

**Perception of Online Polls, Information Literacy, Political Efficacy and
Online Polls Participation in Mainland China**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the degree of participation in online polls and its relationships to the perception of online polls, information literacy, and the political efficacy of Internet users in mainland China. Data were gathered from a sample of 419 Internet users aged 15 and higher. Results show that perceptions of online polls (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness) were positively correlated to participation in online polls but not to information literacy or political efficacy. Hypothesized relationships between information literacy and political efficacy and online polls participation were partially supported. Contrary to expected, political efficacy was found not to be related to online polls participation. However, regression results suggest that Internet users who often participated in online polls are usually male, literate in publishing, and believing that online polls are effective and trustworthy means to express opinions on public issues. Limitations and implications for future studies are discussed.

Word count: 151

Key words: China; information literacy; Internet user; online poll participation; perception of online polls; political efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Since September 20, 1987, with the first Email "*Across the Great Wall, we can reach every corner in the world*" sent from China, Internet has significantly infiltrated every area in China. According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) (2011), the number of netizens in China has reached 457 million in December 2010. Meanwhile, in a white paper "*The Internet in China*" published by the Chinese government, it was reported that over 80% of China's netizens regard the Internet as the main daily news source and admitted that the Internet played a unique role in the reporting of important news events and fully satisfying people's need for information (State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 2010).

Because of its interactive property, Internet is now widely utilized in citizen journalism to promote the voices from audiences, especially from the grassroots. One of the commonly used methods for audiences to express views is online polls. According to a content analysis of 100 online newspaper websites in the U.S., Schultz (1999) found that 24 out of 100 conducted online polls. Nowadays in China, the editors and even the users of many news websites, BBS, and social networking platforms can also launch online polls on all kinds of subjects. However, the online polls discussed in this paper referred only to those public affairs polls related to political, economics, and social issues.

Many websites, especially those well-known portal websites in China, often post online polls for important news topics in public affairs. As scientific public opinion polls in China are not commonly conducted, these online polls have been becoming an important way for Internet users to express their opinions and participate in community affairs. To some extent,

the results of online polls are often regarded as public opinions and often quoted by journalists in their stories. For example, a popular online news website Xinmin.cn (新民网) reported that, according to their online polls, 91% of the netizens approved that drunk driving should be a criminal offense.¹

In view of this increasingly popular trend, it is necessary to find out Internet user's perceptions of online polls in China and the factors influencing Internet users' participation in online polls. With these findings, we will be able to have a better understanding and assessment of online polls and voting behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online Polls Participation

Partaking in online polls is a way of political participation and civic engagement for Internet users. However, online voting was also criticized for its lack of reliability and validity. The initiator of an online poll and the stakeholders are able to manipulate the poll results easily. After examining the implementation of online poll and the traditional news media's reports on online polls, Wu and Weaver (1997) summed up the problems that are commonly recognized with online polls. They included: 1) manipulation; 2) shaping the results by stuffing the ballot box or inclusion of repeat submission; 3) class bias; 4) bias of selection in cooperation; and 5) bias of participation-nonparticipation. Schultz (1999) found that multiple votes were possible on many online polls in newspaper websites in the U.S. and identified only two quick polls out of the 100 used a disclaimer explaining that the poll was

¹沈小栋.(February 27, 2011). 逾九成网民支持将醉驾、飙车入罪. Xinmin Website. Retrieved February 27, 2011, From <http://news.xinmin.cn/t/xmsz/2011/02/27/9510565.html>

unscientific.

Some organizations even used unscientific poll results to mislead public opinion.

Mercuri (2002) pointed out the risks of electronic voting system including: poor accountability, poor reliability, and greater opportunity for widespread fraud. The Xinhua News Agency (2011) has reported that there are illegal agencies which help their customers to vote and get the poll results they expect in China. According to this report, some fraudulent online marketing companies claimed that they could help their clients to control the results of online polls by hiring groups of people to vote, or manipulating the data by voting robot or insiders. The cheating company even hired hackers to falsify the data from online poll directly. Despite countless anecdotal evidences reported in the press that online polls are unscientific, internet users are still partaking in it for different motivations. This study attempts to find out the factors that may shed light on the reasons why internet users are still participating in online polls.

Davis (1989)'s Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) indicated that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were significantly correlated with the user acceptance of new technology, and usefulness had a significant greater correlation with usage behavior than did ease of use. Carter and Bélanger (2005) found that trustworthiness, which was composed of two constructs, namely trust of the Internet and trust of state government, was also significant predictor of citizens' intention to use an e-government service. A recent study by Schaupp and Carter (2005) found that user perceptions of usefulness and trust significantly impacted their intention to use an electronic-voting system, but perceived ease of use had no direct affection on e-voting adoption. Therefore, it is logical to expect that:

H₁: The more Internet users perceive online polls positively (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness), the more they will participate in online polls in China.

Information Literacy

The American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy published a final report in 1989, stating that an information literate person “must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (Presidential Committee on Information Literacy: Final Report, 1989). Shapiro and Hughes (1996) emphasized that information literacy should be extended to “critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure, and its social, cultural, and even philosophical context and impact” and proposed seven dimensions of information literacy including: (1) Tool Literacy which refers to properly use the tools of current information technology; (2) Resource Literacy means to understand the form, format, location and access methods of information resources; (3) Social-structural literacy indicates the understanding of information production and flows into the life of groups; (4) Research Literacy reflects the ability to use information technology tools to conduct research; (5) Publishing Literacy is the ability to format and publish by an proper medium with tools such as Internet; (6) Emerging Literacy means the ability to continually embrace emerging innovations in information technology; and (7) Critical Literacy refers to the awareness and ability to be critically evaluate the information technology from the historical, philosophical, sociopolitical, and cultural perspective.

With the development of information technology, the information environment keeps

changing. An information literate person should be able to adapt to changing information environment. Lloyd (2006) regarded information literate people as those “who have a deep awareness, connection, and fluency with the information environment. They are engaged, enabled, enriched, and embodied by social, procedural, and physical information”. With this logic, it is reasonable to imply that an information literate person would be critical to online polls and not rely on it to understand the public opinions as online polls are generally lack of reliability and validity, thus, its effectiveness in assessing public opinions should be questioned. The other is that an information literate person is able to publish or express their ideas by other information technologies, in particular social media such as blogs, microblogs, and SNS. This would result in a lower participation degree on online polls for information literate people. Hence, we expect that:

H_{2a}: The more information literate Internet users are, the more they will report a negative perception (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness) of online polls in China.

H_{2b}: The more information literate Internet users are, the less they will participate in online polls in China.

Political Efficacy

Political efficacy refers to an individual’s feeling of effectiveness within a political system.

Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954) first defined political efficacy as ‘the feeling that an individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process’ (p.

187). Following Lane’s (1959) two-component interpretation of political efficacy, Balch (1974) conceptualized and testified political efficacy as a two-dimensional construct including

internal efficacy, referring to an individual's belief in his or her own competence to impact politics effectively, and external efficacy, referring to the degree to which individuals believe that the government represent them and reflect their needs and concerns.

Political efficacy plays a role in the political communication and media usage. Wei and Leung (1998) studied the role of the mass media in political socialization in China and Taiwan, and found that the amount of attention paid to the media correlated strongly with political efficacy. By analyzing the data of Taiwan's 2004 Social Change Survey, Wang (2007) also found that political use of the Internet promotes political interest and feelings of trust and efficacy, and makes an individual more likely to participate in campaigns and politics.

As the Internet is a catalyst for making the Chinese government more open, transparent, and accountable (Zheng, 2007), the authorities also regard it as a "dash board" of the public opinions. Sometimes they even adapt their policy on certain event according to the public opinions on the Internet (Li, 2004; Tang, 2009). In a survey in Zhejiang Province in China, Wan and Zhang (2010) found that the degree of voting participation was higher in rural areas than in urban areas. This is because under the villager self-administration system, the villagers in rural area are able to elect their leaders in the village directly. This study seeks to expand previous research by addressing three more hypotheses and a research question:

H_{3a}: Internet users with higher political efficacy will report a more positive perception (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness) of online polls.

H_{3b}: The more information literate Internet users are, the more they will report a higher political efficacy.

H_{3c}: Internet users with higher political efficacy will participate in online polls more often in

China .

RQ: To what degree can demographics, perception of online polls, information literacy, and political efficacy predict online polls participation?

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection

Data were gathered from a sample of 484 Internet users in mainland China using a convenient sampling method. Of the 484 completed questionnaires, 65 were screened out for the following reasons including: being a repeated submission, an uncompleted questionnaires, chose significantly different answers to two similar questions which were used to filter the malicious respondents, finished the questionnaire within 120 seconds, or those who claimed they go online less than once a week which means that they are not regular Internet users. These filtering mechanisms resulted in a total of 419 valid samples.

The valid samples consisted of 57.3 percent male and 6.9 percent were in the age range of 15-20, 36.8 percent were in 21-25, 35.6 percent were in 26 -30, 15.8 percent were in 31-35, 3.1 percent were in 36-40, and less than 2 percent were in the age range of 41 or higher. Of the 419 respondents, 31.5 percent had no income, while 9.5 percent were in the income range of US\$472 and below, 27.6 percent in the income range of US\$473–1,420, 21.3 percent in US\$1,421—2,366, 3.6 percent in US\$2,367—3,312, 2.4 percent in US\$3,313 or above; and 9.6 percent refused to report their income. In terms of education, 0.2 percent of the respondents were at elementary school level or below, 2.6 percent were at high school level, 11% were at junior college level, 61.8% were at bachelor degree level, and

24.3% were at master degree level or above.

Measures

Information literacy. To assess the different dimensions of information literacy as proposed by Shapiro and Hughes (1996), an inventory of 15 items were adopted in this exploratory study. Similar to a study conducted by Leung and Lee (2011), some items were modified and two new items were added because of differences in cultural backgrounds. Respondents were asked to indicate ‘To what degree does your opinion match with the following descriptions?’ on a 5-point Likert scale with ‘1’ = not very confident and ‘5’ = very confident.

Table 1 shows the factor analysis of the 15 statements which yielded a five-factor information literacy structure including publishing literacy, critical literacy, emerging technology literacy, social-structural literacy, and tool literacy. Two other dimensions, namely research literacy and resource literacy, were not considered as they are not directly related to this research. The reliability alphas were high for all factors ranging from .79 to .86.

(* Insert Table 1 about Here *)

Political efficacy. In assessing political efficacy, measurement adopted by Wei and Leung (1998) in a survey conducted in both China and Taiwan was employed in this study.

Respondents were asked to respond to two statements on external political efficacy: “I don’t think public officials care much about what people like me think” and “People like me don’t have any say about what the government does”, and one other statement on internal political efficacy: “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person

like me can't really understand what's going on." Measurement was based on a 5-point scale with 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree' (efficacious) to the statements. The statement "Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things," used in Wei and Leung's (1998) study, was deleted because it is not applicable to China's political ecology. Reliability analysis of the composite political efficacy measure using these three items was acceptable at .71.

Perception of online poll. To assess perception of online polls, five statements to indicate respondents' attitudes toward online polls were used including: "Online poll on public affairs is an effective way to express my opinion," "Online poll is a primary way for me to express my opinion on public affairs," "Online poll on public affairs is reliable and trustworthy," "The result of online poll on public affairs can represent the public opinion of our society," and "The government cares the result of online poll on public affairs and often refers to it in the formulation of public policy process." Respondents were asked "To what degree do you agree with the statements below?" using a 5-point scale with 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree.' As shown in Table 2, exploratory factor analysis yielded two factors. Effectiveness (eigenvalue=2.15, variance explained=53.8, alpha=.66) consisted of two items indicating that online polls are usefulness, effective, and a primary way to express ideas on public affairs. Trustworthiness (eigenvalue=.83, variance explained=20.83, alpha=.65) is the second factor comprised of two items reflecting that online polls are reliable, representative, and trustworthy of public opinions. The item on "influence of online polls on government" was dropped due to low commonality which failed to load into any factor.

(* Insert Table 2 about Here *)

Degree of participation in online polls. At the start, respondents were informed that the online polls in the questionnaire referred only to those polls related to public affairs associated with political, economic, and social issues. Respondents were asked to indicate “How often do you participate in online polls on public affairs issues in the last six months?” using a 5-point scale with ‘1’ = never and ‘5’ = very often.

Demographics. Personal data such as gender, age, education, and monthly personal income were recorded.

RESULTS

Online Polls Participation

Although online polls are still popular in many Chinese news websites, BBS, and social networking platforms, results from this exploratory study indicated that most Internet users in China are not active participants in online polls especially when the polls are related to public affairs issues. In fact, only 5% scored “very often” or “often” (with $M=2.3$ and $sd=.77$) when answering the question “How often do you participate in online polls on public affairs in the last six months?” This indicates that online polls may not be as popular as expected if it is on serious topics. Some factors may have inhibited Internet users to express their views through online polls. For some, participating in online polls may mean a game and may prefer not to express through these entertainment-oriented polls. However, despite still under a tightly controlled traditional media system, China is undergoing a period of transition from a totalitarian state to reform and openness. At the same time, the Internet is

rapidly becoming an important channel for expressing opinions especially in user-generated content using social media in the Web 2.0 era (Leung, 2009). It is against this backdrop that this study explored the factors, such as perceptions of online polls, information literacy, and political efficacy, which may have significant impacts on online polls participations.

Hypothesis Testing

Results in Table 3 shows that the degree of participation in online polls was significantly and positively related to the perceived effectiveness ($r = .41, p < .001$) and trustworthiness of online polls ($r = .25, p < .001$). Thus, H_1 was fully supported.

H_{2a} proposed that the more information literate Internet users will perceive more negatively (both in terms of effectiveness and trustworthiness) of online polls in China. Bivariate relationships in Table 3 between the five dimensions of information literacy and the two perceptions of online polls were not significant. Thus, H_{2a} was not supported. These results suggest that those who self-reported that they are information literate had no uniform opinion on whether online polls are effective, useful, or credible. H_{2b} predicted that the more information literate Internet users are, the less they will participate in online polls in China. Contrarily to what was hypothesized, Pearson correlations in Table 3 show that publishing literacy ($r = .20, p < .001$), emerging technology literacy ($r = .13, p < .01$), and social-structural literacy ($r = .13, p < .01$) were significantly and positively related to online polls participation. Such results suggest that those who are technically competent in publishing content on the Internet, understanding the social significance of information and how they are socially situated and produced, the more they are active in expressing their

views in online polls. Therefore, H_{2b} was rejected.

H_{3a} hypothesized that Internet users with higher political efficacy will report a more positive perception (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness) of online polls. However, no significant relations were found. Thus, H_{3a} was not supported. H_{3b} proposed that the more information literate Internet users are, the more they will report a higher political efficacy. Both critical literacy ($r = .10, p < .05$) and social-structural literacy ($r = .16, p < .001$) were significantly related to political efficacy. This suggests that information literate Internet users are capable of comparing and evaluating critically whether the information is authentic, accurate, timely, and reliable which in turn may lead them to be more politically efficacious. Therefore, H_{3b} received partial support. H_{3c} hypothesized that Internet users with higher political efficacy will participate in online polls more often in China. No significant relationship was found. Therefore, H_{3c} was not supported.

(* Insert Table 3 about Here *)

Predicting the degree of participation in online poll

A regression analysis was conducted to examine how demographics, perception of online polls, information literacy, and political efficacy can predict online polls participation. Results in Table 4 indicate that gender ($\beta = .12, p < .05$), perceived effectiveness ($\beta = .37, p < .001$), trustworthiness ($\beta = .10, p < .05$), and publishing literacy ($\beta = .13, p < .001$) significantly predicted online polls participation. This suggests that being male and literate in publishing Internet users who believe in the effectiveness and trustworthiness of online polls and regard online polls as the main channel to express opinions on public affairs would

participate more in online polls on public affairs topics.

(* Insert Table 4 about Here *)

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Perception of online polls and information literacy

This study set out to empirically examine the degree of participation in online polls and its relationships to the perception of online polls, information literacy, and political efficacy of Internet users in mainland China. Contrary to our expectation, no significant relationships between any dimensions of information literacy and the two dimensions of perception of online polls (i.e., usefulness and trustworthiness) were found. It is logical to expect that information literate Internet users would be quick to recognize the shortcomings of online polls and develop negative perceptions. However, results indicate that many of the self-reported information literate Internet users in mainland China may not have realized the limitations of online polls in reliability and representativeness. Given the situation that information flow is still not unimpeded and the training in information literacy is much less emphasized in the educational system in China as compared to the West, Internet users may not have developed highly sensitive information literacy skills to recognize online polls are unscientific and should not be regarded as a reliable channel to express opinions. In fact, despite the means on each item of information literacy scale was above 3.0, respondents may have over-stated their information literacy skills in the sample.

Perception of online polls and political efficacy

Although it was our expectation that the higher an Internet user's political efficacy is, the more positive they would perceive that online polls are reliable and trustworthy, no significant correlations between perception of online polls and political efficacy was found. This suggests that Internet users with high political efficacy may think that they are able to impact the government in real life, but their perception of online polls are quite different in its ability to influence government policy or the political climate via online polls. In other words, the limitations of online polls such as being unscientific and unrepresentative may have cautioned them not to trust online polls beyond the level of being an entertainment platform. Furthermore, for people with high political efficacy, they would believe that there are many other offline and online channels to influence the political process. Online polls may not be the only channel to express ideas on public affairs.

Participation in online polls

As expected, perceptions of online polls (both in effectiveness and trustworthiness) were positively correlated with online polls participation. Such results are in line with Davis (1989)'s Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that usefulness and effectiveness of technologies are key determinants for usage behavior. The results also support previous research by Carter and Bélanger (2005) and by Schaupp and Carter (2005) that trustworthiness significantly predicted citizens' intention to use an e-government service. Thus, building a positive image in future implementation of online polls by media organizations or portal sites is a monumental challenge if website operators want to promote the perception that online polls can be scientific, unbiased, and trustworthy.

It is interesting to note that, contrary to what was hypothesized, the more information literate Internet users are, the more, instead of less, they will participate in online polls. In particular, as shown in the bivariate relationships, being literate in publishing, emerging technology, and social-structural skills (i.e., ability to evaluate the social significance of information) were those who would participate in online polls more. It is easy to understand that Internet users who are technologically literate and good at publishing information electronically in multimedia form, and create contents in BBS, blogs, twitters, and SNS websites for different audiences would be frequent online poll participants. In other words, as they are active and competent users of Internet, they would participate more. However, being social-structurally literate were also active users of online polls is a surprised finding. This may be explained that scientific public opinion polls are not commonly conducted in China. Only in recent years that online polls have been becoming popular and an important alternative way for Internet users to express their opinions and participate in community affairs. So the logics of scientific method, probability theory, and random sampling are not in the vocabulary of most Internet users even if they are social-structurally and technologically literate with the latest development in new information technologies. This seems logical as these people possess the technical know-how and have higher computer competence and internet efficacy. However, at the same time, they don't have the critical or social-structural literacy skills to evaluate if online polls are scientific, effective, and trustworthy.

All together, as indicated in the multiple regression analysis that those who participate in online polls are usually male, have a positive perception of online polls being effective

and trustworthy, and are very literate in publishing contents on the Internet. All other information literacy skills such as critical, emerging technology, social-structural, and tool literacy failed to predict the degree of participation. One possible explanation may be that online poll is not a complex technology and it is easy to use as an online tool, so the tool literacy and emerging technology literacy would not have significantly impacted participation. This further illustrates that, until a strategy to correct the negative perception for online polls is found, better education in information literacy is needed, especially in critical and social-structural literacy skills in polling methods, so that users can decide wisely whether to participate in online polls.

Also contrary to expected, political efficacy was not found significantly related to online polls participation. This may be explained with the earlier finding that Internet users with higher political efficacy did not have a significantly positive perception (in effectiveness and trustworthiness) with online polls and considering it as a primary way to express their opinions on public affairs. Without such an important perception, it is logical to see that individuals with high political efficacy may not actively engage in online polls.

What's more is that it is interesting to find partial support that politically efficacious individuals are also information literate individuals especially in critical and social-structural literacy. One possible explanation is that information literate Internet users may have greater opportunities to be exposed to information of different political philosophies; able to critically evaluate whether information is authentic, accurate, and reliable; understand the social significance of information received; and know how information is socially situated and produced with different political backgrounds. As a result, they may be better

cultivated and have a greater confidence to impact politics and perhaps believing to some degree that the government will represent them and reflect their needs and concerns. It is also important to point out that only critical and social-structural dimensions of information literacy were significantly linked to political efficacy. This indicates that technological know-how to publish and to navigate the Internet are not important factors associated with political efficacy, but being able to think critically and evaluate the authenticity of information are.

LIMITATIONS & SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Convenience sample was sure a limitation for this study, as it would be more generalizable and vigorous if it employed a probability sample. Another limitation may be the measurement of information literacy which relied on self-reports, as information literacy is a set of objective standards rather than a subjective assessment. Meanwhile, with different social backgrounds, technology application, and life scenario, the denotation of information literacy would be different. Lloyd (2010) emphasized that information literacy is a context-dependent practice. So it is necessary to explore and find out how to measure different dimensions of the information literacy accurately according to different socio-cultural backgrounds and application context in future studies.

Furthermore, the online polls on some important or sensitive public affairs topics are sometimes not encouraged but restricted by the authorities in mainland China. In this situation, all variables discussed in this study would definitely not be able to predict the degree of participation in online polls. The impact of government's policy was not specifically

discussed in this study but it should not be ignored as an important variable to the degree of online polls participation.

The Internet is changing the political landscape in China, but it is also fragile and being filtered and restricted by the political system. The political ecology in China is different from western countries which may have different impacts on online behavior. In real life, the voting behavior between noncompetitive plebiscitary elections and semi-competitive elections is fundamentally various (Shi, 1999), and the different ecology would definitely impact the online behavior. Therefore, the online civic engagement is complex and dynamically changing in mainland China, and it is necessary to keep on tracking the changing impacts of all predicting variables as some of them may become significant while others may not.

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Table 1. Factor Analysis of Information Literacy

To what degree does your opinion match with the following descriptions?	Mean	SD	Factors				
			1	2	3	4	5
Publishing Literacy (Factor mean = 3.53)							
1. Format and publish ideas electronically in multimedia form	3.31	1.09	.86				
2. Create contents in BBS, blogs, micro blogs, and SNS websites for different audiences	3.43	1.14	.82				
3. Format and publish ideas electronically in textual form	3.84	1.03	.82				
Critical Literacy (Factor mean = 3.66)							
4. Compare and evaluate critically whether the information is timely and appropriate	3.73	.73		.83			
5. Judge critically whether information is authentic, accurate, and reliability	3.71	.77		.82			
6. Distinguish the true messages in a sea of message	3.55	.78		.77			
Emerging Technology Literacy (Factor mean = 3.24)							
7. Aware of the latest product development in new information technologies	3.25	1.01			.85		
8. Be able to decide wisely when to adopt the latest product development in new information technologies	3.25	.91			.84		
9. Be able to decide wisely when to adopt the continually emerging innovations in information technology	3.21	1.03			.67		
Social-structural Literacy (Factor mean = 3.45)							
10. Understand how information is socially situated	3.37	.91				.86	
11. Be able to evaluate the social significance of information	3.46	.80				.80	
12. Understand how information is socially produced	3.53	.81				.62	
Too Literacy (Factor mean = 3.76)							
13. Find the needed information in an online database or search engine in time	3.91	.77					.84
14. Recognize the needed information sources in time	3.82	.81					.84
15. Locate information in multiple sources and decide the type of resources needed to yield useful information for a particular need	3.55	.89					.67
Eigenvalue			6.10	1.73	1.34	1.16	.95
Variance explained			40.68	11.53	9.05	7.73	6.33
Cronbach's alpha			.86	.82	.83	.81	.79

Notes: Scale used: 1= totally not match and 5= totally match; N=419

Table 2. Factor Analysis of Perception of Online Polls

To what degree do you agree with the statements below?	Mean	SD	Factors	
			1	2
Effectiveness				
1. Online poll is an effective way for me to express my opinion on the public events.	3.57	.97	.85	
2. Online poll is the primary way for me to express my opinion on the public events.	3.06	1.08	.83	
Trustworthiness				
3. The results of online polls represent the public opinion of our society	2.80	1.02		.89
4. Online poll on public events is trustworthy and reliable.	2.73	.89		.78
Eigenvalue			2.15	.83
Variance explained			53.80	20.83
Cronbach's alpha			.66	.65

Scale used: 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'; N=419

Table 3. Pearson Correlations among Key Variables

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<u>Perception of Online Polls</u>								
1. Effectiveness	.44***	.07	-.08	.04	-.01	-.04	-.05	.41***
2. Trustworthiness		.00	-.06	.03	-.03	-.02	-.08	.25***
<u>Information Literacy</u>								
3. Publishing literacy			.30***	.50***	.46***	.39***	-.01	.20***
4. Critical literacy				.38***	.52***	.47***	.10*	.07
5. Emerging technology literacy					.51***	.42***	.03	.13**
6. Social structure literacy						.41***	.16***	.13**
7. Tool literacy							.02	.09
<u>Political Efficacy</u>								
8. Political efficacy								.04
<u>Online Poll Participation</u>								
9. Frequency of participation								

Notes: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; N= 419

Table 4. Regression Analysis of Demographics, Perception of Online Polls, Information Literacy, and Political Efficacy as Predictors of Online Poll Participation

Predictors	Online Poll Participation
	β
Demographics	
Gender (Male=1)	.12*
Age	.05
Education	.06
Income	-.05
Perception of online polls	
Effectiveness	.37***
Trustworthiness	.10*
Information Literacy	
Publishing literacy	.13***
Critical Literacy	.04
Emerging technology Literacy	.04
Social-structural literacy	.05
Tool literacy	.05
Political Efficacy	
Political efficacy	.06
R^2	.24
Adjusted R^2	.21
F	9.50***

Notes: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; N= 419