"ROLE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN 2014 GENERAL ELECTIONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PUNJAB"

Vishal Rambani

Centre For Advance Media Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala

Abstract

Digital media is the best approach for political parties to reach a worldwide audience in today's times of expanding social media usage and greater internet penetration, thanks to the proliferation of smartphones and the saturation of traditional media.It is now easier than ever to target specific groups of people and tailor campaigns to their preferences thanks to the wide reach of digital and social media platforms. This was India's first election in which social media was used by 1.2 billion people, and it was during the Lok Sabha elections of 2014. As far as political campaign promotion goes, India's marketing and PR sector is dominated by social media. A whole new battlefield has opened up in the war for attention. India's next Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, is widely expected to replace Barack Obama. With the use of hedging methods, politicians benefited from this election's results. The power of social media allowed to reach out to voters in ways that were previously unimaginable. This paper describes an overview of impact of social media on politics with history of Political Process in Punjab and Parliamentary Elections 2014 in Punjab. A survey was used in this paper. 390 social media users selected from Punjab of age group 18 to 46 years. Data analysed by SPSS.

Keywords: social media, politics, election, Punjab,

1.1   Introduction

The phrase "social media" was often thrown about during the 2014 Indian general election. Traditional mass media is strictly regulated by the Election Commission of India, hence political parties are increasingly relying on social media outlets to communicate their views. In our modern media-driven society, politicians have been relying on the internet for more than a decade to connect with the public. From the beginning, campaign goals, commitments, and other information were communicated through static websites. The use of social media platforms and social networking sites (SNS) by campaigns to engage with voters began in the mid-2000s. People are becoming more aware thanks to social media, which makes it simpler for them to access and share new forms of information. It had a significant influence on Romanian cities in 2012. The anti-corruption effort in India also shows the power of social media. In 2012, social activist Anna Hazare utilised social media to bring the people of New Delhi together. Social media is used by politicians to communicate with their people and persuade them to engage in either a protest or to vote. There are many different types of audiences that may be reached

502

with Web 2.0 technology, including political parties and social activists as well as high-ranking officials. Social media has affected campaigns in a variety of ways, not only in terms of distributing their message to a larger audience, but also in terms of influencing campaigns in other ways. It is possible to utilise social media activity to predict the result of a vote. Data from social media sites like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter are increasingly being used by various organisations to forecast the result of the next election. Elections have long been the foundation of India's democratic structure. Assembly elections are never the same because of the ever-changing political climate in whatever country or state where they are held. Consequently, the attention, involvement and choice of the individual voter tend to vary. Political parties in a democratic democracy like India need to conduct election campaigning, and they've utilised a number of strategies to accomplish it throughout the years. Prior to the advent of the internet and new technologies such as social media, traditional media had a big impact on elections. As technology and the internet have advanced, so too has the political atmosphere in India. Because of social media, our democracy has being reshaped. Most of the blame goes to the internet and cheap cellphones. When there were no Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, or other social media sites like these in existence, political parties were able to use them to great advantage during elections. Voters from all political parties may now easily contact with their elected representatives thanks to the development of these new technologies. In another way: In order to attract new, younger voters, political parties have turned to social media. Social media had an important role to play in December 2013's assembly elections in India's capital, Delhi, but Assam is a state that feels isolated. Despite the fact that Narendra Modi has used social media in the past, the atmosphere in Gujrat Assembly elections had not changed. "An example of how social media may influence elections was employed by the Aam Aadmi Party during the Delhi Assembly Elections of 2013.

A lot of people used the phrase "social media" during the Indian legislative elections of 2014. Politicians used social media to communicate with their intended audience. India's Election Commission monitors traditional media, making social media a popular method of communication for political parties. The use of social media by politicians is also on the rise as a means of reaching out to a wider audience in the age of mass media. The 2008 presidential election in the United States was the first election in which the SNS's impact on voters was fully realised. President Obama's campaign relied heavily on Facebook's ability to connect with young people. Thanks to this campaign, he received the support of about 70% of voters under the age of 25. Anna Hazare, a social activist in New Delhi in 2012, utilised social media to spread her anti-corruption message.(Sen, 2016)

1.2 Parliamentary Elections 2014 in Punjab

The biggest surprise in the Punjab parliamentary elections of 2014 was the electorate's surprising support for the debutant Aam Aadmi Party. (AAP). All four of AAP's seats in the Lok Sabha were in Punjab, where it beat off 434 other candidates. The AAP placed third in eight of the state's 13 seats, with more votes than the winning candidate's margin of victory in seven of them, which indicates that the party had a substantial effect on the final electoral result. With the AAP's electoral triumph, the state's bipolar party system, which had been in existence since the 1997 assembly elections, looked to be on the verge of dissolving in the approaching 2017 assembly elections. In a post-poll study conducted by the CSDS in 2014, the AAP's victory was not primarily due to a combined anti-incumbency factor operating against the Congress and the Akali Dal-BJP combination, popularly known as the "Kejriwal factor." Aside from 2012, when the Congress and Akali governments failed miserably, the state's electorate's desperation had a larger role in the party's success than any structural issues. The AAP's well-known candidates and volunteers also helped the party's success.

The unexpected reaction of the people to the AAP in Punjab's 2014 parliamentary elections was the most important feature of the poll. There were just four seats in Punjab won by the party, which fielded candidates from all across India as well as from regional states. It is thus possible to say that Punjab deviated from the national trend in favour of the BJP by denying the party any significant gains in alliance with the Shiv Sena, as well as other states like Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Assam, and Telangana. Jammu and Kashmir and others3 also deviated from this trend (SAD). It was a one-seat gain for the governing SAD-BJP alliance, which had won four, the BJP two, and the Congress three seats in parliament in 2009. However, it is noteworthy that only the House of Representatives lost members in 2009. **(Kumar, 2014)**

1.3 Statement of the Problem

For political leaders in Punjab who largely depend on social media to promote their message, this study may be very useful to them. An examination of social media and mass communication in the 2014 general election in Punjab, where the Aam Aadmi Party won four seats despite having only one television network and a handful of widely considered mainstream newspapers, will shed light on the shifting dynamics of election campaigning. The electoral commission believes that at least 90,000 of the state's young voters were reached by legislators throughout the state. Social media had a huge role in this result. This year's crop of youthful, tech-savvy voters was a target for all political parties.

Young people nowadays can stay in contact with anybody they choose because to the widespread availability of smartphones, iPhones, and iPads.

1.2 Objectives

- To find out the patterns of the usage of Social media among people.

- To investigate the use of social media for political campaigns in General Election 2014.

- To check the integration of Social media in Lok Sabha Elections in Punjab.

- To understand any kind of potential threat from Social media to Traditional media.

- To analyse the social media using habits among political candidates of Lok Sabha Election of Punjab.

- To study the hiring of Public relation services by the Punjab politicians and how they conducted their political campaigns during the Lok Sabha 2014 election.

- To study those Lok Sabha Constituencies of Punjab, where people voted for candidates of Aam Aadmi party for the first time other than main political parties.

1.3 Hypotheses

- People are using social media to maintain their profiles instead of focusing on the any kind of political activities.

- Politicians of Punjab excessively used social media for their political campaign during Lok Sabha Election 2014.

- The majority of the politicians had not direct control over their profiles on Social media sites and maintaining by their Public relations agencies.

- The people of the four Lok Sabha Constituencies of Punjab were more concerned with their local issues instead of the and.

2.1 Literature Review

The general elections of 2014 marked the start of a new era for Indian media. Narendra Modi's ascent to prominence in Indian politics was facilitated by his use of digital media for public relations. Modi tweeted 1,230 times between April 15 and August 15, 2017. The "spiritual nationalism" promoted by Mohandas Gandhi has been replaced by the "selfie nationalism" that I believe Modi's focus on social media governance has brought about. Modi's right-wing In addition to his Hinduism and unwavering support for big business, his portrayal of himself as a global leader to whom Indians of all castes and classes can relate, and his silence on issues such as minorities' rights and poverty, as well as India's variety of religious traditions, all contribute to his nationalist fervor.Given Modi's "selfie nationalism" and the widening rural-urban divide, I believe India's democracy is more like a "delegate" than a "representative" democracy, as O'Donnell puts it.

(somya singh, 2017) Democracies are attempting to figure out if they can use social media to reliably predict election results because it is becoming the dominant mode of communication. Social media

(Twitter) may have had an impact on the 2014 General Election results, according to a new study. More than 8 million buzzes were generated by 12 Indian political parties between January 1, 2014 and April 9, 2014 for this study. The 2014 General Elections outcome was strongly impacted by social media buzz, according to a wide range of studies.

(Duhan, 2017) During the 2014 Indian general election, social media was largely believed to have had a substantial impact on the outcome. When it comes to mobilising its followers, the BJP administration has made extensive use of television, Twitter, Facebook, and other kinds of social media. The BJP's win was made possible in part by social media, but other elements also played a role. Social media has a direct influence on how young people vote, according to this report. Additionally, it would examine at how social media affects the choices made by young people and first-time voters in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party in elections.

(BAJAJ, 2017) Bharatiya Janata Party used Twitter during the 2014 Indian election campaign in order to establish a focus on development and governance in order to criticize the Congress Party. Focusing on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and using Twitter and traditional campaigning, the BJP crafted a unique election narrative.

(J, 2017) An increasing body of data demonstrates that social media is having an effect on how individuals talk and communicate. Increasingly, citizens are using the Internet to not only learn about politics, but to actively participate in it. The use of social media, particularly in political contexts, is increasing. Microblogging services (like Twitter) and social networking sites (like Facebook) have recently been suggested as ways to increase political participation. People can use Twitter to share news and opinions, but political organizations are increasingly turning to Facebook pages and groups as a way to engage their constituent's directly in political dialogue and spur more participation in the medium.

(kawaljeet kaur kapoor, 2015) In India's 2014 parliamentary elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party decisively beat the Indian National Congress, electing Narendra Modi as the country's 15th prime minister. Newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Indian voter populace were effectively able to communicate via this election's unique campaigning techniques. When Barack Obama was running for president, Namo relied significantly on his usage of social media and marketing methods. The fusion of social media and election campaigns has radically altered the political landscape in India. Team Modi's efforts to break India's decades-long ties with the Congress Party will be examined in terms of their use of social media in gaining an edge over their opponents.

3.1 Research Methodology

This chapter explains the study's methodologies and measures, as well as ethical considerations, data gathering, and analysis.In the academic sense, research is a scholarly endeavour. It has been said by researchers that research involves outlining and redefining problems, formulating hypotheses about potential solutions, collecting data, drawing conclusions, and then testing those conclusions to see if they are in line with the hypotheses that were developed.

3.2 "Research Design"

A study design is a tool for determining which technique is best suited to a certain set of research goals and variables. It is possible to arrange data collecting and analysis based on the research questions given at the outset of the project. The purpose of this article is to examine the influence of social media on the 2014 general election. A descriptive study may be conducted in a variety of ways, including both qualitative and quantitative methods. In this study, researchers used both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It's a hybrid approach. When doing research, it's important to identify the study's goals and objectives, as well as collect and analyse participant data. For this study, social media played an important role in the 2014 general election, with a focus on Punjab.

3.3 "Methods and Tools used"

The data was gathered using a survey. When it comes to social science research, surveys are a typical method of gathering information. A representative sample is used in all surveys to characterise or explain the characteristics or attitudes of the population. With an eye on Punjab in mind, checklists were developed to help analyse a study on how social media played an important role in the 2014 general election. A survey of 390 social media users in the Punjab age range was conducted (18 to 46 years).

3.4 Data analysis

Analysis is the process of interpreting raw data to identify and highlight important information for decision-making purposes. It's necessary to do data analysis before beginning the data preparation process, which includes data entering, editing, and coding. Data must be accurate and can be quickly analysed with the assistance of software tools in order for it to be useful. These data were put into a spreadsheet in order to perform the research. Each respondent's replies were assigned a number value before being placed into a spreadsheet. The SPSS toolbox was used to analyse and model the data.

The SPSS 26.0 statistical programme was used to analyse the data in this study. Other statistical tests were employed to examine the most relevant data. The most critical aspects of the research were brought to light using percentage analysis.

4.1 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A thorough explanation of how the questionnaire results should be interpreted. Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were used in the research. When there are more than two variables, ANOVA is used to show the relationship between the variables, with one variable serving as the independent variable and the other as the dependent one.

4.1.1 One way-ANOVA Test Description

Anova test onsocial media really influence the voters' thought and decision-making

ANOVA			
	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Decision was influenced by Social Media	.159	.313	.816
For political information medium is more trustworthy	4.589	10.448	.000
Social Media will play a vital role in the coming elections or people return to the traditional media	12.652	28.327	.000
Medium of communication has been hit hardest on the arrival of Social Media	5.114	8.224	.000
There was a lot of propaganda on social media	26.004	14.782	.000
Hate contents/allegations were common on social media	33.946	20.827	.000
Political updates were instantaneous	29.523	18.840	.000
Received political information even without seeking it.	26.389	17.197	.000
usually misinformed by a political post on social networking sites	3.677	2.631	.050
There was lot of misinformation	8.673	6.175	.000
With the arrival of Social Media, people no longer blindly trust the traditional media news coverage	26.699	45.824	.000
There any chance that social Media will increase its influence further in the coming elections	20.954	34.435	.000
Voters from poor economic background are mostly outside the reach of Social Media	11.723	23.895	.000
Presence of a political party on social media accurately reflects its popularity among the voters	.943	4.676	.003
Social Media to influence others in support of your favourite candidate	2.019	10.169	.000
Medium is more trustworthy for gathering news	9.606	6.733	.000
Traditional media losing its influence after arrival of Social Media	8.435	15.984	.000
Medium carries the voice of the people	9.034	15.656	.000
Aware of "Paid News" practice in the traditional media (Newspaper/TV)	.872	6.445	.000

Opinion, who is more corrupt- media reporters or the owner of media house	1.718	11.237	.000
Newspapers of which language can be accused of publishing the paid news more often	.799	3.310	.020
Television and the Print Media were influenced by political parties through corrupt practices	8.668	15.196	.000
Social media, lately become very popular for political purposes	1.065	6.279	.000
Candidate's profile or pages on social media sites help you to learn more about them	6.392	12.133	.000
"Political information was sufficient enough to enable me make an informed vote choice"	11.204	7.357	.000
During the elections which medium you preferred for political activities	5.833	5.016	.002
Shared the information of your favourite candidate on Social Media	3.148	15.949	.000

The findings of the ANOVA test provide valuable insights into the influence of social media on voters' thoughts and decision-making, specifically in the context of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections in Punjab.

For political information, the medium is more trustworthy ($F = 10.448$, $p < 0.001$): This result indicates that participants in Punjab considered traditional mediums such as newspapers and television to be more trustworthy sources of political information compared to social media. This finding aligns with the perception that established media outlets have a longer-standing reputation for reliability and credibility.

Social media will play a vital role in the coming elections or people will return to traditional media ($F = 28.327$, $p < 0.001$): The significance of this result suggests that participants believed social media would have a significant impact on the coming elections in Punjab. It indicates that social media was seen as a platform that could influence political communication and potentially shape voters' decisions.

Medium of communication has been hit hardest on the arrival of Social Media ($F = 8.224$, $p < 0.001$): This finding implies that participants perceived traditional mediums, such as newspapers and television, to have faced challenges and experienced a decline in influence following the rise of social media. It suggests that social media's emergence has disrupted the traditional landscape of political communication in Punjab.

There was a lot of propaganda on social media ($F = 14.782$, $p < 0.001$): Participants acknowledged the presence of propaganda on social media platforms during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections in Punjab. This indicates concerns about the spread of misinformation and biased content, potentially influencing voters' perception of political parties and candidates.

Hate contents/allegations were common on social media ($F = 20.827$, $p < 0.001$): The significant result suggests that hate speech and allegations were prevalent on social media platforms during the election period in Punjab. This highlights a potential negative aspect of online political discourse, which could impact public sentiment and the electoral process.

With the arrival of Social Media, people no longer blindly trust traditional media news coverage ($F = 45.824$, $p < 0.001$): This finding indicates that the advent of social media led to a decrease in blind trust in traditional media's news coverage among participants in Punjab. It suggests that social media platforms provided alternative perspectives and information sources that challenged the monopoly of traditional media outlets.

4.1.2 Discussion

As a means of determining the effect of social media on the 2014 Punjabi election. To compile the information needed for this investigation, the researcher used a descriptive research approach. The interpretation of diverse data and statistics is a major part of the descriptive research design patent. To conduct our study, we relied on primary as well as secondary data and information sources. Most of the core data was gathered via the use of a well-crafted questionnaire. The researcher was able to acquire data that was both closed and open-ended by using this questionnaire. Survey responses had to be collected online because they couldn't be collected in person, so a form was shared with those who participated in order to collect their responses. The researcher also consulted secondary sources of information. Previously published papers and articles were used to supplement the present research. In addition, other publications in magazines, books online, and other websites have disclosed political social media. It was necessary to consider the sampling limitations while determining the study's sample size. This research has a sample size of 390 people. These people, who range in age from 18 to 46, are active on social media.

Conclusion:

The ANOVA results shed light on the influence of social media on voters' thoughts and decision-making during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections in Punjab. While traditional media remained perceived as more

trustworthy, social media was recognized as playing a vital role and impacting political communication. However, concerns were raised regarding the prevalence of propaganda, hate speech, and the erosion of blind trust in traditional media. These findings underscore the need for guidelines and responsible use of social media by political candidates and electoral officials to ensure fair and informed electoral processes. Future research and efforts should aim to address the challenges and leverage the potential of social media in political contexts while mitigating its negative consequences

References

BAJAJ, S. G. (2017). The Use of Twitter during the 2014 Indian General Elections. *Https://Www.Jstor.Org/*, *57*.

Duhan, P. (2017). *Influence of Social Media on the First Time Voters and Youth In Favour Of Bhartiya Janta Party*. *11*. http://www.csjournals.com/

J, B. (2017). *Social media and its impacts on politics*. *4*. https://research.vit.ac.in/

kawaljeet kaur kapoor, yogesh k dwivedi. (2015). Metamorphosis of Indian electoral campaigns: Modi's social media experiment. *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, *11*.

Kumar, A. (2014). 2014 Parliamentary elections in Punjab: Explaining the electoral success of Aam Aadmi Party. *Journal of Punjab Studies*.

Sen, S. (2016). SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS USES BY THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN PUNJAB. *Shodhganga*. http://hdl.handle.net/10603/169341

somya singh, pramod pathak et. a. (2017). Social media as an upcoming tool for political marketing effectiveness. *Science Direct*, *22*.