

# The Role of New Media in the 2024 General Election Campaign

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## **Abstract**

Political parties extensively used New media in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. This platform proved vital to the ruling BJP. Other political parties have learned from this and refined their New media tactics. As the 2024 general election approaches, each political party has begun strategizing according to their strength. Political strife is escalating over New media. The current study investigates the possibilities of political parties' usage of New media for election campaigning in the impending 2024 general elections. It also tries to understand the role of New media in the upcoming elections. A quantitative study of voters in Delhi and the National Capital Region was done. According to the findings, people anticipate that New media will also play a major role in political parties' election campaigns in the 2024 general election. The study also anticipates that the 2024 general elections will be fought primarily through New media rather than traditional media.

**Keywords:** Political parties, General election, Voting behaviour, Election campaigning, New media

## **Introduction**

The year 2024 is an election year. On one hand, the assembly elections held in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Telangana last year, considered as semi-finals. Because victory in these states will increase the confidence of the winning Parties. At the same time, the 2024 Lok Sabha elections are also on the horizon. The electoral chessboard is almost set. The main contest is between the NDA and other alliance and parties. Regional parties have also started preparations at their level. Social media has garnered much attention and buzz in political communication since Barack Obama's successful use of it during the 2008 U.S. presidential elections. Barack Obama's "Yes We Can" campaigns were said to be the first in which social media played a big role, increasing turnout and even determining his presidential election victory (Lama, 2013). In the elections of 2014 and 2019, BJP got a landslide victory, breaking all the equations. Major credit for this was given to the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate, Narendra Damodar Das Modi, while the election campaign conducted on New media was also considered a major reason for this. Facebook, Twitter, and blogging sites featured ads and campaigns for Narendra Modi with catch lines and hashtags like "Ab Ki Baar Modi Sarkaar" and "Har haat shakti, har haat tarakki" for Rahul Gandhi, and these ads were posted, shared, commented, retweeted, discussed, analysed, scrutinised, and even mocked, but in a way made a deep connection among the electorates. Additionally, political parties and candidates set up their own websites and social media accounts, especially on Twitter, where they participated in public discourse (Lama,2013).

This time also everyone's eyes will be on New media. If we look at the figures, the number of followers on the BJP's Facebook page is 16 million. Whereas the INC has 6.7 million followers. The number of X (formerly twitter)-followers of the BJP is 10.1 million while the number of X (formerly twitter)-followers of INC is 21.2 million. In the main contest, the number of Facebook followers of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is 48 million. X's (formerly twitter) is 93.9 million and Instagram's is 82.6 million. Apart from this, the number of followers of the recently started WhatsApp channel has reached above 5million. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most favourite leader among the leading leaders of the world. The number of Facebook followers of Rahul Gandhi is 6.8 million, the number of X (formerly twitter) followers is 24.6 million and the number of Instagram followers is 51 lakhs.

However, with more than 900 million internet users, India ranked second globally in terms of online market share, after China (Tanushree,2023). The nation now boasts over 600 million New media users (Basuroy, 2023). Youth interact on many New media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Koo, Sharechat and many others. Politicians use various social media tools to communicate with voters and motivate them to vote. As a result, widespread use of Web 2.0 technology has made it easier to communicate with a wide range of audiences, including political parties, social activists, and individual leaders (Metkar, & Aade, 2020).

Political parties use the data from these social media platforms in their New media election campaigns. This data gathered in the blink of an eye, will be used by better marketing businesses working with political parties to generate targeted campaigns and personalized content that resonate with specific voter demographics and psychographics (Sengupta, 2023).

lthough plenty of organizations have already started utilizing information from social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, and others to forecast election results. People are expected to visit these social media sites in order to express their opinions on their political leaders throughout election season. Simultaneously, thorough qualitative content analysis and structural network analysis will produce outcomes similar to those of conventional election polling (Metkar & Aade, 2020). Instagram and WhatsApp will instead play a critical role in spreading the message of political parties. Parties will also tap influencers across categories to reach the debutant electorate. Parties now leverage digital influencers and trends like memes and songs to subtly influence youth voters (Mittal, Apoorva,2023). India has seen a rise in the number of social media users and internet users. Consequently, the BJP has made the decision to update its social media strategy with an emphasis on regional languages in order to appeal to voters in India's small towns and cities (Ramachandran, 2023). Political parties in India are vying for the support of social media celebrities in order to convince voters ahead of the union elections in 2024. The Bharatiya Janata Party, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has met with influential people several times in recent months. (Jaswal, Shrishti,2023).

The BJP plans to launch at least two new applications in the near future to improve contact with its target audience and cadre. It is anticipated that the data in the two programs will also speak to floaters who are unconstrained by political or ideological preferences (Ramachandran,2023). Akash Anand is leading the preparations for the BSP's new social media division. Facebook and YouTube accounts are also getting ready. Mayawati is also about to introduce a new app. (Shrivastava,2023). Under the SP's designed digital

campaign strategy, the group of YouTubers and influencers will work in both branding and counter directions. It will carry out its duty of educating the public about the party's platforms, policies, and election-related issues using digital media. Furthermore, whenever the BJP takes power, a great deal of effort will be made into "exposing" the policies and activities of the administration (Bhadoria, yogesh,2023).

The "man of ideas," Sunil Kanugolu, is a social media campaign strategist who is credited with helping Congress win the assembly elections in Telangana and Karnataka. He will now reportedly assume leadership of the party's electoral management campaigns for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections (Twinkle,2023). In the ever-changing field of communication, political communication has developed from a theoretical and conceptual study to an applied science. In light of the impending 2024 elections, social media ethics, political communication and communication strategies on social media, and the millennial generation in the political vortex, the presence of New media in political communication forces the study of communication science and the use of social media to be understood as well as strategic to master and implement (Audina et al.,2022). It is possible to assess how advantageous New media will be for political parties in the 2024 elections. This study aims to assess the future influence of New media in the context of the 2024 general elections.

### **Review of Literature**

According to Cameron, Barrett, and Stewardson (2016), there may be a statistically significant connection between the size of online social networks and election participation and outcomes. The amount of the effect is modest, though, and social media presence will only matter in highly competitive elections. According to Metaxas and Mustafaraj (2012), social media have evolved as alternative channels of information and dialogue, encouraging ruling politicians to be active on the Internet and pressuring the mainstream media to keep up via more equitable and less skewed reporting. (Kasennally, Awatar2017) states that Political parties must develop a focused, organized social media strategy. If they continue to employ only traditional content, it will be insignificant and produce excellent political discourse and involvement.

Roy, Ingle, and Biswas (2014) found that People have a platform to connect with the events they enjoy through social media. It evolved into a crucial marketing tool for reaching the target demographic quickly and affordably. Young voters, especially students, are significantly impacted by online banner ads and other forms of advertising, which not only have an impact but also aid in moulding their behaviour. There is a strong connection between ageing and people. People use social media platforms to follow political developments, and technology is essential to provide first-hand information quickly. (Munir,2018) investigates the relationship between political social media and influencing youth voting behaviour, finding that politically knowledgeable young voters are more effective and selective than their less politically conscious others. Social media was the primary source of political information for young voters. It can be a useful platform for debate and viewpoint expression. In addition, younger voters believed that social media messages affected their voting choices, voting behaviour, and referendum outcomes. According to Smith (2011), social media specialists have a variety of viewpoints on how social media should be used going forward. Some believe it should be used to directly engage donors, while others

think it should target particular demographics for advertising. Regardless of how politicians use social media throughout their campaigns, it will always play a significant role.

### Research Objectives

- To explore the role of New media in the 2024 general election
- To find out the possibilities of political parties' New media campaign strategies during 2024 general election

### Methodology

The study was conducted using quantitative methods. An online questionnaire tool titled "Prediction of Political Parties' New media Election Campaigning Strategy-2024" was created. The study's population was from Delhi and the National Capital Region. Voters and New media users from Delhi-NCR were chosen randomly. 300 voters were contacted, and 200 responded. Five questions were posed to the responders. Responses were gathered using Yes or No standards. When constructing a questionnaire, care was taken to ensure that the questions were well-balanced and covered all essential themes. There have been attempts to construct validity. A pilot study of 35 NM users from Delhi was done to assess the questionnaire's validity. The revised questionnaire was developed using ideas and modifications from ten specialists who were contacted directly. The data were collected using purposive sampling. Only respondents who were registered to vote in Delhi-NCR and used New media were selected for the study. Data were gathered both offline and online. The researcher personally sent Google Forms to the respondents in addition to communicating with them over WhatsApp. The questionnaire was filled out by the respondents at marketplaces, colleges, offices, and homes, and it was either electronically or on paper submitted.

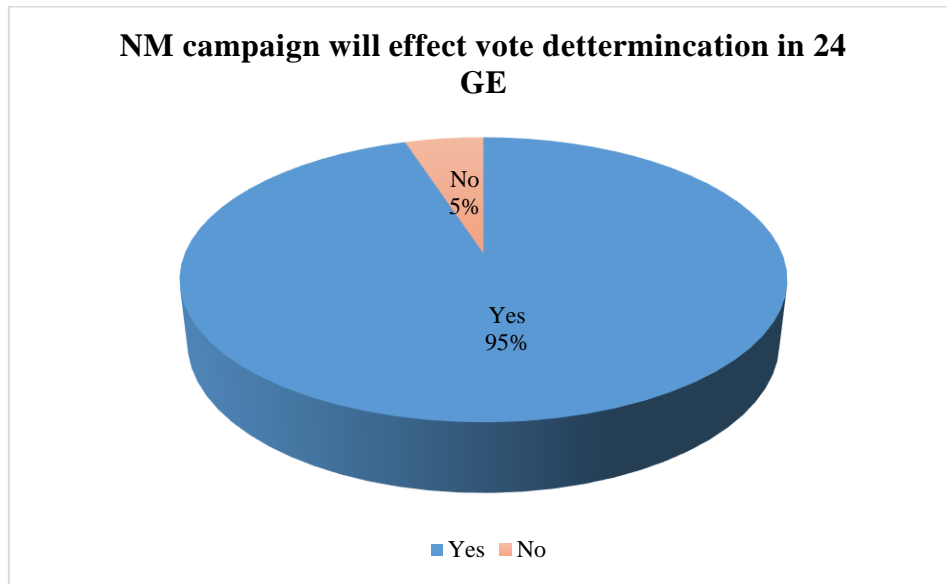
### Data Analysis

#### Item no 1



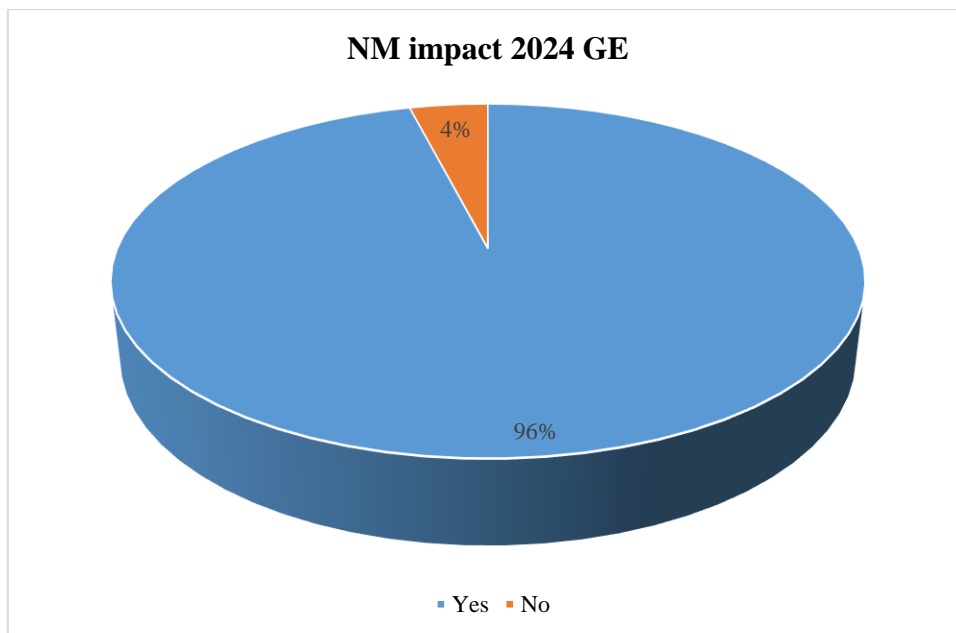
**Number 1: The role of New media in the 24th general election**

According to Figure 1, 99% of voters think that New media will be crucial to political parties' campaigning in the general election of 2024, while 1% disagree.

**Item no 2**

**Figure 2: New media effects in vote determination during the 2024 general election**

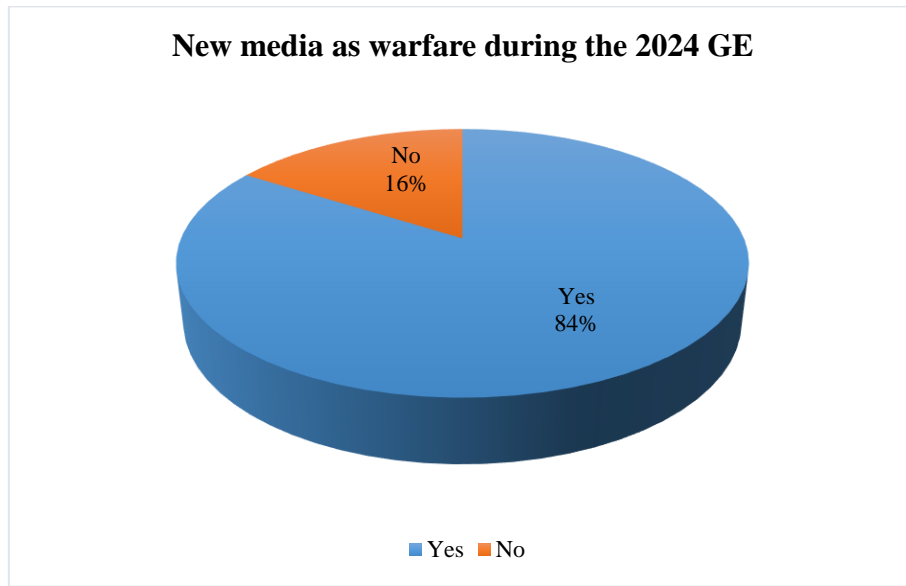
Figure 2 indicates that 95% of voters agree that New media will effect vote determination of the voters during the 2024 general election. While 5% voters did not agree with this.

**Item no 3**

**Figure 3: New media impact in the 2024 general election**

According to the figure 3, 96% voters think that New media will impact the 2024 general election on the other hand 4% voters responded no.

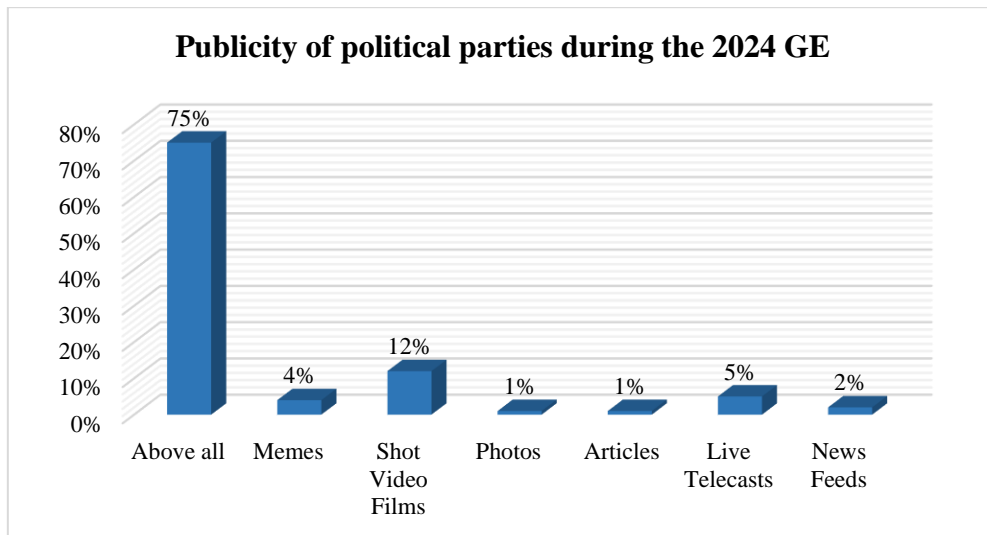
**Item 4**



**Figure 4: New media as warfare during the 2024 general election**

Figure 4 shows that 84% voters think that New media will become as warfare during the 2024 general election while 16% voters responded no.

**Item 5**



**Figure 5: Publicity of political parties during the 2024 general election**

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Figure 5 indicates that 4% voters think that memes will be used in political party’s election campaign while 12% voters believe that shot video films will be used for campaigning,1% voters responded photos,1% said articles,5% opined Live Telecasts,2% think that News Feeds will be used, on the other hand 75% voters agree that political parties will use all above publicity strategy.

**Analysis**

There is only some time left for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024. All the political parties are busy

making their election strategy. Teams are also being formed regarding New media and setup is being made. The respondents believe that in the 2024 general elections, political parties will give importance to campaigning in New media. Given the strong presence of New media in 2014, 2019 and the widespread influence of New media at present, voters also believe that New media will have a major impact in the 2024 general elections. Research reveals that New media campaigning will also play an important role in influencing the votes especially young voters vote. Memes are a mixture of graphics with photos and text that are presented as sarcasm or humor. Shots are video films which are used by parties to promote themselves or their big leaders. Mainly party related promotion films, rally shots and speeches, sound bites, live telecast, reels etc. are used in this. Apart from photos, articles, live telecast and news feed are also provided. Research shows that in the opinion of voters, political parties will use all these options in their election campaign on New media. Every political party takes a dig at each other every day through its social media accounts. Parties work to increase their support to the general public through new videos, articles and messages. Respondents believe that in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, New media platforms would become the battleground in an aggressive manner, and the major battle of political campaign will be fought on New media only.

### Conclusion

As far as the future use of New media is concern, it can be concluded that though traditional means of communication like e-mail and fundraisers will continue to be utilized in political campaigns, New media will play an ever increasing role in campaigns. Through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, political candidates will continue to interact with supporters and receive support in the form of donations and volunteers (Smith, 2011). This study reveals that New media will also play an important role in the election campaign of political parties in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. To reach more voters in less time, political parties will resort to New media campaign and come up with new strategies. The study says that New media campaigning can also play an important role in determining the votes of voters in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

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