

# FACEBOOK USE FOR POLITICAL INFORMATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AMONG PAKISTANI YOUTH

*Dr. Qaiser Khalid Mahmood\**

*Dr. Niaz Ahmed Bhutto<sup>†</sup>*

*Junaid R Soomro<sup>‡</sup>*

*Dr. Hakim Ali Mahesar<sup>§</sup>*

## **Abstract**

*Facebook is a leading social networking site across the world. Facebook has allowed its users to access political information and can freely express their views to others. Presently, there are almost 32 million Facebook users in Pakistan. Majority of them are young people and they use this platform for retrieving political information and expressing their views about Pakistani politics. This study was designed to see the effect of students' age and academic performance (GPA) on their political participation; to investigate a relationship between general Facebook use and political participation of the students; to examine specific use of Facebook for seeking and sharing political information and its relationship with political participation of the students. The research was conducted with social sciences students studying at International Islamic University Islamabad. 158 undergraduate students were randomly selected from sociology, education, political science and mass communication. The results showed that Facebook use for retrieving political information determined political participation of young Pakistani Facebook users. Nonetheless, Facebook use for general purposes, age and academic performance of young adults did not predict their political participation. The possible implications of these findings are also discussed.*

**Keyword:** Facebook Use, Political Participation, Pakistani Youth.

---

\*Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, International Islamic University, Islamabad.

<sup>†</sup>Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.

<sup>‡</sup> Teaching Assistant, Institute of Gender Studies, University of Sindh, Jamshoro

<sup>§</sup>Associate Professor, Institute of commerce, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.

## INTRODUCTION

The advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have transformed contemporary societies (Castells, 2001; Healy, 2001). This is due to widespread adoption of Internet in everyday life of the common people (Baym, 1995; McLaughlin et al, 1995). Scholars of social science view Internet as the most significant technological innovation and denote it as the greatest technological event since the capture of fire (Barlow et al., 1995; Marshall, 1998). Internet, which is primarily developed for non-commercial use, make available for commercial use in early 1990 (Wellman et al, 1996). Academics believe that Internet has revolutionized the daily lives of common people (Lévy, 1996; Kerckhove, 1997; Jones, 1998). To them, Internet allows people to overcome spatial and temporal constraints by connecting friends and kin. Wellman et al. (1996) consider internet as platform for people to sustain strong, intermediate, and weak ties. Moreover, they can easily access information on various topics and can interact with social groups for civic activities (Hiltz & Turoff, 1993; Baym, 1997; Jones, 1998; Wellman, 2001).

In last two decades, there has been gigantic increase in internet users across the globe. In 2001, only 495 million people have access to internet. This number was increased to 2749 million in 2013 (ITU, 2013). At present, there are more than 4.38 billion internet users worldwide. These statistics show how quickly internet penetrated in users' lives. This is because of its multipurpose use (Howard et al., 2002; Quan-Haase, & Wellman, 2002). It can be utilized for information, communication, recreation, administration, and to maintain social life (Bimber, 2000; Wellman et al., 2001; Zhao, 2006). Therefore, Wellman (1997) consider that Internet can enhance social life of asocial people. Internet has given them opportunity to contact and have interaction with friends and relatives. By this way, the can develop and maintain their social ties. Research studies show that the Internet has enhanced social ties among different groups

(Hampton, 2003) and played its role in developing social capital (Wellman, 2001; Quan-Haase, & Wellman, 2002). Furthermore, the Internet has emerged out as online public sphere for political participation (Boogers & Voerman, 2003).

### **Social Networking Sites and Political Participation**

The development of Web 2.0 technologies, several online social networks have been developed e.g. weblogs, instant messaging, forums and social network sites, (Johnston *et al.*, 2013). Online social networks can be defined as virtual communities which interact and pool resources through computer-mediated relationships. Most of the time, such type of networks consist of people that share common interests (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Among them, Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are widely recognized online social network in all segments of society and age groups (Governatori & Iannella, 2011). An online social network site can be defined as “a set of web-based services that allows individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, (3) view and transverse their list of connections and those made by others within their system” (Boyd and Ellison 2007, p. 221).

The researchers defined political participation in a variety of ways. Political participation is called activities that allow people to show their needs and desires and influence in one way or another in the selection of public servants and the formation of public policy (Norris, 2001). Conventional academics consider campaigning, voting, and donating money as key measures of political participation (Dahl, 1989). However, modern scholars include novel indicators of political participation. To them, social network sites like Facebook offer new opportunities for citizens to engage, discuss and debate in the political arena (Crompton 2008). They recognize several ways to conduct political activities by using this online platform. Users of this site share political information (Valenzuela *et al.*, 2018). They also make use Facebook for political dialogue and

discussion (Chambers, 2003). It can also be used for political campaigns (Castells, 2013).

SNSs have changed the political and social life worldwide (Attia et al., 2011). These sites have influenced political environments and induced social changes in various countries (Cook, 2010; Marandi et al., 2010; Shaheen, 2008; Guobin, 2010; Smeltzer & Keddy, 2010). In USA, SNSs become a critical factor in changing the political partisanship and to trigger political activism during elections (Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011). Particularly, after the success of Barack Obama in 2008 general elections; entitled as 'The First Internet President' (Greengard, 2009), researchers investigated the tactful use of SNSs in changing American political environment. Several scholars have discussed the SNSs utilization in 2008's American presidential election and argue the decisiveness of these sites in Obama's success (Talbot, 2008).

Likewise USA, several European countries also have used eCampaigning for their citizens called E-voting guides, a popular form offered by public policy and research institutes, to increase the voter turnout which helps them to choose the best appropriate party or candidate on the basis of numerous statements (van Dijk, 2013). Alongwith the Europe and USA, the power of SNS's could not also be ignored in Middle East countries, Twitter use for political uprising in Iran (Karagiannopoulos, 2012) and Facebook use to overthrow the dictatorships in Middle East countries (Attia *et al.*, 2011).

Recent studies provide the evidences that SNSs have been use by political parties and candidates to promote fund-raising and volunteering efforts, thus strengthening the democratic process (Cogburn & Espinoza-Vasquez, 2011; Gueorguieva, 2008). Gueorguieva (2008) confirms that SNSs have become useful source for the collection of funds and to enhance voluntary participation. This finding has been reconfirmed by the other studies as well

(Vitak et al., 2011).

### **Social Networking Sites, Political Participation and Youth**

SNSs have also become an innovative medium for young people to get themselves involved in the political process (Stromer-Galley & Foot, 2002). This is because of their potential in engaging youth in discussions, debates, and public awareness issues that young people care about (Rheingold, 2008). For instance, American youth utilized SNSs for political purposes during 2008 elections. In this election, American young adults used SNSs to learn about candidates, form and join political groups, participate in political discussion, and share political information with others (Fernandes, Giurcanu, Bowers, & Neely, 2010; Haridakis & Hanson, 2011; Kushin & Yamamoto, 2010; Vitak et al., 2011). In 2012 election as well, they made use of SNSs to promote political material, encourage others to vote, post thoughts on issues, and follow officials or candidates (Rainie, Smith, Scholzman, Brady, & Verba, 2012).

### **Rationale of Current Study**

At present, Pakistan has more than 32 million Facebook users and more than 65 percent of them are below the age of 25. This figure clearly indicates the popularity of Facebook among Pakistani youth (Qureshi, 2016). More importantly, more than 90 percent students at university level have access internet in comparison with others. For instance, Pakistan observed an emergency imposed by the Government of Pakistan on November 3 of 2007. At that time, electronic media were banned. In that situation, Pakistani students delicately used SNS for information seeking and sharing. They used SNSs to express their views against emergency and recorded their voices to restore democracy in the country (Shaheen, 2008). In another study, it was highlighted that young people used this platform to discuss social issues of Pakistani society (Mahmood, 2017; Mahmood, Zakar & Zakar, 2018). In another study the researchers reported that the use of social media enhanced political

participation of youth. They concluded that Facebook had given a political space to Pakistani youth (Ahmad & Sheikh, 2013; Mahmood, Bhutta & ul Haq, 2018). Moreover, the use of SNS's by various political parties (e.g. PTL, PMLN, and PPPP etc.) has increased people's political participation tremendously, especially among youth (Eijaz, 2013). Although these research studies showed positive effects of Facebook use in order to enhance political participation of young people in Pakistan. This research intends to provide an empirical evidence that Pakistani youth is effectively and constructively using Facebook to enhance their political information and participation in political process.

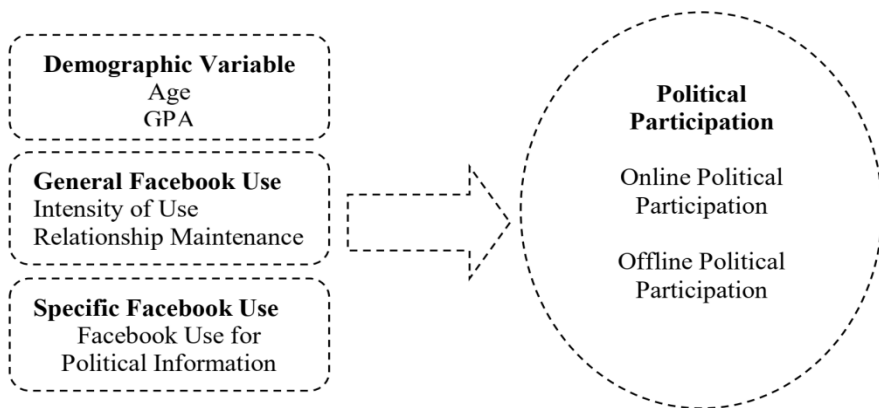


Figure 1: *Conceptual Model of the Study*

## METHODOLOGY

The study was cross sectional in nature and done with the students of International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan. The researcher selected faculty of social sciences. In the faculty of social sciences, four departments; sociology, political science, education and mass communication were selected. 158 undergraduate students were randomly selected from above mentioned departments.

In order to measure general Facebook use, two scales were used. First scale measured intensity of Facebook use. This scale was developed by Ellison et al. (2006). Facebook Intensity Scale consisted of two self-reported Facebook behaviours. The first part referred to amount of daily Facebook use and total number of friends in a Facebook profile. For measuring emotional connectedness and its integration into individuals' daily activities, six Likert-scale attitudinal items were developed by the authors. The second scale measured relationship maintenance behaviours. Relationship maintenance behaviours refers to *"the individuals' likelihood to engage in directed communication behaviours that represent relationship maintenance activities and signal attention and investment in one's contacts on the system through small but meaningful actions"* (Ellison, Vitak, Gray and Lampe, 2014).

In order to measure Facebook use for political information, the researched used a scale based on three dimensions; social issues, current affairs and politics. The dependent variable of the study was political participation of the students. This variable was measured through two scales. First scale measured online political participation of the students and second scale measured offline political participation of the students. Online political participation was assessed through eight items. In these items, the researchers examined various political acts (e.g. sharing political status, uploading videos related to politics, commenting on other's status that deals with politics, and etc.) of the students performed by using Facebook. To assess offline political participation of the students, a scale was developed on traditional political behavior (e.g. sharing political views with others, volunteering for a political party, putting on campaign t-shirt, badge or poster, persuading others to vote for a particular party and attending rallies).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table 1 reveals that half of the respondents 79 (50%) did belong to management sciences while 45 (28.5%) students. Moreover, majority (76.6%) of the respondents was male. Their average age were 20.78 while they had 3.26 G.P.A on average. Most of them were studying at undergraduate level. Furthermore, the data reveal that majority of them (60.1%) casted their vote in 2013’s general elections of Pakistan.

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=158)**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
<b>Discipline</b>		
Social Sciences	45	28.5
Management Studies	79	50.0
Engineering	32	20.3
Arts	2	1.3
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	37	23.4
Male	121	76.6
<b>Education Level</b>		
Bachelors	131	82.9
Masters	23	14.6
M Phil	4	2.5
<b>Casted Vote</b>		
Yes	95	60.1
No	63	39.9
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	20.78	1.75
GPA	3.2691	0.44



Table 2 summarizes descriptive results of the Facebook intensity scale. The data show that Facebook was the part of their everyday activity (M=4.00, S.D=0.94) and they felt proud (M=3.51, S.D=1.17) to be the part of Facebook. They also believed Facebook as a part of their daily routine (M=3.88, S.D=1.04) and felt out of touch (M=3.59, S.D=1.20) if they did not log onto Facebook. Overall they referred their selves as a part of Facebook community (M=3.83, S.D=0.95). In case Facebook shutdown due to any reason, the respondents replied that they became upset (M=3.39, S.D=1.30). These statistics clearly indicate that the respondents had high level of Facebook intensity.

**Table 2: Facebook Intensity of Respondents (n=158)**

Scale: Facebook Intensity (FBI)	Mean	S.D
Facebook is part of my everyday activity.	4.00	0.94
I am proud to tell people I'm on Facebook.	3.51	1.17
Facebook has become part of my daily routine.	3.88	1.04
I feel out of touch when I haven't logged onto Facebook for a while.	3.59	1.20
I feel I am part of the Facebook community.	3.83	0.95
I feel upset if Facebook shut down.	3.39	1.30

According to table 3, Facebook has been considered as a source for relationship maintenance. The respondents made use of Facebook to responding a friend whenever they share good news (M=4.20, S.D=0.71) and bad news (M=3.99, S.D=0.95) on Facebook. In addition, they tried to respond people when they were asking for advice on particular matters (M=4.04, S.D=0.81). They greeted their friends by posting messages on their Facebook walls whenever they had birthdays (M=4.22, S.D=0.91). Moreover, the respondents tried to respond questions of other users on Facebook if they knew the answers (M=4.04, S.D=0.94). Henceforth, Facebook has now become a source of relationship maintenance for its users.

**Table 3: Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviors of Respondents (N=158)**

Scale: Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviors	Mean	S.D
When I see a friend or acquaintance sharing good news on Facebook, I try to respond.	4.20	0.71
When I see a friend or acquaintance sharing bad news on Facebook, I try to respond.	3.99	0.95
When I see someone asking for advice on Facebook, I try to respond.	4.04	0.81
When a Facebook friend has a birthday, I try to post something on their wall.	4.22	0.91
When I see someone asking a question on Facebook that I know the answer to, I try to respond.	4.04	0.94

The emergence of social network sites has activated a change in current societies by letting the users to access information without any barriers. More importantly, young people are keenly interested in getting information through social network sites instead of other communicant mediums (e.g. Mass Media and Print Media). Facebook has global reputation among its users who often utilize this website for retrieving and sharing information. In Pakistan, Facebook has also emerged out as a good source of information among young people. The findings of following study assert that Pakistani students heavily retrieved and shared information related to social issues, politics and current affairs through Facebook (See Table 4).

**Table 4: Facebook Use for Political Information (n=158)**

Scale: Facebook Use for Political Information	Mean	S.D
I use Facebook to access and share information on social issues.	3.84	0.96
I use Facebook to access and share political issues.	3.39	1.30
I use Facebook to access and share information on current affairs.	3.77	1.04

Table 5 illustrates the descriptive results of online political participation scale. The results reveal that people intended to participate by sharing political status on their profile pages (M=3.18, S.D=1.48) while they also liked to comment on friend's or university fellow's political (M=3.20, S.D=1.50). Furthermore, people discussed their point of view through chatting with Facebook friends on current government's performance (M=3.06, S.D=1.45). They shared posts on various government policies in Facebook based online social groups (M=3.04, S.D=1.48). On the basis of these results, it was concluded that majority of the Pakistani students were performing various political activities through Facebook. In other words, they had good level of online political participation.

**Table 5: Online Political Participation of Respondents (n=158)**

Scale: Online Political Participation	Mean	S.D
I often share political status on my profile page.	3.18	1.48
I share political videos and pictures on my profile page.	3.08	1.50
I comment on friend's or university fellow's political status as well.	3.20	1.42
I post links to political stories or articles for others to read on my profile.	3.03	1.43
I share posts on various government policies in Facebook based online social groups.	3.04	1.48

I also share posts regarding the stance of opposition parties on national issues on Facebook based online social groups.	3.04	1.44
I discuss my point of view through chatting with Facebook Friends on current government's performance.	3.06	1.45
I also share Political leader's status on my profile page.	2.93	1.47

Table 6 reveals the information on offline political participation of respondents. According to data, the students shared their political view with others (M=3.36, S.D=1.50) and worked for or volunteered themselves for a political party or candidate (M=2.71, S.D=1.66). The third item measures the peoples' offline participation by putting on campaign t-shirts, badge or put up campaign poster in 2013 general election. Moreover, they gathered information about various political parties or candidates (M=3.03, S.D=1.54). They also motivated other people to vote for a particular candidate or party in the last general election (M=3.16, S.D=1.54). Nevertheless, these statistics are comparatively low than online political participation of the students. This is because of traditional culture of politics in Pakistan that does not favor youth to be an active participant in the political process. Young people are now involving themselves in traditional politics because of their higher level of online political participation.

**Table 6: Offline Political Participation of Respondents (n=158)**

Scale: Offline Political Participation	Mean	S.D
I share my political views with others.	3.36	1.50
In last one year, I have worked for or volunteered myself for a political party or candidate.	2.71	1.66
In last general election, I put on a campaign t-shirt, badge, or put up a campaign poster.	2.91	1.66

In last general election, I tried to persuade someone to vote for or against a candidate or party.	2.92	1.59
In last general election, I attended a campaign function or rally to support a candidate or party.	2.85	1.65
In last general election, I gathered information about various political parties or candidates.	3.03	1.54
In last general election, I motivated other people to vote for a particular candidate or party.	3.16	1.54
In last one year, I have worked for or volunteered myself for a political party or candidate.	2.71	1.66

Simple linear regression was performed to see the predictability of Facebook use for political information, Facebook intensity, Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors on online and offline political participation of youth. Facebook use for political information showed significant predictability while the results for Facebook intensity, Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors, age and GPA of the respondents did not show significant predictability on online and offline political participation. According to table, the regression coefficient (Beta) of Facebook use for political information was 0.410 for online political participation and 0.453 for offline political participation respectively. Beta was used to determine whether Facebook use for political information has a controlling effect on online and offline political participation of the respondents.

**Table 7: Linear Regression Results for Political Participation**

Predictors	Online Political Participation	Offline Political Participation
Facebook Use for Political Information	.410 <sup>***</sup>	.453 <sup>***</sup>
Facebook Intensity	.099 <sup>n.s</sup>	.079 <sup>n.s</sup>
Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviors	-.022 <sup>n.s</sup>	-.158 <sup>n.s</sup>

Age	.080 <sup>n.s</sup>	.134 <sup>n.s</sup>
GPA	-.013 <sup>n.s</sup>	.171 <sup>n.s</sup>
R <sup>2</sup>	.207	.254

Note: Coefficients are standardized regression coefficients. \*\*\*p < .001, <sup>n.s</sup>= not significant.

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of Facebook use for political information and online political participation indicated 0.207 or 20.7% which imply that Facebook use for political information as an independent variable account for 20.7% variations in online political participation (dependent variable) among Pakistani youth. The computation of Facebook use for political information explains the variations of dependent variable (offline political participation) by 25.4% ( $R^2=0.254$  or 25.4%). The findings suggest that Facebook use for political information of Pakistani youth were positively related with online and offline political participation. By implication, Facebook use for political information has a significant effect on online and offline political participation of the respondents.

## CONCLUSION

In Pakistan, Facebook, most popular social network site in Pakistan, has become an integral part of the daily lives of young people. They proclaim themselves as digital generation and make use of technological artifacts for maintaining their social life. They rely heavily on Facebook to maintain their social relationships. This website is also a good source for information retrieving for them. Furthermore, they become active participant in country's politics due to Facebook as it allowed them to discuss their ideas, comment on government policies, and share their point of views with others. The current study is aligned with previous studies conducted at national and global level with students. Additionally, these results reject stereotypes about university students that they waste their precious time on Facebook. However, further inquiry is also

enquired to establish this causal relationship among the variables. A mix method study with a larger sample may be conducted to validate the results of this study.

## REFERENCES:

- Ahmad, K., & Sheikh, K. S. (2013). Social media and youth participatory politics: A study of university students. *South Asian Studies*, 28(2), 353.
- Andolina, M., Keeter, S., Zukin, C., & Jenkins, K. (2003). A guide to the index of civic and political engagement. *College Park, MD: The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement*.
- Attia, A. M., Aziz, N., Friedman, B., & Elhusseiny, M. F. (2011). Commentary: The impact of social networking tools on political change in Egypt's "Revolution 2.0". *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 10(4), 369-374.
- Baym, N. (1995). The emergence of community in computer mediated communication. In S.G. Jones (ed.), *Cybersociety. Computer-mediated communication and community* (pp. 138-163). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Baym, N.K. (1997). Interpreting soap operas and creating community: inside an electronic fan club. In S. Kiesler (ed.), *Cybersociety. Computer-mediated communication and community*. London: Sage.
- Barlow, J.P., Birkets, S., Kelly, K. & Slouka, M. (1995). What are we Doing On-Line. *Harpers*, August: 35-46.
- Bimber, B. (2000). The study of information technology and civic engagement. *Political Communication*, 17(4), 329-333.
- Boogers, M., & Voerman, G. (2003). Surfing citizens and floating voters: Results of an online survey of visitors to political web sites during the Dutch 2002 General Elections. *Information*

*Polity*, 8(2), 17-27.

Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210 – 230.

Carpini, M. X. D., Cook, F. L., & Jacobs, L. R. (2004). Public deliberation, discursive participation, and citizen engagement: A review of the empirical literature. *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.*, 7, 315-344.

Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Castells, M. (2001). *The Internet Galaxy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chambers, S. (2003). Deliberative democratic theory. *Annual review of political science*, 6(1), 307-326.

Cogburn, D. L., & Espinoza-Vasquez, F. K. (2011). From networked nominee to networked nation: Examining the impact of Web 2.0 and social media on political participation and civic engagement in the 2008 Obama campaign. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 10(1-2), 189-213.

Cook, C. (2010). Mobile Marketing and Political Activities. *International Journal of Mobile Marketing*, 5(1).154-163.

Crompton, J., (2008). Mixing friends with politics: a functional analysis of '08 Presidential candidates social networking profiles. *Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Communication Association 94th Annual Convention*. San Diego, California.

Dahl, R. A. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Denning, D. (2000). Activism, hacktivism, and cyberterrorism: The Internet as a tool for influencing foreign policy. *Networks and*



*Netwars: The future of terror, crime, and militancy*, 239, 288

- Ehrlich, T. (2000). *Higher education and civic responsibility*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.
- Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2014). Cultivating social resources on social network sites: Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors and their role in social capital processes. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 19(4), 855-870.
- Ellison, N., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2006). Spatially bounded online social networks and social capital. *International Communication Association*, 36(1-37).
- Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Steinfield, C., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2011). Negotiating privacy concerns and social capital needs in a social media environment. In *Privacy online* (pp. 19-32). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Fernandes, J., Giurcanu, M., Bowers, K. W., & Neely, J. C. (2010). The writing on the wall: A content analysis of college students' Facebook groups for the 2008 presidential election. *Mass Communication and Society*, 13(5), 653-675.
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Jung, N., & Valenzuela, S. (2012). Social media use for news and individuals' social capital, civic engagement and political participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 319-336. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01574.x
- Guobin, Y. (2010). Online activism. *Journal of Democracy*, 20(3), 33-36.
- Governatori, G., & Iannella, R. (2011). A modelling and reasoning framework for social networks policies. *Enterprise Information Systems*, 5(1), 145-167.
- Gueorguieva, V. (2008). Voters, Myspace, and Youtube the impact of alternative communication channels on the 2006 election

cycle and beyond. *Social Science Computer Review*, 26(3), 288-300.

Hay, C. (2007). *Why we hate politics* (Vol. 5). Polity: Cambridge, UK.

Harris, A., Wyn, J., & Younes, S. (2010). Beyond apathetic or activist youth 'Ordinary' young people and contemporary forms of participation. *Young*, 18(1), 9-32.

Hampton, K. N. (2003). Grieving for a lost network: collective action in a wired suburb special issue: ICTs and community networking. *The Information Society*, 19(5), 417-428.

Hanson, G. L., Haridakis, P. M., & Sharma, R. (2011). Differing uses of YouTube during the 2008 US presidential primary election. *Electronic News*.

Healy, T. (2001). In Each Other's Shadow. Draft Paper for Céfin Conference. Our Society in the New Millenium, 7-9 November 2001.

Hiltz, S.R. & Turoff, M. (1993). *The Network Nation: Human communication via computer*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Howard, P., Rainie, L., & Jones, S. (2002). Days and nights on the Internet: The impact of a diffusing technology. In B. Wellman & C. Haythornthwaite (Eds.), *The Internet and everyday life* (pp.45-73) Oxford: Blackwell.

ITU (2013). *Statistics*. [online] Retrieved from: <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx> [Accessed: 14 June 2013].

Jones, S. (1998). *Cybersociety2.0: Revisiting computer-mediated communication and community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Johnston, K., Tanner, M., Lalla, N., & Kawalski, D. (2013). Social capital: the benefit of Facebook 'friends'. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 32(1), 24-36.

- Karagiannopoulos, V. (2012). The role of the internet in political struggles: Some conclusions from Iran and Egypt. *New Political Science*, 34(2), 151-171.
- Koch, W. (2008). Internet spurs upswing in volunteerism Retrieved from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-03-12-youthactivism\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-03-12-youthactivism_N.htm)
- Kerckhove, D. D. (1997). *Connected Intelligence: The arrival of the web society*. Somerville House, USA.
- Kushin, M. J., & Yamamoto, M. (2010). Did social media really matter? College students' use of online media and political decision making in the 2008 election. *Mass Communication and Society*, 13(5), 608-630.
- Levi, M. (1996). Social and Unsocial Capital: A review essay of Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work. *Politics and Society*, 24:46-55.
- MacLaughlin, M.L., Osborne, K.K., & Smith, C.B. (1995). Standards of Conduct on Usenet. In S.G. Jones (ed.), *Cybersociety: Computer-mediated communication and community* (pp.90-111). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mahmood, Q. K., Zakar, R., & Zakar, M. Z. (2018). Role of Facebook use in predicting bridging and bonding social capital of Pakistani university students. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 1-18.
- Mahmood, Q. K., Bhutta, M. H., & ul Haq, M. A. (2018). Effects of sociodemographic variables and Facebook group membership on students' political participation. *Education and Information Technologies*, 1-13.
- Mahmood, Q. K. (2017). *Use of Social Network Site As A Source Of Social Capital Among Youth: A Cross Sectional Study of University Students in Lahore*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

- Marshall, G. (1998). *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marandi, E., Little, E., & Hughes, T. (2010). Innovation and the children of the revolution: Facebook and value co-creation. *The Marketing Review*, 10(2), 169-183.
- Metzgar, E., & Maruggi, A. (2009). Social Media and the 2008 US Presidential Election. *Journal of New Communications Research*, 4(1).141-165.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. In *Culture and Politics* (pp. 223-234). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Putnam, R. D. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of democracy*, 6(1), 65-78.
- Norris, P. (2001). *Digital divide? Civic engagement, information poverty and the internet worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quan-Haase, A., Wellman, B., Witte, J., & Hampton, K. (2002). Capitalizing on the Internet: Social contact, civic engagement, and sense of community. In B. Wellman & C. Haythornthwaite (Eds.), *Internet and everyday life* (pp. 291-324). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Qureshi, U. (2016). TECHJUICE. Retrieved from <http://www.techjuice.pk/pakistan-facebook-users-crosses-the-landmark-of-20-millionusers/>.
- Raynes-Goldie, K., & Walker, L. (2008). Our space: Online civic engagement tools for youth. *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth*, 161-188.
- Rainie, L., Smith, A., Schlozman, K. L., Brady, H., & Verba, S. (2012). Social media and political engagement. *Pew Internet & American Life Project*, 19.2-13.

- Rheingold, H. (2008). Using participatory media and public voice to encourage civic engagement. *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth*, 97-118.
- Shaheen, M. A. (2008). Use of social networks and information seeking behavior of students during political crises in Pakistan: A case study. *The international information & library review*, 40(3), 142-147.
- Smeltzer, S., & Keddy, D. (2010). Won't you be my (political) friend? The changing face (book) of socio-political contestation in Malaysia. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement*, 30(3-4), 421-440.
- Shah, V., Kwak, N., Lance, R., & Dhavan, H. (2001). "Connecting" and "disconnecting" with civic life: Patterns of Internet use and the production of social capital. *Political Communication*, 18(2), 141-162.
- Stromer-Galley, J., & Foot, K. A. (2002). Citizen perceptions of online interactivity and implications for political campaign communication. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 8(1), 0-0.
- Talbot, D. (2008). How Obama really did it: Social technology helped bring him to the brink of the presidency. M] *Technology Review Magazine*. Retrieved March 10, 2009.
- Tolbert, C. J., & McNeal, R. S. (2003). Unraveling the effects of the Internet on political participation? *Political research quarterly*, 56(2), 175-185.
- Valenzuela, S., Arriagada, A., & Scherman, A. (2012). The Social Media Basis of Youth Protest Behavior: The Case of Chile. *Journal of Communication*, 62(2), 299-314. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01635.x
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2013). *News as discourse*. New York: Routledge.

- Vitak, J., Zube, P., Smock, A., Carr, C. T., Ellison, N., & Lampe, C. (2011). It's complicated: Facebook users' political participation in the 2008 election. *CyberPsychology, behavior, and social networking*, 14(3), 107-114.
- Wellman B., Hasse, A.Q., Witte, J. & Hampton, K. (2002). Capitalizing on the Internet: Network capital, participatory capital and sense of community. In B. Wellman & C. Haythornthwaite (eds.), *The Internet in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wellman, B. (2001). Physical place and cyberspace: The rise of personalized networks. *International Urban and Regional Research*, 25(2), 227-252.
- Wellman, B. (1997). An Electric Group is Virtually a Social Network. In S. Kiesler (ed.), *The Culture of the Internet*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Wellman, B., Salaff, J., Dimitrova, D., Garton, L., Gulia, M., & Haythornthwaite, C. (1996). Computer networks as social networks: Collaborative work, telework, and virtual community. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 22, 213-238.
- Zhang, W., Johnson, T. J., Seltzer, T., & Bichard, S. L. (2010). The revolution will be networked the influence of social networking sites on political attitudes and behavior. *Social Science Computer Review*, 28(1), 75-92. doi: 10.1177/0894439309335162
- Zhao, S. (2006). Do Internet users have more social ties? A call for differentiated analyses of Internet use. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(3), 844-862