

Use of Social Media in Indian Political System



Hari Krishan

Assistant Professor,
Deptt. of Education,
Aryan College of Education,
Kotputli, Jaipur, Rajasthan

Abstract

The rise of the internet in the early 1990s, has led to the increase in the world's networked population. From e-mailing and e-commerce to e-governance, internet has brought us all at a single platform. The social media are nowadays playing an important role in people's everyday life and the use of the social media has become more and more important as a way of communicating in the last many years. Social media like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and MySpace etc. have gained more and more popularity. Social media have grown extremely in the last many years. Indian politicians are now using social media, Internet and in turn are permitting a new amphitheatre of grassroots politics. The main objective of this article is to study the role of social networking sites like Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, and YouTube etc. on Indian politics. The social meeting in socio-political activities and people's positive participation in Indian political plan is also increased through social media and networking.

Keywords: Social Media, Political System, Internet, Social Media and Politics.

Introduction

It was more than a decade, when internet manifests as a powerful medium of communication globally. However, due to technological reach and contact, it was more voiced in the developed countries and developing countries like India. Social Media mirrors the real world. Social media make easy the interactive web by engaging users to participate in, comment on and construct content as means of communicating with social diagram, other users and the public. Social media are new information system and information technology using a form of announcement utilizing interactive and user-produced content, and interpersonal relationships are created and maintained. Social media has emerged as a foremost tool where general public are able to talk about the issues of daily life and also of national consequence. In 21st century Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, telegram and Youtube are not just innovations in the internet technology world, but are fast rising as influencers.

The tendency has been followed by Indian political parties during General elections of 2004. The electronic messages and ads were sent on internet and mobile phones produced a buzz at that time. The hi-tech political system is portraying grassroots political and social media. Ahead of the parliamentary elections in India, the political parties are again pointed for the prospects in the social media tools for campaigning. Politicians are now using social media and the Internet technology and in turn are permitting a new amphitheatre of grassroots politics. On the same, it would be interesting to identify the new communication patterns that have emerged and helped in the social enlistment and increasing participation in the political system in the recent past particularly through the use of social media.

According to Internet and Mobile Association of India (MAI) there has been an likely to explode growth in the use of Internet not only in India, but also global in the last decade. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0 and that allow the formation and trade of user-generated content." A social media is a platform to build social networks. The population of India is around 1.2 billion as of 2011, of which the number of Internet users is more than 200 million. It is estimated to increase to 250 million by June 2014, and India

will be the second-leading country after China which at present has the highest Internet user base of 300 million.

Aim of the Study

The main objective of this article is to study the use of social media like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube etc. in Indian politics system.

Review of Literature

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content." According to Internet and Mobile Association of India (IMA2013) There has been unlikely to explode/increase in the use of Internet not only in India, but also universal in the last decade. The use of social media is significantly compound. Even though use of social media has quite a few challenges such as security, accuracy, privacy at the similar time it provides the opportunities for collaboration, sharing, and rendezvous of users which is provided by the medium of social media. The tendency has been followed by Indian political parties during General elections of 2004 in India. The electronic messages were sent on internet and mobile phones created a buzz at that time. To make the study holistic, both, quantitative and qualitative approach has been incorporated. Focused group interview of 10 media politicians, personnel and social-political scientists has been done to discover out the above mentioned objectives. Social media is comprehended as a communication stage where it users accumulate and disseminate information of their choice.

Classification of Social Media

Social media have quickly full-grown in importance as a proposal for political activities in its different forms. Social media such as Facebook, Telegram, Twitter, Whatsapp and YouTube provide new ways to give confidence citizen get involved in Indian political system. Social media can be grouped as Social media, Social Blogs, social news websites, Social Photo and Video Sharing and Wikis. Social media like Facebook, Telegram, Twitter, Whatsapp and YouTube by adding friends, commenting on profiles, joining groups and having discussions.

Social media technologies take on many different forms including blogs, business networks, activity social networks, forums, microblogs, photo sharing, products/services review, social bookmarking, social gaming, social networks, video sharing and virtual worlds.

Most Popular Social Media

Facebook

Facebook is one of the most trendy online social media. It was founded on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates. Today 550+ million users are active participants in the Facebook. The worldwide interest with Facebook is based on the possibility it offers to be in make contact with people whose e-mail addresses and phone numbers have changed or become redundant. They can also forward the rearrangement to their own Facebook contacts using the "Share" preference. One

popular feature Facebook supports is community pages for common interests. Many political candidates create a page for themselves, and when a client clicks on the "Like" button, that user indicates that they would like to get updates each time the candidate adds something to Facebook.

Whatsapp

Whatsapp messenger is a freeware application. This application allows the sending of text messages and video calls, voice calls, images, photos, documents and other media. The application runs from multimedia mobile. The past few years have seen WhatsApp become an all the time more powerful and influential tool for political campaigns in India. For many people in India, it may come as a surprise that participation in large WhatsApp groups constitutes the majority of online communication for many users in India. While WhatsApp helps politicians reach voters and constituents in areas that don't otherwise have access to the internet, it also extends the reach and primacy of Facebook (who own the platform) in the democratic process in India. WhatsApp is being deployed as a major part of the political process in India.

Telegram

Telegram is a cloud-based mobile and desktop messaging app with a focal point on security and speed. Telegram's client-side code is open source software but the source code for recent versions is not always instantly published, whereas its server-side code is closed-source and proprietary. In March 2018, Telegram stated that it had more than 200 million activate user. According to its CEO, as of April 2017, Telegram's annual escalation rate was greater than 50 percentages. Telegram currently has over 200 million user monthly users. We were unable to learn more about its demographic go down in India, despite having reached out to the company multiple times across several different platforms. We discovered that it supports messaging in limited regional Indian languages.

YouTube

YouTube is also an important channel for parliamentary and local election candidates, with a much lower cost than TV commercials. YouTube is the Internet's leading video service application. It began operating in 2005, and grew very rapidly, with 50+ million visits to the site just by the end of the same year. In 2010, there were already more than 2 billion visits to You-Tube every day. Based on the number of viewers, the most popular videos on YouTube are music videos, entertainment programmes, and news videos, but there are also some usermade videos about individual problems that have found quite a large consultation. YouTube users have so far been more disposed towards entertainment than politics, and because of this, the most watched political substance has been satirical "mash-ups", where a video recording is mixed with a changed audio recording, changing the message and meaning of the video. Also popular are in secret filmed slip-ups and witty remarks made by politicians.

Twitter

Twitter is a free, Internet-based micro blogging service application, on which users can send short, 140-character messages to each other or groups. Its use is based on quick exchanges of thoughts, views and information between friends, acquaintances, and all the users of the Twitter platform. Twitter can also be used to manoeuvre the user to more detailed content elsewhere, through web links or other references. However, studies on the use of Twitter to manipulate voting behaviour highlight only small groups of "super users". However social media cannot be an option for traditional media but can be used along with these channels to connect its full potential.

Social Media and e-Governance

Social media has led to the emergence of citizen led e-governance in India. Anti corruption movement by Anna Hazare and protests followed by Nirbhaya gang rape were channelized through the social media in India. These events garnered colossal national and global sustain by involving the common man. Political campaigns are based on agendas and there remains not a particular agenda but a set of changed agendas carefully designed to be a focus for different classes of people. Most often this is done with the intention of dividing people and diverting them from being unite over an issue. Anna Hazare initiated a Satyagraha (Fasting for a nobel cause) pressure group for passing a stronger anti-corruption Lokpal bill in the Indian Parliament. He started hunger strike when the insist was rejected by Indian government. The movement attracted attention in the social media, millions of supporters inside and outside of India. People showed support through social media such as Twitter, Whatsapp and Facebook.

Social Media and Indian Political Parties

The political parties have their own many groups, websites which was not seen some years back and some of them also utilize other social mediums to interact with people. With every party having its own website and leaders being active on different social media it makes the citizens believe that they are within their reach. The need to obtain appointments or wait for them to talk is no longer required. The leaders are accessible at the click of a button. The role of Social media in Indian politics has risen tremendously in the latest years. In the past one year, we have seen most parties stepping up their game and using social media platforms successfully to woo voters, especially the millennial. Although, the use of social media platforms is not new, its use for political parties has exploded in the last few years.

Earlier, political parties used to drive a lot on traditional media like TV, radio and print, but the access of the Internet has changed the entire landscape. The media war rooms are filled with volunteers trained in information analytics and communication through digital platforms. Different Indian political parties have their own media groups, websites which was not seen some years back and some of them also use other social mediums to network with people. With every party having its own

media groups, website and leaders being dynamic on different media it makes the citizens feel that they are within their reach.

In recent times, Indian political background has seen two major national parties, Indian National Congress (INC) and Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) fighting an online political battle. Online party line is aggressively used against each other. Each and every medium is used to wage war of words. One tweet leads the other to react immediately. The most famous tweets from both sides were, BJP calling Rahul Gandhi as 'Pappu' and Congress calling Narindera Modi as 'Feku'. Both the parties strive to downplay the achievement and exaggerate the failures of each other. Both sides assert to have large number of followers. Politicians have realised that they can see the reactions and opinions of people real time if they post or share information on social media platforms. This two-way communication helps them realize the voters better, which is not possible in other communication channels like Radio, TV and Print.

Social Media in Indian Politics

Social media have influenced many aspects of our life be it culture, education, administration, businesses, marketing or politics. Social media is playing an extensive new role in Indian democracy. Recently, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India (GoI) declared Social Media as a part of it. Almost every political party, including the party of the serving government has its social media wing to take worry of the political campaign and have budget allocation for the same. Everyone is recognizing this innovative and powerful medium to intermingle with the masses and make them participate and thereby enabling better communication. Indian politicians, be it old or young have started experiencing the impact of social media in one form or the other. Now, almost every political party used the social media to get their information across the masses.

Social media creates a new political dialogue. It takes the power of political messaging away from the social media model and places it firmly into peer-to-peer, public discussion. Recently years, it has deeper into social media. But social media can also be subject to significant abuse. Some politicians have been accused of boosting their obvious popularity on social media with legions of followers who don't exist and of using social media to smudge their opponents. Worse, social media have been used to fan aggression against religious and ethnic groups. Indian politicians have adopted social media because they know where and how to discover the youth of the country on majority.

Conclusion

After examining all the elements i.e. social media, content, mass media and audience within the communication method in relation to the political content, one can safely assert that if not a change, the social media has certainly brought an extension with its characteristics to the existing patterns of the political campaign. Social media outlets are necessary to Indian politicians and political parties, enabling

them to gain support, give confidence participation and have an open and continuous dialogue. Social media have been able to make reflective impact by means of news, interaction, learning and marketing. Social media have become an important source of news.

The upcoming general elections/ other elections and political campaign on social media will prove a breeding ground for a much more meaningful politics of future with more political participation of 'netizens' in democratic method in general and electoral process in particular. Though it may not bring in massive changes immediately, but still it will play an imperative role in creating political awareness, which in itself is a huge step forward for a developing country like India. Various news channels tweet or give updates on considerable happenings all over the world and the news quickly gets passed around the networks in ways never experienced before. It allows citizens to keep in touch more regularly.

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