

# **Everything in Moderation: The Effects of Adult Moderators in Online Youth Communities**

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## **Abstract**

The effect of adult involvement and moderation in online youth communities is a topic of current debate, especially in learning environments and youth-based community interventions. In this paper, we explore the effects of adult moderation in an international online youth community. We examine youth behavior in three forums, one with high adult moderation, one with medium, and one with low. Results indicate that adult moderation has a mixed effect on youth participation, interconnectivity, and language attributes online. Participation and interconnectivity are highest in medium moderation group. However, use of apologetic language is highest in high moderation groups and feedback is highest in low moderation groups. Together, these results suggest that moderation will influence the structure of discussion, in both positive and negative ways. Design of online communities should therefore take these results into account.