Connecting the unconnected the role of social media in political discourse and participation

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***Abstract*-The platform of communication in diverse fields is media reaching millions of people with information in a fastest way possible. Social media happened to be the fastest platform of communication in the 21st century. In the field of politics globally, nationally and locally social media is used to disseminate information. In India too the public are connected to politics through social media from getting information on politics to sharing their aspirations with their representatives. The study discusses on political discourse and participation in politics through social media and the challenges and opportunities in use of social media regarding politics.**

***Index Terms*- social media, politics, information, technology.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Media refers to various channels and platforms used to communicate information, entertainment, and ideas to a wide audience. Media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, disseminating news, providing entertainment, and facilitating communication within society. It can also serve as a tool for education and advocacy. The way media is consumed and created has evolved significantly with technological advancements, leading to more interactive and user-generated content. In the ancient time media was in the form of oral traditions where information was disseminated in the form of storytelling from one to another however with the passage of time and civilization it has gradually changed from scripts to inscription to print media and with the advancement of technology to digital media or at present time we can term it as Social media which is widely used for discourse and disseminating information. Social media refers to online platforms and applications that enable users to create, share, and interact with content and each other. These platforms facilitate communication and the exchange of information, allowing individuals and organizations to connect with a wide audience. Popular social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, and Snapchat, among others. These platforms are used for a variety of purposes, including personal communication, marketing, brand promotion, news dissemination, and community building.

Social media has significantly transformed the way people communicate, share information, and engage with one another. The rise of major platforms in the 21st century like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram has changed the communication patterns and influence on community and culture. This rapid growth in technology has strengthened global connectivity. Social media has become a powerful force in shaping political landscapes across the globe. Social media has become a significant force in Indian politics over the past decade, transforming the way political campaigns are conducted, how politicians engage with the electorate, and how information is disseminated. Social media has dramatically altered the political landscape in India, offering both opportunities and challenges. While it allows for greater engagement and mobilization, it also raises concerns regarding misinformation, polarization, and the regulation of online discourse.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mohammad Saadia in his research paper 'The Role of Social Media in Shaping Political discourse and Propaganda' discusses the increasing use of social media by politicians and political parties to influence public opinion. It also addresses the challenges in the use of social media providing suggestions for promoting media literacy and ensuring social media companies to be more accountable and foster positivity in the field of social media.

Nabajyoti Ray in his research article 'Role of Social Media in Shaping Voter's Behavior: A Case Study of Assam Legislative Assembly Election, 2021' deals specifically with the Assam Assembly Election 2021 and it discusses what social media is and how it has evolved and came to be used as one platform for political discourse influencing political orientation of people and how it had shaped the

voting behaviour of people of Assam resulting in win for BJP in 2021.

Rantu Sarmah and Dr. Niranjan Mohapatra in their research paper 'Role of Social Media in Election Campaigning in India with Special Reference to Assam' highlights how in democratic countries social media is used as a means of electoral campaigns. It also note the point how social media platforms like Facebook, twitter, Youtube etc. has been a tool for politicians to interact with their voters. However in his paper he has specifically outlined what is social media and the general meaning of political campaign and how social media has been richly used in context of election campaign in Assam.

K. I. Bernoulli and T. Tat in their paper 'The Impact of Social Media on Political Engagement: A Systematic Review of Multidisciplinary Perspective' examines the complex relationship between social media and political participation from a variety of academic perspectives, including sociology, political science, and communication studies.

It looks at how social media platforms affect activism, public opinion, and political participation. The review summarizes research on how social media shapes political discourse, inspires movements, and affects election procedures. It also covers topics like polarization, disinformation, and the digital divide. The review offers a comprehensive grasp of social media's function in contemporary political landscapes by combining views from other domains.

Sajjad Malik in his research paper 'Media and Democracy' presents what media is, its use and basically highlighting the concept of media democracy. It also holds that media is keeping democracy alive by making the rulers accountable towards its citizens. It discusses how the issues of the public are brought at the front through uses of media especially of those grassroots level who are marginalized sections.

Urfee Jan in the article 'The Role of Social Media in Shaping Political Discourse in India: Insights from the BJP' focuses on insights from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as it examines the complex effects of social media on political communication, citizen participation, and electoral mobilization. Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and other social media platforms have completely changed how people interact with one another and create opinions. This analysis sheds light on the BJP's strategy, which offers important insights into how Indian politics are changing in the digital era.

Binakuromo Ogbebor 'Media Policy, Democracy and Theories of the Press' argues that many of the arguments in the debate that followed the Leveson Inquiry and the News of the World phone hacking incident were grounded in normative theories of the press. The underlying premise of these arguments was that the media are trusted with information power, and that the way this power is used has an impact on democracy. The normative theories regarding the portrayal of media policy are critically examined in this chapter. The concepts of social responsibility, the theory of social democracy, and the neoliberal version of libertarian theory are examined in order to clarify the logic underlying important media policy claims. In discussions about their profession, the press can serve as several homogeneous publics and individual unique voices in addition to acting as an interpretive community, as demonstrated by the notions of the public sphere and "journalism as an interpretive community."

Jinalasanghvi in the research paper 'Role of Social Media in Indian Politics' discusses the emergence of social media has altered how individuals relate to one another as well as how information is gathered and shared. Social media differs from traditional media like print, radio, and television in two important ways: (i) the quantity of content that news and opinion makers can produce is significantly less than that of user-generated content; and (ii) its "viral" potential, which increases the likelihood that information will spread through word-of-mouth and the interspersing of the various social media platforms, thereby reducing control over the dissemination of such information. These characteristics represent the paradigm shift from Web 1.0 technologies, which allowed for basic two-way transactions and information sharing, to Web 2.0 technologies, which allow everyone to be both a content creator and a consumer. The way individuals interact, communicate, and influence one another is being redefined by social media.

Dr. Abhay Vikram Singh, Dr. Manoj Kumar & Dr. Dinesh Vyas 'Role of Social Media in Indian Politics: Opportunities and Challenges' Social media's development has clearly changed how Indian politics are viewed, bringing with it both opportunities and difficulties that have changed political engagement, communication, and mobilization in some way. Social media has made it

possible for political players to interact directly with the public and circumvent established media, democratizing the broadcast of information. Additionally, it has made real-time feedback possible, promoted grassroots mobilization, and encouraged new kinds of political engagement, especially among young people. The study looks at these problems in relation to the Indian elections, emphasizing case studies that show how social media can affect democratic processes in both positive and negative ways. Additionally, it talks on how social media affects political accountability and openness as well as the direction of Indian electoral politics.

Michael Chan & Jingjing Yi in their research paper 'Social Media Use and Political Engagement in Polarized Times. Examining the Contextual Roles of Issue and Affective Polarization in Developed Democracies' their study explores how issue polarization and affective polarization at the national level shape the relationships between social media use for political information and democratic outcomes in 27 developed democracies, supporting the idea that political polarization plays a significant contingent role in explaining these relationships. The results show that the effects of social media use vary depending on affective polarization, with high affective polarization countries experiencing higher levels of democratic engagement and lower levels of satisfaction with democracy, which may have implications for democratic erosion and backsliding, while low affective polarization countries saw an increase in perceived quality of democracy but no effect on political satisfaction.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent years, social media has emerged as a powerful tool in shaping political discourse and participation across the globe. A diverse and populous democracy, the role of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp in influencing political engagement has become increasingly significant. Despite the growing prevalence of social media in political processes, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding its impact on political discourse and participation in the Indian context. Several key questions remain unanswered like how social media platforms shape the political opinions and behaviours of different demographics in India, the role they play in facilitating or hindering informed political discussions. This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the role of social media in shaping political discourse and participation in India, focusing on both its empowering potential and its challenges by exploring the dynamics of online engagement and the factors that contribute to or detract from meaningful political participation. This research also seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the intersection between social media and Indian politics utilized by political parties, and investigating the experiences of ordinary citizens in a vibrant democracy. Ultimately, this exploration seeks to understand how social media not only connects the unconnected but also influences the very fabric of democratic participation in India, navigating the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Objective of the study

- To investigate how social media shapes political discourse in India.
- To identify the challenges and opportunities presented by social media in the Indian political landscape.
- To forecast future trends in Indian politics through use of social media

Research Questions

1. How do Indian citizens utilize social media for political knowledge acquisition?
2. What are the implications of social media for the quality of political discourse in India?
3. How will be the future of Indian politics with the use of social media?

Research Methodology

This research paper is based on secondary research and qualitative in nature. The secondary sources includes- journal, articles, books and other depositories like shodhganga is referred.

Scope of the study

The study will primarily analyse how social media is disseminating political knowledge and shaping political discourse. It will also examine the impact of social media on Indian politics as it has witnessed a significant increase in internet and social media penetration in the country. This will allow the research to capture the evolving trends and patterns in the use of social media for political engagement reflecting a broader trend of digital democratization, connecting diverse segments of the population, including those who have historically been marginalized from traditional political processes.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The majority of media policy debates in Western democracies are predicated on normative theories of the press. The notion that the media are entrusted with information power and that the way this power is employed has an impact on democracy serves as the basis for these arguments. The media has grown to be a crucial aspect of modern human affairs. Information is available through the media on a wide range of topics, from politics to leisure. The media's contribution to the maintenance of democracy ranks highest on the list of its social significance. Some have contended that democracy in modern society cannot exist without the news media. The function that the media play in maintaining democracy is generally acknowledged as what gives them legitimacy. The maximalist theory encompasses social and economic ideals including freedom of the press, equality of opportunity, freedom of association, and the ability to receive and distribute information in addition to political ones. The maximalist perspective is predicated on the notion that democracy ought to govern every facet of society. The maximalist approach to democracy beliefs in the definition of Abraham Lincoln 'as governance by the people' where the political right of people doesn't end with voting but which includes with political debates and on being part of decision making. They also held a view that effective and creatives ideas on the part of press can enhance democratic sphere through public debates

Libertarian Theory of Press- According to libertarian theory, the press has the right to freely distribute information (Siebert et al., 1956). As a result, another name for it is the normative theory of mass communication. It is completely legal for mass media outlets to report any ethical news or information. The nation's press serves as a watchdog over the community and society. The libertarian press concept was initially introduced by John Milter. First, the United States government implemented the libertarian press idea in the 1700s. Europe embraced it in the 1900s and beyond. Humans have the right to know the truth about the material that is released by the media, according to the Libertarian press. The public should receive the real news from the press. Mass people own the media outlets, and they are allowed to run them freely in accordance with government regulations. Free expression of opinion is the main goal of media outlets. The press upholds government policies and acts as a watchdog for the nation and society. Public discussion and opinion are given priority by the media.

Social Responsibility Theory- The majority of third-world and developing countries adopted this social responsibility philosophy of the press, which is linked to "the Commission of the Freedom of Press," in the middle of the 20th century. "Pure libertarianism is antiquated, outdated, and obsolete," according to the book "Four Theories of Press" by Siegbert, Peterson, and Schramm. The social responsibility theory eventually replaced libertarian ideology as a result. The social responsibility paradigm permits unrestricted press freedom, but it also requires that press material be discussed in public forums and that media embrace any obligations imposed by the public, professional self-regulation, or both. Because it grants complete media independence on the one hand while imposing external constraints on the other, the theory falls somewhere between authoritarian and libertarian ideologies. The ownership of the press is private here. By establishing a high standard of knowledge, truth, and accuracy, the idea contributed to the development of professionalism in the media. The commission of the press council also included a few tasks based on the social responsibility of the media, such as creating a code of conduct for the press, raising the bar for journalism, protecting journalistic interests, and criticizing and punishing those who violate the code.

Networked Individualism- It is a concept introduced by sociologist Barry Wellman to describe the way individuals are connected in modern society through a complex web of personal networks facilitated by digital communication technologies. It suggests that people are increasingly relying on personal networks of relationship rather than traditional, institutional structures for support, information and social interaction. In a networked individualism model each person is seen as a node within a larger network of connections which may include family, friends, colleagues and like-minded individuals. These networks are often created, maintained and expanded through various online platforms such as social media, email, messaging apps and online communities.

Media Democracy- Media democracy is the set of beliefs that support changing mass media through increasing public service broadcasting, engaging in diverse media and journalism, and providing a range of forums for public discourse and opinion expression. Media democracy's primary objective is

to create a robust democracy that is open, accessible to all that empowers society and supports democracy and its ideals. Today's media promotes a wide range of concepts and ideas and adheres to specific ideologies that they strongly believe in, such as Changing the existing media model to a transparent and democratic one enhancing public service announcements, increasing the mainstream media's adoption of alternative media, increasing citizens journalism's impact and function, increasing the number of participants in the broader conversation to advance democratic principles and ideals.

V. SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN INDIA

The widespread technological transformations with the liberalization of economy and upgradation of smartphones and ease to access internet has enable digital empowerment among citizens. These developments have made it possible for people to communicate in real time, democratize access to information, and engage in public discourse, express their opinions, and hold elected officials responsible. In the contemporary landscape of Indian politics, the role of social media has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping the dynamics of political discourse and participation. With over 900 million active users making up 62.07% of its population India stands as one of the largest social media markets globally, where platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have become pivotal arenas for political engagement. This phenomenon reflects a broader trend of digital democratization, connecting diverse segments of the population, including those who have historically been marginalized from traditional political processes. The advent of social media has significantly altered the way political information is disseminated and consumed. Unlike conventional media, which often operates within a framework of gatekeeping, social media platforms enable users to share content instantly, allowing for a more participatory form of communication. This shift not only empowers individuals to voice their opinions but also facilitates the rapid spread of grassroots movements and alternative narratives that challenge established political norms. As a result, social media has become a crucial tool for mobilizing citizens, particularly the youth, who are more inclined to engage with political issues through digital channels. However, the impact of social media on political discourse is multifaceted, presenting both opportunities and challenges. While it fosters greater political awareness and engagement, it also raises concerns about misinformation, polarization, and the manipulation of public sentiment by partisan actors. The rapid proliferation of fake news and echo chambers can distort political realities, leading to a fragmented public sphere where constructive dialogue is overshadowed by divisive rhetoric.

Politics is transformed into a symbolic and ideological construct as a result of media discourse's power to virtualize political reality. This virtual image becomes part of the symbolic field of politics, influencing society's political consciousness. Citizens frequently prefer the media reality conveyed through mass media over the reality of their practical political experience. Public opinion is the currency of democracy. Social media platforms are gradually becoming the principal forum for public conversation and public opinion mobilization, serving as a tool for people to discuss both everyday issues and national concerns. Social media is no longer just a harmless way to connect with friends and family. Instead, it has evolved into an influential venue for political engagement and the development of new political dialogues. Increasing Public Awareness where people have never been more aware of government policies than they are today. Prior to social media, political campaigns relied primarily on traditional modes of communication, such as television commercials, newspaper articles, rallies, and scheduled debates, to reach voters. Politicians had to rely on journalists and media outlets to spread their views, frequently tailoring their narratives to the preferences and prejudices of news networks. This created a barrier between candidates and the general public, as media outlets operated as gatekeepers, limiting what information reached the people. Government outreach is expanding due to the successful use of social media through various social media campaigns that raise awareness among the public. During the Covid pandemic, for example, social media was extremely effective at raising precautionary awareness and mobilising leads for medicines.

Bridging the Gap, Social media has helped individuals and their representatives connect. Social media has greatly decreased the communication barriers that previously prevented individuals from interacting with leaders. Political candidates utilize social media to engage, recruit volunteers, and generate finance for campaigns. Candidates use

social media to gather feedback and ideas for improving their political activities. Some candidates engage qualified aides to update their statuses or tweet, as well as to organize debates on social media to motivate citizens. Social media is ideal for participatory democratic systems since it encourages transparency and accuracy in the process, allowing for speedy publication of findings. Social media has had a significant impact on political debate, making it more contentious, faster-paced, and more concise. The evolution of discourse is manifested in the formation of "echo chambers," in which users are largely exposed to content that supports their pre-existing opinions. These echo chambers can cause people to become entrenched in their beliefs, restricting their exposure to different points of view and constructive debates. Social media has irreversibly changed the terrain of political campaigns. Candidates may now target certain demographics with accuracy thanks to personalized commercials, a tactic aided by data analytics that provide insights into voter preferences and behaviors. Microtargeting has become widespread practice, allowing campaigns to target specific audiences with messages that appeal on a personal level. While this strategy may increase voter participation, it also raises ethical concerns regarding voter manipulation and the monetization of political ideas.

Demographically, Social media is extensively used by the youths and hence they are connected to politics by means of social media. Campaigns use social media to attract a larger audience, particularly younger populations, and promote diversity in political discourse. According to a Pew Research Center survey, the majority of young individuals (ages 18 to 29) now rely on social media platforms for political news and updates instead of traditional media outlets, highlighting emerging voters' changing behaviors.

The role of social media in politics will change along with technology. AI-powered news feeds and augmented reality are two examples of emerging technologies and platforms that have the potential to significantly alter political discourse and engagement. At the same time, regulatory actions might be taken to address the issues of disinformation and data protection, which would affect how social media companies function in political environments. Without a doubt, these changes will have an impact on future interactions between politicians and voters.

VI. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIAN POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Social media has transformed political engagement by democratizing access to information and providing a forum for direct conversation between politicians and citizens. Social media has facilitated inclusive political discussion in India, where conventional media was formerly the dominant source of information. Politicians, parties, and activists may now reach a large audience instantly, spreading messages, policies, and perspectives without the need for traditional media middlemen. Direct communication creates a personal link between leaders and citizens, enabling them to address concerns and build trust.

Media is a fourth pillar of democracy that ensures transparency. It acts as a watchdog over government and public institutions, holding them accountable for their actions. Investigative journalism can uncover corruption, abuse of power, and injustices, promoting transparency and accountability providing a platform for public discourse as it encourages dialogue and helps shape public opinion. In a globalized world, media connects citizens not just to local and national issues but also to global challenges, fostering a sense of global citizenship and responsibility. The rise of digital media has further democratized information access, allowing more individuals to participate in the media landscape and express their opinions, thus enhancing democratic engagement. Media outlets provide comprehensive coverage of political events, policies, and election campaigns, ensuring that citizens are aware of what is happening in the political landscape. Media frequently conducts and publishes opinion polls that gauge public sentiment on various issues, influencing how politicians and parties approach their campaigns.

Social media platforms allow political campaigns to target certain populations and customize messaging accordingly. This customized strategy is especially effective in India, where voters' concerns differ by location, religion, and socio-economic status. Social media has helped mobilize grassroots support. The 2014 Modi campaign leveraged social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook to develop and sustain political momentum, demonstrating its effectiveness.

While social media offers numerous benefits, it may also pose considerable difficulties to democratic processes. One of the most important concerns is the

widespread dissemination of misinformation and fake news. Social media platforms can spread false information, distorting public views and influencing elections due to their widespread reach and speed of distribution. Misinformation campaigns can be initiated by political actors, foreign entities, or unscrupulous people aiming to influence public opinion. Fake news poses a significant danger to informed decision-making and democratic engagement in India's highly heated political debate. Misleading information can undermine trust in the political system, confuse voters, and cause confusion on key topics, jeopardizing the democratic process. The manipulation of public opinion through social media also presents a serious challenge. Political actors, both domestic and foreign, often use sophisticated techniques such as bots, troll farms, and fake accounts to amplify their messages, manipulate voter perceptions, and undermine democratic processes. These tactics can create a distorted view of public sentiment and influence election outcomes by generating the illusion of widespread support or opposition. The impact of these manipulative practices can be profound, leading to questions about the legitimacy of electoral results and the overall integrity of the political system. Furthermore, social media presents obstacles to political accountability and openness. While these platforms can improve openness by allowing for public inspection, they can also be used to distort the facts and promote misinformation. The abundance of content and anonymity on these platforms can lead to reckless behavior, such as defamation and hate speech. In India's highly charged political debate, the use of social media for misinformation and propaganda hinders voters' ability to make informed decisions.

VII. FUTURE TRENDS IN INDIAN POLITICS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has lessened the gap of interaction between individuals however the same in case of politics. The traditional pattern of interaction between the representatives and public which had a gatekeeper is wiped out with the coming of social media. The interaction between representative and public is direct, less expensive where opinions views and demands are highlighted through social media using hashtags and tagging the ministers concerned. The power of social media stems from its capacity to broadcast political views unfiltered, bypassing traditional media's gatekeeping role. Viral tweets or hashtags can overnight elevate a political viewpoint or slogan to the level of national discourse. For example, a tweet from a political figure may gather popularity, sparking significant debate across multiple platforms. This amplification can have a substantial impact on public opinion, giving grassroots movements or projects attention. While this might encourage democratic engagement, it can also result in the rapid dissemination of false or inflammatory information, complicating political discourse.

Social media, unlike conventional modes of communication, allows voters and political officials to communicate in both directions. Voters can interact with politicians through comments, likes, and shares, creating a sense of direct interaction that is not commonly found in other media formats. Platforms enable politicians to monitor public mood in real time through public opinion polls, live Q&A sessions, and immediate feedback loops. This increased connection produces a political scene in which people feel heard and respected, but it may also lead to the phenomena of performative activism, in which exchanges are more about publicity than true engagement.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the digital age, the convergence of communication and technology has resulted in social media that has transcended geographical boundaries and transformed political participation. Social media has had a deep and far-reaching impact on Indian politics. In recent years, India has seen an exponential increase in internet penetration and smartphone usage, resulting in millions of residents joining various social media sites. This digital revolution has democratized political discourse by giving people from all walks of life a virtual platform to express themselves, interact with others who share their views, and hold elected leaders responsible.

The current political climate appears to be heavily impacted by social media. Before the advent of social media traditionally electoral campaigns were set through TV, Newspapers and now it has transformed to Facebook, Twitter(X) effectively using to reach voters using regional languages and cultural related contents. Today's political campaigns rely on social media to disseminate information, persuade citizens, and encourage political participation. The rise of social media in Indian politics represents a substantial shift in how

political campaigns and public interaction are managed. The smart use of these channels has revolutionized political communication, making it more direct, dynamic, and effective. Social media's impact on public discourse extends beyond communication to essential activities such as agenda setting and issue framing. In India's political scene, hashtags like #AchheDin (Good Days) and #MainBhiChowkidar (I, too, am a Watchman) have become effective tools for moulding public opinion and rallying support. These hashtags have been intentionally utilized to promote favourable narratives about government performance and increase grassroots participation in political campaigns. Narendra Modi's 2014 Lok Sabha election campaign represented a change away from traditional media and toward a social media-based strategy. To gain leverage, his team employed targeted digital advertising, interactive hashtags like "AbKiBaarModiSarkar", and WhatsApp groups to reach millions of people, especially young and first-time voters. Furthermore, 3D holographic rallies enabled him to address many areas at the same time, greatly expanding his reach. This direct interaction shaped his image as a tech-savvy, up-to-date, and capable leader, and it played an important part in the BJP's triumph. The success of this strategy established a precedent for future Indian elections, in which social media remains a dominant force in political campaigning.

In Indian politics in the field of social media we see that each representatives have their Facebook page along with twitter of their name and identity where news are shared frequently and they also share their day to day works through which people can participate in politics where the unconnected ones are able to be connected to politics by going through such content and learning everyday affairs of the state. Twitter (now X) is one such site that, in addition to the broader public, is unique in that politicians use it extensively—they dispute with one another, engage with civil society, and interact socially with individuals all on Twitter. Some use it for self-promotion and media validation, while others use it to support their real-world beliefs. Twitter also allows fringe politicians to reach out to the public directly, circumventing mainstream media where their presence may be minimal.

Social media platforms have significantly changed the landscape of political and social activity in India, serving as critical instruments for amplifying voices and mobilizing movements. The ability of these platforms to quickly distribute knowledge and coordinate collective action has empowered marginalized populations and sparked tremendous social change. A significant example is Anna Hazare's 2011 anti-corruption rallies. Social media was critical in organizing and galvanizing public support for the campaign, allowing extensive participation and bringing significant attention to the issue of corruption. Similarly, the #MeToo campaign, which grew globally, used social media to raise awareness of gender-based violence and harassment. The movement used social media to raise awareness about critical issues, challenge power dynamics, and advocate for systemic change. Social media platform enable marginalized groups to bypass traditional media gatekeepers, amplifying their voices and challenging dominant narratives. This has resulted in more inclusive and diversified public conversation, allowing for open and effective discussion of numerous societal concerns. Farmers' recent rallies against problematic agricultural legislation highlight the widespread usage of social media for grassroots mobilization efforts. Protesters used channels like as Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram to coordinate logistics, provide real-time updates, and rally international support. Social media can promote decentralized movements, allowing for large-scale civic engagement and advocacy.

IX. CONCLUSION

The rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp has democratized access to information and public discourse, notably in politics. Politicians, activists, and the general public can now skip traditional gatekeepers and engage directly in political discourse, possibly upsetting existing power structures and increasing popular engagement. However, this transformation has brought up a myriad of issues, such as the propagation of misinformation, the creation of echo chambers, and the worsening of political division. Social media's impact on political discourse is nuanced and multifaceted. While technology unquestionably provides prospects for increased involvement and democratization, the issues posed by divisiveness, misinformation, and potential manipulation cannot be overlooked. To ensure that social media contributes positively to democracy, a multistakeholder strategy is required. This includes platform regulation, media literacy initiatives, fact-

checking efforts, and greater transparency from political actors.

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