

# Impact of Social Media on Politics

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**Abstract:** The development of the internet in the early 1990s, has contributed to the expansion in the world's networked population. The networked population has more access to information, more chances to participate in public discourse and a stronger capacity to execute joint action. Social media has become a reality of life for civil society globe over, including many players — average individuals, activists, non-governmental organisations, telecommunications businesses, software suppliers, and even governments at large. Social media revolution in the Indian political landscape is real, palpable and fast. Keeping an eye on impending Lok Sabha elections, the purpose of this essay is to investigate the influence of social media viz. Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and You Tube on Indian politics. No doubt social media is now being seriously studied by the Indian political parties as a medium to reach out to the people, but will it affect the Lok Sabha Elections in the same manner as in Obama's Presidential elections? Social media has acquired relevance with the surge in young population in India. As they are the one who utilise internet the most in India. Will this social media & youngsters shift the flow of Indian politics? This article will discuss these and some more problems linked to Indian politics.

**Keywords:** politics, social media, population, communication.

## 1. Introduction

It's all about the dialogue through social media. The interactive web is made possible by social media because it encourages users to engage, remark, and produce their own material, which they can then share with their social network, other users, and the general public. The rise of social media has made it possible for individuals to voice their opinions on a wide range of problems, from the mundane to the national. In the 21st century, social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are not just internet advancements, but they are also influencing and shaping public opinion.

In Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is defined as "a series of Internet-based apps that build on the conceptual and technical underpinnings of Web2.0, and that allow for the production and sharing of user-generated content." As the name suggests, this is a service that allows users to create social networks. Web-based social network services like these allow users to communicate with one other over the Internet. Users of social networking sites may communicate with others in their network by exchanging information, photos, videos, and other media.

As a result, social media is a two-way street that not only provides you with information, but also interacts with you and allows you to communicate with other visitors as well. Involvement may take the form of soliciting your feedback,

allowing you to cast your vote on an article, or making movie suggestions based on the preferences of others who share your tastes. People may become opinion leaders via media creation and distribution, not simply passive consumption of media, thanks to social media's ability to spread information and ideas like ripples in a pond.

## 2. Classification of Social Media Websites

Social networking sites, social bookmarking websites, social news websites, social photo and video sharing, and wikis are all examples of social media websites. In social networking sites such as Facebook, Hi5, and Last.FM, users may join groups, comment on other users' profiles, and participate in discussions by making new friends. Del.icio.us, Blinklist, and Simpy are some examples of popular social bookmarking tools. Tag webpages and browse other people's bookmarks to get involved in the conversation. Digg, Propeller, and Reddit allow users to vote and comment on articles. Users of social picture and video sharing platforms such as YouTube, Flickr, and the like communicate with one another by exchanging photographs and videos and commenting on those of others. Wikis (Wikipedia, Wikia) allow users to collaborate by adding and updating content.

## 3. Social Media and their Effects

Many facets of our lives, including education, culture, administration, marketing, enterprises, and politics, have been impacted by social media. Through news, conversation, education, and marketing, social media have had a dramatic influence. In today's world, social media is a vital source of information. A wide variety of news organisations use Twitter and other social media to report on major events throughout the globe, and this information spreads like wildfire across several networks in record time. Keeping in contact is easier because of this new technology.

People in other towns, nations, and continents may easily stay in contact, which opens the door to learning about and exchanging ideas about other cultures. Social media has also played a significant role in promoting education. Children who use social media platforms from an early age improve their communication abilities and become more literate in the process. Marketing has undergone a major shift. Through social media interactions, businesses are becoming more customer-centric. They may get a feel for the market's demands by studying the market itself.

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#### 4. Social Media and C-Governance

In India, citizen-led government (C-governance) has emerged as a result of the rise of social media. Protests after the Nirbhaya gang rape and anti-corruption campaign by Anna Hazare were fueled by social media. Because they included the general public, these activities were a huge success on a national and international scale.

#### 5. Anti-corruption Movement

After Anna Hazare began a Satyagraha (nobel cause fasting) campaign, the Indian Parliament passed a strengthened Lokpal anti-corruption law. He went on a hunger strike when the Indian government denied his request. More than a million people in India and throughout the world supported the initiative. Twitter and Facebook were used by many people to demonstrate their support. In only 36 hours, online signature campaigns like *avaaz* amassed over 10 lakh signatures. In light of this, the government is considering the introduction of a Lokpal bill in the House of Representatives.

#### 6. Delhi Gang-rape

In December, an instance of gang rape in Delhi sparked widespread protests and outpourings of rage. The scruples of the people drove the nationwide demonstrations at New Delhi's India Gate location to seek justice for Nirbhaya. A large part of the turnout at India Gate was spurred on by the widespread use of social media. While the latest developments in the case were being broadcast on television, individuals seated on the streets were receiving updates by cell phone. They received all of the news on their mobile phones through Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets. On Twitter, users were able to connect with renowned persons who have a particular position in society by receiving their tweets' responses. Justice Verma's committee was set up after widespread objections by the public.

Later, on March 19th and March 21st, the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha both approved the Criminal Law [Amendment] Bill, 2013. The rapists face harsher penalties as a result of the modifications.

#### 7. Telangana Movement

The latest events in the Telangana problem show how social media is impacting administrative matters in a very evident way. Telangana's 57-year-old desire for independence was accepted by Congress' Working Committee on July 30th, 2013, when they voted to propose a resolution to the federal government. Students' involvement in the Telangana movement dates all the way back to 1969. Ten districts of Telangana have now been home to students who have helped to promote the movement and make it a popular one.

The student movement has benefited greatly from the use of social media. Several Facebook groups have been established up to unite the people. The communication on the statehood question was sparked by a Facebook status post or a tweet. In addition, it provided information on what is working well and what needs improvement. Thousands of people watched recordings of the demonstrations and movements posted to

YouTube. In other situations, the political landscape has been rewritten entirely because of the rise of social media. Politically, the effect has been felt in India and beyond. Before looking at the impact of social media on Indian politics, we need to examine its impact in the context of developed countries, where literacy and internet use are much higher.

#### 8. Social Media and Indian Politics

In a democracy like India, what role does social media play in politics? The political parties have now realised the significance of social media as a result of the "buzz" it has generated and the increasing participation of young people. New and strong medium is being recognised by everyone as a means of engaging the public and allowing improved communication. The influence of social media on Indian politicians of all ages has begun to be felt. Almost every political party now uses social media to spread their message to the general public. Buttons and banners aren't the only method politicians can connect with their supporters. Commercials, blogs, and hundreds of tweets fill the new political landscape.

In today's world of social media, politicians are able to stay in touch with constituents and promote their message in countless advertisements and on Facebook and Twitter (Foley, 2013). A new political discourse is being generated by social media. As a result, it removes political message from its traditional role in mass media and puts it in the hands of the people. To persuade others, nothing beats a personal recommendation from someone you know and trust. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter help to build that personal recommendation network.

#### 9. Social Media and Political Parties

Political parties in India have been engaged in a fierce online struggle in recent years, with the Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janta Party battling it out. There is a lot of online propaganda being utilised against one another. The battle of words is being fought across all media. Responding to one tweet prompts the other to do the same. On both sides, the most well-known tweets were those referring to Rahul Gandhi as "Pappu" and Narinder Modi as "Feku," respectively. Both sides attempt to minimise their own successes while exaggerating the other's failings. Both sides claim that they have a sizable following.

In the past, political parties didn't have their own websites, but now they have and some of them now utilise social media to communicate with their constituents. Every political party has its own website, and its leaders are active on a variety of media outlets, making people feel as though they are within reach. There's no need to schedule time with others or wait for them to speak. The leaders may be contacted with the press of a button.

Rahul Gandhi, the new vice president of the Congress party and one of India's most well-known youth celebrities, has engaged with the general public, particularly young people, using a variety of social media platforms apart from direct connection. Social networking platforms such as Facebook have been used by him in order to communicate with a wide

range of people, including high-profile individuals and the general public. In addition to writing blogs, he also posts them online to share his thoughts with others. Bharitya Janta Party leader L. K. Advani has a personal blog. Shashi Tharoor, a Congressman, was among the first elected officials to begin using Twitter. The chief minister of Gujarat, Mr. Narendra Modi, has utilised all media to communicate with the public. As a result of his use of social media, he has been able to communicate successfully with the country's young people and spread knowledge. He often cites the need of using social media to engage young people in the political process. Elections in Gujarat have shown the effectiveness of his strategy.

### 10. Social Media and Lok Sabha Elections

What impact will social media have on the outcome of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections? In order to better understand the demographics of India, further research is needed. India has a low level of internet use. However, the number of people using the service is expanding at an incredibly rapid rate. 190 million people were using the Internet in June 2013, according to a study done by IAMAI and IMRB International. Urban users account for 130 million of these people, whereas rural users account for 60 million. Other popular social media sites include twitter and Facebook. About 37 percent of urban Indian registered voters use the internet on a regular basis, according to a recent survey.

There are 25 million Indians living as NRIs. In this demographic, social media is a major part of their lives. Despite the fact that they do not have the right to vote, they have an impact on the voting habits of their family members who do. This shows that the number of individuals who use or are impacted by social media is by no means tiny. In terms of voter demographics, it seems like India will go to the polls in 2014 with a younger electorate than in 2013. The population today consists of 31.3% of those between the ages of 18 and 35. (Census 2011). The number of people voting for the first time is expected to rise to 149.36 million, according to the Election Commission. This demographic is identical to the one that is using social media. 24\*7.

The percentage of Facebook users in India between the ages of 18 and 25 is higher than in any of the other top 15 nations (33.7 percent) Information gleaned from Facebook in September 2010 (Inside Facebook Gold). Internet users, however, seldom vote in elections. According to the 2011 census, India has a total population of 121.01 billion people, of which 377.105.760 are found in urban areas (31.16 percent) Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) estimates that social media is used by 74% of all urban Indian internet users. This shows that social media may have a significant impact on the urban Indian populace in terms of influence. There are 833,087,662 or 68.83 percent of India's population living in rural areas, nevertheless.

Indians in rural regions have a literacy rate that stands at 68.91 percent, making up the vast bulk of their population. It

has been established in previous elections that rural voters have a significant impact on the outcome. People in rural areas have historically voted more often than those in cities and suburbs. Because rural populations are larger, but literacy rates are lower, they are less likely to be swayed by social media, which requires not just literacy but also a familiarity with the latest technological advances. Furthermore, in India, a voter's choice to vote is influenced by a variety of circumstances. Voters in India, whether urban and rural, prioritize the interests of their communities above everything else.

### 11. Conclusion

The 'aam aadmi' has been empowered and engaged to voice their political views in new ways because to the rise of social media. As a result of the rise of social media, the next generation is more engaged than ever in political discourse. Only those who read newspapers, watched news channels or participated in nukkads of a village or clubs had access to political debates in the past.

But today, thanks to social media, the Indian young are taking a more active role in their country's political debates. They devote much effort to debating and debating politics. They now have opinions on current political events and have a say in how decisions are made at work. But encouraging young people to vote and to use social media as a platform for political parties remains a pipe dream. In India, it may take decades for social media campaigning to become as popular as in the United States. The Indian political sphere is undergoing a social media revolution that is both genuine and rapid. It may not have immediate effects, but it will nevertheless play a major part in raising knowledge of political issues in a developing nation like India, which is a significant accomplishment.

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