What is the Role of Social Media in Establishing a Chain of Equivalence between Activists Participating in Protest Movements?

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of social media in establishing a chain of equivalence between activists participating in protest movements. Applying Diani's network approach as the theoretical framework and introducing the concept of Laclau and Mouffe (1985) 'the chain of equivalence' in social movement studies. It is a discursive formation on how each chain is different and how the chains work together to oppose hegemony (common enemy i.e. the state, authority or stakeholder). This project consists of 9 interviews with a chronic interest in participating in protests movements in Taiwan. The method is applied together with social network analysis to draw a graph to depict the overlapping concept provided by the activist's map. By combining the two methods together, the researcher is able to reach a better understanding of the way activists build their network. The result shows that the importance of social media is when building network connections between activists, through building the chain of equivalence, protest movements can easily work together online and offline become allian to opposed the common enemy. The links are able to constitute outside for information to spread over. Through social network links they are able to establish 'the chain of equivalence' in protest movements. While social media plays a vital role in protest movements, the network ties between activists should also be taken into account.

Keywords: social media, chain of equivalence, protest movements

Introduction

In recent years, social media is quickly emergingas an important role ofprotest movements. It is a widely held view that the use of social media for protest movement is not a new phenomenon. This can be seen from the Arab Spring, the Turkey Protests, the 2010 Student Protest in the UK, and the recent Brazil anti-World Cup Protests. The adoption of a variety of social media by protestors has raised their visibility to a wider geographical scope and has also built a stronger communication link between protestors.

Remarkably, social movements are increasingly using technology in their protest movements. As such, social movements have become more integrated. It is important to understand how technology helps social movements interact, in bringing together the study of social movements and media. This can be supported by Malinick et al's paper, that "the relationship between social movements and media has long been viewed as a complex and dynamic interaction" (Malinick, Tindall, & Diani, 2011). This relationship is extended to the media disciplinary. While there is an urgent need to understand the role of social media in protest movements, research is still lacking, where Cammaerts, Mattoni et al's Eds. (2013, p. 3) argue that "In the vast literature on protest, resistance, social movements and processes of social change, there is a very small presence of media and communication (practices)."

Online and offline has begun to be referenced with each other for social movements to put their actions in practice, implying that it is not a new phenomenon. However, there has been minimal research on the Network Approach in understanding the way activists build a map. Arguably the 'Chain of Equivalence' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) in protest movements needs to be taken into consideration. This is because the concept of the 'Chain of Equivalence' is the fundamental reason for movements to stand side by side and to subvert the opponents stand. Until recently, there has been little interest in linking this work to social movement studies, however it is important because, as Mouffe (2006) explains it is important to define a common adversary in which different chains could work together to establish a frontier in order to against the common opposite position (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2006). This concept transfers the meaning well to social movements both online and offline.

In order to make it applicable to social movement studies, this research applied the Network Approach (Diani & McAdam, 2013) to discuss how activists can establish networks through

building the chain of equivalence. Focusing on social media discussion, I will adopt the Logics of Self-Mediation (Cammaerts, 2014) to understand how activists communicate with others and the way in which they are used. Through social media that enhances collective actions and builds links, the spread of message becomes much quicker and communication channels between activists are enhanced.

The Approach of the Study

In this paper, I will therefore focus on the network approach for social movements. The author argues the role social media plays in establishing links between activists, through building the concept of 'the Chain of Equivalence' for social movements where activities take the same stance to oppose the common enemy.

To do so, Diani's (2003) Network approach helps us to understand the importance of social media taking on the role as nodes to link diverse activists. The network can be seen as nodes that link different activists together. It is important to understand how the activist appropriates social media to build the network to establish a collective identity in defending their common enemy. This is through the concept of 'chain of equivalence' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) that transfers the meaning well for social movements studies. In particular, this concept highlights the importance of bringing together different groups of people albeit with *different but not opposing[1]* standpoints, in order to establish a *common* adversary to face the common enemy (Carpenter & Cammaerts, 2006). It is argued that through this chain of equivalence, different elements can hence work together to strengthen their links during protests.

The third concept, I will discuss is the logic of self-mediation (Cammaerts, 2004) in social media for social movements. In particular, it serves to practise the strategy of media practice, through mobilisation, coordination and archives during protest movements.

Protest Movements in Taiwan

Taiwan, where there are a variety of social movements, mainly fighting for matters relating to international politics and socially controversial issues. Diani (2013) argues that "a social movement develops when a feeling of dissatisfaction spreads, and insufficiently flexible institutions are unable to respond". As such, there are more and more Taiwanese young people, in college, willing to participate in protest movements. They have adopted della Porta and

Diani's (2006) protest logic 'bearing witness and injustice' and brought it into practice.This not only shows in real participants, but also the use of technology in protest movements. This ranges from the 2008 Wild Strawberry Movement (where appropriate technology has been applied by protesters through online platforms, such as blogs, the BBS platform and real live podcast online) to the 2012 Anti-Media Monopoly (which began to adopt social media, such as Facebook, to discourse the movement frame). In addition, the 2014 Sunflower Student Movement has been widely adopting online movements links to shift to offline movements. This was conducted by students to mobilise, coordinate and archive in the movements that whenoccupied Taiwan's Parliament. During protests, there are different chains (people with different identities) that will be built to oppose against the common enemy (hegemony, i.e. the state, authority or stakeholder). It is a cyclical concept. Mouffe (2006, p. 8) explains the idea well when she argues that 'once the fight against that common enemy has been won, the chain of equivalence is transformed again, because then the differences will be re-established'. When the protest ends, there will be other issue protests established, resistance will start all over again due to there is no equivalence in the society. This is the basis for the logic behind the protest movement in Taiwan. That there are many political and social inequalities, evey relation is different but the different chains are able to work together to oppose against a hegemony.

The main target interviewees of this research will involve senior student movement associates in protest movements in Taiwan. The young generation, after the 1980s, appropriated social media and technology for protest movements to raise up the issues as well as practice in the protest movements. This research will use in-depth interviews of student movements to understand how they build the chain of equivalence, and how the network approach for social movements can be linked to activists. In addition, I will provide a brief network method to build up the basis for drawing network maps. The network approach helps us to look at different relationships of Weak Ties both online and offline. The concept of self mediation helps us to understand the media practice of activists who adopted social media for the social movements.

Literature Review

The theoretical frameworks will introduce the network approach for social movements, the chain of equivalence and self-mediation for protest movements. Continuously use networks as

a method to link the interaction between activists. Building on social media as a tool for activists to establish their connections to coordinate 'inside' and constitute 'outside'. Media practice introduces self-mediation to understand the increasing importance of using social media for protest movements.

The Concept of Network and Social Movements

There are a variety of ways to discuss social movements. As Diani (2003) argues social movements research "have contributed to the understanding of broader social processes, form collective action dynamics (Oliver & Maewell, 2001) to identity formation (Melucci, 1996), from the mobilization of social resources (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) to changes in forms of public action (Tilly 1978, 1995a-d)" (Diani, 2003, p. 300). Recently, the Network Approach has been introduced by Diani (2003) that further focuses on the different links. Diani (2003) argues that 'social movements … from metaphor to substance' (Diani, 2003). It can be understood that social movements use media platforms to achieve the aforementioned "substance", that is, to become more utilised in protests. Building on this, social movements and media platforms in fact have mutual effects on each other. Such interaction has become the network to deal with change (ibit).

Adopting the network approach, I will look how activists build their networks within each other. In addition, despite the groups having different topics and goals, they can stand at a common stance to work together and build their relationships.It is supported by Diani's statement on the Network Approach, that 'Focusing on the concept of social movements - in particular, treating movements as networks - enables us to identify a specific social dynamic, which differentiates social movements from cognate processes' (Diani, 2003, p. 300).

It is interesting to note that, the network approach for social movements can be seen as nodes that are either direct or mediated. Diani (2003) argues that 'nodes may consist of individuals, organizations, and eventually—if more rarely—other entities such as neighbourhoods (e.g. Gould, 1995) or states (e.g. Breiger, 1990). They may also consist of events linked by persons… relationships may consist of either direct or indirect ties' (Diani, 2003, p. 6). This addressed the new phenomenon for social movement both of strong ties with weak ties. Both direct ties and strong ties are relational that are dependent on different connections.

Network as 'Nodes' for Social Movements

The network approach, as nodes, deals with the relationship between activists. It includes 'weak ties' to see the different relationship between activists. The technology bridges the link for social movements.

It is vital to suggest that the transformation of online and offline can be seen as what Diani describes network as a set of 'nodes' (Diani, 2003, p. 6-7), that ideas, individuals, events, and organisations are linked to each other in a broad process of collective action, with some continuity over time (Della Porta & Diani, 2013, p. 5). The nodes matter because links between one individual to broader connections through social links, connect one to another. The links are able to cross the boundary of different social networks, for example, the overlapping framework of different groups, different organisations, and social networks online. It has been suggested by Diani (ibid) that a node, can be seen as a pattern in the form of direct and indirect ties. He indicates that 'direct ties when two nodes are directly linked in explicit interaction and interdependence—for example, two activists who know each other personally, or two organizations who jointly promote a rally. We have indirect ties when a relationship is assumed to exist between two nodes because they share some relevant activity or resource' (Diani, 2003, p. 6-7).

Contemporary forms of protests are compatible via a variety of media. It can be argued that 'technologies do not make collective action. Men and women do.' (Diani, 2011, p. 469). Based on this argument, the change in the way of communication does not mean that the original concept would be neglected, but instead is enriching the latter one. Diani (2011) addresses the work of Ramesh Srinivasan (2011) during the Turkey protests. She concluded the offline connections based on social networks is also important, "By fixating on technologies and the few youth that actively use them, we ignore a much more powerful narrative — the story of how synergies are created between classes to mobilize as a network without depending on social media. In Egypt, these networks may include family connections, neighborhoods, mosques, and historical institutions, such as the previously banned Muslim Brotherhood" (Diani, 2011).

Networks and Weak Ties

Arguably online connections help activists to spread the information and the connections are enhanced by protests.Social networks and groups help to build trust among members (Kavanaugh, Reese, Carroll, & Rosson, 2005). Previous discussions about the network can be seen as a set of nodes. Nodes link between activists very much depend on the interpersonal relationships. It is important to understand the relationship between activists, which can be explained as ties. The relation plays a role to discuss the ties. There are 'Weak Ties' and 'Strong Ties' to see the different relationships between activists.

Weak ties are the relationships between people who are not close toeachother; however, they are overlaps between different social circles. There are different expenses and information resources surrounding it (Haythornthwaite, 2005, p. 127). With the nodes and weak ties, Kavanaugh argues that "such joint memberships form group-to-group ties that indirectly connect all individuals in different groups" (Kavanaugh, Reese, Carroll, & Rosson, 2005, p. 120). While the strength of strong ties, as Haythornthwaite (2005, p. 127) argues "our close friends and co-workers, is their willingness to work with us, sharing that information and resources they have, and access to the contacts they know."

Network is important as della porta and Diani argues that "the relationship between individuals and the networks in which they are embedded is crucial not only for the involvement of people in collective action, but also for the sustenance of action over time, and for the particular from that the coordination of action among a multiplicity of groups and organisations may take" (della porta & Diani, 2006, p. 116).

The role of network is important thatidentity-building takes place. Tilly (1978) argues that "social networks, that the mobilization of resources and the emergence of collective actors become possible" (Tilly, 1978 in della porta & Diani, 2006, p. 121). The connections between people has been influenced by social networks, and the 'trust' between activists, as Diani (2003, p. 5) argues that "social structures as networks which link together concrete activists through specific ties, identifiable and measurable through reliable empirical instruments"(Diani, 2003, p. 5).

Furthermore, through building the network they are able to active collective action and further build collective identities. della Porta and Diani (2006) argue that "people often become involved in a specific movement or campaign through their previous links, their very participation also forges new links, which in turn affect subsequent developments in their activist careers" (della porta and Diani: 2006, 115). Also, Terrow(1998) illustrates "The coordination of collective action depends on the trust and cooperation that are generated among participants by shared understandings and identities" (Terrow, 1998, p. 21).

Chains of Equivalence and Social Movements

What Is Chain Of Equivalence?

Before addressing the notion of chain of equivalence and applying this concept to protest movement studies, we need to declare the concept and to discuss how to use it. It can be understand through *equivalence and difference*. The second is through the frame of protest movement.

The first is logic of equivalence and difference (2000, p. 303). Laclauand Mouffe in *Equivalence and Difference* explicitly points out that differences can be 'combined together' or 'balanced out' to achieve a common identity underlying them all (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 113). They elaborated the former definition using an example of a colonized country, where differences of dress, language, skin colour and customs combined together to form an element defining the colonized people as a whole (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 113). I will adopt this concept to examine different elements to build the common stance in the field of social movements. At the same time, I use this concept to show how it is able to discuss the protests with different identity defend the common enemy (see **Figure 1**).
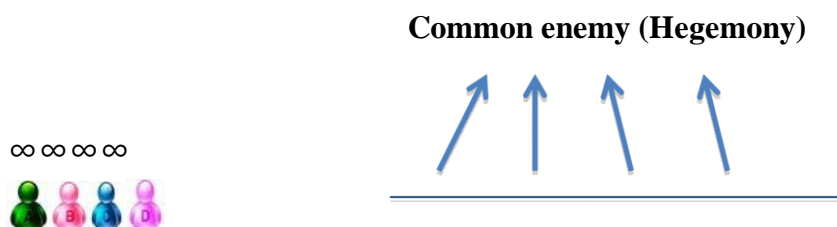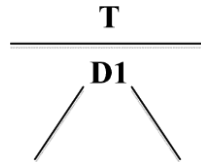
Common enemy (Hegemony)

Figure 1: Chain of equivalence

This explain diagram, can be understood through the represent **Figure 2** by Laclau (2000, p. 303). This is an explanation of how the chain of equivalence is possible to subvert the hegemony (T) and is the basis for applied 'chain of equivalence' into protest movements. In the diagram T represents Tsariam,

$$\frac{T}{D1}$$

$$\theta = \theta = \theta = \theta \text{ \textbf{D1} \textbf{D2} \textbf{D3} \textbf{D4}}$$

Figure 2: Explanation of how the chain of equivalence is possible to subvert the hegemony (T) (Laclau, 2000, p. 303)

'the horizontal line for the frontier separating the oppressive regime from the rest of society: the circles D1 … D4 for the particular demands, split between a bottom circle representing the particular of the demand and a top semi-circle representing its anti-system meaning, which is what makes their equivalentialrelation possible. Finally D1 above the equivalent circles stands for the general equivalent (it is part of the equivalential chain, but it is also above it)'(Laclau, 2000, p. 303).

In other words, on the same side of D1 to D4, the difference is balanced out to become the equivalent of θ**.** As such, each chain (D1 … D4) is able to work together to deny the 'T' (the common enemy). This is an explanation of how the chain of equivalence is possible to subvert the hegemony (T) and is the basis for the applied 'chain of equivalence' in protest movements. The Chain of Equivalence provides logic to discuss the way activists stand side by side to defend against the common enemy.For example,as Laclau argues that student have demand in education, liberal politicians for freedom of press, each demand is not the same; "what unites them is that they constitute between themselves a chain of equivalences in so far as all of them are bearers of an anti-system meaning" (Laclau, 2000, p. 302). It is need to point out that "the chain of equivalence will vary radically according to which antagonism is involved" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 117).

Chain of Equivalence and Discourse

The chain of equivalence is a politically discursive concept. It is applicable for bringing discourse into media and protest movements. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) opened up the concept of the chain of equivalence as apolitical discourse, which involves constituted antagonism and discursive that are able to understand the relational identity; Leurs (2009) Carpentier and Spinoy claim that their collection of case studies is actually the first structural attempt (2008, p. 20). They make it plausible that with the aid of Laclau andMouffe, research can be done into media, conflicts and identity. This also elaborates on the work of Laclau and Mouffe (1985) — it plays a crucial role in the identity of community media (Carpentier, Nico, Rico, Lie, & Servaes, Jan, 2003, p. 51). Adopting the concept of the chain of equivalence is proper with bringing media and protest movements together as aconcept to depict the meaning of the movement frame. Carnipor, Lie and Servaes (2010, p. 52) note this with "constitutive negative point of identitification or a construed outside". This is important and can be adopted for protest movements at the start of the movement frame. This is support by Terrow (1998), he argues that "challengers must frame their demands in ways that will attract followers and build on social networks, and collective identity, of 'us' and 'them', and of fundamental goals through changing seasons of opportunities and constrains" (Terrow, 1998, p. 105). In addition, it needs to be pointed out as Mouffe (2006) argues that "there is no receipt for chain of equivalence".

Social Media and Self-Mediation

After the rise of social media played an important role, it has been increasingly relied on social media to communicate. It is from "Blogger (1999), Wikipedia (2001), Myspace (2003), Facebook (2004), Flicker (2004), YouTube (2005), Twitter (2006)", Google+ (2011) that spring old and new online communication tactics (van Dijck, 2013, p. 6). Including in Taiwan the widely adopted PTT (Bulletin Board System, the largest social network site in Taiwan). It has become important for protesters to use these social media platforms in protest movements. Facebook's virtual space overlapped with PTT's update of contemporary issueshas been applied in protest movements in Taiwan.

With this new influence on social media, the influence of the online social network is important to discuss. It is argud that the value of openness and connectedness are quintessentially reflected in the word favoured most by Facebook's executives: *sharing* (van Dijck, 2013, p.

46). Through sharing and exchanging information,is able to link a group of people who have similar interests. Itis noted by Van Dijck (ibit) that 'Facebook's executives: *sharing* have valued on openness and connectednesses.It leads to many possibility for connect people, things and ideas, thus, 'Like button, a feature that lets users express their instant approval of a specific idea or item and share it' (van Dijck, 2013, p. 49). It is nor only sharing but embedded with like mind of participants and their personal interests. Alone the line as van Dijck (2013, p. 52) argues 'The majority of Facebook users comply with the site's protocols for online socializing, which after all benefits their self-interests'. In other world, within the social network, 'the meaning of "friending" as inscribed in the interface is thus not simply accepted but also appropriated and contested by users (ibit).

Interestingly, I would argue that social media play a role to bulding connection with other people 'networkly' to show the social relationshps. For exampl, Mark Zuckerberg raised a network of actions 'ice bucket challenge', to point out who is the next person to be challenged in this event. The fun game, and the simple idea clearly show the network approach between the individuals and their social network ties. This is not only actions in social media but alsoindicate the relationship between online and offline interactions for an individual and the networks connections.

Self-Mediation

More recently, the link between media and social movements has become an important focus in the concept of mediation. Self-mediation for social movements can be understood by Tylor (2010) "it is not replacing the traditional social movement, but rather complemented them" (Tylor, 2010, p. 1150). Thus, when technology was more and more influence, everything that is mediated seems likely to live in a media world. It is vital to understand how possible the practice of self-mediation is, as a part of social movement studies. However, as Cammaerts points out "Mediation is a useful, but under-used, concept to capture diverging articulations between media, communication, protest and activism" (see Martin-Barbero, 1993; Silverstone, 2002). It is urgently needed to bring this in for protest movements studies. Begin with examines Self-Mediation opportunity; three core concepts will be introduced (mobilize, coordinate as well as archive). To disseminate and to mobilize, refer to strategies for protests to link with outward communication. Activists are able to disseminate information, through technology and the message could spill over (Meyer & Whittier, 1994 in Cammaerts, 2012).

To organize and coordinate is an inward strategy for protests to create their platforms. By utilizing this social networks are able to coordinate, and exchange information between activists. To record and to archive,for example, photographsand film, spread messages online to increase visibility and legitimize activists' actions. It is argued that mediation helps to empower protests. As "Mathiesen (1997) calls the synopticon, the inverse of Foucault's panopticon, i.e. the many watch the few" (Cammaerts & Mattoni, (eds) 2013, p. 13).

The logics and forms of protest, Diani (2006) argues that activists assign logic for participating in movements can be distinguished according to the logic of numbers, the logic of damages and the logic of bearing witness (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 171-178).When protests are being organised numbers are important. PTT has a daily average of about 100,000 people simultaneously online, as is a large online social network platform in Taiwan. James DeNardo argues that "There always seems to be power in numbers" (James DeNardo, 1985, p. 35 in Della porta & Diani, 1006, p. 171), a movement's destiny depends to a great extent on the number of its supporters (ibid). For example, PTT largely shows the netstriking, which follow the 'logic of numbers'. It is consists of a large number of people connecting at the same time to 'jam' a site and for other users to read the demand (Della porta & Diani, 2006, p. 172). It is possible to accompany this with real physical protest that link online and offline scenes (ibit).

Methodology

The primary methodology used was in-depth interview and the second method appropriated social network analysis method to draw a map. Use two methods for collecting data is commonly done, there are potential benefits of multi-strategy design for example; different approaches are able to explain the findings (Robson, 2011, p. 167). The in-depth interview is a method, which is able to combine other methods for better perspective findings. As Robson argues, interviews 'lend themselves well to be used in combination with other methods, in a multi-strategy design or multi-method approach' (Robson, 2011, p. 279). The second method will adopt SNA 'It is not a formal theory in sociology but rather a strategy for investigating social structures (Freeman & Irvine, 2002). It is an idea that can be applied in many fields. The reason for drawing a map on the basis of the network approach is to observe the relationships between activists in theprotest movements. Visualizing Social Networks is one of the methods used to portray the relations between activists and their interactions.

Reasons for Choosing the In-Depth Interview

In-depth interviews have been selected as the primary method in this paper. It is one of the most appropriate methods to gather qualitative data. It uses the conversation with the interviewees to exchange opinions. It is a solo, interpersonal method and through the process of the interview depicts the interviewee's motivation, beliefs, attitude and opinions. It is as Kvale (1996) argues; the interviews are able **"to explore insight and elaborating their own perspective"** (Kvale, 1996, p. 105). In addition, it is particularly suited for studying people's understanding of the meaning in their lived world, describing their experiences and selfunderstanding, clarifying and elaborating their own perspectives (Kvale, 1996, p. 105).The purpose of this study is to understand how activist's appropriate social media through building the concept of 'the chain of equivalence', that protesters are able to build links participating in protest movements, that stand at the same side to against their common enemy. It is fruitfult to use the deph-interview to understand what they think for a better understanding of media practice by protesters.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews can be based on the degree of structure or standardization of the interview. It is divided into: structured nterviews, semi-structure Interviews and unstructured Interviews (Robson, 2011, p. 279). Semi-structure interviews have been chosen in this project. Semistructured interviews in a free format, seek to promote an active and open-ended dialogue. However, the interviewer still retains control of the terms of the discussion (Deacon, 1999, p. 65). "The interviews have a topic guide that serves as a checklist of topics … and order areoften substantially modified based on the flow of the interview and questions are asked to follow up on what the interviewees says" (Robson: 2011, p. 280).

Selecting Participants

The objective interviewees consisted of ninesenior students movement associate (**Table 1**) involved in diverse aspects of protest movements in Taiwan. Most of them are protest organisors and the first time and first group, whotake part in occupied Taiwan's parliament during the protest.

Table 1: Basic information of interviewees

Code	Years in protest movements	Note: **Interview Time**
Activist A	4 years	14 June 2014Record
Activist B	12 years	24 Jul 2014Record. Introduced by F
Activist C	5 years	7 June 2014Record
Activist D	3 years	15 May 2014 Record
Activist E	2 years	28 July 2014 Record. Introduced by A
Activist F	2 years	30 July 2014 Record
Activist G	2 years	14 Jul 2014 Record. Introduced by K
Activist H	5 years	16 Jul 2014 Record
Activist I	2 years	4 Jul 2014 Record. Face-to-face Place: London. St Patrick Station
PhD 2 Postgraduate 5 College 2	8 movements organisors	Skype Google (A to H) Place: LSE and Taiwan, online interview.

Sampling Process

Snowball sampling, the method is to primarily find the first sampling, and then through the first sample extend to other relative samples. It is suitable for research targets not to be easy to recruit but they can be found over the specific networks (e.g.subculture). It has been applied in the sampling data use. The selected interviewees will choose the senior student movement associates, who have participated in a variety of protest movements more than two years. Firstly, I will look for well know senior students associates in the society in Taiwan, and then invite them. I will then ask the associate who agreed to suggest anotherinterviewees, the suggestions will then be checked the qualification objective interview for this project. In order to avoid the bias due to the reason personal networks.

Research Design

The Multi-method is applied in this research. In this chapter the in-depth interview will be introduced.The method will ask interviewees to draw a mind map regarding protest movements.Semi-structure interviewis based on the three theoretical themes: Network, chain of equivalence and self-mediationthat will be focused on the interview topic guide (see **Appendix A**). It will be prepared to remind of the core concept of the questions. The

participants' background will have to be selective in order for them to be eligible in this research. During the interview, the open questions will provide the participant with a better space to express their thoughts. In addition, in order to protect the interviewee from politic considerations, the research will apply anonymityin this project. The interviewees will be informed about the consent form only being submitted to the school, the consent form and their name will not be published. During the interview, the participants will be informed about their participation and given an introduction of the purpose of the study. The conversation will be recorded. After the interview, the interviewees' transcripts will be typed. Then the data will be discussed according to the theme and given a letter (see **Table 1**) to represent their name. The data will be discussed according to the theme (see **Appendix C**).

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was chosen foranalysing the date.This is according to the theoretical themes. It will be identified by "theory-related material that is based on issues of theoretical importance" (Robson, 2009, p. 483). It isbased on three theory concepts: network for social movements, chain of equivalence and social media and self-mediation three theory frameworks. The network will look at the Weak Ties and the interaction between protests; the chain of equivalence will be focused on the identity and the way activists build up their stance against the common enemy online; social media and self-mediation will mainly explore the way activists appropriate technology to mobilise and how they to use technology as a part of a toolbox for media practice.

Drawing the Protest Map

The method invited interviewees to draw a mind map for social movements. This is a challenging method to depict the extent of thoughts about what the protesters think of social media in protest movements. However, it is not groundless,the maps will draw on the basis of Social Network Analysis. Otte and Rousseau (2002, p. 441) argue, "It is not a formal theory in sociology but a rather a strategy for investigation social structures". It is a method for analysing the structure in social science. In addition,Stanly (1994, p. 17) points out "social network analysis is a framework for testing theories about the structure of social relationships". It is a method to observe the relational concepts,Stanly (1994) illustrates that "relations defined by linkages among units are a fundamental component of network theories" (Stanly, 1994, p. 4). Visualizing the social movement is able to depict the relational relationship; in addition to

discuss the role social media plays in protest movement. This research will mainly focus on the relational and overlap concept provided by the protests' map to draw a collective mind map. The advantage to do this is "images of social networks have provided investigators with new insights about network structures and have helped them to communicate those insights to others" (Freeman). The way will be based on point and line; similarly embeddedin networks of relations (Stanley, 1994, p. 348) to look the ties of protest in order to understand the way their build the link to establish the chain of equivalence.

Results and Discussion

The main objectives of this paper were to explore the role social media plays through building the chain of equivalence between activists, who participate in protest movements in Taiwan. The discussion is based on thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 10 activists. The Network approach is applied in this research to understand the weak ties, therelationships between activists when participating in movements. How activists consider the role of social media in protest movements has been widely discussed. An overview of the significant findings of the study are that social network connections are important in protest movements on social newtwork platforms, which are able to build multiple nodes to help build links within movements. While social media provides opportunities for protesters participating in protest movements, the contribution is mainly focused on keeping in touch and is divided into inward communication and outward information spreading. We cannot ignore the offline relationships also participating in the movements. The chain of equivalence successes or failures will be discussed, and the role social media plays in building the links.The prominent finding of self-mediation for protest movements will be presented. Lastly, I will draw a visual image to conclude the protests map.

Network Ties Taken Into Account for Protest Movements

The results indicate thatsocial media makes it easier toestablish networkties for protest movements. Facilitation of technology leadsto instant communication and decreases the cost of mobilizing. It can disseminate activist information and recruiting a large number of people. The speed and synchronous affordance of the Internet allows information sharing for participants at the same time, establishes the chain of equivalence, coordinates inside group and constitutes outside. It helps activists to know the condition of the movement, and to decide what to do with physical actions, activist Cargues:

My personal interesting experience was during a protest movement, when we were in the middle of negociating with the policemen, main organisors are unable to know of the outsite situation and otherwise, but people surrounding us will podcast the latest information (i.e. the policemen's attitude or requests) online, for outside of the circle, they are able to know the information, in addition they will comment and critic, and they will do actions. It was never thought about before, where you were and unable to spread equivalent information to disseminate it.

Thus the synchronous nature on the net is able to reach the information synchronization and information disclosure, it is a way to fight against the common enemy. Activist C argues, "Through information synchronization, activists are able to know what to do for protest movements and how to build information links"; "Information disclosure helps activists post messages on social networks to fight the government" (i.e review the policy or the politician's unequvivalence actions).

Furthermore, the large number of people synnonmously online, participating online, create the possibility for protest movements to shift from online participation to offline participation. It can be connected to Della Porta's concept (2006) the "Bearing witness and injustice" emotion. It has been done before during the Sunflower movements. The social network helps to build the connections from the online movement to the offline protest action, it is supported by activist A:

Because I feel that the student movement has a big key, 318 that night. Although we often focus on the day we ran into Parliament. I think another big crucial point is, that is on the gossip platform (PTT) everyone was concerned about this, then the green burst character (30000 on one platform at the same time, see example **Graph 1**). So the issues quickly become talked about. In fact, there were thousands of people coming and going that night looking at this issue on PTT… I noticed at that time, that it seems to be the collective emotional contention condition, it has combined with the real contention in the real realm, because before the internet and the physical was fractured, that day it got together. Many people called for attention so that not thus only stay online but go to the real scene.
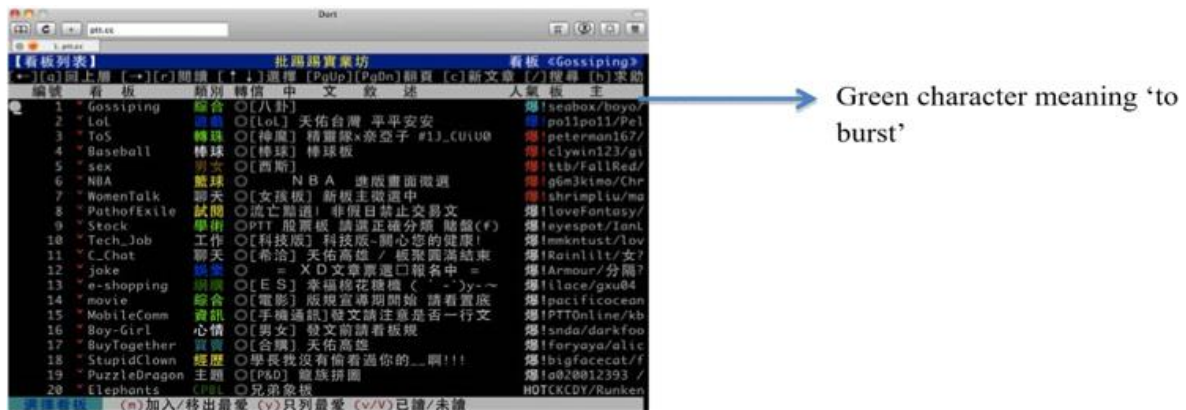
Graph 1: PTT platform

With this condition, the chain of equivalence is quickly able to establish and encourage activists to participate in protest movments. In addition, the speed of the network connection online can help the collective action. Activist Fargues,"during the social network society, I can use a very short time to share in my friends circle, I can look at the discussion on Facebook'sfanpage, and allow many people's emotional and discourse to connect together and then explore the larger energy".

Network of Weak Ties

During the protests a variety of media platforms had been widely used. For example: line, PTT, Facebook. From Strawberry (Blog), to Anti-Monololy(Facebook, PTT), and the Sunflower Student Movement (PTT, Facebook, line), technology has widey built the links between activists. Short remote links between the connective issuesand between real actions. Thus, network connections become easier and are able to build 'the chain of equivalence' for protest movements. The connection is possibly to connect to people who are weak ties, Activist F argues that "I do not know other people, we know each other when we start a project, when we connect online then we know each other. This is a social network site with the most characters, as long as we have similar interest, we can in a short timemobilise people to raise money and to set up a 4 am tw website" (F).

Network of the Individual

It hasbeen argued that the network of the individual is important in protest movements; Activists will support each other for different protest actions (E), "today if there is an action,

you will find the most familiar people in Huaguang(a protest topic), because some of us overlap. Everyone is a friend on Facebook, the web is complex, therefore you may want to mobilize other people by picking on the most familiar, and then using technology to contact them", "Movement court rushed to Legislative Yuan, a hundred of people basically rely on relationships (the Sunflower Student Movement)" (G) thatis a network connection with stong ties for activists to participate in protestmovements.

Social network ties play a vital role, it has been shown by every activist, in the protest movements. The exsisting interpersonal network can take into account the protest movements, as activist G says "during the Sunflower Student Movement, the official decision to speak outside is based on the original co-related people, for example, who has worked together before with NGO's, lawyer's or academia. It is based on the interpersonal network". Previous networks are important in protest movements.

The Network Connections of Different Topics

Weak ties for protests overlap between different topics, activists will support each other's topics. They use social media to keep in touch with other activists;it is also based on the individual's social network ties in this aspect. For example, activist E argues"we do not necessarilyrecognise the topics but will go on to support them", "everyone get together you support my topics, I support yours" (G). It helps building the chain of equivalence. The multiple nodes for activists to establish social network links

Similarly, Using Social Network Ties to Build the Link

Analysing the research clearly shows that social network ties play an important role in linking activists, activist E argues "when you see your friend will participant or your girlfriend / boyfriend will participant. You will think about whether I should participant or not". Along this line, 'strong ties' are important (I): During the protest movements, you have to use the network association, as she acknowledges:

But in fact, I argue that you must use the 'network association'. Today we hold an activity by 5 people, everyone should invite their friends. This has two meanings, one is the significance of interpersonal association. Another meaning is if there is an event today, which looks not so

popular, but if there are five hundreds of people participating in this event, it seems like the event is something good. The number of participants in itself showcases the effect of publicity.

The link is able to bring them together to conduct collective action during the protest, and extend large numbers of people to participate.

Social Network Platforms at the Same Stratosphere

Interestingly the result finds that, the social network tieson the social network have a 'friends circle' with similar interests and groups, this has been widely mentioned: "the network will let the interactionsto be limited to just between your friends" (C). "I feel that I use Facebook, actually it isfamiliar, in other words, we use Facebook to the extend topic, understand our topics is between one to two layers of circles distances" (A). It is on the same stratospere, "the logic of social media is as 'concentric' messages spreading out for protests","It is based on relative network ties for protesters" (H).

However, network connections through Facebook, brought limitations for activists, "most of your life when you are involved in the movement, it is difficult to reach the potential of caring about the movement, I think it is difficult to help… there are some formations that you will look the updated posts which have similar interests, I think on PTT or public spaces, it is the same stratosphere" (I). "During the same stratosphere there is some contact between friends, it helps to participate to create the recogitionof a participation feeling" (A). "young people aged 20-30 in Taiwan, about 90% or more, the use of a highly similar stratosphere" (H).

"Possibility, it can extend issues to stangers, the further discussion, I will post on the fanpage. To post an article, and then I will go there to push the'like' button; BBS has a strong energy to extend topics to strangers" The network of the individual will influence the chain of equivalence as a success or failure and it will be discussed in the next section.

While social media platforms play an important role in connections between activists, we cannot ignore the interpersonal network of individuals, as the literature discussed, "the solid brotherhood between protests is important". The activists contribute their thoughts:"The connection between individual and between organisations, it is on the basis of the real action activitists" (B).

Social media platforms play a role in the resistance, as the network connections are able to link between activists and organizations or individual and organization, supporting, this is, Activist E "I think it has, it becomes very easy to make the series of connections between organizations, and between the organization and the individual". Thus the network ties indirectly create the connection successfully for the different topics of protest movements.

Chain of Equivalence

In the literature review the chain of equivalence is discussed as the demarcation that my project tries to establish on this matter. I will refer to two discussions with the chain of equivalence successes and failures.

The first success: the analysis tries to establish that the chain of equivalence can be understood in one protest movement. According to the literature, the chain of equivalence, based on **Figure 2** should be taken into account. For example, Activist Gargues that "while occupying the Taiwan Legister Yuan**, the**Sunflower Student Movement, participants (chain) were different, all have different identities (i.e. Pro-independence, Anti-KMT, Anti-black box, Anti-Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement) while they work together to occupy Taiwan's parliament to oppose the common enemy". Equivalence becomes a chain against the ruling government in Taiwan (ruling party). The condition is as activist G argues "there is a bad man who did a bad thing'. Everyone is unable to get a response from the bad man". It responses Diani (2013) "a social movement develops when a feeling of dissatisfaction spreads, and insufficiently flexible institutions are unable to respond".

D1   Occupied Leister Yuan (The Sunflower Movements)

θ= θ =   θ=   θ   **D1   D2   D3**
D4
Students occupied represent all Anti-KMT   Pro-independence   Anti-Cross-Strait Service
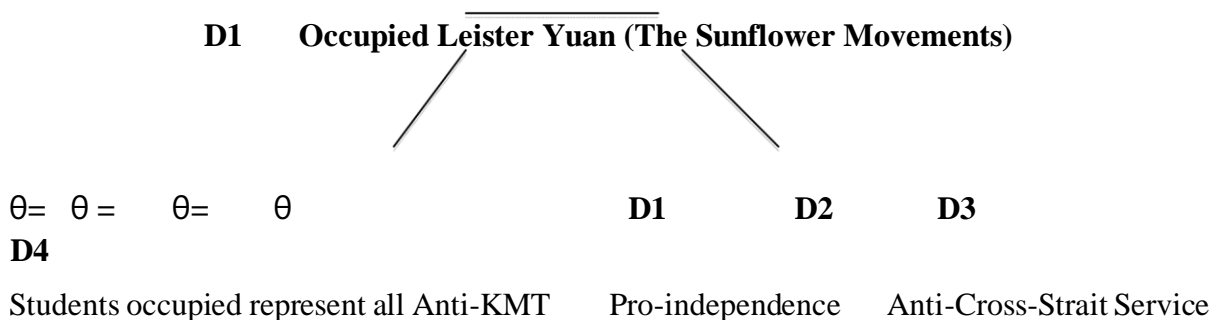
Figure 3: Government in Taiwan (ruling party)

The results indicate the argument from Lalau and Mouffe, each topic of the protests is not necessarily the same but working together against the hegemony is fruitful. Although they

support different topics, they work together against the antagonist. Activist Irepresents that, 'we say we have a common enemy to fight, use of common friends' (I).

In addition, the result shows that social media helps a series ofnetwork connections progress quickly through social media,building the chain of equivalence for protest movements. Activist A expresses that "regarding a single action, it is easy to recruit different groups, for example, we want to invite group A, group B, and group C to support our movement, to actually send a message on Facebook is easy and to construct many things successfully" (A). Different social issues are able to establish connections online.In a real live situation, as well as on Facebook, they will post another's information to mobilise people to join the protest. As activist B says that

While in line with the condition in the literature, we should note that the two polesof 'others' and 'us', when the common enemy is stronger or the range of the enemy (antagonism) is large; the chain of equivalence is easier tobuild. The activist D argues that "different issues standing in the same position are not against the government, if you say something against me about the name of the party against the country, the more I think of each groups differences, of course, the more you target the more people will become increasingly blurred". It point out the importance of the response to the previous discussion that "the chain of equivalence will vary radically according to which antagonism is involved". (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 117).

The second discussion is in what condition the Chain of equivalence will fail - broken friendships. Personal networks largely point to the importance of the influence of the chain is success, during the protest movements, as well as the occupied movements (B, G). Personal networks (weak ties) will strongly influence the chain break. Two of the activists A and B, argue that, "you may consider who is your friend by who is not your friend, maybe one day you have to do something but he didn't, it is based on the trust basis" (G). "Sometimes you think you are friends but finally, you find that you are not friends" (B).

The second condition that the chain will break is the power displacement, when the chain becomes equivalent, but the tactics to defend against the common enemy have different identities. There would also be a leader appearing in the movement. This will lead to each chain being broken (B). In the Ligister Youn and outside 'Dalits Liberated', the two groups

did not build the chain. The reason is that their strategies for dealing with the government were two very different ideas. In this situation, there will be no communication between the two groups and they will not use technology to communicate with each other. As activist B argues "it is impossible to negotiate only through social media. It can only be coordinated inside".

Furthermore, media practices are able to helpmobilise protests. Different groups are able to become an equivalence chain online: as A argures "through self-mediation, the link is able to be constructed of different links", but the identity is relational between each protestor. The identity is not necessarily the same (I).

The Role of Social Media

After discussing how the chain of equivalence can be established, the discussion will move on to the role of social media helping establish the links and building of chain of equivalence through media practice. In answering the question of the role of social media in establishing the links between activists, it largely shows that the 'network of the individual'has influenced the links on Facebook, the relationships of individual networks have been taken into account in the protest movements. Social media has two roles: firstly, it is to coordinate inside; secondly, it is to podcast information to the outside world.

With the opportunity provided by social media, "the internet is decentralised" during the network groups; everyone has the possibilltyto become an independent media. (C, A, I) argues, "The connection I felt is there are two roles, first is the discourse and how to act, if there's a need for a better discussion, I feel it needs to post on the PTT, yes, but if today I want this to diffuse to the activists, it lets it more people stand out, everyone will repost on Facebook and mobilise friends"(F).

With the role technology plays, there are many possibilities, " I feel that technology plays a role to increase possibility, the mobile phone lets everday and time to communicate". "Everyone can be an SNG car podcast in a live situation, it is also the technology can bring many peole in a short time" (F). As such, broadcast groups play an important role for protest movements when podcasting outside. "During protest movements, broadcast groups are really important" (I) and (E) argues. In terms of coordinating inside, for an example, an activist argues that, the link on Facebook is mainly focus on the group itself. Facebook is

forcommunicating between friends in the protest movement. It support by activist (H): "The use of Facebook is a highly similar stratosphere … People have similar interests. So for us it is useful to use Facebook".

When coordinating inside, the role social media plays influenced by interpersonal networks.For example, "Facebook allowed us to keep in touch, for friendships to keep warm" (H). Also, the connection is more coordinated inside (I A). '' Under the condition of the chain of equivalence, the tie social network platforms play an important role in building the links and also creating strategiesagainist the enemy. For example, as previous discussed Information synchronization and Information disclosure orthe use of online sharing, images, and simple graphs to tell everyone the latest conditions (AGK). Multiple nodes link different platforms, official websites and multiple links: Facebook. Chains are able to increase their establishment through media practice. Especially in the protest movementswhen mobilising people to participate in the protest. Let the message spillover, as activists argue (FHI).

Social Media as an Advertising Tool

Not only as van Dijck argues that sharing information but 'influencing' other people who have links between one to two layer sections. (GH) efficient for spreading messages for personal interests, even with different topics, activists are willing to support each other.This can be shown on Facebook. The protesters will repost different topics from the movement against the opposite stance, for example, the government (C).

A variety of media practices that help build the links to establish the chain of equivalence. Media practice helps messages spread out and enhance the links. That helpthe chain to be built.

The Limitation of Social Media

There is a potencial limitation for using social media for protest movements, participants argues that if there is no Facebook or lack of wifithere will be issues, the chain and the link will technically break: for example, as F argues "I remember that during the occupied parliament, there was not enough wifi, everyone is limited by this, eveyone are difficult to surfing online, and are unable to push the press article".

Self-Mediation and Social Media

Social networks play an important role for mobilising recruits, activists argue that, it is important to mobilise especially in the beginning of the occupied LY movements, F express:

In fact, regarding this part, its what the majority of people are doing. After we successfully got into the Legister Yuan, We had to photograph, check in and tell everyone that we were inside. So in a very short time, the message went out first-hand … After some time, someone broke into the conclave. They did a live webcast through an iPad for everyone to watch (See **Graph 2**)

Graph 2: Source: http:// 4am.tw/timeline/

This would seem to suggest that mobilising on social media is important. It has been argued by protesters (G H F), for example, activist (G) argues:

"I felt the important thing was the first time we occupied the Legislative Yuan. The latest 3 to 4 hours, the most important moment, needed people, that timewe rely on social media, we called, we needed people at the LY, it was the most important, that is the crucial thing, so called information society".

Coordinate and Archive

The appropriability of mobile and photography is a new way to defend against the common enemy, "in many times, it is an army to againistpolice. You can use mobiles to take a photo; there will have numbers on their arms. Furthermore, photos are now really convenience to podcast on Facebook" (E).

Network Map for Protest Movements

According to the maps provided by activists there are circles to represent the relationships between activists and social media platforms; 'friends' are important in the map; PTT is able to expend the large number of people, the maps also surround different protest topics and organisations. It needs to mention that social media plays a role for directly linking other activists and enhancing the network connection.

Instead of calculating the density of the network, I shall look at the overlap concept, to relationally portray the idea of the mind map of protest movements. This will help to understand the relationship between protests and further show how social media plays a role. The social media platforms are able to work together to raise the topic and through media practice (self-mediation) go against the common enemy in protest movements (chain of equivalence).

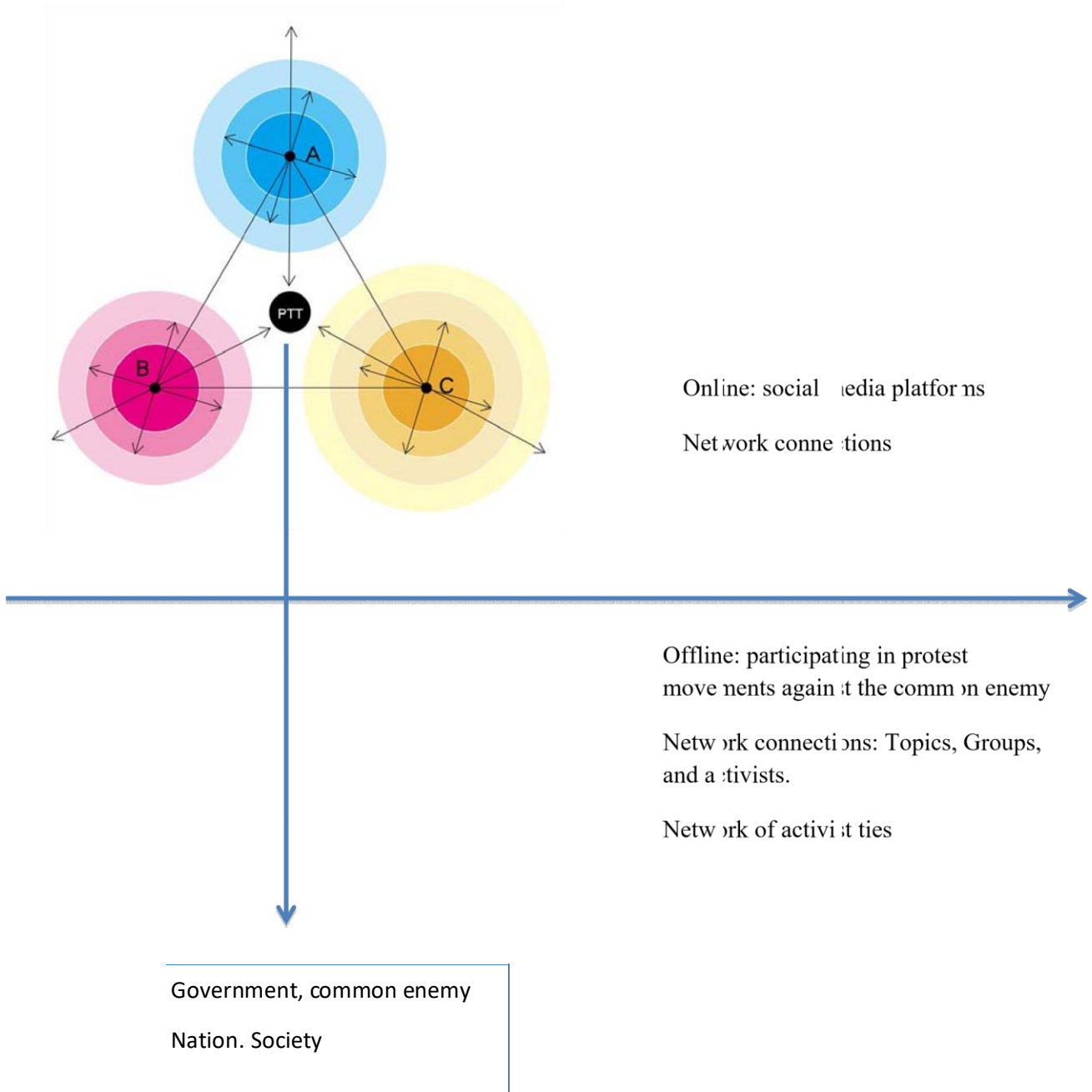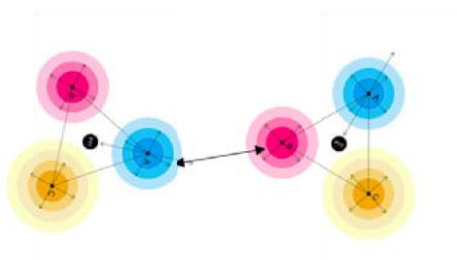**Map1:** Social media affordace activists (D1 to D4) become equivalent

Self Mediation   **T**   **Government. Authority**
Media practice   **D1**
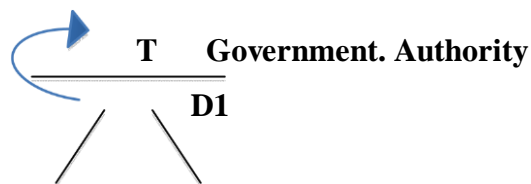
θ = θ = θ = θ **D1**

D2   D3   D4

Map2: The role of social media for activist's when build the link (per unit).

Online: social media platforms

Network connections

Offline: participating in protest movements against the common enemy

Network connections: Topics, Groups, and activists.

Network of activist ties

Government, common enemy

Nation. Society

Map3: social network spread

The three concentric circles represent Facebook, the more outward the weaker the link. Activist A,B,C's relations are equivalent; their friends are about two layers. Activists are able to connect through eachother's friends, and directly link to each other in order to build connections and directly link to the PTT platform, which is outside of the circle of relation. The PTT Platform can directly link to the activist to other people on the outside.

Conclusions

At the start of this paper I asked the question what is the role of social media in building a chain of equivalence between activists participating in protest movements. In response, the role social media plays is as an information exchange in instant time, to establish network ties between activists, and to support different topics online. The affordance of technology, the online and offline for activist are connected with each other in protest movements. Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) 'the chain of equivalence' in protest movement studies has been properly applied to protest movements. There are different activists with different identities, when the common enemy appears, they stand on the same side and use media practice and real actions against the opposite side. In addition, the logic of self-mediation is a way to use a veriety of media during the protest (i.e. Facebook, Line, Live podcast). Activists will adopt social media to mobilize, especially in the beginning of the occupied movement and the real situation, to act and use social media to coordinate between activists at the same time. Furthermore, film and photographs are used as a strategy against the enemy. As there they are able to 'share' images online to enhance the visibility and to protect the activists, contributed by the nine interviewees opinions. The idea of appropriated technology should also be mentioned, as everyone is able to become an independent media. That is important for protest movements.

Obviously, there is no specific way to build the chain of equivalence asMouffe argues, "there is no receipt for the chain of equivalence". However, successful chain being built can be understood through the affordance of social media, as it is easy to invite different activists and groups into a protest topic online. In the real protest realm, the chain that will be built can take network ties into account. In addition, when the common enemy is stronger, the chain can still be built.

The activists are able to build connections based on endless of nodes, while the chains would be links through the strength of weak ties in compatible social networking sites that activists

use to get in touch through specipic ties, and strong ties along with similar interests, a sense of intimacy and trust. This portrays the vital 'online' role of social media. That being said, we cannot ignore the importance of the 'offline' relationships formed via face-to-face interactions.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

(Translate from Chinese to English)
General topic:

What role do you think you play in the social movements? Why?

Theme 1: Network approach

Has your participation brought you any new insights? What are they?

What is the different between online participation and physical participation? How are the two linked in relating to social movements?

Theme 2: The role of social media for social movements

What is your opinion regarding social media and social movement?

How interviews use social media as a tool to rearticulate their resistance?

How do you consider social media to mobilize, coordinate and achieve? Is it possible to use social media to raise issues?

What are the conditions for you to like a page? Would you like a page if your friend like? What role would you consider social media plays in the notion of social movements? How can we understand its opportunities and limitations?

Theme 3: Self-mediation

8.   How you use technology to consider social movement in a range of aspect？

10. How do you make a link with the outside world?

11. What concept do you think about adopt social media tomobilise, coordinate, archive

for social movements?Is it possible to connective different groups to mobilise them?

(Collective different group)

Theme 4:The chain of equivalence

13. How they represent their identity on social media?

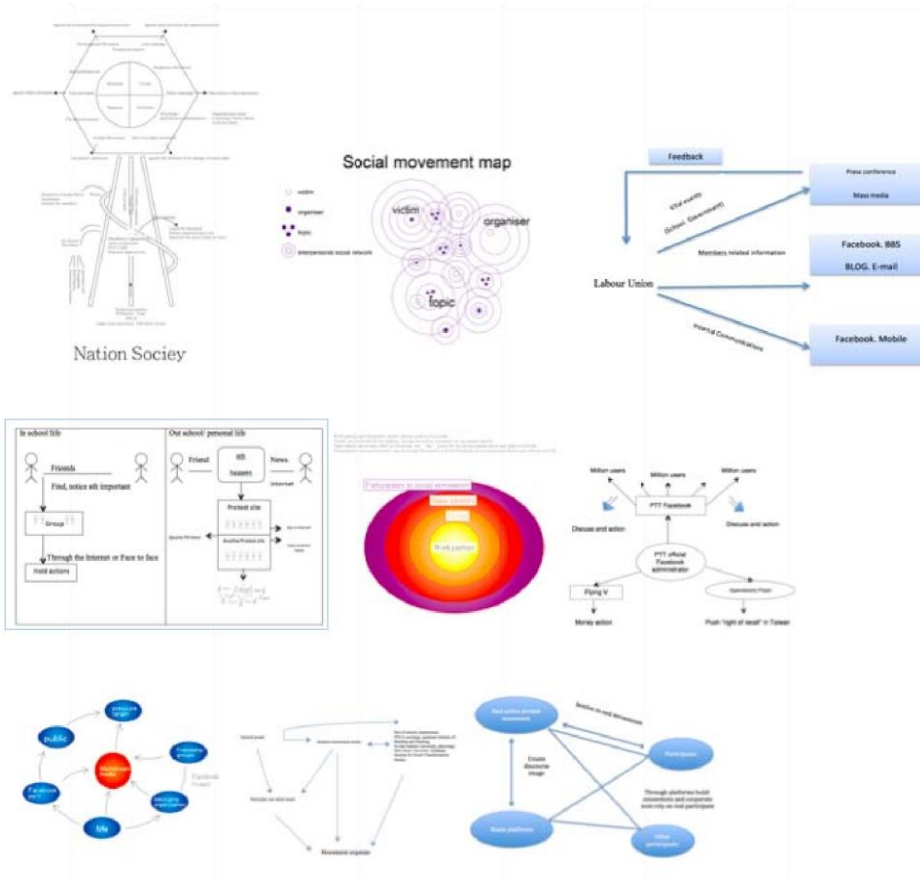14. Identity and frame on social media

15. Who do you consider is your friends (ally) in the social movement? Online and offline

16. How do you work together with others to defend against the opposite stance (e.g.

the Government or state)

Map

• Could you draw a map to picture your ways in social movement? Mainly focusing on how to link to other activists, organisations or other online links.

Appendix B: Methodological Appendix Maps

Appendix C: Theme

Themes	Category	Statements
A. Network for protest movements	Weak ties	In the interviews when they refer to the use of technology to link to other activists, this will refer to the network approach.
	Strong ties Collectiveaction Collective identity	
B. Chain of Equivalence	Link together to against common enemy, success or failuir.	When the interviewees state that they stand on the same side to defend against a common enemy (for example: stake holders, authority, hegemony) this will be known as the chain of equivalence. Even if they support different issues, they still come together to stand against the state.
	Different Issues topics	
C. Selfmediation and protest movement	To Disseminate and To Mobilize	When the interviewees mention about how they use technology (i.e. mobile phones, social media) during th protest to mobilise. Coordinate or archive, this will refer to self-mediation
	To organize and coordinate	
	To record and archive	