

Role of Social Media in shaping political Campaigns in India

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at the impact of social media on political campaigns in India. The study looks into how social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram affect political discourse and Indian voter turnout. Since social media enables political parties to engage with voters and reach a larger audience, it plays a significant role in today's political campaigns. Social media has changed the way Indian politicians run their campaigns these days. provides them with powerful tools to communicate with voters, disseminate information, and shape public opinion. This dissertation article uses a qualitative approach as its methodology. A qualitative approach considers several factors, one of which is the period. Between November and December 2023, political parties, regions, and well-known people will all be included to create a diverse representation of political conversation on social media. Thanks to the research study, we are able to learn about the variety and intricacy of social media strategies employed in political campaigns throughout the election season. The purpose of this study is to investigate the connection between political campaigning in India and social media. The findings contribute to our understanding of the ways in which different digital communication platforms impact democratic processes, voter behaviour, and political discourse.

Key Words- Indian voters, election campaigns, and the effects of social media.

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a very strong powerful tool for communication in the digital age, and it affects both urban and rural places greatly. Social media has had a significant impact on interpersonal communication, making it simpler to communicate with people in foreign countries. This change has only been made feasible by a few social media sites, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and others. Social media's technological reach and accessibility were expanding, both in developed and developing nations like India, and they were growing more powerful and loud. Social media is all about discussions and is a reflection of the actual world. By encouraging people to take part in, leave comments on, and produce content as a way of interacting with other users, the public, and other users, social media makes the interactive web feasible. Social media has grown to be an invaluable resource for citizens to discuss everyday and national concerns.

Not only are social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube relatively new to the internet in the twenty-first century, but they are also rapidly gaining sway over individuals and opinion leaders. Social media is essential for the Spreading of news across national boundaries and social, cultural, and political niches by various multimedia platforms. Social media's has caused a effective shift in Indian election campaigns. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp were widely used as essential instruments for voter outreach in every general elections. Political parties found that group chats, live sessions, and hashtags were essential tools for communicating with voters, addressing issues, and showcasing their accomplishments. Social media's with quality of making everything viral has increased the impact of campaign messages by spreading them to even the most remote areas of the nation. The purpose of this study work is to ascertain the recent advancements in communication patterns, particularly with regard to social media use, that have aided in social mobilization and enhanced participation in political processes. It also aims to examine current patterns in the political campaigning industry's use of social media platforms to channel public opinion through political parties. The current study aims to demonstrate the relationship between the new age, or 21st century communication patterns brought about by social media platforms, and its effects on India's political landscape.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Examining the ways in which political parties use social media during election campaigns.
2. To research how well various social media tactics influence public opinion.
3. To research how social media affects voting behavior.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study shows how social media affects political campaigns in India for this we will approach for qualitative technique. This approach helps us to go through various political posts of India from social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. We will choose a varied sample of posts from various parties, influencers, and people to get a range of viewpoints. This approach implies the data and then examine it to find trends and patterns in the ways that social media affects political campaigns. Then evaluate our results in light of previous research and talk about the implications for Indian democracy, voters, and political parties.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this era of the electronic revolution, where social media has taken center stage, democracies are asking if social media can be a trustworthy indicator of election outcomes. as a result. The goal of the current study is to ascertain if the use of social media had an effect on the 2014 General Elections, given the increasing popularity and usage of social media. During a 100-day period, from January 1 to April 9, 2014, a total of 8,877,275 mentions of 12 Indian political parties on social media were included in this study (UpasanaKhurna 2019).The result indicates that social media buzz had a considerable and positive influence on the 2014 general elections.

2016 National Cheng Kung University All rights reserved. Elisveir (Parmod Pathak, Saumya Singh, AnkitaAnshul, Md. Safiullah 2016) produced and hosted the event. The media, particularly on social and digital platforms, has taken on a significantly different role in Indian politics and is now a crucial element of democracy. Traditional political communication strategies have been superseded by digital strategies, which have a wider influence and may reach a large audience internationally. This modification highlights the value of social media for contemporary state and federal political campaigns (MadhuShastri 2017). The internet revolution is having an impact on Indian election campaigns, with the BJP leading the way in online activities. Other parties are investing money in social media to catch up. Furthermore, internet advertising should be used in addition to traditional methods rather than in instead of them. Researchers from Carnegie will look at the mechanics of elections, including foreign policy, welfare initiatives, and party connections (Shahana Sheikh 2024). The expansion of the internet has increased people's access to knowledge and capacity for coordinated action. Social media integration into civil society involves corporations, governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Its impact on Indian politics is increasing daily as political parties engage with voters, especially the younger generation, on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter (Surjit Kaur and Manpreet Kaur 2013). Social media's growth in India has altered political discourse and enhanced democratic participation and governance. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter give voice to a variety of viewpoints and promote public involvement.

Understanding Social Media

Today, maximum of us are engaged with social media as mode of interacting or speaking with humans throughout the globe with no geographical limitations or boundaries. In the generation of social media our networks is a great thing and larger than they have got ever been. Social media allows instant spread of knowledge, experiences, ideas, and critiques the various customers through new age media consisting of Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. Social networking sites such as face, Twitter, Instagram all have end up a global support phenomenon and has emerged as one of the best channels for achieving audiences worldwide. Prior to comparing the consequences of social media's growth throughout many domains, it's far important to realize the definition and records of this conversation medium. Social media's function in launching the conversation fashion and its effect on Indian politics This look at article ambitions to evaluate the brand new conversation styles which have arisen from the use of social and virtual media, how they have got mobilized present day society, and the way they have got affected the political process. It is obvious that the definition of social media is " pc mediated era that permit individuals, enterprises, governments, non-governmental companies, and different companies to view, produce, and trade ideas, information, and different varieties of expression via visual communication and networks. It possesses the features mentioned below –

1. zero Internet- primarily based totally programmes, Social media's essential thing is usergenerated content material
2. Users and businesses construct user- particular profiles for a internet site or utility this is created and controlled via way of means of a social media company.

3. By linking one profile to another, it enables humans and businesses construct on line social networks.

Modification of Communication Style

Social media allows politicians and parties to communicate directly with potential voters. Without the mass media as an intermediary, it enables politicians to interact more quickly and directly with citizens, and vice versa. Online interactions produce responses, criticism, discussions, and arguments in addition to encouragement and involvement for in-person events. Sharing messages on personal networks causes them to be spread more widely, reaching new audiences. Using social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, all significant political parties in India have an online presence. Social media serves as a vehicle for disclosure for politicians, political parties, and voters. They share photos, personal information, and publicly message friends on these platforms. The advantage of this is that it breaks down the boundaries between professionals and consumers by demonstrating to how the former operates and enabling to make instant contributions to the former's work. Social media has definitely changed the way political party approach their voters, they are extensively promoted their parties and their work through various social media platforms. Engaging with their voters through posts, sharing videos, tweeting their views regarding any news, this enables them to connect with the public directly and get their views.

Social media and politics

In this virtual generation social media has emerge as essential device for political events to sell themselves via all of the numerous social media. The benefit social media gave to political events changed into that how they disseminate records to their citizens and create an tremendous photograph of their minds. Some of the blessings are –

1. Reach out to Each Voter Individually- As it Unlock the AI's ability to set up a non-public reference to each voter. Establish a non-public connection with the aid of using sending the message with the aid of using political birthday celebration with their call to win them over with votes and affections.
2. Customized Audio Broadcasting - Call disconnections may be averted with custom designed voice broadcasting as to keep your target market engaged and make certain your voice is heard, start your message with their call.
3. Increase Interaction via Interactive Videos- Political events can boom voter participation with the aid of using the usage of interactive video generation to run polls and surveys, inspire human beings to percentage and reshare encouraging films on social media, and raise voter answers. Organizing interactive video campaigns for the visitors and the citizens out their. Can Send Out customized Messages to citizens- Personalized messages may be introduced quite simply on famous systems which includes WhatsApp, SMS and Voice Call .Political events can use a number of verbal exchange channels to without difficulty have interaction your target market.

Impact of Social Media On Politics

Social media has given a huge platform to political parties to communicate with public directly, and share their views and ongoing about their parties with mass population through different platforms of media. Social media has drastically change the political landscape. Political campaigns have a huge impact on mass population through these social media platforms, parties spent huge amount and time on these campaigns due to its huge impact on lager audience. These social media campaigns have huge influence on shaping an image of a political party and influence on votes.

Positive Impact Of Social Media On Politics

1. Raising Public Awareness: During past, people's knowledge of governmental policy was much lesser than it is today. The efficient use of social media by the government is expanding public outreach through various social media campaigns that raise awareness. During the Covid -19 when public was going through pandemic and have less knowledge about Covid-19 ,then for instance, social media was quite successful in spreading awareness and generating leads for medications to larger masses.

2. Closing the Distance: People and their representatives have emerged as a closer all credits goes to social media. Thanks to social media, the boundaries to conversation that prevented humans from interacting with the leaders have significantly decreased. On social media, politicians are interacting with their followers. By collaborating on occasions and publishing content material on social media, they make certain that the overall target market is informed and stay updated. It has given an opportunity to ordinary public to take an part in all the process related to politics. In addition, social media has been notably hired to effect diplomatic ties among India and its allies.

3. Reducing Barriers: By enabling more individuals to participate in political campaigns, these platforms offer a low-cost and low-barrier avenue for communication between the public and politicians, which could strengthen political democracy.

4. Better Analytical System: Social media enables for more efficient data collecting and have more smooth analysis with less human labour as compared to traditional techniques of measuring public opinion. As it also saves time and money. Data analytics has developed to become the central nervous system of all political campaigns. It facilitates the election campaign committee's ability to better comprehend voters and tailor its plans to meet their requirements.

Social Media key Strategies

1. **Targeted Messaging:** Political parties use data analytics and targeting algorithms to target certain voter categories with their messaging. Parties can use user demographics, preferences, and online conduct to craft tailored messages that appeal to different voting groups.
2. **Visual Content:** Multimedia content, including videos, infographics, and memes, is being used more and more in political communication. An very effective technique for captivating audiences and presenting complex ideas in an engaging manner is visual storytelling.
3. **Engagement in Real Time:** Real-time feedback, debate, and involvement between political leaders and voters are made possible by social media platforms. More accountability and openness in the political process are fostered by social media platforms that include town hall meetings, Q&A sessions, and live streaming.
4. **Influencer collaboration:** Public opinion and voting behaviour are greatly influenced by the opinions of celebrities and influencers. Political parties frequently use influencer alliances as a means of reaching new audiences and disseminating their message. Public celebrities' support can lend legitimacy and prominence to political initiatives.

Politicians and political parties can interact directly with potential voters through social media. Politicians may communicate with the public more swiftly and directly when the mainstream media stops acting as an intermediary, and vice versa. Changes in Communication Style Politicians and political parties can interact directly with potential voters through social media. Politicians may communicate with the public more swiftly and directly when the mainstream media stops acting as an intermediary, and vice versa. Online interactions spark debates, discussions, comments, and criticisms as well as support and involvement for in-person events.

Shared messages on personal networks reach a wider audience and receive more attention. Nearly every significant political party in India is engaged on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Politicians, political parties, and citizens have a route for disclosure through social media. On these platforms, they publicly message pals and post photographs and personal information. This has the benefit of obfuscating the distinction between consumer and professional interactions, showing the latter how the former functions and allowing the latter to make a direct contribution to the former's work. The previous obstacles are being removed, which makes stronger interactions between voters or advocates and politicians who utilize social media to contact their voting base conceivable.

Social Media Campaigns done By political parties

1. Bhartiya janta party (BJP)

This time BJP party is all set with its social media campaigns to attract public views some of the campaigns which took lot of viewership are –

1.A BJP rap encouraging first-time voters to "Vote for the G.O.A.T." rap gets popular on social media-

The 3-minute, rap track turned into posted most watched the night time earlier than the Lok Sabha elections' first round. Using Gen Z key phrases like G.O.A.T, OG, and FOMO, amongst others, it highlights the achievements of the Narendra Modi authorities and showcases a variety of younger artists. Within 24 hours their were 88,000 likes on the post .The track one by one tells the most important accomplishments of the Modi management at some point of the preceding ten years, which include the elimination of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and the advent of a thirty- 3 percentage reservation for women. Aimed at attracting youthful and inexperienced voters, the popular tune features a visual that resembles a modern rap song. Over 18 million voters who have never cast a ballot before will be exercising their right to vote in the general elections this year, according to the Election Commission.

2. Campaign Done B Micro Influencer (Dilmein Modi , Dillimein Modi)

Ahead of the Lok Sabha election, the BJP, which is known for its skill at using social media in its electoral operations, is hoping to involve micro-influencers from within the party to assist it increase its influence among voters in Delhi. An individual with a ground connection is a micro-influencer. In the community, they are regarded with greater trust than influencers who have larger fan bases. They are easier to reach. They typically have between 2,000 and 5,000 social media followers. The party's "Dil Mein Modi, Dilli Mein Modi [Modi in hearts, Modi in Delhi]" campaign is being run in the nation's capital. In order to educate voters about the initiatives implemented by the BJP-led Central government and how they improved people's lives, the party plans to launch a "positive" Through this campaign for Delhi party wants to reach out to the voters by showcasing their work done for public.

BJP is now concentrating on YouTube and Instagram. Although Facebook and other sites have a more mature audience than Instagram, YouTube caters to a wide age range, with users ranging from 18 to 80 years old. In addition to material quantity and quality, the BJP's IT division is focusing on information dissemination speed.

1. BJP has 7.5 million followers on Instagram.
2. Instagram following of Prime Minister Narendra Modi: 85 million.
3. X handle for the BJP: 21.6 million followers .
4. The X handle of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has 96.9 million followers.
5. Total Number of WhatsApp Groups: 50 Lakhs.

BJP IS AT THE TOP RACING

When compared to other political parties, data collected by India Tv indicates that the BJP is more visible and has a wider social media following. With a combined 23.54 percent of social media presence, the BJP leads the Congress, AAP, and Trinamool Congress.

Campaign Done by Congress Party

The Congress party runs a number of campaigns in an effort to sway public opinion. Additionally, a few of the campaigns aim to supply the party with resources, such as

"Donate for Desh Donate to Desh."

It said that the initiative was inspired by the renowned "TilakSwaraj Fund," which was founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920–21, more than a century ago. In the first 48 hours of its crowdfunding campaign, more than 1,13,000 people have given the Congress campaign over Rs 3 crore, according to India Today. Congress launched a nationwide crowdsourcing project named "Donate for Desh" with the goal of raising funds for the party before to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The public commended the Congress party for their initiative, and their campaign had a positive social media impact.

2. Bharat Jodo Yatra

The Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY) from Kanyakumari to Kashmir is an incredible start to rethink India's politics through persistent public action. The Congress party has solidified its position as a result. It has put together a massive outreach programme that is strikingly reminiscent of Mahatma Gandhi's 1930s Dandi March. The campaign was one of direct action, involving tax resistance and nonviolent protests, which ultimately led to the call for civil disobedience as a means of resisting social rule. Rahul Gandhi organized this yatra, which was well-received by the public; many people participated and helped with the endeavor.

The Congress social media team, according to India TV sources, disseminates information on significant national events happening across the country within a day. Congress also makes care to spread its message via WhatsApp groups and Instagram. Based on their current social media techniques, the Congress is pushing videos that show off Rahul Gandhi's humanity and make him relatable to the people.

1. 10.3 million people follow Congress (INC India) on X.
2. On Facebook, Congress (INC India) has 6.7 million followers.
3. On Instagram, Congress (INC India) has 3.7 million followers.
4. On YouTube, Congress (INC India) has 4.24 million subscribers.
5. X has 25.2 million followers for Rahul Gandhi.
6. 6.9 million Facebook fans follow Rahul Gandhi.
7. Rahul Gandhi has 6.3 million Instagram followers.
8. Rahul Gandhi has 4 million subscribers on YouTube.

Campaign Done By AamAdami Party (AAP)

Some of the campaigns done by AamAdami Party are –

1. Modi kasabsebadadar – Kejriwal

The AamAdami Party came with the social media campaign 'Modi kasabsebadadar- kejrival. With a picture of Kejriwal in jail and a caption reading, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's biggest fear is the Delhi chief minister," senior AAP minister Atishi declared that all party leaders, including elected officials and field workers, would use this picture as their social media profile picture in a show of support. Through this they want spread message to their voters about the opposing party how they are manipulating situation to make the bad image of the party before the election. But asking for the support from

their voters to vote to Kejriwal as an initiative spreading through their social media pages and also through party leader social media pages.

2. Save Democracy, Constitution

This was another campaign launched by the party on social media asking people to support and save the constitution and democracy in the country. Through a preference conference AamAdmi Party leader Atishi urging their voters to join the campaign and support them for their campaign.

The AamAdmi Party (AAP), although relatively new, appears to have perfected the art of using social media as a tool to interact with their voters. The focus point of their online presence is Arvind Kejriwal, their leader of their party and the chief minister of Delhi. His X handle has more followers (with 2.47 million) than Congress party leader Rahul Gandhi. Memes are the AamAdmi Party's main area of interest. Their main agenda is to poke fun at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The party understands the younger generation and their tastes for social media, so they try their best to attract them.

1. X account of Arvind Kejriwal: 27.4 million followers.
2. Instagram handle of Arvind Kejriwal: 2.1 million followers.
3. AAP has 1.1 million followers on Instagram.
4. The X handle of AAP has 6.5 million followers.

Campaign Done by Trinamool Congress Party

1. Didir Suraksha Kawach (Mamatashelid for people safety)

It was created as a part of the Mamata Banerjee party's campaign to increase public awareness of the state government's social welfare programmes, such as LakshmirBhandar, KhadyaSathi, and SwasthyaSathi. The "hummable song" video not only highlights the pro-people stances of the party leaders, but it also offers a glimpse into the state's growth strategies and rich cultural heritage. The common people can be directly reached through music, which also serves as a constant source of encouragement for the TMC party and a reminder of their duties.

2. BolchebanglarjonotapradhanmantrihokMamta (The people of Bengal have declared they want Mamta as Pm)

This is yet another campaign by Trinamool Congress Party where party promoting this slogan through all their social media platforms through graphics, through visuals showcasing Mamtabanarjee and her work done for her people.

3. **Khalehobe (Their will be a game)**

This another huge campaign done by the party where party was successful in getting their campaign a significant presence in all social media platforms. It was challenge give by Mamata Banerjee to BJP party let begin the game.

To reach their audience, the Trinamool Congress party places a strong emphasis on Facebook and YouTube. The digital strategy prioritizes video content, or packaging content in brief video formats that aren't longer than 60 seconds, in line with the prevailing trend of reels and short films. The party claims that by doing this, they swiftly leave a significant impression on voters. The TMC's social media campaign not only wants to promote "Khela Hobe," but also to fortify the BJP's anti-Bengal position. Additionally, "Bishorjon," which translates to "annihilation of evil powers," is a concern. The Trinamool Congress is bracing for war with its social media campaign, which revolves around the idea of protecting its "territory" against the "Banglavirodhizaminidars," or anti-Bengal feudal landowners. In an effort to reach voters, the Trinamool Congress Party is also concentrating on using various social media sites like Instagram and WhatsApp in its campaign. Instagram is mostly focused on short reels, and the party uses local parties as its communicators by using WhatsApp. The party is ensuring that each key story is constantly told at the district and assembly levels through a top-down approach.

1. Instagram handle for Trinamool: 1,08,000 followers.
2. Mamta Banerjee has more than 3.8 lakh Instagram followers.
3. X handle for Trinamool: More than 6.8 lakh followers.
4. 7.4 million is Mamta Banerjee's X handle.

In an attempt to spread their message to a wide audience, political parties pour a significant amount of money, resources, and time into their social media campaigns for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. With millions of active users, social media platforms are regarded as crucial spaces for shaping public opinion and swaying undecided voters. According to data provided by India Tv, the BJP leads the Congress, AamAdmi Party (AAP), and other rivals in the contest for social media users.

Modification of Voting Patterns

Political parties are interacting with voters differently thanks to digital media, which is helping to interact like never before. In the current period is characterized by rising social media usage, growing internet usage as a result of rising smartphone usage, and declining of traditional media, there has been a shift in voting behaviour. Political parties are interacting with voters through digital media, As political parties get directly to interact with their voters, get to know their opinion, also get to know how their campaign went through their voters likes , shares and viewership. The use of social media and digital media makes larger the communication's audience and highlights its powerful ability to influence voters' decisions and actions. Through several research have discovered a favorable correlation between a person's voting behaviour and their use of social media and mass media. In other words, citizens are more likely to vote if they rely more on social media and mainstream media for information. In the end, social media makes word-of-mouth easier and collaboration more influential and cost-effective, reaching those who are more likely to be inspired to actively participate in the political campaigns.

CONCLUSION

In the last few years, the media's role has changed from that of a simple information dissemination instrument to that of a medium for debate on a range of topics. Traditional media's one-dimensional communication pattern has evolved into a multidimensional one with the arrival of the social media revolution. Social media is now a virtual medium for holding open debates where personal viewpoints are featured in mainstream media and are only limited by civic decency rules due to its accessibility, affordability, and ability to facilitate borderless connection, among other benefits. The social media sites have developed into strong, intimidating instruments. These tools are being used by people to express their ideas on a range of social, political, economic, and personal concerns. The role of the media has changed recently from that of a same medium to one in which online conversations are held for the sake of public privacy. The path to digital democratic system has quickly surfaced in India and is progressively being acknowledged as the fifth pillar of our democracy. In India, news is taking lead over the media it is conveyed through for the first time. The social media's development in India has significantly changed the political discourse landscape for election procedures, governance, and democratic engagement. From its function as an enabler From the influence of citizen-political dialogue on grassroots activity and voter turnout to social media has developed into a crucial weapon in the political toolbox. Social media's impact on Indian politics is complex, as demonstrated by its capacity to promote citizen engagement, for information access, and imply various views from a range of socio-political backgrounds. Direct communication between political parties and the voters is now possible because to platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter that have developed into virtual panel discussion for political discussion and debate.

An analysis of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) and other competitor parties presence on social media demonstrates a calculated strategy and that priorities outreach, communication, and citizen involvement. Understanding how social media may influence public opinion, but BJP party has successfully used these channels throughout election campaigns to rally support and reach out to voters directly. Some huge campaigns done by BJP party such as "Vote for G.O.A.T" are examples of the party's initiatives that show their dedication to responsive leadership and inclusive governance. Social media does, however, come with drawbacks, such as the dissemination of false information, , and the creation of echo chambers. The BJP's Efforts to prove to misleading narratives and encourage responsible usage emphasis the necessity of moral behaviour and legislative frameworks in online environments. In conclusion, the examination of the BJP' , Congress Party, AamAdami Party, and Trinamool Congress Party are the historical background highlight how social media has revolutionized Indian politics. India is still navigating the problems and opportunities posed by social media. It will be essential to promote responsible citizenship, digital literacy, and democratic principles. India can lead the path towards a more knowledgeable, diverse, and lively political dialogue in the digital era by utilizing social media to its fullest potential while minimizing its benefits. The different political parties strategy specially BJP' party strategy has changed a new era in Indian politics transformed by the digital revolution and is a monument to the changing dynamics of political communication and engagement.

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