ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIAN POLITICS: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The rapid expansion of social media has profoundly altered the political landscape, influencing political discussions, shaping public opinion, and impacting electoral processes. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp have revolutionized political communication, making it more dynamic, instantaneous, and interactive. These digital spaces enable politicians, political parties, and citizens to engage in discourse in unprecedented ways. This research seeks to examine how social media influences political dialogue, shapes public sentiment, and affects election outcomes.

Akey advantage of social media in politics is its ability to reach a broad audience instantly. Politicians and parties leverage these platforms for election campaigns, policy promotion, and voter engagement, often bypassing traditional media. Its significance can be seen in a better alternative of main stream media particularly at the time when the main stream media is under control and it seems to be working for corporates and ruling Modi regime. Social media also empowers individuals by offering direct access to political figures and real-time political updates. It fosters discussions on critical issues, encouraging political participation and activism. Additionally, these platforms allow targeted political outreach through data-driven strategies, making campaigning more effective and precise.

Despite its benefits, social media presents significant challenges in political engagement. The rapid spread of misinformation and fake news has become a major concern, shaping public perception and sometimes even influencing election results. Manipulated narratives, biased reporting, and misleading content can misinform voters and contribute to political polarization. Moreover, the misuse of social media for propaganda, hate speech, and cyber bullying complicates online political interactions.

This study will explore both the benefits and drawbacks of social media in politics. By analysing real-world cases, it aims to provide insights into how social media is transforming political processes and suggest strategies to address its negative effects.

KEYWORDS: *Political Communication, Public Opinion Influence, Election Campaigning, Misinformation And Fake News.*

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