The Influence of Media Usage on the Outcome of Social Movement Campaigns in Southeast Asia

Rothsethamony Seng
Z1972413@students.niu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations

Part of the Asian Studies Commons, Comparative Literature Commons, and the International Relations Commons

Recommended Citation

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research & Artistry at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.
ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA USAGE ON THE OUTCOME
OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT CAMPAIGNS
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Rothsethamony Seng, M.A.
Department of Political Science
Northern Illinois University, 2024
Aarie Glas and Ches Thurber, Co-Directors

Does the use of media strategies help social movements or mass protest movements in Southeast Asia achieve their goals? The prominent study in this area argues that social media, in particular, has done more harm than good for grassroots movements. Tufekci (2017) argues that social media provides little help compared to the regime. I argue that social media helps the movement through three important areas, including (1) amplifying the messages of the movements to shape public opinions and counter propaganda and misleading information from the government, (2) facilitating and mobilizing protestors to coordinate virtual or physical protests, sustaining the momentum, and (3) pressuring the authorities by receiving international support without risking lives to be injured in physical protests. I evaluate my argument using a mixed-method approach. First, I utilize a quantitative analysis, which shows surprising results; however, this may be the result of inadequate results from the cross-national dataset. Then, I turn to the qualitative approach, and this approach supports the hypotheses.
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

DEKALB, ILLINOIS

MAY 2024

THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA USAGE ON THE OUTCOME
OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT CAMPAIGNS
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

BY

ROTHSETHAMONY SENG
©2024 Rothsethamony Seng

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Thesis Co-Directors:
Aarie Glas
Ches Thurber
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'm deeply thankful to my supervisors, Dr. Aarie Glas, Dr. Ches Thurber, Dr. Alesha Porisky, and Dr. Kheang Un, for their invaluable support and guidance in my thesis journey. Their expertise was crucial in shaping my research. I also appreciate the Northern Illinois University Political Science Department for enhancing my academic journey and fostering a learning environment. I am very grateful and thankful to my parents (Mr. Ouv Seng and Mrs. Ratha Song), my sister (Mrs. Rothpisey Seng), and relatives for their endless love and unwavering belief in me.

In addition, I am also indebted to the Center for Southeast Asian Studies for providing the resources and opportunities to serve as a communication specialist and graduate assistant that were crucial in financially supporting my master’s degree in political science, and my graduate certificate in Southeast Asian studies. I would like to express my special gratitude to Dr. Judy Ledgerwood, Dr. Trude Jacobsen Gidaszewski, Ms. Rachael Skog, and the CSEAS team.

My colleagues and friends' camaraderie and feedback have been vital, along with Dr. Limeng Ong's advice on the quantitative section and Mr. Menghieng Ngov's emotional support throughout my academic journey. Thanks to the International Student Scholars Service (ISSS), the Institutional Review Board, and the twelve interview participants for their insights and everyone involved in this journey for their contributions to completing my thesis. Lastly, I extend my appreciation to all those who, directly or indirectly, have been a part of this journey. Your contributions, however big or small, have been integral to completing this thesis.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

| LIST OF TABLES | vi |
| LIST OF APPENDICES | vii |

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION ......................................................... 1
   Significance of the Study ........................................... 1
   Research Question .................................................. 1
   Purpose Statement .................................................. 1
   Methodology .......................................................... 1
   Structure of the Study .............................................. 2

2. PUZZLE AND RESEARCH QUESTION ................................. 3
   Background .......................................................... 3
   Puzzle ............................................................... 4
   Hypotheses .......................................................... 5

3. EXISTING AND ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS ..................... 6
   3.1. How Social Movement Wins? ................................... 6
   3.2. Positive Impacts of Media .................................... 9
      3.2.1. Gathering Public Support .............................. 9
      3.2.2. Disseminating Messages .............................. 9
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3. Pressuring Government and Policymakers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.4. Increasing International Intervention</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.5. Encouraging Participation from Marginalized Groups</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6. Receiving Social Capital</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.7. Creating Collective Action</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Negative Impacts of Media</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1. Government Control and Censorship</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2. Propaganda and Misinformation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3. Digital Media Literacy Limitations</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4. Surveillance and Privacy Risks</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delimitations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Definition and Operationalization</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ARGUMENT IN BRIEF</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Hypotheses Explanation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. RESEARCH DESIGN</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1. Methodology</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2. Quantitative Analysis</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Data Collection</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3. Qualitative Analysis</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Selection</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5.4. Rationale for Mixed-Methods Approach ........................................... 23
5.5. Limitations ........................................................................................................ 24
6. FINDINGS AND ANALYSES .................................................................................. 25
   6.1. Data Analysis ....................................................................................................... 25
   6.2. Political and Media Background of Thailand ..................................................... 30
   6.3. Anti-Thaksin Campaign (2005-2006) ................................................................. 32
   6.5. People's Alliance for Democracy Campaign (2008) ........................................... 35
   6.7. Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign (2013-2014) ............................... 39
   6.8. New Democracy Movement Campaign (2014-2023) ....................................... 40
   6.9. Discussion on the Influence of Media ............................................................... 42
7. CONCLUSION .......................................................................................................... 46
   Contributions ............................................................................................................ 48
   Limitations ................................................................................................................ 50
   Recommendation for Future Research .................................................................... 52
REFERENCES ............................................................................................................. 56
APPENDICES ............................................................................................................. 64
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Analysis of Nonviolent Social Movements</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Media Usage for Six Nonviolent Movements in Thailand from 2005 to 2023</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. CONSENT FORM</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Thailand has encountered a series of nonviolent movement campaigns, resulting in significant social and political changes. Understanding how media usage influences the outcomes of these campaigns is not only academically intriguing but also crucial for comprehending the evolving dynamics of political activism in the region. Pinckney (2020) argues that popular protest can be a major driver of democratization in the globe. There are several reasons to think that social media should empower movements, yet the leading scholarly treatment of this subject (Tufekci) argues that social media hinders movements (Tufekci, 2017).

This thesis seeks to address this contradiction by asking how media usage influences the outcome of social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia. This study aims to expose the relationships between media usage and the success or failure of social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia, specifically Thailand, providing valuable insights into the broader intersection of media and social change.

To examine the central argument of the role of traditional and new media in shaping the outcomes of nonviolent protests, this research draws on existing literature and 12 interviews with protest organizers, protestors, press professionals, journalists, and academic experts, working directly or indirectly, on the social movements in Thailand.\(^1\) In addition, this study analyzes global cross-sectional time-series data using logistic regression to examine the association between the use of traditional and new media and the outcome of nonviolent social

\(^1\) This primary virtual interview collects qualitative data to support the case studies.
movements between 2000 and 2023 with the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.1 dataset and World Bank internet usage data.

This research is structured into four parts. The first section introduces the empirical issue and its significance. The second component provides existing and alternative explanations, borrowing from existing scholarly sources, including university press books and theoretical journal articles. The third segment indicates three main hypotheses, including the benefits of media on (1) amplifying the messages of the movements to shape public opinions and counter propaganda and misleading information from the government, (2) facilitating and mobilizing protestors to coordinate virtual or physical protests, sustaining the momentum, and (3) pressuring the authorities by receiving international support without risking lives to be injured in physical protests. The fourth part discusses the research design by utilizing mixed-method analysis and six non-violent protests in Thailand as the case studies. Fifth, the study illustrates the results and findings from the primary and secondary sources to contribute to studying social movements and media in political science. This study concludes by reflecting on its theoretical contribution and comprehensively summarizing the empirical arguments regarding the puzzling research question.

---

2 This quantitative analysis is a bridge to indicate why we require mixed-method analysis.
CHAPTER 2: PUZZLE AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Between 2000 and 2023, the world witnessed remarkable transitions in media technologies and platforms, including the proliferation of online news outlets and the rise of social media. Newman (2023) indicates that 40 percent of survey participants in Thailand prefer to consume news through online platforms, and several Asian nations, especially the younger population, utilize mobile phones to access video news via YouTube and TikTok. In addition, Thai citizens illustrate better freedom of expression through online platforms with independent TV-style online shows (Newman, 2023).

These changes have reshaped how social movements can utilize traditional and new media to communicate and protest, making it challenging to generalize the impact of media usage over time. Dencik and Leistert (2015) acknowledge the shift in contemporary protests by utilizing commercial social media platforms to organize and participate in campaigns from political actors, advocacy groups, and non-governmental organizations.

However, social movements are not isolated because of several other external factors, including government responses, public sentiment and engagement, and international influences (Lokot, 2023; Amenta & Polletta, 2019). As a result, understanding how media usage plays an essential role in shaping the outcomes of the social movement is a questionable issue for scholars. In addition, what we see in Thailand (or elsewhere) is not easily explainable, given what we know about successful social movements.
The research question is, how does media usage influence the outcome of the social movement campaign? While leading scholars have been skeptical of the value of social media to resistance movements, I argue that they are a powerful tool in asymmetric conflicts. Specifically, social media allows movements to (1) media can amplify the movements’ messages to shape public opinions and counter propaganda and misleading information from the government, (2) media can facilitate and mobilize protestors to coordinate virtual or physical protests sustaining the momentum, and (3) media can pressure the authorities by receiving international support without risking lives to be injured in physical protests. This research concentrates on the distinct goals, tactics, and media usage strategies of six nonviolent movement campaigns in Thailand, including the Anti-Thaksin Campaign, the Anti-Military Government Campaign, the People’s Alliance for Democracy Campaign, the Red Shirt Campaign, the Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign, and the New Democracy Movement Campaign.³

To explain the issue, this thesis also recognizes the interplay with other factors contributing to the success of the movement's outcome. Although there is a substantial amount of research on the role of media in social movements, there needs to be more research on Southeast Asia, especially in Thailand. Considering the methodological reasons to provide an in-depth analysis of the non-violent movement case studies, this thesis will fill this research gap by comparing these six nonviolent movements in Thailand from 2000 to 2023 and providing more insights into the region. In this rapidly evolving communication technologies era, understanding how media is utilized to impact politics and social movements is significant.

³ These six campaigns were selected as non-violent social movements (reference from Harvard NAVCO 1.3 data). However, there are interviewees who argue some of the campaigns are somehow involving violence.
We know social movements are more likely to succeed when they have certain characteristics, including political opportunities, mobilizing structure, and deploying effective messages (Goel et al., 2015). In addition, Thurber (2021) suggests that “nonviolent action” also plays an essential role in creating “revolutionary political change and overthrowing autocratic regimes.” Satell (2016) also argues that successful social movements have these criteria in common, including clear purposes, value prioritizations, small group mobilizations, ideological continuity, and relying on engagement, not rhetorics. Drawing on this insightful literature from several scholarships, my theory is that social media helps movements spread the message of the movement, channel support into mobilization, and garner international support for the movement.

Given the lack of internet access, digital illiteracy, and government repression in Thailand, utilizing traditional and new media as independent variables on social movements should be less influential; however, the findings indicate the reverse result. Media usage (traditional and new media) can potentially influence the successful outcome of the social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia by three hypotheses:

**H1:** Media strategies, both traditional and new, amplify social movement messages, shaping public opinion and countering government misinformation.

**H2:** Media, especially social media, facilitates the mobilization of protesters, sustaining movement momentum with lower resource consumption and risk.

**H3:** Media strategies attract international support, pressuring authorities by demonstrating global backing for movements, thus reducing the need for physical gatherings.
CHAPTER 3: EXISTING AND ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

3.1 How Social Movements Win?

There are several factors contributing to the failure of social movements in the Southeast Asia, including (1) the government could suppress the movement or protest via force or threat of force, (2) the protestors focus too much on nationalism instead of seeking support from international stakeholders, (3) the citizens lose faith in democracy, they do not participate politically because they think it might not work, (4) the protestors have limited resources, mainly financial resources for the movements, and (5) the limited media coverage.

McVeigh, Cunningham, and Farrell (2014) argue that the alignment with the “political party agenda” can influence the outcome of the social movement in Southern nations between 1960 and 2000. McVeigh, Cunningham, and Farrell (2014) address the characteristics of the organizations can increase the likelihood of accomplishing their stated goals, and the political environment in which the social movements operate can influence their effectiveness.

Taylor (1999) indicates the persistent influence of gender hierarchies across various movements, not only in those explicitly addressing gender conflicts or aiming for gender change. By integrating feminist insights with mainstream social movement theories, Taylor (1999) argues for recognizing gender as a fundamental factor affecting the emergence, dynamics, and consequences of social movements. This approach offers a richer understanding of the social construction of gender and the transformative potential of social movements in challenging and reshaping gender norms and inequalities (Taylor, 1999).
Traditional and new media can serve as powerful amplifiers for nonviolent movements in Southeast Asia, particularly the six cases in Thailand from 2000 to 2023. Drawing upon the insights from recent scholarship, Castells (2015) highlights the concept of a “networked public sphere,” showcasing the new media’s potential to enable alternative voices to challenge the government's narratives. Bennett and Livingston (2018) also examine how media can create communication structures, supporting the movements to effectively counter the government's misinformation and propaganda.

However, the findings also indicate the vulnerability of movements that heavily rely on social media. Tufekci (2017) illustrates the dynamic of digital mobilization, underscoring the speed and reach of social media platforms. Yet, Gagliardone et al. (2016) argue the transient nature of social media and the control from the government can create major risks to protestors. Trottier (2016) also discusses the challenges and limitations of online activism in sustaining momentum in the digital sphere.

Tufekci and Wilson (2012) argue that social media, mainly Facebook, helped with the communication for the protests; however, Tufekci (2017) argues that social media hurts movements in the long run. Yet, several scholars have discussed the media's role in amplifying and framing the voices of social movements (Gitlin, 1980; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993). Gitlin (1980) highlights the old and new media’s role in the Occupy Nigeria Protest, while Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) address the influences of media on movement outcomes impacting the action strategy, framing strategy, and leadership, and emphasizing the audience size and entertainment values.
In addition, Entman (1993) introduces the media framing theory, indicating the importance of portraying the movement or issue in the media to impact public perception and support. These insights underscore the importance of media serving as a vital platform for protesters to gather public support, disseminate messages, pressure the government and policymakers, increase international intervention, encourage participation from marginalized groups, receive social capital, and create collective action.

Despite being successful, these examples are not recommended for the protesters as a long-term movement strategy. Although digital media has the potential to coordinate collective action, it also raises the question of its effectiveness in achieving tangible outcomes (Bennett & Segerberd, 2012). Consequently, identifying the role of social media in nonviolent movements in Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand, provides a profound understanding of the importance of traditional and new media in this region.

The role of social media in social movements has been a subject of scholarly interest. Scholars have emphasized the importance of communication and media in theorizing about social movements, highlighting how social movements occur as conversations and how collective identities in social movements require continuous information exchange between activists and their environment (Mattoni & Treré, 2014). Furthermore, the impact of social media on social movements has been explored, revealing how social media shapes social movements and changes how activists and social movement organizations interact with each other (Murthy, 2018). Therefore, utilizing traditional and new media for non-violent political protests can lead to drawbacks, such as government control and censorship, propaganda and misinformation, digital media literacy limitations, and surveillance and privacy risks.
3.2. Positive Impacts of Media

3.2.1. Gathering Public Support

The rise of social media platforms has created new dynamics for social movements, including the Internet supporting the Zapatista movements in Mexico, Twitter organizing medical supplies during the Arab Spring, empowering tear gas effect in Istanbul’s Gezi Park, and the refusion to use bullhorns for Occupy Movement in New York (Tufekci, 2017). Social media allows movements to mobilize quickly, bypass traditional gatekeepers, and communicate directly with supporters and protestors. Visual social media, particularly images, can evoke affective responses and influence individuals' attitudes and actions toward social issues; therefore, visual media plays a role in shaping public sentiment and mobilizing support for social movements (Proitz, 2017).

3.2.2. Disseminating Messages

Chadwick and Dennis (2016) discuss the importance of digital media in reshaping political activism by studying the relationship between leadership and membership influence from horizontalism in digital media⁴ and elite media-centric work⁵ in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. By exploring the strengths and weaknesses of the Citizen’s Movement 38 Degrees in the United Kingdom, Chadwick and Dennis (2016) contribute to the dynamics of citizen-led movements and the role of media in driving mobilization and advocacy. Cogburn and Espinoza-Vasquez (2011) indicate the role of social media in transforming political

---

⁴ Horizontalism in digital media refers to the decentralization of power and equal distribution of information for users.

⁵ Elite media-centric work refers to media content production through a select group of influential individuals or organizations.
participation and fostering civic engagement, offering valuable insights into the potential of media usage in influencing the outcomes of social movement campaigns.

3.2.3. Pressuring Government and Policymakers

Some social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook, have been identified as practical tools for engaging citizens with local government and political issues. The influence of social media on political expression has been observed among Chinese internet users, contributing to support for the existing sociopolitical system (Selander & Jarvenpaa, 2016). Therefore, social media shapes public sentiment and attitudes toward the government and political system.

Social media's transformative power is also visible in the context of autocracies, where it has sparked citizens' desires for democracy and socioeconomic advancement in authoritarian governments (Weidmann & Rød, 2019). This finding illustrates the potential of social media to mobilize citizens and pressure governments and policymakers in non-democratic regimes. However, not all social media platforms are equally significant. Haro-de-Rosario et al. (2016) demonstrate that Facebook is preferred over Twitter for participating in local government issues, so different social media platforms may have varying levels of effectiveness in engaging citizens and influencing their interactions with government and policymakers.

3.2.4. Increasing International Intervention

When the domestic government is too oppressed, international intervention can also step in and play a critical role in supporting the protestors. Media can increase its reach nationally and transnationally, allowing the movements to benefit from international attention and transnational advocacy networks to be involved in the movements (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). However, the
effectiveness of international support can vary, but it can also cause unintended consequences, such as government backlash (Davenport, 2007). Therefore, examining how media can shape international reactions to Southeast Asian non-violent social movements is necessary.

3.2.5. Encouraging Participation from Marginalized Groups

Not only does social media assist non-violent political protests, but it can also encourage more women to participate in the protests. Mclean and Maalsen (2013) examine the uprising of feminism on social media and other platforms, offering a geographical viewpoint on feminist activity and emphasizing the significance of social media in providing assistance and advancing feminist movements. In addition, Yin and Sun (2020) examine the impact of the MeToo movement and political participation in China, resulting in intersectional digital feminism and the role of social media in driving and amplifying feminist activism. This finding indicates that digital media platforms can provide spaces for marginalized voices and contribute to the visibility and influence of social movements.

3.2.6. Receiving Social Capital

Furthermore, social media can significantly facilitate participation in social movements by enhancing social capital among individuals. Hwang and Kim (2015) indicate that social media improved social capital, which moderated the relationship between social media use and social movement participation. Bächtiger et al. (2018) discuss the role of deliberative democracy in fostering social capital and collective action, highlighting the potential of social media as a platform for deliberative processes that contribute to developing social capital.

3.2.7. Creating Collective Action
Etter and Albu (2020) examine the impact of social media algorithms on collective action in social movement organizations, and their findings indicate that social media algorithms can influence the visibility and reach of social movement content, potentially shaping the dynamics of collective action and mobilization. Furthermore, Khazraee and Novak (2018) analyze the impact of digital platforms on protests and how social media enables the formation of collective identities and conclude with the comprehension of the impact of media consumption on the development and activation of social movements.

In addition, Pavan (2016) investigates the capacity of online collective action networks to integrate several aspects beyond protest, examining the role of social media in establishing social movements as formalized entities. Pavan (2016) provides valuable insights into the enduring effects of social media usage on the institutionalization of social movements. Pavan (2016) increases the understanding of the relationship between media consumption and the results of social movements.

3.3. Negative Impacts of Media

3.3.1. Government Control and Censorship

Traditional media outlets are often subject to government control or influence, especially in authoritarian regimes. This can lead to censorship or biased reporting, misrepresenting a movement's objectives. Media coverage can also manipulate the government's responses to social movements since news media can shape the public agenda by influencing authorities, public opinion, and elites.

In contrast, local news media favor the issues overlapping with the interests of local well-being and economic growth (Andrews & Caren, 2010). Earl et al. (2004) also indicate that
the news agency, type of event, and involved issues impact the decision of a newspaper to cover an event. Qin and Wu (2017) find that the government's methods for controlling public opinion impact how people use social media in China, highlighting the intricate interactions between political movements, propaganda, and social media.

As a result, governments often prefer keeping their reputation and image, so the media attention can pressure the government to respond to the movement's demands. However, governments in some regions, including Southeast Asia, can use propaganda, media censorship, and regression to counter social movements, impacting collective action from mobilization to revolution (Tilly, 1978). This juxtaposition of the influence of media and government reactions creates complexity in understanding the outcome of the movements.

3.3.2. Propaganda and Misinformation

Tufekci and Wilson (2012) suggest that social media played a significant role in mobilizing individuals to participate in the protest by spreading information and shaping public opinion in the context of political movements. Anduiza et al. (2013) also agree that online social networks played a crucial role in mobilizing individuals for the protest, indicating the significant influence of new media in shaping the political protest in Spain.

However, there are several issues with traditional and new media regarding the spread of news and political information. Davis et al. (2016) emphasize that social media platforms can quickly create and spread false information. Vosoughi et al. (2018) also indicate that false news spreads further and faster than the truth, reaching more people and distributing misinformation faster. As a result, there is propaganda and misleading information on social media platforms.
Moreover, scholars address misinformation about public opinion through social media in elections and political events. In the context of political manipulation, the issue of propaganda has been highlighted, particularly in understanding political parties and politicians and engaging in manipulation on social media (Bienvenue, 2020). Additionally, social media and digital networks concerning social movements and activism have been contextualized, emphasizing the significance of social ties and networks online and offline (Rahimi, 2011).

3.3.3. Digital Media Literacy Limitations

Enikolopov et al. (2015) provide evidence of the relationship between the use of social media and protest participation, particularly in Russia, by highlighting the impact of social media platforms in shaping and mobilizing participation in protests. However, the impact of digital illiteracy on access to and engagement with these platforms remains a critical area for further exploration.

In the context of political activism, Little (2016) discusses the role of communication technology in facilitating and shaping protests and addresses the significance of digital tools in contemporary activism. However, the implications of digital illiteracy on effective communication technology utilization for social movement organization and mobilization warrant further investigation.

Moreover, Selander and Jarvenpaa (2016) illustrate the impact of digital action on social movement organizations by showcasing the evolving nature of digital activism and the need to
understand the limitations of digital illiteracy in adopting new action repertoires\(^6\) within social movements. Freelon et al. (2020) also address the need to critically examine the role of digital illiteracy in shaping online activism and its potential implications for social movements.

### 3.3.4. Surveillance and Privacy Risks

Participants in movements can be put at risk due to surveillance by state actors, as new media often leaves digital footprints. Although social media content has the potential to organize protests, it can also create significant privacy risks, particularly in terms of surveillance. Brunton and Nissenbaum (2015) address the exposure to legal risks and the amplification of official surveillance, highlighting the complex interplay between media usage, privacy, and surveillance in the context of political protest.

Moreover, ethical considerations in the context of big data and digital contact tracing add another layer of complexity to the discussion on surveillance and privacy risks (Sharon, 2020). Additionally, Rivers and Lewis (2014) highlight the need for ethical research standards in a world of big data, suggesting the necessity of ethical guidelines and frameworks for researching the intersection of media usage, surveillance, and privacy risks in political protests.

Although numerous scholars are researching traditional and new media and social movements globally, the Southeast Asia region remains relatively understudied. Each ASEAN member state has a unique media and political landscape, making understanding how media operates and facilities within this diverse region crucial. Furthermore, Thailand has had a resurgence of social movements in recent decades (Hewison, 2017), allowing this research to investigate the interplay between media and activism.

---

\(^6\) Selander and Jarvenpaa (2016) draw on the collective action space model and resource mobilization theory to “build new theory on social media and digital activism at the organizational level” called “new action repertoires”
Correspondingly, the question of how media usage influences the outcomes of nonviolent social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia, mainly Thailand, from 2000 to 2023 is compelling and puzzling. Existing literature provides a foundation for understanding the role of traditional and new media in the movements. Still, the unique socio-political aspects of Southeast Asia, together with the transition in media technologies, require further investigation.

This research will contribute to the broader understanding of the dynamic relationship between movements, media, and external factors, presenting insights into scholarship, policy, and activism in Southeast Asia. By analyzing the quantitative statistical analysis and examining the primary interviews, this study will provide an insightful contribution to the broader aspects of the media’s influence and the specific cases from direct participants. In addition, drawing on several academic journals and university press books in this field, this study will critically analyze the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing traditional and new media for social movement in Thailand, Southeast Asia, and beyond.

3.4. Definition and Operationalization

Drawing on the definition from the NAVCO 1.3 Codebook, this study borrows the four characteristics of the movement’s outcome from Chenoweth and Shay (2019a): success, limited, failure, and ongoing. Chenoweth and Shay (2019a) define these characteristics using several news articles, scholarly sources, encyclopedic entries, and area and subject experts. Therefore, in this research, *success* refers to when the campaign accomplished a hundred percent of its objectives within the peak activities year, and “success was a direct result of campaign activities” (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019a, p. 11). On the other hand, *failure* refers to when the campaign has been suppressed or accomplished none of its objectives (Chenoweth & Shay, 2022).
Borrowing from the NAVCO 2.1 Codebook, a nonviolent campaign refers to “nonviolent resistance” when the movement “does not directly threaten or harm the physical well-being of the opponent” (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b, p.5). On the contrary, a violent campaign refers to violent mobilization, including “recruiting, arming, and training participants in preparation for an armed conflict with the regime” (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b, p.4). However, nonviolent mobilization can also maintain “recruitment and training, though arms are not sought” (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b, p.4). As a result, this research will differentiate and operationalize nonviolent and violent campaigns following the definitions from NAVCO data to assist with quantitative analysis.

In this thesis, traditional media refers to non-digital communication channels, including print (newspapers, magazines, books, etc.), broadcast (television, radio, etc.), and outdoor (billboards, posters, etc.) (Logan, 2010). These forms of media are typically accessed through physical copies or devices like TVs and radios. On the other hand, new media encompasses digital platforms and technologies that enable communication, sharing, and information dissemination. Examples of new media include social media, websites, blogs, podcasts, and online video platforms (Logan, 2010). New media is highly accessible through smartphones, tablets, and computers with internet connectivity (Rajendran & Thesinghraja, 2014).

The case study in qualitative analysis focuses mainly on six cases of nonviolent protest from Thailand. Therefore, it is essential to understand the Thai government's media repression of social movements. The Thai government controlled the media both directly and indirectly, including traditional media. Print and broadcast media have been controlled since the 1990s by the military dictatorship, and the media had more freedom in the early 1990s. However, several
radio stations and television channels were under military ownership, whereas the mainstream media was mostly under the elite, causing the journalists to avoid sensitive topics and be self-censored, leading to the rate from Freedom House as “not free” in 2014, with the result of 130 of 180 countries in press freedom (Talcoth, 2015).

The rise of social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, used by Thai politicians in 2009 and 2010, and the freedom to share opinions and critiques are a lot better than traditional media through having the platforms to access information, discuss political beliefs, file sharing, and people to people (P2P) networks without any interference (Talcoth, 2015). Turley and Fisher (2018) examine the utilization of hashtags by activists in the initial phases of the Thai 2020 anti-government demonstrations, and they indicate that Twitter was predominantly utilized for the purpose of constructing collective narratives and disseminating movement information rather than for the mobilization of offline protest actions.
4.1. Hypotheses Explanation

Drawing on the theoretical framework and conceptual terms from the primary qualitative data collection and the complementarities and synergies from existing secondary qualitative and quantitative data, this thesis proposes that media usage (traditional and new media) can potentially influence the successful outcome of social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia through three hypotheses.

**H1: did the media strategies help spread the message of the movement?**

The first hypothesis argues that traditional and new media can help social movements amplify their messages, allowing them to influence public opinions and counter government propaganda or misleading information. The spread of disinformation has resulted from the legitimacy issues in several democratic countries, associated with the efforts of parties and movements to mobilize supporters against the parties and mainstream press carrying the message (Bennett & Livingston, 2018), so the digital media can bypass traditional media and shape public narratives.

The contrasting argument regarding the role of media in shaping public opinion and countering government propaganda has been a subject of interest for researchers across several disciplines. Kavanaugh et al. (2011) highlight governments' increasing use of social media, emphasizing the potential for these platforms to amplify movement messages. Kavanaugh et al. (2011) indicate that social media use by government entities has evolved from routine
communication to critical engagement, indicating the growing influence of these platforms in shaping public discourse.

In addition to amplifying movement messages, the media also plays a significant role in countering propaganda and misleading information disseminated by the government. Woolley (2022) explores the power of digital propaganda and the influence of influencers in shaping public opinion and emphasizes the role of digital media in amplifying certain narratives and countering government propaganda. Woolley (2022) contributes to understanding the methods that can utilize digital platforms to shape public opinion and counter misleading information from the government.

**H2: did the media strategies help channel support into mobilization?**

The second hypothesis proposes that media, mainly social media, can support mobilizing protestors, either virtually or physically, sustaining the momentum of a social movement campaigns. Contradicting the argument from Tilly (1978), this thesis argues that utilizing media can indeed allow the movements to continue longer because there is less resource consumption (time and budget) and less risk. However, social media can be used to mobilize but also polarize if utilized incorrectly (Gilbert, 2021).

Several scholars acknowledge the potential of the media to sustain the momentum of protests, and numerous studies have explored various aspects of this phenomenon. Jost et al. (2018) illustrate the role of social media in facilitating political protest, emphasizing the importance of information, motivation, and social networks. Jost et al. (2018) argue that there are multifaceted ways in which the media can contribute to the coordination and mobilization of protestors, thereby sustaining the momentum of protests.
In a related context, Laer (2010) argues that the internet is an information channel for protest demonstrations, so protesters can utilize online platforms to mobilize and coordinate protest activities. This research contributes to the potential of the media to sustain the momentum of protests by serving as an effective communication channel for activists. Furthermore, Pacheco et al. (2020) explore the coordinated networks on social media and suggest that social media platforms can be used to identify and understand the dynamics of coordinated action, which is crucial for sustaining the momentum of protests.

Despite numerous scholars and research providing insightful information regarding the role of media in facilitating and mobilizing protesters to sustain protest momentum, some gaps should be addressed. For instance, the specific mechanisms through which different forms of media influence protest coordination and sustainability remain underexplored. Therefore, this study will provide in-depth research regarding the correlation between traditional and new media in shaping protest dynamics in Thailand.

**H3: did the media strategies garner international support for the movement?**

The third hypothesis suggests that media can exert pressure on the government or authorities by attracting international support from the democratic hegemon (the United States), powerful democratic states (the European countries), international organizations, and non-governmental organizations so the protesters can reduce the need to meet physically, creating less potential harm to participants rather than physical movements.

In addition, media is a significant tool for world leaders to interact and showcase their international support and personal branding. Barberá and Zeitzoff (2017) examine why global leaders utilize social media and how it affects their international standing, and their findings
indicate that social media can be a powerful tool for receiving international support and influencing public opinion, thus indirectly pressuring authorities.

Furthermore, Dingwerth et al. (2019) illustrate the rise of legitimizing democracy and democracy's language in international organizations, finding that media and communication play a crucial role in shaping the legitimacy and support of international organizations. This influence on public perception can indirectly pressure authorities to align with democratic norms and values to gain international support.

While the existing research emphasizes the influence of media in pressuring authorities and receiving international support, there is a need for more in-depth studies that specifically analyze the mechanisms through which media can achieve these outcomes. As a result, this investigation will provide an in-depth response and research from grassroots activities and experts in Thailand. Tufekci (2017) utilizes the Capacities and Signals theory to analyze how digital platforms affect the organization, tactics, and visibility of social movements. Tufekci (2017) suggests that while social media enables rapid mobilization and increases the visibility of protests, it also introduces new vulnerabilities, such as the lack of sustainable organizational structures and susceptibility to censorship and misinformation. Furthermore, Tufekci (2017) discusses the challenges movements face in maintaining attention and effecting long-term change in the face of these new dynamics.
CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1. Methodology

This research utilizes a mixed-methods approach to investigate the influence of media usage on the outcomes of social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia, particularly six nonviolent protests in Thailand from 2000 to 2023. The selection of this approach is driven by the urge to comprehensively understand the complex relationship between traditional and new media, social movements, and external factors in this socio-political landscape. To defend the thesis and advance the hypothesis, this study will justify the result by utilizing quantitative and qualitative analyses to test for the influence of traditional and new media on the outcome of nonviolent social movements.

5.2. Quantitative Analysis

For quantitative analysis, this thesis will draw upon secondary data obtained from the NAVCO 2.1 dataset and the World Bank internet usage data, which maintains information on various social movement campaigns, including the types of campaigns (violent or nonviolent), the outcomes of the campaign (success or failure), the duration of the campaign, and the percentage of internet usage for all nonviolent movements between 1990 and 2023. This analysis will include a statistical regression technique to identify correlations, trends, and the influence of traditional and new media on the outcome of the movement. By utilizing the binary logistic regression in R statistical analysis to understand the relationship between media and non-violent movements around the globe, this study expects to see the reverse result from the hypotheses.
5.3. Qualitative Analysis

As a counterargument to the puzzling result from the quantitative analysis, this research will select six non-violent protests in Thailand as case studies to conduct in-depth interviews to explore how a movement utilizes media, which is more significant than whether or not it uses media. The six case studies are the Anti-Thaksin Campaign (2005-2006), the Anti-Military Government Campaign (2007), the People’s Alliance for Democracy Campaign (2008), the Red Shirt Campaign (2008-2010), the Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign (2013-2014), and the New Democracy Movement Campaign (2014-2021). By choosing the six nonviolent campaigns from the dataset as a cross-sectional time-series design, this study will research in more detail whether or not each campaign utilizes traditional media and new media for communication and the government’s actions to suppress or control media outlets during these movements.

In addition, this research will also incorporate qualitative methods to advance in-depth findings by using secondary sources, including academic journal articles, published books, news reports, government documents, and most significantly, the interviews with key stakeholders, including journalists, press professionals, protest organizers, protestors, and academic experts, who were actively engaged in or reported on the movements in Thailand. To enrich the qualitative analysis, the interviews will be conducted virtually with a snowball sampling technique to connect with key informants and ensure diverse experiences and perspectives.

5.4. Rationale for Mixed-Methods Approach

The mixed-methods approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of the research question. I am concerned that the unexpected result of the regressions could be due to
(1) an inability of the data to accurately and precisely measure social media strategies and (2) the possibility of conditional factors, such as specific strategies of social media use, that could impact the relationship between social media use and movement success. Therefore, the mixed-methods approach is beneficial in filling the gap and allowing an in-depth understanding of specific case studies.

Quantitative analysis ensures the identification of patterns and statistical relationships between the variables correlated with media usage and movement outcomes. Furthermore, qualitative analysis provides a deeper exploration of the contextual strategies, motivations, and factors of media usage in the selected six nonviolent movements. Combining both quantitative and qualitative methods can enhance the robustness of the research and ensure a more extensive knowledge of the interaction between media and activism.

5.5. Limitations

Although this study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, there are still some limitations. First, numerous scholars define the outcome of the movement in different scopes and definitions. In this study, the outcome of the movement does not refer to democracy because there are movements that seek changes, but the overall goals or objectives of the protestors of some case studies are not democratic changes but the change of the leadership or the government. Second, there are limited primary sources regarding each specific case study in Thailand, and the English translation is not a hundred percent the actual words from the grassroots participants. Third, due to the limitation of time and resources, this research utilizes virtual interviews instead of physical observations. Therefore, future research can fulfill these limitations by observing and
interviewing ground-level participants and comparing different countries to counter different regions' socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts.
CHAPTER 6: FINDING AND ANALYSIS

6.1. Data Analysis

To perform the statistical analysis, this thesis draws on the NAVCO 2.1 dataset and World Bank Internet Usage Percentage data to identify whether or not the correlation between traditional media, new media, internet usage percentage, and the outcome of the nonviolent social movements in the globe from 1990 to 2023 are statistically significant. There are 298 observations of nonviolent political protests (total number of campaigns) since 1990 in the world. As shown in “Table 1. Descriptive Statistics,” according to the R Regression Statistical Analysis, the descriptive statistics for "New Media" indicate that, on average, the usage of new media is relatively low (mean of approximately 0.096).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Media</td>
<td>0.09589041</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.2949464</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Media</td>
<td>0.3219178</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4680137</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Usage</td>
<td>11.9224</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>19.27406</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success (Outcome)</td>
<td>0.2181208</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4136645</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The median of 0 suggests that more than half of the cases in the observation reported minimal use of new media. The standard deviation of about 0.295 indicates moderate variability in new media usage among the cases. The data's minimum value of 0 and the maximum value of 1 suggest a dichotomous or binary variable, illustrating the presence or absence of new media usage in each case (with 0 representing no usage and 1 representing usage). This range indicates that while many cases did not use new media at all, there are instances where it was used to its full extent, as defined in the study.

As for the "Traditional Media," the mean of 0.322 indicates that, on average, the use of traditional media in the observed cases is moderately low. The 0 median suggests that more than half of the cases did not use traditional media. A standard deviation of 0.468 shows moderate variability in the use of traditional media among the cases. The minimum value of 0 and the maximum value of 1 represent a binary scale, with 0 indicating no use and 1 indicating use of traditional media.

The mean of 11.922 for the "Internet Usage Percentage" suggests that, on average, the Internet usage percentage among the observations is somewhat low. The median of 2.7 indicates that more than half of the cases have even lower internet usage. The standard deviation of 19.274 illustrates a high level of variation in internet usage percentages across different cases. The range from 0 to 93 demonstrates that some cases had very low while others had very high usage.

The mean of 0.218 for the "Success" as an outcome indicates that the average success rate of the nonviolent social movements in the study is low. The median of 0 suggests that more than half of the movements were unsuccessful. The standard deviation of 0.414 shows a moderate spread in the success outcomes among the movements. The minimum value of 0 and
maximum value of 1 suggest that the success of movements is measured on a binary scale, with 0 indicating failure and 1 indicating success.

Table 2. Analysis of Nonviolent Social Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent variable:</td>
<td>success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pi_new_media</td>
<td>-0.663</td>
<td>-0.955</td>
<td>-0.883</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.586)</td>
<td>(0.669)</td>
<td>(0.705)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pi_trad_media</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.394</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.317)</td>
<td>(0.337)</td>
<td>(0.367)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internet_percent</td>
<td>-0.018*</td>
<td>-0.018*</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regime_support</td>
<td>-0.832***</td>
<td>-0.735***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.225)</td>
<td>(0.238)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camp_support</td>
<td>0.842***</td>
<td>0.759***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.224)</td>
<td>(0.237)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ingo_support</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.012)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dias_support</td>
<td>-0.020**</td>
<td>-0.028**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.239***</td>
<td>-1.043***</td>
<td>-1.020***</td>
<td>-1.334***</td>
<td>-1.170***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.171)</td>
<td>(0.168)</td>
<td>(0.199)</td>
<td>(0.152)</td>
<td>(0.215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood</td>
<td>-154.102</td>
<td>-141.341</td>
<td>-138.705</td>
<td>-144.640</td>
<td>-129.082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
"Table 2. Analysis of Nonviolent Social Movements" presents the results of five regression models used to understand the factors influencing the dependent variable "success."

The "pi_new_media" variable represents the influence of new media platforms on success. Across all models (1 to 5), the coefficients are negative, suggesting that an increase in new media presence is associated with a decrease in the measure of success.

The "pi_trad_media" variable represents the influence of traditional media on success, which is consistently positive across all models, but like new media, it is not statistically significant. Therefore, the two variables from NAVCO 2.1 data do not represent the statistical significance. In models (1) and (2), the "internet_percent" variable from the World Bank dataset shows a negative association with success, with statistically significant coefficients. However, in model (5), the coefficient is not significant. This suggests that for models (1) and (2), higher internet usage is associated with a slight decrease in success.

The control variables are “regime_support” (“regime has support from other states”), “camp_support” (“campaign has formal support from other states”), “ingo_support” (“campaign has formal support from international non-governmental organizations and societal actors”), “dias_support” (“campaign has support from diaspora communities living in countries other than the target state”) (Chenoweth & Shay, 2019b, p.12). These are the control variables because these factors can influence the outcome of the movement. To ensure that the quantitative results are not skewed caused by the manipulation of these variables, this thesis utilizes these control variables.

In models (4) and (5), the coefficients for regime support are negative and statistically significant at the 1% level, indicating that greater regime support is associated with lower
success, with a high level of confidence in this relationship. This "camp_support" variable has positive and statistically significant coefficients in models (4) and (5) at the 1% level, suggesting strong evidence that campaign support is positively associated with success.

International non-governmental organization support has positive coefficients in models (4) and (5), but they are not statistically significant, indicating no clear evidence of an association with success. Support from the diaspora communities has a negative association with success in models (4) and (5). It is statistically significant at the 5% level, indicating a reliable negative impact of this variable on success.

By acknowledging the puzzling quantitative result, this study aims to provide in-depth primary interviews and secondary literature reviews to explore how a movement utilizes media, which is more significant than whether or not it uses media. The findings demonstrate how media can influence the effectiveness and success of nonviolent movements in Southeast Asia. As movements become dependent on traditional and social media, social media can also harm the movement as it is not a sustainable structure and can be shut down quickly and easily by the oppressing government.

This thesis chose these six Thai cases because these multiple cases within the same country during the period of time in which social media is relevant; therefore, it allows for a “most similar cases” design. According to NAVCO 2.1 data, Thailand’s three successful nonviolent movements were the Anti-Thaksin Campaign, the People’s Alliance for Democracy Campaign, and the Civil Movement for Democracy.

The two unsuccessful movements were the Anti-Military Government Campaign and the Red Shirt Campaign. The one ongoing movement is the New Democracy Movement (See Table
3. Media Usage for Six Nonviolent Movements in Thailand from 2005 to 2023. This thesis aims to see the evidence of whether or not traditional and new media are influential for the outcome of the social movements, allowing us to evaluate the theory for the relationship between media and nonviolent social movements.

Table 3. Media Usage for Six Nonviolent Movements in Thailand from 2005 to 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Violent Social Movement Campaign</th>
<th>Government / Regime</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Degree of Traditional Media Usage</th>
<th>Examples of Traditional Media Usage</th>
<th>Degree of New Media Usage</th>
<th>Examples of New Media Usage</th>
<th>Media Restriction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Thaksin Campaign</td>
<td>Thaksin Regime</td>
<td>2005 - 2006</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>High Degree</td>
<td>This group uses television, radio, print media, and the support from the Thai's entrepreneur in media sector.</td>
<td>Low Degree</td>
<td>This group uses the internet.</td>
<td>There is media restriction from the government, but it is not successful because the protestors have their own media outlets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Military Government Campaign</td>
<td>Military-Ins talled Government</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Medium Degree</td>
<td>This group uses newspaper, print media, and radio, but the government could shut down the traditional media.</td>
<td>Low Degree</td>
<td>This group uses the internet.</td>
<td>There is media restriction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Alliance for Democracy</td>
<td>People Power Party Government</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>High Degree</td>
<td>This group uses television, radio, and broadcast, and they can control media outlets.</td>
<td>Medium Degree</td>
<td>This group uses the new media for both national and international awareness, including BBC international reporter.</td>
<td>There is no media restriction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Shirt Campaign</td>
<td>Abhisit Vejjajiva Government</td>
<td>2008 - 2010</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Low Degree</td>
<td>This group uses radio and television.</td>
<td>Medium Degree</td>
<td>This group uses website and international media.</td>
<td>There is media restriction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Movement for Democracy</td>
<td>Yingluck Government</td>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
<td>Success</td>
<td>High Degree</td>
<td>This group uses 24-hour satellite TV channel, magazines, and radio stations.</td>
<td>High Degree</td>
<td>This group uses social media (popular Facebook pages) and website.</td>
<td>There is no media restriction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Democracy Movement</td>
<td>Thai Military Regime</td>
<td>2021 - Present</td>
<td>On Going</td>
<td>Medium Degree</td>
<td>This group uses a medium degree of traditional media, including print media.</td>
<td>High Degree</td>
<td>This group uses social media (Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok) and hashtag as a strategy.</td>
<td>There is media restriction on traditional and new media, and there is article 1-1-2 to put legal pressure on the protestors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2. Political and Media Background of Thailand

Thailand's political landscape has been characterized by instability and transitions between military and civilian rule, marked by coups, protests, and shifts in governance. Embree (1950) argues that Thailand is situated in the heart of Indochina, surrounded by cultures influenced by India and China. Embree (1950) suggests that Thailand's loosely structured social system has facilitated the country's ability to adapt to external cultural influences without undergoing drastic societal changes.

Thailand has seen a series of nonviolent movement campaigns that have led to significant social and political changes. The relationship between social movements and the state is a central aspect of Thailand's political dynamics, influenced by factors such as government responses, public sentiment, and the international community's reactions. Thomas et al. (2020) argue that Thailand's digital activism is a complex interplay of authentic protests and suspicious online activities, highlighting the evolving nature of political dissent and the significant influence of social media in shaping narratives and mobilizing support amid the country's ongoing push for democracy and reform.

The evolution of media technologies and platforms has reshaped how social movements in Thailand, and Southeast Asia more broadly, communicate, organize, and mobilize. The rise of online news outlets and social media has altered traditional forms of media engagement, enabling movements to bypass state-controlled media channels and engage directly with the public. However, the effectiveness of these new media strategies in achieving movement goals remains a subject of debate, with scholars and practitioners questioning the extent to which social media empowers or hinders social movements.
Sombatpoonsiri (2020) discusses the deep-seated division within Thai society, marked by two conflicting worldviews: the royal Nationalist perspective that upholds the king as the legitimate ruler of Thailand, and the democratic outlook which argues that sovereignty belongs to the Thai people. This ideological divide traces back to the incomplete regime transition of 1932 and has been exacerbated over the past fifteen years through escalating tensions, politicization of independent institutions, and tit-for-tat protests (Sombatpoonsiri, 2020). The resulting polarization has not only split Thai society but also intensified during crises, such as the coronavirus pandemic, further embedding the country in a state of deep-rooted division and pushing it towards authoritarianism (Sombatpoonsiri, 2020).

There are six main non violent social movement campaigns to identify for this thesis, including the Anti-Thaksin Campaign, the Anti-Military Government Campaign, the People’s Alliance for Democracy Campaign, the Red Shirt Campaign, the Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign, and the New Democracy Movement Campaign.

6.3. Anti-Thaksin Campaign (2005-2006)

The Anti-Thaksin Campaign from 2005 to 2006 was a successful mass protest against former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a billionaire who supported the idea of “post-neo-liberal” capitalism (Pye & Schaffar, 2006). Thailand was divided into two camps of partisans, including the pro-Thaksin (Thaksin supporters) and the anti-Thanksin (Thaksin opponents) (McCargo, 2017). The movement occurred due to the intra-elite conflict between the “CEO-style” ruling method of Thaksin and the old power elite with a society that does not want free trade agreements, authoritarian and privatization, and corporate-denominated politics (Pye & Schaffar, 2006).
The Anti-Thaksin Campaign was successful, but critics argue that Thaksin had undermined media independence, particularly in television and radio, and somewhat in the internet and print media, while also suppressing criticism and oppressing public and parliamentary discourse, resulting in widespread corruption (Ockey, 2007). These concerns led to regular protests against his regime, led by former ally Sondhi Limthongkun, who owned the Manager media by the end of 2005 (Ockey, 2007). This successful campaign extensively utilized traditional media, such as television, radio, and print, and new media, such as the Internet (Ockey, 2007). There was a media restriction on the support of Thaksin. We can initially observe a positive correlation between the utilization of traditional and new media and the success of this campaign.

Newspapers in Thailand had to abandon their previous stance of political neutrality and instead became more openly aligned with specific political orientations (McCargo, 2017). The Bangkok Post and The Nation moved oppositely, aligning themselves with the Phujatkan-led anti-Thaksin camp, while Thai Rath and Matichon shifted their support for Thaksin Shinawatra (McCargo, 2017). Furthermore, interviewee 2 agrees that there was the use of media during the Anti-Thaksin movement through satellite TV. Interviewee 1 indicates that she was watching the Yellow Shirt or the Anti-Thaksin movement broadcasted on television, and her parents really supported the Yellow Shirt movement by watching the television all day but not participating directly at the protest site. Therefore, she thinks the media plays an important role in spreading the message of the movement as the hypothesis I of this thesis.

---

7 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 2, December 07th, 2023.
8 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 1, December 07th, 2023.
By the end of 2005, Sondhi Limthongkun, a former ally who owned the Manager media, was leading regular protests against Thaksin's regime due to concerns that he had undermined media independence (television and radio, and somewhat in the internet and print media), suppressed criticism, and repressed public and parliamentary discourse (Pye & Schaffar, 2006). Furthermore, interviewee 7 had the experience of working for the government to censor the news, so they controlled the traditional media. Then, after the rise of Facebook, the government tried to control the new media and spread misinformation as well.9

As the background of the movement, Interviewee 1 argues that the movement began not as anti-democratic but against Thaksin because of the corruption.10 However, “it became anti-democratic from the protest to remove Thaksin because when the military intervened and the coup happened, it became anti-democratic.”11 In addition, interviewee 4 also recognizes the success of the coup involvement in removing Thaksin, but not democracy.12 However, interviewee 7 disagrees that there were Thaksin supporters who still wanted to have Thaksin as a leader rather than the non-democratic government.13 As a result, the Anti-Thaksin Campaign, known as Yellow Shirt, is a successful campaign utilizing media, but there was also some misinformation and control from the government. However, the protestors could accomplish their objective by removing Thaksin from his position.


The Anti-Military Government Campaign, an unsuccessful campaign, occurred as the opponents of Thailand's junta initiated a campaign to restore democracy and counter the military

---

9 Interview, Press Professional and Journalist 7, December 29th, 2023.
10 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 1, December 07th, 2023.
11 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 1, December 07th, 2023.
12 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 4, December 14th, 2023.
dictatorship (Connors & Hewison, 2008). The Puea Thai Party's chairman doubts the junta's legitimacy and warned of its intention to establish an anti-democratic structure (Connors & Hewison, 2008). This campaign also highlights the ongoing power struggle between Thaksin Shinawatra and the royalist establishment (Hewison, 2007).

In 2007, Thailand transitioned back to parliamentary rule with the approval of a new constitution in August and elections in December (Ockey, 2008). In addition, the coup in 2006 set the stage for a year of transition as the military and its appointed government prepared for a return to democracy (Ockey, 2008). However, they faced the challenge of establishing democratic institutions while preventing the popular government they had replaced from returning (Ockey, 2008).

In contrast to the Anti-Thaksin Campaign, this campaign saw a failure in its objectives. Traditional media such as newspapers, print media, radio, and television were employed but faced government restrictions. New media, represented by internet censorship, was severely restricted. These restrictions coincided with the campaign's failure, suggesting a potential relationship between media restrictions and campaign outcomes. As a result, this Anti-Military Government Campaign is considered as not successful.

Interviewee 4 provided an analysis linking the Anti-Thaksin Campaign of 2005 to subsequent political developments in Thailand. She viewed the campaign as successful, particularly in facilitating the removal of Thaksin Shinawatra from power. However, she also claimed that this success came at the cost of undermining the rule of law in Thailand. She argued that in an era when military influence and frequent coups predominated, the 2006 coup, which followed the campaign, was a turning point that changed Thai politics. Additionally, interviewee
observed that the relationship between civil activism and political stability are complicated in Thailand.14

**6.5. People's Alliance for Democracy Campaign (2008)**

In February 2006, Sondhi Limthongkul hosted a radio show that supported the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a successful campaign. It gained prominence online due to its anti-government stance after being dropped by a central radio station (RFI, 2008). The movement included Buddhist religious figures and was known for opposing Thaksin's corruption and land reforms, eventually leading to a non-violent military coup in September 2006. Moreover, after the 2006 coup, Thai Rak Thai was banned, leading to the formation of the People's Power Party and renewed PAD protests in 2008 against Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej, whom they accused of acting as a proxy for Thaksin (RFI, 2008).

This campaign, marked by its success, utilized traditional media extensively, including television and radio broadcasts. Additionally, new media played a role in the form of PAD-controlled media outlets, broadcasting, and international coverage. Media restrictions were present, but they favored the movement. Here, we can observe a positive association between media utilization and campaign success.

The People's Thai government under Prime Minister Samak took several actions to control and influence the media landscape in the country, including shutting down a news radio program. Former senator Jermsak Pinthong hosted the program after criticizing the Prime Minister's handling of a historical event and ordering community radio Thaksin to promote the government or face closure (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Prime Minister Samak also utilized state-run media channels to counter criticism from opposition-controlled media sets, reassigning

---

14 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 4, December 14th, 2023.
time slots and replacing content with pro-government programs.

The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) protested against the government, committing criminal violence against media organizations, such as NBT headquarters (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Pro-government groups also harassed media outlets that reported negatively about their activities, and there were cases of lese majeste (insulting the monarchy) for their speeches and actions, leading to resignations and arrests (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Thai authorities also warned international media not to comment on the monarchy, resulting in criminal investigations of foreign reporters like Jonathan Head from the BBC (Human Rights Watch, 2009).

To understand the background and media usage of this PAD movement, the Interviewee 4 reflected on her experiences during the People's Alliance for Democracy Campaign 2008. The interviewee recalled a political attempt by Thaksin's brother-in-law to become prime minister, which sparked protests. These events were part of a broader political context, including a party that aimed to criticize and potentially remove the monarchy from power. Interviewee 4 also shared personal experiences, revealing that her parents discouraged her from discussing politics with her middle-class friends, who strongly support the existing political structure. This personal detail underscores the divisive nature of politics in her environment and the role of social class in political alignment. Despite recognizing the campaign's success in increasing public sentiment at the time, she viewed it as unsuccessful. The protestors, she noted, primarily came from middle- or upper-middle-class backgrounds, suggesting a particular socio-economic dimension to the political activism of that period. This detail might imply that the movement's concerns and goals resonated more with those particular social classes.15

15 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 4, December 14th, 2023.

The Red Shirt Campaign is a mass protest by the poor people in Thailand (Forsyth, 2010). After disbanding the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) protests in April 2009, UDD leaders retreated to rural areas. They began planning more organized protests for 2010, known as the "Million Man March" in Bangkok, and they created "Red Shirt schools" to educate supporters on achieving democratic governance (Human Rights Watch, 2011). In early 2010, they organized large rallies in rural areas, drawing significant crowds, and they trained "Red Shirt Guards" for security and engaged in fundraising efforts (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

While some UDD leaders aimed for Thaksin's return, several members had broader goals, including continuing populist and political structure reforms, which faced opposition from the traditional political establishment. Security arrangements for the UDD movement were associated with the emergence of "Red Shirt Guards" (Human Rights Watch, 2011). Some were recruited from the Thahan Phran paramilitary force, and the composition and command structure of these guards remained unclear (Human Rights Watch, 2011). However, they played a role in maintaining order during protests, sometimes involving low-level violence.

This campaign faced government restrictions despite using traditional media like radio and satellite television. New media, represented by websites and international media, also encountered restrictions. Notably, this campaign failed. The presence of media restrictions coinciding with the campaign's failure highlights the potential influence of media control on movement outcomes. Community radio stations significantly increased in Thailand, along with the rise of partisan satellite TV, particularly during political struggles (McCargo, 2017). Several community radio stations were closely aligned with specific political movements, such as the
pro-Thaksin redshirt movement in the northeast, offering news and support networks and services, ultimately contributing to a more polarized and less moderate media landscape (McCargo, 2017).

Interviewee 7 provided a detailed account of Thailand's political and social dynamics following the Thaksin campaign 2007, focusing on the Red Shirt movement and its struggles. Initially, the Red Shirt's efforts were unsuccessful, as many intellectuals were forced and feared for their lives. However, the movement gained momentum when it received support from elite groups, gaining resources and leadership. Interviewee 7 also discussed the role of social media, particularly Facebook, in advancing the anti-military campaign. This new platform allowed for more effective communication and mobilization, contrasting with the methods used in the anti-Thaksin campaign.16

Geographically, interviewee 7 highlighted the division in Thailand, including the Northeast (Isann), which largely supported the Red Shirts. At the same time, the South citizens were loyal to the Junta and influenced by the Democratic Party. The interviewee described violent encounters in the South, contrasting with the non-violent stance of the Red Shirts from the North. A personal perception about a senior reporter caught up in a conflict serves to highlight how dangerous and chaotic the situation is, particularly for journalists who are frequently mistaken for Red Shirt activists and targeted by the army.17

6.7. Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign (2013-2014)

The Civil Movement for Democracy is a successful campaign, and it is a movement towards the crisis of police legitimacy as an anti-government protest between 2013 and 2014

---

16 Interview, Press Professional and Journalist 7, December 29th, 2023.
17 Interview, Press Professional and Journalist 7, December 29th, 2023.
The People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) is a highly media-using protest movement in Thailand responding to the growing number of internet-connected Thais. Their media campaigns include a 24-hour satellite TV channel, popular Facebook pages, opposition media outlets, websites, magazines, radio stations, and active social networking supporters (Nyblade et al., 2015). This strategy was effective since PDRC supporters primarily came from the urban middle class, especially in Bangkok and southern Thailand, where internet usage and Facebook adoption were high.

This campaign, characterized by its success, utilized a broad spectrum of traditional media, social networking supporters, and popular Facebook pages. New media, mainly social media and websites, played a significant role. Notably, media restrictions were very successful in favor of the movement. The positive correlation between media usage and campaign success is evident. Suthep Thaugsuban, the PDRC leader, experienced a significant surge in his Facebook page's popularity, growing 6,000% in a year to nearly 2 million "likes" (Sinpeng et al., 2015).

Over one-third of Thailand's 67 million people have internet access, and nearly 90% of internet users have Facebook accounts, making social media a primary reason for going online (Sinpeng et al., 2015).

Interviewee 8 indicated the experience of having pro-Thaksin parents, offering a contrasting generational perspective on Thai politics. Her parents, typical of their generation, viewed Thaksin as a symbol of democracy opposing the military. She disagreed with this opinion, believing Thaksin to be more of a royalist and unrepresentative of the democracy that the younger generation seeks. She highlighted the generational divide in media consumption and information access, indicating that her parents rely on traditional media like newspapers and TV,
which limits their exposure to diverse viewpoints. This contrasts with the younger generation, who actively engage in discussions on platforms like Twitter.\textsuperscript{18}

Furthermore, interviewee 8 compared the American media landscape, where outlets like Fox News and CNN promote particular viewpoints to show how one media source can impact people. This suggests a broader commentary on the evolving nature of media consumption and its impact on political perspectives across different generations in Thailand.\textsuperscript{19}


The New Democracy Movement has been an ongoing movement since 2014. In 2020, Thai youth initiated the largest anti-government protests since the 2014 military coup, demanding democracy, constitutional reform, and an end to repression (Hinz, 2022). This ongoing campaign utilizes traditional media, print, film, and new media, such as social media platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, and hashtags. Interviewee 2, who participated in the protests, highlighted the movement's decentralized nature and use of new media, including how authorities attempted to prevent protests by changing locations at the last minute.\textsuperscript{20} This reflects the dynamic interplay between media usage and government-imposed restrictions. Government-imposed media restrictions are present. While this campaign is ongoing, the interplay between media usage and eventual outcomes remains unseen.

However, government persecution, including arrests and new laws, and the COVID-19 pandemic dampened the movement's momentum (Hinz, 2022). Interviewee 4 noted the shift in public dialogue about the monarchy and the subsequent crackdowns on activists, illustrating the

\textsuperscript{18} Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 8, December 29th, 2023.
\textsuperscript{19} Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 8, December 29th, 2023.
\textsuperscript{20} Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 2, December 07th, 2023.
government's efforts to suppress the movement.\textsuperscript{21} Over time, internal divisions weakened the once-unified movement, comprising various subgroups (Hinz, 2022). The generational conflict between progressive youths and conservative elites, including the monarchy, became prominent (Hinz, 2022). Dissatisfaction with the political system led to calls for monarchy reform, a significant shift in Thai politics (Hinz, 2022). Despite challenges, the movement continues to grow in virtual spaces, potentially re-emerging in the streets during the 2023 general election (Hinz, 2022).

In Thailand, a significant democratic movement has emerged, with various segments of society uniting against the military-backed government and the monarchy. Young people and students were initially at the forefront of protests, but they have gained traction thanks to support from middle-class people and Thaksin Shinawatra's "Red Shirts" (Wilson, 2020). This shift is notable as the conflict between the Bangkok middle class and Thaksin's supporters was previously used as a pretext for military intervention in 2014 (Wilson, 2020).

Interviewee 7 provided insights into the involvement of various groups, including the Red Shirts, and the generational disconnect within the movement, aligning with this shift in support dynamics.\textsuperscript{22} Key factors contributing to the movement include the military's efforts to consolidate power, King Vajiralongkorn's controversial behavior, and the emergence of a politically engaged younger generation with concerns about potential repression and the country's uncertain future (Wilson, 2020).

Despite legal obstacles and accusations against its leaders, the movement, under the leadership of the youth-led organization Ratsadon, seeks to continue advocating for political

\textsuperscript{21} Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 4, December 14th, 2023.
\textsuperscript{22} Interview, Press Professional and Journalist 7, December 29th, 2023.
reform (VOA, 2021). The protesters challenge the monarchy and parliament to draft a new charter, citing concerns about wealth and power disparities (VOA, 2021). Interviewee 6's description of the movement's youth-led nature and the symbolic use of the three-finger salute from "The Hunger Games" emphasizes the generational perspective and the role of youth in challenging traditional power structures. While Prayuth remains in power with the support of the monarchy, observers acknowledge the lasting impact of the protest movement on Thai politics and society (VOA, 2021).

Most of the protestors are in the "Gen Z" age group, born about 25 years ago and fueled by social media (VOA, 2021). The alliance between Thailand's monarchy, considered one of the wealthiest globally, with a private fortune estimated at around $30 billion or more to $60 billion, and the military has resulted in extreme inequality in the country (VOA, 2021). This has led to the concentration of economic power in the hands of tycoons, palace associates, and the military, making Thailand one of Asia's most unequal societies (VOA, 2021).

6.9. Discussion on the Influence of Media

This thesis explores five critical areas from interviews with Thai specialists to discuss the influence of traditional and new media in Thailand, and those five major areas are (1) the transition from traditional to new media, (2) government control and censorship, (3) the role of social media in mobilizing movements, (4) the diverse demographics and platforms, and (5) the counterargument between traditional versus new media.

First, there is a transition from traditional to new media. Interviewee 1 observed a significant shift from traditional to new media, recalling the prominence of traditional media

---

23 Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 6, December 26th, 2023.
in earlier protests compared to the current trend. This perspective aligns with Interviewee 4, who argued about the transitional period and the increasing role of new media in activism. Interviewee 8 further supports this idea, emphasizing the freedom and accessibility of social media compared to government-controlled traditional media. On the other hand, Interviewee 6 offered a detailed account of how social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook have become essential tools in organizing and funding protests, showcasing the practical applications of this media transition.

Second, there is government control and censorship. Interviewees 5 and 7 discussed the challenges posed by government surveillance and censorship, especially in digital media. They highlighted the government's efforts to control online narratives and suppress dissenting voices. This concern was raised by Interviewee 9, who indicated that the government was attempting to repress citizens legally and control information on social media. In contrast, Interviewee 8 pointed out the relative freedom of new media, illustrating the struggle between government control and the democratizing potential of social media.

Third, by discussing the role of social media in mobilizing the movements, the positive aspects of social media in activism are highlighted by Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3, and Interviewee 11. They discussed how social media platforms facilitate crowdfunding, information dissemination, and the mobilization of large-scale

---

24 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 1, December 07th, 2023.
26 Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 8, December 29th, 2023.
27 Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 6, December 26th, 2023.
29 Interview, Press Professional and Journalist 7, December 29th, 2023.
30 Interview, Influencer and Protest Organizer 9, December 29th, 2023.
31 Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 2, December 07th, 2023.
33 Interview, Observer and Academic Expert 11, January 12th, 2024.
demonstrations. However, Interviewee 2 also raised concerns about spreading misinformation on these platforms, presenting a detailed view of social media's impact.

Fourth, there are diverse demographics and platforms. Interviewee 2 illustrated the changing demographics of social media users and the varying popularity of different platforms among different age groups.\textsuperscript{34} This perspective is complemented by Interviewee 6, who discussed the role of Facebook and Twitter in reaching a broader audience and the dynamic use of these platforms in protest movements.\textsuperscript{35}

Fifth, there is the discussion and counterargument between traditional and new media. Interviewee 12 observed the declining relevance of traditional media and the rise of independent and online media sources.\textsuperscript{36} New media is seen as a more effective tool for activism due to its wider reach and lesser susceptibility to government control. In addition, interviewee 1 indicated that the protestors could easily raise large amounts of funds from the K-pop fandom in Thailand.\textsuperscript{37}

Therefore, the interviewees collectively introduced the influence of media, with new media emerging as a vital tool in activism and social movements despite challenges such as government censorship and misinformation. There is a general agreement on traditional media's declining influence and social media's rising importance. However, the perspectives on its effectiveness and impact vary among the interviewees.

\textsuperscript{34} Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 2, December 07th, 2023.
\textsuperscript{35} Interview, Protestor and Academic Expert 6, December 26th, 2023.
\textsuperscript{36} Interview, Researcher and Academic Expert 12, January 22nd, 2024.
\textsuperscript{37} Interview, Protestor, Observer, and Academic Expert 1, December 07th, 2023.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Through a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative interviews, this study explores how different types of media, including traditional and new media platforms, contribute to mobilizing support, disseminating campaign messages, and influencing public opinion. The study also examines the challenges and risks associated with media usage in social movements, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of political activism in Southeast Asia.

To understand the relationship and correlation between media and the outcome of the social movement, this research statistically analyzes the quantitative data borrowed from Harvard NAVCO 2.1 and the World Bank internet usage datasets. Then, the paper explains the qualitative data from existing scholarly literature and primary interviews. The quantitative analysis from 1990 to 2023 indicates that there is not much statistically significant correlation between traditional media, new media, internet usage, and the successful outcome of the movement.

By acknowledging the contrasting results of the quantitative analysis from the hypotheses, this study explores the role of media in shaping the success of nonviolent political protests in Thailand by examining six cases from 2005 to 2023. There are three successful campaigns, two unsuccessful campaigns, and one ongoing campaign.

The first case study is the Anti-Thaksin Campaign (2005-2006), a successful mass protest against former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The campaign extensively utilized traditional media (television, radio, print) and new media (internet). Despite media restrictions favoring
Thaksin, the campaign effectively used the media to voice opposition, which resulted in widespread protests against Thaksin's regime.

The second case study is the Anti-Military Government Campaign (2007), which aimed to restore democracy and counter the military dictatorship in Thailand. However, it was unsuccessful. Traditional media like newspapers, print media, radio, and television were employed but faced severe government restrictions and censorship, particularly on the internet. The campaign's failure was potentially associated with these media restrictions.

Third, the People's Alliance for Democracy Campaign (2008) began as a radio show led by Sondhi Limthongkul. This successful campaign extensively used traditional media (television and radio broadcasts) and new media through PAD-controlled outlets and international coverage. Media restrictions were present but favored the movement, showing a positive association between media utilization and campaign success.

Fourth, the Red Shirt Campaign (2008-2010) was unsuccessful. It was a mass protest by people with low incomes in Thailand. It maintained government restrictions despite using traditional media (radio and media outlets) and new media (websites and international media). The presence of media restrictions coinciding with the campaign's failure highlights the potential influence of media control on movement outcomes.

The fifth campaign is the Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign (2013-2014). This successful campaign was a response to the crisis of police legitimacy and included anti-government protests. It employed broad traditional media platforms, such as social networking supporters, magazines, radio stations, and new media, such as websites and social
media (mainly Facebook page). Media restrictions were successfully navigated to favor the movement, showing a positive correlation between media usage and campaign success.

The ongoing movement is the New Democracy Movement Campaign (2014-2023), initiated by Thai youth, which demands democracy, constitutional reform, and an end to repression. It utilizes traditional media (print and film media) and new media (social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and hashtags). Government-imposed media restrictions are present, and the interplay between media usage and eventual outcomes is yet to be determined. Furthermore, the Thai government began to maintain article 1-1-2 to put people in jail if they mentioned negative news about the royalty.

7.1. Contributions

This research has contributed to understanding the complex dynamics between media usage and social movement outcomes in Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand. A mixed-methods approach explains how traditional and new media influence nonviolent campaigns. Key findings highlight media's multifaceted roles, from amplifying messages and mobilizing support to impacting movement success rates and potentially causing harm.

There are three main contributions. First, the thesis provides new empirical insights into the role of media in Southeast Asia's social movements, a relatively understudied area. Second, the study contributes to theoretical discussions in political science and media studies, especially regarding the impact of media on nonviolent movements. Third, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative interviews, the mixed-methods approach offers a comprehensive view of the complex interaction between media and social movements.
This thesis provides empirical insights into media’s role in Southeast Asia’s social movements through (1) diverse media landscapes and (2) case studies and examples. First, the study looks into how the complex and evolving media landscape in Southeast Asia, characterized by a blend of tightly controlled traditional media and relatively freer digital platforms, plays a critical role in shaping the strategies and effectiveness of social movements. By focusing on Thailand, the study offers nuanced insights into how activists navigate this landscape, leveraging new media for broader reach and engagement while contending with censorship and propaganda in traditional channels. Second, the six specific case studies from recent Thai social movements provide concrete examples of the media's dual role as both a tool for mobilization and a battleground for narrative control. These empirical insights illustrate the strategic use of social media to circumvent censorship, mobilize support, and craft narratives that resonate with domestic and international audiences.

The theoretical contributions include (1) media and nonviolent movements and (2) amplifications versus backlashes. First, the thesis engages with and contributes to theoretical discussions on the symbiotic relationship between media and nonviolent movements. By analyzing the ways in which media coverage affects public perception and movement success rates, the research offers evidence that supports, complicates, or even challenges existing theories about the "media framing theory" of protests, indicating the benefits of portraying the movement or issue in the media to impact public perception and support (Entman, 1993). Second, the findings contribute to theories regarding the amplification effect of media on social movements, demonstrating how media can extend the reach and impact of nonviolent campaigns. Simultaneously, the study addresses the potential for backlash, where increased visibility leads to
heightened repression, a concept debated in political science and media studies. This dual perspective enriches theoretical discussions about the strategic use of media in nonviolent resistance.

The mixed-method approach provides the benefits of (1) comprehensive understanding, (2) methodological synergy, and (3) theoretical and practical implications. First, the mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of media coverage and its effects on movement outcomes with qualitative interviews from movement participants and media practitioners, allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the interaction between media and social movements. This approach enabled the identification of patterns and correlations while capturing the in-depth perspectives and experiences of those directly involved. Second, reflecting on how mixed methods enhanced the project, integrating different data types offered a multi-dimensional view of the media's influence. Quantitative data provided a broad overview of trends, media reach, and participation rates. At the same time, qualitative insights revealed the strategic considerations behind media use, the challenges activists face in gaining coverage, and the personal impacts of media narratives on participants. This synergy between methods illuminated the complex dynamics at play, providing a richer, more in-depth analysis than either approach could alone. Third, the mixed-methods approach not only substantiates theoretical discussions with empirical evidence but also provides practical insights for activists and media practitioners. By understanding how media can influence social movements in-depth, stakeholders can strategize more effectively to leverage media for positive change while mitigating potential risks.

7.2. Limitations
The study of six non-violent movements in Thailand could speak to the study of non-violent movements in Southeast Asia more than other countries because of (1) the varieties of its movements, (2) the comparative regional studies for its emerging economies in the Global South, and (3) the relevance of its cultural and social studies. First, we could utilize non-violent movements from the NAVCO 2.1 dataset for Thailand to analyze the case studies statistically. Second, Southeast Asia has diverse political, economic, and cultural backgrounds. As a middle-income country that has navigated its unique development path, Thailand offers a case that could be contrasted with its neighbors.

Studies on Thailand could be particularly relevant for countries within the ASEAN group that share certain socio-political and economic traits, such as Indonesia or the Philippines, especially regarding political governance, economic development models, and social issues. Third, Thailand's unique cultural heritage and social structure, including its monarchy, religious practices (Buddhism), and gender diversity (e.g., the visibility of LGBTQ+ communities), provide rich material for cultural and social studies. These aspects offer comparative perspectives to study the social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia.

There are also three limitations. The first limitation is the scope of the study. The focus on Thailand limits the generalizability of the findings to other Southeast Asian contexts. The second limitation is the data constraints. Some limitations in primary source data and challenges in translating Thai sources may affect the depth of insights. The third limitation is time and resource constraints. The reliance on virtual interviews instead of in-person observations could have impacted the richness of qualitative data.
The virtual interviews limited my study compared to in-person because of the technical issues, contextual insights, and participant engagements. First, virtual interviews can be prone to technical difficulties such as poor internet connectivity, low-quality audio or video, and disruptions from software issues. These problems can interrupt the flow of conversation, lead to misunderstandings, and sometimes result in the loss of valuable data.

Second, conducting interviews within the participants' natural or work environments can provide contextual insights that enrich the data. For instance, observing participants' interactions within their community or workplace can add layers of understanding to the verbal responses. Virtual interviews limit the opportunity to gain these environmental and contextual insights, especially for the movement activities in Thailand.

Third, engaging participants effectively can be more challenging in virtual interviews. Distractions at the participant's location, multi-tasking, or simply the fatigue of being on a video call (often called "Zoom fatigue") can affect their engagement during the interview. This can lead to less thoughtful responses or a reluctance to delve deeply into topics.

7.3. Recommendation for Future Research

In conclusion, while this research has provided valuable insights into the influence of media on social movements in Southeast Asia, it also provides the opportunity for further exploration in this field. There are three main recommendations for future research. First, Future studies could expand the geographic scope to include more Southeast Asian countries for comparative analysis. Second, Long-term studies (longitudinal studies) could provide deeper insights into how media strategies evolve over time in social movements in different countries. Third, future research can investigate the relationship and correlation between the specific
government actions and media strategies in different political regimes, enriching the understanding of the media's role in social movements.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Interview Question

Section I: Social Movement or Political Protest

1. Have you been involved in any social movement campaigns or political protests in Southeast Asia? (If yes, what is it?)
3. In your view, what explains the outcome? What are the most crucial factors contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia?

**Following up question (if not answering the 4 factors)

4. One of the common causes contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia is if the government could suppress the movement or protest via force or threat of force. Do you think they play a role in this case? How would you explain the outcome?
5. One of the common causes contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia is if the protesters focus too much on nationalism instead of seeking support from international stakeholders. Do you think they play a role in this case? How would you explain the outcome?
6. One of the common causes contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia is if the citizens lose faith in democracy, they do not participate politically because they think it might not work. Do you think they play a role in this case? How would you explain the outcome?
7. One of the common causes contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia is if the protesters have limited resources, mainly financial resources for the movements. Do you think they play a role in this case? How would you explain the outcome?

Section II: Media (Traditional and New Media)

8. One of the common causes contributing to the failure of social movements in Southeast Asia is the limited media coverage. Do you think they play a role in this case? How would you explain the outcome?
9. What media (traditional and new) is important to the outcome?
   Traditional media refers to newspapers, billboards, magazines, televisions, etc.
   New media refers to online media, where content can be viewed, stored, and distributed on the Internet; for example, social media.
10. Can you please describe the use of traditional media in the movement or protest? (The kinds of media used, how it was used, its reach, its limits, etc.)
11. Can you please describe the use of new media in the movement or protest? (The kinds of media used, how it was used, its reach, its limits, etc.)
12. Can you give me a case that can help me to see the evidence that the absence of media usage can contribute to the lack of successful outcomes for the social movement in Southeast Asia?
13. If an average person in Thailand spends more time on social media or other media, would it somehow impact the outcome of the social movement?
14. If only the Thai government allows the citizens to utilize social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others) or other media without any repression, would it somehow impact the outcome of the social movement?
APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM
Title of Study: The Influence of Media Usage on the Outcome of the Social Movement Campaign in Southeast Asia

Investigator Name: Rothsethamony Seng
Dept: Political Science
Phone: 

Key Information
This is a voluntary research study on the relationships between media usage and the success or failure of social movement campaigns in Southeast Asia, specifically Thailand, providing valuable insights into the broader intersection of media and social change.

This expected one-hour interview study involves answering the questions regarding your experiences and perceptions of traditional and new media and social movements in Southeast Asia, particularly the six cases from Thailand, including the Anti-Thaksin Campaign (2005-2006), the Anti-Military Government Campaign (2007), the People’s Alliance for Democracy Campaign (2008 or 2005-2011), the Red Shirt Campaign (2008-2010), the Civil Movement for Democracy Campaign (2013-2014), and the New Democracy Movement Campaign (2014-2021).

The benefits include providing valuable insights to the relationships between media (traditional and new media) and non-violent social movements in Southeast Asia; there is no foreseeable risks as for now because the data will remain anonymous (if you prefer) and recordings will be stored with locked password.

Description of the Study
The purpose of the study is to understand the influence of media (traditional and new media) on the outcome of the social movements in Southeast Asia by using the six case studies from Thailand. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

This one time interview is estimated to be around 1 hour, and the participants will be asked questions related to your experience in being the press professionals or journalists or protestors in the non-violent movements in Southeast Asia or Thailand.

Risks and Benefits
The risk of participation is a breach of confidentiality in case any hacker is trying to access the data, even though it is unlikely to happen.

The benefits of participation are able to raise awareness about non-violent social movements in their country (Thailand) while sharing about the real-life scenarios happening in those six cases. In addition, participants will receive this journal paper if it could be published after the thesis defense.
Northern Illinois University
Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Anonymity and Confidentiality

- The records of this study will be kept confidential to the fullest extent provided by law. Research records will be kept in a locked file, and all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password protected file. The audio and video recordings will only be accessed by the researcher, the faculty chair and faculty committee members of the thesis, and the future journal reviewer. The recordings will not be shared to the public, and it will be destroyed upon the expiration date or it will be stored in a safe file forever if the participants give consent. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.
- With your permission, your identity will be made known in written materials resulting from the study. However, you will be given the opportunity to review and approve any material that is published about you. In addition, if you prefer not to include your name in the study, you can also let the researcher knows.

Your Rights
The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may refuse to take part in the study at any time. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right to skip any question or research activity, as well as to withdraw completely from participation at any point during the process.

You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered before, during, or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact the researcher, Rothsethamony Seng at Z1972413@students.niu.edu or by telephone at +1-779-902-2601. As Rothsethamony Seng is a graduate student, the faculty chair for this research is Dr. Aarie Glas (aglas@niu.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigators or if you have any problems or concerns that occur as a result of your participation, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity, and Safety at (815)753-8588.

Future Use of the Research Data
After removing all identifying information from your data, the information could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies with your legally authorized representative.

Disclosure of Research Results to Participants
The research paper will be shared with the participants after the thesis defense (if requested by participants), but it will surely be shared with the participants after publication in any journal or university press.
Northern Illinois University  
Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study investigators.

________________________________________________  ________________________
Participant’s Signature                                 Date
I give my consent to be audio and video recorded during the interview on Zoom.

________________________________________________  ________________________
Participant’s Signature                                 Date