

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

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Political communication or campaign through social media is now turning into a basic paradigm of Indian elections. For politician, the election is not about getting elected; it is about getting socially elected. Social media has changed the way people think, write and react but political pundits believe it has also influence the way people vote. Most of the political parties are aware of the pulse and the impulse of the public on social media timelines, which is why more and more politician are realising the importance of social media as an electoral tool. As a result, for the general election, digital strategies have become central to planning political rallies and party manifesto are no longer conspiracies of a coterie but are laid bare in the public eye, if not crowd-source to voters at large. Canvassing demand a party's interactive presence on social platform like twitter, Facebook, You tube, Google plus. And so for anyone wanting to read the sentiment of the people, the notion of the dipstick survey has been replace by a tweetstick survey.

Social media connects people and gets them talking and sharing is one thing. But it become more meaningful when it allow campaigner to know the voters, target a specific audience, splice demographics, mobiles support, and urge people to participate. When some of these people actively engage in political debates, they become a great tool in spreading the word and influencing opinion.

With increasing knowledge of the computer and internet and invention of many devices in information communication technology (ICT) politicians as well as the electorate. were now familiar with use of blogs, websites and other social media platforms for communicating political issues. The new media are not only empowering people but they are also democratizing human relations. The use of the internet by politicians to communicate with their constituencies has extended the concept of 'mediatization'¹ of politics in developing countries. Increasing use of the internet or new media has inspired tremendous and influential innovations in political campaign

communication. During elections they are now useful tool of servicing the political system by providing information, discussion and debate. Political gladiators of all shades of opinions, ideologies, intents and goals use the media with the belief that political communication through media exerts pressure or influence on people's perception and behaviors as needle effect of media messages

Social media is emerging as a substantial promotion tool during elections by the political parties to connect and express their vision, to influence voters, to achieve its objective to help them increase their visibility or to gain majority. The perception of Indian people towards the modern marketing tools in politics remains unexplored. Social media is not only the current generation's line of communications technologies but it has also changed daily activities and connected people in a manner never before possible. In the same manner, social media has also transformed politics in India and globally. Social Media marketing have created a new dimension in online advertising and political marketing resulting in easy access for the parties and political leaders or institutions to keep in touch with the people understanding their needs, wants and behavior. In this paper, the influence of social media on voter's behavior and how political marketing takes new dimensions is discussed.

In the 21st Century, Social media have become an essential space of public communication. Every organization which provides products and services irrespective of whether it is big or small have recognized the privilege of social media to reach the customers. Marketing activities had been highly traditional earlier, but due to the increasing number of users in Internet there is a positive trend towards digital marketing. This trend has been catalyzed to a great extent by social media and the business marketing strategies. Increasing active users in social media has provided new opportunities to marketing strategists to target an emerging section of society that is heavily influenced by social media. Social media is a novel platform and a tool to help countries and its societies to create, express, share their thoughts and ideas without barriers. In the recent years, Political parties in India have also taken up this space understanding the success stories of corporates reaching the customers more easily and quickly.

The term 'Political Marketing' was first coined by Kelly in 1956. Political marketing can be described as a process by which political candidates, events and ideas directed at the voters and gain their support understanding the voters' behavior. Wring (1997) defines political marketing as "the party or candidate's use of opinion research and environmental analysis to produce and promote a competitive offering which will help realize organizational aims and satisfy groups of electors in exchange for their votes". D Eisenhower, 34th President of USA was the first to apply political marketing into practical terms in the election campaign of 1952. In the world's largest democratic country, elections are considered to be the festivals of democracy.

The political sphere is also not an exception. Political sense of a human being in a country like India is very much significant because it is the largest democratic country in the world. India, with a population of more than one billion (presently 1.252 billion as of the record of 2013) enjoys the political taste of every human being through universal adult suffrage policy which means whenever an Indian citizen attains the age of 18 years, he or she is entitled to cast his / her vote in favour of any registered political party, who are participating in the general election. Therefore, politics and political knowledge are considered as most significant part of citizen life in India. Political sense among the Indian citizens grows through proper cultivation of the same through regular acknowledgement. In order to woo the Indian citizens regarding the awareness of political issues, nowadays the political parties and their leaders also try their best to use any kind of possible and sophisticated means to reach with their agenda. Social media network is considered one of the means to reach the Indian citizens. Earlier, it was the political web pages of different political parties in order to make an influence among the viewers. But in this competitive world, where everyone is just rushing after success, political parties and their leaders start to make personal contacts through social networking sites. Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp – all are infested with certain qualities that can easily generate political awareness among the followers of those sites. It is believed that if anyone has failed to make an impact nowadays through social networking sites, he / she cannot get that much importance among white-collared class as the same is being utilised for a special section of the society.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the impact and the role of social media on the political decision making process in Thirunnelli Panchayath, Wayand.
- To find out the impact of election manifesto on voting behavior
- To find out the views of the voters on the social media trend of the misuse of news than for development purpose.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Limited time for conducting a detailed study
- The study is limited with specific area because of the convenience.
- Inaccuracies in information supplied by respondents on nature and extent of work and about the income and their expenditure.
- Reluctances of the respondents in giving proper information regarding why they are not interested to work.

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