

# **Political Discourse in Social Media and Its Impact on the Participation of Youth in Uttar Pradesh**

**RESEARCH SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED TO THE BABASAHEB BHIMRAO  
AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW**

**FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

## **Research- Synopsis**



**Research Supervisor**

**Dr. Shashi Kant Pandey**

**Professor & Head**

**Department of Political Science**

**School of Ambedkar Studies**

**Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University**

**Lucknow**

**Research Scholar**

**Santosh Kumar**

**(Enrollment No. 1441/15)  
Department of Political Science**

**School of Ambedkar Studies**

**Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University**

**Lucknow**

**Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University**

**School of Ambedkar Studies**

## Research Summary

### **Introduction-**

This research which is based on the role of social media in the political participation of youth in the State of Uttar Pradesh, explores how the inherent characteristics of social networking sites facilitate the political participation of youth in the state. Political pundits, academicians and journalists consider social media as a potential media to mobilize and empower the masses. In fact, in the present century, internet is regarded as the liberator in both social and political spectrum. Over the past many years, the world has witnessed the use of internet for both political participation and mobilization. India is not only the largest democracy in the world, but also, she has made stupendous growth and development in the digital spectrum. Utttar Pradesh is the largest state of India demographically, therefore its important to know how the internet based political discourse playing the role in the state. It is understood that the youth is more exposed to new age communication technologies. Then the use of social media for political discourse by the youth generates interest to access the scenario scientifically. The revolution in the field of Information and Communication has changed the age old well established social, economic and political practices all over the world. The inception of internet dates back to the 50s and 60s when in many European countries and in the United States of America the internet was used for the first time. The US Department of Defense used the internet to connect various centers within the Pentagon. The packet switching networks such as ARPANET etc. were developed in the 1960s and early 1970. In the 1980s, the work of Tim Berners-Lee in the United Kingdom, on the World Wide Web, theorized the fact that protocols link hypertext documents into a working system, marking the beginning of the modern Internet. Since the mid-1990s, the Internet has had a revolutionary impact on culture and commerce, including the rise of near-instant communication by electronic mail, instant messaging, voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone calls, two-way interactive video calls, and the World Wide Web with its discussion forums, blogs, social networking, and online shopping sites.

**Social Media-** Evolution of Social networking sites is the extraordinary invention the field of internet. The term social media refers to sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube that enable people to send messages, images and videos that can be read or seen by large number of people. This state being the largest one demographically in the country plays a significant role

in the national politics. There is a popular saying that the route to New Delhi goes via Uttar Pradesh. In the recent past the users of social media in the state have increased manifold. This increase of youth population on the internet has produced many possibilities in politics as well. This is essential for the political parties to maintain the connectivity with the voters. This is the platform which is filled with youth now days. The significant part of social media is that it facilitates the interaction among youth. It is the best example of decentralization of information in the world as well. The main drawback of mainstream media is that they are the one- way communication systems while the social media mirrors the interactive society. India is having the largest youth population in the world toady therefore the internet specially the social networking sites are the ideal gatherings of youth. The information and communication revolution has been the most recent trend in the world. The world has witnessed exceptional expansion of information and communication systems by leaps and bounds. One of the results of these developments has been the birth of social media. The process of globalization would have been incomplete in the absence of this revolution specially the social media. Social media has left the mainstream media in the prominence in many aspects. In the Jasmine Revolution when the respective governments restricted the mainstream media so that the revolutionaries could not communicate among themselves, the people started to use the social media and as an outcome the decades old regimes in many countries failed to maintain their existence. The Jasmine Revolution proved that social media has an extraordinary potential in the political spectrum. India is the largest democracy in the world therefore media have a pivotal role to play. Earlier the media was in the few hands. Even toady the corporate media is highly centralized system not only at the national but at the international level as well. The social media has been very effective in the decentralization of mass media. The main characteristic of social media is its being decentralized nature. In fact, the social media empowers the common masses. This has emerged as an essential part in the political empowerment of people now. When the UPA Government was criticized for not being capable enough to solve the issue of corruption and to establish a Lokpal, there was widespread agitation around the nation. Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal and Kiran Bedi led a mass movement in Delhi and many other parts of country. The youth was the primary part of this movement. The youth was connected to the movement through social media. The Anna Hazare led mass movement against corruption was an innovative experiment as it involved the youth especially through social media. Many political parties aim to attract the voters between the age group of 18 to 25 years. These are

the potential voters in the country and have the power collectively to change the entire picture because they play the decisive role. In the 2014 General Elections, the voters' turnout was exceptional and helped a lot in the landslide victory of BJP led NDA. The BJP had worked a lot in the management of social media and as a result got the exceptional political mileage.

The social media engages different types of people in the network. Be it professionals, or the members of civil society, they all are the part of this networked society. In India, the role of social media has now been recognized by the political parties. The BJP in particular started to use the potential of social media to attract the voters. The youth are most of the users of social media. For this reason, the BJP directly approached the young voters and succeeded to persuade them towards their political agenda. This subsequently converted into the record voters' turn out in the 2014 General Elections. This proves that political participation of youth was influenced by the social media management. The researcher therefore aims to explore the role of social media in the political participation of youth in the largest state of India. Social media is a popular platform of expression in the contemporary world. Most of the online active net savvy people use social media for different purposes. The sudden emergence of social media is one of the key factors behind the attraction of this media. Initially, the use of social media was confined to the technocrats as these were only having the expertise to use this complex mechanism by that time after the emergence of internet and the need of sharing of information through this digital platform. With the passage of time, the technology of social media became more users friendly and inclusive because common masses now were not the recipients of the messages only, but they had become the content generators as well. The user generated contents later became the mainstay of social media. Unlike the mainstream media, the social media provide an opportunity to exchange the user generated information among the users. Social media are also known for empowering the ordinary people. In democracies also where the press is considered as the fourth estate, the political communication is initiated by the elite or leadership at the top levels. But social media is very democratic as far as political communication is concerned. This alternative media provides even the marginalized sections of society the opportunity to express them freely.

**Historical Background** - Kaplan and Haenlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content." The impact and strength of social media

can be understood by the developments in the Arab Spring in the early 2011. The people's uprising was at its climax against the establishments. When the discontent brought them outside their homes in the streets, the government put severe restrictions on the mainstream media. At this crucial hour the alternative media played a pivotal role. The YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Weblogs facilitated the political communication among the revolutionaries and mobilized them politically. As a result, the decades old regimes were uprooted. It has been observed in many research studies in the world that social media has become one of the major social, political and economic factors. Many research studies have been conducted in prestigious universities on the role and impact of social media. Madaline Storck studied the role of social media in the Arab uprising of 2011 and concluded that the social media facilitated the organizational structure and emerged as the strong form of alternative press. Surjit Kaur and Manpreet Kuar have studied the impact of social media on politics in India. According to them the social media have enabled the common masses to be expressive enough in the world's largest democratic set up. This proves that there is a pivotal role of social media all over world. In political spectrum, this is a new advent of expression of common voice. Human civilization has always been blessed with the achievements associated with communication. Communication has affected various aspects of life. Communication and politics are deeply associated with each other. There is no possibility of political process in the absence of communication. This is the age of democracy which can't be successful without appropriate communication structure at all levels. Subsequently, political communication has emerged as the attractive academic field for researchers especially after the emergence of social media. The political communication researches conducted recently exhibit that social media specially the Twitter and the Facebook have emerged as a popular platform of political discourse specially among the youths. The political leaders in the world are using this platform extensively to access the voters. It has been established in various electoral campaigns that the use of social media resulted into big successes for the politicians who use accessed the voters through this medium. The early adopters of social media have been benefitted more. Barrack Obama and Donald Trump both used the social media to access their voters. The researchers have found that the use of social media in politics is a popular trend. The voters specially the youth who indulged in the discourse are found to have been mobilized through social media for a particular cause. Anna Hazare led movement India Against Corruption can be best example in the recent past where social media was used to mobilize the youths for political mobilization. This was an organized attempt of the

use of social media in India. In the 2014 General. By 2019 General Elections, the use of social media increased comprehensively. Though the BJP has been forerunner in using the newly emerged information and communication technologies, the other political parties also showed significant interest in the use of social media for the purpose of political communication. The other political parties adopted structured and organized approach in the use of social media. Social media has emerged as a popular platform of political discourse in India. The Indian Against Corruption Campaign was a significant movement in respect of using social media for the political purposes. Social media not only organized the movement but also facilitated the participation and mobilization specially the youth in the country. Besides, the use of social media platform by the BJP gave popularity to its agenda among the youth in particularly. Amidst these circumstances, the study of social media and its role in the participation of youth becomes very important. The research study would eventually establish the use of social media by the youth for the political discourse and its impact in the political participation.

### **Universe of Study-**

#### **Area Selected for the study– Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**

Uttar Pradesh is the most significant state politically. It has a diverse impact on both the regional and national politics. There is a famous saying that the way to Delhi is via Uttar Pradesh. The ruling party at the center made land slid victory in the 2014 elections in Uttar Pradesh and subsequently was able to form the independent government after three decades of coalition politics. Since Lucknow is the Capital of Uttar Pradesh, most of the political activities take place at this place.

### **Selected Social Media for the Study-**

The researcher has studied the two-social media for the study- Facebook and Twitter. Since these the popular media in both in the state and country. The social media are very powerful platform of communication in the contemporary world. There are currently more than a couple of hundreds of social networking sites in practice. Out of these huge number of sites only 15 have millions of users. The number of internet users was 243 million in 2014. Out of which the number of Facebook users was 114.8 million whereas the twitter user was 33 million

## **Selected Political Parties for the Study**

Political parties selected for the study are- the BJP and SP. The selection of political parties has been on the basis of their performance in the 2017 Assembly elections. On this basis, the two largest political parties are- the BJP and the SP. The BJP has been forerunner in using the digital media for the political mobilization. The party has used social media substantially for the same purpose. Samajwadi Party has also used social media to spread its influence in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The party led by Akhilesh Yadav used the social media for the political campaigning. The live streaming of rallies of Akhilesh Yadav were reaching the people directly in different parts of Uttar Pradesh.

## **Research Questions**

- What is the role of political discourse in social media in Uttar Pradesh?
- How is social media motivating the youth to participate in the political processes?
- How is social media different from the traditional mass media in the context of political communication?
- What is the effectiveness of social media in the political mobilization of youth?
- What is the role of social media in the political participation?
- Has the social media democratized the information?
- Does social media generate interest of youth in politics?

Social media is the latest development in the field of mass communication. But this mass media has grown manifold. Both politicians and voters are engaged in the communication process in social media. India has achieved great results in the area of information technology. This has enhanced the development of social media in India. Political parties have always strived to connect with the voters in the politics of Uttar Pradesh. Emergence of social media has connected the political leaders with the people. Has this connectivity resulted into qualitative or quantitative outcomes in the politics of Uttar Pradesh? This is an important aspect.

The youth in Uttar Pradesh is highly active in social media. They access their favorite political candidates through this media. Political parties also initiate the digital campaigns on this platform. In these circumstances, the political discourse in social media has become important for youth of

state. What is the outcome of youth's engagement in political discourse on the social media platform? This question generate interest to know more about the relationship among social media, youth and politics.

Mass media is considered the fourth pillar of democracy. Liberal media theory throws the light on the need and importance of free media in a democratic system. The traditional mass media has been concentrated either within the government control like Doordarshan and Akshawani before liberalization in 1991 or within few hands in the private sector like individual proprietorship in India. The arrival of social media has changed these equations. Now the question arises how have these changes impacted the political discourse in the political spectrum. Can we call social media as people's media?

Now its is an established knowledge that social media mobilizes the people. Most of the times, the Arab Spring of 2011 and the India against Corruption in 2012 in India are considered as the most relevant examples of political mobilization. This question generates interest whether the political discourse in social media can mobilize the youth in Uttar Pradesh.

In today's world of democracies, the political participation is considered as a prerequisite for the success. Political participation is actual success of democracy. Mass media facilitates the political participation. How is social media in this respect? This is an interest aspect to know.

Mainstream media is criticized for having the biased approach. The emergence of social media as an alternate media is considered as the democratization of mass media. Because of this anyone can access the contents anytime from any place. In these circumstances, it has been significant to know how has the social media democratized the information.

Youth is always at the forefront of the innovation. Social media has two significant aspects. Firstly, the youth can access this platform directly and secondly, he can do this process with his smart phone. Studies in these areas suggest that youth spend a lot of time with his smartphone. In this way he also uses the social media as well. It is interesting to know whether his engagement has also increased his interest in politics.

### **Research Objectives**

Following are the research objectives of the study-

- **To find out the role of social media in the political mobilization of youth.**
- **To study the use of social media platform for political discourse by youth.**
- **To examine the role of social media in enhancing the political participation.**
- **To examine whether the social media has enhanced the interest of youth in politics**
- **To analyze the role of social media on the formation of public opinion.**
- **To examine the relevance of social media platforms used by the youth in Uttar Pradesh.**

## **Hypothesis**

The study aims the following hypothesis-

- The social media penetration has strengthened the political discourse among youth. Political Parties are also using this platform to persuade them.
- The social media has increased the political mobilization of youth in Uttar Pradesh.
- The social media has increased the political participation of youth in Uttar Pradesh.

## **Methodology**

The study aims to explore the impact of social media on the political participation of the youth in Uttar Pradesh. Both primary and secondary data have been used by the researcher. The mixed method of data collection has been found suitable. This is an exploratory research where the researcher aims to study the political discourse in social media and its impact on the participation of youth in Uttar Pradesh. The mixed exploratory research can be called such a problem as could not be interpreted evidently. The studies based on exploratory research also aim to develop an understanding on a phenomenon, event or problem. This study is basically trying to understand the impact of social media on the political participation of the youth in India's demographically largest state, Uttar Pradesh. It is both qualitative and quantitative analysis of this new age media and its role in the political discourse. Political Discourse in Social Media and its Impact on the Participation of Youths in Uttar Pradesh requires both primary and secondary sources of data to study. The researcher aims to explore the impact of social media in political discourse empirically. For this purpose, the researcher followed three step procedure to collect relevant data. There are

three significant demographic variables in the research study- age, education and gender. The political parties and youth are the focus areas of study.

**Methods of Data Collection-** The researcher has used the random method of data collection. The outbreak of Corona Pandemic obstructed the data collection process. In this backdrop, the researcher found the suitability of using online digital communication technologies to collect data. Following is the detailed description of method of data collection-

**Survey-** The survey can be defined as an attempt to collect relevant information and insights through the data collection. This process involves the designing of questionnaire. The researcher conducts the survey on 300 respondents. Because of corona outbreak, the respondents have been facilitated online google form. The 300 respondents are in the three-age groups of 18-22, 22-26 and 26-30 and are almost equal number of males and females. This selection is based on the random sampling method. A random sampling is a kind of technique which is used to select a respondent without any biased approach. In this sampling, each of the respondent has an opportunity for being selected in the process. Questionnaires contains over all 32 questions. These questions are divided into three broad categories. The first part consists of information based on demographic variable. The second part enquires about the social media using habits. Whereas, in the third part, the respondents would be asked to narrate the impacts of social media and their participation in the political discourse. The two social media sites have been emphasized in the questionnaire because the researcher has chosen the Facebook and Twitter as the social networking sites for the purpose of study. The selection of social media is on the basis of the users. Data collected through survey is explained on the basis of frequency and percentage.

**In-depth Interview-** The in-depth interview is a popular research technique. In this process, the researcher conducts the interview of a small number of experts belonging to the concerned areas of research. In this the interviewer are asked to provide the detailed insights on the topic of research. Since the participants are less in number, the researcher has abundant of time to explore various facts and concepts related to his research. This is a qualitative method of research where the researcher tries to understand the perspective of respondents through the interview. The in- depth interview is considered suitable enough when the researcher has to collect the idea about a particular topic or thought. They are considered suitable to collect the qualitative data. Here, the researcher has conducted the in- depth interview of thirteen experts. These experts are further classified into four broad areas- Information Technology,

Journalism, Media Academics, Social Worker and Politicians from the two concerned political parties- BJP and the Samajwadi Party. There were ten questions designed to be asked from the interviewee. Because of the outbreak of Corona pandemic, the researcher conducted the telephonic interview. Considering the objectives of research, the researcher interviewed thirteen experts from different fields within the ambit of field of study. For the purpose, the experts were contacted. The telephonic interview was thought to be most suitable because of the corona pandemic. In this backdrop, all the interviews were conducted telephonically. Dr Sangeeta Mahapatra lives in Hamburg, Germany and is an associate at the GIGA. She has done extensive work on social media and politics especially on the Middle East, South Asia etc. The researcher interviewed her on skype. Dr Vijay Rana is based in London and he has prolonged experience in the field of media, politics and youth. He was interviewed on WhatsApp. Ram Dutt Tripathi has been the correspondent of BBC Hindi Service in Lucknow Uttar Pradesh. He holds prominence in the field of media and politics. He was interviewed on phone. Dr AK Singh is an Asst Professor in the Deptt. of Journalism and Mass Communication BBAU, Lucknow. He has vast experience of media, youth and active journalism. He was interviewed on phone. Rest of other experts were also interviewed on phone.

<b>Category of Experts</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Expertise</b>
Social Media Researcher & Media Academician	1-Dr Sangeeta Mahapatra	Associate, GIGA, Hamburg, Germany	Social Media and Politics
	2-Dr AK Singh	Asst Professor, Dept. of Journalism & Mass Comm, BBAU Lucknow.	Media, Youth and Culture
Social Activist	1-Dr A Q Hashmi	General Secretary, Maulana Azad Memorial Academy Lucknow.	Media, Youth Culture & Education.
	1-Dr Vijay Rana	Former Correspondent BBC, London, UK	Media, Youth & Culture.

Journalists	2-Ram Dutt Tripathi	Former Correspondent BBC, Lucknow, UP	Media & Politics
	3-Sameeratmaj Mishra	Journalist, BBC, Lucknow	Media & Politics
	4- Haidar Naqvi	Journalist, Hindustan Times, Kanpur	Media & Politics
	5-Pramod Joshi	Senior Journalist, Noida, Uttar Pradesh	Media & Politics
	6- Naval Kant Sinha	Senior Journalist, Lucknow Uttar Pradesh.	Media & Politics
	7-Naveen Joshi	Resident Editor, Hindustan, Lucknow	Media, Culture and Politics
IT Expert	1-Rajesh Jain	Founder & Managing Director of Netcore Solutions, Mumbai	IT Expert
Leader, BJP	1-Dr Manoj Mishra	Spokesperson, BJP Uttar Pradesh	Media, Youth and Politics
Leader, SP	1-Abdul Hafiz Gandhi	Leader, SP Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow	Media, Youth and Politics.
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>		

The researcher transcribed the interviews in such a logical manner as to facilitate more insights and analysis of the contents. The variables have been defined with the purpose of coding the agenda. Coding rules have been structured with a motive to differentiate various categories. Having finished the aforementioned essential beginning, the researcher, thereafter read the transcribed contents carefully so that the relevant contents could be identified. After this, the categories of contents were also decided and fixed for further action according to their relevance of the research. The researcher paraphrased interview contents and used his own words. The statements and opinions were selected carefully. Once the coding is done, the researcher went

ahead to analyze and interpret the contents of interview. Furthermore, the need of research study was kept as the frame of mind before finalizing the contents for the data analysis. The researcher found the qualitative method to be suitable enough to reach the desired conclusion. After having conducted the interview, the researcher transcribed the contents systematically for the purpose of further analysis. The qualitative content analysis was adopted for the purpose of the study. The aim of analyzing the data is to find out the relevant inputs from the experts according to the need of the research objectives.

**Content Analysis-** The content analysis is a popular form of research. In the content analysis, the researcher tries to identify the patterns of communication. In this method of research, the researcher collects data from wide areas of communication. This can be in the form of visual, text or oral communication. In simple terms, the researcher studies, the digital media like social networking sites, newspapers, books or magazines. Photographs and films can also be examined in the content analysis method. The content analysis is of both kinds- quantitative and qualitative. In these both categories of research, the researcher codify the themes and other concepts within the ambit of available contents and then analyses the results accordingly. The researcher collected the data of six months from March 2020 to August 2020. This period was chosen deliberately as due to the outbreak of corona pandemic, the internet was used mostly by the people both the common masses and the political leadership. The Facebook and Twitter accounts of BJP and SP were accessed through the official web page of these political parties in Uttar Pradesh. The content analysis of the official Facebook and Twitter pages of the BJP and SP was conducted by the researcher. The pages were accessed from the official website of the SP and the BJP Uttar Pradesh. Thereafter, the posts from March to August 2020 were collected and categorized. Every post/tweet was categorised into a suitable group. The coding scheme was developed by the researcher by using clustering approach, creating a new category when needed. The posts were categorised as follows:

### **1.14 Chapter Scheme**

The study of the aforementioned area is concluded in the six following chapters-

**The Chapter One-** the first chapter introduces the topic of the study. In the first chapter of introduction the political discourse in the social media has been described. The chapter explains the social media as the new dimension in the area of political communication. India emerged as the IT super power in the world. This major development facilitated the digitization of

communication system. The stupendous growth in the mobile telephony has changed the communication scenario from 1995 till date. Social media has become a favorite destination for both candidates and the voters in the world. As far as Uttar Pradesh is concerned, the

**The Second Chapter** – The second chapter discusses the theoretical aspect of social media and political communication. This is an analysis of different theories and other related aspects about social media and politics. This chapter introduces the theoretical framework of relationship between social media and politics. The main focus is on the role of social media in the political mobilization.

**The Third Chapter-** The third chapter is about the emergence of social media for political communication and the use of social media by major political parties in India. The strategy and planning to reach the masses through the media have been described comprehensively.

**The Fourth Chapter-** The Fourth chapter is a detailed analysis of the emergence of social media and political discourse in Uttar Pradesh, India's largest state demographically and having substantial political capacity to influence the regional and national politics.

**The Fifth Chapter-** The fifth chapter is based on the empirical analysis of data collected by the researcher. The entire chapter is divided into three parts. In the first part of the chapter, the researcher describes the data with the help of tables and graphs. In the Second part, the discussion has been made on the basis of the inputs collected by form thirteen experts selected from different filed of expertise like IT, Media, Politics etc. The third part is the content analysis of social media data for the stipulated time of six months.

**The Sixth Chapter-** This chapter discusses the findings of study whether the social media persuade the youth for political participation in Uttar Pradesh. In this chapter the major findings and recommendations have been discussed by the researcher.

### **Findings-**

On the basis of the study, the first hypothesis, **the penetration of social media has strengthened the political discourse among the youth and the political parties are using this platform to persuade them** is validated. In the last decade, social media has grown exceptionally. This growth is not confined within a country but this is termed as the global phenomenon. The youth use social

media for various purposes. He generally uses this platform for personal purpose and also have multiple accounts. His engagement with social media confirms that the youth is exposed to this new age communication system. The opinion of experts and content analysis of six moth data of both Facebook and Twitter confirms that the youth is engaged with social media and political parties are also trying to access the youth through social media. The second hypothesis that **the social media has facilitated the political mobilization in Uttar Pradesh is tested negative**. There have been negative responses from both the categories of respondents in this regard in the survey. According to the respondents, they engage in the social media discourse but their political decisions are least influenced by the social media contents. Political discourse in social media is not a significant determinant of political mobilization. Majority of the respondents doubt the social media contents. The experts and content analysis also prove that political discourse in social media does not mobilize the youth in Uttar Pradesh. The hypothesis that **social media increases the political participation of youth in Uttar Pradesh** is also disproved. The survey reveals that though youth remain engaged in social media yet his political participation is least impacted by the political discourse in social media. Majority of respondents say that their voting decisions are not influenced by the social media discourse.

### Testing of Hypothesis

S.N.	Hypothesis	Result
1	The penetration of social media has strengthened the political discourse among the youth and the political parties are using this platform to persuade them	Positive
2	Social media has facilitated the political mobilization in Uttar Pradesh	Negative
3	Social media increases the political participation of youth in Uttar Pradesh	Negative

### Main Findings

- Social media is a popular mass media. Youth have multiple accounts and they access the social media regularly.

- Majority of youth follow the Bhartiya Janata Party on the social media platform.
- The credibility of social media contents is a big concern. Even the regular users of social media don't believe the contents blindly.
- Social media amplifies the transmission of messages by leaps and bounds in comparison to other mass media channels.
- Social media ignites the debates and discussion and transport the contents in high speed but is not the sole determinant in the formation of public opinion and subsequent political participation.
- Social media increases the engagement of youth in political discourse but that does not result into substantial political participation and mobilization.

### **Limitations of the Study**

- The main limitation of this study is that it is only concentrating the two social media platforms- Facebook and Twitter.
- The second limitation of study is that it is restricted only a certain period of time. The opinion and contents may be affected in the changing circumstances.
- The third limitation is that it is confined only in the urban area that is the capital city of state. The ground reality in rural and backward areas may be significantly affected due to poor connectivity and low income. The socio- economic factors impact the social media significantly.
- The fourth limitation is that the study is confined within social media spectrum. However, the other mass media are also reaching the masses vastly and effectively. Political discourse in mainstream mass media may result differently.

**Suggestions-** The study makes it clear that social media is an important mass media which is facilitating the communication between masses to masses. It can be termed as people's media. In these circumstances, it is understood in this research that the role of social media can be made more constructive if the credibility of contents is established. There is also need for the political parties to follow the self-regulation code for themselves. The most significant power of social media is its being free of gatekeeper. This provides an opportunity for all without any discrimination. It is therefore recommended that there should be a gatekeeper in the social media as well to ensure the positive use of the networked media. Besides, there is also need of the media

literacy. If the users know the various aspects of social media, he or she would not use it for negative consequences.