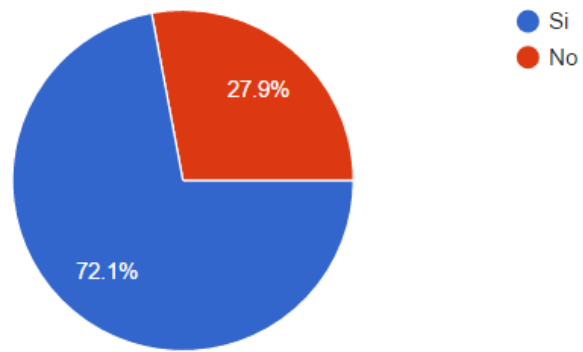
Edad (272 responses)



¿Donde vivió durante el 2015? (272 responses)

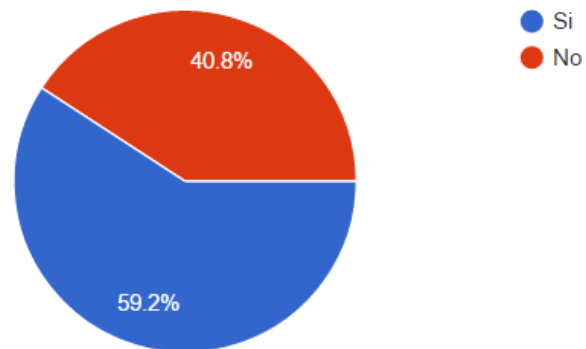


¿Trabaja? (272 responses)



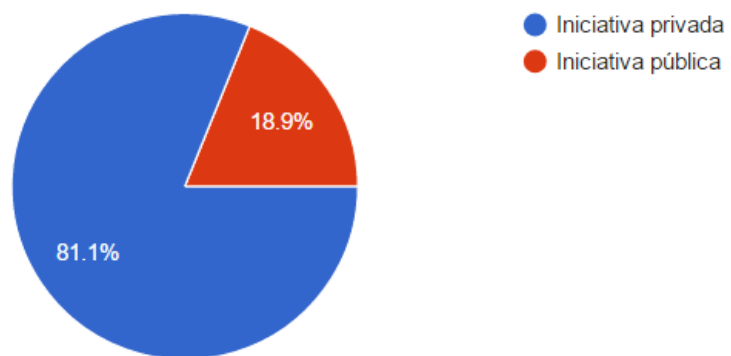
Untitled Section

¿Estudia? (272 responses)



Centro de trabajo

Seleccione (196 responses)

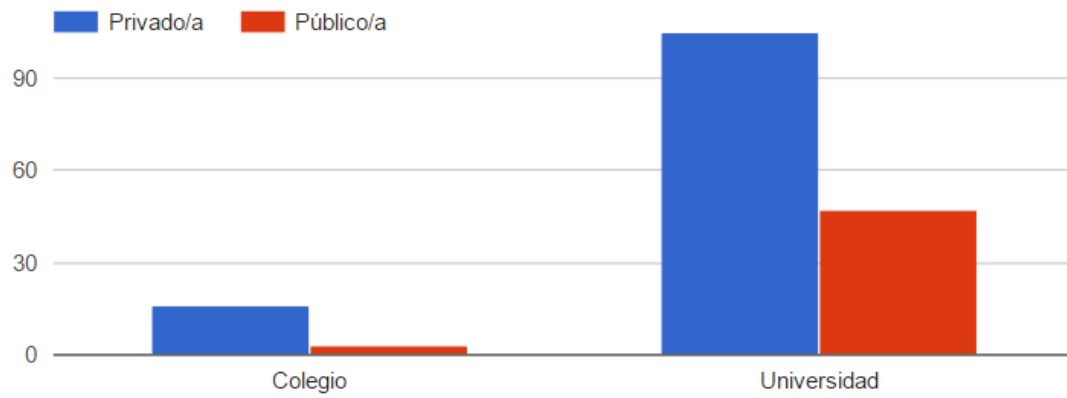


Si tiene alguna profesión, indique cuál es: (148 responses)

Estudiante
Estudiante
Estudiante
Estudiante
Estudiante
Publicista
Publicista
Publicista
Publicista
Ingeniero
Ingeniero
Ingeniero

Centro de estudios

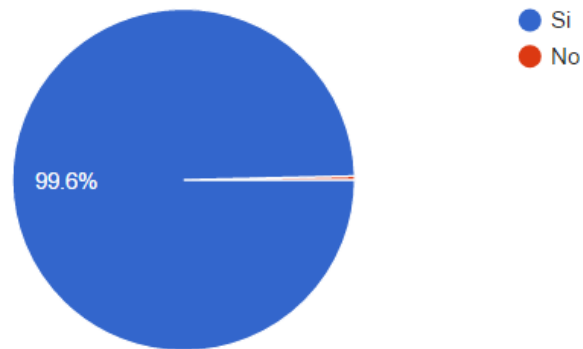
Seleccione su centro de estudios



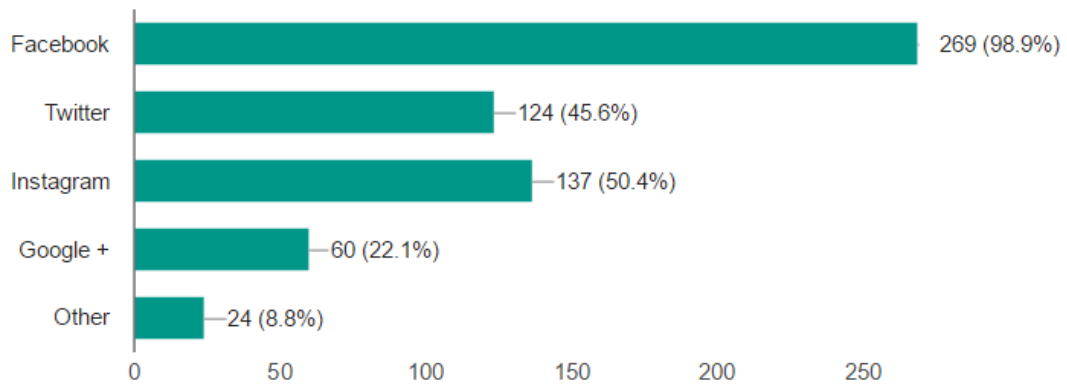
Redes Sociales

¿Hace uso de las redes sociales (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)?

(272 responses)

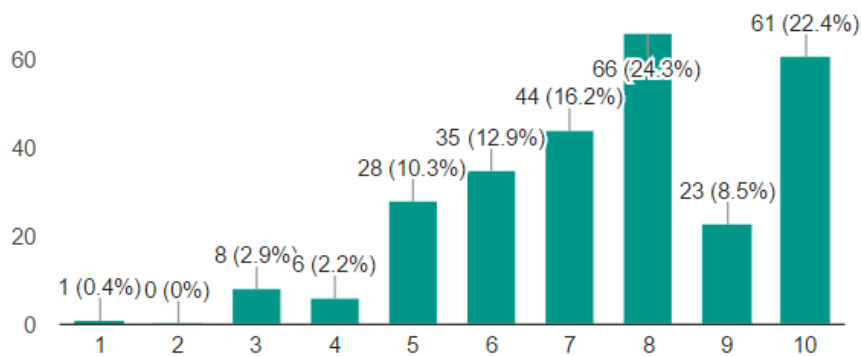


¿Cuáles son las redes sociales que mas utiliza? (272 responses)



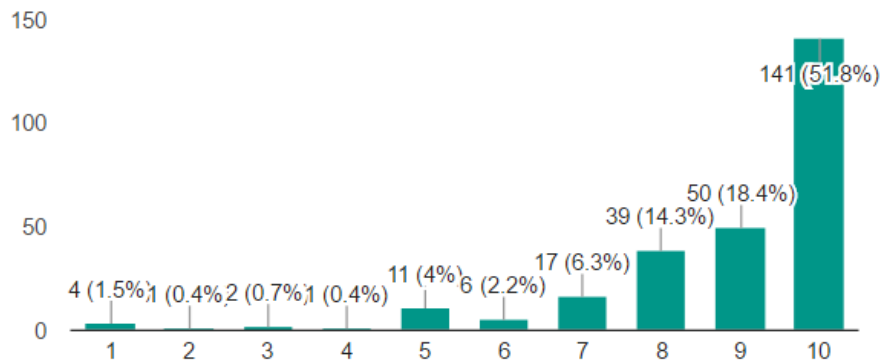
¿Qué importancia tienen las redes sociales para usted? (272 responses)

(272 responses)



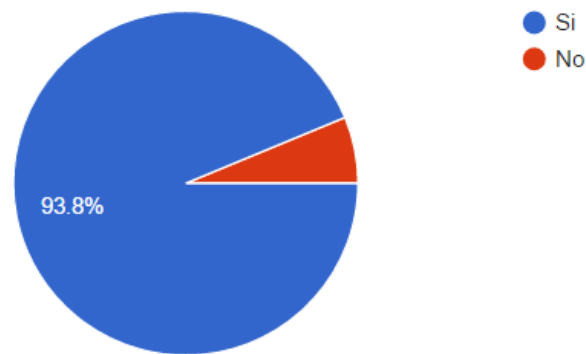
Durante las manifestaciones, ¿qué tan importante fueron las redes sociales para usted?

(272 responses)



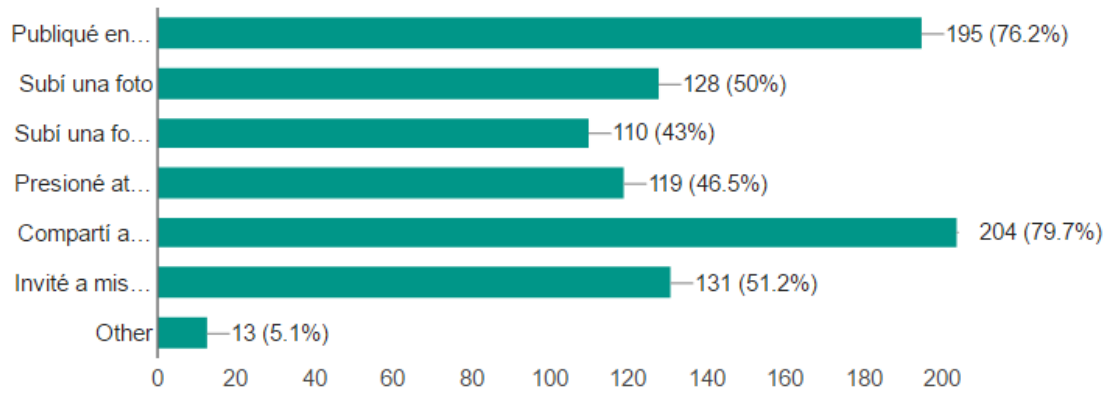
Durante el periodo de las manifestaciones, ¿usted tuvo alguna interacción en las redes sociales en apoyo a las mismas?

(272 responses)



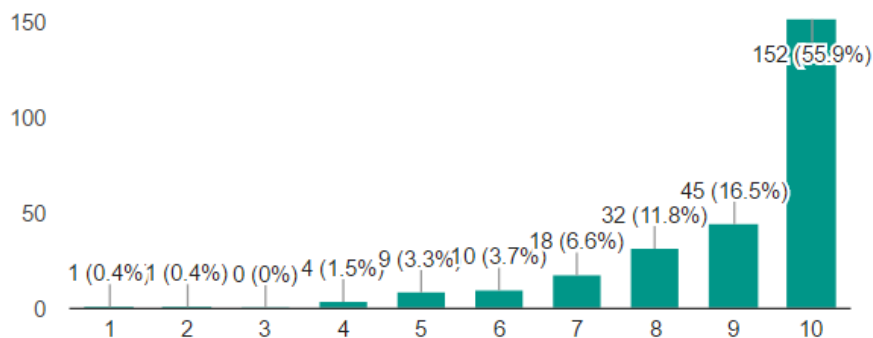
Si su respuesta fue afirmativa en la pregunta anterior, ¿cómo fue su participación en la redes sociales?

(256 responses)



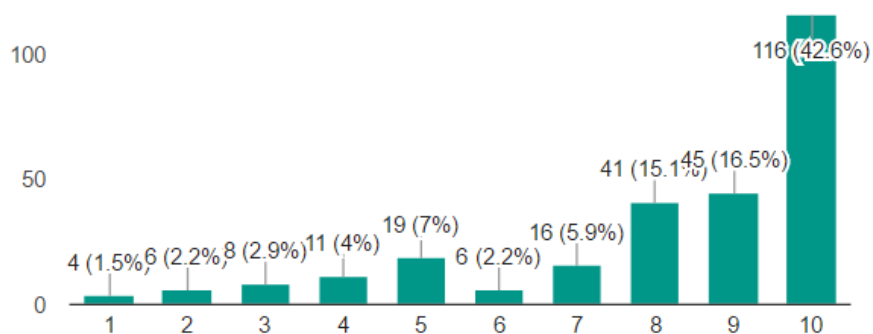
¿Qué tan importante fueron las redes sociales para que las manifestaciones se realizaran de manera pacífica?

(272 respuestas)



¿Qué tan diferente hubieran sido las manifestaciones SIN las redes sociales?

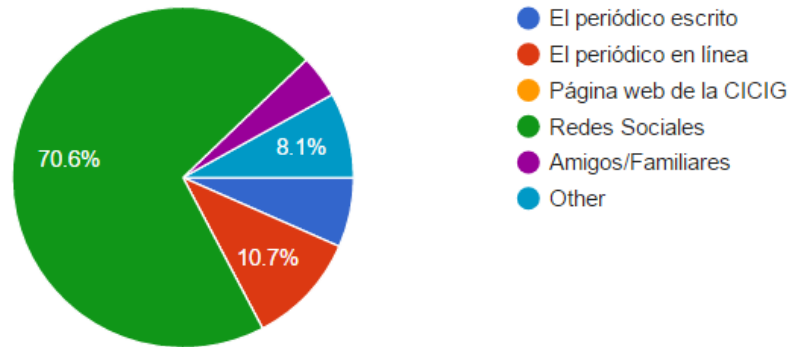
(272 respuestas)



El escándalo de corrupción

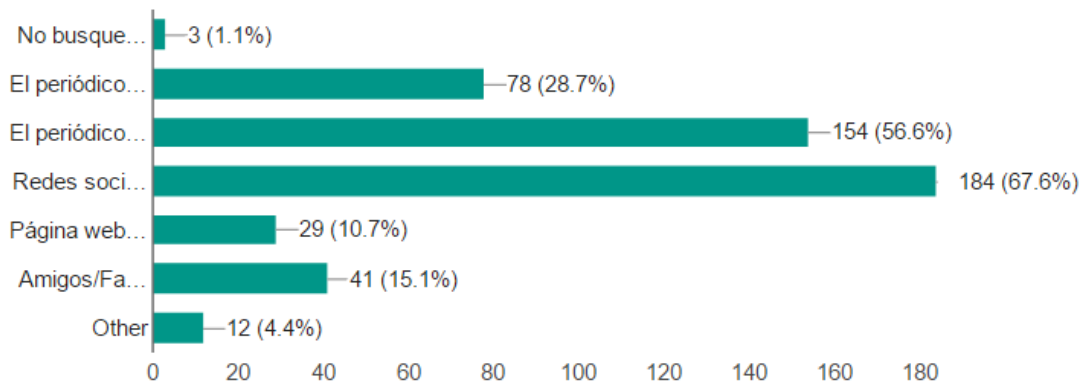
¿En dónde se enteró por primera vez del escándalo de corrupción que ocurrió en 2015?

(272 responses)



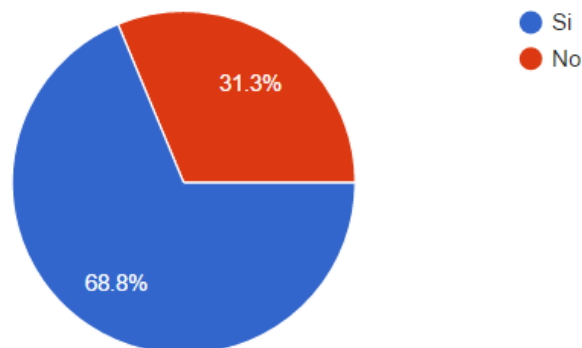
Después de enterarte del escándalo de corrupción, ¿en qué medio buscaste más información relacionada con el caso?

(272 responses)



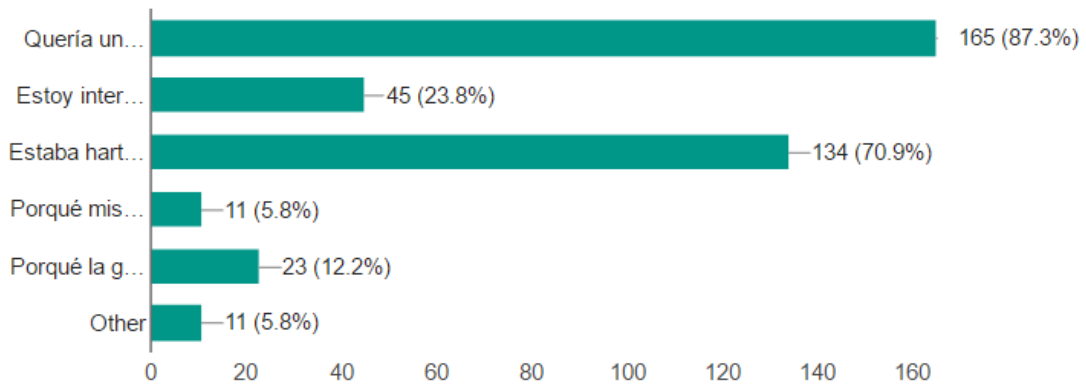
¿Usted participó en alguna de las manifestaciones?

(272 responses)



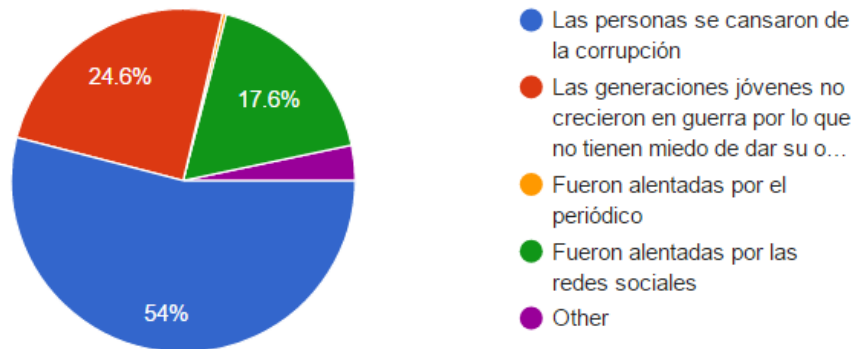
Si usted participó en alguna manifestación, ¿por qué lo hizo?

(189 responses)



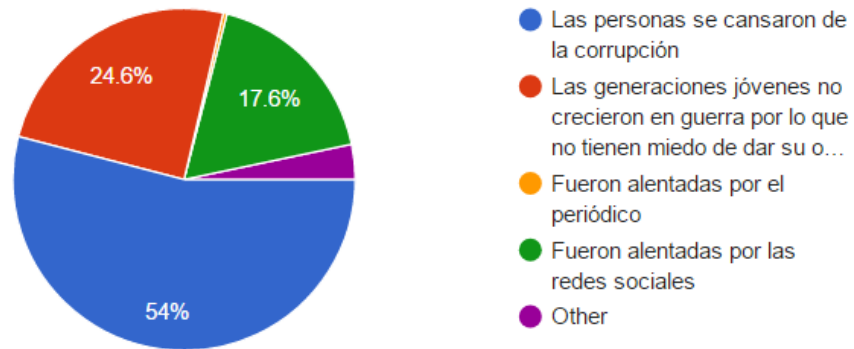
¿Cuál crees que fue la razón por la que se llevaron a cabo las manifestaciones (Escoja la opción más cercana a su opinión)

(272 responses)



¿Cuál crees que fue la razón por la que se llevaron a cabo las manifestaciones (Escoja la opción más cercana a su opinión)

(272 responses)



¡¡Muchas gracias por su participación!!

Number of daily responses

