A study on the impact of social media marketing on Indian electoral culture: with special reference to students' election of Guwahati city

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Abstract:

The influence of social media has increased tremendously on our day to day life from last few years. On an average in India we spent 3hours, 30 minutes per day or 70.1% of daily media life. It has a direct impact on our cultural beliefs and social habits. People use social media for many things, such as socialising, finding and information sharing. It has revolutionised the way people communicate and socialise on web. The use of social media is increased in the electoral political culture also. From 2014 general election, the traditional election campaign strategy has been replaced by social media management by candidate. It is now a common exercise by the students' election candidates also to use social platform to reach the voters.

Need of the study:

It will give us a glimpse change in the electoral culture by the social media.

The study will also make the mass aware of strategies adopted by political parties.

Objective of the study:

To study the change in the political marketing strategy on social media platform.

To study the future of electoral marketing strategies in student politics.

Main paper:

INTRODUCTION:

From "*Yeh dekho Indira ka khel, kha gayi shakkar, pee gayi tel*" to "*garibi hatao, indiralao desh basao*", from "*Indira hatao desh basao*" to "*abki bar Modi sarkar*"- India has witnessed a structural change in electoral marketing. The dominance and vast use of social media sites to advertise the motto and issues of a particular party is a widely used practice now days.

Even the political parties are hiring marketing agencies to look after the entire campaigning process. Modern marketing practices are being applied by the marketing agencies.

But this trend is surprisingly popular amongst the young star, in colleges and universities where social media platform is being used by all candidate to win the election. The usage and popularity has not changed our mind set but also contributed towards growth of a particular behaviour, which is being captured and marketed by the talented campaign managers of college and university election.

Before understanding what is political marketing lets understand what is marketing and Political marketing?

Marketing:

Marketing is all about meeting and identifying social and human needs. One of the good definitions is meeting needs profitably.

Political marketing:

"A complex process, the outcome of s more global effort implicating all the factors of politicians' political communication and emphasizes that political marketing is the general method of political communication, one of its mean.''

Culture:

Culture is like an umbrella, which includes social norms and behaviour of human societies as well as the beliefs, customs, knowledge, arts, laws and all related activities of the individuals in the group.

Electoral Culture:

It can be defined as a course of action or stimuli that lead to behave in a particular way by a person or to support a particular ideology or issue by any organisation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

In the paper written by Akashdeep Bhardwaj, Vinay Avasthi, Sam Goundar, I.J. of Electronics and Information Engineering, titled Impact Of Social Networking On Indian Youth, the authors discussed about the various pattern of users of social media. They also figured out about various positive and negative impact of social media. (Akashdeep Bhardwaj)

In the journal The Impact Of Social Media On Social Lifestyle, Precious Chibuike Chukwuere and Joshua Ebere Chukwuere studied about the social life style of female student and its connection with the social media. They highlighted various issues related to mental health of girl student. (Chukwuere)

NEED OF THE STUDY :

The rapid change in the marketing strategies in all over the world has also touched Assam. We have to prepare our self to adopt the changing marketing and social behaviour. Electoral process is the key to our democracy. So we should be aware of what is happening and why it is happening so that no one can exploit us. The main need of the study may be summarised as under:

1. It will give us a glimpse of behind the scene of college and university election.

2. The study will help us to know the changing electoral strategies.

1. The study will also make the mass aware of strategies adopted by student organisation.
2. This study will help us to access the impact of social media on student poitics.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study is:
1. To study the change in the political marketing strategy of students election on social media platform.
2. To study the future of electoral marketing strategies in student politics.

METHODOLOGY :

Universe of the study:

The study is based on social observation. The study was carried out in special reference to Assam. The study is both analytical and descriptive in nature. Through the study an attempt has been made to interpret the social behaviour and the course of action adopted by student political organisation to attract those behaviour.

Sampling Procedure

All of the respondents of the study are students of various colleges and universities of Assam. They were selected randomly. The study area is mainly confined in Guwahati city for the convenience of the researcher.

There were two stage sampling. At first voters from different colleges and universities were randomly selected. In the second stage some of the union members were selected as respondent.

Sample Size

For the study, total 100 students were approached as the 1st stage respondent. 10 union body members were selected for 2nd stage respondent.

Data Collection

Data was collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from all the respondents of the survey. Two separate set of questionnaires were prepared for the respondents.

The secondary data was collected from official records, publisher's record, published reports of similar research, journals and literature form social science discipline.

Limitation of the study :

1. The study area is limited to Guwahati city only.
2. The study consist only a few samples due to time and money constraints.
3. As the researcher has limited knowledge and experience it is obvious to have limitation in the study.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Data collected through questionnaire and interview were analysed through tabulation and graphical presentation.

Analysis of the data received from the students:

1. **No of students using social media platform:**

particulars	yes	no	total
No of students using social media platform	100	00	100

From the study it was found that 100 % of the sample were using social media platform.

2. **Analysis of the responses regarding different segment of media used by students :**

particulars	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	WhatsApp
responses regarding different segment of media used by student	86	59	20	100

From the study it was found that 86% of the respondents were using Facebook, while 59% are using Instagram, 20% are using Twitter, and cent percent are using WhatsApp

3. **Analysis of the responses regarding time consumed by the social media per day**

particulars	Above 5 hour	1 to 5 hour	Less than 1 hour
How much time you use social media per day.	10	46	44

From the study it was found that 10 % of the respondent use social media for more than 5 hour, while 46 % for 1 to 5 hour and 44% uses less than 1 hour per day.

4. Analysis of the statement regarding , whether they are influenced by the social media while voting :

particulars	yes	no	total
Are you influenced by the social media while voting	87	13	100

From the study it was found that 87 % of the sample agrees that they are influenced by the social media post while voting, while 13%disagree the fact.

5. Analysis of the statement whether social media creates an awareness about the election:

particulars	yes	no	total
Do you think social media creates an awareness about the election	96	04	100

From the study it was found that 94 % of the respondent agrees the fact that social media creates an awareness about the election while 04% disagree the statement.

6. Analysis of the statement whether social media campaigning increases the voting turnover rate:

particulars	yes	no	total
social media campaigning increases the voting turnover rate	96	04	100

It was found that 96% of the respondent agrees the fact that social media campaigning increases the voting turnover rate while 04%denies the fact.

7. Analysis of the statement whether they access the past history of the candidates:

particulars	yes	No	total
Do you access the past history of the candidates	87	00	87

It was found that 100% of the respondent access the past history of the candidate.

8. Analysis of the statement which factors are considered by voters while choosing a candidate over social media:

particulars	posters	Circulation of post	followers	Creative Slogan	Write up
which factors are considered by voters while choosing a candidate over social media	87	72	28	85	10

It was found that 100% of the respondent are attracted by posters, 82 % are attracted by circulation of post, 38.89 % are attracted by the no of followers , 97.70 % attracted by the creative slogan and only 11.49 %are attracted by write up.

9. Analysis of the statement regarding which campaigning attracts the voters more:

particulars	Audio visual	graphic	total
which campaigning attracts you more	52	35	87

From the study it was found that 59.77% of voters are attracted by the audio visual campaigning and 40.22% of voters are attracted by the graphic presentation.

10. Analysis of the statement whether face to face campaigning will be replaced by social media branding in near future:

particulars	yes	no	total
Do you think face to face campaigning will be replaced by social media branding in near future	68	32	100

According to the survey , 68% of the respondent believes that social media branding will replace the face to face campaigning in near future.

Analysis of the data received from the contestant :

1. Analysis of the statement regarding the usefulness of social media for creating a electoral culture:

particulars	yes	no	total
Do you think social media is creating a new electoral culture in students election	10	0	10

According to the survey 100% of the respondent believes that social media is helping in creating a new and modern electoral culture.

2. **Analysis of the statement regarding branding of a candidate:**

particulars	yes	no	total
Do you think it is easier to brand a candidate through social media than face to face campaigning	10	0	10

100% of the candidate believes that it is easier to brand a candidate through social media than any other media.

3. **Analysis of the statement regarding the factors for preference of social media over other media by the candidate:**

particulars	Low cost	More reach
What are the factor that make you to go for social media.	08	02

According to the survey, 80 % of the candidate prefers social media as it involves low cost, and 20% prefer as it helps in more reach.

4. **Analysis of the statement regarding the timing of post:**

particulars	Day time	evening	night
What is the best time for posting anything related to campaigning?	00	09	01

According to the survey, 90% of the student believes that evening is the best time to get highest engagement for any post, 10% thinks night is the most suitable time.

5. **Analysis of the statement whether they can think for contesting in election wit5hout the help of social media:**

particulars	yes	Impossible
Can you think for contesting in election without the help of social media.	00	10

100 % of the contestant believe that it is impossible to contest in the election without the help of social media.

Findings:

1. It was found that all the respondent use social media, so we can conclude that social media has became a part and parcel of modern lifestyle.
2. WhatsApp is the highest used social media(though it was originally a messenger) followed by Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.
3. From the study it was found that majority of the student is involved in social media fore 1-5 hour on average per day.
4. Majority of the respondent agree that social media influence them while voting.
5. It was found that social media is helping in creating a voting awareness amongst the student community.
6. Majority of the student believes that social media helps in increasing the voting turnover rate.
7. Majority of the respondent browse their past history of a candidate in social media.
8. Attractive social media posters are the most influential factor for choosing a candidate, followed by the creative slogan, circulation of post, no of followers and the creative write up.
9. Audio visual campaigning attracts more voters than the graphic presentation.
10. Almost all of the respondent believes that face to face campaigning will be replaced by the social media campaigning in near future.
11. All of the past election candidate believes that social media is helping in creating a new electoral culture.
12. All of the respondent believes it is easier to brand a candidate through social media.
13. Majority of the student prefers social media due to its low cost.
14. Majority of the candidate believes that night is the best time for posting in social media.
15. According to all of the respondent it is impossible to contest in election without social media.

Conclusion:

We are in 21st century and everyone has a smart phone containing 3-4 social media app in their hand. This phenomena is directly influencing our culture, be it social, technological, economical, family related or political. The increasing use of social media by the political parties as well as the student political organisation has created a new political culture , specially amongst the youth from last 5-6 years. Due to cheaper internet cost from last few years, everyone is used to use social media. Its like a addiction to majority of the youth. This addiction has been converted by the political parties into a new social media political culture successfully. Youth are now a days interested in politics than ever before. They are now aware what is happening and why something is happening. This trend has also entered into the colleges and universities, where it is impossible to contest election without the use of social media as it is the cheapest of all media. In near future the entire political movement or campaigning will be replaced by social media, if this trend follows.

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