

Social Media and the Online Political Engagement of Immigrants: The Case of the Vietnamese Diaspora in Poland

An Nguyễn Hữu* 

This study investigates the political engagement of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland on social media. It employs the typology of online political participation as a theoretical framework to determine the pattern of online involvement in the political sphere staged by the migrant group. Through analysing materials relating to political discussions created daily on an online community of the Polish Vietnamese, collected by doing netnography, this study shows that the political activism on social media of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland exists and varies. Vietnamese-migrant users discuss homeland politics and express views about political issues in the host country as well as other countries by creating non-mobilising posts (Information and Diffusion), while being inclined to produce posts with calls for action (Instruction and Promotion) to criticise social injustice and mobilise equality. This study also found a growing critical attitude towards homeland politics among Vietnamese-origin individuals in the country. The findings have practical implications for associations and state actors in both the host and home countries to account for the evolvement of the migrant community.

Keywords: Vietnamese immigrants, Vietnamese diaspora, Poland, online political participation, diaspora politics, social media and migration

Introduction

The involvement of immigrants in political affairs is by no means a new phenomenon. However, online political participation, as developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017), is considered as an emerging form of immigrant political practice. It is attributed to the recent considerable growth and development of the Internet and other communication technologies, especially the emergence of new social media. Previous studies show that online public spheres on social media lower costs and foster immigrants' engagement in politics by facilitating accessibility, enhancing efficacy by its interactivity, enabling quick and effective reactions towards important political events, furthering the transmission of political messages to the recipients and stimulating political

* Hue University of Sciences, Hue University, Vietnam. Address for correspondence: nguyenhuuan@hueuni.edu.vn.

© The Author(s) 2022. Open Access. This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

mobilisation (Chadwick 2006; Earl and Kimport 2011; Tang and Lee 2013). Social media facilitate immigrants' political expression (Bernal 2010; Brinkerhoff 2009), inciting them to discuss political issues, helping to put pressure on political leaders and calling for social justice and equality in their country of origin (Trandafoiu 2013). Additionally, social media provide the potential for immigrants' transnational political practices through informing political developments in both original as well as receiving countries and other areas, helping immigrants to encounter ideas and narratives that allow them to understand the political process in greater depth, enabling immigrants to form new online centres and supporting them in establishing new political alliances and solidarities (Siapera and Veikou 2013).

Recent studies also point out that immigrants' political participation on social media contributes to the formation of digital diasporas, wherein there exists a tendency towards negotiation to reconstruct ethnic and political identities (Al-Rawi 2019). The Uyghur, for example, endeavour to reformulate Uyghur diasporic identity through daily posts expressing their identities on Facebook sites (NurMuhammad, Horst, Papoutsaki and Dodson 2016). Immigrants disagree with each other over the imagination of homeland, national and transnational political ideologies in online communities to recreate political identities (Georgiou and Silverstone 2007). Online communication also is used as a means by which immigrants express their political dissidence against homeland regimes (Bernal 2006; Mandaville 2001) while, at the same time, dissidents abroad attempt to create connections with regime opponents at home in order to 'coordinate resistance, publicize atrocities, and counter-propaganda and censorship' (Moss 2018: 276).

The Vietnamese diaspora in Poland is the biggest community originating from Asia, with a population estimated at around 25,000–30,000, with both regular and irregular status (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2016). This migrant community first marked its presence in Poland in the 1950s as a result of the 'socialist fraternity' project of which the aim was that the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites would assist their 'younger brothers' during the Cold War era (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019: 21). After the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, inflows of Vietnamese migrants have continued to arrive in Poland, constituting a crowded and diverse community. As a mirror of their homeland, discussing politics is also regarded as a 'sensitive issue' by most Polish-Vietnamese people (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2019). Therefore, it is understandable that most studies by Polish scholars look at the social, cultural and economic aspects of the Vietnamese community in Poland (see Głowacka-Grajper 2006; Grabowska and Szymanska-Matusiewicz 2022; Grzymała-Kazłowska 2015; Huu 2021; Klorek and Szulecka 2013; Nowicka 2014, 2015; Pokojska 2017; Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2015, 2016), while the political life of this migrant group has been rarely addressed in previous analyses. That is not to say that the political practice of Vietnamese-origin immigrants in Poland does not exist. Far from it, there has been growing visibility of political activities within the framework of a democratic system staged by the Vietnamese in the country (see Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2019, 2021). Social media have played a crucial role in mobilising and facilitating the political participation of this migrant group (see Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). I therefore argue that the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland provides an interesting example when investigating migrant online political engagement. While politics is regarded as a 'taboo subject' among the majority of Polish Vietnamese, social media offer favourable settings for the political re-socialisation of this migrant group.

In this study, I research the online political engagement of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland by investigating the pattern of their political participation on social media. I further seek to explore and interpret those political issues that Vietnamese immigrants are concerned about in their online engagement. Theoretically, I employ the typology of political participation online proposed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) as a theoretical framework to identify forms of online political engagement staged by the Vietnamese. Furthermore, I apply content analysis to examine the political interest underlying the discussion of politics through political

messages online circulated by Vietnamese immigrants. Materials for this study are individual posts that I collected through netnography on an online forum of the Vietnamese community purposively selected for this research. As a domain of ethnographic studies, performing netnography should meet the standard of ethics in this qualitative study. The issue which I found the most challenging was the provision of confidentiality for the online community being researched. It should be acknowledged that the political issue which is the focus of this study is widely regarded as a 'sensitive' topic by the Vietnamese (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). Thus, exposing the type of social media and the name of the online community targeted in this research might potentially cause harm to the community and its members. Consequently, I decided to anonymise any information serving to identify the online group. This study thus aims to shed light on the political activism of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, making a significant contribution to the literature on Vietnamese diaspora politics.

This paper is organised as follows. On the basis of past studies, the next section, by systematically reviewing the evolution of the concept of political participation, develops a theoretical framework that clarifies political participation and the typology of online political engagement with reference to the work of Segesten and Bossetta (2017). It then moves on to a short discussion about the Vietnamese diaspora as a case study for this research. A justification of the data and methodology used appears in the fourth section. The fifth section presents the results of this study, after which the paper is closed with the discussion and conclusion.

The concept of political participation and forms of political participation online: A theoretical framework

The concept of political participation has extensively evolved since its introduction to political sciences. A classic definition was proposed by Verba and Nie (1972: 2), who regarded political participation as 'those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take'. This definition has been the subject of controversial debates and is considered too narrow because the 'political outcomes' assumed in the definition are decided by 'governmental personnel' (Teorell, Torcal and Montero 2007: 335). Verba and his colleagues (1978: 47) also admitted that not only political elites but also private and civil-society actors could determine the authoritative allocation of values for society. More recently, Brady (1999: 737) offered a wider view of political participation by referring to 'an action by ordinary citizens directed toward influencing some political outcomes'. This conceptualisation was adopted and developed further by Teorell and his colleagues (2007), whose definition of the term is seen as the most comprehensive to date, viewing political participation as actions by ordinary citizens who more or less intend to influence political outcomes in society (Ekman and Amnå 2012: 287; Teorell *et al.* 2007: 336).

In their classic study, Verba and Nie (1972) identify four dimensions of the typology of political participation: voting, campaign activity, contacting public officials and cooperative or communal activities (forms of engagement that focus on issues in the local community). A more extensive typology of political participation suggested by Teorell and his colleagues (2007) entails five components: electoral participation, consumer participation, party activity, protest activity and contacting organisations, politicians or civil servants. Ekman and Amnå (2012) argue that forms of political participation, as developed in Verba and Nie's (1972) study or in a recent suggestion by Teorell *et al.* (2007) are not optimal. Those established typologies mainly focus on concrete political actions but ignore latent forms which are regarded as 'pre-political' or on 'stand-by' (Ekman and Amnå 2012: 287). These authors point out that latent forms are acts by citizens that may not be directly observed as concrete activities and that this type of engagement could be significant for future political activities of a more conventional type. Ekman and Amnå (2012) clarify two forms of political participation in which individuals can be involved. The first is *civic participation* (latent political participation) which encompasses involvement (a personal interest in politics and societal issues and attentiveness to political issues) and *civic*

engagement (activities based on a personal interest in and attention to politics and societal issues such as discussing politics and following political news). The second form is labelled as manifest political participation – which comprises formal political participation and activism (extra-parliamentary participation). Formal political participation includes electoral participation and contact activities, while activism is determined in terms of legality. Legal activism refers to extra-parliamentary forms of participation – to make one’s voice heard or to make a difference by individual means (e.g. signing petitions, political consumption) – and illegal activism is related to politically motivated unlawful acts on an individual basis.

The notion of a latent part of political participation developed by Ekman and Amnå (2012) is of great significance for understanding political activities online because it taps into the way of information-seeking and communication relating to politics in social media which, in turn, can affect political outcomes (Segesten and Bossetta 2017). Drawing on the typology proposed by Ekman and Amnå (2012), Segesten and Bossetta (2017: 1627) argue that political participation should be in the form of continuity from latent to manifest participation, as ‘a process whereby citizens’ latent activities become manifest, concrete political actions aimed at influencing political outcomes’. According to the authors, the process involves three phases, comprising latent and manifest parts and a transition stage connecting the two parts, termed as ‘mobilisation’. Mobilisation refers to attempts made by individuals to incite political action and is operationalised as political calls for action – which are instructions to ‘do something’ expressed linguistically as an imperative verb.

In this study, I adopt the definition developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017), viewing political participation as a process experiencing latent to manifest forms through the mobilisation phase. This way of conceptualising political participation is particularly relevant to this research because it allows the way in which individuals engage in politics on social networking sites to be taken into account, especially the online social-media platform on which this study focuses. More specifically, it adequately accounts for the practice whereby individuals (users) can only engage in latent activities or execute mobilisation since the researched platform does not support manifest participation essentially. In this regard, Verba and Nie’s classical views and Brady’s recent perspective on political participation fail to capture the way that individuals become involved in the political sphere on social media because they focus exclusively on concrete actions when defining political participation. In addition, it is acknowledged that Ekman and Amnå (2012) have made a significant contribution to the field by distinguishing between latent and manifest political activities, opening up for consideration unobserved activities which can potentially impact on political outcomes. However, they make no attempt to pave the way for observing the possibilities provided by social media with respect to individuals’ political participation. As a result, the significance of latent political participation on social media, which causes concrete forms of engagement in politics and leads to political outcomes, is overlooked. In this sense, constructing the mobilisation phase in conceptualising political participation as a process is crucial. Not only does it help to account meaningfully for the continuity between the latent and the manifest parts but it also makes it possible to capture the important influence of online political participation on political outcomes.

Despite viewing political participation as a continuous process connecting latent and manifest phases through the mobilisation stage, this study refrains from approaching the process as linear. Segesten and Bossetta (2017) acknowledged that a mobilising call could be incited during manifest political actions such as protests which, in turn, can be transformed into latent participation. Moreover, excepting the manifest phase, which exclusively takes place offline, the latent activities and mobilising calls can be enacted both online and off. For example, individuals can read political news in print newspapers or on social media and make mobilising calls on online forums or by canvassing other people.

In their study of the typology of political participation on Twitter and by focusing on latent participation and mobilisation, Segesten and Bossetta (2017) propose a typology of citizens’ political participation online

based on the notion of citizen-driven mobilisation through social media. The typology comprises four dimensions: Information, Diffusion, Promotion and Instruction. On the one hand, Information is similar to Instruction because both denote the creation of original new content. In this regard, these two forms are different from Diffusion and Promotion, in which new content is not user-generated but shared. On the other hand, while Information implies content without a call for action – which is analogous to Promotion – Diffusion and Instruction are made with a mobilising call. The construction of the typology is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Typology of political participation online proposed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017)

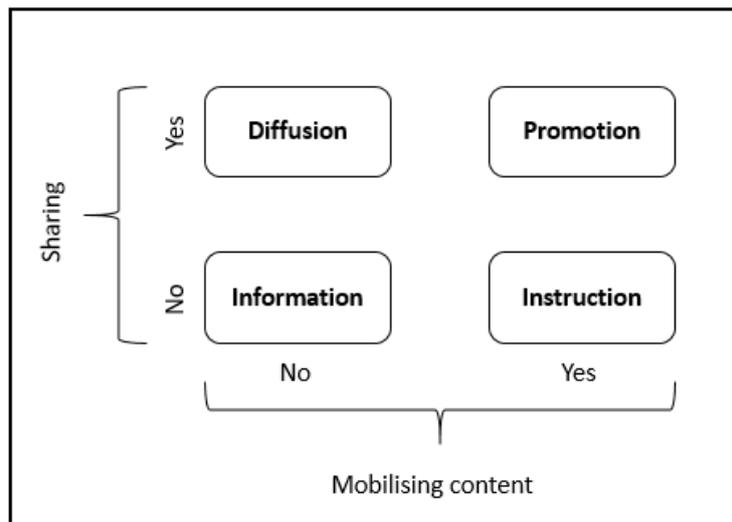


Figure 1 shows a matrix of the relationship between four distinct but related dimensions that constitute a typology of political participation online. The matrix is drawn on horizontal and vertical distinctions. The horizontal distinction is between latent participation – which is the creation and circulation of information about politics without mobilisation (left side) – and mobilisation, which is also the generating and spreading of information about politics with a call for action (right side). In turn, the vertical distinction is between the new creation of content (lower half) and a share of pre-existing content (upper half). According to Segesten and Bossetta (2017), creating and sharing calls for action are two distinct but interlinked activities. While the creation of a call for action is seen as a fundamental condition for manifest political actions, sharing can maximise the possibility of the emergence of manifest political actions originating from the creation of mobilisation.

In this study, I employ the typology developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) to investigate the pattern of online political participation of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland. The reason for applying the model is justified as follows. First, despite being initially developed for exploring online political participation on Twitter, this typology can be applied to several social media platforms, including the one that this study targeted, owing to the focus on sharing. On this platform, a user can participate by making a new post with political content, be it either originally creating a post or sharing the post of the others. Second, as pointed out by Segesten and Bossetta, previously proposed typologies only focus on a single category of social actors (Golbeck, Grimes and Rogers 2010; Jackson and Lilleker 2011; Saxton, Niyirora, Guo and Waters 2015), only take into account one dimension of political participation or fail to identify whether the content is user-generated or shared. This typology is advanced when accounting for the patterns of individuals' political behaviour on social media because it is suitable for a wide range of categories of social actors and can capture different forms of political participation owing to its multidimensional construction.

Recently, Bossetta and his colleagues (2017) also developed a typology of online involvement in politics with four degrees of engagement, including *making* (the act of creating new political content), *commenting* (the act of responding directly to pre-existing content), *diffusing* (the act of liking or sharing content) and *listening* (the act of reading or watching political content without leaving any visible traces on social media). On the one hand, this typology seems to be more sophisticated than the four-dimensional one developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) in the sense that it allows for the observation of activities enacted by lower-level users by developing the form of *commenting* and considering the passive form by formulating *listening*, while the latter does not. On the other hand, Bossetta *et al.*'s (2017) typology fails to account for the connection between online political participation as the latent phase to the manifest stage due to ignoring developing online forms that capture mobilising calls. As I discuss in the methods section, due to the unique feature of the data of this study, which are merely individual posts generated by first-level users, the dataset is not composed of comments left by lower-level users. Therefore, Segesten's and Bossetta's (2017) typology of online political participation is more appropriate to this study than that developed by Bossetta and his colleagues (2017) not only in terms of harmonising the way that political participation is conceptualised but also fittingly accommodating our empirical data.

The Vietnamese diaspora in Poland: a case study of immigrants' online political engagement

As members of the Vietnamese diaspora globally, the Vietnamese have a long history of living in Poland, with the first presence in the country dating back to the 1950s. The Vietnamese migrant flows have continued to take place since then and have experienced four phases in which their migrant orientation has gradually changed to an economic one (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2016). They now form the third-largest legal migrant group in Poland, with more than 12,000 people holding valid documents (Central Statistical Office 2020). It is also the most crowded community originating from Asia, with a population estimated at around 25,000–30,000, with both regular and irregular status (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2016). After nearly seven decades of presence in Poland, the Vietnamese community has turned into a permanent settlement and changed itself to adapt to Polish society.

Unlike its counterpart in the United States, the origin of which can be traced back to flows of communist refugees after the fall of Saigon in Vietnam in 1975 and after which it constituted a stateless community in the country, the Vietnamese community in Poland – documented as a state-linked diaspora (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2016, 2017) – originated from the 'socialist fraternity' project. The aim was for the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites to assist their 'younger brothers' during the Cold War era (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). The nature of the state-linked community of the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland is illustrated by strategies and efforts implemented by the Vietnamese socialist state to control the community through various activities organised by 'official' Vietnamese associations in the country, leading to the interweaving of social and cultural activities of the Vietnamese in Poland with politics (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). A striking characteristic in the political life of the community is that Vietnamese immigrants in Poland are more likely to avoid directly discussing politics because they find the issue very sensitive to debate (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2019) – a phenomenon is allegedly attributed to the experience of totalitarianism under the communist era in the country of origin.

Nevertheless, it is argued that the term 'state-linked diaspora' is not entirely adequate to describe the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland. Vietnamese-origin individuals or groups have engaged in existing forms of political participation in the framework of a democratic system, such as mobilising democracy or protesting, which are different from traditional forms taking place within official Vietnamese associations closely aligned with the Vietnamese state (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). Social media have been found to play a crucial role in

mobilising and facilitating political participation. This was strikingly demonstrated, for example, in two anti-China demonstrations which took place in June 2014 and July 2015 to oppose China's policy concerning sovereignty over archipelagos on the South China Sea. The plans and organising of the protests had been intensively discussed on forums on social media created by Vietnamese users (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). Information concerning the time, the place and the way to organise the protests were widely and quickly diffused by community representatives through such online groups and who also made great efforts to incite the practical engagement of Vietnamese people in these political events. Of the two protests, the first, held in June 2014 in front of the Chinese embassy in Warsaw, surprised the public and social media in Poland because it attracted the participation of around 3,000–4,000 people (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2019). Recently, a similar event occurred in an online group where a small number of Vietnamese people called on all Vietnamese immigrants in Poland to engage in protests against the Chinese-communist government and to support the Hong Kong freedom and democracy movement in Warsaw in 2019.

Online spaces on social media are of great significance for Vietnamese immigrants who have long been mired in the politics of totalitarianism, greatly helping to facilitate their political participation. Social media allows them more space to seek and circulate political information, enabling them to freely formulate and share political views and engage in transnationally political issues, thanks to the nature of transgression of the spatial constraints of virtual spaces. The Vietnamese diaspora in Poland is thus deemed suitable for the study of migrants' online political participation.

Data and Methods

This study is a part of the project 'Political Engagement of Diaspora in the Era of Global Interconnectedness. The Vietnamese Migrant Community in Poland and its Transnational Political Connections'.¹ It employs the netnography-based approach (Kozinets 2019), using data collected in an online forum (community) created by the Vietnamese in Poland. The selection of the online forum as a research site for this study is based on the theoretical and practical guidance of the purposive sampling method. The online group appears to be one of the largest communities online created to connect Vietnamese migrants in Poland, where their political engagement is particularly visible. This online community meets the conditions of a single object of study in terms of both its uniqueness and its similarity to other online forums of the Vietnamese in Poland, hence its selection as a case study (Stake 1995). On the one hand, it is unique compared to the other groups in that, as shown in its goals, it is intentionally created to help Vietnamese immigrants to broaden their knowledge, to understand as well as exercise their human rights and also to encourage the diaspora to actively engage in social and political affairs. On the other hand, regarding commonality, it is similar to other online communities which were set up to bring together Vietnamese people in the country. Furthermore, selecting the online forum also satisfies other criteria of purposive sampling. Practically, this online community is visible for everyone to access (accessibility), gets daily postings by members (frequency of updates) and has become well-known by Vietnamese immigrants in Poland (popularity) (NurMuhammad *et al.* 2016).

Performing netnography is connected with two fundamental ethical challenges, which Kozinets (2002) addressed: the privacy of the online site (private or public) and the acquisition of informed consent. While the publicity of the privacy of the online forum makes the free access and data collection on the forum justifiable (Kozinets 2019), this study faces another ethical issue regarding the guarantee of confidentiality to the research group. This ethical challenge results from a notable characteristic of the Vietnamese, whereby politics is viewed as a 'taboo subject'. As documented in the literature, a majority of Vietnamese are reluctant to engage in politics because they regard political participation as risky (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2021). Taking this issue into consideration, I contend that exposing the type of social media and the name of the online forum

targeted in this research might potentially cause harm to the community and its members. Consequently, I decided to anonymise any information serving to identify them.

The dataset of this study was created through a collection of post materials, conducted from early November 2018 to April 2019. These are posts related to political topics such as dissident activism, general issues connected with political systems, discussions about democracy, authoritarianism, communism and diasporic political activism. Because the research project of which the data employed in this study collected individual posts generated only by first-level users, comments left by lower-level users were not gathered. While I acknowledge that this fact could contribute to the overlooking of mobilising calls by such lower-level users, which could further spur the formation of concrete political participation as an indirect result of posts created with calls for action, this unique feature of our empirical data fits nicely into the typology of online political participation employed as the theoretical framework here. As discussed in the previous section, the typology is primarily formulated to accommodate content generated by first-level users rather than lower-level ones. The data were then organised and sorted by date of collection. To each post was added information about the user's name, the origin of the post (original or shared) and the post's content. However, I cannot add details about the participants whose posts I quote later in this paper for privacy and ethical reasons.

In this study, the unit of analysis is individual posts, which were examined by applying the content analysis method. As shown in Table 1, the qualitative content analysis was carried out via two tasks. The first aimed to classify the typology of online political engagement based on the four dimensions proposed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) – Information, Diffusion, Promotion and Instruction. As discussed by the authors, both Information and Diffusion are recognised as creating posts with content concerning political issues without a call for action. Information is the creation of posts consisting of original texts made by users or introducing content from another source (for example, quotes or links from external sites), whereas Diffusion is the sharing of original posts without a call for action. The other dimensions – Instruction and Promotion – are the creation of posts with a call for action. While Instruction is originally created by users, Promotion is generated by shares. Drawing on this theoretical implication, the content analysis identifying the typology of political participation online was conducted as follows. Original content is coded as Instruction if the post carries a call for action, which is exposed through using imperative verbs such as 'sign this petition' or 'share this information'. If an original post is created without a call for action, be it an original text made by a user or an introduction to content from another source (for example, quotes or links from external sites), it is labelled as Information. A post is coded as Diffusion if it shares an original post without a mobilising call. Finally, if a post is created by sharing an original post with a call for action, it is coded as Promotion.

The second task is to identify emergent themes conveyed in political discussions by the users in the online community. For this task, I applied inductive content analysis to abstract the political issues conveyed through political posts, which are inherently unstructured qualitative data created by the group members. As guided by Thomas (2006), I condensed extensive and varied raw text into a summary format, connecting the research objective of examining the discussed political issues to findings from the raw data and then framing the political topics evident in the raw data. By employing this approach, I was initially familiar with and coded the raw data from the collection of posts related to political topics, as mentioned earlier. I then created categories by overlapping the codes. I then proceeded to reduce the overlap and redundancy categories to create emergent themes. By referring to previous studies investigating political topics or messages delivered online by immigrants (Bernal 2006, 2010; Georgiou and Silverstone 2007; Mandaville 2001; Trandafoiu 2013), political themes which interested the Vietnamese online community were identified as those involving discussions on homeland politics, mobilisation for social justice and equality and debates on international politics. All quotes that illustrate these themes in the next section have been translated into English by the author.

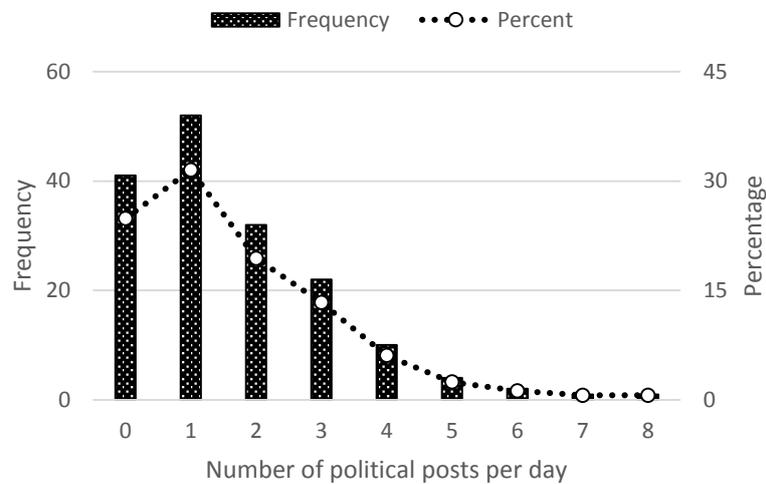
Table 1. Coding scheme

Task 1 – Classifying the typology of online political engagement			
Content	Examples	Original content	Shared content
Without calls for action		Information	Diffusion
With calls for action	Sign this petition	Instruction	Promotion
Task 2 – Identifying emergent themes			
Specific categories		Emergent themes	
Criticism of the homeland political system			
Pressures on political elites in the homeland			
Criticism of the degradation in Vietnamese society			
Criticism of illegal acts by the Vietnamese			
Encouraging the Vietnamese in respect for the law			
Encouraging the Vietnamese in civic engagement			
		Discussion and mobilisation for social justice and equality	
Discussing politics outside the homeland			
			Discussion on international politics

Empirical findings

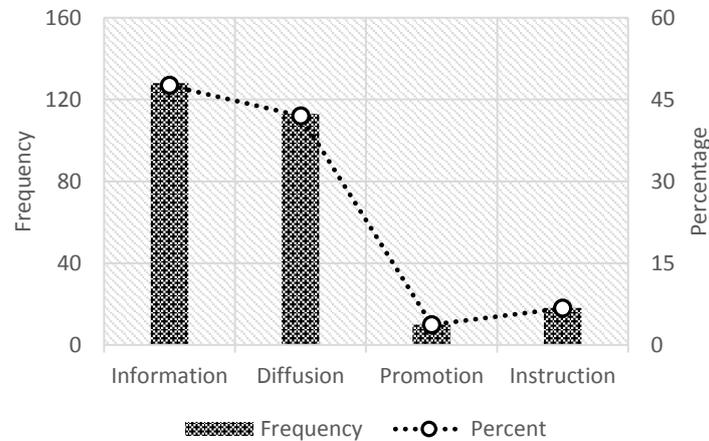
Forms and patterns of political participation online of Vietnamese-migrant users

Statistically, 269 posts, made by 65 users, were related to political issues during the period of data collection (165 days). On average, nearly two political posts were generated daily. The maximum number of posts created per day is 8 and the minimum, zero. As explicitly portrayed in Figure 2, users created no political posts in 41 days, accounting for 24.8 per cent. Of those days when political posts were produced, the number of days having only one post is highest at 52 (31.5 per cent), followed by 32 days with two posts, corresponding to 19.4 per cent. The number falls to 22 days (13.3 per cent) for those with three political posts and drops considerably to 10 days (6.1 per cent) for those when four were generated. There were very few days in which the users made more than four political posts in the online community (five political posts in four days and six political posts in two). There was only one day in which users produced seven posts containing political messages and also one day for eight political posts. This finding, while preliminary, implies that the online political participation of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland exists. Though the engagement is staged moderately, the online political involvement demonstrates that this migrant group is interested in politics, even though political issues are considered sensitive in the majority of Polish-Vietnamese people's view.

Figure 2. The frequency of creating political posts per day among users

As other social media operate, the researched platform helps Vietnamese migrants to easily engage in discussions of transnational political issues. Vietnamese-migrant users show a high degree of interest in homeland politics, with 62.1 per cent of the posts referring to political affairs in the country of origin – Vietnam. The migrant group also pays attention to the political sphere of the receiving country when about one-third of the posts (33.5 per cent) were created to touch on politics in Poland. In addition, this finding shows that the Vietnamese in Poland are also concerned about political affairs in other places when less than one-tenth of the created posts (7.8 per cent) discussed politics in countries which, to a certain extent, are closely connected to Vietnam, such as the United States, China, Great Britain, Venezuela and North Korea.

Forms of online political participation by Vietnamese-migrant users are summarised in Figure 3. A majority was created without calling for action, in which informative posts are the most popular, accounting for 47.6 per cent. This is followed by Diffusion posts, making up around 42 per cent and discussing political issues. Forms of calling for action were not prevalently made by Vietnamese migrants. Only 6.8 per cent of Instruction and 3.7 per cent of Promotion posts were created to instruct original calls for action or share political mobilisation from original posts. My finding indicates that both original and shared posts seem to be equally liked by the users, though the proportion of original posts is a little higher than those being shared. On the whole, Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community did not often initiate political calls on political participation. Instead, the online community tended to deliver political messages in non-mobilising forms of informative and diffusive posts.

Figure 3. Forms of political participation online engaged by users

Through conducting content analysis, three main topics were found to be at the centre of political discussions of the online community, namely that on homeland politics, on discussion and mobilisation for social justice and equality and discussion on politics outside the homeland. While the former two are related to either homeland politics or issues concerning the Vietnamese, the latter focuses on political affairs outside the country of origin. As mentioned in the data and methods section, the discussion on homeland politics involves critically debating the homeland political system, putting pressure on political elites and criticising the degradation in Vietnamese society. Discussing and mobilising social justice and equality involves criticising illegal acts committed by Vietnamese people and encouraging the Vietnamese to respect the law as well as to engage in civic activities. The last theme – discussion on politics outside the homeland – primarily touches on political events happening in the host country – Poland – and other countries, as mentioned above, such as the United States, China and North Korea. Table 2 further shows the distribution of themes conveyed through political posts created by Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community. Three-quarters of the posts were produced to reflect political issues related to the homeland or the Vietnamese. Of these, 104 posts – corresponding to 38.7 per cent – were linked to the discussion on homeland politics, while the number of posts for discussing and mobilising social justice and equality was a bit lower at 96 (35.7 per cent). For the third theme, the users created around a quarter of posts discussing political issues outside the homeland.

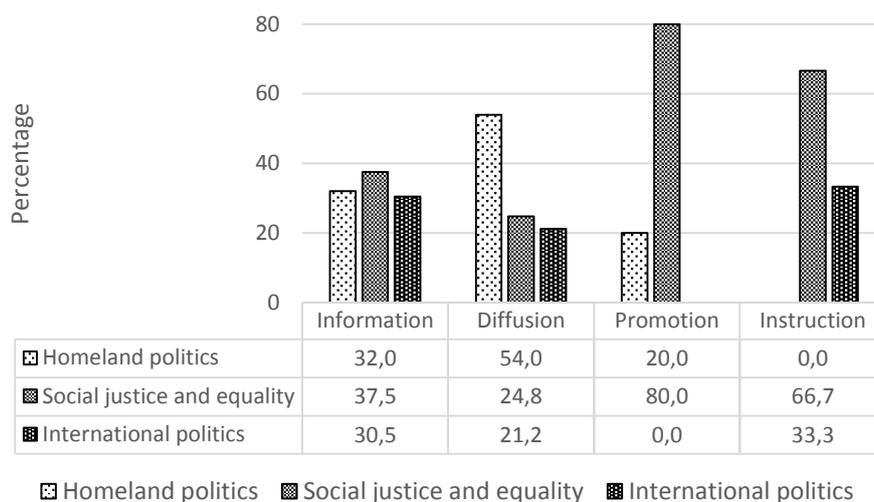
Table 2. Political themes of Vietnamese-migrant users' online participation

Themes	Frequent	Per cent
Discussion on homeland politics	104	38.7
Discussion on and mobilisation for social justice and equality	96	35.7
Discussion on politics outside the homeland	69	25.6
Total	269	100

Figure 4 provides a nuanced description of the relationship between forms of online participation and political themes among Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community. Interestingly, it is found that the way a post is created is closely connected with the political messages that it delivers. This association seems to be mainly manifested in the dimension of mobilising content. As explicitly illustrated in the figure, posts without mobilising calls (Information and Diffusion) were more prevalently produced than those with calls for action (Promotion and Instruction) to convey political messages regarding the homeland and international politics.

By contrast, posts with calls for action (Promotion and Instruction) were more often generated to discuss and mobilise social justice and equality instead of circulating information related to politics in the country of origin and outside the homeland. A chi-square test of independence showed that the association between forms of online participation and political themes is statistically significant, χ^2 (df= 6, N = 269) = 35.40, $p < 0.001$, meaning that this is a practical pattern of online political participation among Vietnamese-migrant users.

Figure 4. The cross-relationship between forms of online participation and political themes



In sum, these findings suggest that the online political participation of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, manifested through posting political messages on social media, differs in terms of its participatory form and political content. Although the Vietnamese-migrant users are more interested in politics in their home country than the political affairs in other places, there were also political posts generated to circulate and discuss political events happening in the host country as well as the countries that have a particular influence on their contemporary homeland. In addition, while the Vietnamese-migrant users employ all four forms of political participation online when carrying out their political practice, they tend to create informative and diffusive posts rather than to make the forms of Instruction and Promotion. A further interesting aspect of the findings lies in the pattern of online political participation among Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community, in which non-mobilising posts were produced to accommodate the discussion on homeland and international politics. On the other hand, posts with calls for action were generated mainly to circulate issues regarding mobilisation on social justice and equality.

Political issues in the online political participation of Vietnamese-migrant users

Thus far, I have provided descriptive analyses of the forms and patterns of online political participation staged by Vietnamese-migrant users. In this section, I discuss in more detail the political themes engaged in by the online community. As indicated in the previous section, the three main topics underlying political posts created by Vietnamese-migrant users include discussing politics in the homeland, discussing and mobilising social justice and equality and discussing politics outside the homeland.

Discussion on homeland politics. In discussing the Vietnamese diaspora's online political participation in Poland, it is worth referring to Brinkerhoff (2009), who pointed out that online migrant communities in the

United States appear to adopt the liberal values of the host country to justify their arguments and support their political positions. It is argued that the political landscape in Poland contributes towards shifting the political standpoint of the immigrants from which they can critique contemporary political ideology in Vietnam and relevant spheres.

It was observed in the online community that criticising communism and viewing the political ideology as a challenge for the development of the homeland takes the form of Information and Diffusion posts. For example, a number of posts recalled campaigns against capitalism in South Vietnam after the 1975 Vietnam War, which destroyed a thriving economy and triggered widespread poverty in the South and subsequently spread to the whole country. In another case, the humanitarian crisis after 30 April 1975 in which millions of Vietnamese people became refugees was also discussed as a result of the victory of communism in the Vietnam war.

Campaigns against the capitalist economy in the South of Vietnam were numbered by Hanoi with codes X1, X2, and X3. After these three attacks, the South's industry (in Saigon) was completely destroyed, giving up the position of the title of Asian dragon for Singapore, South Korea. The city [Saigon – ANH] has become an earthworm and never come back as before...²

Moral erosion, social degradation, massive corruption and other social and political problems are also discussed as being inherent on the contemporary political ideology imposed in the country. Several posts were created to put pressure on senior Vietnamese political leaders, using both ridicule and condemnation. For instance, several posts ridiculed a regulation prohibiting members of the ruling party in the country from criticising the party even if it does something wrong. Vietnamese-migrant users also strongly criticised senior leaders for their moral deterioration or bad treatment of local people. They continuously updated information about the arrest of two former senior generals in the police force who took part in illegal online gambling and shared links to newspaper articles about the subsequent court judgment. Another case relating to the moral deterioration of a state official who sexually abused a female child was also mentioned. Analogous to what happened in Vietnam, Diffusion posts condemned an illegal act that was seen as an abuse of power by a local authority in Ho Chi Minh City to acquire land against the rights of local people. Those posts implied that if the local authority was for the people, the leader would act differently to ensure their security and well-being.

Did General Vĩnh use this way to cheat?³ The Vietnamese should not dream of getting rich by engaging in this kind of illegal online gamble.⁴

A large number of the posts expressed the online community's dissatisfaction with the dysfunctional education system and the degradation of Buddhism in Vietnam. For example, by referring to violence in schools and university admission fraud in Vietnam, the education system in the country is regarded as malfunctioning with regard to what is happening in Vietnamese society. In addition, there were frequent Diffusion posts condemning a Buddhist pagoda and its leaders as frauds for propagating superstition.

The problem of school violence has been alarming society! However, nothing has been done for stopping it but lessons learned for the authority! Pity for [Vietnamese – ANH] children who were born without enough protection.⁵

The role of Vietnamese intellectuals in the development of Vietnam was of particular concern in online political discussions among Vietnamese-migrant users. Vietnamese intellectuals are expected to make a great contribution to the development of Vietnamese society by giving voice to criticism against social injustice and inequality or at least providing latent support for those who fight for social equality or social justice. However, in a number of posts, Vietnamese intellectuals were criticised for their lack of morality in ignoring serious social and political issues happening in the country, which are a threat to the nation.

Intellectuals are people who are highly educated and contribute their knowledge to life and society. So, for generations, people always respect such intellectuals. However, at present, people disappoint the Vietnamese intellectuals. They are qualified in terms of education but their moral and spiritual values are poor and frail...⁶

Summing up, in discussions on homeland politics, Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community disseminated their propositions against communism, seeing the political ideology as the main obstacle to Vietnam's development. They also put pressure on political leaders, criticising the severe degradation of Vietnam currently taking place in spheres such as education and religion. The users also expressed their concerns about the Vietnam government's cooperation with China. The following sub-section touches on Vietnamese-migrant users' discussions and mobilisation for social justice and equality, a notable topic attracting a large share of posts produced by the online community.

Discussion and Mobilisation for social justice and equality. When observing Romanian diasporas in Europe, Trandafoiu (2013) found that immigrants used social media to call for a broader frame of social justice and equality. While doing ethnography on the online forum, this phenomenon appeared in the online political discussions among Vietnamese-migrant users. Firstly, they produced Information and Diffusion posts to criticise the widespread and intensive status of corruption in Vietnam, which they view as inherent in contemporary politics in the country. These posts revealed that a number of projects in Vietnam are designed with over-inflated and unrealistic budgets, enabling corruption by senior officials. This growing corruption in Vietnam is viewed as a serious threat to the country.

The country would not be developed if these 'terrible rats' [implying corrupt officials – ANH] still existed⁷

or

This is the time of ruin, sabotage, and corruption, which makes Vietnam stay in set-back.⁸

In addition, illegal action taken by Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, Europe and elsewhere were also particularly addressed. Diffusion posts circulated about forbidden acts committed by Vietnamese immigrants in Japan, South Korea, Australia and Singapore, such as the extensive smuggling of cigarettes carried out by a group of Vietnamese in Poland. These acts were strongly condemned, resulting in the Vietnamese migrant community being perceived, internationally, as disreputable. Other Instruction and Promotion posts specifically warned against those Vietnamese who are illegally issuing VAT (Value Added Tax) receipts in Poland. This kind of unlawful act has been popular and many Vietnamese have been arrested as a result. Apart from being encouraged to stick to legal jobs, the Vietnamese community was also urged to respect the law when living in Poland. For example, it is indicated that a large number of Vietnamese people in Poland have become rich by smuggling for several years, something which has been taken for granted by many Vietnamese people. This type of smuggling has resulted from loopholes in Polish laws. However, the Polish government has now

issued tighter regulations; thus, smuggling will involve huge risks. As a result, several posts were created calling for greater awareness and emphasising obedience to the law as an essential principle for living in a democratic state like Poland. Instruction posts advised Vietnamese people to make a legal case if facing unjust administrative affairs or being racially discriminated against. This kind of discussion implies that, because Poland is a state of the rule of law, only a court can make final decisions regarding right or wrong. This practice is different from that which takes place in Vietnam, where not all law enforcement agencies entirely respect the law.

Under the increasing transparency of information and the increasing level of knowledge of our community, scams, cheats and robbery will lead to catastrophic failures. Even if you achieve something by unkind doing, your reputation will be lost. So think carefully before doing something that could harm people... No one can resist the development of society. We are the people who can make development faster or slower. It depends on us who are members of society. Learn to change! Changes will come sooner or later...⁹

As observed in the online community, the importance of civic engagement, in particular the role of citizens, was actively discussed. Some Information posts debated that social changes not only result from acts by people in power but are also due to the active engagement of ordinary people in public concerns. An individual can do nothing but a collective of people has huge power and can change anything. Diffusion posts circulated political activism fighting against social injustice, reflecting what happens in the country of origin. This kind of politics is highly attractive and strongly supported by users, who consider it a motive for the development of Vietnam. A striking case circulated and discussed in several posts is a social movement against BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) in Vietnam. BOT is a form of contract between a private company and the government, which aims to build a transport project (a section of a highway or a new highway bridge) – and later allows the company to operate a toll booth for a number of years to collect money from commuters to recover their investment (Tran 2019). The operation of several BOTs faces opposition from drivers and local people in Vietnam because the toll booths were wrongly situated to collect as much money as possible from people who did not use the service (road or bridges). Those BOTs are labelled ‘dirty BOTs’. The projects were criticised not only by Vietnamese in the home country but also by Vietnamese in Poland, notably the migrant users in the online community.

When people get indignant over something in society, people can adopt their rights to protest against unjustness according to international human rights conventions. Thus, when a citizen thinks that dirty BOTs are set up in a wrong way to unreasonably collect money from the people, he has the right to oppose wrongdoing...¹⁰

The movement against ‘dirty BOTs’ turns out to be a typical illustration of the theoretical approach viewing political participation as a process involving latent and manifest activities and the phase of mobilisation. Nevertheless, in this case, the process progressed in a reverse direction, from manifest to latent. The commencement of the movement happened offline with the congregation of hundreds of local people and drivers at several tollbooths in Vietnam to raise voices against the BOTs. Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community, after reading news regarding the movement, created several forms of post – Diffusion, Instruction and Promotion – to support activists who led the movement against dirty BOTs and were repressed by local authorities and armed forces.

Other Instruction and Promotion posts called for petitions to support activities against social injustice. These calls requested that the authorities take action for change. For example, one petition asked the Vietnam

National Assembly to amend the law to protect children and women when increasing cases of sexual abuse have been found in Vietnam. Other calls asked the Vietnamese public to give a voice against social injustice. For instance, some posts protested against the ignorance and indifference of senior leaders in Bac Ninh Province (in the North of Vietnam), where hundreds of pupils in a primary school developed taeniasis due to consuming contaminated pork.

*Because their very silence creates a society full of insecurity and ruthless lies.*¹¹

Political discussions outside the homeland. The Vietnamese-migrant users are not only interested in political issues in Vietnam but also engage in discussions of politics in Poland (the receiving country) and other third countries. They created Information posts to congratulate the country on National Independence Day and to thank Poland for being a great place of residence for generations of Vietnamese immigrants. Other Informative and Diffusion posts were created to update people on an important event in Polish politics related to the assassination of a mayor. These posts also expressed the love and anguish of people regarding the death of the mayor and called for Vietnamese immigrants to take this case as a lesson in cultivating tolerance as well as avoiding acts of racial, religious discrimination and political hostility; such acts will only incite hatred among people and be a threat to society. In other aspects, the users showed opposing views against policies issued by the governing party PiS (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość – Law and Justice) in Poland. They highlighted the demagogic policies that the PiS party is implementing in Poland to gain the support of the Polish people for the next election. The online community was also interested in cooperation between Poland and China, which was exposed in posts pointing to the precautions that Poland should take in relation to the Chinese government because China is considered as not completely trustworthy.

In addition to the demagogic expenditure that PiS is spending (which is supported by many people), the chairman of the PiS party has come up with a new game: spending the month 13 salary for retired people (who are active voters)...

In addition, the first child will also receive 500+... [500 PLN for each child – ANH]

*Therefore, everyone should not expect that the Polish government will reduce tax checks because they have to find all sources of money for the state budget...*¹²

China is the country receiving the most concerns from online discussions by Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community. The country has been the focus of condemnation for what the government of China has done to Vietnam. Several discussions in the forms of Information and Diffusion reminded Vietnamese people never to forget the Vietnamese–Sino War in 1979. The war is referred to by users as China’s invasion of Vietnam. Links to newspaper articles were shared to show the cruelties committed by China’s military forces in the war. The anti-China attitude was shown in Diffusion posts which confirmed that cooperating with China is not the only way to strengthen Vietnam. Users also criticised the many advantages that Vietnam gave China through economic projects. In addition, China was described as a threat to democracy for developing technology to control citizens. Some posts discussed the satisfaction of Chinese people toward the rapid growth of the economy as the main reason why most Chinese people do not fight for democracy in the country. The anti-China sentiment is also expressed through Diffusion posts which highlighted the boycotting of China by other countries. For example, one post shared a video showing Indian men burning China’s national flag and asking

for the eviction of the Chinese presence from the country. In particular, posts called for the recognition of the Lunar New Year as a New Year for several Asian countries, not just for China.

Vietnamese users also created Information or Diffusion posts regarding politics in other countries closely connected to Vietnam. For example, posts relating to the massive political crisis in Venezuela, a country having a political regime analogous to that in Vietnam, were continuously updated. In another case, the summit conference between the US and North Korea held in Vietnam was of particular interest to the online community. Notably, Russia has also appeared as a dictatorship country in discussions in the online community.

*Please take the liberty to call on the entire Polish community in particular and the European community in general. Please speak up and explain to those who do not know that the Lunar New Year is Asian, not Chinese.*¹³

Discussion

While Segesten and Bossetta (2017) developed the typology of online political participation to deal with the way that citizens used Twitter to mobilise during the 2015 British national elections, my study employed the typology to investigate online engagement in politics for a different actor and a different social media platform. This research examined the online political involvement of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland. In general, it was staged by the Vietnamese in Poland, manifested through political discussions underlying posts on social media and was attached to political practices occurring either in the homeland or other places (Postill and Pink 2012).

Unlike the findings of Segesten and Bossetta (2017) in which British citizens often made calls to mobilise in the election, this study found a modest share of posts with calls for action and a substantial number of non-mobilising posts generated by Vietnamese-migrant users in their daily online political participation instead. This pattern might lead to the conclusion that the migrant group's online political participation is the preferred way of engaging in latent forms, which can be further attributed to the reluctance to participate in politics among most Polish-Vietnamese people (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017). While the premise seems reasonable, a significant relationship between forms of online participation and political themes shown in the analysis provides an essential foundation for offering another possible and justifiable explanation for the Vietnamese-migrant users' pattern of online political participation. It was found that the users tend to employ non-mobilising calls to circulate messages regarding the homeland and international politics while being inclined to generate posts with calls for action to mobilise social justice and equality. This finding indicates that Vietnamese-migrant individuals' striking characteristics of a disinclination to get involved in politics, as addressed in earlier studies, might not be the only factor driving the pattern of online engagement of the migrant group. Instead, the reality of politics as another essential force should be acknowledged when justifying such a tendency among Vietnamese-migrant users. Indeed, it was observed that several mobilising posts were created in the online community during the movement against 'dirty BOTs'. In contrast, non-mobilising posts were extensively created during a time when no other significant events occurred in Vietnam or Poland, which could lead to them adopting a more 'instructive' or 'promotive' approach – rather than an 'informative' or 'diffusive' one. As such, the existence of a substantial number of tweets with mobilising calls in the study of Segesten and Bossetta (2017), which focused exclusively on a political event – a national election – is understandable.

Although our empirical data do not provide evidence to demonstrate the translation of mobilising calls into manifest participation, which was not observed either in Segesten's and Bossetta's work (2017), the results of this study support the theoretical perspective approaching political participation as a process. While our find-

ings reveal the connection between latent participation and manifest engagement and the appearance of mobilising calls in the case of the movement against ‘dirty BOTs’, this process occurred in a converse way. First, manifest activities (the congregation of local people and drivers at wrongly located tollbooths to voice against ‘dirty BOTs’) initiated the emergence of latent engagement (following news about the movement against ‘dirty BOTs’ in the homeland among Vietnamese-migrant users in the online community). The participation was then manifested with the generation of mobilising calls (posts calling to support the movement and protect activists leading the movement created by the users). This empirical evidence thus further validates the theoretical argument that political participation is not necessarily a linear process and that each phase (latent, mobilising, manifest) can happen on- and/or offline. Whereas latent engagement is conventionally seen to have less significance, this processual approach helps to more accurately disclose the important role of latent activities in incorporating mobilisation and concrete actions to ensure particular political engagement and achieve the desired political outcomes.

The findings of this study reflect those of Brinkerhoff (2009), who pointed out that online migrant communities in the United States adopt the liberal values of the host country to shift their political positions. In addition, this study uncovered similar evidence to that found in an earlier study by Trandafoiu (2013), who observed Romanian diasporas in Europe using social media to call for a broader frame of social justice and equality. By analysing political themes delivered by the online community, this study has revealed that Vietnamese-origin immigrants in Poland have become more critical towards the contemporary politics in the homeland and more active in mobilising social justice and equality. It is argued that this phenomenon reflects the change in the political standpoint of the migrant group as a result of their being socialised in the political landscape of Polish society. Thus, despite being a migrant group closely connected to the home country, critical attitudes towards contemporary homeland politics are prevalent among Vietnamese-origin individuals in Poland and are not only limited to activist groups who advocate for democracy in the homeland (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2021).

Although this study has found a relative prevalence of critical attitudes towards the contemporary politics of Vietnam prevalent in online discussions made by Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, political mobilisations against the state were not observed in public discourse in the online community. Consequently, this study did not find a tendency towards negotiation to reconstruct ethnic and political identities among the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland, as shown in previous research on other migrant groups (AlRawi 2019; NurMuhammad *et al.* 2016). This practice is a shared feature among the Vietnamese diasporas in Central and Eastern European countries – described as diasporic groups with a state-bound nature. The Vietnamese group in Poland, as documented in the literature, is a state-linked community. The close connection of the migrant group with the Vietnamese government has remained since its emergence in Polish society and has been facilitated primarily by Vietnamese associations in Poland. These collective actors play a vital role in imposing the influences of the state on the community through organising cultural and political activities in order to retain a strong image of the homeland in the life of Vietnamese-origin individuals (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2019). This typical characteristic makes them essentially different to their counterparts in the United States, especially highly political refugees, who display a high sense of disconnection from the contemporary Vietnamese state (Phan 2015).

Conclusion

With the growing usage of social networking sites for engaging in politics, especially among migrant actors, the question arises of whether and how online political participation is staged by Vietnamese-origin immigrants in Poland who identify politics as a sensitive issue (Szymańska-Matusiewicz 2017, 2019). This study took an

online forum – created by Vietnamese users on social media, one of the largest online communities of Vietnamese immigrants in the country – as a case study. Following up a typology of online political participation developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) to account for the case of the Vietnamese, this study found that online political engagement staged by Vietnamese-migrant users endures, indicating the interest in the political sphere among the Vietnamese in Polish society.

The participation also varied in the forms and themes of political messages delivered. Vietnamese-migrant users are involved in politics in the online community by producing a high share of non-mobilising posts compared to those with calls for action. In addition, the findings show that the Vietnamese tend to criticise contemporary politics in Vietnam and deliver political messages to mobilise social justice and equality. The criticism is exposed in various aspects: for example, they circulated information demonstrating the communist ideology as the main obstacle to the development of Vietnam and created posts to put pressure on political leaders, criticising the serious degradation of Vietnam's education system and moral erosion in Buddhism and condemning the negative cooperation with China. Vietnamese-migrant users mobilised social justice and equality by disseminating messages that condemn criminal acts, calling for the Vietnamese to respect the law and raising support for civic engagement.

Its application to the research platform and migrant actors in this study is of importance in examining the feasibility of the typology developed by Segesten and Bossetta (2017) for accommodating the online political participation of civic actors. While the typology serves at best in accounting for political messages generated in the form of posts, it cannot capture political messages circulated by lower-level users in the form of comments on a particular post. As a result, employing this typology might lead to overlooking political mobilisation conveyed through messages produced in the form of comments, which facilitate the possibility of transforming latent engagement into concrete actions. In this regard, modifying this typology to account for the political message left by lower-level users in the form of comments is necessary. Future research might deal with this limitation by referring to the typology proposed by Bossetta and his colleagues (2017), which is composed of four degrees of online political engagement, including Making, Commenting, Diffusing and Listening.

Likewise, future research can replicate the analysis of online political participation among the Vietnamese in Poland to deal with limitations inherent to the empirical data employed in this study. First, the data used in this research do not consist of non-political posts, which leads to a lack of information regarding the weight of political posts over all posts made by the users during the data collection. Consequently, the degree of Vietnamese-migrant users' online political participation that can be drawn out by looking at the proportion of political posts compared to non-political posts is not available. Besides and more importantly, the dataset was simply constructed by collecting posts created by the first-level users in the online forum. This means that an abundance of political messages in the form of comments left by several Vietnamese-migrant users who are not the owners of the collected posts was ignored. This shortcoming could lead to the neglect of political messages containing mobilising contents that could be possibly transformed into concrete actions, which are not delivered in the form of a political post.

Despite the limitations, by focusing on the online political participation of Vietnamese immigrants in Poland, this study makes a significant contribution to the extant literature on the Vietnamese diasporas in Poland and Central and Eastern European countries, which is plethoric in its cultural and economic aspects. It would be naïve to state that the Vietnamese diaspora in Poland is indifferent to politics. Their political activism does exist and varies. Social media have greatly facilitated the phenomenon by allowing them to freely and easily engage in transnational politics. In a general sense, it can be said that modern communication technologies (including Internet-mediated communication, such as social media) play a central role in shaping the political activity of immigrants. Taking this fact into account helps associations and state actors in both receiving and sending countries to formulate appropriate strategies and policies for social changes resulting from migrant

actors' political engagement and mobilisations. In the case of Vietnamese-origin immigrants in Poland, the sending country, Vietnam, needs to be familiarised with the growing evolution of the community. The adapting of the liberal values prevailing within the political landscape of Poland is more or less conducive to abandoning 'political nostalgia' among the Vietnamese – while the receiving country, Poland, should be aware of the political orientation of the community when it comes to multicultural democracy in the country.

Notes

¹ The original title of the project is in Polish: 'Polityczna aktywność diaspory w epoce globalnych współzależności. Społeczność migrancka Wietnamczyków z Polski i jej transnarodowe powiązania polityczne'. The project is funded by National Science Centre, Poland, number: 2017/25/B/HS6/01201.

² This is a Diffusion post. The quote is a caption constituting a part of the post. The rest of the content was shared from another informative post.

³ One of the two Vietnamese military generals in charge of cybersecurity who had been tried for committing illegal online gambling in Vietnam.

⁴ This is an Information post. The quote is the caption of the post. The post comprises the caption and an external link shared from another site.

⁵ This is an Information post. The quote is the caption of the post. The post comprises the caption and an external link shared from another site.

⁶ This is an Information post. The quote is a part of the original content of the post.

⁷ This is an Information post. The quote is the caption of the post. The post comprises the caption and an external link shared from another site.

⁸ This is an Information post. The quote is the caption of the post. The post comprises the caption and an external link shared from another site.

⁹ This is an Instruction post. The quote is a part of the original content of the post.

¹⁰ This is an Information post. The quote is a part of the original content of the post.

¹¹ This is a Promotion post. The quote is the caption of the post. The post consists of the caption and an external link shared from the other site. The external link presents a post of another address calling on everyone to protect children by circulating information about a former state official committing sexual abuse.

¹² This is an Information post. The quote is the original content of the post.

¹³ This is an Instruction post. The quote is the original content of the post.

Funding

This work was supported by the National Science Centre, Poland under Grant number 2017/25/B/HS6/01201.

Conflict of interest statement

No conflict of interest was reported by the author.

ORCID ID

An Nguyen Huu  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7809-5490>

References

- Al-Rawi A. (2019). Facebook and Virtual Nationhood: Social Media and the Arab Canadians Community. *AI and Society* 34(3): 559–571.
- Bernal V. (2006). Diaspora, Cyberspace and Political Imagination: The Eritrean Diaspora Online. *Global Networks* 6(2): 161–179.
- Bernal V. (2010). Nationalist Networks: The Eritrean Diaspora Online, in: A. Alonso, P. Oiarzabal (eds), *Diasporas in the New Media Age: Identity, Politics, and Community*, pp. 122–135. Reno: University of Nevada Press.
- Bossetta M., Segesten A. D., Trenz H. J. (2017). Engaging with European Politics through Twitter and Facebook: Participation beyond the National? In: M. Barisione, A. Michailidou (eds), *Social Media and European Politics*, pp. 53–76. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brady H. (1999). Political Participation, in: J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver, L. S. Wrightsman (eds), *Measures of Political Attitudes*, pp. 737–801. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Brinkerhoff J. M. (2009). *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Central Statistical Office (2020). *Sytuacja demograficzna Polski do 2019 r. Migracje zagraniczne ludności w latach 2000–2019*. Online: <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosc/sytuacja-demograficzna-polski-do-roku-2019-migracje-zagraniczne-ludnosc,16,1.html> (accessed 28 April 2022).
- Chadwick A. (2006). *Internet Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Earl J., Kimport K. (2011). *Digitally Enabled Social Change: Activism in the Internet Age*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Ekman J., Amnå E. (2012). Political Participation and Civic Engagement: Towards a New Typology. *Human Affairs* 22(3): 283–300.
- Georgiou M., Silverstone R. (2007). Diaspora and Contra-Flows beyond NationCentrism, in: K. D. Thussu (ed.), *Media on the Move: Global Flow and Contra-Flow*, pp. 30–43. London, New York: Routledge.
- Głowacka-Grajper M. (2006). *Dobry gość. Stosunek nauczycieli szkół podstawowych do dzieci romskich i wietnamskich*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo ProLog.
- Golbeck J., Grimes J. M., Rogers A. (2010). Twitter Use by the US Congress. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 61(8): 1612–1621.
- Grabowska E., Szymanska-Matusiewicz G. (2022). How an Immigrant Buddhist Institution Negotiates Belonging in Poland: The Case of Thiên Phúc Pagoda. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 43(3): 432–449.
- Grzymała-Kazłowska A. (2015). The Role of Different Forms of Bridging Capital for Immigrant Adaptation and Upward Mobility. The Case of Ukrainian and Vietnamese Immigrants Settled in Poland. *Ethnicities* 15(3): 460–490.
- Huu A. N. (2021). The Cultural Integration of Working Vietnamese People in Poland: An Analysis of Integration as the Process of Immigrants' Lived Experience. *Journal of Population and Social Studies* 29: 416–434.
- Jackson N., Lilleker D. (2011). Microblogging, Constituency Service and Impression Management: UK MPs and the Use of Twitter. *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 17(1): 86–105.
- Kłorek N., Szulecka M. (2013). *Migrant Economic Institutions and their Environmental Influence: A Case Study of Trade Centers Located in Wolka Kosowska*. Research Report 3. Warsaw: Association for Legal Intervention.
- Kozinets R. V. (2002). The Field behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities. *Journal of Marketing Research* 39(1): 61–72.

- Kozinets R. V. (2019). *Netnography: The Essential Guide to Qualitative Social Media Research*. London: Sage.
- Mandaville P. (2001). Reimagining Islam in Diaspora: The Politics of Mediated Community. *Gazette* 63(2–3): 169–186.
- Moss D. M. (2018). The Ties that Bind: Internet Communication Technologies, Networked Authoritarianism, and ‘Voice’ in the Syrian Diaspora. *Globalizations* 15(2): 265–282.
- Nowicka E. (2014). Adaptation and Cultural Contact. Immigrant Children in Warsaw High Schools. *Studia Migracyjne – Przegląd Polonijny* 40(3): 219–242.
- Nowicka E. (2015). Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Acculturation of Young Vietnamese Women in Poland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 4(1): 67–80.
- NurMuhammad R., Horst H. A., Papoutsaki E., Dodson G. (2016). Uyghur Transnational Identity on Facebook: On the Development of a Young Diaspora. *Identities* 23(4): 485–499.
- Phan H. (2015). The Disjunctive Politics of Vietnamese Immigrants in America from the Transnational Perspective. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 4(1): 81–95.
- Pokojska J. (2017). Participation of the Vietnamese Community in Poland in the Socio-Political Life at the Local Level: Present Situation and Prospects for the Future. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 6(2): 163–175.
- Postill J., Pink S. (2012). Social Media Ethnography: The Digital Researcher in a Messy Web. *Media International Australia* 145(1): 123–134.
- Saxton G. D., Niyirora J., Guo C., Waters R. (2015). #AdvocatingForChange: The Strategic Use of Hashtags in Social Media Advocacy. *Advances in Social Work* 16(1): 154–169.
- Segesten A. D., Bossetta M. (2017). A Typology of Political Participation Online: How Citizens used Twitter to Mobilize during the 2015 British General Elections. *Information Communication and Society* 20(11): 1625–1643.
- Siapera E., Veikou M. (2013). Social Media Affordances and Migrant Political Practices. *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* 12(4): 100–119.
- Stake R. E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Szymańska-Matusiewicz G. (2015). Intergenerational Conflicts in Vietnamese Families in Poland, in: K. Um, S. Gaspar (eds), *Southeast Asian Migration: People on the Move in Search of Work, Refuge, and Belonging*, pp. 67–91. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.
- Szymańska-Matusiewicz G. (2016). Migration and Cultural Flows between Vietnam and Poland. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 25(3): 275–295.
- Szymańska-Matusiewicz G. (2017). Remaking the State or Creating Civil Society? Vietnamese Migrant Associations in Poland. *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 12(1): 42–72.
- Szymańska-Matusiewicz G. (2019). *Vietnamese in Poland: From Socialist Fraternity to the Global Capitalism Era*. Berlin: Peter Lang.
- Szymańska-Matusiewicz G. (2021). Democracy after ‘the End of History’: Vietnamese Diasporic Liberalism in Poland. *Social Anthropology* 29(2): 404–420.
- Tang G., Lee F. L. F. (2013). Facebook Use and Political Participation. *Social Science Computer Review* 31(6): 763–773.
- Teorell J., Torcal M., Montero J. R. (2007). Political Participation: Mapping the Terrain, in: J. W. Van Deth, J. R. Montero, A. Westholm (eds), *Citizenship and Involvement in European Democracies: A Comparative Analysis*, pp. 334–357. London: Routledge.
- Thomas D. R. (2006). A General Inductive Approach for Analysing Qualitative Evaluation Data. *American Journal of Evaluation* 27(2): 237–246.

- Tran V. (2019). *Protest Against BOT: How Vietnamese Drivers Fight Back*. Online: <https://www.thevietnamese.org/2019/01/protest-against-bot-how-vietnamese-drivers-fight-back/> (accessed 20 July 2019).
- Trandafioiu R. (2013). *Diaspora Online: Identity Politics and Romanian Migrants*. New York: Berghahn.
- Verba S., Nie N. H. (1972). *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Verba S., Nie N. H., Kim J. (1978). *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

How to cite this article: Nguyễn Hữu A. (2022). Social Media and the Online Political Engagement of Immigrants: The Case of the Vietnamese Diaspora in Poland. *Central and Eastern European Migration Review*, 13 May, doi: 10.54667/ceemr.2022.01.