

Social Media & 2014 Election Campaign

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Abstract

The 2014 Indian general election marked a significant transformation in the use of social media as a tool of political communication and election campaigning. With the rapid expansion of internet access, smartphones, and social networking platforms, political parties and candidates increasingly used digital media to reach voters, circulate campaign messages, build political identities, and encourage public engagement. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and WhatsApp provided new channels for direct communication between political actors and citizens, reducing dependence on traditional forms of mass media. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), particularly through Narendra Modi's campaign, made extensive use of digital technologies, including social-media outreach, online advertisements, video messages, and digitally mediated public interactions. At the same time, the election demonstrated the growing importance of volunteers, online communities, and user-generated content in shaping political discussions. Social media also enabled rapid dissemination of political information, slogans, campaign narratives, and responses to opponents. However, its growing role raised concerns regarding misinformation, political polarization, privacy, and the uneven access to digital technologies among different sections of society. This paper examines the role and significance of social media during the 2014 election campaign, focusing on its changing relationship with political communication, voter engagement, and campaign strategies. It argues that the 2014 election represented an important stage in the institutionalization of social media within Indian electoral politics.

Keywords: Social Media, 2014 General Election, India, Political Communication, Election Campaign, BJP, Narendra Modi, Digital Politics, Voter Engagement, Political Communication Technology.