

Social Media as a Political Marketing Channel and It's Influence on Voter's Political Participation and Preferences

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Abstract

Citizens changing their party preferences have been a critical issue for politicians and political parties. This phenomenon of changing party preferences and lower participation in electoral process by the millennial has become a serious concern for all political parties across the world. Researcher tries to analyze the factors that ignite the change in voting preferences and reasons for low participation. A thorough primary research was conducted and analyzed the data about voter's political participation in various social media platforms besides their voting preferences. This enabled to explore the relative prospects of social media for political use and its influence on political participation and voting preferences of voter. Findings reveal that political communication that matter, however, engaging voters for a higher amount of time can bring the change in preferences towards the party and likelihood of voters to participate online in favor of the respective party.

Keywords: Social media effects; Political participation; voting behavior; Political marketing; Digital Democracy.

1. Introduction:

Political organizations that embrace concepts of business and marketing, techniques to achieve organizational end purpose can be treated as political marketing (Marshment, J.L. 2001). The goals of any political party would be achieving higher vote share, resume to power, winning in elections, greater visibility, developing strong political affiliations by the target audience and many more. Political parties, Politicians, Pressure groups and Local bodies were among those system who often conduct market research and use market intelligence to identify citizens issues and the relative change in voter behavior in order to meet their claims and further pass on their 'product offering' more conveniently and effectively. In spite of significant difference between political studies, political marketing and Marketing, Political marketing suffers serious confusion (Scammell, 1999) as it is usually perceived to be political communication.

Political marketing can be seen as a fusion that connects two disciplines, carry few concepts from marketing and few concepts from politics. Empirically, it means the interpenetration of the political domain by marketing. The characteristic of Political marketing is that, it takes direction from marketing and applied with care in the domain of politics. Vast literature on marketing confesses that businesses and even organizations which are not for profit are largely distinct to each other (see O'Leary and Iredale, 1976, p. 153; Evans and Berman, 1994, p. 399). The goal of any political party may be different and to measure its performance is even more difficult. The nature of political marketing is that, it possesses several and perhaps more inconsistent markets which are unspecified and dark.

Any political party that exists in a system seek to go in for democratic elections and strive to win the elections so as to hold public office by forming the government with the help of gaining majority people support. They may have many organizational goals from the perspective of politics. Infact, all Political parties continuously pursue to do this in every successive election as holding the public office and forming a government is always a long-term perspective.

1.1 Marketing, Political Marketing- Similarities Around

In Marketing all the concepts that relate to Market, demand, forecasting, branding and marketing communication can be comfortably adopt or apply in Political marketing also. Product in political marketing deals with little more complex behavior of voters and general public. In political marketing context, 'product' is the political party behavior and also voter that encloses many characteristics. Upon accessing extended political science literature on different aspects of

political party behavior, it is understood that a political party's product include but not limited to leadership, contestants, politicians, memberships, office workers, sign, party constitution, political activities such as party conferences and policies etc. whereas voter behavior is a study of individual voters preferences, affiliations, decisions and choices.

Literature about Marketing circumscribe how businesses try to reach and acquire more customers for existing products, develop and design new products and feature that satisfy their needs and wants, to whom and how to promote it. Political marketing concepts offer frameworks, theories and nomenclature that seems thoroughly unfamiliar to the political science scholar and those concepts need meticulous revamping. Marketing focuses on alliance between a firm's products, resources and consumer responses about their services, products and all other factors that influence relationship. Hence, Political marketing is therefore considered as a more than just communication, it takes direction from marketing and involves organizational structure, leadership, policy, electoral engagement, relationships and campaigning efforts. Political marketing has its strong consilience with political science because of the concepts that were used and adapted.

Modern politics can be better understood and managed through the use of political marketing. However, a recent development is the application of marketing theory to politics. Political marketers may employ marketing knowledge in areas including marketing tactics, campaign planning, political branding, and image development. There is however a competing viewpoint, according to which standard marketing frameworks do not naturally fit into a political marketing composition. Marketing is valuable because it encourages and makes it possible for parties and voters to participate in a positive discourse. Voter behaviour has frequently been examined in political marketing literature from both the perspectives of marketing management and consumer behavior. Voters select political parties in a manner similar to how customers select brands. Researchers generally agree that voters are a particular category of consumers because they use a service, and that voting behaviour and consumer behaviour are similar because both involve purchases

1.2 Rise Of Social Media

In recent times, citizens internet use has become more social and participatory (Davis, A.2009; Van Dijk, J.A.G.M.,2006). Today, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube are the most popular activities in the World Wide Web. According to social media today, as of Q4 2022, Facebook has just about 2.96 billion active users who spend more number of hours on Facebook than on Google. However accessing internet on mobile phones gave a significant thrust to the use of Social Media. Political parties and politicians are trying to keep abreast with this changing environment. Most of them were successful in implementing Social Media to their benefit.

Nowadays, Internet access is available to a wide audience of citizens; accordingly, social media usage is growing at a fast rate. Throughout the world, approximately 35 of every 100 people had access to the web in 2011 (approximately 2.5 billion people). In total, 72% of the Internet population is active on at least one social network. Recently, social network sites have also begun to wield substantive effects on real world politics: they have been used to organize demonstrations and revolts, such as during the 'Arab spring' and to build social movements and political parties, such as the Pirate Party in Sweden and Germany or the Italian Movimento Stelle, which uses the web to set the party line and to select candidates. Accordingly, there has been discussion about whether the web may become an "uncoerced public sphere". While some authors suggest that the Internet and social media are potential sources of direct democracy that may contribute to increased responsiveness and accountability in real world politics, others have proposed diverging views strongly criticizing this same idea.

Notwithstanding this debate, given the large amount of data related to public opinion available online (and its growing relevance), monitoring this flow of preferences becomes an important task. The challenge is to select the methods that are most appropriate in this regard. While earlier studies, as already discussed, focused mainly on the volume of data (related, for instance, to each party or candidate), here we aim to capture Internet users' attitudes in greater detail, beyond merely tabulating numbers of mentions.

In recent times, Internet has become significantly dominant channel for party political communication. Cavanaugh(2000) debate that the world wide web can be considered as political Wal-Mart, which provide full service for all legislative and ballot information, short videos, political talks, debates, and issue positions, up to the minute results (Cavanaugh, 2000). Unlike print and electronic media, the Internet (digital space) allows its users to choose the degree of disclosure to political information in which they were interested in. It is evident from the case of Obama's election campaign during 2008 and 2012 which is treated as revolutionary in the field of politics (Christakis, N.A., Fowler, J.H., 2009; Lutz, M.,2009; Talbot, D.,2008; Citron, D.K.,2010; Greengard, S.,2009, Zhang, W., Johnson, T.J., Seltzer, T., Bichard, S.L.,2010). Excluding the own website which Obama possess, he adopted 15 distinct social media platforms to run his political and election campaign. He appreciates the potential of integrated communication in the

form of both offline works with an online campaign and systematically tethers the community to offline activities such as fundraising (Ren, J., Meister, H.P., 2010). He was successful in reaching target audience through social media and able to communicate right messages for right target groups through right platforms. Another exemplary case was the Ségolène Royal during 2007 French general election campaign. She cope to connect with an immense online crowd (Lilleker, D.G., Pack, M., Jackson, N., 2010). Due to her online campaigning activity, party membership has seen a sharp rise from 120,000 to 200,000 members (Montero, M.D., 2009).

Another successful politician who understood the power of social media was Mr. Narendra Modi who led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the general elections that held during 2014 and 2019 made BJP the first political party in 35 years to return to power with an absolute majority that seemed to alter the prosaic rules of Indian politics. Social Media platforms have the potential to bring drastic change in the individual relationship with the society (Lewis, S., Pea, R., Rosen, J. 2010). Examples for mass mobilizations include civilian protests that took place in Iran and other parts of Middle-East countries that clearly indicate how social media platforms have changed the real game of politics. Political parties in numerous occasions follow long established, orthodox community structures and such structures likely gain amid social media since they hinge up on active participation from the members.

1.3 Social Media, Political Participation And Voting Preferences

1.3.1 Social Media: Kaplan and Haenlein was the first and prominent author who defined Social Media, which was published in scientific literature also (Vergeer, M., 2009). Vergeer.M., (2009) defines social media as “Social Media is a group applications build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 hinge on internet, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.” The term web 2.0 was invented by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 and later popularized by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty with the O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 Conference in late 2004. According to Tim O'Reilly (2005) Web 2.0 is a platform that comprise all devices that were connected to each other in a network. These applications utilize the built in advantages of that platform, come up with software as a dynamic service that gets better when more people use it.

Hence, it can be ascertained that social media is by and large a contemporary handle for current available technology. Tim Berners-Lee, the founder of the World Wide Web, rightly forecasted social use of the Internet since its evolution. Berners-Lee, T., Fischetti, M., (2008) states that “The World Wide Web is more of a social creation than a technical one and it was created for a social purpose to help people work together”. It was emphasized in the definition given by Kaplan and Haenlein that, users can engage more conscientiously in processes with the help of web technology.

Level of engagement seems to be the crux that spells out clear distinction between web 2.0 and social media platforms. While fundamental tools such as chat and forums were available since the inception of World Wide Web that helps to interact with one another. Kaplan and Haenlein's definition suffers from a drawback that they could not embrace the power of social networks with personal profiles as pointed out by Boyd and Ellison (Boyd, D.M., Ellison, N.B., 2008). The term Web 2.0 has lost its logical connection in the present day. Today, people acknowledge and converse about Social Media. The key distinction with social networking, social media and Web 2.0 is, Social networking is an act of tethering with other users online. It can either happen via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or MySpace, etc., in simple terms it can be described as the act of participate in dialogue with others in a web-based forum and the digital spaces or platforms, that place where these conversations takes place is termed as called Social media sites, these sites further facilitate the act of social networking. However, social media sites have capabilities whose scope is beyond social networking. For instance, YouTube is primarily a video sharing platform, but the comments section is a form of social networking where users can exchange views about the content. It is understood that social networks, social media and Web 2.0 are subset to one other respectively.

Social media creates Internet users an avenue to express themselves by sharing their thoughts and opinions on variety of topics. Increasingly, blogs, Web forums, and social networking platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn offer their users interactive environments that enable the information exchange, knowledge and opinions that allow quick and open communication. This has made social media a prominent data source for opinion polls. Data from social media provides various advantages over traditional media opinion research; apart from that online data analysis is proved to be much less expensive than traditional research when conducted on a large scale. In addition, the analysis of social media is quicker and allows monitoring public opinion continuously in real time. Traditional opinion polls are notoriously subject to many problems, such as low response rates, a lack of respondent commitment, restricted answer options, and limited themes. Social media has become an excellent source of data about people's opinions because millions of people can express their views on any subject, including the most common topic such as elections. Due to their popularity, social media platforms have now been identified as the main stream platforms to engage voters because they offer wide opportunities for users to participate in, discuss, and debate regarding the political field.

In this context, the increasing use of social media by a more varied audience has increased the possibility of investigating social media as a tool with which to understand the political participation of citizens.

1.3.2 Political Participation: There exists variety of views around the repercussions of the digital or cyber space on political participation. Few idealists are of the opinion that the wealth of political information at ones disposal on the cyber space may strengthen interest in political affairs and encourage expression of sole and discrete opinions. This may also result in strengthening user's information about contestants and poll, and thereby increases political participation (Bonchek, 1997). Contrastingly, cynics advocate that the World Wide Web does influence individual to turn them interested and active in politics all at once. Small screen has been considered to be the personalized medium which averts individual from getting involved with provincial matters, the world wide web may come up with further disintegration of society (Davis, 1999).

Results of earlier researches on the effects of the World Wide Web (www) on political participation have been diverse in nature. It was figured out by Scheufele and Hardy (2005) that, exploring diverse information online had marginal impact on the citizen's participation indicators. Bimber (2001) investigated an instrumental model of political information and examined the association that ties with access to the cyber space and voters political participation. The results indicate that political interest associated with securing political information on the cyber space or digital space is not as strong as television viewing and plough newspapers. However, the study establishes that, accessing political information online results in the donating money for political parties at large. Song-In Wang (2007) in his study found that more frequent the respondent expressed their political opinions in various platforms empowered by internet, higher the political interest, political trust, political efficacy and political participation. Further he concludes that expressing one's opinion on the Internet can assess political attitudes.

Nisbet and Scheufele (2004) examined the effects and vulnerability of online political campaign on individuals political self efficacy, political knowledge and political participation. The results communicate that the role of the cyber space or World Wide Web in fostering spirited and informed citizenship is fair. Yet, it is also found that the interaction between political discussion and exposure to online political information enhance ones political knowledge and the effects on political participation. Numerous other studies also reveal that use of conventional print and electronic media serves as a strong soothsayer of political participation over digital medium. However, varied literature reveals that, the use of social media platforms has beneficial impact on political participation. Johnson and Kaye (2000) found that World Wide Web or digital medium or social media users were more politically disposed. (Kaye & Johnson, 2002) further assess to what extent political attitudes related to motivations in using the World Wide Web or cyber space for political communication, and also explored the relation between Internet motives and political attitudes. The study disclose that political attitudes were more strongly associated with seeking political information than using World Wide Web or cyber space for entertainment.

Kenski and Stroud (2006) investigated the relationship between using World Wide Web and vulnerability to online political information about presidential campaign, political efficacy, knowledge, and participation. The give away from the study is, there exist strong association with political variables, such as political efficacy, knowledge, and participation. Even though the association is not so strong, social and demographic variables, party identification, partisan permanence, political interest, and other media exposure variables were also appraised.

1.3.3 Voting Preferences: In recent times, voters who exhibit the phenomenon of change in preferences of political party from one election to another are raising sharply. This phenomenon is frequently labled as electoral volatility (Zaller, 2004; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948; Pedersen, 1979; Kramer, 1970; Hobolt, Spoon, & Tilley, 2009). This phenomenon of changing party preference has been discovered across countries very often and also being addressed in enormous literature (Pedersen, 1979; Jennings & Wlezien, 2016; Dassonneville, 2012). In this context, vote shift in an election is something which is recognized as a deep rooted process which significantly influences both formation and evolution of party preferences (Hobolt et al., 2009). However, shift in party preferences can also be seen momentary during electoral campaigns (Jennings & Wlezien, 2016): Often voters report that, until elections they planned to vote and inclined towards for a particular party, but end up in exercising vote for other on the Election Day. However, voters who were undecided till the Election Day often develop a strong preference for a political party particularly in the course of election campaign. While earlier research has investigated the impact of electoral campaigns on voter's choice (Druckman, 2004, 2005; Hillygus & Jackman, 2003; Kleinnijenhuis, Van Hoof, Oegema, & de Ridder, 2007; Lengauer & Johann, 2013; Matthews & Johnston, 2010; Schmitt-Beck, 2003; Dilliplane, 2014; Boomgarden et al., 2016) yet, to a greater extent it is unknown that, what affects these political campaign that brings in change in voting preferences.

Until now, modest research has probed into the ramifications of making use of social media platforms for political marketing on political participation and voter's voting preference in India. Also researcher attempts to examine whether and how far political marketing activities in social media platforms influences the change and levels of voting preferences and political participation of the voter. As it is evident from earlier researches that, political information build voters' political perceptions and attitudes (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948; Schmitt-Beck, 2003; Ladd & Lenz, 2009; Lengauer & Johann, 2013), we assert that the information accessed by each individual prompts voters with key suggestions to make voting decisions and ability of citizens to modify voting preferences in the brief period (Gerber & Green, 2000; Karp & Banducci, 2007; van Spanje & de Vreese, 2014; Green & Gerber, 2015; Jennings & Wlezien, 2016).

Various groups with a shared vision of discussing political issues which are organized by politicians, enthusiast or political parties in social media assumes that people use social media not only look for political information but also to point out their viewpoints on a wide range of issues. People use social media to nurture their information up to date on the issues related to politics, uses internet to search government documents, express opinions through participating in discussions, debates and in newsgroup (Davis, 1999). Simply put, social media for political use can be understood from two important dimensions, i.e to search for political information and to express one's opinion related to current state of politics. In the current study researcher assess the consequence of political marketing through social media and its influences on voter's political participation and voting preferences. This poses researcher with following research questions, are:

RQ1: whether accessing social media by a voter for political use influence his/her political participation.

RQ2: whether accessing social media by a voter for political use influence his/her voting preferences.

2. The Case

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were two Telugu speaking states of India is an ideal case to study the hypotheses critically. Both the states are characterized by a multiparty as well as the parties have their presence in both the states. In this context, changes in party preferences are more likely to arise during the election campaign, as voters may switch their voting preferences in favor of the parties which distinguish themselves more clearly from their competitors.

3. Method

This study employed a survey to examine the data were collected through a snow ball sampling. The survey has been conducted by posting the questionnaire in various groups organized and managed by various political parties in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state. Researcher identified the group admin and then posted the questionnaire in whatsapp groups with the help of group admin, then employed snow ball technique to collect the responses from those who express interest in politics. Among the 613 samples that were collected, those who use social media constituted a sample size of 466 which was the target group of the present study.

3.1 Exogenous Variables

3.1.1 Social media for political use

The current study uses a six items to measure social media for political use. Those are: 'I use social media platforms for political information sufficiently more than entertainment', 'I discuss political issues with friends, family, peers and other likeminded people through social media platforms', 'I convey my opinions related to politics to the politicians directly through the social media platforms', 'I can obtain relevant political information through various social media platforms', 'I feel comfortable in discussing political issues with other anonymous users', 'I express my opinions about politics in various social media platforms'. Further they were asked to specify the level of agreement for the items mentioned. Researcher adopted Likert 5 point scale, that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Principal components analysis with varimax rotation has been applied on the items to factor them further. Moreover, reliability analysis was also conducted. Political information, voter opinion and expression were the two factors that emerged after factor analysis test was conducted. Reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha) for those two factors tabulated in (Table 1) which were 0.72 and 0.89, respectively.

Table 1 Social media for political use

Factors	1	2
Factor 1 Voter Opinion		
I use social media platforms for political information sufficiently more than entertainment	0.88	0.22
I discuss political issues with friends, family, peers and other like minded people through social media platforms	0.81	0.24
I convey my opinions related to politics to the politicians directly through the social media platforms	0.85	0.20
Factor 2 Political Information		
I can obtain relevant political information through social media platforms	0.76	0.28
I feel comfortable in discussing political issues with other anonymous users	0.13	0.91
I express my political opinion in various social media platforms	0.24	0.71
Eigen value	3.02	1.96
Variance explained	42.71	26.32

3.2 Endogenous Variables

3.2.1 Political participation

An eight item scale was used in the present study to measure Political participation. Items are: ‘Participate and express views in live watch parties’, ‘Participated and expressed views and opinions opinion polls conducted in social media’, ‘Shown interest in attending political rallies’, ‘I volunteer political campaign’, ‘Donated money to political party/politician’, ‘Signed petition far/against the government’, ‘joined any interest group or activist’, ‘Joined/Head/Chaired political office’. Respondents level of agreement with those items was solicited which ranges from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Further items load onto two dimensions, and are named as voter’s opinion and political participation. The results were presented in Table 2. Two factors accounted for 40.48% and 16.14% of the variance, respectively, with reliability tests of 0.80 and 0.61.

Table 2 Political Participation Factors

	Factors	
	1	2
Factor 1 Voters Opinion		
Participate and express views in live watch parties	0.88	0.09
Participated, expressed views and opinions on opinion polls conducted in social media	0.84	0.22
	0.82	0.09
Factor 2 Political Participation		
Have you ever shown interest in attending political rally		
Do you volunteer political campaign	0.73	0.39
Have you donated money to politician/political party	0.32	0.84
Have you ever signed petition far/against the government	0.28	0.81
Have you joined any interest group or activist	0.57	0.62

Have you ever Joined/ head/chaired any political office	0.42	0.42
Eigenvalue	3.6	1.29
Variance explained	40.48	16.14

3.2.2 Voting Preferences

Voting preferences was measured by an eight-item scale in the present study. Those eight items were: 'Posts, links and videos about politics that are posted in social media changes my voting preferences', 'Social media makes my preferences and loyalty vulnerable', 'I prefer to vote only for those who have presence in social media over others', 'I never changed my preferences to vote anytime inspite of following various political groups in social media', 'Party i vote for will win the election', 'My Political views that comply with my political party ideology influences my preferences', 'Candidates previous activities, actions and image that has communicated in social media influences my preferences', 'Responses and active presence in social media influences my preference to vote'. Respondents' level of agreement with those items was solicited. Further items load onto two dimensions, and are named voters opinion and voting influence. The results are represented in Table 3. Two factors accounted for 48.76% and 16.14% of the variance, respectively, with reliability tests of 0.77 and 0.58.

Table 3 Voting Preferences Factors

Factors	1	2
Factor 1 Voters opinion		
Posts, links and videos about politics that are posted in social media changes my voting preferences	0.77	0.19
Social media makes my preferences and loyalty vulnerable	0.83	0.39
I prefer to vote only for those who have presence in social media over others	0.81	0.07
I never changed my preferences to vote anytime inspite of following various political groups in social media	0.83	0.44
Factor 2 Voting influence		
Party i vote for will win the election	0.22	0.77
My Political views that comply with my political party ideology influences my preferences	0.28	0.8
Candidates previous activities, actions and image that has communicated in social media influences my preferences	0.44	0.83
Responses and active presence in social media influences my preference to vote.	0.47	0.52
Eigenvalue	4.4	1.69
Variance explained	48.76	16.14

4. Results and Discussion

Correlation test has been adopted to test the hypothesis, where in H1 states that 'Higher the Social media use for politics positively influences the political Participation'. From the Table 4 it is understood that, higher the usage of social media for political purpose has its influence on voters political participation. This suggests that, more the amount the voter spent time in social media for political purpose, engages in political discussion, voters spend considerable time in watching live watch parties, freely expresses his or her opinions, signing a petitions to government. Further it is also observed that, the higher usage of social media for political purpose has no influence on activities like donating money or volunteering in campaigns and heading a political chair etc. This clearly indicates that, greater the usage results in enhanced online political participation rather participating in field works organized by political parties. and from the Table 5 it is observed that, greater the usage leads to alter their voting preferences.

i.e it clearly indicates that, politicians or political organizations should engage the voters greater amount of time in the social media platforms in order to bring a change in their voting preferences. This greater level of engagement can be possible by implementing various strategies like organizing Question & Answer Sessions, Sharing Other People's

Content on the pages, giving direct responses to the content developed by the individual voter, Initiating and developing a Conversation, Adding relevant hashtags to the posts that were posted by a voter for relevant information to be supplied from various sources, Creating Polls & Surveys and Run Contests and offer Giveaways and premiums. In this manner, user engagement can be enhanced so that organizations can make the voter spend more time which in turn makes the voter more interesting and develops positive preferences towards the respective politician or political party.

We observed the results that influence the social media use for political purpose, suggesting that voters who have been engaged more amount of time and have been given a personal touch or personal attention given by a party are more apparently alter their preferences of voting pro to that political party(H2) and further it is also identified from the results that, higher the usage of social media for political purpose enhances greater level of participation in political activities, however voters have exhibited low interest towards field works like joining rallies, donating money or involving in fund raising activities and campaigning for a party or politician by offering physical presence. This clearly shows that, higher the social media use enhances online participation rather offline. These results from our study have major inferences for subsequent research as well as party communication strategies. The study suggests the political organizations that maintaining personalized communication seem to be much powerful as they contact all sorts of voters by enabling them to establish proper connect with the contestants or their respective political parties. This highlights the prerequisite for political parties to meticulously outline their communication goals and build capabilities that engage the voter in all means and ways.

Table 4: Social media use for political purpose and its influence on voter’s political participation

Social Media Use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Time spend in social mediaplatforms	.512**		.447**	.496**	.315**	.119**	.595**	.074**	.084**
Participate and express views in live watch parties		1	.709**	.681**	.592**	.389**	.507**	.576**	.335**
Expressed views and opinions on opinion pollsconducted in social media			1	.659**	.576**	.461**	.261**	.528**	.392**
shown interest in attending political rally				1	.695**	.333**	.411**	.574**	.447**
volunteer politicalcampaign					1	.274**	.592**	.727**	.422**
Donated money to politician/political party						1	.334**	.226**	.324**
Signed petition far/against the government							1	.504**	.225**
Joined interest group oractivist								1	.332**
Joined/ head/chairedpolitical office									1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 5: Social media use for political purpose and its influence on voter’s voting preferences

social media use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Time spend in social mediaplatforms	1	-.113*	-0.024	-.146**	-.165**	-.162**	-0.084	-0.077	-0.187**
Posts, links and videos about politics changes voting preferences		1	.321**	.452**	.551**	.557**	.587**	.562**	.344**

Social media makes preferences and loyalty Vulnerable	1	.420**	.504**	.563**	.570**	.535**	.277**
prefer to vote only for those who have presence insocial media		1	.553**	.455**	.523**	.501**	.263**
never changed preferences to vote anytime inspite of following various political groups in social media			1	.574**	.533**	.455**	.122**
Party I vote for will win the election				1		.544**	.223**
Political views that comply with political party ideology influences Preferences					1		.366**
Candidates previous activities, actions and image influences preferences						1	.237**
Responses and activepresence influences preference to vote.							1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

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