Social Media and Political Participation

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Abstract

The present study is about the relationship between Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.) and politics. We try to focus on how social media can influence peoples beliefs, convictions and the way they participate in politics. This paper relies on a quantitative analysis of the results gathered through an online survey, on Survey Monkey platform. It examines the extent to which people (at all ages) in Greece that use social media influences their engagement in online and offline participation. The findings indicate that social media can significantly be related to political activities and participation but only online. This means that social media does not create offline political participation. Furthermore political knowledge was also proven to have an essential impact on political participation.

New media have been growing in a tremendous rate as far as civic engagement is concerned. This increase has led many researchers to assume that we now head towards a new era of politics. This new era of politics has four new powerful tools different for the ones we had previously. Television, Radio and Newspaper has been replaced by cell phones, online video, blogs, and social-networking sites such as Facebook. All these four new tools are now transforming the political landscape with regards to campaigning and voter outreach.

The game of politics no longer belongs specifically to the professionals. The last few years there has been created a non-profit community participation such as political party membership. Politics now is something that anyone can have in his own hands and especially whoever knows how to use best these new tools. Ordinary voters have replaced the position that professionals had all these years and the main cause of this is facebook.

Today, social websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, Wikipedia, and YouTube are the number one activity on the web. In 2011, Facebook had approximately 600 million registered users and today, in 2017 there are over 1.86 billion monthly active Facebook users worldwide. This huge increase shows that people are spending more and more time on Facebook over the years. Additionally the use of mobile Internet gave an additional boost to the use of Social Media.

Most of organizations such as political parties are trying to keep up with this increase of social media and they are struggling to implement them to their benefit. However, the political parties do not seem to follow any strategy and tend to underestimate the implementation of social media because they do not understand them at their fullest. (Efthimios Tambouris, Ann Macintosh, Hans de Bruijn, 2011)

A case that is worth to be mentioned is the case of Obama’s election campaign. This case was the first one that used social media in a productive way. This campaign was, for a large part, systematically based on Social Media.
The 2008 Obama Presidential campaign made history. Obama was the first candidate that chose to use Social Media in such a successful way. It is said that Obama Presidential campaign made history for two reasons. One because he was the first African American to be elected president, and secondly because he made the first presidential campaign that used social media so effectively as a major campaign strategy. The reason is that he understood completely the power that online campaigns have gained the past 10 years and the incredible results someone can have if they use social media the right way. (Pamela Rutledge, 2013)

It is safe to argue that Social Media are changing the game of politics. But before that we need to discover what social media mean and how they have evolved to something so powerful.

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Introduction

The dramatic growth of the popularity of social networking sites raised various scholars’ attention. The consecutive increase of social media has created a whole new world of communication and distribution. It has made it possible for one person to communicate to one, a hundred or a thousand people at the same time. Social media such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Linkedin have been growing at a tremendous rate and their users have reached a huge number the last ten years. As a consequence of this, social media have become an integral part of advertising and public relations industries, entertainment, political campaigning and many other issues. Our topic focuses on the impact of new media on political behavior. This study aims to clarify the interrelationships among political attitudes, Internet use, and political participation.

The last years have seen a huge increase in non profit participation of the community for example political party membership. It is a fact that the last years have been many changes as far as political participation is concerned. Despite the fact that most people would expect that the rise of the internet and web 2.0 would not have affect the degree in which people are engaging in party politics.

At the same time, Internet that is used by citizens is becoming over the years more and more popular and participatory. The last few years social media such as Facebook and Linkedin have succeeded to become the number one activity on the web. According to Facebook source, in 2017 Worldwide, monthly active Facebook users have reached the tremendous number of 1.94 billion which is an 18 percent increase year over year.
These numbers are a significant proof that people are spending more time on Facebook than on any other traditional media. Additionally, the raise of the mobile Internet gave an additional boost to the use of Social Media.

It is reasonable that organizations such as political parties try to take advantage of this increase and impact of social media on users for their own personal benefit. Yet they still do not know the right strategy to take advantage of social media. Organizations tend to underestimate the strength of social media because they are not aware of the right way to use them so as to take advantage of them. This often leads to opposing results from the aspirations.

A different case was the campaign of the American president Barack Obama who, during his election campaign, used social media and exploited the power and influence of the public in the right way. Most of the campaign's pre-election campaign was based on social media.

Next to his own website, Obama used fifteen Social Media sites to run his campaign. He was the first one in political campaigns that understood the power of complementing offline work with an online campaign.

This paper aims to show the results of a survey that focuses on Social Media and their role on political participation by its users. Furthermore we will try to analyze these results and introduce some field results and a research agenda.
Literature Review
Many authors such as Rowena Cullen address the issue of defining and measuring political participation through social media (Cullen, 2009). Additionally, next to political participation, studies are available related to social use and social behavior (Zhang, 2010). It must be shown that carefully organized support can be considered as political cooperation. Since it is an action, it is willful and manages state, it is somewhat self expressive and obviously it can point towards political performers or targets. Every one of the exercises that are occurring in computerized condition can be arranged politically in light of the fact that they are finished by clients in the part of the natives who intentionally manage political issues (Theocharis, 2015). Individuals utilizing the new media are valuing the promptness and have the consistent inclination that can furnish them with new viewpoints and bits of knowledge. One noteworthy certainty about individuals who incline toward online networking for support and data was that in this general public they could change the passage or the channel that was giving them the data keeping in mind the end goal to discover something more significant and more dependable by their conclusion (Sveningsson, 2015). The data sort of employments of the Web have associated with political interest among teenagers and youthful grown-ups in a wide range of contexts (Ekstrom, Ostman, 2015). And not exclusively to youngsters. The youngsters are no more in need to build their political convictions through methods or sentiments inside their families however now they have the chance to develop it in a system society by association in social gatherings and communicate with nationals around the world. This is called "organized independence" (Rainie and Wellman, 2012). This is a reality that is relating with every one of the ages and all individuals of each and every level of the general public structure that connect with legislative issues through the Internet and obviously, the second screens. Late investigations demonstrated that simply looking for data through long range interpersonal communication destinations is both constructive and noteworthy indicator for engagement with governmental issues and political support both on the web and disconnected. Every one of these systems helping into a participatory conduct as well as into the production of an alternate, more majority rule society (Zuniga, Jung and Valenzuela, 2012). Other than that, there is the way that relational enlightening trust is in a positive association with online exercises as a political interest (Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham, Sweetser, 2012). This implies on the off chance that somebody requests data from a companion on the web or simply enter a political discussion requesting an answer from the director has as an individual positive association with governmental issues and political correspondence. The individual is really entering to a condition of political receptiveness that can have a positive relationship with the Sites that have been made for reasons for political correspondence. All in all, it must be noticed that news utilization along socially organized and PC interceded spaces not just have associations with political and city support, however this relationship is likewise positive (Zuniga, Garcia-Perdomo and McGregor, 2015).

Does the use of social media affect the way that groups participate politically? In a world constantly changing and developing new technological innovations, politics is something that has unavoidably been influenced. Especially the political participation by young people which is changing on numerous levels and include many causes and consequences. In an era when the public’s time and attention is
increasingly directed toward platforms such as Facebook and Twitter there are undoubtedly more ways than ever to engage people with politics.

The media buzz has suggested that there is something about social media that makes groups more vocal and participatory. The basis for any study of social media is certainly an interdisciplinary one because new technologies affect many social sectors simultaneously. Therefore it is important to acknowledge findings in multiple fields of social science and technology.

**The role of the internet in everyday life**

The appearance of the Internet and its fast growth as far as sophisticated computer and telecommunication technology is concerned have transformed the world into a global village in a real sense.

Communication network satellites provide the quickest and the cheapest data transfer to all parts of the world, a great agreement among thousands of computer systems that communicate with each other is represented by the Internet. The last decade, the internet has also become an information source as it includes many kinds of newspapers.

According to, Tom Rosenstiel and the Pew Research Center* the internet has become a significant information source. From the results of the research we understand that more people and more people are preferring to get their news from the Internet than from newspapers (Rosenstiel, 2015).

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<th>Radio took 38 years in order to reach 50 million users.</th>
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<td>Television took 13 years to reach 50 million users.</td>
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Creation and evolvement of Web 2.0

Starting from the beginning we should mention a few things about Web 2.0. In order to clarify what Web 2.0 is we should mention a few things about Web 1.0. Web 1.0 (usually mentioned as Web) was all about providing information to the visitors. One way communication. On the other hand Web 2.0 started when the users of the internet changed the way they were using the Web. In Web 2.0 the website not only provides information to the visitors but also gives them the opportunity to speak back to the website. It is called user generated content. In this way people are able to comment on an article, upload pictures contribute content or anything else they want.

Another important characteristic of web 2.0 is the large move from static web sites and tools to a more dynamic. Additionally most people began to share more information quickly with each other mostly via the phenomenon of social media.

According to Philippe Modard, social Media is the next step of Web 2.0 as apart from the fact that the website gives its visitors the ability to communicate back, it also gives them the opportunity to communicate with each other. From You Tube to Linkedin to Facebook to all sorts of other kinds of communities web 2.0 is all about sharing and seeing (Modard, 2012).

Social Media, the Creation and Evolution

We have mentioned a lot of things about Social Media. Before we move on we should clarify and see by details what is really Social Media, when did they begin to exist and why?

Social media is the next step of sharing information. We could say that they have built a bridge between the information and the reaction of the users. They are the main responsibility of interactivity which slowly has lead us to the creation of web 3.0.
Social Media is the next step of Web 2.0 as apart from the fact that the website gives its visitors the ability to communicate back, it also gives them the opportunity to communicate with each other. From You Tube to Linkedin to Facebook to all sorts of other kinds of communities web 2.0 is all about sharing and seeing (Modard, 2012).

Today, wikipedia defines social media as “primarily Internet- and mobile based tools for sharing and discussing information among human beings.” Commonly used social media tools include blogs, Facebook, MySpace, Linkedin, Digg, Twitter, and YouTube but the list grows longer each day.

The story of Social media comes from 1997, when SixDegrees made its first appearance. It was the first “entrance” of social networking. Today it is widely considered to be the first social networking site that helped people connect and send messages to others. While SixDegrees attracted millions of users, it failed to become a sustainable business and, in 2000, the service closed. Nowadays, we could say that the founder of Sixdegrees was ahead of its time (Weinreich, 2007).

The social networking that now leads the global social networking pack, Facebook, was founded by university students and it was first remained as a campus – oriented site. It was generally opened to the public in the beginning of 2006. Facebook is the most successful social networking for several reasons. One of them is its ease of use that makes it possible for almost everyone to use it. Also we could add the memorable name and its multitude of easily accessed features.

Twitter was first founded by Jack Dorsey on May of 2006 and launched in July the same year. Since then ‘Twitter’ has become one of the most visited social networking services and has been described as the “SMS of the internet”. As of May 2015, twitter has more than 500 million users, out of which more than 302 million are active.

( Robin Effing, Jos van Hillegersberg & Theo Huibers, 2015)
The above figure shows the evolution of the midway between the internet and the web 2.0 from a study by Robin Effing, Jos van Hillegersberg & Theo Huibers. The horizontal axis is time. With the passing of time new definitions and data are created to understand how the internet works. It shows the evolution from World Wide Web, to Web 2.0, to Social Media. Web 2.0 is a new stage where the user’s participation increases. From this figure we understand that Web 2.0 is a completely new stage of the internet and it has reached a new higher amount of people who participate. Furthermore, Social Media is a new stage of development where users are much more involved than before. Much more time to a much greater degree of participation. A degree that has grown more and more rapidly over time. If governments and political organizations manage to take advantage of this incredible increase of participation through social media, they will be able to take advantage of this new situation.

The power of Facebook

As we mentioned above Facebook was founded by university students, Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates.

Facebook is the most successful social networking for several reasons. One of them is its ease of use that makes it possible for almost everyone to use it. Also the fact that it has a memorable name. But the most important thing is that for the first time friends who meet in real life could communicate with each other online. It was something new, unsimilar with everything was created on the internet until that time.

As Lars Backstrom has mentioned, facebook audience grew rapidly over the years. It now has 1.55 billion active Facebook users (more than 20% of the global population), with 69 million friendships among them. “To date, these are the largest social network studies ever released” (Backstrom, 2011).
What does politics mean

Politics is the concerted action of individuals or social groups in order to achieve community-based goals. With politics people organize their social cohabitation. They participate in a public process to deal with problems affecting social groups or the community.

From the definition of policy, the following issues arise:

What are the issues about politics? What do we mean when we say that politics is a public process? It means that it refers to dealing with "common", "public things". These are issues that are primarily related to the state, the concentration of resources (eg through taxation), their management and their investment, depending on the decisions of the public authorities. The policy therefore concerns, above all, the exercise of public authority and civil-state relations.

The "common", "public things" are contradictory to the issues of the private sphere, where the individual manages, without the interference of the state, various assumptions of his life and develops his personality in various fields, e.g. Family, social relationships, artistic creation (Hanley, 2010).

Social Media and Participation Defined

“The rise of social media has drastically changed political discourse and public engagement, with politicians going where the audience is, while people try to find a balance between filtering and plurality of opinions.” (Tereza, 2016).

As we already mentioned, the entry of social media into humanity has caused cosmogenic changes in all aspects of social life.

This time we will analyze the role of social media on participation generally. Social media is a catalyst for the evolution of the political process, as politics and communication are in a lasting relationship of interaction. Social media have an impact on the political process, giving room for upgrading the role of citizens in the political system through "opportunities to participate".

Obama’s 2008 election campaign for example has been a real revolt in the field of political communication. The American president invited citizens to participate in a public debate on political issues. Through the internet, Obama came in direct contact with the citizens, while he reduced the cost of election expenses. We will analyze more the case of Obama’s 2008 election below.
It is a fact that although social media have been delayed to integrate into the communication strategy of political parties in general but especially of political figures, their use has become a necessity. Among the advantages of their use, the rapid dissemination of information-political positions and opinions, the attraction of other age profiles, the avoidance of traditional media that may circumvent the political profile of a party or person with unfair means and equal opportunities in viewing and Highlighting

However, there are also negative aspects of the use of social media. Creating bogus accounts of political figures in them can lead to misrepresentation of the truth and lower citizens' confidence. Even in the case of authenticity, there are security risks and an increased risk of malicious actions, and there are also no cases of electronic propaganda politics. On the other hand, politicians can use specialized consultants on social media marketing or even simple internet marketing and promote even more targeted political presence, thus highlighting the added value of social media. In any case, users should be careful in their electronic contacts with the political world because they leave their political electronic stigma on the one hand, and on the other hand the lack of critical thinking and ability can lead to the formation of erroneous consciousness.

A good reason why social media have such a strong power over political participation is the fact that they expose diversity. It is a fact that 62 percent of people get their news from social media, with 18 percent doing so very often. (Pew Research Center, 2012)

According to Michael Barthel, a new study, conducted by Pew Research Center in association with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, finds that “clear majorities of Twitter (63%) and Facebook users (63%) now say each platform serves as a source for news about events and issues. That share has increased substantially from 2013, when about half of users (52% of Twitter users, 47% of Facebook users) said they got news from the social platforms” (Barthel, 2014)
Another reason why more and more people are getting their news via social media is that through social media every user has a voice. Everyone can say their opinion that will be read from other users of the same platforms.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that social media can play an important role in the mobilization of people and political behavior as well (Anderson & Caumont, 2014).

Younger voters, in particular, increasingly get their news from social media. According to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in January, 35% of respondents between ages 18 and 29 said that “social media was the most helpful source of information about the presidential campaign. For those aged 30 to 49, social media ranked third, behind cable TV and news websites” (Pew Research Center, 2016).
Political Participation and Social Media in Greece

In Greece specifically, the last 4 years we have witnessed a continuous penetration of social media in the political world, with the former Prime Minister of the country, G. Papandreou, being the proponent. Since then, social media have been increasingly used by Greek politicians to create links with their fans and to inform and comment on the events of the daily political scene without mediating traditional media (Fouxenidis, 2012).

In view of the information of the exploration that was led inside Poulakidakos & Veneti's "Social Media in Political Communication: How do Greek political parties use Twitter during the pre-electoral period?", in spite of the way that Greek government officials utilize Twitter widely, it appears this has not changed a great part of the old patterns of conveying governmental issues. Neither the inspected Greek legislators and gatherings nor their constituents misuse the new stage to drench themselves in an interlocutory condition. Or maybe, what is obvious from the topical investigation of the information is the unfurling of never-ending parallel monologs. Regarding reactions and discussions, the greater part of the legislators on Twitter utilized their tweets so as to communicate their messages instead of react or take part in discussion. The immense greater part of tweets concentrated on: assaulting the adversary, advancing the gathering, the legislator or specific approaches, setting the motivation for the discretionary battle, encouraging effort mottos or decision guarantees. What is vital is that – in the analyzed specimen of tweets—there were no customized reactions.

The benefits of social media in political communication are constantly gaining ground over traditional forms of political communication such as rallies, advertising spots, and pre-election events. The reason that led to this new phenomenon, among other things, is the cost factors (inexpensive campaign campaigns), the ease of reaching a larger audience, and the rapport with the fans. But we will analyze these reasons in the next chapter.

The beginning, why?

According to Tim Unwin, some are the reasons politics has come to social media. Below we will mention the most important:
A) Social networks are mainly a mass social gathering area, so an easy way to reach a large crowd of audiences, but also an area of view that can offer direct and free advertising to persons,

B) Because it is a decongesting space, and even controlled. Written and spoken speech has always offered relief by often weakening the intention and relegating it to the simplest,

C) Because the target for a possible change of political setting - regardless of whether this is really possible - is to bring to the polls young people who can validate new choices, so internet politics attempts to approach and influence the so-called youth community (Unwin, 2012).

Social media is not space is way. The way you interact, you react directly to your actions. In this sense, social media political space is every web site where there are conditions for a public to come and react directly. Mainly social media is considered social networks such as Facebook & Twitter.

Social media is also considered to be any way of using online tools for both communicating with the public and informing it.

The purpose of a political social media space depends exclusively on what the politician wants to achieve, how long his space works and how it works. Most candidates work on a facebook page without a pre-agreed purpose, just for announcements, photos, and multi-read quotes.

In party leaders pages, however, things are more organized, but even the size of the participation with either Like or Comments is a versatile interpretable element that does not automatically confirm citizens' acceptance.

A political social media space could also be a social site where citizens can have direct interactivity, but as we know most I guess on the internet as well as in conventional life, it is easier to reach the world than to expect it To approach you.

This great strength of social media has made candidate politicians more pleased to be more accountable and more accessible to their voters. The ability of social media to directly publish content to a large number of users (even millions at a time) prompts politicians to manage their campaigns with care. Social media tools, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, allow politicians to speak directly to voters at very low cost (usually even free), and they are increasingly choosing social media tools versus traditional media such as the television (Anadiotis, 2010).
Disadvantages of social media

Social media’s incredible opportunities of political communication make it clear that there are many risks.

First of all there is polarization. Theoretically, social media, as an instrument that provides opportunities for discussion, collective reflection, and even the presentation of documents and other arguments, should be an ideal forum for a sober political dialogue, to find signs of coincidence, minimum agreement or even consensus. However, in practice, as a rule, the opposite is the case.

The speed and immediacy, the sharp and elliptical proposals (especially on twitter), and, above all, the effort to attract friends or followers into a mess of message inflation, often leads to an unsuccessful effort to create impressions, little or no, to invoke Of substance, pushes the interlocutors into slogan and complacency, pays tribute to the most extreme views and eventually tends to polarize the climate.

Another disadvantage of social media is the vicious circle. It is very difficult to get out of it. Even with regard to the "opponents" you follow, you usually do it not from tolerance or open-mindedness, but from a sort of perversion, especially to use against them the blasphemy they will say.

Social media to a certain extent seem to be a transcript of oral communication in a written medium. In the public speech, this has the effect of what you say, and even what you say hurriedly and roughly, in an almost "verbal" (within introductory) dialogue, is recorded and can be used against you, as if it were the only thing you've ever said or wrote. It is a fact that users can not escape anything that they may later regret. This is the big contradiction: the freedom offered by social media can easily be diverted and become completely self-centered (Soule, 2011).

Individuals have a tendency to favor the economical correspondence advancements since they are less expensive as well as in light of the fact that they can peruse the web and cooperate with the media, produce their own particular substance and find diverse ways of news keeping in mind the end goal to pick in what news are intriguing in (Gurevitch, Coleman, Blumer, 2009). The clients now they can cooperate straightforwardly to legislative issues through particular gatherings like on-line discussions for strategy making (Van Dijk, 2015). The appearance of refined innovations of interchanges made broad communications all the more simple to get to universally and enable more watchers from various areas to take part in extreme circumstances either aloof (watchers, spectators) or dynamic (as immediate members) (Negrime, 1996). In the computerized period of political correspondence it is watched that individuals never again require the conventional or communicate media with a specific end goal to show their worries. Individuals are never again needing utilizing television pictures or radio voices to get irritated. This could occur through relational correspondence (with the utilization of Facebook), with telephone contact, or up close and personal correspondence. It is currently statically obvious that web-based social networking have a tendency to essentially build the chances of a man to
go to a dissent while satellite television diminish the number (Tufekci, Wilson, 2012). So, in a way, traditional media have passes their role into this new era. But, on the other hand, the rise of Facebook and Twitter gave residents the capacity to remain for their rights in nations that before the advanced age, individuals didn't have the way or the permit to do as such as a result of the world class administrations that had involved the expert and furthermore the customary media. These administrations had put the telecom media into a circumstance of restriction. Most would agree that advanced media have changed the idea of political correspondence particularly in discouraged nations. The new media acting like weight bunches all together the regular folks to have the podium to express their considerations. This prompted gigantic changes in political request of things (Tufekci, Wilson, 2012).

Potential politicians that arised from social media

Another essential subject about social media and politics that we should mention concerns potential politicians that came from social media. Recently, there is a tendency for political candidates who come from social media. They trust the parties, seeing that they have public on the internet and show them as candidates. Social media can bring out new politicians, people with reason, opinion, and probably without party past. Since social networks are social gatherings, it is expected that candidates may also emerge from them. But for that to happen the person has to be on the internet for too long and to gain people's trust. It must be noticed that government officials and political gatherings need to draw in with Web as the Internet is a worldwide overall group. In these groups control is progressively works in worldwide systems and they simply encompass and sidestep the standards of a country state (Castells, 2002). This is going on likewise due to the principle attributes of Web: fortifying city life, expanding access to political data, making political dialog, creating interpersonal organizations and the most critical offering an option and all the more simple method for political articulation and engagement. (Boulianne, 2009) Through a part of Web 2.0 like double screening the significance for media experts, lawmakers and nonelites is set apart because of the development of web-based social networking. In this way some fanatic practices that are directed for, or for the benefit of legislators and political gatherings could be seen all together political performing artists to increase higher consideration and engagement with the group of onlookers and people in general. (Vaccari, Chadwick and O'Loughlin, 2015) so as to ensure their interests, political gatherings and government officials need to draw in with advanced political correspondence and pick up their place in the present day political world. With different words political gatherings can't remain and concentrate just on neighborhood gatherings or
supporters since they will lose their ability to take an interest upon this present reality wellsprings of energy. (Castells, 2002)

Why do politicians come online?

An important question we need to answer before we move on is why politicians come online? We have already mentioned the advantages that social media offer so it would be easy to combine them with the raise of political participation via social media. First of all social networks are mainly a mass social gathering area, so an easy way to reach a large crowd of audiences, but also an area of view that can offer direct and free advertising to persons. Additionally, it is a decongesting space, and even controlled. Written and spoken speech has always offered relief by often weakening the intention and relegating it to the simplest,

Social media is the way users interact. In this sense, social media political space is every web site where there are conditions for a public to come and react directly.

Social media is also considered to be any way of using online tools for both communicating with the public and informing it. The purpose of a political social media space depends exclusively on what the politician wants to achieve, how long his space works and how it works. Most candidates work on a facebook page without a pre-agreed purpose, just for announcements, photos, and multi-read quotes.

In party leaders ‘pages, however, things are more organized, but even the size of the participation with either Like or Comments is a versatile interpretable element that does not automatically confirm citizens' acceptance.

With the emergence of social media, it is obvious that some values of political communication have increased and empowered with specific values. Transparency, openness, trust are some key elements of political evolvement and are shown recently because of the social media (Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2012). At the point when occupied with talk about governmental issues or sharing their contemplations about a political promotion or news story, voters differ in their ability to share their own political dispositions with others. That is, individuals differ on how "open" or "honest" they are, how much authenticity they uncover (Javnost-The Public, 2002; Schiffman, Thelen, & Sherman, 2010; Stromer-Galley, 2002 - retrieved from Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2012 pp.97-98). There is some proof that people with high receptiveness are all the more eager to share their perspectives and be straightforward notwithstanding when in questionable popular supposition atmospheres than are people with low transparency. In writing about association open connections, receptiveness and straightforwardness are frequently viewed as synonymous (Rawlins, 2008, p. 6-
retrieved from Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2012 pp.97-98). Where trust is a multifaceted build, receptiveness appears to be fairly more direct: simple to see through, straightforward, not concealing privileged insights for instance (Rawlins, 2008, p. 6- retrieved from Himelboim, Lariscy, Tinkham & Sweetser, 2012 pp.97-98). Mystery is intentionally concealing one’s genuine self, activities, and contemplations; straightforwardness is intentionally uncovering them (Florini, 1998). One factor that numerous people report enjoying about online exposure of political convictions is that they can stay unknown (Stromer-Kitchen, 2002). On the off chance that obscurity is chosen in online talk, receptiveness and straightforwardness are maybe more effectively accomplished; there might be a more genuine revelation in political online networking than up close and personal.

Influence is one thing, trust is another

It is well known that politicians nowadays work with internet people. Although the definition of influencer or opinion maker is in many places of blur and one can find hundreds of interpretations that will make it easy it is a fact that as in conventional life, there are people on the internet who with their attitude, their behavior and the duration of their presence not only have a large audience but also have a validation of trust from a large percentage of this audience. But the difference of influence and confidence does not mean that the one who influences can actually "help" in an agreed manner the political communication on the internet - and off the Internet.
Social Media and their role in political behavior

The use of social media in recent elections, worldwide, has increased, especially as far as young adults is concerned. When it comes to the young generation, traditional measures, they are less engaged in politics. It is interesting for this particular age how people at these ages use social media for political information, and to express political views. As an answer to the growing political use of social media, researchers have investigated these media’s effects on political behavior such as political participation (Stieglitz, 2012).

Social media, and mostly facebook and twitter can easily build relations with other users. More easily compared to tradition offline activities. Additionally social media spread the news faster than any traditional media and allows real information in real time, something that is crucial to political participation (Yang & Jean, 2014).

According to Lee Rainie and the Pew Research Center “The use of social media is becoming a feature of political and civic engagement for many Americans. Some 60% of American adults use either social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter and a new survey by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project finds that 66% of those social media users—or 39% of all American adults—have done at least one of eight civic or political activities with social media.” (Rainie, 2012).

As we understand, the use of social media has become a useful feature for many citizens. More and more adults are using facebook or twitter. Indeed, a new survey survey by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project showed that 66% of people using social media have made at least one political media activity (through social media) Overall, there are mixed partisan and ideological patterns among social media users when it comes to using social media like social networking sites and Twitter.

People who are actively involved in political action are more likely to engage in political activities and actions through social media. Respectively, people who are not generally involved in political affairs go more slowly into political actions and political ends. Moreover, political actions through social media are more likely to be made by younger social media users. People aged 49 or under will more often take a post that includes personal opinions and beliefs regarding users aged 50 and over

In addition, younger users will be more involved in a social media chat and more often encourage other users to participate themselves.
Young people, are generally not involved in politics, but now they have the opportunity to engage in politically-related subjects through their social media networks, on which they are generally active.

This study is concerned with the investigation of the relationship between younger mostly (but also older) people’s use of social networking sites and online political participation, in Greece.

As we already mentioned above, an example that must be mentioned for this study is the role of social media during the American presidential elections of 2008.

The Internet’s Role in Campaign 2008

"A case that is worth to be mentioned is the case of Obama’s election campaign. This case was the first one that used social media in a productive way. This campaign was, for a large part, systematically based on Social Media.” (Chang, 2014).

Nowadays the social media play an important role in our everyday lives. Specifically the U.S. Social media have become an essential and necessary part of the lives of the American contemporary society. The technological development as well as the rapid development of the social media have caused various and enormous changes especially to the way people choose to live, communicate, get informed, discuss and even vote. To begin with, creating new friendships has changed dramatically for the last two decades. Searching for individuals with similar interests online has become the new trend. Secondly, there is a vast of available new sources full of information that appeal people of all ages. In addition everyone could require to share ideas with individuals from all around the globe. And last but not least let us not forget the fact that even the nature of the information provided has changed. These innovations have revolutionized and caused major effects on many fields such as advertising, definitely public relations, communications, and political communication.

A lot of things were modified in the political world when for the first time in history social networking sites allowed users to show or share their support for a specific candidate using every way the social media provide or interact with others on political issues for example discussing openly in forums and showing their agreement or disagreement on political matters. As a result the presidential elections marked an originality in the political realm peaked with the 2008 US presidential campaign which highlighted these innovations in the field of political communication.

Those were the elections that young followers of Obama used the social networking sites a lot, in order to either stimulate their friends, who were not interested in the elections to vote, or influence them to change their opinion if they were against Obama. That was the Obama campaign. A campaign which
achieved something unit that had never happened before. To recruit thousands of campaign volunteers ready to assist in any possible way and willing to promote the campaign as much as they could.

The 2008 USA presidential elections remained in history for the huge impact that social media had. Especially platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. Potential voters extensively engaged in these social media platforms by posting, commenting and video-sharing. (Barron, Richard, 2008)

They offered a unique opportunity to evaluate the usefulness and applicability of social media technology in the American political environment. This assessment of the role of social media during the 2008 presidential campaign confirms some widely held tenets of conventional wisdom about social media, but it also indicates that the role of social media as the new sine qua non of American politics is far from certain (Victoria, 2014).

President Obama used a lot of different platforms of communication in ways that other candidates never had so he used his web presence and e-mails but he also got into social media very quickly. (Rutledge, 2013).

“After Obama won, the million people who had been receiving text updates and announcements received one final message: “All of this happened because of you. Thanks, Barack.” (Rutledge, 2013).

After these elections, many political organizations, as well as candidates, understood the importance of social media and incorporated it into their communication strategies.

The role of the internet in other campaigns

Another example of social media propaganda is highlighted by the online activity of US President Donald Trump, who used Twitter as a forum for speech during his election period, thus making public a concern by proving that there is no negative advertising. After he won the victory.

Trump's advertisements had a simple, targeted message, focused on the big issues, understood by the voters he wanted to win.
As we already mentioned above, in 2008, Barack Obama gained the nickname "Facebook president", thanks to a social media-oriented communication strategy and unrivaled use of data on the internet. Eight years later, Donald Trump presented another view of an over-cabinet president who uses all the potential of new technologies.

Trump was delighted with Twitter long before he came down for Republicans' anointing. He used his account to pass his ideas to advertise his campaign, usually late in the evening. In Twitter, Trump wrote in capital letters and denounced journalists, women, politicians, media, lawyers.

In addition to his personal tweets, Donald Trump has also won the support of a host of fanatic supporters, particularly mobilized. Many platforms on the web dominated as forums for its fans, such as the far right Breitbart News or even WikiLeaks, which offered him an unexpectedly strong support. The 4chan, 8chan and Reddit forums became his supporters. One of the sub-forums that became extremely popular was The_Donald, which has over 276,949 members.

It is very difficult to predict whether Trab will be a good president for his country and the world. Marketing helps buy a product, but the experience with the product will determine the opinion you will eventually form. The only sure thing anyone can do is that Trumb's case, combined with social media, will fundamentally change political marketing.

Aim of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube by Greek citizens addressing the following questions:

Does social media use relate to political participation and under what conditions?

Is social media use related to political participation and engagement?

How does social media use interact with psychological variables, such as identification and efficacy, in predicting political participation? (A. Gardikiotis, E. Navrozidou, & O. Euaggelou-Navarro, 2016)

The present study attempts to understand the meaning and impact of Social Media on elections and to provide some answers to the above questions.
Chapter 2

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach, which was considered the most appropriate since the aim of the study was to gather information from Greek voters in a short period of time and from a satisfactory number of participants. The research tool was an online questionnaire, consisted of 54 questions of different types, separated in five sections and organized in distinct units, tables and presented in various forms.

The questionnaire was chosen because it could include a number of questions of different types, measuring different aspects. The scales incorporated were needed in order to determine personal characteristics of the individual that could be affecting the decision to move abroad. A general opinion was researched, thus a bigger number of participants needed to be involved, something not so easily accomplished with a focus group or through individual interviews.

Despite the fact that many authors claimed that surveys that are taking place online are not 100 percent valid and may have some methodological issues, related to low response rates, Survey Monkey platform that was used for the creation of this study’s questionnaire have overcome them. The response rates were high, and it was taken into consideration that each participant could participate only one time. This is prone to errors because the mechanism that the platform of survey monkey offered it was checking the uniqueness of the user only from cookies*.

The questions were separated in the following thematic sections:

1. General information (6 questions)

The first section included 6 questions, and its purpose was to obtain some general information about the participant. No names were requested, only information about age, education country, occupation and sex.
The last question of this section- Do you have an account on social media? is of major importance and its answer leads into two different sections because if the answer is no we can exclude people that don’t use social media. Furthermore, if the answer of question 6 is no the survey leads the participate to the below question which is also the last one for them who have no participation on social media: 1a. Why don’t you have an account on social media? On the other hand if the answer is yes the survey leads us to the questions we want to value.

2. **Usage of Social Media (5 questions)**

This field was conducted by 5 questions. The main goal was to find out in what extent and how many hours people spend on Social Media in order to specify at what level people are dependent on them.

3. **Politics and Social Media (10 questions)**

This field was conducted by 10 questions. The goal of this section was to find in order to analyze the effectiveness of social media on political motives, thinking, and behaviors.

4. **Traditional Media and New Media (3 questions)**

This field was conducted by three questions. The purpose of these questions was to understand the extent to which the participants prefer social media in relation to traditional media.

5. **Political Participation on Social Media (35 questions)**

This field was conducted by 35 questions. The purpose of these questions was to clarify the participants Political identification.

If the participant answers yes on question 6, there are following 5 questions that help us understand at what degree each participant uses social media. This is very helpful in order to be able to analyze the research and to gather people who use more time on them than those who use them rarely.

All of these 5 sections were of major importance and helped us create a whole picture of the subject and reach the goal of the research, understanding the way social media influence voters’ decision or opinion as far as politics is concerned.
Survey Monkey Platform

SurveyMonkey is an online survey development that is used for online surveys. It provides data collection, data analysis, brand management, and consumer marketing. The reason why we chose Survey Monkey for our survey is the fact that it offers more large-scale enterprise options as far as data analysis is concerned.

Participants

A total of 151 Greek Citizens participated in the study: 51 females from Greece and 93 males also from Greece. Unfortunately 59 participants had to be excluded, because their participation was invalid (they quit the questionnaire before it was finished). Consequently, the examined sample constituted of 92 participants. We considered essential to ask the participant to fill in their date of birth from the beginning of the questionnaire, in order to have an average age result. Age ranged from 17 to 63 years. The average age of the participants was 31.10 years.

The age of 17 was also acceptable on the survey because we consider that it is a crucial age in which young people start to have a political aspect and opinion. Later, usually, people tend to follow a certain political path.

It was also requested from the participants to fill out the country and city of origin so as to separate and to compare the answers from specific places; for example Greek that live in London.
General information

The first section “general information” included 6 questions, and its purpose was to obtain some general information about the participant. Specifically, date of birth, sex, education, country/city, occupation. The questionnaire was anonymous, therefore we did not request the name of the participants no name was requested.

As we already mentioned the last question of section 1 was very essential and led the participants either to a last question (if they did not have any account on social media) or to the rest of the survey. This question was added in order to separate people who have no interest on social media from those who do. Out of the 92 answers, 86 participants answered yes-I do have at least one account on social media, and 6 answered no – I do not have any account on social media. At an amount of percentage 91,72% people answered yes and 8,28% no.

Usage of Social Media

In this section, the main goal was to find out in what extent and how many hours people spend on Social Media in order to specify at what level people are dependent on them.

This helps us to categorize the participants in two groups, one by people who use social media a lot and one by people who use social media less.

These two categories can be separated into smaller categories: People who spend less than one hour per day on social media, people who spend less than 6 hours per day, people na spend less than 12 a hours per day, and people who spend less than 24 hours per day. The reason why we use the option of "less than 24 hours per day" despite the fact that it is an excessively large number is the fact that people work on social media and spend at least 9 hours on line while working.
For the questions of this section we were helped by a similar survey which was conducted by the Pew Research Center.

The questions of this section were the following type:

*How many social networking sites communities / groups do you own?*

*Please select all the social networks you have created your personal profiles*

*How long have you been using Social Media?*

*Approximately how much time do you spend the day on social media?*

*How many contacts / friends do you have in Social media?*

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**Politics and Social Media**

In the next 10 questions, Participants reported (on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = little to 7 = very much) the extent to which they feel that social media can influence political motivations on the political thought and behavior of themselves and other people accordingly.

The goal of this section was to find in order to analyze the effectiveness of social media on political motives, thinking, and behaviors. Participants were asked to estimate the degree to which they think that social media can affect the political motives, political thinking, and political behavior of themselves and of other people.

Additionally there was a question that included traditional media such as television and radio and newspaper. The purpose of this question was to find out to what extend people considerate Social Media more reliable than traditional media.
Traditional Media and New Media

This section was conducted by three questions. The purpose of these questions was to understand the extent to which the participants prefer social media in relation to traditional media (television, newspaper, radio) and thus to be able to predict to a small extent on how much social media can influence politics and how much traditional media still can. Additionally we tried to understand whether social media will be able to replace other traditional procedures such as the voting procedure. The questions were of the following type: How do you feel when you see a lot of political content in social media? With regard to politics, would you like to have the choice to vote through social media? If so, would you prefer your vote to be clear / hidden?

Political Participation on Social Media

This section was taken from a similar study from A. Gardikiotis, E. Navrozidou, & O. Euaggelou-Navarro - Social media and political participation: the interplay among social media political use and presumed influence, and political identification and political self-efficacy. A number of the existing sentences was reduced, in order to be connected with the current study. The purpose of these questions was to clarify the participants’ political identification. A measure of four items was employed: participants indicated (a) the importance of their political beliefs, (b) their commitment to their political ideology, (c) the degree of interest in politics, and (d) the degree of their political activity (adapted from Duck, Hogg, Terry, 1995, Duck, Terry, Hogg, 1998). The responses were given on 7-point scales from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Additionally on this section we included a Left-right political orientation. Participants positioned themselves politically on a left-right scale (1 = extreme left to 7 = extreme right). The question was the following: In the following scale you would position yourself in relation to your political ideas and general perceptions.
Process of data collection

The collection of data lasted 16 days, from 17/05/2017 until 31/05/2017. The questionnaire was initially designed in a Microsoft Word format and then was transferred to a platform of creating surveys - Survey Monkey. There was a pilot testing which included one specific participant that filled the questionnaire and after taking feedback from that we went on and made some changes. The questionnaire was shared in various social media groups where possible participants could be found. The main source was general forums where there were plenty of Greek citizens at all ages. When the survey was complete we gathered the results in a Google spreadsheet and we downloaded it. The first thing after the downloading of the results was to make a separation between male and female in order to immediately have information about the participants.

Chapter 3

Data analysis

After collecting the data using the questionnaires, we move on to their analysis. The questionnaires should first be put under scrutiny and processing, using various techniques and methods. This section is combined by two categories. The first one is the analysis by the percentage we got from the answers of the questionnaire and in the second category the results were codified and entered into the statistical worksheet SPSS 19.0 package, which is a powerful statistical program.
As we have mentioned above, the final number of the participants was 92 and starting from 17 (minimum age). There was no limit of age as our subject concerns all ages (maximum age of the responders was 60). The average age was age being 31.10. The participants were mainly men as the number was 64 male (70,41%) and 25 female (29,59%). As far as origin is concerned, 24 persons were from villages of Greece and 68 persons were from cities. Main cities were (Athens, Thessaloniki and London. As already mentioned we did not exclude Greek people that live abroad as far as they continue to come to Greece as far as political duties is concerned.

Considering the education, most of the participants were highly educated (68%). Next were individuals that have finished secondary education (23,47%), then participants that have lower education (only 3,06%).

The majority of the participants were employees (72,45%). 10,20% were students, 8,16% were both students and employees, 9,18% were not either students nor employees.

The majority of Greeks participate / have social media (92%).

Of those who do not participate, the biggest percentage responded as "I do not care to join the social network" 57.14%, followed by "I participated in the past but I did not like it" 28.57% and "It is against my culture" 14.29%

The pages used by the Greeks

Citizens are primarily Facebook (90.12%) and the YouTube (77.78%), to a lesser extent Instagram (70.37). They follow Twitter (61.73), Pinterest (27.16) and Tumblr (14.81%).

The majority of Greek users on the internet have been using social media for more than 5 years 91.36% and spend 1-5 hours a day 60.49%. It follows less than 1 hour a day with 24.69% and finally 6 - 12 hours a day with 12.35%

A small percentage of users share the view political or economic developments or participate in political developments. The questions were the following:
How often do you participate in political discussions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>22.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>22.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you post about political content?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>35.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>35.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>13.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you follow politicians in social media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>49.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>27.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>13.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>8.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think that social media has influenced your view of specific political figures?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>34.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>14.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>20.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do you think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>19.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do you think that the use of social media tools can mobilize you personally to engage in political and social actions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>32.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>27.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think that social media have influenced the election of a party

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>13.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>30.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>25.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very much</td>
<td>7.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you consider the political content that is published in social media more reliable than that of television and radio?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.69%</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>27.16%</td>
<td>19.75%</td>
<td>6.17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think social media can replace newspaper & TV in social and political news?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.05%</td>
<td>18.52%</td>
<td>25.93%</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you believe that social media publications can affect one's political point of view?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.47%</td>
<td>17.28%</td>
<td>30.86%</td>
<td>37.04%</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do you feel when you see a lot of political content in social media?

- Disturbed as social media is for entertainment and not for political news: 10.13%
- Indifferent. I do not participate in political discussions but I do not mind to see the: 62.03%
- Pleasant. I like to see / participate in political discussions in social media: 26.58%
- Wonderful. It's the only reason I'm using Social Media: 1.27%

With regard to politics, would you like to have the choice to vote through social media?

- Yes: 28.40%
- No: 54.32%
- Indifferent: 17.28%

If you answered yes, would you prefer your vote to be:

- Open: 3.85%
- Hidden: 73.08%
- Indifferent: 23.08%
Would you see the parliament through social media live?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18.52%</td>
<td>56.79%</td>
<td>24.69%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you participate in political polls through social media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.81%</td>
<td>32.10%</td>
<td>48.15%</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you watch the election process through Social Media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.88%</td>
<td>41.98%</td>
<td>43.21%</td>
<td>4.94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political participation

We asked participants to report how often, from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much) they scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 7 = very much) how much they feel able to perform ten political behaviours

I think I could...

- Explain my political views openly, even in opposite political contexts
  - Not at all: 9.68%
  - Very little: 11.29%
  - Little: 19.35%
  - Medium: 20.97%
  - A lot: 14.52%
  - Very: 17.74%
  - Very much: 6.45%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure that the political representatives that I voted honor their commitments to the electorate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Not at all : 14.29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very little : 11.11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Little : 19.05%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Medium : 20.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· A lot : 17.46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very : 14.29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very much : 3.17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To maintain personal relationships with representatives of political organizations or governmental authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Not at all : 30.65%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very little : 19.35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Little : 11.29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Medium : 19.35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· A lot : 12.90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very : 4.84%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very much : 1.61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To play a decisive role in choosing the leaders of the political movements I belong to or where I am close to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Not at all : 20.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Very little : 20.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Little : 19.05%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Medium : 17.46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Make an effective political campaign or party campaign with which I agree | • Not at all: 32.26%  
• Very little: 9.68%  
• Little: 16.13%  
• Medium: 19.35%  
• A lot: 8.06%  
• Very: 11.29%  
• Very much: 3.23% |
|---|---|
| I actively promote the election of political candidates whom I trust | • Not at all: 24.19%  
• Very little: 17.74%  
• Little: 12.90%  
• Medium: 12.90%  
• A lot: 20.97%  
• Very: 9.68%  
• Very much: 1.61% |
| | • Not at all: 21.31%  
• Very little: 16.39% |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Response Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Promote (or contribute positively to) effective information and mobilization actions in my community (work, friends, family) to support political projects that I believe | - Little: 14.75%  
- Medium: 13.11%  
- A lot: 14.75%  
- Very: 14.75%  
- Very much: 4.92% |
| To collect a significant amount of money to support my party's actions   | - Not at all: 51.61%  
- Very little: 14.52%  
- Little: 9.68%  
- Medium: 16.13%  
- A lot: 0.00%  
- Very: 4.84%  
- Very much: 3.23% |
| Use the tools I have as a citizen to control the actions of the political representatives | - Not at all: 19.35%  
- Very little: 14.52%  
- Little: 16.13%  
- Medium: 20.97%  
- A lot: 12.90%  
- Very: 6.45%  
- Very much: 9.68% |
Political behavior

We asked from participants to report how often they perform a number of political behaviors. They had to answer from a 7 scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

We would like to say how often you show the following behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in political demonstrations</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>24.19%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>4.84%</td>
<td>4.84%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be in touch with members of parliament or</td>
<td>52.46%</td>
<td>22.95%</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response Options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal representatives</td>
<td>• Medium: 4.92%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A lot: 8.20%</td>
<td>• Very: 1.64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very much: 3.28%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To boycott products for political, ethical or environmental reasons</td>
<td>• Not at all: 25.40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very little: 17.46%</td>
<td>• Little: 12.70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Medium: 20.63%</td>
<td>• A lot: 12.70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very: 4.76%</td>
<td>• Very much: 6.35%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donate money to a political organization or party</td>
<td>• Not at all: 86.89%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very little: 4.92%</td>
<td>• Little: 1.64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Medium: 0.00%</td>
<td>• A lot: 4.92%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Very: 0.00%</td>
<td>• Very much: 1.64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>Little</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Very much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To actively promote the election of political candidates you trust</td>
<td>52.46%</td>
<td>26.23%</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
<td>4.92%</td>
<td>4.92%</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
<td>1.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in political or social discussions</td>
<td>20.63%</td>
<td>15.87%</td>
<td>17.46%</td>
<td>7.94%</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>12.70%</td>
<td>3.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase products for political, ethical or environmental reasons</td>
<td>32.26%</td>
<td>17.74%</td>
<td>19.35%</td>
<td>16.13%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute political leaflets</td>
<td>Not at all: 84.13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very little: 11.11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little: 3.17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium: 0.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A lot: 0.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very: 0.00%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very much: 1.59%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help with organized political events</td>
<td>Not at all: 61.29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very little: 17.74%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little: 8.06%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium: 4.84%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A lot: 4.84%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very: 1.61%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very much: 1.61%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all: 19.05%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very little: 23.81%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sign in text that collects signatures for a purpose (social or political) | Little : 17.46%  
| | Medium : 19.05%  
| | A lot : 11.11%  
| | Very : 4.76%  
| | Very much : 4.76%  

| Be related to political representatives | Not at all : 56.45%  
| | Very little : 20.97%  
| | Little : 4.84%  
| | Medium : 8.06%  
| | A lot : 6.45%  
| | Very : 1.61%  
| | Very much : 1.61%  

How important are your political beliefs for you?
How committed are you to your political ideology?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>13.85%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How interesting do you look for political things?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.31%</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>12.31%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent would you describe yourself politically active?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.38%</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
<td>18.46%</td>
<td>18.46%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Left-right political orientation.

We asked from participants to position themselves politically on a left-right scale (1 = extreme left to 7 = extreme right).

In the following scale, would you put yourself in relation to your political ideas and your general perceptions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Far Left</th>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Left Center</th>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Right Center</th>
<th>Right</th>
<th>Far Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.15%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
<td>27.69%</td>
<td>27.69%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above answers we understand a few things about how users consider political participation through social media. Users believe that Social Media have acquired a political identity, but they do not agree that their political beliefs and opinions have been affected by other users.
The presence of political figures or parties on social media is in a high degree and this seems to be a positive element.

A small percentage believes that a political person can affect other users by his/her online page (through posts, photos e.t.c.)

Social Media is seen as an activation tool for political actions and many users have taken part in political action motivated by them.

A very small amount of people are members or fans in pages of political figures or parties. This small amount is because users a very few people are trying through social media to collect information or be sponsors.

The presence of political figures or parties in Social Media is not linked to voting intention

**Correlations**

We continued our analysis by making correlations that helped us to understand the degree of connection of our variables. Purpose of the correlation analysis is to explore the relationship between two or more variables. Results of the correlation table provide information to the investigator on the direction and on intensity of the relationship between the variables.

Correlation coefficients are numbers that measure the degree of dependence, ie intensity of dependence, one variable on the other. The coefficients also give us information about the direction of the relationship between the variables, ie the relation between the variables is positive, negative or neutral. Their prices are in space -1 and +1, except for a few exceptions of correlating more than two variables where their value may be greater than one. If the value of the coefficient is between -1 and 0, then we have a negative correlation, and if it is between 0 and +1, then the correlation is positive. If the value of the coefficient is zero, then it does not exist linear correlation between the two variables examined (Siomokos & Vasilikopoulou, 2005)

For the 4 new variables, the first one is the average of Efficacy, and the other three are 3 different political behaviors, PolBehMoney - generally we would say they are willing to give money, PolBehBoycot - in general, that they are willing to buckle products, PolBehTraditional - in general, that they follow traditional political behavior.

Before we move to the analysis of correlations we should mention what queries each variable came from.

As we already mentioned PolBehMoney is generally we would say they are willing to give money, PolBehBoycot - in general, that they are willing to buckle products, and PolBehTraditional - in general, that they follow traditional political behavior.
Moreover, ideology— in general how important are their political beliefs for them, timedaily— in general how much time they spend on social media in one day, friends— in general how many friends they have on social media, groups— in general how many social networking sites communities / groups they own, polconversation— in general how often users participate in political discussions, polpost — in general, how often do they post about political content, polpersons— in general how often they follow politicians in social media, influencepersonal – in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures, influencepolitics— in general to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country, and last motivation— in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions.

Correlations between efficacy and political participation

The Pearson Correlation (r) was used in order to discover the linear dependence between two variables. Collective efficacy was positively correlated with all the political behaviors, with intention to put money for politics (r= .427), with intention to boycott for political reasons (r=.552) and with traditional political behaviour (r= .629). So in general the more efficacious participants they feel collectively the more willing they are to perform these political behaviors. Also, efficacy was correlated with intention to get involved in political conversation (r= .357), to put up political posts (r= .429) and follow political persons (r= .429)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PolBehMo</th>
<th>PolBehBoycot</th>
<th>PolBehTraditonal</th>
<th>polconversation</th>
<th>polpost</th>
<th>polpersons</th>
<th>influe</th>
<th>influen</th>
<th>motiva</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>.427&quot;</td>
<td>.552&quot;</td>
<td>.629&quot;</td>
<td>.357&quot;</td>
<td>.429&quot;</td>
<td>.469&quot;</td>
<td>.365&quot;</td>
<td>.316&quot;</td>
<td>.533&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correlation Efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

Non-significant results were found in the correlations between they are willing to give money and in general they are willing to buckle products as well as ideology, timedaily, friends and groups (table 2). Additionally, some interesting findings were discovered in the variable of at what degree they are
willing to give money connected with how often users participate in political discussions \( (r=255) \). These findings suggest that people who are willing to give money are usually participants in political discussions. Moreover, positive correlation was found between how often do they post about political content and how willing they are to give money \( (r=390) \) and in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures \( (r=529) \). These positive correlations show that most people who are willing to pay money for political purposes think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures. Also they show that the most people are willing to pay money the more they post about political content on social media. However there were no interest findings between, the will to give money and if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures. Neither with to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country.
Interesting observations had been made about the correlation between how much they are willing to buckle products and following traditional behavior. These foundings show that people who have traditional behavior are more likely to buckle products ($r = .581^{**}$). Interesting correlation was also between how much they are willing to buckle products and how much time they spend the day on social media ($r = .289^{**}$). The result from these foundings were the more time users spend on social media the more willing they are to buckle products. Additionally there was a significant connection between the variable of how much they are willing to buckle products and six types of behavior on social media. Those were in general how often users participate in political discussions ($r = .353^{**}$), in general, how often do they post about political content ($r = .476^{**}$), in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures ($r = .473^{**}$), in general how often do they follow politicians in social media ($r = .297^{**}$), in general to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country ($r = .149$) and in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions ($r = .270^{**}$).

The above results show that people who are willing to buckle products usually follow political figures on social media, they make posts with political content, they think in a high degree that social media can influence their political view, they believe that the use of social media can affect political developments in the country and also mobilize them personally in order to engage in political and social actions.

There were no connection between how much people are willing to buckle products and people who believe that their political beliefs are very important for them.

The above correlations are appeared on table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolBehBoycot</th>
<th>PolBehTraditiona</th>
<th>polconversa</th>
<th>polpos</th>
<th>polpers</th>
<th>ons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PoMone</td>
<td>.427^{**}</td>
<td>.330^{**}</td>
<td>.593^{**}</td>
<td>.255^*</td>
<td>.390^{**}</td>
<td>.529^{**}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolBeh Money</th>
<th>PolBeh Traditional</th>
<th>polconversion</th>
<th>Pol post</th>
<th>Polpersons</th>
<th>influencepersonal</th>
<th>influencepolitics</th>
<th>motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PolBehavior</td>
<td>552**</td>
<td>330**</td>
<td>.581**</td>
<td>.353**</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.473**</td>
<td>.297**</td>
<td>.149**</td>
<td>.270**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variable of in general, that they follow traditional political behavior had no interesting correlation with how important are their political beliefs for them, how much time they spend on social media in one day, how many friends they have on social media and in general how many social networking sites communities / groups they own.

These leads us to the conclusion that people who follow traditional political behavior does not use social media at a high degree. And those who do use them they do not spend a lot of time on them and they don’t own a lot of social networking sites.

However the variable of in general, that they follow traditional political behavior was positively correlated with all the political behaviors, in general how often users participate in political discussions (r=.613**), in general, how often do they post about political content (r=.622**), in general how often they follow politicians in social media (r=.653**), in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures (r=.220*), in general to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country (r=168**) and in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions (r=.278**).

From the above we understand that people who follow traditional political behavior, follow politicians in social media, believe that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures and that they can affect political developments in the country.
Table 4

The variable of in general how important are their political beliefs for them was significantly connected only with how often people follow politicians in social media (r=0.207*) and had no connection with the rest of the variables.

From this we understand that the more people consider that their political beliefs are very important the more they follow politicians in social media. (table 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, how much time they spend on social media in one day had no significant correlation with willing to give money which show that people whether use social media or not does not affect their willing to give money for political purposes.

Positive correlation was discovered between the how much time they spend on social media in one day and they are willing to buckle products (r=0.289**). Additionally, there was positive correlation between in general how much time they spend on social media in one day and the variables how many friends they have on social media and on how many groups they belong, which shows that the more time people spend on social media every day the more likely is to have a lot of friends on social media and to belong in a lot of groups on them.

Negative correlation was discovered between how much time they spend on social media in one day and the political behavior such as how often users participate in political discussions, how often do they post about political content, how often they follow politicians in social media, if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures, to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country, and in general to
what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions. (table 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PolBehBoyco</th>
<th>friends</th>
<th>groups</th>
<th>polpersons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>timedaily</td>
<td>.289**</td>
<td>.294**</td>
<td>.394**</td>
<td>.207*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

In the variables of how many friends they have on social media and how many social networking sites communities / groups they own, there were also a small amount of corellations.

The variable about how many friends they have on social media had an important connection with the variable about how many social networking sites communities / groups they own (r=,233*), and with the variable whether they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures (r=,314**) and last with the variable to what extent they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions. (r=272**).

From these correlations we understand that the more friends, users have on social media, the more they believe that social media can influence their opinion about specific political figures and also can mobilize them personally in order to engage in political actions. Additionally, the more social networks they own, the more friends they choose to have on them.

(table 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>timedaily</th>
<th>friends</th>
<th>groups</th>
<th>influencepersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>friends</td>
<td>.294**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.233*</td>
<td>.314**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groups</td>
<td>.394**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.233*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7

When it comes to correlations between the variable in general how often users participate in political discussions and political behaviors via social media, positive correlation was found between the participation in political discussions and in general how often they post about political content (r=.637**). This positive correlation shows that the more people participate in political discussions the more they make posts that concern politics on their accounts. Additionally positive correlation was found between in general how often they participate in political discussions and in general how often they follow politicians in social media (r=.449**), which also shows that users who participate in political discussions are more likely to follow politicians in social media. Moreover, there was also a
positive correlation between the variable about the participation in political discussion and in general to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country \( (r=,318**) \). From this positive result we understand that people who discuss about politics on social media believes networking tools can affect political developments in the country at a high degree.\( \text{between polconversation and influencepolitics} \). (table 8)

Last, the variable about political discussion was positively correlated with the variable to what extent they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions \( (r=,345**) \). We understand from this result that users who participate in political conversations mostly believe that the use of social media can mobilize them to engage in political and social actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolEntMone</th>
<th>PolEntBocot</th>
<th>PolBehTrad</th>
<th>ideology</th>
<th>timed</th>
<th>friEnds</th>
<th>groups</th>
<th>polConversati</th>
<th>polPost</th>
<th>polPersons</th>
<th>influePersonl</th>
<th>influePolitics</th>
<th>motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>polconversion</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>345*</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8**

As far as the variable in general, how often they post about political content, is concerned there was a positive correlation with the variable in general how often they follow politicians in social media \( (r=,577**) \), the variable in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures \( (r=,345**) \) and the variable in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions \( (r=,315**) \).

From the above we understand that users who post about political issues usually follow politicians in social media, they believe that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures and that the use of social media can mobilize them to political and social actions. (table 9)
Interesting observations had been made about the correlation between the variable in general how often users follow politicians in social media and the political behavior in general if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures \((r=0.382**)\) and between the variable in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions \((r=0.231*)\).

From these results we could conclude that users who usually follow political figures in social media believe that social media has influenced their opinion about specific politicians. Additionally, they think that the use of social media can motivate them into political and social actions. (table 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolBehMoney</th>
<th>PolBehBoycot</th>
<th>PolBehTradition</th>
<th>ideology</th>
<th>polconversati on</th>
<th>polpost</th>
<th>influencopers onal</th>
<th>motivatio n</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pol post</td>
<td>.429**</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.622**</td>
<td>.637**</td>
<td>.577**</td>
<td>.345**</td>
<td>.315**</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 9

When it comes to correlations between the variable if they think that social media has influenced their view of specific political figures and political behavior, positive correlation was found between this variable and the variable of whether they believe that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions \((r=0.428**)\).
From the above results we understand that users of social media, the more they believe that social media can influence their opinion about specific political figures, the more they think that social media can motivate them into political and social actions. (table 11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolBeh No boycot</th>
<th>PolBeh Traditions</th>
<th>friends</th>
<th>polpost</th>
<th>polpersons</th>
<th>motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>influence personal</td>
<td>.365**</td>
<td>.297**</td>
<td>.220*</td>
<td>.314**</td>
<td>.345**</td>
<td>.382**</td>
<td>.428**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 11**

When it comes to correlations between the variable *in general to what extent they think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country* and the variable *in general to what extent do they think that the use of social media tools can mobilize them personally to engage in political and social actions* there is a significant connection ($r = .423**$) [table 12 & 13]

These findings suggest that the more users of social media believe that social networking tools can affect political developments in the country, the more they think they can be mobilized by them in order to participate in political or social actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>polconversation</th>
<th>motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>influence politics</td>
<td>.316**</td>
<td>.318**</td>
<td>.318**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 12**
Table 13

<table>
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<tr>
<th>motiv</th>
<th>Efficacy</th>
<th>PolBehB</th>
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<th>polpost</th>
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<th>influenc</th>
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<tr>
<td>ation</td>
<td>.533**</td>
<td>.270**</td>
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<td>.345**</td>
<td>.315**</td>
<td>.231*</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>.423**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

The evolution of the internet has affected many sectors of the economy and has reversed many market rules. Through the evolution of the Internet and technology consumers can express their point of view by posting on internet or via Social networking tools.

In an ever changing environment where everything is fluid and that is characterized by the need of people for Communication and sharing of views has become more imperative than ever. In such an environment, Social Media found the right ground to grow and to find their own place in the everyday life of people. Social Media, like the adoption of every new trend, has influenced all aspects of our everyday life.

Social media are the new thing of the era and have replaced communication policies of older years, such as posters and huge popular gatherings in pre-election speeches. Parties and politicians are getting closer and closer to the internet because they are the simplest, most economical and world-wide way of showing them.

The financial crisis has also affected party funds, with aspirants through social networking sites organizing their campaign more cheaply, and at the same time targeting directly the young audience, which is mostly informed over the internet.

Because social networks are a mass social gathering place, they are an easy way to reach a large crowd directly and most of the time interactive.

Most contenders and party leaders have one or more pages on Facebook and have a Twitter account for announcements, photos, comments, and many times to have a response to something that concerns them, even mentioning their schedule.
This study investigated the impact of using Social Media on politics and user participation, especially on Greek users. The results clearly illustrate that there is a share of users whose political behavior is influenced by Social Media and, above all, by the content they read daily via them. (Ads, policy profiles). These findings are a lot interesting variables for future research. However, the presence of political figures or parties in Social Media does not linked to voting intention. Additionally, an important number of users have no intention on conducting political actions through social media. Users believe that Social Media have acquired a political identity, but they do not agree that their political beliefs and opinions have been affected by other users.

Moreover, the ever-increasing structural unreliability of traditional Mass Media in the media encourages internet users to turn to social media as they have the potential to move beyond the boundaries of the traditional media monologue and turn it into a wider political dialogue While offering interactivity.

Last, an important conclusion from this survey would be the fact that today citizens feel safe to express themselves and form their views freely through Social Media. Therefore, politicians should under no circumstances underestimate the use of social media. On the contrary, politicians should use these instruments, as a useful marketing tool and voter approach.

**Limitations**

Although this work has led us to useful and meaningful results some restrictions which should be mentioned, have been missed.

More specifically:

Geographical and time constraints.

The method of electronically sending a questionnaire resulted in low sample response with regard to the use of interviewers. In our quest to have the research Pan-Hellenic scope, the questionnaire was also created in electronic form and shared through email and social media networking. This method usually has a lower acceptance rate compared to the use of interviewers. Time constraint and lack of financial resources did not allow us to rapprochement with people who refused to answer and there was generally no ability to reach people from other many with As a result, our sample has geographical constraints.

As for the portion of the sample that responded electronically, it is disadvantage that there is no direct
contact with the interviewer to provide clarification where needed. In present research has attempted to limit these problems offering the possibility of communicating the participants with the research team group to provide explanations. However, by processing the reply it seemed that some questions, which were not completely understood by some individuals in the sample.

The subject of research has many implications (social, psychological). The effort to cover the whole spectrum of the object and especially adding psychological questions, would lead us to

Creating a questionnaire too large in size, usually inhibitory factor for the participation of the sample. This has resulted the lack of possibility to export significant results.

At last, another limitation of the study was an essential question that although we first included on the questionnaire it finally did not appear when we sent the questionnaires. The question were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why are you using social media? (You can choose more than one option)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To find information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To play games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make business contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be in touch with family / friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make new friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To see other views / opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To share music / videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn about news (social / political)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question would be the first one after a participant answered “yes” to the question if he/she uses social media. The answers would help us to categorise the users you use social media for entertainment from those who use them in order to learn news social or political.
Future research

The scope of social media in general and their impact on political behavior in particular, is a new subject of study with many extensions. The positive of this research is that the result emerged issues or views that should be studied in the immediate future.

Initially, it is proposed to carry out a wider geographic survey at Pan-Hellenic range. A possible later study could include examining psychographic features (way of life, characteristics Personality) of the participants in order to carry out some extra results.

In addition, another possible later study could include the relationship between the degree of impact on the users by social media and contrary to the impact on the user by traditional media. We have mentioned this question on our study but we have not focused on this a lot. Which traditional media have the greater influence on the user’s behavior and why? How much have this situation changed the past 10 years?

Another proposal for future research is the comparison of a user of social media and a citizen that has no account on any social networking. This would lead us to a result about how voters behave and think before and after using social media. This research could be combined with a comparison between the degree of impact on users behavior by the media social networking and the influence of other media as well as marketing actions generally.

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*Pew Research Center : The Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan American “fact tank”, which is based in Washington, D.C. It provides information on social issues, public opinion, and demographic trends shaping the United States and the world. It also conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis, and other empirical social science research. Pew Research Center does not take explicit policy positions, and is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts

*Cookies: Cookies are small text files that are stored in our browser while browsing the web. Their purpose is to alert the site they visit to their previous activity. They typically describe our details as a user name and password for the purpose of visiting the same site later on, remembering us so we do not need to login.
1. Choose your gender
   - Male
   - Female

2. Choose your date of birth (mm / dd / yyyy)

3. Choose your engagement
   - Student
   - Employee
   - Both
   - None

4. What is your education?
   - High school
   - College
   - Higher education

5. City / Country

6. Are you a member of a Social Networking Site?
   - Yes
   - No

7. Choose why you do not belong to any social networking
   - I do not know what a social network is
   - I'm not interested in joining the social network
   - I participated in the past but I did not like it
   - It is against my culture
   - I do not feel safe with my personal data

8. How many social network site do you use?
   - 1-10
   - 11-20
   - 21-50
   - Over 50
9. Please select all social networks in which you have created personal profiles (You can choose more than one)
   - Facebook
   - Twitter
   - Youtube
   - Pinterest
   - Instagram
   - Windows Live
   - Hi5
   - Friendster

10. How long have you been using Social Media?
    - Less than a month
    - 1-6 months
    - 7 months to 1 year
    - Over a year
    - Over 5 years

11. Approximately how much time do you spend the day on social media?
    - Less than 1 hour per day
    - 1-5 hours per day
    - 6-12 hours per day
    - 12-24 hours per day

12. How many contacts / friends you have in Social media
    - Less than 10
    - 10-50
    - 51-100
    - 100-500
    - 500-1000
    - More than 1000

13. How often do you participate in political discussions?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Medium
    - Often
    - Always

14. How often do you post about political content?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Medium
    - Often
    - Always

15. Do you follow politicians in social media?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Medium
    - Often
    - Always
16. Do you think that social media has influenced your view of specific political figures?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

17. To what extent do you think that the use of social networking tools can generally affect political developments in the country?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

18. To what extent do you think that the use of social media tools can mobilize you personally to engage in political and social actions?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

19. Do you think that social media have influenced the election of a party?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

20. Do you consider the political content published in social media more reliable than that of television and radio?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

21. Do you think social media can replace newspaper & TV in social and political news?
   - Not at all
   - Little
   - Medium
   - Very
   - Very much

22. Do you believe that social media publications can affect one’s political point of view?
23. How do you feel when you see a lot of political content in social media?
   - Disturbed as social media is for entertainment and not for political news
   - Indifferent. I do not participate in political discussions but I do not mind to see them
   - Pleasant. I like to see / participate in political discussions in social media
   - Wonderful. It's the only reason I'm taking part in Social Media

24. With regard to politics, would you like to have the choice to vote through social media?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Indifferent

25. If so, would you prefer your vote to be
   - Open vote
   - Hidden vote
   - Indifferent

26. Would you see the parliament through social media live?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Often
   - Always

27. Do you participate in political polls through social media?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Often
   - Always

28. Would you watch the election process through Social Media?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Often
   - Always

29. I think I could
   - Explain my political views openly, even in opposite political contexts
   - Make sure that the political representatives that I voted honor their commitments to the electorate
   - To maintain personal relationships with representatives of political organizations or governmental authorities
To play a decisive role in choosing the leaders of the political movements I belong to or where I am close
To play a decisive role in choosing the leaders of the political movements I belong to or where I am close
I actively promote the election of political candidates whom I trust
To promote (or contribute positively to) effective information and mobilization actions in my community (work, friends, family) to support political projects that I believe
To collect a significant amount of money to support my party's actions
Use the tools I have as a citizen to control the actions of the political representatives

30. We would like to say how often you show the following behaviors
- Participate in political demonstrations
- Be in touch with members of parliament or municipal representatives
- To boycott products for political, ethical or environmental reasons
- Donate money to a political organization or party
- To actively promote the election of political representatives
- Engage in political or social discussions
- Purchase products for political, ethical or environmental reasons
- Distribute political leaflets
- To help with organized political events
- Sign in text that collects signatures for a purpose (social or political)
- Be related to political representatives

31. How important are your political beliefs for you?
- Not at all
- Very little
- Little
- Medium
- A lot
- Very
- Very much

32. How committed are you to your political ideology?
- Not at all
- Very little
- Little
- Medium
- A lot
- Very
- Very much
33. How interesting do you look for political things?
   - Not at all
   - Very little
   - Little
   - Medium
   - A lot
   - Very
   - Very much

34. To what extent would you describe yourself politically active?
   - Not at all
   - Very little
   - Little
   - Medium
   - A lot
   - Very
   - Very much

35. In the following scale you would position yourself in relation to your political ideas and your general perceptions?
   - Extreme Left
   - Left
   - Left Center
   - Center
   - Right Center
   - Right
   - Extreme Right

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE