An Assessment Of Impact Of Social Media On Political Participation

Bibhuti B Pradhan

Abstract: Indian follows the federal parliamentary constitutional republic system. India has the world's largest democracy and constitution is the largest constitution of the world with 444 articles, 12 schedules, 98 amendments with approximately 1,460,000 words from English language. There has been only 98 changes in 70 years in the constitution. The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of social media on political participation. The data was collected from around 1494 respondents who were above the age of 18 since the minimum voting age in India is 18 years. The initial questionnaire was pre-tested with around 50 voters. The changes were incorporated in the finalized questionnaire before starting the data collection. Based on the analysis the study shows that the use of social media and the political constructs namely political efficacy and political knowledge seeks information from the social media and are a positive and significant predictors of political participation.

Index Terms: Political Efficacy Political Knowledge Political Participation

1 INTRODUCTION

India follows the federal parliamentary constitutional republic system. India has the world's largest democracy and constitution is the largest constitution of the world with 444 articles, 12 schedules, 98 amendments with approximately 1,460,000 words from English language. There has been only 98 changes in 70 years in the constitution (Sampson, 1949). Indian constitution came into force from 26th January 1950 and after the independence there purposively indirect chosen members of parliament with prime minister as the head of the parliament. In present there are total of 4215 members of legislative assembly and 543 members of parliament (Israel & Austin, 2010)(Gupta, 2005). In India there are 2 types of parties- national parties or state parties and to be considered as the national party, a political party must have their seats in 3-4 states in states at either ruling party or at the opposition. Jawaharlal Nehru was the first prime minister of Indian who served India for almost 17 years then all his family members took the post (Jacobsohn, 2006). In 1885, Indian national congress was formed and is a dominant party of Indian parliament. For some of the decades the congress struggled out with a lot of campaigns but after independence it accounted huge success and started dominating other parties. With their consequential drop in 2014, congress only got mere 44 seats. In 1980, BJP came similarly other political parties came (Lamb & Cohen, 2006). In the elections of 2019 Lok Sabha, taking only Bhartiya janta party (BJP), Indian national congress (INC), Bahujansamaj party (BSP) and others. So, BJP won in Madhya Pradesh with 116 seats, INC got 114 seats, BSP got 2 seats and 5 seats others. In Chhattisgarh INC won by 68 seats, BJP won 15 seats, BSP+ won 7 seats. In Telangana,TRS won by 88 seats, INC+ got 21 seats, BJP got 1 seat and others got 2.In Mizoram, MNF won by 26 seats, others got 8 seats, INC got 5 seats and BJP is on 1. Whereas, in Rajasthan, INC got 100 seats, BJP got 73, others got 20 seats and BSP got 6 seats (Epstein & Robertson, 2015) (Yadav, 2004). The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of social media on political participation.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

India is a federal republic which has 29 states and 9 union territories. The Indian parliament is bicameral federal with Rajya Sabha or upper house and Lok Sabha or lower house (Kapur & Mehta, 2006).

Social Media: - social media came into existence in 1940s after the introduction of telegraph. Social media is the web 2.0 internet-based application that provides a platform to interact with people worldwide, sharing photos, videos and generation of content (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). There are several platforms on social media that allow people talk to each other, share data etc. with safety and security. Social media websites like Facebook, WhatsApp and tinder etc. social media is a platform that is worldwide and allows the transfer of information from one place to another in a second (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Political Efficacy: - political efficacy is when the citizen of India has the faith and trust on their government that the government will take care of their needs and wants. Political efficacy is measured by the surveys- higher the efficacy higher the citizen’s trust on the government and lower the trust, lower the trust on the government (Kim, 2015). There are 2 types of political efficacy that is –external efficacy (when the individual belief that political parties will respond on what they want) and internal efficacy (when on beliefs that the individual can understand politics and then participates in politics) (Kenski & Stroud, 2006). During voting in elections, political efficacy plays a greater role in such a way that when people have high efficacy in politics they will surely vote so that they can bring changes in the government whereas, when people have low efficacy while voting they prefer not to vote for any party (Gil de Zúñiga, 2012).

Political Knowledge: - when people/ individual have a good knowledge of politics so that they can interact with others as well as has a greater knowledge during communication. Every citizen must be civic competent in knowledge so that the individual could participate in the democratic society. The more the knowledge more the individual gets the public image because there is abundant knowledge about the politics (Galston, 2001). An individual who wants to enter politics must be competent enough about political knowledge. People participation gives rise to people who have enough knowledge
about the politics. The knowledgeable people are talked so that clear and transparent picture of people wants could be known (Foucault, 1972).

3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

When people get involved with the politics in such a way their country is governed. It helps the government to understand what the people wants and what is the thing that their government is lacking into (Stolle, Hooge, & Micheletti, 2005). There are different way a person is involved with the government namely-voting (the most important and fair method through which the public figure is selected and not assigned by someone else), protest (the influence and initiation of the people to change the rules and regulations and laws according to them is also wider aspect of public participation), jury duty (the people will judge the other people who has done crime so that fair decision would be made) and public consultation (the way people participate with the members from government so that they can knew the changes the people want) (Van Deth, 2014) (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995).

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from around 1494 respondents who were above the age of 18 since the minimum voting age in India is 18 years. The initial questionnaire was pre-tested with around 50 voters. The changes were incorporated in the finalised questionnaire before starting the data collection. Out of a total of 1494 there were 73.9% males and 26.1% females. In terms of age group 48% of 421 respondents were below 30 years, 29.7% were of 31-45 age group, 11.2% each in 46-60 and above 61 age groups. Majority of the respondents were from service class with 44.4% of the total sample, Business class respondents were 15.2%, 135 were students and 8.3% were retired. Out of the total 1494 respondents 74.1% were in the Income group of Rs. 1 lakh to 7 lakh per annum, 10.7% were in 7 lakh to 10 lakhs income bracket, 10 lakh to 12 lakh income group constituted 6.4% and 8.8% of the respondents were in above 12 lakh per annum income group.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

A SEM was conducted for fulfilling the objective to assess the impact of social media on political participation. Measurement model results and reliability values of each construct in factor influencing retention. The model fit indices were assessed for an acceptable fit. The model fit indices found were chi-square/d.f. (χ²/d.f) = 15.06, p = 0.00, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = 0.87, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.989, normative fit index (NFI) = 0.92 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.045. These fit indices indicated an acceptable measurement model.

6 DISCUSSIONS

Based on the analysis the study shows that the use of social media and the political constructs namely political efficacy and political knowledge (Agboola, 2014; Best & Krueger, 2005; Colombo, Galais, & Gallego, 2012; Jackman, 1993; Meesuwan, 2016; Nam, 2011; Quintelier & Vissers, 2008) seeks information from the social media and are a positive and significant predictors of political participation (Aguirre Sala, 2012; Gozzoa & D’Agataa, 2010; La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998; Mcclurg, Scott D., 2003; McClurg, 2003; Participation, 2011; Valenzuela, Kim, & Gil De Zúñiga, 2012).

REFERENCES


