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## **Political Campaigns and Elections: Analysing Political Strategies, Election Campaigns, Voter Behaviour, and The Influence of Social-Media in Politics**

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### **Abstract:**

An election campaign is a connected series of activities (such as public speeches, campaigning, telephone calls to voters, organizing events, and advertisements) designed to elect a candidate or group of candidates to elected office. During local elections each candidate conducts his own separate election campaign; However, a candidate endorsed by an electorate may decide not to run his own election campaign and instead rely entirely on the electorate to conduct campaign activities on behalf of the candidate. Alternatively, a candidate and an electorate may agree to run complementary campaigns in which both the candidate and the electorate conduct campaign activities designed to elect that candidate to a particular local government.

### **Keywords:**

Political Campaign, Political Election, Candidate

### **Introduction:**

A political campaign is an organized effort that seeks to influence the progress of decision-making among a particular group. In democracies, political campaigns often refer to election campaigns, through which representatives are elected or referendums are held. In modern politics, the most high-profile political campaigns focus on general elections and candidates for head of state or government, often president or prime minister. A campaign message consists of the ideas a candidate wants to convey to voters. Those who agree with his views are to support him as he runs for political office. A message often contains several talking points about strategic issues. Issues summarize the main ideas of the campaign and are repeated over and over again to create a lasting impression on voters. In many elections, the opposition tries to get the candidate "off message" by raising policy or personal questions unrelated to the talking points. Most campaigns prefer to keep the message broad to appeal to the largest number of potential voters. A message that is too narrow can alienate voters or slow a candidate down by clarifying details.

### **Political / Election Campaign:**

Election campaigning is the means by which candidates and political parties prepare and present their ideas and positions to voters in the run-up to elections. Contestants use a variety of techniques to reach voters and deliver their messages, including traditional and new media, public events, written materials, or other media. In some countries, public media and/or space is allocated to contestants for these purposes (considered indirect public campaign financing). The dates of the official election campaign period, usually a month or several months leading up to Election Day, are often legally defined. In most countries, the legal window for campaigning ends a day or two before election day, providing a so-called "black-out period" immediately before voting begins. Parties and candidates shall establish physical premises from which they carry out campaign activities and overall functions.



Democratic elections require information as well as free votes and a fair opportunity for candidates to gain support and motivate supporters to help them gain office. Election campaigning is important to achieve those goals. Elections that are truly competitive give the contestants an equal opportunity to convey their position to the citizens and compete for votes. Election campaigns give candidates and political parties an opportunity to present their message to citizens, helping voters make educated and informed decisions on election day. To help ensure a level playing field and ultimately elections that reflect the will of citizens, any public resources allocated to electoral contestants must be fair. Decision-making processes about how those resources are allocated must be transparent, so that competitors and the wider public can understand and trust the results. With access to information about election campaigns, including official campaign windows and allocation of public resources, parties and candidates can structure their campaign activities and understand what rights they have from the state.

### **Political Strategies:**

It is better to analyse the political scenario in your constituency before taking the political campaign to the voters. Understanding your target audience helps political parties and candidates feel the local pulse and identify the issues and concerns that constituents care about most. Following are some important political strategies:

- **Know Your Competition:** Knowing your competition can help you win elections. As you research any competitors, identify their strengths and weaknesses. Check out his messages that resonated well with voters. Are they appealing to a certain age group or gaining followers because of a certain strategy? Use this information to your advantage so you can tailor your campaign to attract voters to you and expand your reach. On the other hand, knowing their weaknesses will help you highlight which messages or marketing channels have had less success. If you notice that your competitor has put a lot of effort into a certain area but isn't getting much of a response, you know to focus your efforts differently. Develop competitor analysis reports and capture their current position in the electoral landscape. This will help clarify where you stand and how much effort you need to put in to gain an advantage over other candidates. This political campaign strategy will help you to know your strong points and know which areas need improvement.
- **Strike an emotional connection with a relatable message:** Whether running for local or presidential elections, a message that connects emotionally with voters is often the most effective. So, think about what you and your campaign stand for and incorporate that into the issues and concerns most important to voters. The idea of creating a strong message is to let your voters know you care. It is an attempt to find common ground between you and your constituents to gain their support. Keep it simple and clear while addressing current issues facing voters. Try to come across as truthful and credible and answer the most pressing questions on your constituents' minds.
- **Plan Your Budget:** Think strategically when budgeting for your political campaign. This includes where, when and why your campaign will be spending. Your finances should cover all aspects of a political campaign from start to finish. One of the best political campaign strategies for budgeting is to track your finances back from the end goal. Start by estimating the number of votes you need to win. Next is determining the most effective means of reaching your target audience, including social media, door-to-door canvassing, and phone banking. The most important part is to always stay on top of



your budget and finances. You can use software like Aristotle's Campaign Manager to create a comprehensive budgeting system for your political campaign.

- **Recruit volunteers:** Your political campaign needs enthusiastic supporters. Establish a system that recognizes and nurtures volunteers among your supporters. These volunteers will expand the spread and efficiency of the campaign by having a workforce on the ground to carry out tasks ranging from social media posting to canvassing. You can ask your current staff and volunteers to talk about their experiences and why they trust you and your policies. Using a management tool like campaign management software can help you keep track of who is volunteering and any training or tasks that need to be allocated to volunteers.

- **Create Fundraising Channels:** Running for office can be expensive, and political campaigns require a lot of money to finance the marketing you want to run. However, figuring out how to raise money for your political campaign can be quite challenging. There are many channels to use for fundraising, including:

- Emails
- Text messages
- Flyers
- Door-to-door appeals
- Online fundraising pages on social networks
- Fundraiser events

You need to explore all possible options. Knowing your target audience's familiarity with fundraising channels will make or break this strategy. For example, if you target senior citizens and only use digital fundraising channels like a fundraising website or social media page, they are less likely to participate. In this case, an appeal through radio advertising, flyers or door-to-door brochures can do the trick. On the other hand, social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn may work best when targeting younger voters.

- **Tand Out in the Competition:** The best way to convert potential supporters into voters is to address local factors. Some great ways to stand out locally are to participate in or host community events or volunteer for charities. You can engage with supporters on social media by hosting live Q&As or posting videos of debates, events or good work you do for the community. You can also meet influential people in the community to expand your network and gain insight into local area politics.

- **Get Out the Vote (GOTV):** As the election date approaches, step up your efforts to motivate your supporters to get out and vote for you. Maintain a high-quality voter file such as the voter data offered by Aristotle. With the right data, you can stay in touch, provide timely and regular updates throughout the campaign so you can stay in touch with your supporters. Your volunteers can participate in door-to-door canvassing to ensure that potential voters get out and vote for you. According to a Yale study, this method can increase turnout by 9 percent. You can also use text messages and social media posts to get voters out, especially on Election Day.

### Voter Behaviour:

The most interesting questions about elections are not related to who won, but to questions such as why people voted the way they did or what the implications of the results were. The answers to these questions are not always easy. Merely looking at



campaign events and incidents will not suffice. Unique aspects of elections must be blended with a more general understanding of electoral behaviour to form a complete explanation.

Voting behaviour is how people decide how to vote. This decision is shaped by a complex interaction between individual voter attitudes and social factors. Voter attitudes include characteristics such as ideological predispositions, party identification, satisfaction with the current government, public policy orientation, and feelings about a candidate's personality traits. Social factors include race, degree of religion and religiosity, social and economic class, educational level, regional characteristics, and gender. The degree to which an individual identifies with a political party influences voting behaviour, as does social identification. Voter decision making is not a purely rational endeavour but is deeply influenced by personal and social biases and deeply held beliefs as well as characteristics such as personality, memory, emotions and other psychological factors. Avoiding wasted votes through voting advice applications and strategic voting can influence voting behaviour.

Voter behavior is often influenced by voter loyalty. Voters' satisfaction with what a political party has achieved and dealt with is correlated with voters' intention to vote for the same party again. Thus, the more satisfied voters are with how a political party has performed, the more likely they are to vote again in the next election. Additionally, the information provided to the voter is critical to understanding voting behavior. The information given to the voter influences not only who to vote for, but also if they intend to vote.

#### **Influence of Social-Media in Politics:**

The use of social media in politics refers to the use of online social media platforms in political processes and activities. Political processes and activities include all activities related to the governance of a country or region. These include political organizations, world politics, political corruption, political parties and political values. The Internet has created a medium of communication that plays an important role in disseminating news, and social media has the power to change not only the message but also the dynamics of political corruption, values, and conflict in politics. Due to the use of social media in electoral processes, global conflicts and extreme politics, diplomacy around the world has become less private and more public.

Social media has been used to allow anyone with an internet connection to become a content creator and empower its users. The idea of "new media populism" includes how citizens can include disenfranchised citizens and how the public can have an engaged and active role in the political conversation. New media, including social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, can increase people's access to political information. Social media platforms and the Internet have facilitated the dissemination of political information that counters the tactics of mainstream media, which are often centralized and top-down and involve high barriers to entry.

Social media platforms are increasingly used by adults in India for political news and information, especially when it comes to election time. A November 2019 study found that one in five Indian adults get their political news primarily through social media. 21% of adults use social media to get their political and election news. In a small study conducted in 2022, they found that 217 out of 500 Indian participants reported that they got most of their information about politics from social media sources.





Initially, political parties used the Internet as a one-way communication tool to inform the public through their websites. With the subsequent rise of social media and technology, communication patterns changed to a two-way street, making social media a more powerful political tool. In the current scenario of the Indian political landscape, all political parties and their candidates at various levels are active and engaged on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, personal websites and blogs. Political parties have realized the importance of social media and are using it along with underground political activities. Pages of political parties, elected representatives, election commissions, policy makers and various state governments showcase their work on platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Party members and elected representatives often make sarcastic taunts or criticize the opposition party and its activists. Even current Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat', where he shares his thoughts on All India Radio and DD channel, is telecast live on YouTube and Facebook. Political activities on social media have increased before elections. There are online campaigns, manifestos and promises on social media, entry and exit polls by various media outlets and third party organizations, on-ground activities and live broadcasts on social media, and a lot of political discussion by citizens.

Online activities related to politics are essential and act as a motivation for the younger generation to participate in political events. Social media use, political information and knowledge, and political participation are interrelated. This particular change is playing an important role in the elections of developing nations like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. The Internet and social media have proven to be important tools for disseminating political information. On the contrary, this phenomenon poses a threat to democracy, as witnessed by European countries and even the presidential elections of the United States. As mentioned earlier, social media is the biggest source of information for people; However, it has a high potential for misinformation, propaganda and manipulation of public views. Social media and active participation of citizens can influence the political structure of a nation. As it is often quoted that a tool is only as good as its user, social media is only as good as its users; It increases user intent. Politics is about power and the tendency of people to go to any extent to get power is evident. There has been a recent rise in IT cells, which are organizations in the guise of pages/groups/individuals that help increase the influence of online political activity. These IT cells of different political parties spread misinformation and spread fake news to politically influence people and their opinions. The level of fake news in circulation and its impact on citizens led to the new term 'WhatsApp University', a caricature of people who believe everything on social media without checking its authenticity.

Although there are various researches on the impact of social media on politics and the influence of social media in the Indian political scenario, this study aims to explore the impact in the millennial era and the changing political climate since the advent of the BJP. Gaining power in 2014. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between political social media activity (SMA), political efficacy (PE), and real-life political participation (RLPP). Additionally, it examines the awareness on the IT cell and also examines whether people are receptive to new voices in political discourse.

### **Conclusion:**

Political campaigns are efforts by political organizations to gain public support through persuasive communication to influence public policy. This broad definition



encompasses all kinds of campaigns, from neighbourhood organizations seeking to influence local politicians to political parties and candidate campaigns seeking to get into office to shape policy themselves. Campaigns are important for representation in pluralistic democracies. Campaigns are a means by which groups of individuals with a common cause can communicate their cause, enabling others with similar concerns to join their campaign, and therefore campaigns give voice to those individuals and supporters of their cause.

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