

A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

After voting in Ahmedabad, Narendra Modi took a selfie on the lines of millions of youth. It became the most prevalent in India's elections. Some big newspapers and media channels also campaigned to take selfies after casting their votes in order to create awareness and encourage people to vote. Photographs of thousands of people who have drawn themselves after casting their votes are also being shown in the mainstream media. There is a flood of such selfies on social media. There are many leaders on social media, but I do not remember any such leader, who after casting his vote in this way, not only took a selfie showing his finger and election symbol, but also immediately tweeted it from his account (@narendramodi) done. It (#selfiewithmodi) became the top trend on Twitter. With this hash tag, thousands of people are constantly tweeting and welcoming Modi's move. It can be guessed from this that social media will play an important role in the coming elections in India.

Keywords- selfie, social media, politics, election, Namo vs Raga, Narendra Modi, Rahul Gandhi

In the 17th lower house election in India, Narendra Modi used social media as a huge weapon of publicity. Narendra Modi is perhaps the first leader in India to understand the importance of social media in campaigning. During his 'Sadbhavna Mission' in 2011, he campaigned separately through Facebook and Twitter. Even in internal party meetings, he kept asking party leaders to use social media more and more.

In the last two assembly elections in Gujarat, Modi used social media fiercely. First time they have their own separate team for social media in the lower house elections 2014, which keeps an eye on trends and tweets running from top trend to opponents. These are reviewed every day and strategies are formulated according to major issues. Every day, there is war on Twitter from the opponents and the contest is on which trend will be at the top.

On the lines of Modi, many big leaders of BJP have now openly come on social media. More than 62 lakh people are following Narendra Modi on Twitter, which is the highest of any personality in India.ⁱ While his page has been liked by more than 10 million people on Facebook. Apart from this, Modi has reached out to the people through social media by organizing programs with Google Hangouts and Facebook. Apart from this, Modi also blogging regularly. Videos of Narendra Modi's speeches are also seen on YouTube in large numbers.

Rahul Gandhi is far from Modi in terms of popularity. Only 16 lakh people are following Rahul Gandhi on Twitter.ⁱⁱ The Congress party became active on social media of late. Today the party has its own Twitter account. Also, many big leaders of Congress are active on social media through Twitter and Facebook. Whereas if someone has made the best use of social media like Modi, it is Aam Aadmi Party and its leader Arvind Kejriwal. Kejriwal is very active on social media and it is a powerful medium for him to connect with his workers. In the social media trend, Kejriwal is seen competing with Modi and Rahul Gandhi.

The lower house election 2014 is going to be the first such big election in the country, in which social media has played a big role. A study on the 2019 lower house elections said that there are about 160 lower house seats where social media influenced the results. 10 crore new voters are expected to be added in the next lower house elections, of which a large part is active on social media. It is evident that the eyes of all political parties, including Modi. This selfie and social media has completely changed the campaigns of political parties. Each political party has a separate cyber wing.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH STUDY

The following objectives of the study presented have been set:

- To consider the role of social media in political campaigns.

- To properly discuss the activation of social media.
- To furnish details of the condition of political parties being hi-tech.
- To explain the relationship between politics and social media.

Research study design:

- Social media is influencing political campaigns.
- Political parties are keeping their sayings high through social media.
- Political campaigns and issues are being decided on social media.

Research Method: The content analysis method has been adopted for research studies. In them, literature materials obtained from various sources have been studied and analyzed. And on the same basis, report writing has been written.

Research design: The method of study is the arrival and the research design is investigative and descriptive. Facts and information have been obtained from secondary sources. This information has been collected from books, magazines, newspapers, television, internet etc.

The contribution and form of social media to this great cause of Indian democracy is being studied abroad. He is not just like that. Social media is a product of new technology. Participation of overseas Indians in the election campaign has been made easy. Now these people are not only becoming a part of the Indian political process by sitting across the sea, but also affecting the power politics of India. Social media has made inroads to the youth who deeply influence power politics. With this, the strength of the vote and the importance of the issue are being discussed here. Now people active in the online world are in a position to form an opinion among the masses. This has put them in a position to influence power politics. In the 16th lower house election, he is using his power fully. There are people like Suman Kumar in Boston, USA, and Nachiket Joshi in South hall in Britain. They say that social media is a medium for them, which does not cost much money and it becomes easy to reach more people. They are organizing a 'Tea-party'. Make plans with a cup of tea. Then they work on social media.

It is not just the supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Narendra Modi. Supporters of the Aam Aadmi Party are also active. They are running a campaign called 'Call India'. However, Congress party supporters are less active than these two parties. The political storm that is going on online makes it feel different. Websites such as Facebook, Twitter as well as Wikipedia are his electoral weapons.

Social media is a product of new technology. Participation of overseas Indians in the election campaign has been made easy. Now these people are not only becoming a part of the Indian political process by sitting across the sea, but also affecting the power politics of India. He is being called a new-age political activist.

By the way, those in power politics did not know that the online world can improve their image. When this happened, they took over Facebook as well as Twitter. Activity on Wikipedia has also increased. Wikipedia is considered the world's largest online encyclopedia. Fairness and confirmed fact are its hallmarks. But, it is constantly being refer in India's electoral atmosphere. Content on the page of Prime Ministerial candidate Narendra Modi from the Bharatiya Janata Party. They are constantly changing. According to a report by Parul Aggarwal, only on April 13, there were more than 40 amendments on the page of Narendra Modi. Arvind Kejriwal's Wikipedia page was revised more than 30 times from 26 to 28 March. It is not just Wikipedia that is being used to influence a category. Many such websites and blogs have emerged. There are many websites like 'youth ki awaaz', 'citizen for accountable governance.com', 'the indian republic', 'change dot org', which are active in view of general elections. 'Citizen for accountable governance dot com' headquartered in Gandhinagar, but its news and programs are not sponsored. Since six years, this website has been organizing a program called 'Chai Pe Charcha'. This is an attempt of those young people with technical knowledge who want to see Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. One such website is 'The Indian Republic'. It has also made its direction and policy clear. Activities of 'Change dot org' are also seen. The youth operating these websites are of the opinion that the traditional method of election campaigning demands more time. This is no longer possible for many. In such a situation, social media has provided new media. This has led to new means of participation in elections.

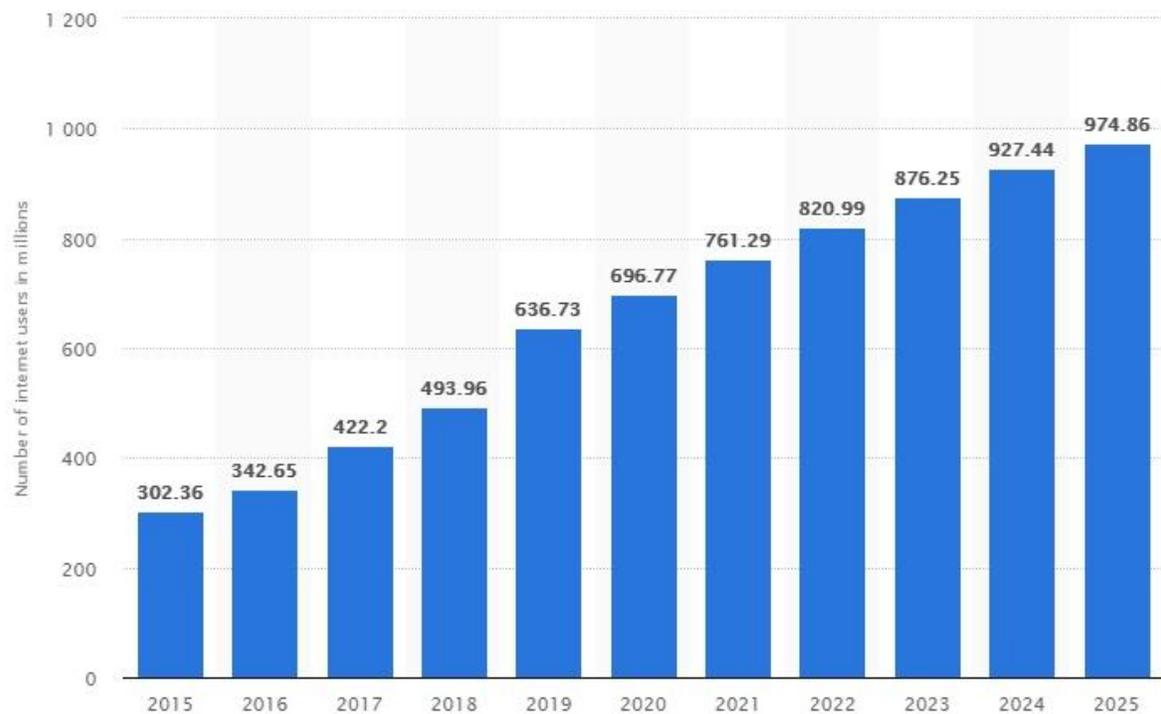


Figure 1

In India, around seven crore people were on the internet in 2009, while in 2014 the figure has reached to about 24 crores. In 2019, about 636 crore people were on the Internet. It is believed that by 2024 it will cross the figure of 927 crores.ⁱⁱⁱ

Google India officials also believe that the Internet is in a meaningful role in India's general election. Google itself is running a 'pledge to vote' campaign.^{iv} Facebook has launched the 'Talks Live' program to get its nine crore users to participate in electoral politics.^v All this has been done by looking at the interest of the users. The activism of the people in the internet world after the 16th lower house election is a sign that they do not want to miss influencing power politics even in 2024.

"Social media data will replace open poll in future." Those who understand the world of online and its Internet are expressing this idea. Professor Amit Seth is among those people. He is a researcher at the Ohio Center of Excellence.

It will be interesting to see whether voters with contact with the online world vote on the basis of caste and creed on the ground or they vote by breaking these circles. If the scope breaks, Indian politics will be deeply affected. Seth says that after studying social media closely, we can get the mood before, during and after the rally. This is said by Amit Seth from BBC dot com. So, has social media become almost of the same importance as the report sent by chance in the world of journalism!

Nidhi Chaudhary, who is associated with a multinational software company, says that until a year ago, many social networking sites were not equipped with the features that they are giving to their users today. According to Nidhi, social sites have prepared many such special tools, which are available to meet the needs of their users. He said, "I think these things were definitely prepared keeping in mind the time." Today these sites are getting its commercial advantage."

By the way, many people have different opinions about social networking sites. They believe that this medium of contact on Indian soil leaves a transient effect. According to one figure, the most active people on social networking sites are 18 to 35 years old. These are the same young voters whose leaders of all parties are discussing in different ways in their speeches. Now it will be interesting to see whether the voters who have contact with the online world

vote on the basis of caste and sect on the ground or they vote by breaking these circles. If the scope breaks, Indian politics will be deeply affected.

Due to the increasing use of social media and its impact in the election, the Election Commission also decided to monitor it. According to the commission, the expenditure on social media will also be added to the expenses of the respective political parties. A detailed guide line was prepared for this. The 2004 court rulings have formed the basis of this guide line, which includes ensuring that the costs incurred through the social website are included in the expenses of the respective political party. For this, the Election Commission has also increased surveillance on these websites. For this, some teams have also been formed, which will monitor the activities of political parties and their leaders.

Some campaigns of prominent political parties on social media have also been successful in playing an important role. 'Fanatical Thinking Not Young Josh' The Congress launched a 'Hardcore Thinking Not Young Josh' campaign on social media websites to connect more and more youth to the party. Through this campaign, the party is not only trying to brighten the image of its Vice President Rahul Gandhi, but also took a sarcastic attack on BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate Narendra Modi. 'Mission 272+' The Bharatiya Janata Party aims to win more than 272 seats across the country for the lower house election 2016. People associated with BJP also address Narendra Modi by the name 'Namo'. Therefore, a BJP campaign was also run by this name. The Aam Aadmi Party launched a campaign called 'Aam Aadmi Party' to make people aware of their decisions. Apart from this, like the Congress, she has also started a poll campaign in which she is engaged in opening up the corruption of Congress and BJP on Facebook and Twitter. As part of this campaign, she speaks out on alleged corrupt politicians and the party and its policies. On the pretext of these aggressive campaigning, she wants to make her presence on social sites among the youth.

All political experts believe that social media has increased influence on society and politics, but it also increases vote bank, they have doubts. Political campaign consultant and co-founder of Perfect Relations, Dilip Cherian, believes that at least it has access to the young population. The new promotional campaigns that appear on social media keep the election promises with full creativity. Internet users evaluate them and on this basis, there is scope to convert them into numbers. Therefore, it becomes difficult to say which promotional campaigns are more creative and mass-appealing.

CONCLUSION

According to the study, social media has been able to influence the political choices of voters in 160 out of 543 seats in the lower house elections. In this study, 67 seats have been placed in the middle category, where the number of Facebook users is equal to five per cent of the total voters, with 60 seats in the category of minimum impact. The remaining 256 seats were said to be free from social media influence. The maximum number of seats that can be affected by social media are 21 in Maharashtra, 17 in Gujarat, 14 in Karnataka and 12 in Tamil Nadu. Social media was affected by 11 in Andhra Pradesh, 10 in Kerala, nine in Madhya Pradesh and all seven seats in Delhi. How should we understand this picture?

The findings of the study make it clear that despite its growing influence, social media in India has limited ability to influence political decisions. If you look closely at the publicity campaigns of all political parties on social media, then it is not a difficult task to understand that on these mediums, political parties are presenting their traditional politics in the new category. Possibly through this, they are able to communicate with the newly-middle class, especially youth, who have emerged in the last few years. It is important to underline that social media, like traditional information and publicity media, has no direct and unilateral effect on users.

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