
Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPTool

Title: Chat Apps Analytics: the use of Telegram during the pre-campaign to 2022 Brazilian presidential election

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Project abstract:

In 2016, computational propaganda influenced the results of two world-relevant electoral processes¹: the United States presidential election, giving the most important chair of the White House to Donald Trump, and the BREXIT referendum, which resulted in the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. From then on and after the fake news crisis, researchers have confirmed that the employment of manipulation strategies and disinformation dissemination on social media can interfere with electoral processes results and threaten democracies².

Jair Bolsonaro was elected Brazilian president in 2018 after a campaign that focused on the online environment, and he credited his victory to his presence online³. One of the strategies employed by Jair's campaign was the bulk messaging on WhatsApp public groups, financed by private companies, which is against the Brazilian electoral law⁴. In this illegal campaign that happened on WhatsApp, combinations of topics and segmented narratives were used to create persuasive disinformation content that was disseminated to a network of groups⁵.

Since the informational chaos triggered by the 2016 Fake News crisis and during the infodemic experienced in the coronavirus pandemic, disinformation dissemination online has intensified as does the pressure on platforms to react. In this context, extremists' accounts are being blocked by traditional social media sites, like Facebook, a phenomenon called deplatforming⁶. This phenomenon is stimulating the migration of extremists to other platforms, like Telegram⁶. The Russian app allows the creation of public groups and channels with a limit of 200,000 participants and its administrators do not process any solicitation regarding potentially illegal content disseminated. Telegram is a potential environment for the implementation of disinformation campaigns during elections.

There is an urgent need to understand the social uses of Telegram channels. This case study aims to collect and analyze data shared in Telegram public channels of political figures related to the 2022 Brazilian presidential election.

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Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

Data will be collected from Telegram public groups and channels. A list of groups and channels comprising Brazilian presidency candidates and respective political parties official channels will be compiled. Messages content and metadata will be extracted via Telegram API.

How will the data be collected or created?

There are two tools being considered for data collection: [4-CAT](#) e [Teleton](#).

Extracted data will be stored in CSV files in folders named with the prefix "pre-campaign22-telegram" plus the data collection date (pre-campaign22-telegram-year-month). R and Python scripts will be used to process and summarize data.

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

Dataset comprises: text file with the list of Telegram channels, channels metadata text file, messages text file.

Documentation of Telegram channel's metadata is available in https://tl.telethon.dev/types/chat_full.html e em https://tl.telethon.dev/constructors/channel_full.html.

Documentation of Telegram messages is available in <https://tl.telethon.dev/constructors/message.html>

Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

User related data (i.e. telephone number) will be anonymized during the data extraction.

In this way, the study does is in compliance with Brazilian General Personal Data Protection Law.

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IP/IPR) issues?

According to Telegram Terms of Use, the content shared in a public channel is public content. See https://telegram.org/faq_channels.

Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

Data will be stored in a personal computer with backup in iCloud Drive in real-time.

How will you manage access and security?

Data stored in the researcher personal computer and iCloud Drive are protected by strong passwords and biometry.

Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

The dataset will be public available.

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

Dataset will be published as a repository on GitHub.

Data Sharing

How will you share the data?

Data will be published on GitHub.

The study result will be published as a Chapter in the researcher doctoral thesis.

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

N/A

Responsibilities and Resources

Who will be responsible for data management?

Extraction, processing, and analyses of data will be conducted by the principal researcher.

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

Resources needed for the project execution:

- A computer with Internet access;
- A SIM card (cellphone number) to create and register a research account on Telegram;
- Telegram API access tokens;
- Expertise using the tools to collect data (4CAT or Telethon);
- The softwares: Telegram, Anaconda, and RStudio;
- iCloud Drive to store data backup.