

An Analytical Review of Political Communication in India with Special Reference to the Social Media

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Abstract

Political communication is concerned with the interaction of political actions and the media in a proactive manner: This interaction between the two parts is extremely significant due to the fact that politicians rely on the mass media to develop their reputation with the general public. The Indian television landscape was dominated by the early 1980s, and news became a staple of prime time viewing in practically all households during that time period. It transmitted lectures by prominent individuals as well as interviews with political figures or those in positions of authority. Before LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization), this dynamic was still in place, and in fact became even more powerful when MNC (Multinational Corporations) and newer news channels were introduced into the media business. Rather than just reading the news, the newscaster became a programme producer, responsible for putting together the content of the news segments that were presented. To back up these news articles journalists used sound clips from news broadcasts, and chat shows were transformed into wrestling ring-like arenas where they could probe and drill these major personalities without fear of being ridiculed on air. Internet growth coincided with the rise of social media platforms, which provided a direct line of communication between the general public and individuals. The media link between politics and social media became increasingly important in the development of political communication as a result of this interconnectedness

INTRODUCTION

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Objectives of the Study

- To study the political Communication in India
- To assess the role of social media in Political communication
- To study the contribution of Gurevitch in Political Communication

Political Communication and its role in India

During the past several years, India's political scene has undergone a drastic shift due to the rise of social media. Using mass media to such an extent has regularly sparked discussion about whether or not the media can stay impartial and fulfil its role as the "fourth estate." Right now, Narendra Modi is the Prime Minister of India and is an excellent example of how Modi a prominent man of his stature can appear to be both "public and personal" all at the same time. At the time of writing, he had a Twitter following of 14.7 million people and had sent out 9164 tweets, making him the third most popular world leader and the most popular Indian figure

He makes considerable use of Twitter to keep his fans up to date on political and personal events, as well as his life lessons and values, as well as photographs and videos. It is his online presence that motivates other leaders, such as Shashi Tharoor of the opposition party, to become prominent and active on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter

The advent of new media has now made it feasible for individuals to communicate directly with a larger but more targeted audience through

direct communication. Social media, which includes sources such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, new websites, and phone applications, has permitted the flow of information in real time. Because of technological advancements, there has been a shift in the pattern of information intake, which has resulted in the replacement of television. Further, technological advancements have made two-way communication feasible, which was previously impossible with radio, a lot of things can be done with TV or any other traditional media, like rethinking and rethinking communication channels between politics and the media, among other things.

Creating political connection with the masses is, according to Gurevitch, one of the conditions for success. This implies that it is not enough to simply appear on screen; it is also

conditions for success. This implies that it is not enough to simply appear on screen; it is also necessary to develop a mental presence in the minds of the public through the use of multi-media. Twitter has evolved into a medium for the general population to participate in political discussions and express educated thoughts on political events taking place in their communities. Due to the regular flow of information or tweets from politicians on their official Twitter accounts, this situation has been made feasible in the first place. Twitter has provided a platform for the general populace to 'express themselves' and examine their political party leaders with greater scepticism.

Political Communication and Social Media

Throughout the political communication system, the Internet has operated as a destabilising force. Consequently, it has altered traditional patterns of interaction between the people and the government and has resulted in the democratisation of the public sphere (public square) (Dahlgren, 2005). Whether it's reporting on their overseas travels or encounters with government officials or dignitaries, paying tribute to a well-known figure, or expressing emotional ties with others, Twitter and Facebook profiles have emerged as the first sources of news and perspectives. Politicians use social media to spread their thoughts because it allows them to

bypass traditional media while still reaching a wide audience.

Over the past two decades, politics and the media have gradually melded into one domain of power. For political communication, social media has also proved effective. Today, evaluating political processes, organisations, and politicians as well as their intents is impossible without taking the media into account (Giuliano, 2006). As a result, political leaders are better able to connect with constituents on a more “personal” level.

Political Communication-Old and New Media Relationships by Michael Gurevitch and Stephen Coleman and Jay G Blumler explains how the connection between politicians and the media has changed over time in their article. Despite the fact that ownership patterns and the hiring of key roles in media organisations continue to show a significant relationship with politics and so challenge this mode of political communication, digital media also face intense competition from conventional media.

Through the use of Twitter, political communication has developed a strong link with the public. As a social media platform, Twitter originated as a tool for social change, but today it is a critical influencer in movements such as the Arab Spring, the Egyptian Revolution, and other revolutions of a similar nature. As a result of its role in the social revolutions, Twitter has helped to corroborate information acquired from the people on how media may give exact data about how technology-based social networks emerge and adapt over time. Director of the Stanford University Center of Excellence for Historical Significance, Margot Gerritsen says that “I believe that Twitter will be one of the most informative resources available for ever that Twitter will be of economic, social, and political trends, as well as consumer behaviour and social trends.” “I believe that Twitter will be one of the most informative resources available for consumer behaviour and social trends” (American Libraries, 2010).

The Middle East has been a part of the worldwide Twitter movement. For this reason, Twitter has been dubbed a “platform that reflects social and political trends” by researchers. There have also been other instances in which Twitter has enabled more localised revolutions to take place, as has

been documented in the news recently. Specifically, Gurevitch refers to John Scupham’s (1967) work, in which he claims that “The use of radio and television has changed the emphasis of political conflict in democratic countries away from abuse and toward argumentation and debate. This is something that does not appear to be a popular trend on social media platforms. As Blumler points out, television “provides perceptions of the world of politics to persons who otherwise have little access to serious coverage of current affairs,” and thus has the potential to mislead the public “help to establish more effective patterns of citizenship participation. While conventional citizenship has risen, participation, interaction, and cooperation have grown more rapidly in the case of social media than traditional citizenship. The National Health Service in the United Kingdom was a people’s movement that attempted to hold the state accountable to its population, and this may be understood in the same way.

The public, outraged, took to Twitter to demand answers from officials regarding the credibility and operation of the National Health Service. They called attention to issues such as health benefits and hospital tariffs, among others. Twitter provided them with a direct channel of communication with government leaders, allowing people to express their concerns and demand answers (McKee, 2011). Twitter has evolved into a social trend reflector as a result of the shifting political trends that have taken place on the internet. Twitter’s favourable image isn’t always taken at face value by others, according to some people. The theory has been fiercely resisted by scientists and academics alike. Human culture and intelligence have collapsed due to the advent of new technologies, which in turn has led to an attention deficit culture, according to Cowen (2009). As a result, there has been some concern that Twitter is causing a detrimental cultural transition in terms of information absorption. While the first charge has been proven to be correct, the second has been proven to be incorrect. As a result of the shift away from lengthy print publications to a more “short and sweet” manner of communication, there has been a constant need to update data and information. Information is broken down into smaller pieces and distributed on a regular basis. People are paying more attention to information as a result of this shift.

in their information consuming habits. Because of the brief structure, more attention is being drawn to small bits of information rather than big amounts of information.

As Ehrenberg (2012) points out, Twitter has been identified as one of the most significant sources of false information and misrepresentation of information. Due to the fact that the public posts directly to the internet, there is no system of checking or control in existence. As a result, it has become a vehicle for the dissemination of erroneous beliefs, political agendas, and claims. According to the author, the most serious problem is that, while false information spreads quickly through social media, corrections receive little attention. Gurevitch offers an explanation for why this has happened in the first place. It is his opinion that the agenda of the world is no longer set by the combination of politicians and journalists; rather, other influential and popular personalities such as celebrities and political commentators as well as intellectuals have begun to set the agenda through social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook.

Many researchers, on the other hand, are not of the same opinion. The Library of Congress is in fact compiling a collection of tweets dating back to March 2006 in order to better understand social and political patterns. Twitter has become a valuable source of information for researchers looking to identify social and political trends (American Libraries, 2010). Social media platforms such as Twitter reflect shifting social trends and have a greater impact on public debate and communication, particularly in the context of politics. Twitter's widespread use is a result of its popularity among politicians as a microblogging platform, which has the potential to promote political engagement. Twitter has become a perfect tool for users to spread information and gather political ideas publicly and rapidly (Stiegetz, & Dang Xuan, 2014). (Stiegetz & Dang-Xuan, 2014).

More than just a tool for social networking, Twitter is gradually becoming much more. To some extent, this shift can be traced back to the introduction of features such as real-time highlights, knowledge recording and evaluation systems, and an abundance of information (Ben-Ari, 2009). Aside from communication, it's been used in a wide

range of industries. One of the most popular micro-blogging networks, it has also become a hub for knowledge exchange and information gathering. Rather than needing to keep up with everything all the time, it's a "always-on" system that lets users explore a stream of information depending on their own schedules and interests (Farkar, 2010). Gurevitch takes issue with this notion and discusses how he sees the concept of 'publicness' evolving. However, he claims that the power of viral energy in social media and online media has not only allowed for the rapid transmission of messages as well as the elimination of the boundaries between the private sector and public sector, but has also facilitated the creation and destruction of reputations. Some of the most notable political organisations, such as the American Congress, are using Gurevitch's concept in their usage of Twitter, which allows for quick two-way contact between politicians and White House officials, allowing the congress to better engage with people. This growing system, despite the fact that it requires immediate responses, has emerged as the most preferred way of communication between the Congress and the general population (Shogan, 2011).

Analysis of Gurevitch and Political Communication

As a result of the growth of new media technologies such as political blogs and government websites, as well as Twitter and other forms of social media, the delivery of political news has undergone a significant transformation. Increasingly, these new media forms are taking the role of traditional news media outlets, with young people constituting the greatest segment of those who consume this new media type (Pew, 2008). Resulting from this shift in consumption patterns traditional media such as television have been phased out, with the Internet and its new age communication tendencies taking its place as the primary source of information and entertainment. Another implication of this the expansion of the internet into industries that were previously under the jurisdiction of print and broadcast media. This transition is, however, more than just a process of replacing the old with the new according to the authors, it is also a "ecological



reconfiguration recasting roles and relationships within a dynamic media landscape" (Gurevitch, Coleman & Blumler, 2009). Political communication and the use of new media instruments have changed the roles and responsibilities of politicians in relating to the sociological systems of their constituents. Significantly in recent years, owing to the rise of new media and political communication through these new media instruments.

To illustrate this point, we can look at Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose job has evolved over the years from that of a state's chief minister to include the multidimensional roles of journalist¹, public motivator², social activist³, and a political commentator⁴ as well as other roles. His responsibilities are no longer limited to those within the house, but have broadened to include a broader range of media-related responsibilities: As a result of his 149 million followers on Twitter. In a recent survey, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi came

in third place among the world's most popular politicians. With more than 9000 tweets on a wide range of topics, he is an outstanding example of how the public and private sectors can urge the audience to become active participants in the democratic process, such as women's emancipation, saving girl children, promoting yoga, personal equation with colleagues and senior leaders, national development, international relations, and government programmes: Modi's tweets have received more than a million impressions. It also connects with) Gurevitch's claim that politicians have become increasingly attentive to the fact that they are now serving as news providers to the general people. They are also cognizant of the media habits of the target audience as well as the expectations that they have of the political leaders in their respective countries. Politicians concentrate their efforts on delivering information on subjects that will allow them to establish a stronger connection with the audience in order to satisfy the audience's needs. The prospect of direct engagement and fast response, as well as the availability of real-time information, have all helped to break down the traditional barrier that existed between the two organisations.

In addition to Tharoor, the leader of the opposition

has been actively using Twitter to interact with constituents, particularly young people and people living in the diaspora, for some time now Mr. Shashi Tharoor has a following of 337 million individuals on Twitter, making him the third most followed politician in India. Among his more than 28,000 tweets, there are a variety of topics that represent his diverse interests. Every single one of his tweets, on the other hand, is geared toward delivering new information, knowledge and education to his followers and subscribers. Among his most popular tweets are links to articles and books, as well as clips from films, that inspire his followers to learn more about the world and about themselves. While informing readers on his personal engagements and excursions to an achievers mansion he also displays a strong proclivity for retweeting popular perspectives and updating his followers on current events. Primary objective of net weeting in close the communication gap that exists between the general people and elected authorities. In Gurevitch's evaluation of the role of new media in displacing conventional media, serkeeting a phenomenon that helps the public to feel more connected to the politician because it gives them the ingression of being heard a phenomenon that reflects his stance on transforme publicness. According to Gurevitch's assessment of the role of new media in the displacement of conventional media, retweeting a phenomenon that allows the people to feel more connected to the politician since it provides them with the sensation.

As a society's gatekeeper and watchdog, the media has played an important role up to the current technological explosion and has accepted its duty as such. It disseminated information to the public that it deemed proper to expose from the perspective from which it chose to do so. With the introduction of social media, this 'setting' created by the media underwent a significant shift. Because people have become the proprietors of their own information, they no longer rely on the media to communicate information on their behalf. Neither did the politicians feel the need to involve a third party in order to communicate with the general public. In fact, politicians are increasingly opting to directly communicate with the public

the material they deem appropriate, The tweets of both of the politicians who have been observed demonstrate that there is no longer a need for a media gatekeeper to protect the public. Once that has been accomplished, traditional news organisations are left without any exclusive coverage because the material would have been readily available on social media, hence eliminating the need for traditional media channels completely. It has been observed that the advent of new media has resulted in a reconfiguration and reframing of roles and relationships within the existing media environment, according to Gurevitch. It is just another example of Modi's emphasis on the creation of a digital India that lends weight to the suggestion that he is aiming to make. It is the mobile application established by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that has revolutionised the very perception of a chief executive officer. Mann Ki Baat, the speech he gave to the nation, has made him a national icon. He is trying to connect with the people by redefining the roles of leaders and the media, enabling two-way communication, involving the general public, and decreasing the time and space gaps that are critical to political communication and relationship building in order to achieve this. As a result of its forward-looking attitude, this digitalization-centered approach is proving tremendously beneficial because it allows for direct connection between the government and the general population. Users can connect with media, material through the use of comments, retweets, likes, and other interactive features provided by digital media. (Gurevitch, 2009)

On his worldwide tours or personal experiences, Narendra Modi shares his thoughts on Twitter. In addition to adding to the dynamics of personal yet political communication, Shashi Tharoor's selfie tweets and other politicians' selfie tweets provide direct insight into not just their political actions, but also into their personal tastes. Consequently, information can now travel beyond geographical boundaries, reducing the need for media and making information transfer a more personalized experience.

The concept of 'publicness is being transformed:

Politicians and the general public's traditional division between the public and private spheres

is being reshaped by advances in modern communication technology (Gurevitch, Coleman, & Blumler, 2009). New media's networking power and contagious energy make these possibilities possible. An important part of the process of bridging the gap between the public and private sectors is viral energy, which enables information to circulate fast and effectively among the general population. A multifaceted method of information delivery has also been opened up as a result of this shift. When it comes to promoting social causes and national events, Narendra Modi utilises the power of social media and multidimensional information distribution. A steady flow of exposure is created by the viral energy of blogs, social networking sites, and wikis, where reputations are strengthened and destroyed, messages are disputed and dismissed, rumours are floated and tested (Gurevitch, Coleman, & Blumler, 2009). There was a time when the public and politicians could not communicate effectively due to this trait. In addition to removing these roadblocks, the advent of social media has given politicians a new sense of political accountability. Social media's ability to spread information quickly and widely has made it critical to foster a sense of trust among the general public. When it comes to government accountability, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi frequently uses Twitter. The term "responsible governance" is commonly used to describe a government that is. Given the fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tweets frequently centre on government schemes, initiatives, and campaigns aimed at improving the lives of citizens, his tweets are highly aligned with the popular view of responsible governance, which is free of corruption, addresses pressing issues, and is accountable for its actions. Prime Minister Modi's Twitter feed is a good example of this. It is an example of rejecting the necessity to express political messages without using traditional instruments of mass communication while still delivering the message to people without diluting the strength of the message, as is the case with President Obama.

Interactivity and remixing: According to Gurevitch, the parameters of public involvement with politicians have undergone a significant transformation as a result of the proliferation of new media



communication technologies. As a result of this shift the public has higher expectations of politicians. It is no longer the case that politicians and journalists are the gatekeepers of information and public opinion. The general public has been elevated to the

status of equal stakeholders in the information exchange system. Politicians in India, on the other hand, are responding positively to the public's desire for accountability, engagements, and individualized solutions.

Politicians nowadays, in contrast to previous generations, are less concerned with providing material in a professional manner and are instead more concerned with producing instantaneous and personalised content. Through his tweets, Narendra Modi offers personalised support to achievers while also individually noting the presence of lesser known individuals who are actively involved in government operations but who are generally overlooked. This offers the administration a strong image of being supportive of the country's ambitions, which helps to strengthen its position.

The negative of digitization, on the other hand, is that it results in a decline in the integrity and control over messages. Once information has been made available on the Internet, the owner of the material no longer has control over it. Users have the ability to manipulate and edit communications in any way they see fit, and the reactions to messages on the Internet are completely uncontrollable. Messages can alter in meaning depending on how they are interpreted and distributed, and users have the ability to remix and duplicate content in a variety of formats. Therefore, once material is released on social media, it no longer belongs to the politicians or journalists who created it.

Channel multiplication and audience fragmentation: As a result of his frequent Twitter Tweets Narendra Modi's abroad trips and meetings have drawn considerable interest. New media's value lies in its ability to connect people around the world, not in its ability to keep information private. The Prime Minister agrees with Gurevitch's judgement on these travels. The Prime Minister's visits have been well publicised, and his continuous tweets and photos of the same have also been widely publicised. Tweets he has sent while he is away have acted as

an excellent source of up-to-date news, as well as providing contest for his visits. Despite the fact that politicians' foreign visits are covered extensively on television and radio, the ordinary public not aware of their activities. According to the survey, politicians utilise social media to disseminate information from a personal point of view rather than the national point of view provided by traditional media. Photographs and selfies are used by Shashi

Tharoor in the same way to communicate to the public about his involvement in foreign affairs and to take advantage of the worldwide reach that modern media affords. It is possible to see the Prime Minister's tweets from his globe tours, the conferences he attends, and the people he meets on his official website. The purpose of these tweets is to provide the general public with up-to-the-minute information on who attended meetings and what the meeting's fundamental agenda was. As a result of the variety of points of view expressed in the media, the audience has become increasingly dispersed. Even though it is often considered that young people prefer to receive information via new media, a large chunk of the general public still relies on traditional media. When it comes to information distribution and channel alternatives, the general public is seeing a distinct fragmentation.

CONCLUSION

According to the results of the survey, politicians chose new media as their preferred method of informing the general public about their political movements. Using new media, politicians may reach a wider audience and establish a two-way dialogue with the general people. However, this does not completely eliminate the connection between traditional media and political communication. Even in a country like India, where there is a large digital divide, where traditional mass media still dominates, digital media is growing and more popular. More and more young people are becoming interested in and utilising digital media since it allows them to reply nearly instantaneously to news and information they are receiving. The panoply of communication between politicians and the general public have, changed as a result of improved interactivity.

An example of Gurevitch's assertion that politicians and journalist are no longer setting the topic has been proven in the Indian context by politicians tweets and social media interaction with the common public

It is possible to conclude that Michael Gurevich's parameters appear to be directly applicable to the pattern of political communication through social media that is observed among Indian politicians in light of these research. Using Gurevitch parameters it can be seen that the interactions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress Party leader Shashi Tharoor on Twitter can be used to understand the pools of social media communication between politicians and the publicness that is created as a result of their interaction with the public. With the current passion for social media, political leaders are taking calculated risks in order to keep their constituents engaged at the same time. Tweets, answers, and retweets are now supplementing rather than replacing traditional televised interviews.

Narendra Modi and Shashi Tharoor, the two politicians studied in the study, are increasingly using Twitter to define their publicness and establish a two-way dialogue with the public. As a result, the general community has felt more connected to them. What was formerly held in private is now being aired from the 'mouth of the horse' in an effort to improve public support, transparency, and political communication. It's not simply that these politicians use their Twitter accounts to engage with constituents and provide information, it's also that they use them to encourage citizens to become more politically involved.

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