



Role Of Social Media In Indian Politics: A Game Changer For Political Parties

Prabhleen Kaur^{1*}, Dr. Sukhdev Singh²

^{1*}Research Scholar Political Science Guru Kashi University Talwandi Sabo, Bathinda (Punjab)

²Assistant Professor, Guru Kashi University Talwandi Sabo, Bathinda (Punjab)

Citation: Prabhleen Kaur, Dr. Sukhdev Singh (2024), Role Of Social Media In Indian Politics: A Game Changer For Political Parties, Educational Administration: Theory and Practice, 30(7), 315-317

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i7.6664

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Social media is one of the most significant and useful instruments for mass communication available today. The sophisticated communication technology of the twenty-first century has commoditized all aspects of society. Social media has become an indispensable part of modern life, particularly in the political sphere. It is essential to the public's active engagement in politics. It has long been acknowledged that the free media is essential to democracy and that it has a significant impact on election results. The use of social media as a platform for various sorts of political activism has expanded quickly. Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube are just a few of the social media sites that provide fresh approaches to 'stimulate citizens' engagement in political life where elections and electoral campaigns have crucial role. Traditional media was a major factor in raising public awareness in the past, but social media eventually emerged as a powerful marketing tool that not only raised public awareness but also attracted new customers. There's a growing trend of politicians using it. Social media allows politicians and parties to communicate directly with their constituents. Political parties and candidates can engage and communicate with the public directly by using social networking platforms. Furthermore, social media platforms give voters a voice and a venue to express their thoughts. The sharing of the communication related to the party manifestos, ongoing political speeches, exchange of videos related to political issues and mudslinging among the politicians may lead to serious discussions in social media. In the elections youth participation creates the awareness about the importance of voting in democracy through Electronic Media.

KEYWORDS: Election, Social media, Facebook, Twitter

Objectives of the study:

- To examine the role of Social media in Indian politics with reference to Lok sabha election 2024.
- To highlights the impact of social media in election campaign.
- To study some ways indicating how Social Media have changed Indian politics.

Review of Literature:

Biswas, A., Ingale, N. & Roy, M. (2014) studied the influence and role of social media on voting behavior in their article, Influence of social media on voting behaviour. **Chandrappa, K. (2014)** studied the impacts of media during campaigns and elections in his article The Influence of the Media in Politics-campaigns and election. **Chopra, S. (2014)** highlighted the impacts and role of social media in politics in her in her book, The Big Connect: Politics in the Age of Social Media. **Rajput, H. (2014)** highlighted the use of social media sites by the politicians during their election campaigns in his paper titled Social media and Politics in India: A study on twitter Usage among Indian political leaders. **Rekha (2015)** studied the influence of social media during 2014 parliament elections. **Rahul (2016)** in the study 'New Media in Indian Political Campaigning System' described the new media as an effective tool for election campaigning. **Meti, v., Khandoba, P.K & Guru, M.C (2015)** emphasized the role of media in democracy in their study Social Media for Political Mobilization in India. **Bibu, V.N. (2016)** highlighted the issues and challenges in democracy in his paper, New Media and Governance: Issues in Democracy and the transiting Public Sphere in India.

Introduction:

Social media is now a crucial component of political communications during election campaigns in recent years. From social media to chat rooms and instant messaging, communication has changed since the dawn of the Internet era. In the realm of online communication, social media is the newest and fastest-growing phenomenon. All political parties and candidates in India's 2014 legislative general election used social media heavily to encourage voter turnout. Political communication scholars were quite interested in the recent spectacular rise and popularity of social media use. Examining the political implications of social media as a new tool for individuals to engage with each other and receive political information online is particularly interesting. With the proliferation of hyperlinks and multidimensional connectivity found in social media, users can now receive, process, and distribute news and information in novel ways. Social media's structure differs greatly from traditional media's, enabling users to communicate news and information in many diverse ways. Nowadays, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social networks are regarded as politically transforming communication tools on par with traditional media like radio, television, and newspapers. Social media is predicted to change democracy by enabling politicians and public to engage, communicate, and connect in ways never possible. Politicians and other elected officials are beginning to understand how effective social media is at spreading political news and engaging with the public.¹

The significance of social media as a platform for many sorts of political engagement has increased dramatically. Social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter provide fresh approaches to promoting public participation in politics, where elections and campaigning play a major role. 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. Although the presence of social media is spreading and media use patterns are changing, online political engagement is largely restricted to people already active in politics and on the Internet. Social media has reshaped structures and methods of contemporary political communication by influencing the way politicians interact with citizens and each other. However, the role of this phenomenon in increasing political engagement and electoral participation is neither clear nor simple.²

Social Media Use for Political Mobilization:

Social media are online communities in which users freely exchange information about themselves and their life by utilizing a variety of multimedia formats, including audio, video, photos, and personal writing. These websites facilitate person-to-person talks and content creation and exchange between individuals and groups. Social media users can be found on wikis, blogs, message boards, asocial bookmarking, tagging, news, social networks, wikis, and virtual worlds, among other platforms. We have seen social media grow exponentially on a global scale in recent years. These days, new types of social contact, debate, exchange, and collaboration are being driven by social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and other social network sites. Through social media, people can share their broader interests and engage in activities and events, exchange ideas, and post updates and comments. Nowadays, different user communities use social media for a wide range of purposes. Work and leisure are becoming more and more muddled due to social media. Furthermore, people may now live in a media world long after their workday is ended due to internet surveillance and the social media distribution of news and opinions. Social media outlets are essential to politicians and political parties, enabling them to gain support, encourage participation and have an open and continuous dialogue. Most significantly, social media makes it easier for those who are highly motivated to create an environment in which those who are not as motivated may still be effective without having to become activists themselves, which makes it ideal for politicians to take advantage of. Campaign strategies and the political system are starting to change as a result of the emergence of social media and its impact on the public and politicians. Social media and the Internet are being used by politicians, which has opened up new ground for grassroots politics. Voters today use computers and mobile devices to seek out more information and, in some circumstances, alternative forms of activism, rather than basing their decisions only on information found in traditional media.³

Different results are reported for Internet and political involvement; individuals who visit political websites are likely to be interested in campaign news and are inclined to vote for interested candidates. In other words, the more citizens rely on mass media and social media for information, the more likely they are to cast a ballot. Social media serves as a medium for disclosure for politicians, political parties, and voters alike. Users can share photos, private messages, and personal information with friends on these platforms. The advantage of this is that it breaks down the barriers between professionals and consumers by demonstrating to the latter how the former operates and enabling the latter to make an instant contribution to the former's work. This breaking down of previously existing barriers enables strengthened relationships between voters or advocates and politicians who utilize social media in an effort to reach their voter base.⁴

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 and Social Media:

Social media now offers a platform for direct connection, involvement, and mobilization in political campaigns, changing the game. India's seven-phase Lok Sabha elections 2024 came to a close when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the oath of office. The 2024 national elections saw a significant impact from social media, which provided a forum for political conversation, information sharing, and voter involvement. Social media became an important battleground and a massive platform for the parties to reach millions of people with a single click during the hard-fought, intense election campaigns in which the opposition India bloc and the Bhartiya Janta Party-led NDA continued their attacks and counterattacks in an attempt to win over votes. The political parties broadcast live events including press conferences, road shows, and rallies on social media sites like Facebook and YouTube. This allowed the parties to bypass conventional TV news networks and directly address the general public. During the just finished Lok Sabha elections, political parties' social media staff used their ingenuity to create viral hashtags, take part in meme festivals, and reach out to voters with their message. During the 44-day elections, prominent political parties including the Congress and the BJP used social media to make fun of each other's counterclaims by creating visually striking memes. The parties have also made accounts on the social media platform for several states and languages in an effort to attract a larger audience.

Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyaay Yatra were widely utilized by the Congress in the run-up to the elections to help him shed his reputation as a Shehzada and instead project an image of a grassroots leader who has traveled the entire nation to learn about the issues facing everyday people. However, by highlighting his daily schedule of events and roadshows, the BJP, which focused its lok sabha campaign on PM Modi, attempted to present him as a "Kamrath" (hardworking) leader. Additionally, social media was frequently used by both sides to convey an air of power and dominance over one another.⁵

Conclusion:

The social media revolution in the political sphere is real, palpable, and accelerating due to social media's growing popularity and greater expansion in India. Social media needs to bring people together from all over the world, regardless of how far apart they are. India has the biggest percentage of internet users, and people there believe that information found online is more trustworthy and credible than that found in traditional media outlets. In Indian politics and elections, social media is quite important. The youth now use social media as a forum to talk about good governance. It motivates people to actively participate in voting today. It facilitates the efficient and quick outreach of political parties and candidates to a sizable electorate. The importance of social media for political campaign in 2024 parliament elections, political parties and candidates can make the characteristics, power and popularity of social media well understandable. Politicians use the social media as an effective tool of publicity. They are targeting the voters to attract, towards their party candidates. The volunteers of the BJP party indulge in conversation with common people and understand their form of mind and attitude, which helped them to achieve success with the us.

References:

1. Narasimhamurthy, N. (2014). Use and Rise of Social Media as Election Campaign Medium in India, International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies, Vol.1 (8), pp.202-203.
2. Sawant, R.K. (2019). Role of Social Media in Politics, Think India Journal, Vol.22 (38), pp.155-156.
3. Narasimhamurthy, N. (2014). Use and Rise of Social Media as Election Campaign Medium in India, International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies, Vol.1 (8), pp.207-208.
4. Meti,V., Khandoba ,P.K and Guru, M.C (2015).Social Media For Political Mobilization In India , Journal of Mass Communication & Journalism, Vol. 5 (1), www.researchgate.net, Retrieved on June 30, 2024.
5. Sharma, T. (2024). Lok Sabha Elections 2024: How Social media Emerged as a Key Battlefield for BJP Vs Congress, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>, Accessed on 1 July 2024.