

Youth, Politics, and Cyberspace: The Impact of Virtual Spaces on Partisan Tendencies and Political Attitudes in 1990s-born Iranians

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The reference to Castells is well-placed, but the quote “narratives of outrage and hope” would benefit from brief contextualization—what are examples of these narratives among Iranian youth?

The use of Gil de Zúñiga and Diehl is appropriate, but the authors could expand on how “deliberative political discussions” are structured or encouraged in Iranian virtual spaces.

The variable “Gender” has mean and SD values, but this is conceptually ambiguous—gender is a nominal variable. Clarify what scale or coding system was used and whether reporting means for gender is statistically meaningful.

The skewness and kurtosis values are briefly reported, but the interpretation (“roughly normal distribution”) needs justification using acceptable thresholds (e.g., ± 1 for skewness/kurtosis).

Same as above—what are the groups in the ANOVA? What defines high vs. low virtual space usage, and how was this categorized?

The conclusion “digital environments...shape the political behavior of a digitally native generation” is strong but could be enhanced by referencing specific mechanisms—e.g., peer influence, content virality, or influencer impact.

It’s excellent that self-report bias is acknowledged. However, the authors should also mention the lack of behavioral (non-self-reported) data, which limits the interpretation of actual political engagement.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The authors state that cyberspace “enables new forms of identity performance and political mobilization,” but do not define or exemplify “identity performance.” A brief elaboration would strengthen clarity.

The sentence “Rahbarqazi and Nourbakhsh...with youth being the most active demographic” could be improved by quantifying “most active”—what percentage or relative difference?

The discussion of algorithmic bias and commodification is insightful. However, it would be useful to briefly link these issues to Iranian-specific platforms or restrictions (e.g., domestic versions of Instagram or Twitter).

Mentioning both SPSS and Excel is redundant unless the specific purpose of each is detailed. Specify which tests were conducted in each program.

The sentence “...virtual platforms significantly affect political engagement...” needs nuance. Does this refer to all youth uniformly, or are there subgroup differences by gender, education, or urban/rural background?

The mention of “foreign-controlled platforms” is compelling. Consider suggesting how this affects digital sovereignty or youth trust in political discourse.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.