



## SYSTEMATIC REVIEW ON SOCIAL MEDIA THROUGH DEMOCRACY WITH A FOCUS ON POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND PRACTICE

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### **Abstract:**

Social media has become a transformative influence in modern democratic nations, altering political communication and behaviour worldwide. The interplay between social media platforms and democratic processes, emphasising the impact of digital technology on political involvement, participation, and governance. Social media facilitates swift information distribution, promotes civic engagement, and offers a platform for varied perspectives, thereby reinforcing democratic principles like transparency and accountability. Simultaneously, it has transformed traditional political communication by facilitating direct engagement between political leaders and the public, hence diminishing reliance on conventional media outlets. The research underscores the difficulties linked to social media utilisation in democratic settings, encompassing the dissemination of misinformation, echo chambers, political polarisation, and the manipulation of public opinion via targeted campaigns. These difficulties elicit apprehensions over the quality of democratic discourse and the integrity of electoral procedures. By examining contemporary patterns and practices, it highlights the opportunities and threats posed by social media in influencing political behaviour and democratic results.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Democracy, Political, Communication, Practice.

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Social media has a major impact on political communication and practice in the current digital era, transforming democracy. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter (now X), Instagram, and YouTube have created new avenues for interaction between political organisations, institutions, and individuals, expanding the scope of democratic participation. Social media allows for a more dynamic, rapid, and decentralised interchange of ideas and information than traditional media, which usually uses a one-way communication model. Knowledgeable citizen participation, transparency, and accountability are fundamental to democracy. By enabling the quick dissemination of political information, promoting public conversation, and providing a forum for a variety of viewpoints, particularly those of marginalised

people, social media supports these ideals. These platforms are increasingly being used by political leaders and parties to spread their agendas, inspire supporters, and influence public opinion. Digital communication strategies are now closely linked to governance processes, policy discussions, and election campaigns. There are several concerns about integrating social media into political processes. The spread of false information, fake news, echo chambers, and algorithmic polarisation can affect public discourse and undermine well-informed decision-making. Furthermore, debates about the moral and legal implications of social media use in politics have been sparked by worries about data privacy, digital espionage, and voter manipulation. Despite these challenges, social media plays a crucial role in the development of modern democratic processes. It has made it possible for people to get more involved in political processes, from election participation to grassroots movements. It has also made it necessary for political institutions to adapt to a communication environment that is more open and participatory. Therefore, evaluating contemporary political processes and defending democratic values in the digital age require an understanding of the intersection of social media, democracy, and political communication.

## II. SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

**Ambadas, B. (2024).** This study investigates the importance of social media in India, emphasizing its use in political campaigns. A look at the 2014 Indian general elections shows how social media can affect how people vote, how they get involved in politics, and the results of the elections. The results show that social media was very important in getting young people and city voters to vote, which helped the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) win the election. The study shows how important social media is in Indian politics and how it may change political discourse, impact public opinion, and make people more involved in democracy. The findings have ramifications for political parties, candidates, and scholars aiming to comprehend the changing dynamics of political communication in India.

**Taneja, V. (2024).** This research study investigates the complex interplay between social media and Indian politics, examining its historical origins from the pre-independence period and the independence movement to its current role as a significant force in the Indian political arena. This research presents a thorough analysis that emphasizes the changing function of social media platforms in moulding political discourse, mobilizing public opinion and attitudes about various situations, and affecting electoral results. This study seeks to illuminate the transformative influence of social media on Indian politics by analyzing significant historical events and current trends, as well as their ramifications for the world's largest democracy and its government. This research paper looks at the many ways that social media affects communication, cultural exchange, business, and politics in the current world. This paper looks

at how social media platforms have changed the way people and groups interact with each other, get information, and take part in public discourse and raise the voice of the common man to the political regime. It does this by looking at current trends, ongoing media platforms, and scholarly literature. This study seeks to elucidate the complexities of social media's benefits and challenges in the modern context by examining critical themes such as algorithmic bias, echo chambers, online misinformation, and digital activism. Ultimately, this research enhances the understanding of the intricate interactions among technology, society, media challenges, and their effects on the populace and human behavior in the digital era.

**Ghosh, P.P. & Gupta, H. (2024).** The Indian government has set up dozens of welfare programs to help keep its inhabitants safe, but most people don't know much about them, which makes it hard for the programs to reach their goals. The authors of this literature study looked into how social media may be used as a way for the government to talk to and engage with citizens because more people in India are using it. The assessment looks at the pros and downsides of social media, as well as the strategic issues that come with it. It also looks at how traditional media is one-way and how social media is two-way. This review brings together the results of 50 peer-reviewed publications to look into how useful social media is for talking about government welfare programs. The research shows that Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, which are major social media sites, may be utilized to reach out to people, share information, and get them involved. The conclusion is that social media can be used alongside radio, TV, and newspapers, but it is not a good idea to completely replace traditional media. Strategic and methodical use of social media may assist in shaping public opinion by encouraging both agreement and disagreement.

**Kaur, P. & Singh, S. (2024).** One of the most important and useful tools for public communication nowadays is social media. The advanced communication technology of the 21st century has turned every part of civilization into a product. Social media is becoming an important element of everyday life, especially in politics. It is important for people to be actively involved in politics. People have known for a long time that free media is important for democracy and that it has a big effect on the results of elections. The use of social media as a place for different kinds of political activism has grown 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 a 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. During the elections, youth participation creates awareness about the importance of voting in democracy through electronic media.

**Rajesh, D. & Mane, A. (2024).** In the digital age, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become central to political engagement and democratic processes. This research paper explores the multifaceted impact of social media on political participation and democratic values. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, interviews, and content analysis, to examine how social media influences voter behavior, political mobilization, and the spread of misinformation. Key findings indicate that while social media has empowered political activism and expanded democratic participation through grassroots movements and targeted campaigns, it has also exacerbated political polarization and facilitated the spread of fake news. The research highlights the dual role of social media in enhancing political engagement while posing significant challenges to democratic integrity. By analyzing case studies and current regulatory efforts, the paper provides insights into the implications of social media for modern democracy and suggests areas for future research and policy development. The study concludes that balancing the benefits of social media with the need for robust regulation is crucial for preserving democratic processes in the digital era.

**Jain, A. (2023).** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most followed world leader on Instagram with 14.8 million followers. Check out the data for world leaders on Instagram. He is closely followed by Indonesian President Joko Widodo @Jokowi with 12.2 million followers, who more than doubled his followers over the past 12 months, according to the newly released 2018 World Leaders on Instagram study by leading global communications agency BCW (Burson Cohn & Wolfe). With 10 million followers, U.S. President Donald Trump is in third position. Social media has become an enabler for participation and democracy among citizens since it is believed that the social media sphere has the potential to enhance political participation. The politicians promote their controlled speech and present their point of view without being interrupted by the journalists or by the media format limitation. Social media has given privilege to the politicians to post a presumptive political agenda. By using the social media tool, politicians and the political parties interact apparently with more efficiency with their supporters, beyond the institutional and bureaucratic rigors. Assessing political conversations in social

media requires a deeper understanding of the underlying practices and styles; it comes as no surprise that in the last few years several politicians have integrated Twitter into their political campaigns.

**Raj, S. (2023).** Digital platforms have opened up new avenues of political participation for women across the globe, including in India. The digital media facilitated by the Internet has revolutionized the social and political landscape. It is argued that digital tools like social media platforms have democratized women's political participation in India. The digital platforms have provided accessibility to women to raise their voices on these platforms through social and political mobilization as well as community building. Cyberspace has offered newer forms of participation for women in India. From the Nisha Susan-led Pink Chaddi campaign in 2009 to another women-led movement, #MeToo, which gained momentum in 2018, women in India have utilized the digital space to raise their voices against sexual violence, oppression, and gender-based discrimination. Building on the large scholarship on media, democracy, and participation, in this article, I look at how digital media has offered newer forms of political participation in India. Looking at the wide literature on this subject, I also discuss how digital media has led to the construction of feminist counter-publics in India. It is not that digital media has only offered the spaces to women to counter or challenge the dominant discourse; these spaces have also become hotbeds of trolling and online harassment.

**Borah, D. et al. (2022).** Because of the emergence of social media, the political discourse has been totally transformed, since it has altered the manner in which information is disseminated, analyzed, and argued. Through the application of knowledge from the fields of information technology, political science, sociology, communication studies, and psychology, this multidisciplinary approach intends to investigate the intricate effects that social media platforms have on political discourse. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which social media platforms enable the rapid broadcast of information and the manipulation of public opinion, thus making them powerful tools for political mobilization. Additionally, it investigates the ways in which algorithms and echo chambers influence online debate and may contribute to the worsening of political polarization. The purpose of this article is to investigate the issues that are caused by disinformation and fake news on social media platforms, as well as to evaluate the impact that these issues have on democratic procedures and the quality of political discourse in general. This study investigates the psychological mechanisms that are responsible for political engagement on the internet. It takes into account a variety of factors, such as emotional contagion, cognitive biases, and the impact that anonymity has on user behavior. In addition, the research investigates the ways in which social media might facilitate political participation and civic engagement. Specifically, it examines the ways in which it can amplify voices that are marginalized and encourage

political discourse that is inclusive. A comprehensive understanding of the intricate connections that exist between political discourse and social media can be obtained through the utilization of this multidisciplinary approach. It provides the general public, scholars, and policymakers with essential information by elucidating the benefits and drawbacks associated with this shifting link.

**Divyshikha & Shankar, B. (2022).** In recent years, social media has emerged as a new aspect of political communication, as evidenced by the Twitter and Facebook feeds or pages of political candidates. In the past few years, social media has become more prevalent in election campaigns. It provides a platform for two-way communication. Political parties have started to use social networking sites to engage directly in conversations with voters and encourage more public conversation. Candidates can use social media and its highly visible environment to showcase themselves, communicate directly with their supporters, and spread the information about their policies. The purpose of this study is to evaluate people's political awareness in social media and to observe the change in the attitude of social media users after exposure to political content on social networking sites. The research is based on primary and secondary sources of information. For the conduct of the research, the survey approach was used for obtaining primary data, and an online semi-structured questionnaire was developed. The influence of social media on political communication is discussed in this paper.

**Giri, S. & Snehal, S. (2021).** The evolution of the Internet in the early 1990s has led to the global expansion of Internet networks throughout the world. This has given us opportunities to exchange opinions, ideas, and beliefs, and to think and express more readily and effectively, ultimately leading to easier access to various public platforms and the democratisation of expression on local and global affairs. Social media has become an important part of our daily life. A life without social media becomes like a day without having a glass of water. Social media has created inclusive participation of people in our democratic system; from electing their representative to addressing their grievances, it has played a vital role in our society. The paper tries to discuss some of the major aspects of social media, such as its impact on our political system, its impact on the constitutional freedom of expression, and some of the laws pertaining to social media, and presents some observations regarding its use and implication in our future for sustainable governance.

**Rodrigues, U. (2020).** Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed a landslide victory in the 2019 national election, with his Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) winning 303 seats, comfortably beyond the 272 seats required for a majority in the Indian Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). As has been the recent trend, the 2019 Indian election campaign was fought on social media apps and platforms. After the 2014 national election was named the 'first social media election' in India, it was predicted that WhatsApp, a

messaging app owned by Facebook, would play a significant role in the 2019 election campaign (Rodrigues 2018). During the state elections in 2018–2019, WhatsApp was increasingly being used by BJP and various opposition parties to keep in touch with their constituents. In fact, a number of political parties set up data analytics departments to analyze voter data at district and booth levels to tailor their election campaigns, and almost all regional and national leaders were using Facebook Live to connect with voters. Although traditional factors such as caste- and religion-based candidate selection and voting patterns, and more contemporary issues of unemployment and farmers' unrest were significant issues in the 2019 election campaign, it was the use of social media platforms as a communication tool for political campaigning that gained further ground for parties in India.

**Olaniran, B. & Williams, I. (2020).** Social networks are important agents of change because they are seen as a way for people who have been left out to have their voices heard. However, in some societies, social networks have become a place for fake news and propaganda, giving power to disruptive voices, ideologies, and messages. Twitter, Facebook, and Google are examples of social networks that can change civic engagement and essentially hijack democracy by influencing people to think a certain way.

**Darshan, B.M. & Kalyani, S. (2019).** The advent of digital media along with the recent boom of smartphones has changed the atlas of communication. The ubiquity of social media has led to its increased use in all aspects of communication as against conventional media. Politics is not an exception. The role of social media in political discourses, engagement, and mobilization is widely realized and practiced and has become an important mode of political communication in India. In this paper, we explore the current academic corpus on political communication in the context of social media. The broad aim of the present paper was to explore the current academic literature in the field of social media and political communication. The narrative literature review undertaken indicates scant work with limited focus on the broader issues. Social media influence on voting behavior and political engagement was the well-explored domain, but the determinants and uniqueness of such communication have not been explored. The indications from the review showcase that the magnitude and essence of political communication have changed through the years. The spectrum of political communication through social media has a great role in political and civic engagement. This study will be useful to the researchers in the fields of mass communication, journalism, and political science. The conventional mainstream media and social media are increasingly showing a pattern of convergence and mutual exclusiveness. One of the critical findings from the review is that the gender domains of social media and political communication in India have not been given much attention, and empirical evidence is

scanty. Future research in the field of social media in India should focus on the gendered spheres of political communication.

**Mir, M.A. (2019).** Without media or free press, democracy cannot be successful. In simple words, democracy is the government of the people, for the people, and by the people. In this sense, the active and vigilant participation of a free press is essential in a democratic society. It is the voice of the people. It plays an important role in the shaping of a healthy democracy. Media is considered a heart of democratic society. As an important source of information, it makes the people in all countries of the world aware. The media is generally considered the fourth pillar of democracy. It makes people conscious of different happenings from grounds such as sports, politics, economics, social, etc. Media is like a mirror also, which illustrates the basic reality, and sometimes it may be harsh. The present paper is an attempt to examine the role of media in Indian democracy.

**Valdez, J.L.V. (2018).** Individuals utilizing social media may leverage the Internet to organize and advocate for enhanced services, increased transparency, and substantive participation in the political sphere. Citizens can now communicate instantaneously, voice their concerns, organize, and publicly disseminate their issues. People worldwide can now influence global perceptions, prioritize issues on their national agendas, and promote political activism. Emerging technologies and social media have transformed interpersonal interactions and the exercise of freedom of expression and information, alongside other associated—and occasionally conflicting—fundamental rights.

### III. CONCLUSION:

Social media has become a transformative influence in modern democratic institutions, radically altering political communication and practice. It has broadened the public domain by facilitating expedited information delivery, enhanced political understanding, and increased citizen engagement. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter (X), and YouTube have diminished conventional boundaries between political leaders and citizens, promoting direct interaction, immediate involvement, and more inclusive discourse. The impact of social media on democracy is intricate and multifarious. Although it amplifies marginalised perspectives and fortifies participatory democracy, it concurrently poses issues including misinformation, echo chambers, political polarisation, and the manipulation of public opinion via targeted campaigns. These concerns can erode democratic principles and impair informed decision-making among the populace. In political communication, social media has transitioned from unilateral messaging to interactive, data-informed, and highly tailored communication. Political actors increasingly depend on digital channels for campaigning, agenda-setting, and mobilisation, rendering

online presence an essential element of contemporary political practice. In summary, social media presents both an opportunity and a challenge for democracy. Its capacity to improve transparency, accountability, and citizen participation is considerable; nonetheless, it necessitates responsible use, digital literacy, and robust regulatory frameworks to alleviate its hazards. An equitable strategy that fosters ethical discourse and protects democratic tenets is crucial for ensuring that social media positively enhances democratic government.

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