Resources, Political Efficacy and Political Performance: Political Participation on Facebook

Master Thesis

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Abstract

The main goal of this thesisis is to look for an answer to the question ”what motivates citizens to engage in politics using Facebook”. The thesis will discuss which benefits citizens are getting when they opt to political participation over social network sites, specifically Facebook.

In order to answer this question so a survey was conducted, which examined the relationship between political participation on Facebook and three topics factors. The first was resources for political participation that citizens use or need to sacrifice if they want to engage with politics. The second was the sense of internal and external political efficacy, with which citizen estimate their ability to understand and discuss politics, along with the openesss of the political system for new idea. The third and last one was, self presentation of political impressions, how individuals presesnt their political identity to their peers. The survey found that Facebook does not overwhelmingly reduce costs of participation, and that citizens who engage in politics on Facebook would not necessarily assume that their activities would bring change in policy. However, citizens who do carry on political participation on Facebook may expect a high sense of internal political efficacy and would use Facebook not so much for changing government policy, but as a mobilizing tool, and as a stage for one’s display of an idealized political impression.

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When citizens want to participate in politics and not only see it on TV or read about it in the newspaper, they need opportunities for participation. Those opportunities are arranged mostly by social movement or parties, as those groups have the proper resources to mobilize masses of people and interact with the state institutions and the media.

Some opportunities can `still be arranged only by the state, such as voting and referendums. Voting is perhaps the only form of political participation, in which citizens as individuals can directly influence government policy and legislation. It is contingent on many individuals acting in the same manner; that is, voting in large numbers for a certain party or candidate. It is almost needless to say that voting may produce some disappointment for citizens; such as voeters who's candidate or party did not win or a party or candidate that won but never lived up to its pre-election promises. Thus, there is no wonder that citizens may opt to voice their disappointment not only when elections are at bay.

Participation has many explanations; as many other social phenomena, an individual's decision to march down a street carrying a sign or to sign a petition is contingent on many factors, which have been mapped by scholars in the past couple of decades (Leighley, 1995). For example, it was found that those who engage more with politicscome from a certain socio-economic background, meaning, people who have more resources, such education and money, for political participation (Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995).

Another approach that explains political participation is Blais's rational choice (, 2003: 14). This approach claims that when an individual considers participating in politics, he or she estimate their available resources for such an action and whether the outcome would justify spending those resources. According to rational choice, people would not participate in politics if they think that they would not gain any benefit, or that their involvement would not yield a positive outcome.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this thesis, whenever political participation is mentioned, it relates only to voluntary form of participation as in with no pay, in money or other material benefits (patronage), or as in with no coercion or threat.

Advancements in technology now allow citizens to create new participation opportunities. Information and communication technologies make modern information sharing much easier and faster than ever before. This allowed for the development of one of the more recent areas of research: political participation on the Internet, and more specifically on social network websites, such as Facebook.com.

Those social network sites enable users to connect with other site members and create an electronic version of their social network. Facebook allows users to create their own content; from simple short text messages ("status updates"), to publishing photos, through publishing external content like articles from other websites to sharing that content with their own social network. User generated content may be what one had for breakfast or a short video of a cat chasing a laser dot, but it can also be a political text or even an invitation to a demonstration or a rally. As Facebook and similar websites grow in popularity, political institutions such as parties and independate candidates use Facebook as a digital advertising platform (Zhang, Johnson, Seltzer, & Bichard, 2010). Most studies that investigated the relationship between Facebook and political participation or social capital with a focus on political participation (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009), opted for denoting Facebook usage as the independent variable, asserting that Facebook use may enhance political participation. In other words, scholars have suggested that the Internet in general and social network websites in particular induce political participation, and may counter the dwindling rates of political participation in democracies. On the other hand, other researchers have argued that Facebook political participation should be seen only as a feel-good action or "Slacktivism" (McCafferty2011). Here arise two presuppositions: the firstly that internet activism is easy and

bears no costs. Seconly as such it has no actual effect on policy. So, if citizens wish to be taken seriously by decision makers, they must show that they are willing to sacrifice resources like their free time and to mobilzie many other citizens as possible to support their political stance and political demands.. By demonstrating in the streets, citizens present to politicians that they cannot be ignored and if said politicians desire re-election they must abide to the citizens' will.

However, this approach disregards how the internet allows citizens to engage with each other. While this thesis is not about mass media critique, a term that should be mentioned is the public sphere; where according to Habermass (1974) citizens freely exchange ideas about issues that concern them, without government intervention. Habermas argued that mass media is the realisation of the public sphere, as it allows conveying issues that trouble the public to political institutions (Habermas, Lennox, & Lennox, 1974). However, one may wonder to what extent mass media really represent the public sphere, scholars like Hall (1978) and Gitlin (1980), noted that media outlets may present issues in a way that serves their private interests, and not necessarily the public's interests. As such, one may look at how social network websites allow citizens to deliberate, discuss and exchange ideas, while their representatives in the parliament and in government are exposed to their discourse. Therefore, this thesis' contribution to further studies is to investigate the capacity of the internet and social network website to serve as the new media for public sphere.

Another contribution this manuscript may offer is the possibility to investigate what makes people choose Facebook as their favourite arena for political participation. By doing so, the reader would be able to realize how users detect Facebook affordances for political participation. This point of view is unique in the sense that citizens' preferences are the main focus of this research, and not the medium itself. By turning around the common research paradigm – to see whether social network sites promote political engagement - the reader may locate what was missing for individuals in real world political participation, that social network sites now complement. It may

help citizens, policy makers and intellectuals understand how they can mobilize others by harnessing social network sites' capabilities to increase political participation. Moreover, one may assume that social network websites will not survive forever. Current trends in technology come and go today much faster than they used to, especially internet trends. Facebook is a commercial enterprise, and as such is subject to financial difficulties or even termination. In case of such a change, would it mean that people would cease or decrease their engagement because the medium lost its popularity? Will they go back to to street protests or just stop protesting alltogether? This thesis provides citizens and politicians with a new point of view and understanding on what can be achieved with Facebook as a tool for political participation,.

At this point it should be stressed that voting, although a clear act of political participation is not a major factor in this thesis. Unlike other forms of political participation, voting is endorsed, regulated, operated and protected by the state and is vital for democracy. While freedom of speech and freedom of assembly are protected by law in democracies, the state does not instigate protesting. The state decides on Election Day date and executes it. Furthermore, the cost of voting is very different to other sorts of political participation. In many cases Election Day is a day off and voting polls are located in various and multiple locations. Voting is also anonymous and secured, and by large is considered a civic duty (Blais, 2006). Therefore, this thesis will focus on non electional forms of political participation.

Literature Review

"Classic" Political Participation

The concept of political participation was designed to describe the ways in which the public engages with political institutions. The definition which is used by most scholars is the one demonstrated by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995: 38): "Activity that has the intent or effect of

influencing government action—either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies."

There are several degrees of political participation or courses of action. Milbrath and Goel (1974) examined previously collected data on political participation in The U.S. and other countries, then created a two dimensional model that allows the reader to ascribe different actions to different people. The model incorporated political involvement levels with several modes of activity, such as voting, rioting, donating money to parties, contacting elected officials, engagement in political discussions and more. The authors also indicated that the more educated and the richer people would be more involved in politics and political engagement than poorer and less educated citizens, take action, a conclusion that was reaffirmed again and again (Brady, Verba, Schlozman, 1995)

One of the observations made by social scientists was that some modes of political participation are in decline, be that low turnouts (Blais, 2007) or party membership (Scarrow, 2007). In his seminal work, Putnam (1995) attributed the decline in civic engagement to the waning social capital in the U.S., or more simply, to the fact that Americans have been talking with their fellow citizens much less than they used to, thanks to high rates of television consumption. According to Putnam, decrease in social capital means that ordinary citizens have less trust in each other. TV and mass media created an imagined community of people whose main commun denomanator is watching their favourite show on TV. That TV show replaced their close relationship with the people in their immidiate environment – one's social network - which resulted

in a decrease in mutual trust. That lack of mutual trust translates into alianation to the political realm and distrut in the government and other political institutions.

Political Efficacy

Why do citizen opt in or out of political participation? There could be numerous answers to that question. One may join a demonstration just because he or she found it by chance; another would publicly support a candidate because of a family relation; and some may sign a petition because they believe this action could lead to a policy change they desire.

As Milbrath and Goel (1977:35) stated: "Before a political action can occur, the political actor must pick up relevant stimuli from the environment." Conversely, one would not vote because he or she does not have enough time; or would not write a letter to a politician since he or she do not possess adept writing skills. When an individual receives a stimuli, he or she weigh it against their attitudes and available resources before making a decision whether or not to engage.

The decision to engage with politics is usually a result of one's attitudes towards participation, in the sense that there cannot be a political action without some prior thought about a political issue. Fazio (1986: 210) showed that attitudes combined with "... immediate perceptions.... may then prompt attitudinally consistent behaviour." One of the common attitudes related to political participation is political efficacy (Caprara et al., 2009). Shultz (2005) presented a fine definition for both terms: "Internal efficacy can be defined as the confidence of the individual in his or her own abilities to understand politics and to act politically, whereas external efficacy constitutes of the individual's belief in the responsiveness of the political system." Bandura (1977) linked between percieved internal efficacy and behavior, orhow a sense of self efficacy induces behavior. In the political context, Madsen (1987) used Bandura's theory to show how a sense of political efficacy, both internal and external, predicts political participation. Table 1 details possible

outcome for combination of internal and external political efficacy, according to Madsen's conclusions.

Table 1 Madsen's typology for political efficacy and political participation

	Low Internal Political Efficacy	**High Internal Political Efficacy**
Low External Political Efficacy	Do not engage in politics, apathetic to the political system	Sense of grievance, social activism, protest oriented participation
High External Political Efficacy	Do not engage in politics, despondent about the political system	Conventional participation (voting), support for the political system

Although linked, internal and external political efficacy are two distinguished concepts; the former is the assessment that one's action would have some outcome while the latter is the percived openness of the political system to listen to the citizen and actually change (Caprara, 2009).

Resources for political participation

Political participation bears certain costs. Brady, Verba & Schlozman (1995) created a model of resources that are needed for an individual's political participation. They regarded money as funds to be contributed to a party or a candidate, but neglected to mention other aspects in which money can be a factor of affecting political participation. For example, when parents wish to attend a rally or a meeting, they most likely need to pay a babysitter to keep an eye on their children. If one lives away from the event's venue, one needs money to pay for public transportation, or to pay for fuel and other expanses of holding a private car. However, Brady, Verba & Schlozman's observation of time has been demonstrated to be a strong predicator of participation, and it is logical to assume that those who must work long hours to provide income do not have the time or the money to engage in political action.

There could be further considerations that may result in an individual diciding to refrain from political participation, such as the chance of getting arrested or getting hurt during a

demonstration and other physical damages. Even signing a petition on the street might detain a parent from picking up their children from kindergarten, or missing the train back home. Therefore, money and time often go hand in hand when one contemplates whether to engage in politics or not.

The last factor Brady, Verba & Schlozman mentioned was civic skills, or in their own words "Citizens who can speak or write well or who are comfortable organizing and taking part in meetings, are likely to be more effective when they get involved in politics." (1995) Those skills are often associated with education levels, such as high school attendance, advanced academic degrees and so own. Of course there may be many other factors that may induce people to engage in politics. Bad weather or an occurrence of major sporting events may well deter people from going outside even just to buy some milk or sugar, let alone go to a political meeting. Can technology help citizens reduce those costs and increase the sense of political efficacy?

New Forms of Political Participation

Some scholars dispute the use of the term participation: Michelleti (2003) coined the term "individualized collective action" to describe "the practice of responsibility-taking through the creation of everyday settings on the part of citizens alone or together with others to deal with problems which they believe is affecting what they identify as the good life." (2003) She demonstrated how more and more actions that citizens take in their day to day practices are actually political, though they do not follow more traditional definitions as presented by Milbrath and Goel (1974). For example, boycotting a candy brand for ecological reasons does not constitute as a political action according to the repertoire listed by traditional literature on participation. However, that action is anchored within the concepts aforementioned: it is intended to make governments regulate candy manufactures, and therefore it answers the concept of participation; the buyer knows his or her political power as a consumer, and how both the government and industry would like him to keep buying the candy. This form of action is a part of what Bennet (2012) described as the

personalization of politics. His argument is that people have changed their political way of action to fit their own personal images, needs and believes, and stopped relying on group identities and affiliations. He concluded that "Participation is importantly channeled through often dense social networks over which people can share their own stories and concerns—the pervasive use of social technology enables individuals to become important catalysts of collective action processes as they activate their own social networks." (Bennet, 2012)

One of the most evident advantages of online participation is its evident low costs. Moreover, online participation seems to be more efficient in terms of gathering information and contacting fellow participants, with no restrictions as there are in the offline world, specifically restrictions on time and space (Anduiza, Cantijoch and Gallego, 2009, Boulianne, 2009). Citizens can exchange information among themselves via email without having to leave their house. They can do it as a part of their daily routine, or even while they work. If they have already purchased a computer and an internet connection, they do not need to invest more funds to gather political information. However, one should remember that desktop computers are cumbersome and they confined users to a single space, either their home or office. Laptops allow more mobility, yet they are more expensive and like desktop computers require a reliable AC supply in case their battery runs out of power. Smartphones on the other hand, offer users a better solution to access the internet and thus gain information about politics and communicate with peers more easily than by using computers. While prices of smartphones is still quite high relatively to regular cellular phones, telecommunications providers often subsidize the purchase of smartphones as a part of a communication package, so consumers pay for their smartphone by making calls and surfing the internet. Desktop computers and laptops do not have Third Generation connection modules, but smartphones do. With internet connectivity a large display and a small keyboard, they provide basic and sometimes advanced capabilities of computers. In other words, if one does not need to type a

ten thousand words manuscript, a smartphone would answer most of one's daily computer needs, and even more as it allows making phone calls. In any case, political participation on mobile devices has been the focus of some studies, mainly as a rapid mobilization tool for the protest in Egypt (Lynch, 2011).

Conversely, Norris (2000) has already noted that access to computers and internet connectivity overlaps existing social cleavages; this means that although some costs of participation are lower in the online world, one still needs resources to gain access to it. Some traditional engagement methods have successfully duplicated in the online world, such as donations, political discussions and petition signing.

There are more optimistic findings regarding the feelings of citizens when they use the Internet to achieve political goals. Kavanaugh, Carroll, Rosson, Reese, and Zin (2005) offered a model that details different personal attributes that affect political involvement. They have concluded that, among other factors, collective efficacy explains online activism. Therefore, it is possible to assert that political activity on the internet may provide an opportunity for citizens to gain support from their community and increase the sense of both internal and external political efficacy.

Another important conclusion the researchers made was that "the Internet offers an alternative medium for carrying out political activities beyond the scope of the classical institutions, and therefore facilitates the use of new repertoires." (Kavanaugh et al., 2005). Those repertoires become increasingly evident in social network sites.

Political Participation over Social Network Sites

Social network websites allow users to connect with other users and exchange content online. Emails, chat rooms, instant messaging software and other products also allow users to communicate and share content with each other, but social network sites offer communication based on the user's

social network. What makes social network sites unique is that the entire user's network is – in principle – aware of said user's online activity. In other words, the user shares content with their entire network and is being exposed to content shared by other users in the network. Valenzuela et al. (2012) have shown the "idea of relationships between discussion network attributes and participation online", in a sense that activity on social network sites is a predicator of political participation and political efficacy. They found evidence that users of those sites use them to maintain their social network, by deliberating and conversing with their strong ties – family and close friends – on matters like political issues.

There are more than a few social network sites. Some of those are dedicated to a specific field of interest. Such are Instagram and Flickr that are dedicated to photography, or regional sites like Orkut in India and Renren in China that are dedicated to the people of those countries (Wikipedia, 2013). However, it is clear that the most talked about social network site is Facebook, with over one billion users (Fowler, 2012). One may wonder what all these people actually do on Facebook. What does it exactly mean to 'share content' with other users? Content can be anything, from pictures and short status updates to full length articles and edited videos. Thus, when a user shares a status update about a traffic jam on the way to work, their entire network can see that getting to the office today was an unpleasant experience. Similarly, a user can share a promotional video of their favourite presidential candidate, thus making their entire network know who is the best person to elect as their next president. As it was demonstrated by Vesnic-Alujevic, Facebook, as other social network sites, is "a suitable space for interactive political communication." (2012).

2008 marked the year that scholars focused their efforts on social networks sites as an arena for political participation, as the Obama campaign for U.S. presidency relied heavily on the Internet, more specifically on how the campaign harnessed social network sites to gain support and funds (Smith, 2009, Vitak et al., 2011). Furthermore, 59% of American voters used social network sites to

share and receive information regarding the campaign (ibid). Fernandes, Giurcanu, Bowers, and Neely (2010) examined students' Facebook wall posts during the presidential race. Their content analysis has shown that Facebook wasa virtual political arena for university students to show and encorurage support of their favourite candidate.

Findings by Vitak et al. (2011) confirm what many other studies argued: political participation on social network sites is highly correlated with traditional political participation. Do social network sites merely reflect pre-existing rates of participation, and therefore do not trultprovide a low cost avenue for participation? Perhaps, but it is worthwhile to consider that Vitak et al. - as well as others - focused primarily on young respondents. According to a more recent study done by Schlozman, Verba and Brady (2010), while controlling for age, online participation on social networks increases, while traditional participation experiences a decrease beyond a certain age. It is true that young adults of the age group 18-24 did not use other online participation methods, such as sending an email to a politician or donating money via the politician's website; but they did use social network sites for political use, such as befriending politicians on Facebook or posting political comments (Smith et al., 2009: 51). Thus, social network sites do more than reflect offline participation patterns.

Social network sites supposedly allow citizens to publicly communicate with parliament members, ministers and even heads of states in a direct way[1]. Unlike sending a letter, posting a comment on a politician's Facebook profile page or befriending him or her is both a public and a private communication with that politician. It is important to understand that participation over social network sites is somewhat different than other forms of online political participation, such as donating money, signing petitions or contacting politicians via email; those activities are done on a

[1]It is fair to assume that elected official do not personally read all online communications sent to them

platform that does not allow the citizen to receive feedback from his or her peers. There are offline activities that allow citizens to expose their beliefs to others, such as placing stickers on their cars, wearing party t-shirt or hanging a banner from one's house balcony. Citizens who use such instruments do so to publicly display their political beliefs. However, it does not really permit a political discourse. To engage in such discourse, one must receive feedback about his or her argument from other people. A citizen instigating a political act over a social network site does so while being exposed to other citizen's on a platform that does not only afford feedback and discourse, but seems essentially designated for such use. Since former online participation methods held some sort of anonymity, it is intriguing to inspect what motivates one to expose their political views to their entire social network, and possibly to many others, like potential employers. Moreover, people use Facebook to not only gather information, but also discuss it with their peers: "the inherent structure of the SNSs facilitates not only the acquisition of information but also the discussion of its importance and relevance with other members of a particular individual's social network." (Gil de Zúñiga, Nakwon & Valenzula 2012). Now, one must ask if social network sites can help citizens reduce costs of participation. If so, how does Facebook save time and money, and how does it allow citizens with low civic skills to engage?

Bennet (2012) concluded that "communication technologies may put individuals at the centre of their own networks, but the reach of those networks often enables the co-production and distribution of multimedia content with a surprisingly large number of others." When it comes to distributing political content in that manner, the concepts of internal political efficacy and external political efficacy need to be re-examined. It is due to the fact that neither of these concepts takes into consideration the potential of involving other citizens in engaging with politics. As noted earlier, since others in the user's Facebook network see said user's participation, the user gains

support, thus promoting participation (Kavanaugh et al., 2005). Such awareness is highly unlikely in any other kinds of participation.

The network itself has the ability to share, discuss and appraise political content uploaded by users; if the user's network is consisted out of citizens and politicians, there could be higher levels of self and external efficacy, regardless of traditional measures of political efficacy, such as education, political knowledge and others abilities. Simply put, for example the fact that posting political comments has low costs and reaches everyone, both politicians and many other citizens, may remove some barriers for political participation. In regards to Madsen (1987) it would be interesting if political participation on Facebook responds to internal and external efficacy in the same way as offline political participation responds to it.

Political Performance on Facebook

Political participation is essentially deliberation (Gastil, Deess& Weiser, 2002). Actions such as writing letters to elected officials require the use of language, while demonstrating merely requires one being present at a certain place at a certain time. It is clear though, that for a political action to be taken by a certain individual, he or she probably received information about the issue. Elsioph even stated that "The substance of political life is public discussion; even if a person can experience feelings of political concern without having a language for giving those feelings socially recognizable meaning, the feelings do not matter if they remain only private." (1990). Individuals may also serve as disseminators of information, making themselves a medium for political discussion. It is also known that media outlets do not just present facts and information about current events, but also present commentary and opinions, not only in the op-ed section, but also in the way stories and people are presented and framed to media consumers. Therefore, it is safe to assume that when individuals discuss politics with their peers, they do so with some sort of prejudice, stemming from their own values and beliefs. Such deliberation is in fact a self-political

presentation. Citizens in a democracy enjoy the freedom to do so without having to fear sanctions by the regime, but it is not too uncommon for individuals to adjust the presentation of their values to the environment they are found in (Huckfeldt, 2007,: 106). That is to say that there is a gap between what they really think, and what they present to thw world.

Kubal (1998) wrote about environmental activists' self-presentation. It appears that activist use different approaches when they move from region to region. There seems to be too little attention to how individuals who are not part of the political game present their own beliefs. Moy & Gastil (2006) wrote about political deliberation among groups from different backgrounds, but did not fully investigate the motives or mechanism respondents use to articulate their political attitudes, and dealt mainly with exposure to printed media, education and socio-economic status. In short, when people talk about politics, they create apolitical impressions, which is how their partners for discussion see their political point of view.

In his seminal work, 'Presentation of Self in Everyday Life', Goffman (1959) coined the term Dramaturgy to explain how people act in face-to-face interactions. According to his theory, the whole world is a stage and individuals are actors who perform in front of an audience. Such a "Performance" is shaped by the interaction's settings : the people actor interacts with and the environment (Goffman, 1959: 17). The performance takes place in the "front", while in the "back" the actor plans his or her performance (Goffman, 1959: 22). The performance in the front is planned and executed according to society's norms and laws (Barnhart, 1994). This performance may not reflect the actor's own norms, but as he or she wishes to be liked by the audience, they use "impression management" (Barnhart, 1994) to create such idealized identity. The actor iterates impressions that are given - those are the signs that he or she use to create a specific impression for the audience - with signs that are given off - impressions created without the actor's control, like body lanugague and facial gestures that the actor is not aware of them.. The better the actor

understands the audience interpretation of the sign that was given off, the better he or she would manage their impressions. In other words, if the actor wishes to create a better impression then the he or she should look for feedback from the audience; who in turnwould either approve or deny that impression. However, Goffman does not contend that actors are at the mercy of the audience and should always surrender to their judgment. In another work, Goffman termed the phrase "to keep face", which means the actor maintains a good performance even when the social situation changes:

"The term *face* may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes—albeit an image those others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself." (Goffman, 1967: 5).

If one should employ impression management to political deliberation, he or she may find that the term may be used to understand how individuals project their desired political identity. Taking for example common political deliberation among peers: every discussant wishes to maintain a likable political impression, each of them may use different ways to achieve it. According to Goffman, no one would like to present political views that are too extreme for the group, but also not to completely shut off and not argue at all. To illustrate, among a group of 60 year old white American males, it is safe to assume that if a discussant would suggest implementing Kim Il-Sung's five year plan to levy America's economic crisis, he or she would lose their political-face. Conversely, if a discussant in a group of young Israeli religious Jews would support the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank, that discussant would also lose political face. Another example would be if an individual goes to a Football match that determines which club would win the national championship, sit in the area reserved for the hard core fans of one of the clubs, and would not wear any of club's shirts, scarfs and would not cheer when the club is on the

offense. In short, political performance when an individual engages in a sort of political participation, while taking into consideration the social setting and the norms of what is politically correct to express in such setting.

It should be noted that performance does not constitute a complete conformity just to be liked by other members of society, but the ability to gain social support. Goffman was also aware that not all individual are great actors. In that case, the tension between the given to the performance given off would be too high, which may lead to lose face and result in embarrassment (Goffman, 1967: 9). Also, keeping one's political-face does not mean that people would not be willing to argue for their beliefs, even if their audience may not share them. One cannot argue with another if they agree on the same issues, and political arguments and deliberation among citizens is commonplace in democracies (Moy & Gastil, 2006). Therefore, it is safe to assume that actors may try and convince their audience, and not just give them a political performance that the audience willsurely agree with. When people argue about politics, they actually fight for their own political face.

Initially research on self-presentation on the internet focused on personal websites (Vazire & Gosling, 2004). While it is true that personal website allow users to fully control what goes on their website, this is an asynchronous self-presentation. Unlike the Goffmanian face-to-face interaction, presenting oneself on a website does not easily allow feedback from the audience. It is true that users may opt to leave an email address for site visitors to give feedback, but does not come close to a social interaction. Personal website contains information that is just out there, and site owners have almost no way of telling if they lost their face. However, social network sites provide a different experience. Goffman's theories have found their way to social network sites research: Siibak (2009) applied impressions management to youth choice of profile pictures for their Facebook profiles. She concluded that even in cyberspace, individuals strive to present a favourable

physical impression, using appealing profile pictures. She also quotes Clark (2005) saying that impression management on social network sites is an "ever-present worry of needing to perform oneself appropriately, and the twin need to be constantly evaluated as acceptable, or simply okay, in the context of one`s peers" (Clark, 2005 cited in Spiibak 2009). Wong (2012) went a step further and included in her study actual actions that users take on when they are using Facebook for self-presentation. She specifically addressed Facebook features, such as the 'like' button, posting comments, sharing content and sending private messages, actions that correlated with seeking self enhancement, ingratiation and supplication. In other words, Facebook features allow users to manage their impressions by receiving feedback from other members in their social network, thus creating a pseudo face-to-face social interaction on cyberspace.

However, a scholarship on political participation over social network sites has yet to reveal a special interest in presentation of a political self on websites like Facebook. It seems that political performance on Facebook would be a proper term to use when discussing one's self presentation of his or her political beliefs and attitudes to one's social network when they are using Facebook.

Hypotheses

As the title suggests, this thesis will focus on three factors that predict political participation on Facebook. The first factor in the model is the resources for political participation: money, time and civic skills. As shown in the literature review, Facebook allows one to engage in politics without leaving the house. Thus, if one wishes to protest yet they do not have the spare time to go to a demonstration, they can use Facebook to do so. Thus, two hypotheses predict that:

H1: Low income citizens would use Facebook for political participation.

H2: Citizens with little spare time will use Facebook for political participation.

Scholars have paid attention to how usage of new communication technologies such as web based chat rooms and SMS (text) messages lead to a decrease in language skills (Rosen, Chang, Erwin, Carrier, & Cheever, 2010), but they did not investigate if there is a reversed relationship that will allow to assert that modern communication technology makes language proficiency redundant. Thus, the third hypothesis lays a new paradigm and tests whether Facebook takes on the third dimension of the SES model for participation offered by Brady, Verba & Schlozman (1995):

H3: Citizens with low civic skills will use Facebook political participation.

To test the relation between internal political efficacy and political participation on Facebook, Madsen's approach, which had been discussed in the previous chapter, would be employed. As he argued, conventional participation would be the result of a citizen with high levels of internal and external efficacy, while the combination of high internal efficacy with low external efficacy will lead to protest and social activism. Zimmerman (1989) argued in the same spirit that those with high external political efficacy would engage from within the political system, or in for instance they would become party members or even candidates for elections. Those with low external political efficacy would turn to unconventional political participation, outside the political system. They would employ boycotts or passive resistance.

It is impossible to become a party member through Facebook, not to mention voting. While one can show support for the political system via Facebook in the form of befriending his or her favourite politicians, one can also express political critique and discontent through politicians'and parties' Facebook pages, and of course one's own Facebook profile. Thus, it can be asserted that political participation on Facebook may be considered as an engagement outside the political system, and following that logic, here are two hypotheses that test the relationship between political efficacy and political participation:

H4: Citizens with a high sense of internal political efficacy will use Facebook for political participation.

H5: Citizens with a low sense of external political efficacy will use Facebook for political participation.

The sixth and final hypothesis will test whther citizens use Facebook as a stage to show their political opinions and receive feedback from their audience, that is, their social network:

H6: Citizen will use Facebook for political performance.

Research Methods

A quantitative research method was used to test the hypotheses above, by conducting a survey of 293 respondents in Israel.

Case selection

The U.S. is not the only country with high penetration rates and a lively online political scene. Israel, though small in land and population[2], enjoys a high penetration rate of Internet and social network sites: about 70% of the population is connected to the Internet, and roughly half the population uses Facebook (Internet World Stats, 2013). Also, Israel's political arena is volatile and provides many fields of interests to the avid political scientist, as well as to the common Israeli citizen: a war every decade (Kobe, 2009), ethnic and religious social cleavages (Mizrahi & Herzog, 2012), social-economic disparities and a 45 years old occupation of the West Bank (Kimmerling, 2010). Also, up until the year 2000, Israel enjoyed a rather high turnout rate of nearly 80%, which has been in decline ever since (Arian, Arian and Shamir, 2011). Have Israelis found refuge in social

[2] according to 2008 Israel's Central Beauro of Statistics in —that year there were 7.4 milion Israeli citizens (Central Bureau of Statistcs, 2008)

network sites to express their political opinions and engage with the political realm? It seems appropriate that the unit of analysis of this manuscript will be the Israeli citizen.

Data Collection and sample

The data for this research was collected via a survey conducted among Israeli citizens from different groups in the population using snowball sampling: the survey was passed by email, Facebook and also a hard copy version was given out. The questionnaire was hosted on drive.google.com and the URL was delivered by email or a public Facebook post to selected Israeli citizens who would share it with other contacts. Those Facebook users were selected based on their network size, meaning they had more than a 1000 Facebook friends. Network size was not the sole criteria; the selected users were also political activists and have had a close acquaintance with the author. To avoid selection on the independent variable, the questionnaire was also printed and delivered during one day outside a mall in Haifa, the third largest city in Israel and in a small house party in the city of Kiryat Ono. 49 printed questionnaires were filled and returned, while the total number of questionnaires filled was N = 293.

Operationalization – dependent variables

Offline and Online Political Participation

One of the main challenges this thesis tried to deal with was the correlation of online and offline political participation . Distinguishing between people who prefer to participate politicaly on Facebook and people who prefer to participate politicaly in the real world would help appreciate in what ways people see Facebook as an arena for political engagement. As several scholars discovered (Boulianne, 2009), those people who were active in the real world were also active in cyberspace in general and in social network sites in particularIt is quite possible that citizens may

treat both cyberspace and reality as effective avenues for political participation. However, the data provided some evidence that there are citizen who use the internet mostly for political participation, and engage less in offline political participation, as can be seen in the appendix B, which deliniates the descriptive for items that measured political participation in the real world and on the internet.

Research of political participation on the internet is a relatively new field of study. Thus, it was decided to produce new items that would measure political participation on the Internet and on Facebook. Said items were devised while bearing in mind the affordances of social network sites, such as the ability to contact anyone on the network, making that contact public to the network, getting feedback from the network etc. Additional items that measured classic political participation were also devised according to Milbrath and Goel's (1974) table of possible political participation forms . In total 14 items measured offline and online political participation, each item was measured on a frequency scale from 1 to 5, indicating how often a respondent engaged in any of those activities. The scale offered the following options: 1 = never, 2 = once, 3 = more than once, 4 = frequently, 5 = all the time. Descriptive statistics for those items can be found in Appendix B.

To answer the challenge of differentiating offline activists from Facebook activists, two scales were created: the Facebook participation scale and the offline participation scales, in which each scale was made of the sum of items' scores that measured each form of participation. It should be stressed that the online survey did not allow respondents to submit their questionnaire without answering all questions, and that all of the printed questionnaires were answered completely. Therefore there were no missing values at all, which allowed to use an additive index. For the offline scathe the following items were included: wrote a letter to a politician, participated in a public meeting with a politician, attended a demonstration or a rally, signed a petition on the street, became a party member, boycotted a product or a country and donated money to a party or a candidate. For the Facebook political participation scale the items were: posted a political status on

Facebook, befriended, like or subscribed a politician on Facebook, posted a comment to a politician's Facebook page, engaged in a political argument on Facebook and lastly, called for a boycott on a certain product or a country. The last item was considered as an online item because the most feasible way for ordinary citizens to call for other people to pursue a boycott is via the internet. Obviously social movements have other means for introducing boycotts to the public, but this is not the case for citizens who do not have access to media outlets or other kinds of traditional media.

As was noted earlier, although measured in the survey, voting was not considered for the Offline Political Participation scale for several reasons. The first is that there is no similar activity in the online world, and it is the only activity which is state sanctioned. Voting is the only activity that has a clear outcome, in a sense that a certain party will receive a seat in the parliament if it gathers enough votes. The only legal way for the public to replace a government is by voting and while demonstrations, petitions or rallies may sway other voters to change their voting behaviour, those activities do not have a direct influence on who will be in office. Another reason was that most respondents voted at least once since they gained suffrage, while 62.3 present of them managed to vote every time they had the chance. The mean for voting was 4.16 while median and mode were 5, whereas only 7.5 present of the sample never voted. No other item on both offline and online scale received such scores. Furthermore, election day in Israel is a day off and voting polls are located all around the country, even in remote army posts, thus dramatically reducing costs of taking such action. In other words, including the voting item in the offline scale would greatly undermine the online scale and would create a bias towards offline participation.

As those items were devised specifically for this research and were not tested in previous research, a principle component analysis was employed. The analysis was conducted on the 14 items with orthogonal rotation (varimax). Table 2 shows the factor loadings after rotation.

Component 1 represents online political participation while component 2 represents offline political participation.

Table2 Summary of exploratory factor analysis results for the Offline-Online Political participation questionnaire (N = 293)

Item	Rotated Factor Loading	
	Online Political Participation	Offline Political Participation
Went to a demonstration or a rally	**.51**	**.54**
Signed a petition on the street	.26	**.46**
Boycotted a product or a country	.**42**	.39
Wrote a letter to a politician	.01	.**55**
Donated money to a party or a candidate via bank order, personal cheque, cash or on the telephone	.22	.**60**
Became a party member	.18	.**71**
Went to a public meeting with an elected official or a candidate	.20	.**73**
Wrote an email to an elected official	.**49**	.**54**
Signed an online petition	.**56**	.3
Wrote a political status update on Facebook	.**87**	.14
Befriended, liked or subscribed an elected official on Facebook	.**79**	.20
Engaged in a political argument on Facebook	.**86**	.15
Called for a boycott on a certain product or a country	.**60**	.20
Posted a comment to an elected official's Facebook page	.**68**	.18
Eigenvalues	5.66	1.36
% of Variance	40.46	9.70

1. Note: Factor loadings over .40 appear in bold

2. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy confirmed the sample, KMO = .86. All items KMO items were above .74, where the acceptable limit is .5 Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericityχ^2 (91) = 1812.19, $p < .001$, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for PCA. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each component in the data

As the table shows, some items loaded above .40 on both scales. Deciding which of those items should be included in which scale was based on the content of the item and if the content of that item related more to offline political participation or to Facebook political participation. The items for the final offline scale were: Went to a demonstration or a rally, signed a petition on the street, wrote a letter to a politician, donated money to a party or a candidate, became a party

member and went to a public meeting with an elected official or a candidate. The items for the online scale were: wrote a political status update on Facebook, befriended, liked or subscribed an elected official on Facebook, engaged in a political argument on Facebook, called for a boycott on a certain product or a country and posted a comment to an elected official's Facebook page. The items that have been dropped were: boycotted a product or a country, signed an online petition and wrote an email to an elected official. The first boycott item was dropped as it loaded on the online scale and even so the load was marginal. The email item was not included in the Facebook political participation scale because email is not a social platform. Yet, the email item was used for other analysis as will be shown later.

Operationalization – independent variables

Income

Respondents were asked to rate their income relatively to the average wage in Israel, using a 5 point scale ranging from 1=way below the average to 5=way above the average. (M = 2.29, SD = 1.34).

Time

To measure lack of time, respondent were asked to rate the following statement "My work or school take up most of my time" on a five point Likert scale, in which1 was labeled "strongly agree" and 5 was labeled "strongly disagree". For the final analysis the scores for this item were reversed (M = 3.55, SD = 1.24 after reversing the scores).

Civic Skills

As Brady, Verba, & Schlozman (1995) showed, civic skills were highly correlated with language skills. Brady, Veraba & Schlozman used a complex questionnaire to measure education and civic skills and including it in the survey would have made it extremely long and exhausting to complete. Therefore, it was decided to develop a single item that would indicate one's civic skills according to one's attention to grammar and spelling, as those are fundamental components of language

proficiency.The item is “spelling mistakes do not annoy me and I believe people should be more tolerant to others who misspell”. Respondents were asked to rate the statement on a five point Likert scale which was reversed, so that respondents who scored highly on this item were respondents with more civic skills (M = 3.48, SD = 1.27.)

Political efficacy

Respondents’ political efficacy, internal and external, was designed to be measured with items suggested by Niemi et al. (1991) on a 5 point Likert scale. Scores of the items were summed to create an index. However, after running another PCA, it was discovered that some other items in this part of the questionnaire are located on the internal efficacy component, though originally those items were devised to measure political performance. Moreover, the content of those items: 1. “I can persuade other people to agree with my views” and 2. “I can mobilize other people to engage in politics” seemed closer to internal efficacy. Therefore, it was decided to add those items to the internal political efficacy index. The analysis was conducted on the 12 items that measured the rest (without the resources items) of the independent variables items, with orthogonal rotation (varimax). An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each component in the data. 4 components had eigenvalues over Kaiser’s criterion of 1 and in combination explained 63.95% of the variance. The scree plot suggested extract three factors. Therefore, it was decided to retain factors 1, 2 and 3 as the inflexion point was set at the fourth factor. Table 3 shows the factor loadings after rotation. Component 1 represents internal political efficacy, component 2 represents external political efficacy and component 3 represents political impression management.

Although Cronbach’s alpha for the external political efficacy items did not score very high, it is very close to the acceptable limit (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Following the statistical analysis, it was

also decided to discard the item "In a democracy, the people always have the final word". The phrasing may have been too vague comparing to the other items on the scale.

Table3 Summary of exploratory factor analysis results for the Political efficacy and political performance items (N = 293)

Item	Rotated Factor Loading		
	Internal Efficacy	External Efficacy	Political Performance
I have experience to engage in politics	.**79**	.05	.16
Politics is too complicated for me	.**62**	.17	.08
Politicians don't care about what people like me think	.12	.**75**	.08
I could do a good job in public office	.**85**	-.03	-.05
I am qualified to participate in politics	.**82**	.13	.19
People like me don't have a say about what the government does	.21	.**74**	.04
In a democracy, the people always have the final word	-.03	.**43**	-.11
There are many legal ways to influence what the government does	.02	.**74**	.17
I find it important that my family and friends know my political beliefs	.22	.01	.**70**
I can persuade other people to agree with my views	.**48**	.01	.**44**
My political views are more valid when my friends agree with me	-.11	.01	.**78**
I can mobilize other people to engage in politics	.**46**	.12	.**60**
Eigenvalues	3.64	1.68	1.31
% of Variance	30.34	14.02	10.88
A	.75	.68	.64

Notes: 1. Factor loadings over .40 appear in bold

2. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy confirmed the sample, KMO = .74. Most of the KMO items were around .80, and only two items were around .52. Bartlett's test of sphericityχ^2 (66) = 929.45, p < .001, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for PCA.

Two indices were made after conducting the CPA: internal efficacy index and external efficacy index. For each index, the scores of the index's items were summed. The first index included the following items (all were reversed except for the second item): 1. "I have the experience to engage in politics and community affairs" (M = 2.98, SD = 1.38), 2. "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what is going on" (M = 3.68, SD = 1.22), 3. "I feel that I can do as good a job in public office as most other people" (M= 2.82, SD = 1.37), 4. "I can persuade other people to agree with my views" (M = 3.38, SD = 1.02) and 5. "I can mobilize other people to engage in politics" (M = 3, SD = 1.19).

The external efficacy index was made of the following (only the third item was reversed): 1. "Politicians don't care about what people like me think" (M = 2.78, SD = 1.14), 2. "People like me don't have a say about what the government does" (M = 3.08, SD = 1.15), 3. "There are many legal ways to influence what the government does" (M = 3.11, SD = 1.15).

Control Variables

There were two control variables: age and offline political participation. Offline political participation is the scale that was detailed in the operationalization chapter, and age was measured on an ordinal 8 point scale where each point represented an older age group: 18-24. 25-32, 33-40, 41-48, 49-56, 57-64, 65-72, 73-80, 81-older (M = 2.78, SD = 1.72). The median for age was 2, meaning that the sample was made of many young respondents. This outcome was quite expected as the questionnaire was mostly circulated via email and Facebook.

Analysis and Results

After an initial correlation test, it was found that Facebook political participation is highly related to offline political participation, and is negatively related to age, $r_{offline} = .60$, $r_{age} = -.33$, both with $p < .001$. Such correlations suggest that young people from the sample who are active in real world also

engage in politics on Facebook. Therefore, it was decided to include age as a control variable, along with offline political participation. Having those two variables as control variables would produce a clearer picture of how the other independent variables predict political participation on Facebook. Appendix C contains the table for correlations of independent variables with Facebook political participation, as well as the table in which age and offline political participation were controlled.

In the heart of this thesis stands the assertion that Facebook users can distinguish between the benefits of political participation in the real world and political participation on Facebook. Therefore, one may see that distinction by using a model that compares the effect of the independent variables – resources, political efficacy and political performance – on offline political participation and on Facebook political participation. To properly appreciate that distinction, the model included offline political participation as one of the predicators of Facebook political participation, and vice versa, along the rest of the aforementioned independent variables.

Four regression sub-models were employed to form one model. This technique should allow the reader to appreciate the effect that each form of political participation has on the other form. In the first model all independent variables, including age, were regressed with offline political participation. In the second model all independent variables, including age and Facebook political participation, were regressed with offline political participation. In the third model, allindependent variables, including age, were regressed with Facebook political participation. The fourth and last model had all the independent variables including age and offline political participation regressed with political participation on Facebook. Table 4 presents the results of those three regressions.

The first model showed that 36% of the variance in offline political participation can be explained by the model.

Table 4: Four regression models predicting political participation in the real world and on Facebook

	Offline Political Participation		Offline Political participation controlling for Facebook Political participation		Facebook Political Participation		Facebook Political Participation controlling for Offline Political Participation	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Constant	5.05***	1.35	2.33**	1.35	6.52***	1.51	3.88**	1.37
Age	0.04	0.14	0.50***	0.14	-1.10***	0.16	-1.12***	0.14
Income	-0.33	0.18	-0.31*	0.16	-0.05	0.20	0.12	0.18
Civic Skills	-0.34**	0.16	-0.28*	0.16	-0.14	0.18	0.04	0.16
Lack of Spare Time	-0.10	0.17	0.12	0.17	-0.52**	0.19	-0.47**	0.16
Internal Efficacy	0.36***	0.05	0.21***	0.05	0.37***	0.06	0.18***	0.06
External efficacy	0.23**	0.08	0.21***	0.08	0.05	0.08	-0.07	0.08
Given Political Impression	1.01***	.18	0.45**	0.18	1.35***	0.20	0.82***	0.18
Given Off political Impression	-.14	.19	-0.19	0.46	0.12	0.21	0.19	0.19
Offline Political participation							0.52***	0.06
Facebook Political Participation			0.42***					
N	293		293		293		293	
R^2	.36		.50		.42		.55	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

The resource variables gave only a partial prediction of offline political participation: income (B=-.33, p=.06) and civic skills (B=-.34, $p < .05$) were found to have a negative yet marginally significant relationship with offline political participatin. Positive relationship between age (B=.5, $p < .001$) and offline political participation was established, indicating that older people may prefer offline political participation to online. Income (B=-.31, $p < .05$) and civic skills (B=-.28, $p < .05$) showed to have negative and significant statistical relationship with offline political participation. Internal (B=.21, $p < .001$) and external (B=21, $p < .001$) political efficacy predicated the dependant variable in this model, along with given political impression. The factors that did not provide a statistical explanation to offline political participation were given off political impression (B=-.14, $p > .05$) and lack of sparetime (B=.12, $p > .05$).

The Third model explained 42% of the variance in Facebook political participation, without controlling for offline political participation. Age has dramatically changed and now has a negative and significant effect on Facebook political participation (B=-1.10 with $p <.001$). Civic skills (B=-.14, $p > .05$) and money (B=-.05, $p > .05$) did not predict Facebook political participation and Time (B=-.52, $p < .01$) was found to have a negative statistically significant relationship with Facebook political participation, or in other words those who have more spare time, use it to engage in political activities on Facebook. Internal (B=.37, $p < .001$) political efficacy remained as a positively significant explanatory variable, while external political efficacy has lost its explanatory power. Given political impression (B=1.35, $p < .001$) is even stronger in predicting Facebook political participation than in predicting offline political participation, but given off political impression (B=.12, $p > .05$) has no significant effect on this kind of political participation. Age (B=-1.01, $p < .001$) was found to have a negative and statistically significant relationship with Facebook political participation.

The fourth and last model, in which offline political participation (B=.52, $p < .001$) was included as an explanatory variable, explained 55% of the variance in Facebook political participation. Civic Skills (B=.04, $p > .05$) and income (B=.12, $p > .05$) could not explain Facebook political participation, but lack of spare time (B=-.47, $p < .01$) has explained engagement, yet to a lesser extent than in the third model. Internal (B=.18, $p < .001$) political efficacy predicated Facebook political participation with statistical significance, but not as strongly as in the second model, while external (B=-.07, $p > .05$) political efficacy did not have a meaningful statistical relationship with political engagement on Facebook. Given political impressions (B=.82, $p < .001$) predicted Facebook political participation, while given off political impression (B=.19, $p > .05$) did not, as in all other models.

Considering the change in external political efficacy coefficients between the second and the fourth models, one may think that Facebook users direct their engagement towards other citizens within their social network, and not to politicians or institutions who have Facebook profiles and pages. To test that assertion, a more narrow post hoc analysis was performed. Two dependent variable items that dealt with communication with politicians over the internet were correlated with an external political efficacy item: “Posted a comment on a politician's Facebook page” and “Wrote an email to a politician” with “Politicians do not care about what people like me think.” One may speculate that respondents who scored high on those engagement items, that have actually sent emails and posted comments, believe that their communication with politicians may yield something, either a response from the politician or even a change in policy. The correlation analysis provided some evidence that sending emails to politicians may have originated with a sense of external political efficacy ($r_{email} = .20$, $p < .001$), but posting comments on politicians’ Facebook pages did not correlate with politicians’ assumed attention for what citizens actually think ($r_{comment} = .07$, $p > .05$). Those findings go hand in hand with the results the second regression model

presented. When Facebook participation was controlled along with age, external political efficacy was highly related to offline political participation, r=.21, p <.001. As noted earlier, the fourth model showed no relationship between external political efficacy and political engagement on Facebook. Those findings suggest that those who are politically active on Facebook may seek for a different outcome than those who predominantly engage in offline political participation. While it appears that those who march on streets do so to make politicians do something, those who write political status updates on Facebook may have a different target in minds.

Discussion

The goal of this manuscript was to suggest a new perspective for thinking about political participation over social network sites by setting political participation on social network sites as the dependent variables, as opposed to what was done so far by other scholars. Researches have so far focused on the relationship between online and offline political participation, candidates' nd citizens' use of social network sites to gain and show political support, and the use of the internet for coordination of offline political participation (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Scholars have also mainly focused on the effect of Facebook political participation on offline political participation, social capital and other dependent phenomena, but rarely did they investigate Facebook political participation as the dependent variable. This approach does not take into account what users are trying to achieve or gain from engaging with politics on virutal platforms such as Facebook.

The model offered in this thesis allows the reader to compare between those who prefer offline political participation and those who would rather engage on Facebook. It also shows the effect that offline political participation has on Facebook political participation and vice versa, and to confirm that, age is a major factor in predicting preference for either form of engagement.

The first three hypotheses, which suggested that Facebook could help reduce costs of offline political participation, thus enabling less privileged individuals to participate,were rejected. It

should be noted that even the relationship between offline political participation and income, time and civic skills did not come out as previous research has shown. In other words, even the more privileged were not found to be overwhelmingly engaged in offline political participation, as the reader should have expected according to the SES model offered by Brady, Verba and Schlozman (1995). Those results could be explained in several ways, but it seems that using a snowball sample and not a representative sample contributed the most to those results. In regards to income, it seems that the fact that sample was very young had a great effect, as young people are at their beginning of their career and therefore are expected to earn less money than older people. Young people are also more engaged in political participation, but it looks like a more representative sample of the population would have produced different results for the income hypothesis.

The second hypothesis that lack of time would predict political participation on Facebook was also rejected. The negative relationship between lack of spare time and political participation on Facebook may suggest that in order to post comments on politicians Facebook walls, or to engage on political discussions on Facebook may actually take more time than offline political participation. A different approach would be that those who have more spare time on their hands use it for political participation on Facebook.

Internal Political efficacy was found to predict political participation on Facebook and confirmed the fourth hypothesis. As the model shows, the relationship was a bit weaker than with offline political participation. It could be explained with the fact that political participation on Facebook exists only since2006, when the site was made available to people from all around the world. One may also speculate that internal political efficacy is associated with experience, as experience may come with age. However, no correlation was found between age and either form of political efficacy. In any case, it seems that the difference is not substantial. A more complete inference could be made in light of Madsen's and Zimmerman's observations that were detailed in

the literature review. According to those scholars, for Facebook to be used for unconventional participation – as in boycotts, passive resistance and social activism outside the political system – those who have a high sense of internal political efficacy need to also have a low sense of external political efficacy. However, only the results for offline political participation support that inference, and thus the fifth hypothesis was rejected, and hence it cannot be argued that Facebook is either an arena for unconventional political participation or for conventional political participation. One of the premises of the thesis is that citizens can tell if Facebook is good for political participation. Citizens may opt for political participation on Facebook because it allows them to achieve something. As shown earlier, citizens do not see Facebook as a cost-effective tool for political participation, nor for conventional or unconventional participation.

The sixth hypothesis, that Facebook is seen by citizens as a stage for political performance, was partially accepted. Citizens do use Facebook to present their network with their political opinions, but it seems they do not seek approval on behalf of their network. For those respondents, it is sufficient that everyone would know their political opinions. What may matter to them the most is that everyone know what their beliefs are.

Those results echo the debate of social capital and Facebook. As Putnam (1995) feared, waning social capital leads to waning trust in the government and therefore poses a real danger for democracy. In short, Putnam's main concern was that TV pushed people away from each other, as they do not have face-to-face interactions, and by that reduced their interpersonal communication. Without communications there is no trust between members of society, which leads to a lack of trust in the government. If Facebook actually allows people to communicate, one may expect that it would replace face-to-face communication and increase peoples' trust in one another and in the government. It was so argued by several scholars, who have established that there is "a robust connection between Facebook usage and indicators of social capital, especially of the bridging type.

Internet use alone did not predict social capital accumulation, but intensive use of Facebook did." (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe (2007) On the other hand, Valenzuela, Park, & and Kee (2009) claimed that although there is a statistical relationship between Facebook use and social capital, it is small and they suggested that social network sites are not enough to combat youth disengagement from civil society.

One of the conecrns that was raised earlier was that Facebook only reflects offline political participation. However, the sample and the model here, in light of the previous paragraph, offer a different yet still worrying inference. The sample showed that young people prefer political participation on Facebook to offline political participation. Since Facebook is still a very young and new medium, it would be nearly impossible to predict if those who currently use Facebook to engage with politics would abandon it as they grew older and switch back to real-world engagements. As Madsen (1987) stated, political particpation that stems from a combination of a high sense of both external and internal political participation, "has long been regarded as a hallmark of the good democratic citizen." Hence, those who were active on Facebook did not present desired particpation motives. It seems that they did not want to be involved in disoucrse to fufil their democratic duties, but perhaps to show that they, as individuals, have political opinions. For example, they would share a picture that calls to help victims of human trafficing not because they truly believe that the government would actually help those victims, but to show to their network that they as individuals care about the victims of human trafficing.

This notion should alarm decision makers and citizens who care about democracy. As those are the citizens of the future, such trends of reliance on social network sites to replace real world political participation may hide wanning support in the political system in the guis of virutal, literally, political participation.

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Appendix A

Dear participant,

Thank you for taking the time to answer this survey. You will be presented with a series of questions about political participation and internet usage for an M.A. thesis in the Faculty of Social Science in Leiden University. Filling the questionnaire should take no more than ten minutes. There is no need to write your name or any other identifying data. Please answer all the questions truthfully and honestly and your contribution to science would be priceless.

Thank you again,

Ori Harel

Below is a list of political activities. Please indicate how many times did you participate in each activity:

Wrote an email to an elected official

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Donated money to a party or a candidate via bank order, personal cheque, cash or on the telephone

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Wrote a letter to an elected official

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Posted a comment to an elected official's Facebook page

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Became a party member

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Engaged in a political argument on Facebook (e.g. posted multiple comments to a political status update)

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Called for a boycott on a certain product or a country

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Voted

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Went to a demonstration or a rally

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Befriended, liked or subscribed an elected official on Facebook

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Signed a petition on the street

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Went to a public meeting with an elected official or a candidate

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Posted a political status updat on Facebook

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Worked (with pay) for a political party or an elected official

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Signed an online petition

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Boycotted a product or a country

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

Donated money to a politician or a party via a website

1. never 2. once 3. more than once 4. frequently 5. all the time

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement (put an X in the appropriate box)

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree
I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics and community affairs.					
I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people					
Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's					

going on					
I don't think public officials care about what people like me think					
I find it important that my friends and family know my political orientations and beliefs					
I can persuade other people to agree with my views					
Having living room debates cannot help solve political and social problems					
My political views are more valid when my friends agree with me					
I can mobilize other people to engage in politics					
People like me don't have any say about what the government does.					
The people have the final say about how the country is run, no matter who is in office.					
There are many legal ways for citizens to successfully influence what the government does					

You have just learned that the local authorities plan to build a highway next to your neighborhood. After discussing it with neighbors and traffic professionals you learn that this highway will lead to an increase in air pollution and traffic jams in your neighborhood along with a decrease in real estate value. You are determined to stop the building of the highway. Below is a list of actions that **you** personally can take. Please rate the following actions from the most attractive to the least attractive by marking X in the desired box.

Actions/attractiveness	Most	Somewhat	Not very	Least

	attractive	attractive	attractive	attractive
Chaining oneself to construction vehicles				
Posting a comment on the mayor's Facebook wall				
Inviting your Facebook friends to a rally against the highway				
Attend a city hall council meeting regarding the highway				

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement (put an X in the appropriate box)

	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neither agree or disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree
My work or studies take up most of my time					
I pay my electricity and water bills via the internet and not at the bank					
Spelling mistakes annoy me and I believe people should pay more attention before they write something					

Please circle the correct answer:

I have an internet connection at home	Yes / No
I have a mobile phone with an internet connection	Yes / No

Israeli citizen: Yes/No

Sex: Male/Female

Age: 18-24/ 25-32 / 33-40 / 41-48 / 49-56 / 57-64 / 65-72 / 72-79 / 80-older

Where do you live:

1. City
2. Village/Kibutz
3. Communal settlement

Area of residence:

1. Tel Aviv
2. Jerusalem
3. Haifa
4. Beer Sheva

Marital Status:

1. Single
2. Married
3. Cohabitation
4. Divorced
5. Widowed

What is your religion?

1. Jewish
2. Muslim
3. Christian
4. Druze
5. unaffiliated

How religious are you?

1. Secular
2. Traditional
3. Observant
4. Orthodox

What is your Mother Tongue?

1. Hebrew
2. Arabic
3. Russian
4. English
5. Amharic

The average income in Israel is 9500 NIS per month. Is your income:

1. Way below the average
2. Slightly below the average
3. Average
4. Slightly above average
5. High about average

Appendix B

Descriptive statistics for offline and online political participation scale

	Precentage						
	Never	Once	More than once	Frequently	All The Time	M	SD
Attended a rally	24.8	12.9	40.1	18.4	3.4	2.62	1.16
Signed a petition on the street	29.9	24.5	40.8	3.1	.7	2.19	.93
Boycotted a product or a country	63.6	10.2	16	6.5	3.4	1.75	1.14
Wrote a letter to a politician	89.5	4.8	4.4	1	0	1.17	.54
Donated money to a party or a politician	77.2	11.2	9.2	1.4	.7	1.37	.76
Became a party member	63.9	20.7	9.9	1	3.7	1.58	.98
Went to a public meeting with a politician	58.5	18	20.1	2	1	1.69	.93
Wrote an email to a politician	34.4	5.8	23.1	23.1	13.3	1.65	.96
Signed an online petition	13.3	7.5	50.3	22.8	5.8	3.00	1.04
Wrote a political status update on Facebook	34.4	5.8	23.1	23.1	13.3	2.75	1.47
Befriended a politician on Facebook	44.9	8.5	27.2	12.2	6.8	2.27	1.33
Participated in a political argument on Facebook	34.5	6.5	28.7	17.7	12.6	2.68	1.42
Call for a boycott on a country or a product	63.6	12.6	18.7	3.7	1	1.66	.98
Posted a comment on a politician's Facebook page	66.7	10.2	20.7	1.7	0.3	1.58	.90

Appendix C

Correlations table of all variables

	Internal Efficacy	External efficacy	Given Political performance	Given Off Political performance	Lack of time	Civic Skills	Income	Facebook Political Participation	Offline Political Participation
Internal Efficacy									
External efficacy	.25***								
Political performance given	.29***	.110							
Political performance given off	.08	.06	.28***						
Lack of Time	.01	.09	-.05	-.04					
Civic Skills	.04	-.05	.01	.11	.00				
Income	.09	-.02	-.02	-.10	-.08	-.01			
Facebook Political Participation	.43***	.18**	.40***	.19**	-.05	-.03	-.18**		
Offline Political Participation	.47***	.28***	.42***	.09	-.02	-.09	-.06	.60***	
Age	-.03	-.17	.13*	-.09	-.23***	.04	.52***	-.33***	-.02