



# POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INDIAN PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S TWITTER COMMUNICATION

ANANT JAIN (RESEARCH SCHOLAR)

**Abstract** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most followed world leader on Instagram with 14.8 million followers. Check out the data for World Leaders on Instagram. He is closely followed by Indonesian President Joko Widodo @Jokowi with 12.2 million followers who more than doubled his followers over the past 12 months., according to the newly released 2018 – World Leaders on Instagram study by leading global communications agency BCW (Burson Cohn & Wolfe). With 10 million followers U.S. President Donald Trump is in third position



Source: Public Instagram profiles

Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed a landslide victory in the 2019 national election, with his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) winning 303 seats, comfortably beyond the 272 seats needed for a majority in the Indian Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). . As has been the recent trend, the 2019 Indian election campaign was fought on social media apps and platforms. After the 2014 national election was named the 'first social media election' in India, it was predicted that WhatsApp, a messaging app owned by Facebook, would play a significant role in the 2019 election campaign (Rodrigues 2018). During the state elections in 2018–2019, WhatsApp was increasingly being used by the BJP and various opposition parties to keep in touch with their constituents. In fact, many political parties set up data analytics departments to analyze voter data at the district and booth level to optimize their election campaigns, and almost all regional and national leaders use Facebook Live to connect with voters. Were staying Although traditional factors such as caste- and religion-based candidate selection and voting patterns, and more contemporary issues of unemployment and farmers' unrest were important issues in the 2019 election campaign, it is the use of social media platforms as a communication tool for political Was. campaign that gained more ground for the parties in India. In the context of an increasingly platform-driven society, where private and public communication is largely disseminated through a global online platform (social and mobile) ecosystem (Van Dijk 2018), in this chapter I discuss how How social media and mobile platforms are used in political communication in India, and the implications for India's public sphere.

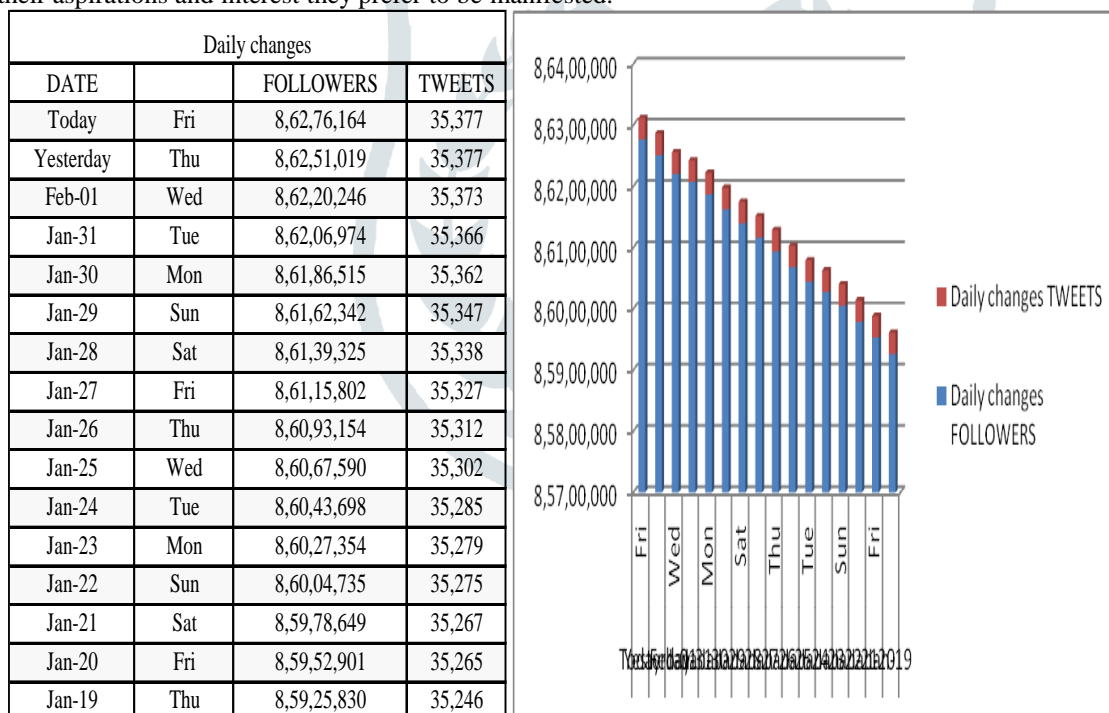
**With 70 million Twitter followers, PM Modi is one of most followed world leaders** [India News](#)

Published on Jul 29, 2021 10:34 AM IST

After PM Narendra Modi, Pope Francis has the highest number of followers on the microblogging site at 53 million.



Social media has become an enabler for participation and democracy among citizens since it is believed that the social media sphere has the potential to enhance the political participation. The politicians promote their controlled speech and present their point of view without being interrupted by the journalists or by the media format limitation. Social Media has given privilege to the politicians to post a presumptive political agenda. By using the social media tool, politicians and the political parties interact apparently with more efficiency with their supporters, beyond the institutional and bureaucratic rigors. Assessing political conversations in social media requires a deeper understanding of the underlying practices and styles; it comes as no surprise that in the last few years several politicians have integrated Twitter into their political campaigns. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has the highest number of twitter followers among Indian politicians. Before the 2014 general elections in India, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter account- @narendramodi had millions following him. Since opening his account in 2009, he has over 14.6 million twitter users following him as on 2015. Political Communication has had a phenomenal influence of the social media. Recognising the potency in the alternative media, the politicians come to know about are their voters and construct their messages, the electorates also can highlight their aspirations and interest they prefer to be manifested.



Political Communication is essentially an interactive procedure for dissemination and transmission of information by and among political personalities, the media and the people of a geographical location and beyond. It is both a top-down and a bottom-up process, operating from the governments to the people as the end users and also shifts upwards to the authorities in the form of public opinion. Robert Entman and Lance Bennett identified two approaches to political communication studies: an approach emphasizes the communication process through which political messages and information are constructed by the political actors and the mass media (producing political communication) and other approach refers to public reactions to persuasive messages and individual choices (the perception of political communication). If we could relate strictly to classical communication or media elements, we find that in the process of production of political communication, the focus is more on building the political messages, the selection and operation of media channels and in identifying or creating a context, in which the political actor's image is growing. On the other hand, the perception of political communication focuses strictly on receptors attitudes, on collecting and centralizing the feedback and on finding some solutions, which will optimize and answer both quantitatively and especially qualitatively from the target-audience. The 2014 Lok Sabha elections witnessed a watershed moment in the history of electoral democracy in India as political parties and candidates were all over the social media platforms to connect to the people with their election agenda.

Twitter is a micro blogging site developed to provide the users to read and post messages of up to 140 characters, known as 'tweets'. Globally, Twitter has more than 500 million users and is one of the top 10 most visited sites. In India there are more than 23 million Twitter users, which took India to the 6<sup>th</sup> spot globally in terms of Twitter users. For politicians in



India, the 2014 Lok Sabha elections was a watershed election because this was the first time in the political history of India that social media was employed by the political parties across the political spectrum for the dissemination of their respective political agenda. Most of the political parties acknowledge that the pulse and the mood of the nation can be gauged from the social media discussions and conversations engaged in by millions of users. Unlike the conventional ways of sending messages, recorded calls and public gatherings, this election saw politicians leveraging social media to reach out to their constituents like never before. Although the use of social media by politicians was started by former External Affairs Minister Sashi Tharoor, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon came to dominate the Twitter space with millions of followers joining him. According to Andy Stone from Facebook policy communication, *"Modi continues to have the fastest growing page (for the last day, week and month) of any politician or elected official worldwide"*. The growth rate was around 1.171 per cent against Barack Obama's

0.305 per cent. Twitter had a predominant role during the entire campaign period. It became the medium of choice for people to consume political content and – even more important – to relate with politicians. Twitter India stated that there have been 56 million election-related Tweets from January 1st until May 12, 2014.

In 2001, India had 7 million Internet users. By 2013, the number rose to 40 million people in the country. Over the years, India has emerged as one of the largest growing populations of Internet users in the world—462 million in the second half of 2016 and growing rapidly. Elections in India are no less than grand festive occasions when the whole country is decked with flags, banners, posters, wall writings, symbol displays, and recorded political songs and speeches of candidates blare out from loudspeakers hung from electric poles and treetops. Leaders from the political parties contesting elections visit places across the country to address public rallies and processions to encourage and persuade voters through door-to-door meetings. The increasing use of Social media has intensified personalised political discourse and there has been a steep rise in the political participation focused at traditional parties or candidates and their direct exchange of thoughts and ideas with the people. Since 2011, political communication in India through mass media has entered an interesting and a highly complex fourth phase where internet and online communication has emerged as an independent variable influencing political communication running parallel to the legacy media. During the 2008 Mumbai attacks information was shared through Twitter and Flickr between Indians and the outside. The second mass use of social media in India was the May 2009 national elections, when, for the first time, online voter registration and transparency campaigns started where political parties for the first time, tried to reach out to voters through social networking websites.

In the 2014 Lok Sabha election, BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate Narendra Modi effectively used social media to connect with online citizens. Besides being active on Twitter and Facebook, Modi also went for live chats on Google Plus with netizens. By going online for live chat, he became the first Indian politician to do so. Through his social media campaign, he was able to capture the first time voters, the youth, who certainly are more attuned to digital culture. At the same time, the middle class Indian also became noticeably active on social media. It cannot be argued that the proactive presence on social media helped Modi win the election. But it is evident that despite being a controversial figure, Modi was projected as the most updated tech geek and a forward-looking politician. He was also able to connect with the youth because of his style of political campaigning and his keenness to use the social media tools. Narendra Modi with his team was quite active on social media since 2009, but as BJP declared him as Prime Ministerial candidate, a clear upsurge in the use of digital media was seen.

In the 16th General Elections, nearly 814 million of 125 crore population were eligible to vote. In order to reach out to huge mass of potential voters, all the channels of digital media as well as offline medium were used so that could be accomplished to more voters. The *Chai pe Charcha* programme was devised to target the lower income groups and farmers through live interactions by Narendra Modi. Facebook Page "I support Narendra Modi" and the slogan "*Har har Modi Ghar ghar Modi*" went viral across social media platforms. Narendra Modi made use of the social media tools to disclose the bad doings of Congress government and also made the voters aware about their voting rights. And through digital media he made people aware about the development that was done in Gujarat.

Moreover, the two way mode of communication offered by the digital media helped to the public engaged and he also gave replies to their comments. Modi's use of the social media fetched him the support and love in the form of likes, shares, comments and retweets etc. The role of language, imagery and network effects has been the guiding principle behind Narendra Modi's inclination towards social media and investing emphasis on Twitter communication. Narendra Modi has clearly harnessed his familiarity with new-age communication technology to his political advantage. Narendra Modi has made a niche on the social media and has a great following among young political enthusiasts. The growing online popularity has earned Modi significant political currency, particularly among the young demography. He has a steadfast presence on Facebook, maintains a blog and his twitter account @narendramodi is designed in such a way that every sentence on a tweet could be tweeted as 140-characters making it tweet-ready. This was most pronounced in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections when political experts saying that even before Modi became a PM candidate, he became a social media phenomenon. As a political leader, Modi did not absolutely disassociate himself from the mainstream media; instead he used social media as a tool to disseminate messages which was taken by the people and even by the traditional press as well. Raheel Khursheed, Head - News, Politics & Government at Twitter India said "Keep in mind, in 2009, there was just one politician with 6,000 followers on Twitter to now, when every party and candidate is represented." In 2014, India's Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi paved the way for social media usage for elections in India. The run up to the Lok Sabha Elections created a buzz because of the extensive usage of social media platforms and especially Twitter to the optimum with five of Narendra Modi's tweets featuring in the top ten tweets.

Since taking office, the Prime Minister's Twitter account @narendramodi has amassed over six million followers, making him the second most followed politician in the world, after US president Barack Obama. The official twitter handle of the Prime Minister's office @PMOIndia has also grown by 40 per cent during that time. According to Twitter India, 5 out of the 10 top election Tweets have been sent by Narendra Modi including the victory tweet 'India has won!' which he tweeted on May 16, 2014 instantly became a hit with over 3.9k re-tweets and nearly 38,000 marking favorites within a short span of time followed by the *Selfie with mother*. Eventually, the victory tweet was by far India's most shared tweet.

As the Prime Ministerial candidate for the BJP, Narendra Modi, known for his keen inclination towards new technologies, experimented new social media instruments to reach out to the voters with messages that contain vote appeals, influence

potential voters. During the festival of Holi in 2014, Modi sent personalised direct messages to thousands of people with a signed photograph for each of them. Unlike a regular direct message, this was connected to a link that enabled the receivers to tweet or share the autographed image. An unprecedented event forcing someone to say: “won’t vote for Modi but impressed with his digital campaign.” Not just this, Modi has also forced his social media team to accelerate his online presence on Whatsapp and SMS in addition to the buzz created over the numerous social media platforms. Developed in the context of research and social theory, Actor-Network Theory (ANT) viewed the inter-textual link with social networks, objects and non-human entities acting within the networks. The present study will employ the concept of Actor Network Theory (ANT) an integrative approach and a mix of methodologies covering ethnography science, history and even poststructuralist philosophy. (Dustin M & Paul R, 2011). Introduced by French Society Studies scholars Michel Callon and Von Bruno Latour and further developed by John Low, the ANT views the relationship with science with social structures as “material-semiotic” networks. The complex networks falling within the purview of the theory are often perceived by the evolving ties between heterogeneous agents alias actants which attribute agency to humans and non-humans as well.

There are certain situations when politicians follow the media logic and there are times when the reverse happens and under those conditions the media turns into *political actors*. The fundamental principle of *political parallelism* that was introduced in the mid-1970s within the bracket of mediatization narrates the discussions on political actors in the ambit of political communication. New Media has an important role in political communication as a *political actor* as political and media elites operate in a setting which has little room to skip the observations and also criticisms. Actor Network Theory is applied as an alternative approach to assess and estimate the function of information and practices of nationalism and cosmopolitanism and advocates that the local and global perspectives between the individual and the collective should be skipped as ‘other phenomena.’ The goal of this study is to study how the BJP’s prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi cultivated Twitter to disseminate his political messages and attract voters in the 2014 General Elections. A quantitative and qualitative content analysis, that would include textual analysis, sentiment analysis and discourse analysis, would look into the nature, language, semantic and systemic use of the twitter posts, to understand the alternative political narrative of Narendra Modi transmitted to large mass of followers through the use of ungated communication media.

In the present study, the researcher has carried out a content analysis of the tweets posted by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi between 26 May 2013 to 25 May 2015. The researcher has conducted the analysis of the tweets for two periods, first for a one-year period between 26 May 2013 to 25 May 2014 before Modi became the Prime Minister and, second for a one-year period after he was elected the Indian Prime Minister of India, from May 26 2014 to May 25 2015. The tonal references of the mood conveyed by the tweets in the periods under study has been analysed through sentiment analysis of the tweets. The work, *Twitter use by three political leaders- an exploratory analysis*, (2012), Noa Aharoni, Department of Information Science, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel focused on how three different political figures viz Prime Minister of Britain, David Cameron; President of United States of America, Barack Obama and Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu prefer to communicate via Twitter. In her paper an analysis of the tweets made during the period from August till October of 2010 by the three politicians has been done through content analysis and statistical descriptive analysis.

In her article on “*The Past Decade and Future of Political Media: The Ascendancy of Social Media*” published in the book *Towards a New Enlightenment? A Transcendent Decade* (2019) Diana Owen talks about the changes in the American media system ever since new media arrived in the scene in the 1980s. She also focuses on the changes in the way people acquire information, the emergence of the *political twitterverse* that has brought significant shifts in the patterns of political communication between the politicians, the press and the people. Also, her work traces out the ways in which social media has replaced the local news outlets and occupied the spaces dominating the news landscape suiting to the support base of Donald Trump. Juraj Horvath, faculty of Arts, Institute of British and American Studies, University of Presov has mentioned Norman Fairclough’s assumptions of critical discourse analysis for the study on *Critical Discourse Analysis of Obama’s political discourse* (2012). He claimed that ideologies reside in texts and underscored his findings that it is not possible to discount ideologies from texts which are open for diverse interpretations. Shanto Iyengar and Stephen Ansolabehere in their book *Going Negative: How political advertisements Shrink and Polarise the Electorate* (1995) reflect on how negative advertisement campaigns drives down voter turnout, mostly in a dramatic fashion. The book also suggests that political consultants deliberately use such advertisements for such results. Joyojeet Pal in his article *Banalities Turned Viral: Narendra Modi and the Political Tweet* (2015) focusing on the role played by Twitter fueling the reach of Modi with a mix of messages that touches the voters hearts, shout outs made to the other celebrities, as well as a close watch on the followbacks. The author debated that use of social media helped Modi to restore his public image as a techno-geek leader during the Lok Sabha election. In the article *Machine Learning-Based Sentiment Analysis for Twitter Accounts*, published in the journal *Mathematical and Computational Applications*, 2018, authors Ali Hasan, Sana Moin, Ahmad Karim and Shahaboddin Shamshirband explored the opinions or text available on different platforms of social media through machine learning techniques with sentiment, subjectivity analysis or polarity calculations. The authors mentioned that there is a stringent research works could be carried through computationally analysing opinion and sentiments. The article discussed adoption of various sentiment analysers with machine learning algorithms to determine the approach with highest accuracy rate for understanding election sentiments. The researchers have validated three sentiment analysis lexicons using two machine-learning algorithms calculating sentiments from three analysers *SentiWordNet*, *TextBlob*, and *W-WSD* and the results were examined through two supervised machine learning classifiers. Studying text techniques which bring out information from text data is text analysis. Supriya Paul and Sachin Deshmukh from Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad in their work *Domain Independent Joint Sentiment And Topic Detection Using AFINN And Other Lexicons* (2015) examined the joint sentiment and topic detection model (JST) to find out sentiment and topic from the texts. The authors, using the AFINN and Bing Liu and Minquing Hu’s sentiment lexicons opined that only sentiment classification is not enough for an in depth understanding of the user generated data. JST provides better and sufficient information regarding the text instead of just sentiments. James Martin in his book *Politics and Rhetoric: A critical introduction* (2014) mentions that rhetoric is the art of speech and persuasion and the actors using rhetorics, politics is the ability to be applied. The author threw light on the issue that public arguments are usually dismissed as simple rhetoric instead of looking at them clinically and critically making the citizens as passive

recipients rather than engaged participants in the exchange of political dialogue. The book also focuses on the skills of the rhetorical art. The book delves into the realm of rhetoric in modern day public life and analyses the vitality as a means of political communication. Aspects of power and identity in the context of political communication are crucial to the rhetorical patterns. The book brings to the fore some vital aspects of politics and rhetoric in the discourse analysis which with regards to politics and political communication. The aim of this study is to empirically find out how the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi cultivated Twitter to attract voters in the 2014 general election. It will also look to understand the similarities and differences in the Twitter behavior of Narendra Modi, as a prime ministerial candidate for the 2014 general election and subsequently as the Prime Minister of India, the researcher is undertaking a quantitative as well as qualitative content analysis of a sample of 730 tweets made from his twitter handle @narendramodi since May 26 2013 to May 25 2014 and from May 26 2014 till May 25 2015. The general objective of the study will be to find out the twitter posts of Narendra Modi for a period of one year before he became the Prime Minister of India and for a period of one year after he became the Prime Minister.

## **objectives:-**

Objective 1: To classify the tweets posted by Narendra Modi either as Positive-toned or Negative-toned or Neutral and find out the difference in Twitter Sentiment before and after he became the Prime Minister of India.

Objective 2: To classify the tweets posted by Narendra Modi as either election rhetoric or vision policies of governance.

Objective 3: To study the twitter behavior of Narendra Modi in terms of frequency of tweets and classify them as episodic or thematic in nature.

Objective 4: To distinguish the tweets by Narendra Modi as either personal messages or political messages and to find out the differences in his messaging content before and after he became the prime minister of India.

Objective 5: To find out the most repeated words, phrases, expressions and idioms in the tweets by Narendra Modi and if there is any difference in the semantic, syntactic and linguistic expressions used by him in the periods before and after he became the Prime minister of India.

Objective 6: To study whether the tweets made by Narendra Modi are proactive or reactive and classify them as a) Announcement b) Engagement c) Encouragement d) Informative. e) Imperative. f) Political charges. g) Political defenses. h) Sarcasm.

Objective 7: To find out the nature, types and expressions used in the tweets which his followers have retweeted the most. In the previous chapter, studies related to Political Communication and Social media are reviewed in depth which highlight that Social media is evolving as a platform for social, informational, and political exchanges. In the previous chapter, studies related to Political Communication and Social media are reviewed in depth which highlight that Social media is evolving as a platform for social, informational, and political exchanges. The growth and proliferation of internet services in India has added a fresh boost to the expansion of social media and its integration into the political arena is increasingly felt mainly after the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. However, despite a major push, elaborate research in political communication and social media have been by and large limited. In this backdrop, the present study seeks to explore and examine the communication behavior of India Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the social media platform using Twitter for a period of one year as a Prime Ministerial candidate (i.e. from May 2013-2014) and one year after elected as the Prime Minister (i.e. from May 2014-May 2015). In order to understand the use of social media in political communication in the Indian political scenario, research questions on the nature, issues and variations of the communication strategies are formulated.

**RQ1.** What is the nature of communication engaged in by Narendra Modi through his Twitter communication?

**RQ2.** What are the core issues foregrounded by Narendra Modi through his twitter communication and how they vary between the period before and after he became the Prime Minister of India?

**RQ3.** Whether there is any variation in the syntactic, semantic and linguistic usage of his twitter communication between the period before and after he became the prime minister and what typology of messaging elicits the most positive response from his online followers?

The entire volume of tweets posted in the official Narendra Modi twitter handle @narendramodi was retrieved by the researcher for the time period i.e May 2013 till May 2015. The researcher found out that a total of 4,714 tweets were made by Narendra Modi within the period of study. It was observed that out of the total tweets made from the official twitter handle @narendramodi, a total of 2,475 tweets were made from May 26, 2013 to May 25, 2014 by Narendra Modi as the Prime Ministerial candidate with average of 6.79 tweets per day. On the other hand, after he was sworn in as India's 16<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister on May 26, 2014, tweets made by Narendra Modi since then till May 25, 2015, which constitutes the period of study, there were 2,239 tweets posted at average of 6.13 tweets per day.

A sample is a subset of population-a group or a class of subjects, variables concepts or phenomena (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003). From the population, a sample of 730 tweets

was selected constituting 365 tweets a year for both pre and post 2014 election period for the study. The segregation of tweets was done to obtain set of variables codified as

- a) Announcement. b) Engagement .c) Encouragement. d) Informative. e) Imperative .f) Political charges. g) Political defenses .h) Sarcasm.

Content analysis is a research methodology that is applied to derive meaning from a set of content of messages, text, images or symbolic audio-visual data. The Webster's Dictionary of the English Language included the term content analysis in its 1961 edition, defining it as "analysis of the manifest and latent content of a body of communicated material (as a book or film) through classification, tabulation, and evaluation of its key symbols and themes in order to ascertain its meaning and probable effect." Krippendorff has attributed three features of the contemporary dimensions of content analysis – it is an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process and predictive or inferential in intent. As a research methodology, content analysis examines data, printed matter, images or audio-visual content to study and understand their connotations and information conveyed to the end users. In 2011, the social and political movement against the existing governments in the Arab countries of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria was also reflected in India when massive civil demonstrations against corruption by those in power were organized. Organizers of the 'India Against Corruption' movement, led by Anna Hazare and Arvind Kejriwal, planned nationwide protests and dharnas (strikes) in early 2011.



'Team Anna' demanded that the central government of India consult with members of 'civil society' to draft a strong Lokpal (ombudsman) Bill to enhance accountability of people in public office. This was followed by large-scale protests organized by the youth, educated, professional and working class in India, who used mobile phones and social networking sites to garner support across the spectrum of Indian society. In an inter-media agenda-setting process, the movement was carried by the country's hundreds of 24-hour news channels and thousands of newspapers (Rodrigues 2014; Ashutosh 2012). Mainstream media responded to the so-called 'middle class' movement because it also represented their target audience (Rodrigues 2014). After massive civil unrest, some in the anti-corruption movement formed a new political entity called the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to counter the idea of public probity on the political front. In 2012–2013, AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal and his party were active on social media sites such as Twitter and YouTube, and later formed the local government in the capital Delhi. However, it was the BJP and its prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi who made the best use of social media platforms to connect with educated, networked, middle-class Indians, including 150 million first-time voters. Although both the BJP and the Indian National Congress (INC or INC) party extensively used YouTube as their television channels during the 2014 national election campaign, the Congress party used three-dimensional holograms of the BJP for rallies, political messages, and more. Couldn't compete with simplification. Focused messaging on the prime ministerial candidate's Twitter and his Google Hangouts.

In 2014, Arvind Gupta, head of the BJP's information technology cell, said that 'with technology and social media, we have been able to create an alternative medium with which we can communicate directly. Social media is any digital medium that enables users to communicate and interact socially. Users of social media use various means to actively participate in sharing information through comments, posts, reviews and discussions through text, graphic, audio, video and animated content Twitter, as an online news and social networking platform, has gained importance in political communication as a microblogging platform that allows users to post and read short multimedia messages known as tweets. Facebook is one of the most popular social networking platforms, with 2.41 billion monthly active users as of 30 June 2019 (Statista.com 2019). YouTube, the largest online video platform worldwide, has 2 billion monthly active users. Over 5 billion videos have been shared to date, and approximately 1 billion hours of video are watched daily (YouTube.com 2019). Short messaging apps such as WhatsApp are becoming increasingly popular as easy-to-use mobile phone services. WhatsApp allows users to share data (text, audio, video) with individuals and groups. With over 1.5 billion monthly active users, WhatsApp is the most popular mobile messenger app worldwide. Recently, WhatsApp confirmed that it has over 400 million users in India (Singh 2019). WhatsApp messages are encrypted, so it is difficult to trace where a forwarded message comes from; This means that media messages can be shared between social groups without knowledge of who first distributed the message on the service. Friends, family and acquaintances can create a group on WhatsApp and share content of interest. There are a billion groups in use on WhatsApp, some created for e-commerce reasons; Others are made up of family members or friends. Facebook, which owns WhatsApp, has noted that private messages, ephemeral stories and conversations among small groups are the fastest growing areas of online communication (Kalogropoulos 2019). Reuters Digital News Report 2019 also states that people in many countries are spending less time with Facebook and more time with WhatsApp and Instagram in 2019 compared to 2018 (Newman et al. 2019). This, in turn, is impacting social communication around news, which is becoming more personal, as messaging apps become increasingly ubiquitous. 'WhatsApp has become a primary network for discussing and sharing news in non-Western countries such as Brazil, Malaysia, South Africa and India (Newman 2019). Concerns about misinformation and disinformation remain high; According to a Reuters report (Newman et al. 2019), trust in news in general is declining (42%) and trust in social media remains low at 23%. Modi shows the way Modi is the first politician to communicate directly with his followers on social media and mobile platforms. Modi's presence on social media began in 2012. He is the second most popular politician in the world due to his presence on multiple platforms, including Twitter with 51 million followers, Facebook with 44 million likes and followers, Instagram with 30 million followers, and YouTube. 433 million videos have been viewed as of October 2019, and his NaMoApp has over 10 million downloads as of March 2019. Modi's messages are in several languages to connect with his legion of followers. For example, when the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu visited India, it was reported in English on Modi's social media pages. Modi and his social media team interacted with his followers, influencers, celebrities, foreign dignitaries. Individuals have built their online image through strategic associations with film and sports stars, successful business people and, sometimes, by connecting with ordinary people and congratulating them for their efforts. To support their agenda, which includes the 'Clean India' campaign. Modi launched Swachh Bharatiya on Twitter in late 2014, right after he took over as prime minister. In 2015–2016, he posted 100 tweets related to the Swachh Bharat agenda, but he did not retweet or reply to any of the tweets during this period (Rodrigues and Niemann 2017). Similarly, during the three-month period following the announcement of demonetisation, Modi's Twitter account consistently emphasized the benefits of the ban on 85% of Indian currency notes. His team furthered the Twitter conversation during this historic event by changing the hashtag from #Indiafightscorruption to #Indiadefeatblackmoney to #ipaydigitally (Rodrigues and Nieman 2019). During the 2019 elections, Modi and his BJP cleverly used the term 'chowkidar' to focus on nationalism, patriotism and his role as the savior of the nation. His expression was supported in various forums @PMO\_India account; Twitter handles of their cabinet ministers and government departments. Figure 1: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in English and Hebrew.

An example of Modi's use of positive messaging and visuals on Twitter. A study of Modi's use of Twitter to communicate with his followers over the past five years shows that his communication is a one-way process. In what has been described as 'selfie nationalism' (Rao 2018), Modi keeps his followers informed about his day-to-day activities, including his. Actor Network Theory analysis is attempted to understand online behavior in terms of the tone, tenor and types of expressions of the tweets made from @narendramodi during the

period under study. Steve D Brown (2010) came up with the definition of the ANT as an approach to the study of the connection between people and things. The central reckoning lies in the fact that there is outside the bracket of hybrid networks of human and non-human materials. Sentiment Analysis is a Natural Language Processing (NLP) task of detecting and classifying the sentiment in texts posted on social media. Generally, the classes are termed as "positive" "negative" or "neutral". However, at times, there are some other categories like "very positive" "very negative" are added for evaluating

the sentiments. The objective was to simulate a Sentiment Analysis for the provided set of data (from 2013-2014.csv and 2014- 2015.csv. , in this case using *AFINN algorithm*, one of the simplest and most popular lexicons that can be used extensively for sentiment analysis. The current version of the lexicon is **AFINN-en-165.txt**. It contains over 3,300+ words with a polarity score associated with each word. The lexicon can be found from the original author's GitHub repository (a popular open source code repository) in the below link <https://github.com/fnielsen/afinn/tree/master/afinn/data>. Further, the researcher has used the open source software *Parts-of-speech.info* to analyse the emotional content of the tweets by Narendra Modi for the periods under study. For the purpose, the sample datasets were cleaned and precise for processing. The core of *Parts-of-speech.info* is based on the Stanford University Parts of Speech tagger that studies the text in some language and assigns parts of speech to individual word (and other token), such as noun, verb, adjective, etc., although generally computational applications use more fine-grained POS tags like 'noun-plural'. This software is a Java implementation of the log-linear part-of-speech taggers. The tagger is licensed under the General Public License which allows many free users. (<https://nlp.stanford.edu/software/tagger.shtml>). Based on the literature review the researcher has come to the conclusion that *there* is a need for a study to investigate the symbiotic relation between political leaders and social media in the contemporary political landscape of India. By taking the instance of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to understand how the political leaders, political parties and the political establishment engage in direct communication with the social media users, the researcher has inferred that there is a wide scope of social media integration with political communication for more academic research work. Sentiment analysis is being increasingly used in data science to analyze user tweets- positive negative or neutral. Using the **AFINN-en-165.txt** lexicon tool, sentiment of each word is derived by assigning an affectual score to it. The systematic random sampled 730 tweets by @narendramodi vary in score from -1 to +1.

- ❖ 188 tweets (51.50 per cent) posted in the pre-election were found to be positive innature.
- ❖ The number of positive toned tweets was 242 (66.30 percent) in the post-electionperiod.
- ❖ There were 79 negative tweets (21.64 per cent) in the pre-poll phase.
- ❖ 30 (8.21 per cent) tweets were found to carry negative tone in the period after Modibecame the Prime Minister of India.
- ❖ The quantum of neutral tweets for the pre-election period was 98 tweets (26.84 percent).
- ❖ 93 tweets (25.47 per cent) were found neutral undertone in the post election period.
- ❖ Political discourse is identified by the *actors* or *authors* viz the politicians and they engage in interaction with the masses, either by performing in the political arena or by using tools to disseminate their ideas and thoughts via messages through suitable mediums.
- ❖ In the present study, it was found that Narendra Modi used the social media tool Twitter to communicate with the people who are also on the technology aided platform and to give it into their minds that people must participate in a new brand of communication where service delivery is assured.
- ❖ The numbers derived after the analysis suggest that there were more positive toned tweets during the study period which indicates that the Narendra Modi involved himself on twitter discourse with the vision to win the hearts and minds of the twitter users with a different brand of political communication unleashing his strategy of inclusive development.
- ❖ The 2014 Lok Sabha elections was a major shift from the conventional mode of election preparation in a way that the campaign trials by politicians were majorly done on their social media outlets. The study of the tweets posted by Narendra Modi showed that besides connecting with the people, Modi had appliedTwitter to send powerful and yet punched texts to his political rivals. Known for his incisive mentions, Modi knew, he had to establish a closer connect with the voters and he made use of Twitter to share his political goals in a fine tunedsocial media language blended with his rhetorical skills. For example, the tweet "India has won which he posted on May 16, 2014 on theof counting of votes became the golden tweet of the year 2014.
- ❖ While 07 tweets (1.91 percent) of Modi's pre-election tweets from the sample in the pre-election phase carried announcements like "India's specialty is unity in diversity. The Statue of Unity will showcase India's message of unity to the World," he posted 25 tweets (6.84 percent) tweets announcements oriented tweets after being elected Prime Minister.
- ❖ In comparison to 150 (41.09 percent) engagements related tweets in the pre-poll phase, Modi posted 215 (58.90) per cent tweets enhancing his engagements with the people on the Twitter.
- ❖ As a Prime Minister, there has been an increase of 17.80 per cent in his tweets covering important mentions related to establishing engagement with the people.
- ❖ There were 55 (15.06 percent) tweets where Modi lashed hard at the opposition, Congress in particular with political charges and allegations. While there was only one such tweet (0.27 percent) in the post election phase.
- ❖ The tweet *Congress Mukht Bharat Nirman is the solution to all of India's problems* eventually turned out to be a campaign for his party.
- ❖ His 13 (3.56 percent) pre-Prime Ministerial tweets were found to be laced with sarcasm and humour as he attacked the Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi. However, there were no such tweets found in the post-election period.
- ❖ In the tweet, "Shahzada should tell us about R(haul) S(onia) V(adra) P(riyanka) model. This RSVP model has looted India," Modi called him Shahzada; (a Mughal Prince) shows use of sarcasm by Modi.
- ❖ In another tweet, "Congress is in ICU. They may get as many of their well-wishers out from jail but it won't add to their fortunes" implied the aggressive sarcastic expressions blended with humour demonstrates how the politician used political ironyin the form of sarcasm to manifest his style of politics.
- ❖ While there were 93 (25.47) percent informative tweets in the pre-poll tweets, the post election phase saw 84 (23.01 percent) such tweets from Modi. His tweets kept on updating the users on the chores which also indicated his steadfast responsiveness on issues at large.
- ❖ The comparison of Modi's imperative tweets through which that exemplified his approach to influence the behavior

of the twitter users showed a close contrast with 21 (5.75 per cent) and 24 (6.57 per cent) tweets made in the pre and post-election periods respectively.

- ❖ For example the tweets in the pre election phase, “Due to the power of the people Congress is forced to do in the last few days what it shied away from doing in the last 9 years on Telangana,” Modi and “World's interest in India is rising. We have to rise to the occasion & establish global benchmarks in governance, transparency & taxation” in the post election period depicted Modi's intent to persuade the twitter users on driving his thoughts into their minds.
- ❖ Encouraging people through the tweets has been one of the noticeable activities by Modi on twitter and from the sample the researcher could find that there has been an increase of two tweets 8 (2.19 per cent) tweets in pre election while 10 (2.73 per cent) tweets in post election phase) in this category of variable.

- ❖ For example, in tweets such as, “On Infantry Day we salute the indomitable courage & bravery of our Infantry, who have left no stone unturned in serving our Nation. @adgpi, Modi enthused the people and associations for their appreciable work towards development.
- ❖ Modi defended in political actions by placing the wishes and aspirations of the people in the forefront and 18 (4.93 per cent) such tweets in the run up to the elections had crystal impressions of his mind. In comparison, 06 (1.64 per cent) such tweets in the post-election phase such as “Today a historic milestone has been reached in India-Bangladesh relations after the passing of the Constitutional Amendment by Parliament.”
- ❖ From the data studied, it is seen that Modi's use of rhetoric in his tweets after becoming the Prime Minister i.e. from May 26, 2014 to May 25, 2015 accounted to 5.75 per cent tweets.
- ❖ Narendra Modi used social media, Twitter in particular, attempting to bridge the communication gap between people and the Government and enhanced his “minimum government, maximum governance” vision.
- ❖ The language used by Modi in his messaging mannerism suggested that he had a definite plan to reach out to the people giving them issues to talk and think about.
- ❖ Mentioned in 75 tweets, Congress occupied 20.54 percent of the tweet threads during the pre-election period.
- ❖ Prior to May 2014, before he became the PM, the word 'Gujarat' received maximum mentions in Modi's tweets.
- ❖ Gujarat became a dominant theme of his pre-election tweets.

- ❖ After becoming Prime Minister, there was a fall noticed in the average frequency with which Modi had tweeted.
- ❖ From 6.78 tweets per day before the election, the tweets were posted in the post-election phase at an average of 6.13 tweets per day marking a dip in the daily frequency by 0.65 tweets.
- ❖ There was a shift in his choice of issues for messaging as well.
- ❖ Unlike his incessant mentions of Gujarat in his pre-election tweets, there were only seven messages on Gujarat found in the post election phase during the period under study.
- ❖ The study reveals that Twitter has become an inseparable part of the discourse of political communication, and also is a useful option of social media for exchange of personalised view points in a participatory platform.
- ❖ In studying semantic expressions, the opinion reflected in the data set is given prominence for meaningful comprehension of the emotions the words reflect.
- ❖ There was no significant perceptible differences in the semantic or linguistic expressions as terms like India, people, nation were common and frequently used in the tweets before and after election.
- ❖ There has been an obvious shift in the choice of words used by Modi, as the Prime Minister. From a politician with scathing attacks through tweets to a statesman with sober expressions like efforts, spirit, greetings, congratulations on developmental concerns, Modi's tweeter language underwent a metamorphic change.
- ❖ His pre-Prime Ministerial tweets were found to be laced with sarcasm and humour as he attacked the Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi.
- ❖ Closely read and observed, the tweets before the election which got retweeted by people following Modi on twitter had expressions including empathy, pride, gratitude and sarcasm in the tone and tenor.

Narendra Modi had spontaneously reached out to his twitter audience with his tweets on thematic areas. Before he became the Prime Minister, it has been found that Narendra Modi was at his antagonistic best in his tweeting patterns using derisive and even imperious statements through his tweets bracing for the campaigns. From the theoretical perspective of Actor Network Theory (ANT). The analysis showed that Narendra Modi engaged in a brand of political communication that synchronizes individual information influence and conformity to social pressure with high emotion of arousal evoked by the content boosting sharing of information. Narendra Modi had spontaneously reached out to his twitter audience with his tweets on thematic areas. The major issues on which Modi had tweeted during the period under study include Environment, Employment, Corruption, Congress, 2014 elections, India, North East, Women safety etc. Social Media played a phenomenal role in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Modi took to Twitter to counter the opposition, much ahead of others realising the power and utility of Twitter. The tweets posted by Modi before the 2014 elections covering wide range of issues including corruption, misgovernance, that penetrated the public sphere and people took him as their own leader. Analysing the study from the prism of Actor Network Theory (ANT) a way to understand the use and penetration of new media technologies in our society, Modi's periodic pictures posts taking selfies with his mother on Twitter transpired a fresh lease among the followers and his perceptive texts on election issues urging the voters through the tweets to take active part in the democratic process of election led to the understanding of social aspects of technology. Through Twitter, Modi's strategy of crowd sourcing to convey messages was by far a shift from the traditional mode of political campaigning in the country which established him as a technocratic and development oriented leader. Modi has been largely able to instill the belief that the power of social media has empowered the general population. However, the study beckons that Modi's social media content, particularly the tweets have been far less studied as the focal point of academic research as compared to former presidents of the United States of America-viz Barack Obama and Donald Trump. Analyses of the parts of speech of Modi's tweets have shown a positive pattern of messaging with an intense eagerness and understanding of technology and international economic issues. The



sentiment and language expressed through the tweets highlighted the emotions he had conveyed through his political communication on the social media platform. Tweets often convey relevant information of the political actors' emotional state.

## References

- I. Agur, C. (2018). Re-imagining the Indian state: External forces and the transformation of telecommunications policy, 1947–present. *Global Media and Communication* 14(1), 65–83. AII (2018). Indian Election Series launched at the State Library of Victoria. Retrieved from Australia India Institute, University of Melbourne website: <https://www.aii.unimelb.edu.au/news/indian-election-series-launched-at-the-state-library-of-victoria/>.
- II. ANI. (2014, 30 April). News traders dance on Congress's tune: Modi. *Business Standard*. Retrieved from: [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/news-traders-dance-on-congress-s-tune-modi-114043001572\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/news-traders-dance-on-congress-s-tune-modi-114043001572_1.html)
- III. Ashutosh. (2012). *Anna: 13 days that awakened India*. New Delhi, India: HarperCollins Publishers.
- IV. Chadwick, A. (2013). *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- V. Chen, G. (2011). Tweet this: A users and gratifications perspective on how active Twitter use gratifies a need to connect with others. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(2), 755–762: doi:10.1016/j.chb.2010.10.023.
- VI. Cobb, R., Ross, J.K., & Ross, M.H. (1976). Agenda building as a comparative political process. *American Political Science Review* 70(1), 126–138.
- VII. ComScore.com. (2018). Global digital future in focus. *ComScore*. Retrieved from: <https://www.comscore.com/dut/Insights/Presentations-and-Whitepapers/2018/Global-Digital-Future-in-Focus-2018>
- VIII. Election Commission of India. (2019). Social media platforms present voluntary code of ethics for the 2019 general election to Election Commission of India. Retrieved from ECI website: <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/9467-social-media-platforms-present-voluntary-code-of-ethics-for-the-2019-general-election-to-election-commission-of-india>
- IX. Exchange4media staff. (2019). Internet users in India to reach 627 million by 2019-endL Kantar ICUBE 2018 Report. Retrieved from exchange4media website: <https://www.exchange4media.com/digital-news/566-million-internet-users-in-india-18-annual-growth-kantar-icube-2018-report-95137.html>
- X. Ghosh, L., & Desai, S. (2019, 20 April). The war against fake news. *Bangalore Mirror*. Retrieved from: <https://bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com/opinion/sunday-read/the-war-against-fake-news/articleshow/68759751.cms>
- XI. Gilbert, D., & Saberlin, Z. (2018, 18 July). India's fake news epidemic is killing people, and Modi's government has no plan to stop it. *Vice News*. Retrieved from: [https://news.vice.com/en\\_us/article/8xej5k/indias-fake-news-epidemic-is-killing-people-and-modis-government-has-no-plan-to-stop-it](https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/8xej5k/indias-fake-news-epidemic-is-killing-people-and-modis-government-has-no-plan-to-stop-it)
- XII. Goyal, M. (2014, 7 April). How BJP, AAP, Congress and their candidates are using social media to woo voters. *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/how-bjp-aap-congress-and-their-candidates-are-using-social-media-to-woo-voters/articleshow/33299451.cms>
- XIII. Hanson, G., & Haridakis, P. (2008). YouTube users watching and sharing the news: A uses and gratifications approach. *Journal of Electronic Publishing*, 11(3), 6. doi:10.3998/3336451.0011.305
- XIV. Harris, J. (2019, 7 April). Is India the frontline in big tech's assault on democracy? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/13/big-tech-whatsapp-democracy-india>
- XV. Helmond, A. (2015). The platformization of the web: Making web data platform ready.
- XVI. *Social Media + Society*. doi: 10.1177/2056305115603080
- XVII. John, N. (2019, April 26). Indian Readership Survey 2019: India Today is the largest and fastest growing magazine. *Business Today*. Retrieved from: <https://www.businesstoday.in/top-story/indian-readership-survey-2019-india-today-is-the-largest-and-fastest-growing-magazine/story/340884.html>
- XVIII. Kalogeropoulos, A. (2019). Groups and private networks – Time well spent? *Digital News Report*. Retrieved from: [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR\\_2019\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR_2019_FINAL.pdf)
- XIX. Katz, J. E., Barris, M., & Jain, A. (2013). *The social media president: Barack Obama and the politics of digital engagement*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- XX. KPMG.com (2018) #India trends 2018: Trends shaping digital India. Retrieved from KPMG website: <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2018/05/IndiaTrends2018-Trends-shaping-Digital-India-Internet.pdf>
- XXI. Laghate, G. (2018, 8 December). Print media ad growth to accelerate in 2019. *The Economics Times*. Retrieved from: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/media/entertainment/media/print-media-ad-growth-to-accelerate-in-2019/articleshow/66977717.cms?from=mdr>
- XXIII. Lee, C. S., & Ma, L. (2012). News sharing in social media: the effect of gratifications and prior experience. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28, 331–339.
- XXIV. McCombs, M. (2005). A look at agenda setting: past, present and future. *Journalism Studies*, 6 (4): 543–557.
- XXV. Merelli, A., & Quartz. (2014, 16 May). Modi won the Indian election on Twitter, Too. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/05/modi-won-the-indian-election-on-twitter-too/371057/>
- XXVII. Messner, M. and Garrison, B. (2011). Study shows blogs affect traditional news media agenda. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 32 (3): 112–126.
- XXVIII. Morris, J. (2018, 22 September). Reports of 'WhatsApp lynchings' fall in India after app changes rules on sharing messages. *Evening Standard*. Retrieved from: <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/reports-of-whatsapp-lynchings-fall-in-india-after-app-changes-rules-on-sharing-messages-a3941961.html>
- XXIX. Mukerjee, J. (2019, March 12). Indian media industry to cross \$33.6 billion by 2021: EY- FICCI report. *Fortune India*. Retrieved from: <https://www.fortuneindia.com/macro/indian-media-industry-to-cross-336-billion-by-2021-ey-ficci-report/103040>
- XXX. Newman, N. (2019). Section 1: Executive summary and key findings. *Reuters Digital News Report 2019* (pp. 9–32). Retrieved from: [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR\\_2019\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR_2019_FINAL.pdf). Newman N., Fletcher, R., Kalogeropoulos, A., & Nielson, R. K. *Reuters Digital News Report 2019*. Retrieved from Reuters Institute website: [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR\\_2019\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/inline-files/DNR_2019_FINAL.pdf). Parmelee,

J. H. (2014). The agenda-building function of political tweets. *New Media & Society* 16(3), 434–450.

- XXXI. PTL. (2019, 5 February). Microsoft survey: Indians more likely to encounter online fake news. *Business Standard*. Retrieved from: [https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/microsoft-survey-india-topping-fake-news-menace-globally-119020501427\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/microsoft-survey-india-topping-fake-news-menace-globally-119020501427_1.html) Purohit, K. (2019, 13 May). Sonia Gandhi knew of Rajiv's assassination plot, her husband had 'drinking problems': WhatsApp groups awash with rumours about ex-PM. *Firstpost*. Retrieved from: <https://www.firstpost.com/politics/sonia-gandhi-knew-of-rajivs-assassination-plot-her-husband-had-drinking-problems-bjp-run-whatsapp-groups-awash-with-rumours-about-ex-pm-6622111.html>
- XXXII. Rao, S. (2018). Making of selfie nationalism: Narendra Modi, the paradigm shift to social media governance, and crisis of democracy. *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 42(2), 166–183.
- XXXIII. Rodrigues, U. M. (2014). Social media's impact on journalism: A study of media's coverage of anti-corruption protests in India. *Global Media Journal* 8(1), 1–10.
- XXXIV. Rodrigues, U. M. (2015). The media, the social media and the elections. In E. Thorsen & C. Sreedharan (Eds.), *India Election 2014: First Reflections* (pp.114–124). Poole, UK: Bournemouth University.
- XXXV. Rodrigues, U. M., & Niemann, M. (2017). Social media as a platform for incessant political communication: A case study of Modi's 'Clean India' campaign. *International Journal of Communication* 11, 3431–3453.
- XXXVI. Rodrigues, U. M. (2018). Will social media decide India's next election? *East Asia Forum*, November 18. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2018/11/14/will-social-media-decide-indias-next-election/>.
- XXXVII. Rodrigues, U. M. (2019, 9 May). Can India stop the social media runaway train? Retrieved from Australia India Institute website: <https://www.aii.unimelb.edu.au/blog/indian-election-series/can-india-stop-the-social-media-runaway-train/>
- XXXVIII. Roy, T. L. (2019, 11 April). Print is proof: Newspapers hit out at social media with campaign on credibility. Retrieved from Exchange4media.com website: <https://www.exchange4media.com/media-print-news/print-is-proof-newspapers-hit-out-at-digital-medium-with-campaign-on-credibility-96016.html>. (Accessed 6 May 2019)
- XXXIX. Shenoy, J. (2019, 9 May). India to have 859 million smartphone users in 2022: ASSOCHAM-PwC. *The Times of India*. Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-to-have-859-million-smartphones-users-in-2022-assochem-pwc/articleshow/69252335.cms>
- XL. Singh, M. (2019, 26 July). WhatsApp reaches 400 million users in India, its biggest market. *Techcrunch*. Retrieved from: <https://techcrunch.com/2019/07/26/whatsapp-india-users-400-million/>
- XLI. Smock, A. D., Ellison, N. B., Lampe, C., & Wohn, D. (2011). Facebook as a toolkit: A uses and gratification approach to unbundling feature use. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(6), 2322–2329. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2011.07.011
- XLII. Statista.com. (2019). Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2019 (in millions). Retrieved from Statista website: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>
- XLIII. Statista.com. (2019). Number of social network users in India from 2015 to 2023 (in millions). Retrieved from Statista website: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278407/number-of-social-network-users-in-india/> Stromback, J., & Esser, F. (2014). Introduction: Making sense of the mediatization of politics. *Journalism Studies* 15(3), 243–255.
- XLIV. Tanwar, S. (2019, August 22). Powered by 4G, mobile data consumption in India rose 56- fold in four years. *Quartz India*. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/india/1692952/cheap-4g-data-plans-smartphones-fuelling-indias-data-boom-trai/>
- XLV. TRAI.gov.in. (2019). Highlight of telecom subscription data as on 30th November, 2018. Retrieved from TRAI website: [https://main.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/PRNo05Eng18012019\\_0.pdf](https://main.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/PRNo05Eng18012019_0.pdf)
- XLVI. Valeriani, A., & Vaccari, C. (2018). Political talk on mobile instant messaging services: a comparative analysis of Germany, Italy, and the UK. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21 (11), 1715–1731. doi: 10.1080/1369118X.2017.1350730
- XLVII. Valenzuela, S., Halpern, D., Katz, J. E., & Miranda, J. P. (2019). The paradox of participation versus misinformation: Social media, political engagement, and the spread of misinformation. *Digital Journalism*, 7(6), 802–823. doi: 10.1080/21670811.2019.1623701
- XLVIII. Van Dijck, J. (2018) The platform society as a contested concept. In J. van Dijck, T. Poell and M. de Waal (Eds.). *The Platform Society*. Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online.
- XLIX. Vinayak, A. J. (2019, 26 May). Twitter captures 2019 polls in 396 million tweets. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/social-media/twitter-captures-2019-polls-in-396-million-tweets/article27254990.ece>
- L. YouTube.com. (2019). YouTube for Press. Retrieved from YouTube website: <https://www.youtube.com/about/press/>