

Political Rivalry through Internet: An Analysis of the Political Discourses between Rivals in India

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ABSTRACT

The world witnesses how Political parties in order to reach the public have been using various methods. The traditional methods of campaigning have either undergone drastic changes due to the impact of technology or they have become completely redundant. Traditional methods of campaigning like posters, rallies etc. was complimented by Radio advertisements of political parties in 1977 in India. On the Janata Party initiative broadcast time on Radio was provided to the rivals. For the first time in 1983 videos were used in Andhra Pradesh elections. In 1984 the Congress party sought the services of a professional advertising agency Rediffusion appointed by Rajiv Gandhi. By the 1991 General Elections, videos became the weapon of mass discourse. This era also witnessed the concept of populist measures being sought by using Cinema stars (personalities from the Hindi film industry) with or without party affiliations that campaigned for the political parties and became a source for crowd pulling in election rallies. The phenomenon appears strange as until then it was believed that political rallies were a forum where candidates could voice their opinion on debatable issues and attract the prospective voter by reasoning, logic and oratory skills. But such important occasions when shared with entertainment stars to attract the numbers of listeners show cases a lack of judgement in prudence or paucity of worthy dialogue on developmental issues as also a complete eccentricism to lure voters even on trivial grounds. Although studies on intelligence of voter's competence are few but it seemed, the political bigwigs actually thought it to be completely absent in India. In the recent years the internet has impacted all spheres of activity, including political campaigning. This paper is an attempt to scrutinise the websites of the two leading national political parties in India Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Indian National Congress (INC). The effort is to examine the presence of these political parties on the social media and how the parties are connecting with the public. Issues occurring in the calendar months between to April to June 2014 have been taken into consideration to compare and contrast the methods adopted by both the political parties in their communication strategies through the internet.

Keywords: *Political discourse, social network, Political communication, media*

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Introduction

One of the primary reasons that the Internet is so widely appealing to political candidates and political organizations is that this medium offers a source-controlled form of communication. Internet sites are much less expensive than advertisements. Furthermore, the expanse of the Internet offers candidates, citizens, and political groups unlimited space to articulate completely policy positions, biographical information, speech texts, press releases, and a variety of other important political information (Tedesco, Miller, & Spiker, 1999). An important reason that makes use of internet mandatory by political parties is also the involvement of Non-Resident Indian community in Indian Elections. With the initiative of Overseas citizenship of India as introduced during 2008, the Indian presence abroad can actually matter as they can seek employment and now inherit property in India which the Act specifies. Actually the term global village although cliché holds good when Indian community has to be managed for voting benefits and therein the internet appears handy, cheap and durable. A study conducted in 1996 demonstrates that the Internet contains the following inherent democratic values: (a) inherent interactivity; (b) potential for lateral and horizontal communication; (c) point-to point and non-hierarchical modes of communication; (d) low costs to users (once a user is set up); (e) rapidity as a communication medium; (f) lack of national or other boundaries; and (g) freedom from the intrusion and monitoring of government. (Barber et al., 1997, p. 8) Sparks (2001) (1997) included anonymity of social actors, discursive requirements, and search mechanisms as central advantages of the Internet. According to Sparks (2001), anonymity should be considered as an advantage because it removes otherwise repressive, socially identifiable criteria such as age, sex, race, and accent that might otherwise prejudice or exclude a participant's contribution to political dialogue. Although anonymity has been compromised when two girl students in India were arrested in 2012 when they questioned the total shut down of Mumbai on the occasion of the funeral of Bal Thakre Shiv Sena Supremo. Specifically, most sites succumbed to the Internet's innate obstacles for public participation and interaction, such as information overload, hierarchical structure, and passive, non interactive design (Barber et al., 1997). Although the Internet offers candidates and citizens tools for quality communication, extensive research, such as the Congress Online study, demonstrates that few political sites capitalize on the Internet's enhanced communication opportunities.

Historical Backdrop: The Indian Political Parties

India being the world's largest democracy has a multi-party system. There are three categories of political parties- national, state and regional or local.

There are as per the Election commission's website about 6 national parties, about 62 State parties about 1737 registered regional political parties in India. One of the first political parties to be formed in India is the Indian National Congress which was started in the year 1885 since then the party has enjoined prominent place in Indian politics. It is one of the largest political parties in India and has deep roots within the Indian rural community. The Bharatiya Janata Party was founded in the year 1980, earlier it was called as Bharatiya Jan Sangh. The other national political parties are Bahujan Samaj Party, Communist Party of India etc

The Bharatiya Janata Party established its website on 26 December 1995. In the year 1998 the BJP Campaign appeared on the internet. During the elections of 1998 interactive cable systems and internet were first used to influence the voter. Since then the presence of political parties on the internet has been phenomenal. The Congress established its website only on 28th February 2004. The Internet as against the traditional print and broadcast media is that its communication network offers ordinary citizens unrestricted access and ability to voice their political positions on various issues to a worldwide audience. The presence of political parties on the social media can be traced back to the 2008 elections of Barack Obama in the USA. Social media is a campaign tool like advertisement and is a critical component of any campaign toolkit. Politicians create interesting posts to try to engage their followers, similar to the factors used by any brand or media company. The social media posts are simple and easily created and shared. The posts are easily viewed by people due to compactness and simplicity compared to other things on the internet like e-mails and RSS feeds. Though the internet penetration in India is only 12%, the presence of political parties on the internet is on the rise. Advertising Online is like live promotion of political parties as it helps people to know about the history of the party, vision and their representatives in different areas of the country. A constant pictographic illustration of important members of a Political parties in a nation are an important Public Relations exercise and winning elections can depend on the PR system being practiced by the political system of a country.

Conceptual Framework

The Mass Society Theory proves that there is always a latent fear that harbours around the introduction of any new technology or media. The innovation also competes for space and attention from the traditional pre-existing media. When analysing internet in this backdrop it becomes clear that public spaces that it provides were initially seen as threatening the demarcation between privacy and public but soon the corporate and the politicians started filling the internet forum with advertising and Public Relations activity. Public

communication pertains to building public opinion that may mould fortunes of political parties in a vibrant democracy. Political campaigning has undergone drastic changes under the impact of technology. Political campaigning is no longer limited to only persuading the voters to vote for a particular candidate or party it is also about creating awareness among the public on various issues and over a period of time getting them involved in public opinion formations. The concept of marketing has also pervaded politics. The internet has provided a low-cost platform to the political parties to interact with the public. Internet can be used at anytime, for a variety of purposes and has no geographical barrier. The last two American Presidential elections stand witness to the potential of this new medium. Political parties and candidates are adapting to this medium at a rapid pace all over the world. Although the internet penetration in India is pegged at 12% all the major political parties have their website but are also present on the social media like Facebook, twitter etc. The social media offers a platform for short, crisp messages and comments from people; it can also be spread quickly without incurring any extra expense. When analysing the impact of this minute internet penetration on the larger public domain it is seen that on the lines of Paul Lazarsfeld *et al.* (1944), Two Step Flow Communication and multi step flow, the internet forms one of the many media vehicles to provide a forum of information to the opinion leaders that is the computer literate elite to realign political opinion of others based on his interpretations.

Review of Literature

The milestone modifications shaping political communication are in three stages. The first signifies a strong edifice of strong and stable political beliefs that form the ingredients of political communication. In the second stage, faced with fluctuating electorate the political parties modified their communications to the news formats of the multiple channel television. In the third stage, emerging media abundance reshaped political communication in five trends anti- elitist populism, a process of centrifugal diversification imperatives, increased competitive pressures and changes in how people receive politics. (Blumer & Kavang). The internet contributes in decline of civic life and this technology is primarily used for entertainment. The traditional method such as signing petition, participation in protest, marches rallies have declined over time. The effect of internet use on engagement is positive but it is not substantial, however online news produces substantial effect. (Boulianne.S.:2009). According to Gibson and Ward (2003), political parties use the internet in three ways: For administration: political parties go online to provide and manage information about themselves, their goals, manifestos, policy proposals and so on. Second, they use the internet for campaigning: to recruit new members and potential voters, to target specific

groups for example young people who will go online for information, to try set and agenda for election, bypassing the mass media, but also to retrieve information about visitors to the site, getting an indication of the kind of demographic who are interested in them. Third, political parties use the internet for internal organization: they canvass their members' views on certain topics, they can discuss policies, encourage donations, but also conduct e-ballots or referenda with users and/or members. There is an English cliché' out of sight, out of mind. Therefore internet websites ensure the snap shots of important personalities, national leaders and central leaders to decorate the web page. According to Luke March (2004) internet may be a vital force behind formation of voting behaviour in future. Malaysia since the late 1990s differentiates between news sites, information, blogs and social-networking sites such as the Facebook and Twitter. The new media spreads the news rapidly which can also shift focus of framing away from the state. The flow of information and news is unfiltered, constant and keeps growing. (Weiss: 2012).

The Korean election victory of 2002 was attributed to the wide use of internet and mobile phones medium in the campaign to communicate political information. The young people were to support Roh rather than Lee his opponent who used conservative newspaper media. The general election of May 2011 in Singapore's saw for the first time campaigning via social networking media like the Facebook and Twitter. Apart from this, the bloggers used the internet for other political debate and comment. The People's Action Party (PAP) lost the election which made the opposition gain the historical victory. It was quickly referred to as the "Internet Election" by the observers which implied that the media activism in the cyberspace had a great impact on the ballot. (Portmann: 2011).

Internet has its presence mainly in the urban centres as English language acts as a barrier for information reception. The internet is now being used as a supplement for broadcast and print media. Apart from the internet, cell phone and SMS are also used as a medium to transmit message. Twitter on the other hand has become important tool for steering debate. Facebook has become a medium to gain support for the common cause. In political communication role and effect of media depends on media type and transition stage. It is small and flexible media which play a role in the initial phase of political transition (Michaelsen: 2011).

The use of New Media is revolutionizing and redefining the pursuit of election campaigning due to its easy accessibility and reach. The Harris Poll survey polls of July and October 2007, polled 2,062 people in which it was revealed that 73% went online to access general news and 55% to get political information about candidates or upcoming campaigns which in turn would

help them decide whom to vote for. According to Markus Prior, the greater media choice that an individual gets when one is witnessing a plethora of web pages widens the gap in political knowledge and political action. Politically interested internet users are more inclined to reading blogs like Daily Kos, Huffington Post over newspaper sites and live television sites because they find the former more credible.

E-Campaigns

During the 2008 campaign, blogs had a crucial role to play as it was the first to convey a number of candidate stories. In fact, the term “e-campaign” was coined by Howard Dean, who pioneered the first presidential campaign weblog (now called blogs). E-campaigns helped in the decision making routines and information gathering from websites to learn more about the candidate. Tools like Technorati, search engines like LexisNexis can be used to see which candidate is generating attention from cyberspace particularly that trails the blog buzz. It was noticed that Democratic parties of Obama and Edward focused more on New Media blogs in opposition to the Republicans. What differentiate Paul’s website from the others was that he created a portal in which third party websites and visitors were encouraged to discuss and interact with blog content with the help of social media tools like Facebook, Stumble Upon, Digg and Del.icio.us. To evaluate the effectiveness of websites and to track down potential viewers, web traffic websites like Alexa, Compete, Quantcast etc were used. Alexa measures and analyses the approximate traffic for websites, Compete makes use of multiple data sources to estimate U.S traffic whereas Quantcast provides data on a Web site’s reach and rank and breaks down the site visitors by demographic and usage data. With the use of internet individuals can donate using the credit card quickly, something that the traditional media rarely offered. The top three democratic presidential candidates Clinton, Edwards and Obama raised more than \$28 in online donations within 6 months of 2007. YouTube created its own Election ’08 hub. Barack Obama and Ron Paul emerged as winner’s they made use of web videos more effectively. E-campaigning has emerged to be equally dynamic as the traditional campaigns. Analyses and capturing data can be devised quickly. Lack of innovation, less streaming videos, long websites and lack of social networking tools are the drawbacks of not getting more views. (Haynes A.A and Pitts B, 2009).

Political Campaigns in India

During the regime of Smt. Indira Gandhi by 1974 the Press became critical of the policies of the government. It was in her tenure that emergency was declared and the freedom of the Press was totally quashed in India. Internet

has made it impossible for governments to be able to completely block the media. Traditionally, the dependence was on news print and advertisement as tool of government to control press. In this period use of posters, hand outs, signs on walls were used as a major tool for campaign. During the early 80s Hindi as a national language grew in importance and size. It not only mobilized traditional Hindu base of middle class from small towns but also professionals and intellectuals. The political scenario of India changed with the Jai Prakash Narayan movement as also it threw faces like Mulayam Singh Yadav, Lalu Yadav Nitish kumar as future leaders who man the national third front alliance. After 1991 was the period of liberalization when many private and international broadcast player came into existence. A distinctive feature of this period was the "rath yatra" as a tool for campaign The All India radio and the was also under government control. AIR and Doordarshan was used for government propaganda .In the Southern part of India many broadcasting channel came into existence and were backed by political organisations. (Kiran Prasad: 2003). During the early 90s with the advent of TV satellite channels, there was a boom in electronic campaign. During the election of 1998 interactive cable system and internet were used to influence the voter. Apart from jingles, short films and slogan were made to catch the voter attention.

A study by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and IRIS Knowledge Foundation, has claimed that in 160 constituencies, Facebook could emerge as a tool which could influence people's voting choices in the 2014 elections.

Methodology

The websites of the two major national party of India-Indian National congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party was analysed. The websites were analysed for the kind of content, their navigation and user-friendliness. The Facebook accounts of these two parties was analysed for the month of April, May and June 2013 to see what were the kind of content that the leaders were posting and the kind of comments they received from people. In order to assess the popularity of the Facebook pages the maximum number of likes, maximum and minimum comments and maximum and minimum shares were taken into account. The various posts were categorised and put under broad themes and the broad themes of the posts were compared.

Analysis & Interpretations

Website Description

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP): The BJP web page uses the latest version of flash; therefore it does not take much time to open. The primary menu consists

of the following heads—Home, About BJP, our leadership, In parliament, Media resources, States, Internet TV and Donate. The primary menu in the form of drop downs has secondary menu and in certain cases the tertiary menu. In the Primary menu the first option is “About BJP” it has the history, philosophy and the vision document, manifesto and other related document to the party under it. The manifesto and related document also has a link which takes a visitor to the latest happenings in the party, press releases which are updated on a regular basis. It also contains thumbnails to “Kamak Sandesh” a magazine which is published both in Hindi and English. The mast head of the website contains two pictures- one of Shyama Prasad Mookherjee and the other of Deen Dayal.

The right corner contains the party symbol the lotus and the tagline of the party-“of the party with a difference”. The prominent colours used in the website are saffron, green and white. The upper left hand corner of the mast head contains link to social media such as Facebook, twitter, a link to video stringing site of YouTube. It also contains mobile applications such as android, blackberry and apple i5. Below the masthead is the link to join us, login and search. Below the mast head and primary navigation it contains five slide shows with photographs .On the left side of the photographs are five titles- good governance, cultural nationalism, development, Antyodaya and security. The space below is divided into three columns-current events, media resources and President’s office. It also contains thumbnails shots of narendra Modi and Amit Shah. The bottom of the page provides link to the image gallery, video gallery and special option to find representative to parliament and state assemblies of a particular area. At the bottom of this are the linkages About Us, Leadership, Media, Organisation and Website.

Under leadership the various sub-heads are Shri Atal Bihari Vajpeee, Shri L.K.Advani, Shri.Rajnath Singh, Past Presidents and Chief Ministers .All of these has vivid details about each of them. It has been constantly been updated. The media contains press releases, video releases, Photo gallery, video gallery and Kamal Sandesh. Under organisation it contains information about office bearers, National executive, Parliamentary Board, Election committee, State secretary. All these links are updated regularly. On the left hand of the page are links to speeches, kamal sandesh, yuvaTv and press releases on each of these pages. Under website are State units, State government sites, organisation fronts, National cells, and National office bearers. The state unit has websites listed of the most of the state units. Under the State government sites the links to governments in the BJP ruled states are there. The organisation fronts give the website link to Mahila Morcha, Yuva Morcha, S.C Morcha, S.T.Morcha and Kisan Morcha. The national cell contains the co-ordinator of various morcha and cells with their complete contact details .The national

office bearers has their name listed. All of the pages have links to Facebook and twitter as well as other options of emails, printing At the bottom of the page with copyright information, the address of the head office is mentioned.

Content Analysis

It has a rich literature on history of its founding leaders. It is a website which has been updated regularly both in terms of text, audio and video materials. The content is in English language and no other language options are available. The party magazine is available in both Hindi and English. The layout and architecture of the website is user-friendly and navigation is easy. Bjp.org is ranked #97,899 in the world according to the three-month Alexa traffic rankings. This site was created on 26 December, 1995. This site is relatively popular among users in the cities of Delhi (where it is ranked #6,273) and Ghaziabad (#9,158). Compared with the overall internet population, the site appeals more to men; its visitors also tend to consist of users aged under 25 and 35–45 who have postgraduate educations and have more children. Bjp.org has attained a traffic rank of 13,715 among users in India, where about 94% of its audience is located in India. BJP pages have been indexed by search engines numbering 16100 and the sites have linked to the sites number 792. The BJP has a mobile version and has google analytical tools. It has both Facebook and twitter presence.

Indian National Congress

Description of the Website

The INC website uses the latest version of Flash hence it opens fast. The mast head of the web page is in the tricolour of saffron, white and green with the photo of Mahatama Gandhi on the left and symbol of the congress party the palm on the right side. The palm is against a background of saffron, white and green in the shape of a diamond. In between the photo of Gandhi and the party symbol is written Indian National congress in capital letters with the tagline the "The largest democratic Party in the world". Below the mast head the primary menu is present against a light yellow background. The primary menu has Home, Rajiv Gandhi, Our President, Our Prime Minister, Office Bearers, Organization, Congress in Parliament, History, documents, congress ruled states and support congress. On clicking "Rajiv Gandhi" it takes to a page which has bio, speeches, Gallery photos, videos and in memory. All these have links to Facebook, twitter etc. Our president takes us to a page on Sonia Gandhi which has four photos of her as a slide show and it has on the left hand side other drop menu as bio, speeches, interviews, interactions, photos, videos, renunciation, reiteration, books, archives and the navigation

from each of these pages to get to the home page is very easy with the click of Back option. All the pages have links to Facebook, twitter etc. Our prime Minister this takes us to a page of the Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh-it has options for both Hindi and English and its content are managed by the prime minister's office. The other options on that page are speeches, photos, videos downloads, press releases and information. It is also links to Facebook and twitter as well as can be easily navigated back and forth it is also updated regularly. The primary menu of office bearers contains the details of the AICCC office bearers .the organisation has various secondary menu like congress working committee, central election authority, All India congress committee, central election committee, frontal organisation, congress in states, congress in parliament, leadership. The page opens with a photograph of Nehru and Gandhi and all the things of the secondary menu come on the left hand corner of the photo. The secondary menu on clicking takes to further details about the party like under All India congress committee it has office bearers, departments and cells, committees and other offices. Under frontal organisation it has details about National youth congress, National students Union of India, Indian National Trade Union congress, Mahilla congress, Seva Dal. Under our leadership it has congress president, Prime Minister, Shri Rahul Gandhi, Congress working committee, leadership in states, congress Parliamentary party. The primary menu congress in parliament has congress parliamentary party, members of Parliament in Lok Sabha, Members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha- it contains details about the members state-wise which is arranged in alphabetical order. The primary menu History when clicked goes to the page with a photo of Gandhi reading a book sitting in front of the Charkha and the various links on the left hand side of the page are - Timeline, Journry of a nation and the making of Indian Nation, Congress Session, Past Precedent, Our legacy of leaders, the national flag, Congress and the freedom movement, looking back at the battle of freedom, constructive programmes and the congress, Gandhian march to portal of freedom ,India's struggle to freedom: role of associated movements, Indian national army ,some prominent martyrs of Indians freedom struggle, Nehru 's statement at Allahabad trial, Gandhiji's statement at Ahmadabad trial, join India union movement of Hyderabad, role of press in India's struggle of freedom, congress and colonial struggles, British friends of India. The primary menu documents leads to a page containing the election manifesto and the other links are - constitution, election 2009, AICCC Documents, Archive documents, CPP DAOCUMENTS, CWC Documents, UPA Documents The congress ruled states takes us to the link, about the states in which the congress party is ruling. Support congress takes us to a page where one needs to fill in their details like e-mail id, postal address so that the congress could update people on various programmes and policies and also send them their magazine called

Sandesh. Below the primary menu is the photograph of Manmohan Singh, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, below which is a section of the speech of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi delivered at 83rd Parliamentary session of the congress in 2010 at Delhi. On the left side to the photographs is the complete address of the congress office as well as links to the website in Hindi and Urdu. Press briefings and links to Facebook, YouTube, congress sandesh Yuva desh (an online magazine of the Indian youth congress) NSUL, Indian youth congress and UPA government reports. Below the photographs are various speeches and documents related to the congress president on various occasions like the death anniversary or birthday celebrations. At the bottom of the page is the complete address with telephone and Fax numbers.

On analysis of the content of the INC website it can be seen that it contains all the information regarding the history of the party, about its past and present leader's, media sites such as Facebook can be connected from the secondary menu. The content is multilingual and the available language options are Hindi, Urdu and English. The party magazine is available in both Hindi Urdu and English. The layout and architecture of the website is user friendly and navigation is easy. As per the analysis of alexa.com which is used to analyse the websites. In 2014 the analysis of traffic on the websites of Indian national congress and bhartiya janta party is -aicc.org.in's three month global alexa traffic rank is 235959. Visitors to the site spend approximately 53 seconds on each page view and a total of three minutes on the site during each visit. aicc.org.in's visitors view 2.8 unique pages each day on average. The site has attained a traffic rank of 30683 among users in India, where we estimate that 80 % its audience is local .the congress pages have been indexed by search engines numbering 2100 and the sites have been linked to 792 sites. it has both a mobile version and Facebook presence but no twitter presence the site does not have any analytical tools.

Facebook Analysis of the Political Parties

The Facebook posts of the two parties were analysed for the month of APRIL MAY and JUNE 2014. Posts which were common have been broadly categorised .The maximum and minimum like comments have been noted in order to understand the popularity of the medium In the month of April the BJP Facebook had a total of twenty six posts .whereas the congress twenty one posts.

THE BJP posts were related to the following activities:- Gives link to press conference by prominent BJP leaders

- To engage people puts up questions.
- Educate people on important topics such as enrolment in voter name

- Posts picture of God

The congress posts were related to the following activities:-

- Campaign strategy and manifesto
- Promotes Rahul Gandhi / Sonia Gandhi
- Compare Congress and BJP.
- Highlights achievement of UPA government
- Share activities of congress in order to make people aware about what is going on in party
- Shares photo of event such as “birthday of prominent leaders”

On analysis of the response to the posts by people it can be seen that in case of BJP the number of posts were greater than that of the congress. The BJP with the posts is trying to promote the party and their leaders. They also have the photograph of a Hindu deity. In addition the BJP is trying to create awareness in the public on the right to vote .The congress forms the government and they are using posts to promote the work done by the party in power. They not only have posts related to Manmohan singh- the Prime Minister of India and Rahul Gandhi the future Prime Ministerial candidate but also their other leaders like Smt. Indira Gandhi and Mr Rajiv Gandhi. But on closer look it is seen that BJP is much more active than the congress.

APRIL 2014

Table 1
Response to the Facebook Posts in April Bjp Inc

	<i>INC</i>	<i>BJP</i>
Maximum Likes	1489	735793
Maximum Shares	2390	35670
Maximum Comments	457	11457
Minimum Likes	198	1356
Minimum shares	20	22
Minimum Comments	45	13

On analysis of table 1 it is seen that the number of likes on the BJP page for photo of (The hindu deity Hanuman –the Monkey God) is maximum (735793) whereas for the congress the maximum likes is for Mr Rahul Gandhi at a special session of the CII (1489). It is evident that the followers of BJP are led more by religion but are way ahead of the Congress followers on social media. The number for maximum share, comments on the BJP posts were far greater in number than the congress. In Minimum number of likes, comments

also the BJP number was greater than the congress. Not only in terms of the posts but also considering the number of users of these Facebook page very clearly that the presence of BJP on the Facebook is far greater than the Congress. The analysis clearly shows that the presence of BJP on the Facebook is far greater than the Congress.

May 2014

In the month of MAY 2014 the BJP had 81 posts and the congress had 25 post. THE BJP posts were related to the following activities:

- Status to support BJP in general election
- Gives link to press conference by prominent BJP leaders
- Encourages people to follow BJP leaders on other social network such as twitter
- To engage people puts up question
- Post link to create awareness among people on BJP's view on current problem/situation in the country.

The congress posts were related to the following activities:-

- Share photos
- Pay tributes to late leader Mr Rajiv Gandhi
- Promotes its policies and achievements
- Share views

The issues covered were very contemporary in nature. May is the Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary when he was assassinated at Sriperumbudur in TamilNadu. Congress needs to highlight the event in order to catch on the emotional value.

Table 2
Responses to the Facebook Posts in May

	<i>INC</i>	<i>BJP</i>
Maximum Likes	4870	21675
Maximum Shares	1067	30987
Maximum Comment	89	505
Minimum Likes	150	910
Minimum shares	15	95
Minimum Comment	2	10

On analysis of table 2 it is evident that BJP has more people following them on social media than the congress. The maximum number of likes, shares

and comments on the BJP far exceeds the number of the Congress. Though May is the month of Mr Rajiv Gandhi 's death anniversary photo –yet it did not get a overwhelming response . From the table it is clear that BJP has a greater following on Facebook than the congress.

June

In the month of June 2014 there were 27 posts by the BJP and the congress had seven. THE BJP posts were relates to the following activities:-

- Updates about latest happening in the party
- Political decisions
- Thank people for their support

The congress posts were related to the following activities:-

- Shares photos of national leaders
- Promotes congress in different social media
- Promotes Rahul Gandhi/ Sonia Gandhi

Table 3
Responses to the Facebook Posts in June

	<i>INC</i>	<i>BJP</i>
Maximum Likes	2258	789561
Maximum Shares	5894	687
Maximum Comment	5680	168
Minimum Likes	910	12
Minimum shares	17	11
Minimum Comment	4	1

Table 3 reveals that the use of facebook by BJP was way ahead of congress. It was the time when Narendra modi was appointed as the Prime Minister and the response in terms of the number of likes and comments was tremendous. The congress was grappling with a leadership crisis. On analysis of the Facebook posts of both BJP and congress it is seen that some topics are common in both the parties but the BJP was far ahead of the congress in terms of numbers of posts as wells as likes and comments from users of user media the BJP has been able to express potential of social media.

Conclusion

The internet is a multi faceted medium with various applications. Whether it is Facebook Twitter or even Whatsapp, all the software applications having a

quick response and reach. These applications have revolutionised and grown and are being used by organisations whether corporate, Political or even Non Government for a variety of purposes. One of the uses of new media has been political communication. In India the BJP just concluded 2014 elections showed a huge internet presence of voters and followers. Equipped with the latest versions in software technologies, the navigation has been made easier. But there is a vast difference in terms of content as well as the updating of websites. The BJP's website is updated regularly whereas the congress website has begun recently. The BJP has a surplus list of followers on social media. Mostly consisting of young educated and urban people who are computer literate. This differentiates the base of support for both the parties. In the light of the recent political developments in India it can be concluded that the internet and media has a big role to play in the promotion of Mr Narendra Modi on winning the Prime Ministerial post in General Elections of 2014.

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