

# Political Communication on Social Media with Reference of Himachal Pradesh Assembly Elections

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**Abstract – Social media is very well known term. The Oxford Dictionary characterizes the term as “sites and application that empower clients to make and offer content or to take an interest in social administration”. Social media is another media which is separate from newspaper and audio-visual medium of television or radio. It is group of online communication channels devoted to information, connection, substance, and coordinated effort. The development of the internet has revolutionized the social media. The current communication revolution gave content recipients the opportunity to be their own content producer, such as to post text messages or images, videos on web pages.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The new technology of Web2.0 application, social media is a catch phrase that describes technology which facilitates interactive, information user created content and collaboration. Social media includes variety of internet based communication medium such as:-

- Social Networking websites i.e. Facebook, MySpace, Google+ etc.
- Micro blogging websites i.e. Twitter, Weibo, Yammar etc.
- Video sharing websites i.e. You tube, Flicker etc.
- Macro blogging websites i.e. Word press , Blogger, Blogspot etc.
- Podcast
- Wikis

## FACEBOOK

Facebook website was founded and launched by Mark Juckerberg and his fellow Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Morkovitz and Chris Hughes on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004. Initially the founders limited the Facebook website to Harvard students; however later, they expanded it to higher education

institution in Boston area, the Ivy League Schools and Stanford University. It gradually added support at various universities, and high school students as well. Since 2006 persons having age at least 13 years old has been allowed to become a registered user of Facebook though verification exist in the minimum age according to local laws. The name Facebook came from the Face book directories often given to the United States University students.

Facebook website can be accessed by desktops, tablets, computers, laptops and Smartphone using the internet and mobile networks. After registering the site, users can create a user profile with their name, occupation, schools attended and so on. In this website users can add other users as “friend” by sending request or by accepting other’s friend request. Users can exchange messages, post status updates and digital photos, share digital videos links, use various software applications and receive notifications when others update their profiles or make posts. User’s may also join common – interest user groups organized by workplace, school, hobbies or other topics and categorize their friends into lists such as “people from work” or “close friends”. In addition users can complain about or block unpleasant people. Facebook makes most of its revenue from advertisements which appear onscreen, marketing access for its customers to its users and offering highly selective advertising opportunities.

## ELECTION

Election may be characterized as a coordinated or systematic appointment or selection of a candidate to a political office or another office. The parliament and State Legislative Bodies should be elected every five years in compliance with India's Constitution, unless there is a state of emergency. Both national and state elections are held by India's Election Board. Local polls are, on the other hand, carried out by state election boards. The government made suggestions for elections, but the Election Commission of India released notices.

In India there are four kinds of votes, which are:

1. **General Elections:** – These elections are held in India to elect the Lok Sabha members. The elected representatives of these elections are MP's (Member of Parliament). Every 5 years, general elections take place.
2. **Assembly Elections** – Indian elections to a state assembly are an election in which Vidhan Sabha (or state/legislative assembly) is chosen by Indian electors. The appointed members are called MLA's. These elections are held every 5 years.
3. **Rajya Sabha Elections:** – Rajya Sabha's representatives are chosen by each state and union territory's legislative body. Rajya Sabha has 250 members, 12 of whom are chosen by the President of India. The assembly of each state and Union territory is indirectly elected out of 250, 238.
4. **President Elections:** – The role of electing the President of India is entrusted to elected members of the houses (Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State parliament (Vidhan Sabha). For a span of five years, the President serves.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH ASSEMBLY

The Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly or the Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha is the unicameral legislature of the state of Himachal Pradesh, India. The present capacity of the Vidhan Sabha is 68. In 1952-1957 Legislative Assembly of Part-C State of Himachal Pradesh Indian National Congress won the Election and Yashwant Singh Parmar was the Chief Minister. Since then in 2017 Thirteenth Assembly election is done and BJP is the winner and Jai Ram Thakur is elected as chief minister of the state.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Silvia et al. (2008)** studied the generations of the web which specifies the convergence between the two worlds, real as well as virtual, presenting

ambient intelligence scenario of pervasive and ubiquitous computing. **Kaplan & Haenlein (2010)** in her article clarified the concept of social media & related it to web2.0 and user-generated content. She clarified the characteristics of umbrella term social Media. Social media and its relation to web 2.0 and user generated content. The term Web 2.0 was first used in 2004, which represents technological and ideological foundation. **Hana et al. (2011)** explains the integration of social media into a firm's marketing communication strategy by various advantageous attributes of social media. Social Media has high accessibility feature, social media is being used by big brands and business for marketing. **Mustaffa et al. (2011)** conducted in his research work conducted a survey and analyzed the factors that influence users to adopt or reject, as well as involvement of youth using Facebook in Malaysia. **Raacke & Raacke (2008)** examined & studied the uses and gratification of friend making sites like Facebook & Myspace to explore the answers of research questions (a) why people use these friend-networking sites, (b) what are the characteristics of a typical college user, and (c) what uses and gratifications are met by using these sites among the students of East Coast University, United States. **Correa et al. (2010)** concluded in his research on social media, social networking sites and instant messaging applications, that among adults of University of Texas at Austin, US, majority of the respondents using social media were under 18-34 years age group. **Kothari, C.R. (1985)** the author of the book Research Methodology helps a researcher to work with the most appropriate methodology for his/her studies. **Deltina Hay's Social Media (2000)**, the author deals with emergence of social Network sites and the role it has played for the promotion of any news and available easily among young folks. **McCombs and Shaw (1972)** the study was on the presidential elections held in 1968. McCombs and Shaw's (1972), study which concluded that the media exerted a considerable impact on voters' judgment as they considered the major issues of the campaign. **Jain & Gupta (2012)** studied the impact of social networking sites on minds of youths related to social issues. **Peslak et al. (2010)** The study was based on the behavior of the users of social networking on the basis of Rogers Model, 'Diffusion of Innovation' the research stated that the attitude relative advantage, complexity, compatibility, tradability influences the uses of social networking sites on the basis of gender of respondents

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The present study seeks to explore the linkage or interconnection between the Facebook and Elections. Now a day's social media has become a great tool for communication as it has ability to share text, photos as well as videos. Political parties are using the same as a tool for effecting

voters behavior through Facebook. The research seeks the analysis of different posts by political parties on Facebook. In this context the present research work ventures to the following objectives.

1. To study the uses of Facebook website by political parties.
2. To analyze the types of posts uploaded by political parties .

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of the present study is as follow:

- The study will help in understanding the people involvement in political communication and their response on social media.
- This study will help to analyze the political communication strategies by political parties on social media.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Content analysis:**

Content analysis consists of analyzing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and the contents of all other verbal materials which can be either spoken or printed. Content analysis prior to 1940’s was mostly quantitative analysis of documentary materials concerning certain characteristics that can be identified and counted. But since 1950’s content analysis is mostly qualitative analysis concerning the general import or message of the existing documents.

My study will be content analysis based study of the contents on Facebook websites. It is the study of State Facebook website of political party’s posts like photo, video clips, advertisement, and there number of Likes, comments, shares will be counted on daily basis during Election Campaign. In this research the focus is on Posts of the Two political parties (Indian national Congress & Bhartiya Janta Party) Face book website run on state level . As the Previous Government was of the congress Party and the party would like form their government again and at the other hand Bhartiya Janta Party(BJP) both parties are running strategies on their State Facebook websites to Effect the voters behavior.

**FINDINGS & INTERPRETATIONS**

**Frequency** of posts in different categories by the two parties BJP & Congress

**Table-1**

Party	Cartoon	Link	Photo	Poster	Text	Video	Total
BJP	12	4	55	169	3	27	270
CONG	0	0	59	19	0	34	112

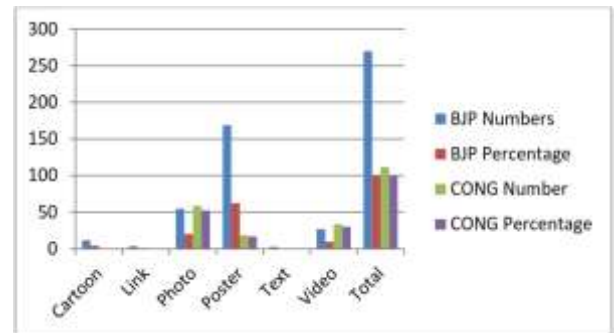
In the above table there are seven categories of the posts and which has been posted by the parties during the period of Election Campaign. Both parties has posted different posts. As from above table we can see that BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) has the maximum number of posts as compared to Congress (Indian National Congress Party). This list also shows in some categories there is no post from the congress party.

But the number of photos & Videos posted by congress party is more than the BJP. Further the number of poster posted by the BJP is more than the congress party.

**Percentage** of posts in different categories by the two parties BJP & Congress .

**Table1.1**

Party		Cartoon	Link	Photo	Poster	Text	Video	Total
BJP	Numbers	12	4	55	169	3	27	270
	Percentage	4.4	1.5	20.4	62.6	1.1	9.9	100
CONG	Number	0	0	59	19	0	34	112
	Percentage	0	0	52.6	16.9	0	30.3	100.0



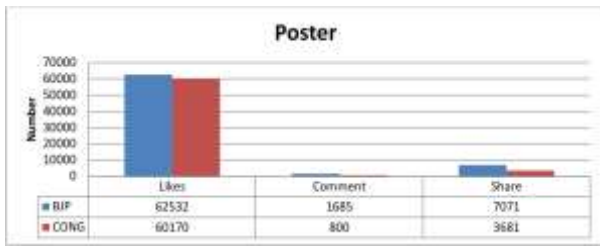
**Poster (comparison in number between two parties)**

**Table-2**

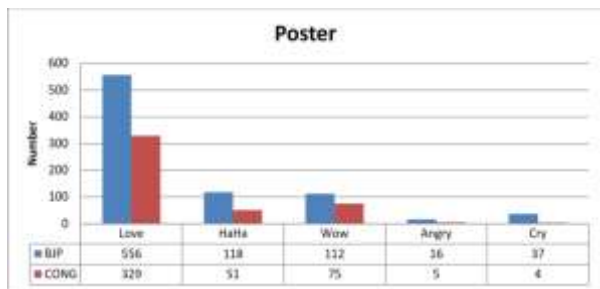
Party	Likes	Love	HaHa	Wow	Angry	Cry	Comment	Share
BJP	62532	556	118	112	16	37	1685	7071
CONG	60170	329	51	75	5	4	800	3681

Now for the category Poster BJP has posted 169 poster and congress has posted 19 posters, And if compare the likes we can see the differences from the above table that the there is not so much differences in the variables (Like, Love, HaHa,

Wow, Angry, Cry, Comment, Share). Below the graph showing the differences in Likes, Comments & Share Variables



Below the Graph shows the differences in the variables Love, HaHa, Wow, Angry, Cry

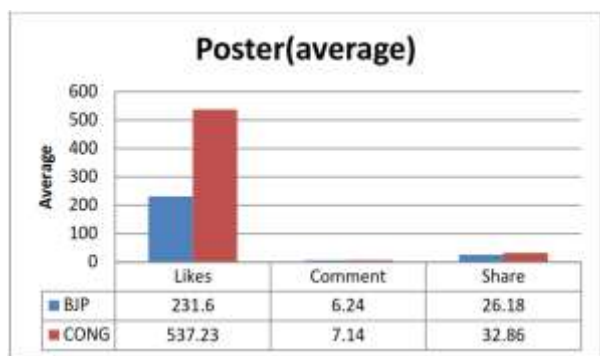


Poster (comparison in Means between two parties)

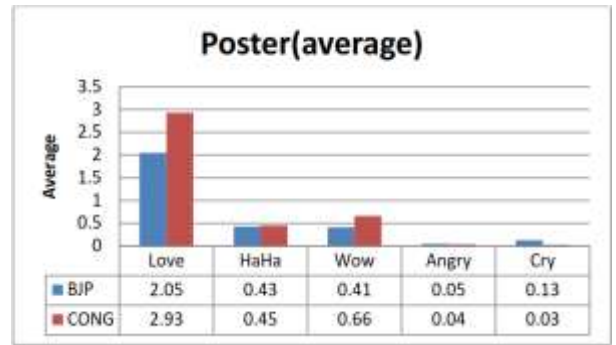
Table -2.1

Party	Likes	Love	HaHa	Wow	Angry	Cry	Comment	Share
BJP	231.60	2.05	0.43	0.41	0.05	0.13	6.24	26.18
CONG	537.23	2.93	0.45	0.66	0.04	0.03	7.14	32.86

In the above table means of different variables are calculated and according to the differences in the means of the variables following Graph is created:-



In the above graph means of the variables Likes, Comment & Share are compared as BJP has posted 169 poster and congress has posted 19 posters as the BJP has posted highest number of poster in comparison to congress but one thing is here is that Congress is Leading against BJP in Likes, Comment & Share.



Again in the above Graph we can see that congress is leading in the variables Love, Ha Ha & Wow and BJP is leading in Variables Angry, Cry.

**CONCLUSION**

Himachal Pradesh election, which took place on November 9, 2017, saw a record voter turnout of 74 per cent. In the elections BJP (Bhartiya janta Party) defeated the congress and won 44 seats in the assembly polls after an aggressive election campaign of 17 days. The results were declared on 18 December 2017. Social media (Facebook) played a great role in the election campaign as the BJP has posted maximum number of posts on its the official Facebook site of Himachal Pradesh as compared to congress Party. The previous government was of the congress party and the main power tussle was between Chief minister Virbhadra Singh and BJP's chief ministerial candidate Prem Kumar Dhumal. Exit polls have already predicted an easy victory of BJP over Congress in Himachal Pradesh. But as the data collected and analyzed in this research tells same thing but in different manner. From data we find that BJP has posted maximum number of posts which is 270 and at the same time congress has posted 112 posts of different categories set .Here the difference is 158. This difference shows that BJP was more active on facebook than Congress party.

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