Social Media's interference in Rural Political Socialization

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Social media not only stipulate new skills and reinforce the cultural and social change. But it also contributes in the process of political socialization. The main purpose of this research paper is to present the scenario of social media's interference in the Political Socialization of rural people. This situational analysis is explored by using Schedule, Interviews and Observation. The result indicates that Facebook is mostly used by the youth of rural areas. Other social media networking sites like Twitter and Google plus will take time to be popular among them. That's why the popularity of social media among the youth of rural areas are persisting but still people believe on electronic media and print media for getting information related to politics.

Social media is not limited itself till providing information and dissemination of news but now a days it also contributed in the opinion making and image building of people, product and organizations. In the rural areas also Social media serves as a political socializing agent by creating a direct connection to media and contents which are essential for the reinforcement of political value and knowledge system and by providing a platform to them in which youths may exercise such value orientations.

Mostly Theorists suggested that children get the Political Socialization from their parents. According to Spark Notes editors (2010), "Young children usually spend far more time with their families than with anyone else and thus tend to acquire the family's habits, beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes. For this reason, family tends to be the most important source of political socialization." But this assumption is not true in the 21st century. Today, children get the Political Socialization through the Social Media instead of their parents.

Keywords: Democracy, Social Media, Political Socialization, Rural Communication, Youth.

Introduction:

Abraham Lincoln defines the term "Democracy" as "the government of the people, by the people and for the people". Lincoln uttered this definition in his speech delivered in Gettysburg in 1864. According to this definition people have right to participate directly or indirectly in the formulation of government. It is a form of government in which people have equal opportunity and this type of government is based on individual merit and no place of hereditary privilege is to be found in democracy. Democracy

gives every eligible citizen, the right to participate in the political process, whether to run for office or vote for those who are running. In order to decide which party to associate with, which candidates to vote for, etc., people need to decide what they believe in. This is where political socialization comes in. Political socialization is "the process by which people acquire political beliefs and values." (Bardes, Shelly, and Schmidt, 2014)

In this process of socialization, Social Media works as an important tool for mobilizing and persuading people. Social media not only stipulate new skills and reinforce the cultural and social change. But it tries to demonstrate the real scenario of the political power to the people. For instance, Donald Trump has utilizes the social media to its utmost possible prospect in their presidential political campaigning. In America and other developed countries, social media movement is extremely targeted towards youth (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2013; Brenner, 2013; Woollaston, 2013). As a result, there has been an explosive growth in studies examining relationships between social media use and political engagement, sometimes with a specific focus on young people (Bode, 2012; Conroy, Feezell, & Guerrero, 2012; Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012; Vitak et al., 2011). These developments contribute to a growing popular understanding of social media as a potent tool for moving young people to political engagement.

In this superhighway era, one cannot limit media for reaching and accessing any individual of this world. Eventually, abiding social media in the process of political socialization is infeasible. Even the social media also have reach among the rural people which instigate the process of political socialization.

Political Socialization: Origin, Scope and Definitions

The origin of Political Socialization concept is originated from the discipline of Sociology. But when it is adapted by the discipline of political studies then it has two dimensions, i.e. Sociological and psychological. Further studies in both of these dimensions have suggests that political acculturation is in the sociological sphere and political socialization is in the psychological sphere. The concept, Political Socialization which is a branch of the study of political sociology, has captured the interest of those political researchers who have been anxious about understanding the nature of various contemporary political systems.

The appearance of political socialization as a distinct field of inquiry usually is dated from the publication, in 1959, of Herbert Hyman's book "Political Socialization". In his book, he postulated the term "Political Socialization" and defined it as a process of "learning of social patterns corresponding to. …. . Social positions as mediated through various agencies of society." He also provided an approach of political socialization which founded two vital assumptions of socialization:

1. Socialization should be assumed primarily as a mechanism by which social institutions inseminate political beliefs, rather than as a procuring process by which innately different individuals develop their own brand of political orientations;

2. Because social institutions and agencies change more slowly than the individual, political socialization inevitably acts as a brake upon political change.

Hyman's sociological prospect had the deplorable aftermath of encouraging later researchers to look upon socialization research mainly as the assessment of youthful political alternatives, rather than as the gleam of psychological processes by which socialization agencies regulated. Soon political socialization research became the study of political preferences at particular points in childhood and adolescence, rather than the longitudinal study of political maturation.

Definitional Ambiguity:

Circumstances of frequent changes are carrying the load of disorientation. Specially, when the changes is of a new form of jargon and when the exploration of the term is far in advance of the exploration in stated research on it. The ambiguity about the term Political Socialization begins with very definition of the term. Fred I. Greenstein has suggested in his work that "there appear to be at least four predominant usages, and some of the contestation on the general merits of political socialization inquiry appears to be of the blind-men-and-the-elephant variety, with the debating parties disagreeing on the implicit referents of their terms rather than on empirical grounds."

He further pointed out four usage of "Political Socialization" in order to point out how the failure to join issues resulting from definitional confusion accounts for one of the commonly asserted objections to political socialization studies. Some researchers are specific about what they mean by "Political Socialization". Others are defined this term on the basis of the context in which it occurs. Whether or not they employ explicit definitions, self-styled students of "political socialization" appear to so designate themselves because they have one or more of the following interests:

1. The study of children's political orientations. Any political analysis of children, especially preadolescent children, is likely to be described as a "political socialization" study. No commentator has been so pragmatic and unpretentious as to be willing to define the study of political socialization as "the political study of children." Nevertheless, just as "anthropology" is usually defined formally in abstract intellectual terms (as the study of "culture" or of "social structure") but tends informally to mean "the study of non- literate populations," political socialization also has a mundane operational definition: "the study of pre-adult orientations to the adult political process."

2. The study of the acquisition of prevailing norms. Some- times the phrase is used to apply quite narrowly to studies of the way the prevailing norms of a political system be- come the norms of the new members of that system. Here the usage parallels one of the meanings sociologists give to the more general term "socialization." The political subset of socialization is also sometimes called "politicization." In any event, the focus is on the acquisition of norm-consistent behavior.

3. Sometimes "political socialization" is used more broadly to refer to the study of any political learning whatsoever, whether of conformity or deviance, and at any stage in the life cycle.

4. Finally, "political socialization" sometimes refers to actual observations of socialization processes, in any of the above senses, taking into account both the socialized and the agents of socialization.

Research Methodology:

Research Objectives:

1) To understand the role of Social Media in the Political Socialization among rural people.
2) To understand the role of Social Media in the formulation of Political Image building among rural people.
3) To know the role of Social media in developing political knowledge system among the youths of rural areas.

Research Tools and Techniques:

This study used a survey design to obtain baseline information from a widely dispersed population of youths who are active users of internet and residing in the rural area. The results highlighted in this paper are intended to explore the role of social media in the political socialization of them. For this, I have utilizes questionnaire and as well as I have conducted various interviews with experts of this field.

Sampling Techniques:

For achieving data, Purposive Sampling Technique has been utilized on two stages. Firstly, it has been utilizes for determining the sample and sample size. Secondly, it has been used while determining the research area.

Research Area:

For conducting this research, I have finalized Sonbhadra, district of Uttar Pradesh. The reason behind selecting this area is; this area is mostly constituted as a rural area where minerals are present. Besides this, as it has natural resources that's why it has an important place in national political scenario.
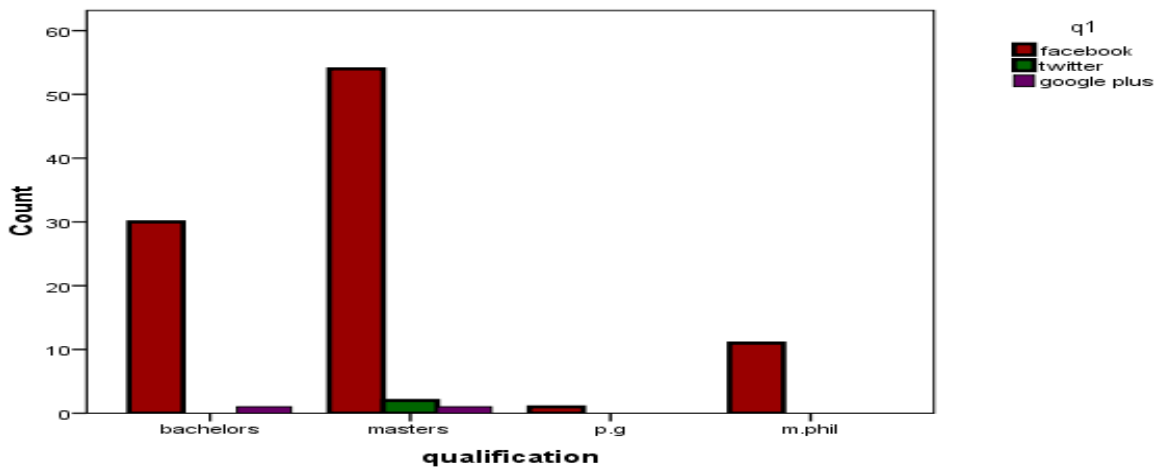
Data Analysis and Interpretations:

➢ **Users of Social Media:**

| Qualification	Facebook		Twitter		Google Plus	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Bachelors(31)	30	97	0	0	1	3
P.G(57)	54	94	2	4	1	2
M.Phil (10)	10	100	0	0	0	0

Table No. 1

Graph No.1

Above graph shows that 97% Bachelors uses Facebook and only 3 % Bachelors uses Google plus, whereas 94% P.G students uses Facebook, 2 % uses Twitter and only 1% uses Google Plus but in the case of M.Phil students, majority uses Facebook.

➢ **Medium used for getting Political information:**

|	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Electronic Media	49	49
Print Media	39	39
Social Media	11	11
Other	1	1

Table No.2
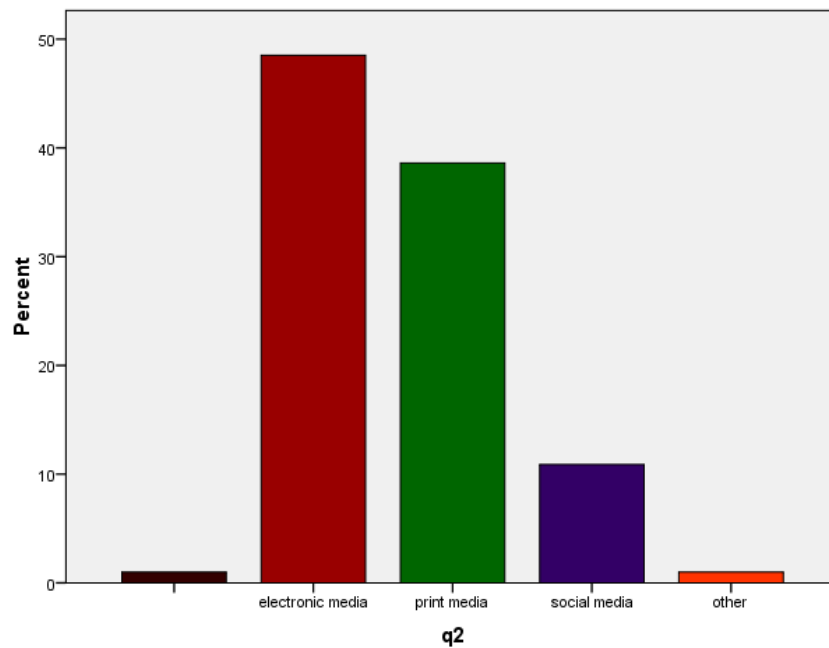
Graph No. 2

Above Graph shows that 49% respondents utilizes electronic media, whereas 39%, 11% and 1% respondents utilizes Print Media, Social Media and Other sources of information respectively. That's why I can say that people like information transmitted by electronic media.

➤ **Most Reliable source of Media:**

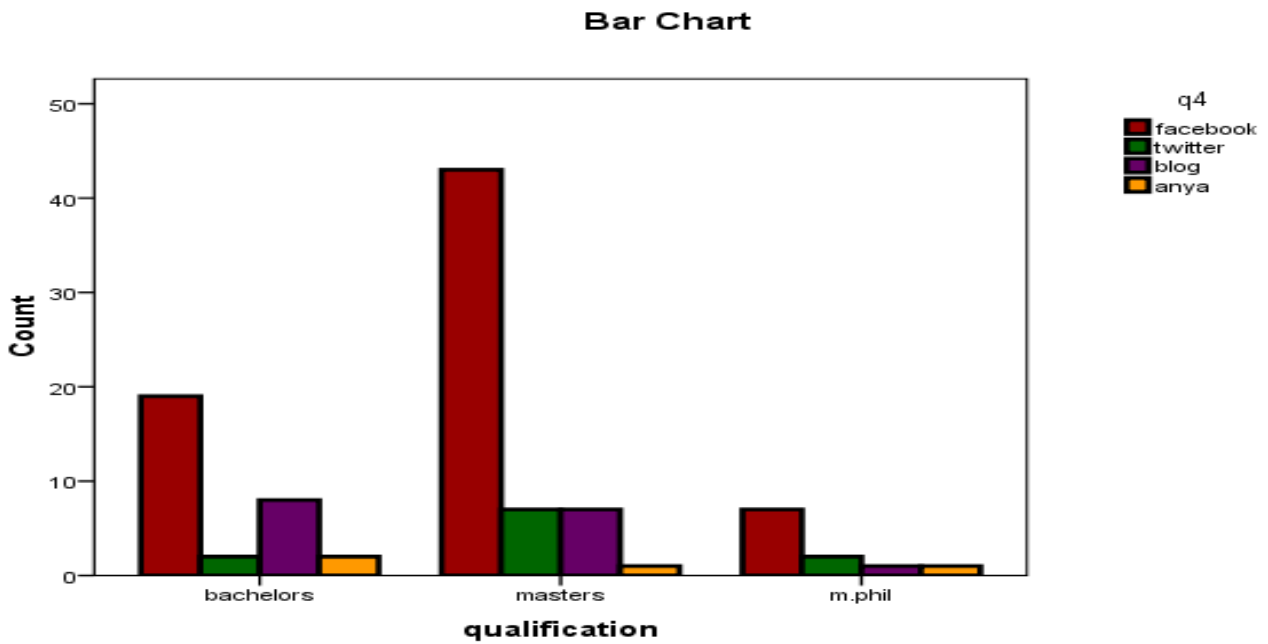| Gender	Electronic Media		Print Media		Social Media		Other	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male(69)	9	13	58	84	3	4	0	0
Female(31)	15	48	15	48	2	6	1	3

Table No. 3

Bar Chart
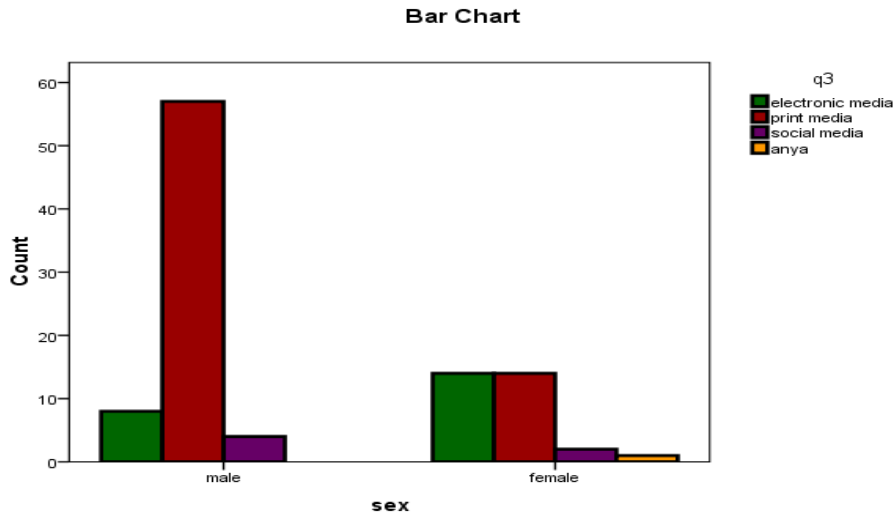
Graph No.3

Above graph shows that 13% Male and 48% female believe on electronic media as a reliable source of information where as 84%male and 48%female rely on Print media. Social media used as a most unreliable source of information as only 4% male and 6% female take it as a reliable source. And other mediums are popular among female only as 3%female are believe on these sources also.

➢ **Which Social Medium is utilizes for interpersonal communication:**

| Respondent's Qualification	Facebook		Twitter		Blog		Other	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Bachelors(31)	19	61	2	6	8	26	2	6
P.G (57)	43	75	7	12	7	12	1	2
M.Phil (10)	7	70	2	20	1	10	1	10

Table No.4

Bar Chart

Graph No.4

Above graph shows that Facebook is the most famous Social media among the youths as 69% Bachelors, 75% P.G students and 70% M. Phil students utilizes it. Other social media like twitter and Blog are utilize by 6% Bachelors, 12% P.G students and 20% M. Phil students and 26% Bachelors, 12% P.G students and 10% M. Phil students respectively.

➢ **How much Social Media helps in Political opinion building?**

|	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very much	13	13
Much	31	31
Average	47	47
Less	08	08
Very less	01	01

Table No.5
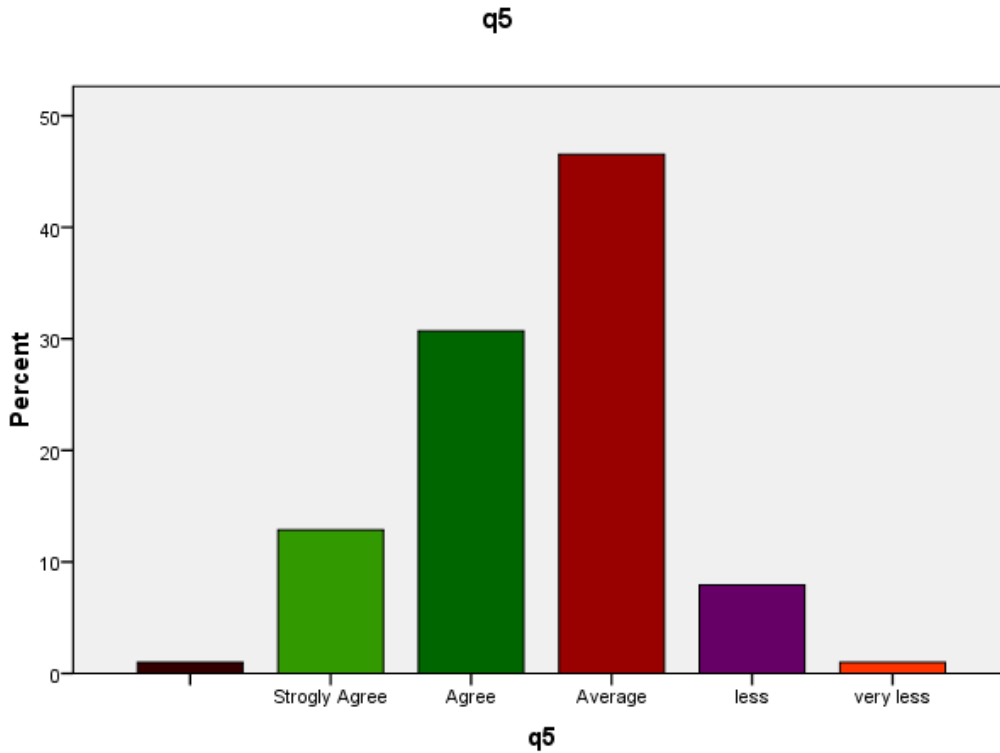
Graph No.5

Above graph shows that 13% respondents strongly agree, 31%respondents agree, 47% respondents average, 8% less agree and 1% least agree that social media helps in Political opinion building. So, it can be say that social media helps in political opinion formation to some extent.

➢ **What role Social Media played in political campaigning:**

|	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Mass Communication	21	21
Public Relation	28	28
Advertisment	28	28
Lobbying	5	5
Above all	18	18

Table No. 6
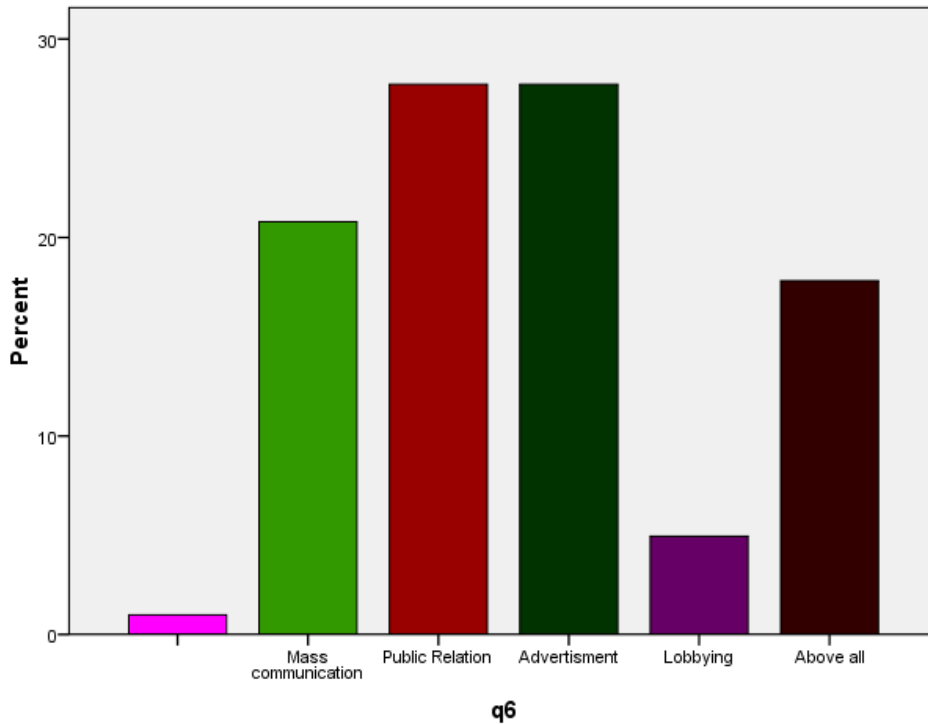
Graph No. 6

Above graph shows that 2   1% respondets think that social media   is utilizes as a medium of mass communication, 28% respondents agreed that it is utilizes as a tool of Public Relation where as 28% respondents think that it is utilized as a medium of advertisement but only 5% think that it is uses as a lobbying tool. More of this 18% respondents think that Social Media is utilized as above all mentioned ways of communication.

➢ **How Social Media is utilizes in political Image Building?**

|	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Party Promotion	32	32
Personal Promotion	45	45
Conserving Political value	15	15
Not utilized in Image building	08	08

Table No.7
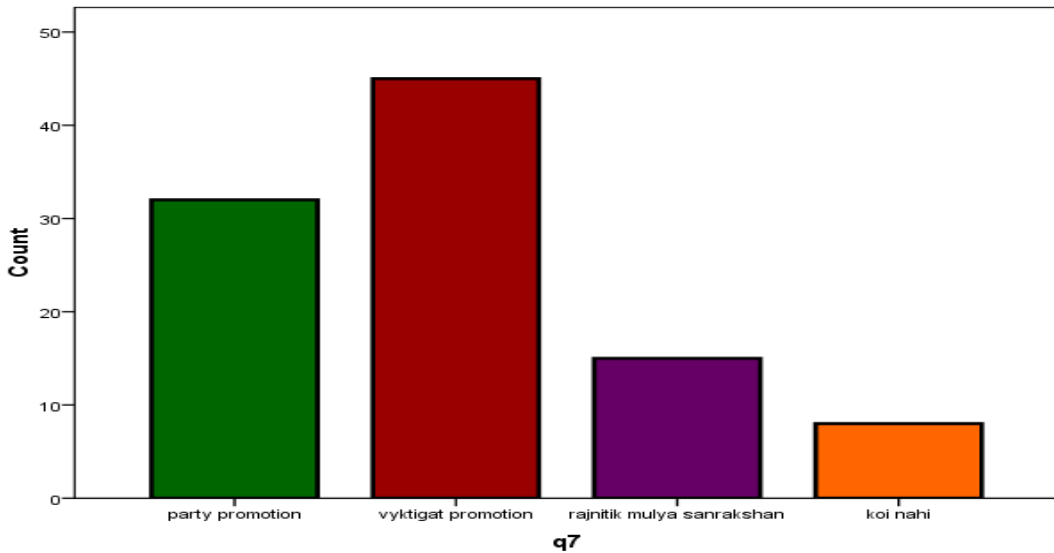
Graph No.7

Above graph shows that 32% respondents think that social media is utilizes for Political Party Promotion, 45% people agreed that it is used by Politicians for personal promotion, where as 15% respondents think that it is utilizes for the purpose of conserving political values and believes rather only 8% respondents think that Social Media is not utilized as a tool in the process of political image building.

➤ **What factors helps in changing the political public opinion?**

|	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Content of Social Media	15	15
Image of the person	59	59
Ideology of Political Party	6	6
Presence on Social Media	4	4
On the basis of above all	16	16

Table No.8
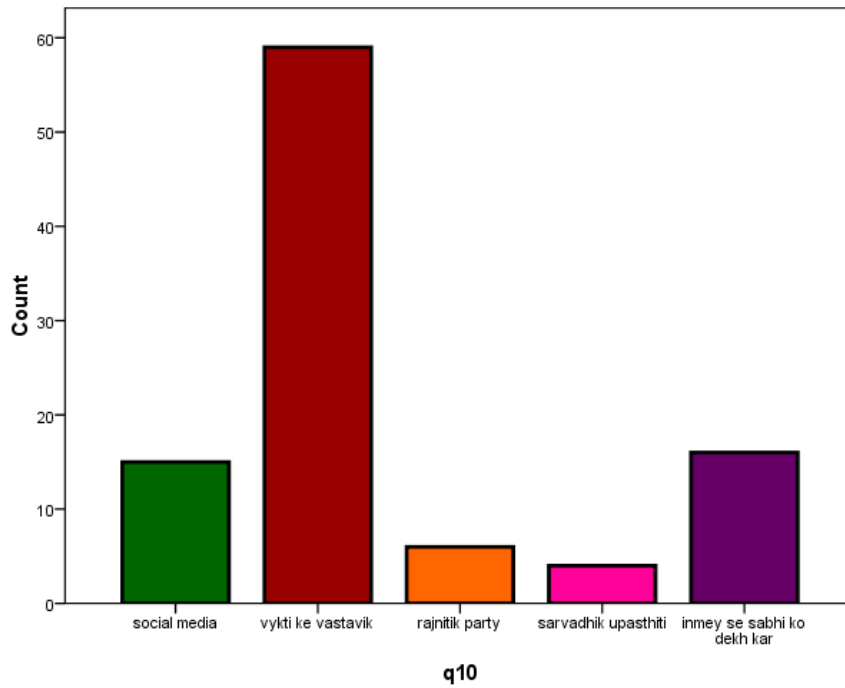
Above graph shows that 15% respondents think that content of social media helps in changing political public opinion, 59% respondents think that image of politician affected the political public opinion, 6% respondents think ideology of political party, 4% think it is the presence of social media where as 16% respondents agreed that above all factors are responsible of affecting the political public opinion.

➢ **Is there any difference persist between political parties' virtual and original image?**

Gender	Yes		No	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male (69)	41	59	28	41
Female (31)	17	55	15	45

**Table No.9**

Bar Chart
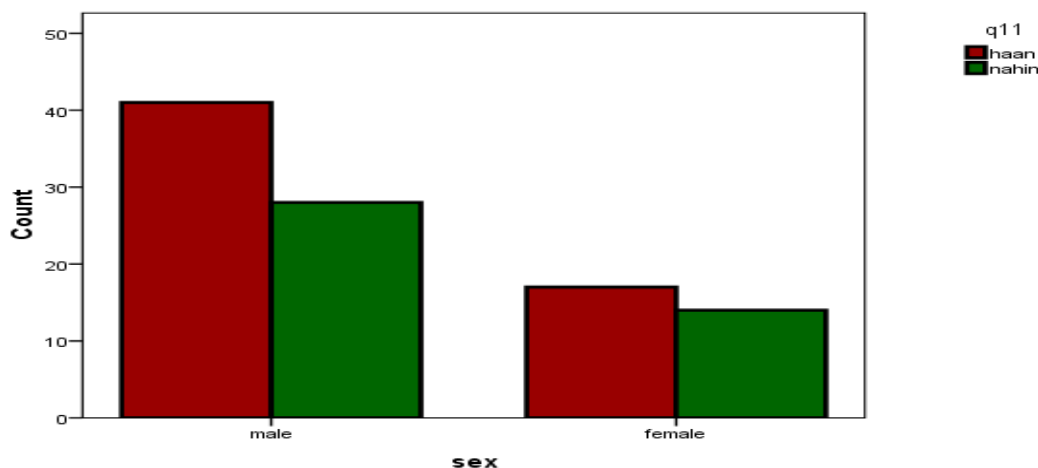
Graph no.9

Above chart and graph shows that 59% male and 55% female respondents agreed that there a difference persist between the virtual and original image of political parties where as 41% male and 45% female respondents disagreed with this opinion.

➢ **At what level Social Media works as a tool for Political publicity?**

	No. of Respondents	**Percentage**
Very much	13	13
Much	31	31
Average	47	47
Less	08	08
Very Less	01	01

Table No.10
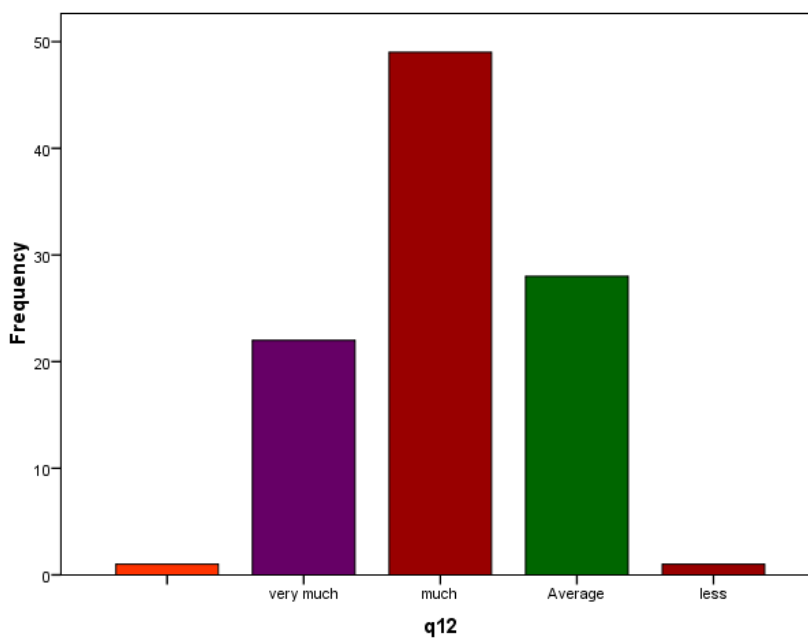
Graph no.10

Above graph and chart shows that 13% respondents think that Social Media very much work as a tool for political publicity where as 31% respondents thinks much, 47% respondents agreed on the average level, 8% on less and only 1% respondents think that social media works as a tool for political publicity.

Discussion

From the analysis of data, it has been found that Social Media became the most distinguished medium of communication among youth of Sonbharda. In answer to the first research question, it was evident that Social Media plays a very prominent role in the Political Socialization of rural people. This was further substantiated by the presence of Social Media and the reliability of people on the social media as well as how much social media helps in political opinion making. The numbers of respondents those support other

media for getting information about the political scenario is much less than the number of respondents who utilizes social media for political information.

The answer of second research question emerged to understand the role of Social Media in the formulation of Political Image building among rural people. Respondents support Social Media as a medium which helps in political image building of the politicians as well as political parties. They also agreed with the phenomenon of original image and virtual image of the political parties which is hampered or shaped by the help of social media.

The findings of this study indicate the extensive significance of Social media in developing political knowledge system among the youths of rural areas. The study of the Social Media and Political Socialization of rural youth provided a good example of influence of social media on the political opinion making of youths. Not only were the social media works as a medium for disseminating information but instead of that it is avail oneself to the political perspective of decision making.

Conclusion:

Basic political attitudes and values tend to be formed early in childhood and tend to be relatively consistent throughout life. Thus, the family is a very important agent of political socialization. However, the degree to which these basic political orientations are retained by the individual varies as a result of the discontinuities one experiences in their political socialization. Hence, this is where the other agents of political socialization become fundamental factors in one's political development. The aspect of rural development can be easily divided into four parameters. They are as Social Development, Ideological Development, Psychological Development and Political Development. In the augmentation of all these parameters, Social Media plays a very crucial role. In the rural areas, the diffusion of internet facility, mobile, online technology and podcasting are firstly step-up the psychological advancement. It can be easily seen that because of these technological advancement, a new ray of freedom and ideological propagation stimulated the rural people about their political rights and duties. This ideological and psychological advancement blossom the political socialization among the rural people. It has been found in this research that the utilization of Social Media by the rural people changes their way of looking the political approaches and political associations.

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