

Activism in the Social Media Age | Pew Research Center

By Monica Anderson, Skye Toor, Lee Rainie, and Aaron Smith

July 11, 2018

This report from Pew Research Center analyzes publicly available tweets and uses a survey of U.S. adults in order to understand the way the public reacts to and thinks about social media activism. The report finds that Americans generally believe that social media is formative for social movements, gives voice to minority groups, and attracts the attention of politicians. It also demonstrates racial divides over who believes social media highlights versus distracts from key issues.

The rise of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag - along with others like #MeToo and #MAGA (Make America Great Again) - has [sparked a broader discussion](#) about the effectiveness and viability of using social media for political engagement and social activism. To that end, a new survey by the Center finds that majorities of Americans *do* believe these sites are very or somewhat important for accomplishing a range of political goals, such as getting politicians to pay attention to issues (69% of Americans feel these platforms are important for this purpose) or creating sustained movements for social change (67%).

Certain groups of social media users - most notably, those who are black or Hispanic - view these platforms as an especially important tool for their own political engagement. For example, roughly half of black social media users say these platforms are at least somewhat personally important to them as a venue for expressing their political views or for getting involved with issues that are important to them. Those shares fall to around a third among white social media users.

Source: [Activism in the Social Media Age | Pew Research Center](#)