Mobilizing for Some: The Effects of Politicians' Participatory Facebook Posts on Young People's Political Efficacy

# Details

## Year

2016

## DOI

10.1027/1864-1105/a000199

## Issued

2016

## Language

English

## Volume

28

## Issue

3

## Start Page

## End Page

## Authors

Heiss R.;Matthes J.

## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Journal of Media Psychology

## Publisher

Hogrefe Publishing Group

## Topics

* Learning
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Content-related issues
* Digital and socio-cultural environment
* Researching children online: methodology and ethics

## Sample

N = 125 high school students (15–20 years)

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Awareness for the needs of the younger generation

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

Abstract. This study investigated the effects of politicians’ nonparticipatory and participatory Facebook posts on young people’s political efficacy – a key determinant of political participation. We employed an experimental design, using a sample of N = 125 high school students (15–20 years). Participants either saw a Facebook profile with no posts (control condition), nonparticipatory posts, or participatory posts. While nonparticipatory posts did not affect participants’ political efficacy, participatory posts exerted distinct effects. For those high in trait evaluations of the politician presented in the stimulus material or low in political cynicism, we found significant positive effects on external and collective efficacy. By contrast, for those low in trait evaluations or high in cynicism, we found significant negative effects on external and collective efficacy. We did not find any effects on internal efficacy. The importance of content-specific factors and individual predispositions in assessing the influence of social media use on participation is discussed.

# Outcome

"This study has revealed how politicians’ participatoryFacebook posts affect young people’s political efficacy.We find a significant positive effect on external and collective efficacy for those low in political cynicism and for those who evaluated the politician positively. We expected the effect of participatory posts for those high in cynicism or low in trait evaluations to be either less strong or not existing. Surprisingly, our results indicate a negative effect of participatory posts for those with high levels of cynicism and negative trait evaluations." (Heiss/Matthes, 2016, 129)