



The Effects of Social Media on Political Participation Behaviors of University Students

Kemal Elciyar

Anadolu University

kemalelciyar@anadolu.edu.tr

Ali Simsek

Anadolu University

asimsek@anadolu.edu.tr

Abstract

The general purpose of the present study was to determine the political behaviors of university students on social media and describe the perceptions towards these behaviors, as well as new behavior types. The study was designed based on the survey model. In the course of the research, a literature review was conducted and a conceptual frame was established. In the following stages of the study, a scale with two parts regarding opinions of 406 students from various departments of Anadolu University was implemented in accordance with the purpose and design of the study. The first part of the scale contained personal information about the participants and the second part consisted of 46 Likert-type statements regarding the identified dimensions of online political participation. The results of the study provided information consistent with one of the theories on political usage of social media, namely "reinforcement theory." According to the results, participants do not perform intensive political activities on social media. Almost all of the behaviors are performed in low intensity. Social media are used frequently for political reasons by a small number of people who are more politically inclined and that describe themselves as cyber-activists. The remaining majority of participants resort to political behaviors on social media instantaneously. These resorted behaviors generally emerge as acts based on sharing and communication; that is, acts which require low amounts of effort. Again, according to the results, university students reach political news through social media, spend a lot of time on social media and they think filters, internet connection prices, and data recording are obstacles for political behaviors.

Keywords: Social media, Political participation, University students

Introduction

Electoral and conventional participation have decreased in recent decades even in most industrial countries (Franklin 2004). Different studies have also identified a growing level of public discontent with the mechanisms and institutions of representative democracy (Pharr & Putnam 2000). This is a negative situation when it is thought that the development of modern democracies is measured by the prevalence and effectiveness of political participation.

Political participation, which is essentially a political behavior (Baykal, 1970), is generally defined as a notion that determines the status and attitudes of the members of the society towards the political system. Besides, political participation can be defined as all forms of people's efforts to influence the political process (Kışlalı, 1993). Political participation is generally explained as a concept that determines the status and attitudes of the members of the society towards the political system.

Lerner says that the urbanization seen in the West, provides increased literacy; increased literacy also brings mass communication tools to be more effective; while increasing uses of mass communication tools will lead to wider economic, political and social involvement. Lerner argues that the processes will be valid all over the world in this order. According to Lerner, the most important factor affecting political participation is mass media (cited in Kongar, 1972).

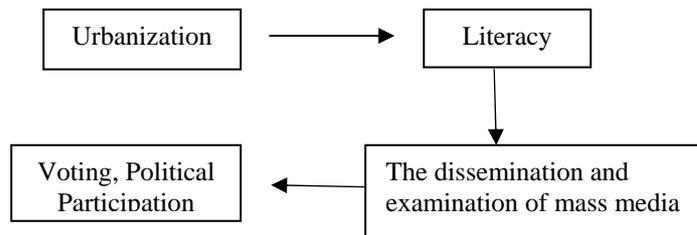


Figure 1: Relation of Political Participation and Mass Media
Source: Kongar, 1972

Dahl (2001) lists the dimensions of political participation in the following terms:

- a) Interest; monitoring political events
- b) Attention; attach importance to political events
- c) Understanding; having information about events and problems
- d) Action; active involvement in political events.

Milbrath, in one of his works, lists the actions involved in political participation according to the order of difficulty ((Milbrath, 1965, 18):

Gladiator Activities

- Holding office
- Candidate for office
- Active party membership
- Contributing time in a campaign

Transitional Activities

- Attending a political rally
- Donating money to a party
- Contacting an official

Spectator Activities

- Wearing a button
- Trying to talk someone into voting a certain way
- Political discussions
- Voting

Today, it seems that all modern political regimes, democratic or anti-democratic, base their legitimacy on society, at least they claim so. The democracy of a regime is measured by the possibilities of political participation, recognized by citizens (Kıslalı, 2003). Communication tools play an important role in almost every dimension of participation that Dahl stated (Wihbey, 2015). There are many benefits that the Internet can provide for democracy and political communication (Dahlgren, 2005). Contrary to traditional media, the new communication environment that emerged at the basis of technological innovations has made the communication and exchange of information more interactive.

There are optimistic or pessimistic views about the impact of the Internet and social media on political participation, and different results are emerging from research. Negative opinions argue that individuals are becoming atomized and weakened on the Internet (Davis, 1999, Novek, 2000). Some studies have also demonstrated that participation increases slightly (Bimber 1999, Schuefele & Nisbet 2002), some



approaching positively; they are concerned that the Internet will provide a more participatory society by increasing political participation.

Norris (2000) generally explained the influence of the Internet on political participation around two theories: Mobilization and Reinforcement theories. According to Mobilization theorists, the Internet is a new structure for participation, empowering citizens and their social capital. New technologies reduce the division between governors and governed and contribute to a participatory democracy. It also constitutes new structures of political activism. On the contrary, the reinforcement approach suggests that the Internet will not change existing political participation and political communication. The point that these theorists put on the subject is the difference between those who can have access and those who do not.

The fast organization, easy access and dissemination of information brought by social media can bring about a new wave of democratization on a global scale (Papic & Noonan 2011). This emerging wave of democratization will also bring more involvement. Today, social media has been integrated into a wide variety of electronic devices, creating a two-way dialogue environment. In this dialogue, the contents spread and can be discussed later. The discussion environment and the rapid spread of information have made social media active in the political arena (Koçgündüz, 2011).

For social media, scholars have made and used different classifications. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) studied social media networks by dividing them into six different groups. This grouping has been preferred because it contains the most appropriate titles for research as well as being frequently used in the literature. The platforms that can be considered within the scope of social media are: "social network sites", "blog", "microblog", "content sharing sites", "social management sites", "wiki", "podcast" and "forum" (Akar, 2010; Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; Constantinides, 2009; Richardson, 2009).

Even though social media is not considered as a factor in political actions on its own, societies use social media as an organization and communication platform (Joseph, 2011). From this point of view, social media has a supportive and organizational function for these actions. In political actions such as Wall Street Occupation, London Uprisings and Arab Rebellion, which have come into existence in very different societies, social media have been used to organize people, to reach more people and to communicate. The use of social media in the same direction in terms of political actions, even in totally different societies, reveals the universal identity of social media (Çıldan et al., 2012). Although the Internet is not the only one for the new social movements, it is the most important tool of communication (Şener, 2007). Young people with low levels of political participation increase their awareness of such issues through social media. Their participation is also increasing. It is believed that the most informed person will have the most participation (Milner, 2002).

Social media is used in two different ways in collective actions. The first is the emergence of direct street demonstrations, which can be defined as activism, and the second is to participate in such movements, based on cyber activism (digital activism, internet activism), mostly based on internet technologies and using online platforms instead of street actions (Table 1). These "cyber-activist" behaviors; sharing of the elements related to the activities on the social media, making supportive sharing, liking the pages or groups related to these activities, protests for the products and organizations, donations, changing the profile photographs, using clothes and accessories, petitions, tweets and so on (Joyce, 2010).



Table 1: Comparison of Activism Types

	Activism	Cyberactivism 1.0	Cyberactivism 2.0
Actors	Local	International or regional	Global, no borders
Diffusion of ideas	M2M, printed, electronic	Traditional media, e-mail, websites	Websites, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter
Organization	Leaders	Horizontal attached to NGOs or leader	Horizontal self-organized
Viral organization	Non-existent	Dependent, organized	Independent, self-organized, devices automated
Content update	Slow	Medium speed	Instant, permanent updated
Recruitment	Person to person	E-mail and websites	Permanent online recruitment
Flow of information	Limited to content and traditional media	Restricted and limited to organizers	Constant flow of data
Language	Restricted to the activists	Restricted to country or region	No language restriction
Engagement	Physical	Offline	Online, instant, permanent
Interaction	Reduced interaction with other citizens	Partially online and offline	Online mostly and partially offline

Source: Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Gil-Garcia, J. R. (2014). Towards cyberactivism 2.0? Understanding the use of social media and other information technologies for political activism and social movements. *Government Information Quarterly*, 31(3), 365-378.

Expressing and exchanging opinions online has increased in recent years. Recent research in the United States shows that 15% of Americans used the Internet to make a donation, while 10% made it possible for others to support a particular candidate during the 2008 elections (Smith & Rainie, 2008). In the same election period, many people under the age of 30 have used the Internet for political opinion exchange and political commentary (Kohut, 2008; Smith & Rainie, 2008).

Throughout its history, the Internet has become a political source of information. Between 1996 and 2008, the proportion of political information online in the United States rose from 4% to 40% (Rainie, 2007a; Smith & Rainie, 2008). According to Pew Internet Research (2012) America's general research; 66% of social media users and 39% of adults participate in political activities in social media. It is thought that young people are more active because the numbers are seen to be lowered in the adults. The young people who constitute the social media user profile get a lot of information from these networks.

Methodology

Sample

The study used a survey model. The population of the study consists of university students studying at the faculties and vocational schools of Anadolu University in Turkey. Administrative or academic staff was not included in the study. As the sample of the study, 406 students were reached through random sampling technique from faculties and vocational schools online. At the same time, the number of students has also met the required ratio of population-sample. 219 of 406 (54%) students were female and



187 (46%) were male. When the ratio of these figures is taken, the results are close to the female-male ratio in the university as a whole. Although the age distribution of the sample was 18-23 years old in the large scale, it is the participant who is ranked up to 27 years old at least.

Instrumentation

A scale was used to determine the "Social Media Effect on Political Participation Behavior of University Students" which was developed by using Velasquez (2012) "Social Media and Individual-Collective Activism" scale as a data collection tool in the study. The scales within the framework of basic political participation components sometimes gathered under different names by other researchers in Turkey and abroad, were also observed in the formation of scale expressions. During the scale development, brainstorming was carried out with 10 research assistants and 15 students in the field and 49 online political participation behaviors that could be realized in the social media were determined. For the determined 46 behaviors, the researchers were interviewed again and 3 expressions were deleted and 4 expressions were changed in line with the feedback from the expert panel. After finalization of the scale, a pilot experiment was carried out with 20 research assistants and 25 students within the scope of the reliability study. Scale reliability was calculated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. As a result of applying the pilot test to the students, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be .96. As a result of applying to the research assistants, the alpha coefficient was found to be .92. If the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is greater than .70, it is considered reliable in the measurement sample (Pallant, 2005). The alpha values of behaviors grouped into four dimensions are: communication (.863), sharing (.916), participation (.827), and production (.886).

The scale consists of two main parts. The first part consists of questionnaire surveys to identify participants' personal information, social media usage, and the barriers faced. The second part consists of the political online behaviors that are grouped into 4 dimensions as participation, sharing, production and communication after the 46 determined behaviors are scaled. When this quadrant classification was made, the behaviors determined based on the study of Breuer and Farooq (2012) were placed on the 4 dimensions described in the study. There are 16 questions in the first part. In the second part, there are 12 items in participation dimension, 11 items in sharing dimension, 10 items in production dimension and 15 items in communication dimension.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was made in the 22.0 version of the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) package program. Collected data for evaluations are digitized with a rating scale of "1 never", "2 rarely", "3 occasional", "4 frequently" and "5 always". The calculation of the score range of the evaluation scale was found by dividing by the number of ratings of the scale width: Never (1.00 - 1.80); Rarely (1.81 - 2.60); Sometimes (2.61 - 3.40); Frequently (3.41 - 4.20), Always (4.21 - 5.00).

Behavioral scores were calculated for both individual behaviors and total individual behaviors in order to calculate participant's online scores. By dividing the total scores obtained by the number of participants, the average behavior scores were obtained. Frequencies were taken in the evaluation of demographic data and survey questions. Determination of the relationships of variables to each other; Independent Samples t-test, Chi-square test, and one-way ANOVA were used.

Results

In the study Anadolu University students' online political participation behavior, age, gender, accessibility to the internet, voting, cyberactivist expression, internet and social media usage periods, obstacles to political activities, used social media applications, incentive and affective variables on political participation, the means and attitudes used



in the accessing to the news were examined. After that, it tried to examine whether there is a relationship between these variables. For this purpose, some statistical techniques were utilized.

Of the sample, 219 of the respondents were male and 187 were female. When these values are taken into consideration, the gender ratio between the sample and the universe is close to each other. The age groups of participants in the survey vary widely between 18-23 years (90%). It appears that the respondents were asked to answer the question of access to the Internet at all hours of the day, almost all of whom had access to the Internet. 97.3% of the participants are able to access the internet at any time of day. When the participants' distribution according to the access from the mobile phone is taken into consideration, it is seen that 99.3% of them have access to mobile devices and at the same time the spread of smart phones is estimated. If access to the internet is considered as a digital divide effect, this factor does not seem to be a big issue for young users.

The difference between the use of the Internet and the duration of social media use is significant ($p < .05$) when looking at the chi-square test for a significant difference. The increase in internet usage is also reflected in the use of social media. According to "Internet World Stats", the number of Internet users in Turkey is around 35 million (44% of total population) and Turkey ranks 14th in the world with these characteristics. Turkey is in the 5th place in Europe. It is seen that the Internet usage time is high in the sample (Table 2). Işık (2007) also found the Internet as the most used media tool in his research.

Table 2: Internet and Social Media Usage Cross-Tab

		Social Media Usage (%)					Total
		0-20	21-40	41-60	61-80	+80	
Internet Usage	0-2 hours	2	1	4	4	0	11
	+2-4 hours	9	20	22	27	15	93
	+4-6 hours	9	30	31	41	34	145
	+6-8 hours	1	5	24	26	24	80
	+8 hours	2	10	11	22	32	77
	Total	23	66	92	120	105	406

The "+" values are used to indicate that the number that comes next to it does not belong, starting from the first value after that number

The rate of voting behavior in elections based on traditional participation behavior of participants is very close to the general citizens' participation rate (87.6%) in the last general elections of November 2015.

Participants' usage of social media applications shows that Facebook, Youtube and Instagram are used extensively among 9 most widely used social media applications. After these applications, Twitter and Google+ are most commonly used. It is understood that LinkedIn, Vine, Tumblr and Pinterest are not very popular among users. Intensive used applications provide many opportunities to participate in users. Through content sharing, participation in discussions, access to political information, and following politicians; users can take many actions based on production, participation, communication and sharing.



Table 3: Participants' Social Media Apps Usage Table

Social Media Apps	N	%
Facebook	389	95.8
Youtube	378	93.1
Instagram	368	90,6
Twitter	312	76.8
Google+	256	63,1
Vine	126	31,0
LinkedIn	66	16,3
Pinterest	63	15,5
Tumblr	43	10,6

In parallel with previous studies such as "We Are Social" which share updated reports about social media and the 2013 survey of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Turkey; Facebook, YouTube and Instagram are the first three most used applications.

It is believed that social media apps encourage traditional political participation behaviors because of their exposure to political information and opinions, also they are politically affected by people in their immediate vicinity. When the participants' opinions on this issue are examined, opinions are divided into two. 48.3% of those who think that their activities on social media encourage them to participate in offline activities, and 51.7% think they do not. The results of the study showed similarity with Warren et al (2014). According to Warren's research, social media users are motivated towards traditional participation. Similarly, Schmitt-Beck and Mackenrodt (2010) found that information and communication technologies and social media will have a positive impact on participation, especially voting.

Users have the ability to influence online campaigns and decision-makers on specific topics with participation campaigns. However, given the participants' views on this issue, there is no strong consensus about the impact of their online participation activities. 52.5% of respondents believe that such behavior is effective, while 47.5% think that such behavior does not affect decision makers.

It is not surprising that individuals who use social media intensively access news via these tools. Looking at the distribution of participants in this subject, it seems that they are going to social media when they want to reach a quick news. With a rate of 88.7% of those participating in the study, they prefer social media for quick access to news. These results are in parallel with previous research (Pew Internet Research, 2010).

Individuals now have access to information and news via social media that they can use at any time of their life. When we look at the responses of the participants, almost all of them take social media priority in their attitudes towards and access to political news. It is stated that social media now has priority in all aspects of communication. Individuals are turning to social media for political information, including news. Similar opinions have been made by Tsagarousianou, Tambini, and Bryan (1998) in their early contributions to the field, where digital democracy facilitates access to information and users have more political information from new technologies. Rich and intensive communication through information, social media and the Internet provide access to political news with minimal effort (Bimber, 2001), allowing individuals to customize their news flows (Althaus & Tewksbury, 1999).

The first attitudes of the participants to the survey after being informed about a political achievement also result in following developments in the social media. Users receive news from social media as well as the information and participation process afterwards



through social media. 81% of users have this behavior and continue to participate through social media. Looking at the following attitudes, social media is followed by looking at newspapers, participating in face-to-face discussions and participating in online discussions.

Some obstacles have been identified against political participation activities in online environments. These barriers are sometimes caused by technical reasons and sometimes are not in the possession of the individual. Given the participants' views on this issue, it appears that three factors have come to the forefront. Internet filtering / censorship / barriers (48.0%), data recording and surveillance concern (46.3%) and internet speed (44.1%) are the obstacles that participants think they are most influenced during online political participation activities.

When we look at the online political participation scores of the survey participants, it is seen that the values are very low. Almost all of the participants have performed at least one of the behaviors given on the scale at least once. However, the great revolutionary consequences attributed to social media and the Internet have not been explored. The study provides more close results than the views expressed by "reinforcement theory" and argued in light of this information. As the theory of reinforcement argues, although social media offers many opportunities for participation, it is only those who are already involved in politics. These people involved in politics related and traditional political participation activities are thought to be equally active in social media. Social media has not made a revolution in this respect; allowing traditionally participating individuals to be active online too (Bonfadelli, 2002; DiMaggio et al., 2004). A contribution to the political participation of people who are not interested in politics is not as much as expected. These results gave similar results to the newly emerging concept of "slacktivism". The concept argues that when looking at online participation activities, users' behaviors are performed lazily and at low intensity of labor, and are frequently encountered in behaviors such as communication and sharing.

Similarly, the concept of "clicktivism" was first used in The Guardian newspaper by Micah White in the summer of 12 August 2010 on the Arab Spring and entered the field. The concept is defined as efforts by social media users to be effective with activities like sharing and sharing. The survey also shows that the participants are not activists but "lazy activists". In other words, the Internet is not an active influence, but a passive effect. In this respect, the research was differed from Vitak et al.(2011).

Table 4: Participants' Sharing Behavior Overall Score Table

Sharing Behavior	Mean
I share my thoughts online about a political issue	2.48
I share political commentary on socialmedia page	2.09
I share a link on political topics in a socialmedia site	2.11
I share the elements of evidence to support the groups that we have advocated	2.22
I share status updates on political issues	2.10
I indicating that I participate in a political activity in social networks	1.93
I share on social networks in order to spread a political issue	2.14
I share the party I voted for on social networks	1.53
I share my username so that my political opinion is clear.	1.24



I share negative content about opposing views via socialmedia	1.59
I share negative discourses about opposing views through socialmedia	1.64

When the Table 4 is examined, it is clear that all behaviors are far from the values of high participation. In light of these results, participants do not seem to be extensively involved in sharing behavior of online political behaviors. Although the scores are higher than other dimensions, their scores are still low. Duggan (2012) found similar results in sharing behavior and 38% of the participants stated that they share political content.

Table 5: Participants' Communication Behavior Overall Score Table

CommunicationBehavior	Mean
I visit an activist or political group socialmedia account	2.44
I communicate with an activist or political group through socialmedia	1.66
I communicate with a selected authority (MPs, etc.) through socialmedia (message, tweet)	1.58
I access to journalists working in the mainstream media through socialmedia in the face of a political event	1.59
I like the page of a political party or politician	2.42
I add a political party or a politician as a friend	2.23
I mail to a government agency	1.79
I follow other users who have similar views from social networks	1.96
I follow other users who have opposite opinions from social networks	1.71
As a result of political events, I try to suppress the decision makers by online means	1.30
I connect internet as an anonymous user	1.58
I call for boycott in an online environment for a product or group after a political event	1.51
I mobilize people through socialmedia in the direction of political events	1.59

Social media applications enable users to interact and communicate with each other, while also eliminating borders between people. Almost everyone with a social media account is visible in this area and other users can access it (Vergeer, 2012). According to Halpern and Gibbs (2013), political institutions can present their campaigns, and politicians are able to explain their election work and ideas on social media. When the table data is analyzed, it is seen that the communication behavior cannot reach the high values as well as the sharing behaviors (Table 5).

Table 6: Participants' Participation Behavior Overall Score Table

ParticipationBehavior	Mean
I participate in online petition for political purposes (change.org etc.)	2.45
I participate in an online political discussion	1.60
I participate in a demonstration organized through socialmedia	1.78



I participation in hashtagactivism (# 2015voting. etc.)	2.19
I participate in an online donation campaign for a political party or politician	1.38
I participate in voluntary gathering process through socialmedia	1.73
I participate in propaganda activities against socialmedia	1.53
I participate in political processes with troll accounts	1.21
I participate in the actions of changing profiles in accordance with official political events (flag after martyrs, Atatürk on November 10th)	1.95
I participate in profile dimming after a political event	1.96
I participate in location sharing to express political behavior (Swarmetc.)	1.61
I participate in online purchase of products produced by a political organization or organization	1.24

Vitak (2011) found a direct relationship between social media use and campaign political participation in the study of participation behaviors. Individuals who participate in political processes in the social media have emerged as elements in both the progress of daily politics and political campaigns. Firestone and Clark (1995) suggested that citizens will understand the importance of participation activities with their Internet applications. When examining the table data, it is seen that no behavior approaches threshold values as in other titles. Therefore, it can be said that the participants did not resort extensively to participation behavior (Table 6).

Table 7: Participants' Production Behavior Overall Score Table

ProductionBehavior	Mean
I broadcast about politics online	1.27
I write in socialmedia on political issues	1.81
I produce political content to share on socialmedia	1.43
I write blog about political topics	1.23
I comment on internet news about political topics	1.52
I produce political humor elements (caps, montage, gif)	1.74
I open entry on sites like wiki, dictionary	1.35
I create works for election security through socialmedia	1.51
I open a group or page to defend an ideology or political formation	1.27
I try to improve the political numerical skills of the participants	1.40

Production behaviors are at the top of the behavior types that users can be active and able to participate in laboring because in these behaviors the process takes place entirely through the user and by presenting his productions online. However, respondents to the survey did not resort to the determined production behaviors. It is not misleading to speculate that the sample defined as "slacktivist" gives low scores on production



behaviors. Again in this respect, the participants are far from being “prosumer” (van Dijck, 2009). As Curtis (2013) points out, 40% of internet users do not produce content, they consume more. This rate is much higher in our research (Table 7).

Table 8: Political Participation Behavior Related Variables

Expressing Itself as a Siberactivist	.000
Viewing Internet Filters as an Obstacle	.002
Viewing Internet Slowness as an Obstacle	.000
Observing Mobile Tariff Prices as an Obstacle	.001
Viewing Surveillance as an Obstacle	.265
Thinking Online Activities Promote Traditional Participation	.000
Thinking Online Activities are Effective	.025

When we examine the relationship between total scores of political participation behaviors and variables, it is seen that age ($n=202, 204$; $M=83.20$ vs. $M=83.42$; $p>.05$) and gender ($n=219, 187$; $M=83.84$ vs. $M=82.70$; $p>.05$) have no significant effect on these behaviors.

In the scope of the research, there are some variables that have been asked to participants. During the analysis, independent samples t-test was used and the significance values related to the participation scores of the variables were obtained.

As it is seen in Table 8, those who define themselves as cyberactivists ($n=94, 312$; $M=100.4$ vs. $M=78.1$; $p<.01$) and those who think that online activities encourage traditional participation ($n=196, 210$; $M=93.18$ vs. $M=74.10$; $p<.01$) as well as those who think online activities are effective ($n=213, 193$; $M=86.18$ vs. $M=80.15$; $p<.01$) have higher participation scores. Internet speed ($n=179, 227$; $M=75.03$ vs. $M=89.84$; $p<.05$) (Campante et al., 2013), mobile tariff prices ($n=111, 295$; $M=76.20$ vs. $M=85.99$; $p<.01$) affected participation behavior adversely, whereas surveillance activities did not show any significant results. It is seen that the internet filters considered as one of the obstacles do not affect the participation negatively ($n=195, 211$; $M=87.64$ vs. $M=79.31$; $p<.05$) (Zittrain & Palfrey, 2008; Perry & Roda, 2014).

Participants indicate that they are influenced by obstacles such as filtering and surveillance. A question was also inquired on "anonymous accounts" because they were thought to be affected by such hurdles. Participants who were adversely affected by surveillance ($n=188, 218$; $M=1.84$ vs. $M=1.52$; $p<.05$) and filtering ($n=195, 211$; $M=1.83$ vs. $M=1.52$; $p<.05$) were significantly more likely to be anonymous than their unaffiliated counterparts.

Users need to spend time on social media and the Internet to be able to participate in online political activities. Variance analysis and follow-up tests were conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between participant's extensive Internet and social media use and participation scores. The results of the analysis regarding the duration of social media usage are meaningful (Table 6). The increase in the use of social media also contributed to the increase in participation scores. However, the impact of Internet use periods on political participation behaviors was not significant ($p=.101$).



Table 9: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Participation Behaviors and Social Media Usage Times

	Sum of Squares	df	MeanSquare	F	p
Between Groups	7058	5	1765		
Within Groups	288817	401	720	2.450	.046
Total	295875	406			

According to the results of ANOVA, there is a significant relationship between participation rates and social media usage ($p=.046$). Increasing the use of social media also increases political participation. Variance equality was achieved with the Levene significance value above .05 and an appropriate monitoring tool was chosen. However, when the follow-up test (Scheffe) results are taken into account, there is no significant relationship between the percentile groups.

Conclusion

The results of this study support the "reinforcement theory" regarding political use of social media. Almost all of the examined behaviors occur at low density. Social media is used politically by people who are more interested in politics and who define themselves as cyberactivists. The rest of the crowd applies instantly to political behavior in the social media. According to the results, university students have access to political news via social media, spend a lot of time on social media and state that filters, Internet connection prices, and data recording are obstacles to political behavior.

As emphasized frequently in the literature, the contributions of new technologies to political and democratic imagination will increase in the future. This has sometimes been taken up to electronic elections but today these tools are more supportive of political communications and organizations. In terms of future research, more investigations should be carried out on filters and surveillance activities that participants think they are exposed to; the role of digital self-efficacy of individuals in the low level of production behavior scores should be examined; the reasons for having low or high political participation scores should be studied more deeply and young people's loss of trust towards traditional media who reach the news via social media should be investigated. Such research will provide significant contributions to the field.

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