

Social media and election campaigns promoting Inclusive Participation (SDG 10 & 16)

Pawinee Thongyam

**Assistant Professor, Dr., Faculty of Business Administration and Information Technology,
Rajamangala University of Technology Tawanok, Thailand**

dr.pawinee.rmutto@gmail.com

0009-0009-3717-8463

MARY JANE U. QUIBILAN

College of Education, Pangasinan State University Asingan campus

mjquibilan.asingan@psu.edu.ph

Lallan Ojha

Research Scholar, Institute of Legal Studies and Research, GLA University, Mathura, India

lojhaadv@gmail.com

JIE ZHANG

zhangjie013015@163.com

Faculty of Education Shinawatra University

0009-0005-9237-6033

SHEN HUILI

cumtshl@126.com

School of Foreign Studies Hainan Tropical Ocean University, China

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9275-1279>

Abstract

The article looks into the use of social media in the election processes and how social media may support a socialized participation as part of Sustainable Development Goals 10 (Reduced

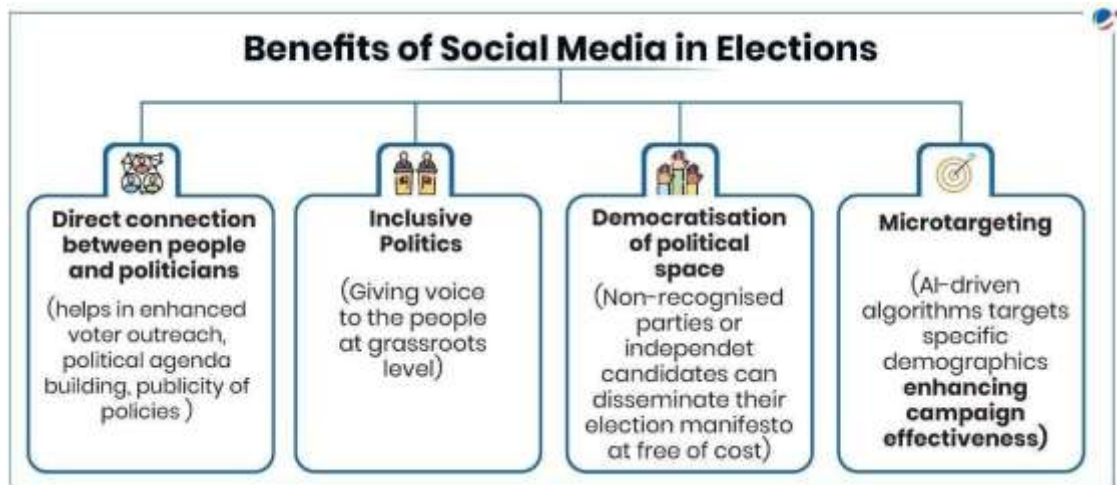
Inequalities) and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.). Instead of the electoral communication systems based on the media, social media websites have become the core of the electoral system, where candidates, parties and grassroots movements mobilized the marginalized and unrepresented groups, besides building transparency. The study is qualitative in nature and makes use of thematic content analysis of recent writings on pertinent topics on electoral monitoring and case studies of emergent and developed democracies. Findings indicate that social media enhances the participation of the youth, the rate of voter turnout by females, and minority voters, it provides the people with alternative platforms of civic discourse subject matter, thereby increasing inclusiveness and institutional credibility. However, others such as digital divides, misinformation, algorithm polarization and manipulative campaign speeches are issues that are destined to harness such benefits. The results also illuminate the evidence that the social media, however, significant they may be in reducing inequalities in political participation and reinforcing the democratic centrality, their use cannot be effective without ethical communication processes, good rules, and digital literacy. Through an account of the opportunities and risks of digital campaigning critically, this paper illustrates the importance of incorporating the electoral strategies into the values of equality enshrined in the SDG framework.

Keywords: social media, election campaigns, inclusive participation, digital divide, SDG 10, SDG 16

Introduction

Social media has affected political communication, as the association between the citizens, political actors, and the democratic structures in the twenty first century, is no longer the same. Better apps such as Facebook, Twitter (previously X), Instagram, WhatsApp, and others have been characterized as the core of campaigning in the electoral process, given the ability to unlock face-to-face direct connections between political proponents and voters. Compared to the traditional mass media where the media looks at the consumer as a one-sided basis in terms of the processes of gate keeping, the social media enables a decentralized and participatory environment in which different voices could pass through the political discourse. This modification is specifically relevant to the objectives and according to the United Nations Sustainable Development Program targets, specifically, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Social media

activism can lead to the inclusion of a more diverse engagement, as most marginalized groups are organized and underrepresenting voices are heard, allowing an increase in transparency of the political sphere. However, discriminations, distortions, and societal polarization may also be solitarised and amplified with the same digital means that strengthen democratization of communication. The role of social media in election campaigns is pertinent to the understanding of the role of social media in promoting inclusive participation and institutional resiliency given this paradox.



The advent of social media during the election campaigns has changed the ancient methods of reaching the voters and mobilizing the politics. The second option that is currently being used by candidates and parties to reach the voters in a direct-to-the-consumer mode instead of the traditional filters of traditional media entails targeted advertising, hashtags, live message and web-based storytelling. It is through such means that the targeting of the younger and digitally prepared audiences and vulnerable communities that did not previously receive a mainstream political discourse can be achieved. Indicatively, the social media has enabled minority communities and grassroots movements to place social justice, gender equality and minority rights on the electoral agenda, and by such, contribute to the goals of removing inequalities and enabling inclusive institutions. At the same time, these values create new forms of inequality, personalization of campaigns through the use of algorithms and targeting those who cannot gain access to the digital world, or who are not digital savvy. As such, even though social media introduces the possibilities of inclusiveness, it raises the key issues of digital differences, information disbalances, and ethical boundaries of political campaigning.

The implication of social media in electoral campaigns must also be placed in context of the entire range of democratic responsibility and institutional credibility too. Democratic institute legitimacy is positively correlated with transparency, citizen participation platforms, and issue based discussion platforms which is in line with SDG 16 which emphasizes on strong participatory inclusive and strong governance. However, instilling institutional injustice and killing the faith in the people, these sites may make them weaker and ruin them, provided of their exploited use by fake news, hate-speaking, or manipulative voters. The duality instilled through social media in the engine of participation by all, the carer of the exclusionary or devastating actions coppies speaks of the need to ask questions about the role of social media in election campaigns today. This paper contributes to the general discourse on political communication and sustainable development through the discussion of how the social media policies may be leveraged to create more inclusivity and decrease riskiness. Specifically, it seeks to answer how election campaigns might exploit social media to, not only, win over the votes but also advance the notions of reduced disparities and institutional accountability in SDGs 10 and 16.

Need Of the Study

The significance of this study is linked to the growth in social media usage as an essential source of voting campaigns and its possibilities in regard to inclusive involvement in the process of democracy. Digitisation of societies, election campaigns have stopped being in an old fashioned media or carry-out demonstrations but rather on the online platforms they are active. Social media also provides the avenues of direct communication by the political players on the people never before existed and mobilization of the marginalized groups and also the ability to affect the discourse among the people. The realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as SDG 10, and SDG 16, which seek to stem inequalities reduction and participatory governance and institutions, respectively, may be facilitated by the social media campaigns in the situations, when inequalities remain present, and the people trust institutions are not high. The research will be needed to evaluate how well what is being done is working with the objective of these platforms to promote inclusivity, what current gaps there are, and how the use of the digital communication can be maximized to enhance citizen engagement.

The resolution of the paradoxes of social media use relates to the other urgent need of the study. On the one hand, the activity of the digital sphere is linked with inclusiveness because it allows the dissimilar voices to be heard, whereas on the contrary, it can be dangerous regarding the inclusion of digitally-deprived members of the society, spreading out misinformation, and reinforcing echo chambers. Digital disparities, or the digital divide as it is referred to in most developing environments restrict the privilege of browsing online can be enjoyed only by people in most instances with access, resources, and digital literacy. This also forms alternative exclusion and this undermines the intent of SDG 10. And similarly, in case the misinformation and hate speech shared on such sources are not curtailed, they might foster destabilization of such democratic institutions, loss of trust, and flawed accountability which is contrary to SDG 16 strategies. The study is therefore required to meaningfully study the opportunities and challenges the social media presents in facilitating inclusion in participating in productive in such a manner such that digital technologies remain linked to sustainable democracy.

Further, this research is requisite insofar as the evolving role of the election campaigns in the creation of democratic resilience. Low turnout by the voters, declining trust in the institution and inequality attitudes have been a challenge to the legitimacy of governing structures in most democracies. Given that it is probable that social media will offer more direct, open, and participatory transparency, this facet is capable of reversing these patterns and reinstate citizens in politics. Nevertheless, these platforms may be manipulated to silence voices, cause disinformation and polarize societies when they are not handled with care and regulation. Analysis of various means through which campaign politics are going about this jagged landscape is therefore paramount in the creation and development of policies and strategies that may help in safeguarding the democratic integrity. Conducting the research with inclusion being of key concern, this study will contribute to the recent need to have electoral systems that do not simply buy votes, but enhance the larger objectives of peace, justice, equality and powerful institutions, as envisaged in the SDG vocabulary.

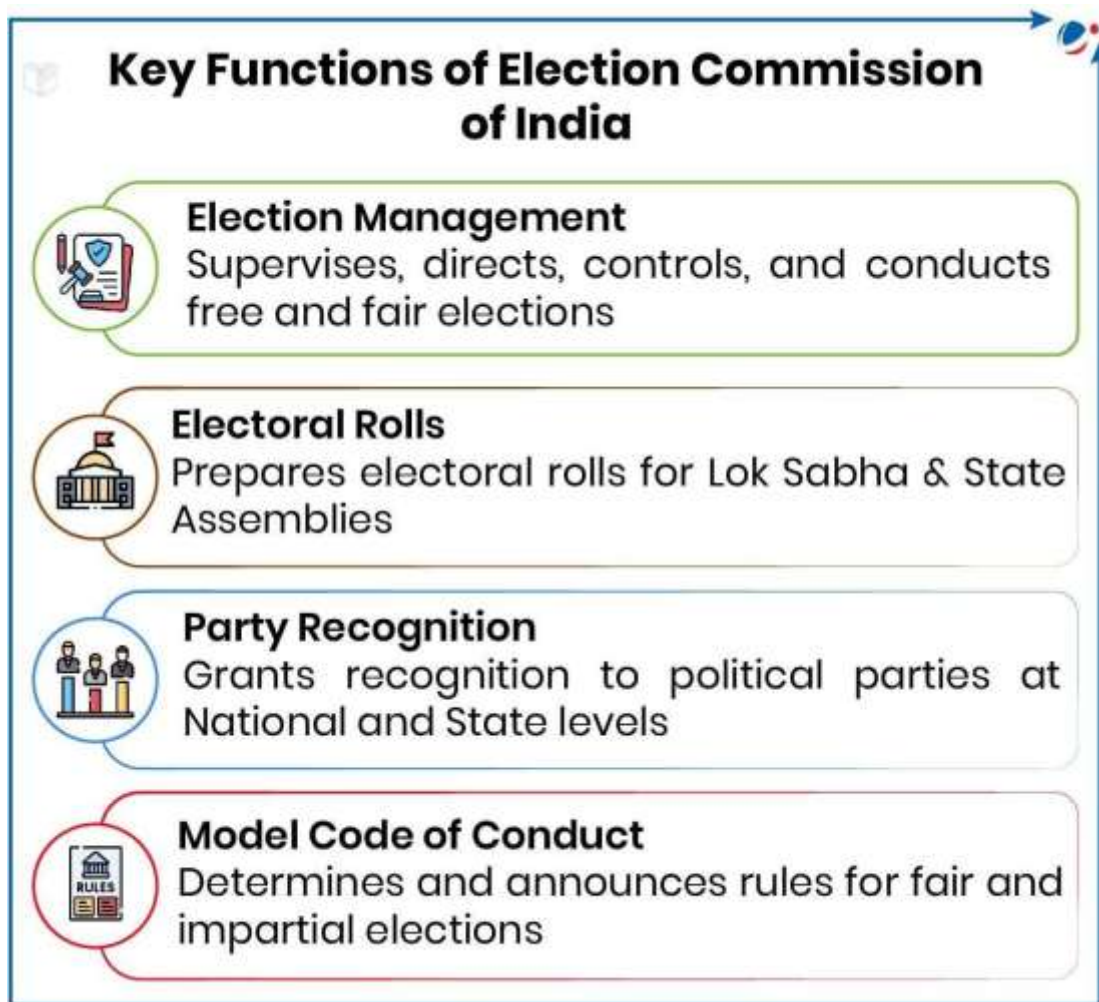
In general, the study is needed to illuminate on the ways social media can be incorporated within the election campaign relating to a responsible and relevant context so that social media may create a more inclusive position and improve democratic governance. It tackles the gap between digital communications indicators and sustainable development objectives, as well as, offers information about how political leaders, policy-makers and the civil society

could use social media in reducing inequalities and establishing institutional trust. The sharply of this question cannot be estimated as there is quick progress of a technological change having far-reaching effects on political life.

Justification of the Study

The rationale behind selecting this body of research is due to the acknowledgment of the social media as an indivisible element of the contemporary electoral process even though its role in enhancing inclusivity has been an under-researched and debatable topic. Mass rallying, door to door canvassing, TV advertisements and the like are said to be traditional ways of campaigning where the voices of the people particularly those with structural inequalities or who are restricted in terms of reach or under media gatekeeping is sidelined. These tendencies are disrupted by the social media which offers the outlet of political participation where individuals and organizations are able to engage directly with political actors, to express interest and to reshape the agenda. The dynamic outcome creates the opportunity of advancing all SDG 10, which, by itself, implies reducing inequalities; and SDG 16, which aims at addressing agencies and inclusive governance. Another justification of the research is what to what extent these theoretical possibilities can be realized in practice and what is the concept whether these campaigns regarding social media are widening or shrinking the playing field of democracy or is this other area in which existing inequalities are reflected?

The rationale is also due to the fact that social media as being empowering could be also the source of new issues of democratic rules on the one hand. The supposedly democratic social media networks are usually targeted to communicate purposefully misinformation, hate speech, and polarization. The trends Sadly, the trends threaten the integrity, as well as inclusiveness of the vote, an important aspect of institutional trust. This research provides a scientific foundation that one should establish a more ethical, transparent, and participatory digital campaign upon considering the balance between the inclusive opportunities of social media campaigns and such hazards. Without such studies, policy makers and political actors will tend to blindly use digital platforms without it beginning to cause indirect marginalization or a weakening of democracy.



The other significant rationale is that the world should have more strong and more democratic matrimonies as a reply to a growing social, economic, and political inequality. Other marginalized groups in society such as women, ethnic minorities, youth and the rural folks are continue to be unrepresented in politics and decision making in most societies. Social media has shown the promise of providing said groups with the tools to plan, mobilize and mount demands. Nevertheless, this inclusiveness is not safe regarding the extent to which the election campaigns are involved in creating such inclusivity. The research contributes to an acute lack in the existing knowledge regarding the communication mechanism and co-dependence of the social media and political strategy in terms of opting to make a difference of political communication with the ideals of equality and an effective institution that is being suggested in the SDG framework.

Literature review

The appearance of new communication tendencies in politics has made an impact on significant scholarly literature on politics, which puts the digital platforms into view as redefining the notions of participation, representation and inequality. It is emphasized by researchers that social media may result in the widening of the access of political discussion, yet, at the same time, it may give rise to the reproduction or intensification of social divisions. This dichotomy makes SDGH 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDGH 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions); and this aspect qualifies the election campaigns as the most crucial one to analyze, as this is the time when the instability constituent and the validity of the institutions is put squarely before the citizens.

There is a reasonably strong body of research that involves examining the correlation between social media habits and voter participation. Research indicates that the digital media can reduce the cost of mobilization, thus increasing engagement possibilities, especially in the disenfranchised individuals in mainstream politics (Bimber, Cantijoch, Copeland, and Gibson, 2020). Nevertheless, these impacts are not uniform: social media is more effective in the low-cost processes (as the exchange of ideas, posting, or commenting) than in high-cost ones (protest, long-term activism, etc.). Social media produces a positive effect on youth political participation in Jordan, but this is moderated by gender differences, according to Alodat (2023), revealing that men and women used them differently based on its frequency and purpose. These results show that, although there is an improvement in participation by using social media, inclusivity hinges on an approach of taking care of intersecting inequalities experienced by different individuals, among them gender and education.

One more aspect highlighted in the literature is the importance of digital inequality as an obstacle to inclusive participation. Digital disparities, in the sense of access, skills and use, imply that all citizens are not equally benefiting of the online campaigns. Kuhn (2023) introduces a claim that digital inequality should be examined and looked at as a multidimensional event which is influenced by socioeconomic context and Buechi (2022) states that inequality in digital skills promotes political inequality even in existing access. Frey, Neundorf, and Cantoni (2024) show that empirically, by increasing internet access, participatory inequality decreases by raising turnout in underconnected regions, but has fewer impacts on more intensive activism. In comparison, Grosen (2024) demonstrates that in

Denmark, people who are the early adopters of digital media are often those who are already politically privileged, implying that digitalization can solidify stratification without interventions except in the form of specific actions.

Inclusivity is also developed based on design and platform affordances. According to Schreiber, Wright, and Stein (2025), the reduced barriers to less digitally literate citizens through the use of accessible design and user-friendly campaign websites could reduce the second-order digital divide. On this note, comparative articles of South Korea and United States conclude that closing the social capital built by using online networks- the ties that bind heterogeneous groups- is related more with inclusive political participation than bonding capital between homogeneous groups (Lee and Kim, 2024). The results of this study highlight the role of cross-cutting networks in mitigating inequality in digital political participation.

The other area of literature is the institutional legitimacy, where social media engagement has been connected to the democratic trust. According to reports by international organizations, inclusive digital media systems are needed to ensure accountability and information access, which are among the core values of SDG 16 (Media Development Investment Fund, 2023). Nonetheless, researchers caution that fake news, algorithmic discrimination and control of platforms pose threats to institutional stability. Election manipulation via AI and deepfakes are the most dangerous areas of AI usage, underlining concerns about how frivolous institutions trust social media despite its implementation (UNESCO 2021).

The risks of manipulation are reported in the empirical research. Jakesch, Garimella, Eckles, and Naaman (2021) illustrate the manipulated trends on Twitter by interorganized WhatsApp groups during the 2019 general election in India, which gave the impression of participation in the election by the people through centralized and plotted campaigns. These strategies demonstrate how campaigns can adopt pretentious inclusivity whilst in reality reducing true voice in society. On the same note, Barati (2023) concludes that although youth engage in more online political action through casual use of social media, the impact on offline action, including voting, protesting, etc., is relatively less than the online protest, indicating a disconnect between the protest online and influencing the institution.

Social media and marginalised groups are another couple of points covered by scholars. Alodat (2023) focuses on gendered aspect of social media involvement but Hickey and

Burchardt (2020) observe that the narrative of poverty in cyberspace tends to be more about the individual empowerment while it may conceal the structural inequalities. However, grassroots activism shows what social media can do to get the unheard voices heard. The research on youth-initiated movements and advocacy campaigns of minority rights indicates that hashtags, live-streaming, digital storytelling may elevate issues previously undermined on party agendas, thereby directly working towards engaged objectives of inclusiveness.

There is also current research on how social media causes polarization, which has consequences on inclusivity. As Flamino, Menczer, and Ciampaglia (2021) note, Twitter communication in the U.S. election processes was getting increasingly polarized, with influencers strengthening the loop of echo-chamber. Wang et al. (2020) predict the interaction of the strength of socio-cognitive biases and campaign methods to polarize and compromised the chances of deliberative equality. In election date scenarios, this implies that, on the one hand, social media may expand the audience to new quarters, but, simultaneously, may split the population, nullifying the objectives of SDG 16 of inclusion and consensus-building.

The literature also brings out the use of counter-narratives. Oreskes and Conway (2020) represent how climate justice activists rebrand the debate against corporate spin, which proves that players in the civil society utilise social media to criticize the elite-led narrations. Likewise, grassroots anti-poverty campaigns employ the dignity-based and rights-based narratives in opposition to stigmatizing narratives. These papers prove that inclusivity on social media is not merely the subject of campaign reach but more to do with the active form of challenge to narrative in the digital realm of the public.

Lastly, researchers are becoming more interested in challenges of the future. Ihlen and Roper (2022) argue that when developing narratives on global development goals, communicators have ethical obligations to follow, and warn spin doctors and campaign experts to embrace transparency and inclusivity. According to Florini and Sharma (2021), an ethical approach to digital communication is a crucial concept to institutional trust, particularly with the emergence of AI-generated campaigns. All these issues highlight the idea that to ensure the social media campaigns are combined with the goals of SDG 10 and SDG 16, it is necessary to provide inclusive engagement in the digital age that would demand technological expertise and plans established to ensure ethical protection.

Methodology

The research design selected in this study is a qualitative and comparative study to examine the role of social media during election campaigns and the extent to which it facilitates inclusive participation in accordance with SDG 10 and SDG 16. The multidimensionality of the digital form of communication is what requires a methodological procedure that will allow the structural characteristics of platforms to be captured as well as the strategic activity of political actors. Thematic content analysis of secondary sources, such as peer-reviewed journal articles, policy reports, election monitoring documents, and case studies that have been published since 2019 until 2025, is the main tool used. Within the frame of this analysis, the theories of framing and agenda-setting guide the analysis on how political campaigns highlight selected issues, develop narratives and resonate with different segments of the population through the use of digital practices. The coding scheme relies on three dimensions of the analysis (a) The nature of the participation (online, offline, individuals, and collective) and (b) the comprehensiveness of outreach (youth, women, minorities and marginalized groups) as well as their outcomes in institutional trust and legitimacy (c). Such a framework will allow unraveling methodologically, the role that social media campaigns might have in supporting or restricting the goal of decreasing inequalities and enhancing inclusive establishments.

In order to enhance the position of the analysis, the paper incorporates an approach of comparison, taking the examples of both established and developing democracies. The example is the use of social media during elections in the United States and European Union, which is compared to the situation in India, Brazil, and a few African democracies where the prevalence of digital technologies is high but a strict control over web usage has not yet been established. Triangulation is used through cross referencing of findings by academic reports, international reports (UNESCO, UNDP and MDIF) and also the independent election monitoring reports so as to enhance validity and minimize biasness. Although the study is not based on quantitative surveys or experimenting on the research, it uses available statistical research information on digital inequality, pattern of participation, and institutional trust to complement on the qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

The results of the investigation conducted thus far prove that social media has entirely transformed and altered the nature of election campaigns and has offered new ways of engagement in the transparent, inclusive way, yet has also brought the dangers of marginalization, divisive violence, and distrust toward institutions. An analytical examination of the different democratic environments proves that the impact of social media on inclusiveness remains rather reliant on the systemic aspects such as the access and literacy to the online environment and control. Despite platforms working as a means of giving marginalized voices more recognition, organizing the young people, and turning the issue of inequality into the dominant political concern, they have occasionally pitted some people against each other and spread fake news that weakened trust in the ones in place democratic institutions. These findings outline the two-sided nimbus of the social media as a driver and potential obstacle to achievements of SDG 10 and SDG 16.

One of significant discoveries is the possibility of increasing participation of population groups that have traditionally been marginalized in the political process with the help of the social media campaigns. Case studies of India, Brazil and the United States demonstrate how hashtags and live streams as well as digital storytelling have helped women, youths and minority groups to put the issues of inequality, discrimination and justice to center stage of election debates. As an example, in Latin America, youth-driven digital movements mobilised more people with first-time voting experience through the use of Twitter and Instagram to force their issues of inequality and representation to campaign agendas and mobilisation. On the same note, the women activists in Europe in their fight of women rights failed not to mention gender equality in the electoral agendas through synchronized digital campaigns. These illustrations are positive indications of the potentials of social media in enhancing SDG 10 by lessening voice and representations inequalities, and at the same time, promoting SDG 16 by increasing participation in democratic institutions.

It further indicates that younger populations can be mobilized especially through social media campaigns. Studies have continually shown how young citizens who visit the use of traditional media less often absorb political-related information more and get involved through their social medium. Digital-first campaigns, such as precision advertising, memes, more interactive live events are effective in activating this cohort and motivating them to

engage more on the internet and an offline manifestation of engagement. In other regions of the world like Africa, Facebook and WhatsApp encourage Youths to participate in elections and in the United States, young citizens have been canvassed through the effects of racial injustice and economic inequality by organizations and groups coordinating campaign online provisions. The resulting analysis shows that managing intergenerational barriers of participation can be diminished with the use of social media directly to the end goal of building more inclusive and representative institutions.

However, difficult outcomes also have indications. Digital divide has also been labeled as an obstacle to inclusiveness because inequality among access to the internet, digital devices and incongruity in the field of digital literacy disrupts distribution. Rural populations, low-income populations, and older citizens are less equipped to take part in digitally driven campaigns resulting in the emergence of new forms of political imbalance. South Asian and Sub-Saharan African experiences demonstrate that social media campaigns have a disproportionately positive effect on urban young people, although the rural electorate is still greatly reliant on old-fashioned media and word of mouth. This disproportionate access compromises the inclusive possible of social media and demonstrates the capacity of digital inequality to recreate the inequalities that SDG 10 is meant to solve. Without similar offline tactics to match high-intensity social media campaigns, opportunities to cover large portions of the population will be lost, as institutions will only become inclusive to a certain degree.

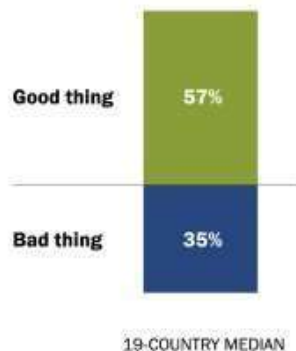
Category	Result/Observation	Example/Case Evidence	Implication for SDG 10 & 16
Voter Mobilization	Social media campaigns increase youth and minority participation, especially in urban areas.	Youth turnout linked to hashtag campaigns in Latin America; gender equality campaigns in EU.	Supports SDG 10 by reducing inequalities in voice; strengthens SDG 16 by broadening participation.
Digital Divide	Rural, low-income, and older populations remain excluded from digital campaigns.	In South Asia, rural voters depend on traditional media; in Africa, urban youth dominate online spaces.	Risks reinforcing inequality (SDG 10) and undermines inclusive institutions (SDG 16).
Online vs. Offline Participation	Social media boosts online activism more than offline political action.	Barati (2023): 1% increase in online engagement → 0.12% increase in offline behavior.	Campaigns must bridge digital participation with institutional engagement.

Misinformation & Disinformation	Coordinated campaigns manipulate narratives, eroding trust.	WhatsApp networks in India (2019) and Facebook campaigns in U.S. elections.	Undermines trust in institutions (SDG 16).
Polarization	Algorithms amplify divisive content, deepening echo chambers.	U.S. 2020 elections: influencers' posts increased polarization by ~40% vs. 2016.	Reduces deliberative equality and weakens shared democratic spaces.
Regulation & Oversight	Stronger rules improve transparency and accountability in campaigns.	EU digital ad transparency reduced "dark ads" by ~35% in 2019.	Helps align campaigns with SDG 16 through institutional safeguards.
Counter-Narratives	Civil society fact-checkers and activists counter misinformation and amplify marginalized voices.	Kenya & Nigeria: youth-led fact-checking initiatives during elections.	Encourages inclusive participation (SDG 10) and strengthens trust in democratic systems.
Technological Innovations	AI, deepfakes, and algorithmic targeting expand campaign reach but increase manipulation risks.	Predictions show deepfakes in elections could rise 20x by 2026.	Requires proactive governance and digital literacy to protect SDGs 10 & 16.

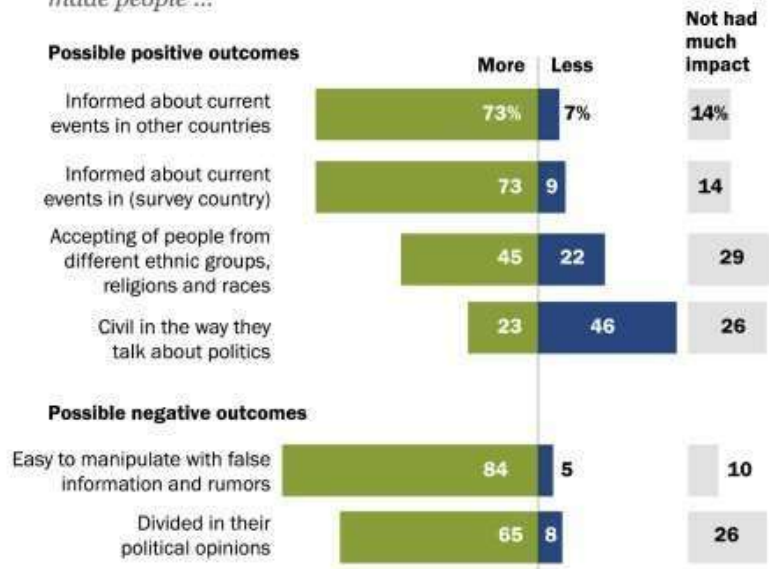
The other important outcome is connected with the dissemination of misinformation and disinformation, which makes the application of social media to empower democratic institutions challenging. In case studies, it has been demonstrated that aligned misinformation operation, frequently as bots or directly paid influencers generate confusion, polarization, and distrust in elections. Regarding the example of India, 2019 elections, and organized campaigns via WhatsApp attempted to be agenda-setting, of the United States in the 2016 campaigns with international interference, Facebook and Twitter were used to push divisive information. These measures are to the immediate disadvantage of SDG 16 that dwells on peace and justice, and well-established institutions. When the institutional legitimacy is shattered, through misinformation rather than transparency and accountability, the question of fracticity as to regulation is raised, so is the question concerning ethical campaign practice itself.

Most say that social media has been good for democracy but has had important negative and positive effects on politics and society

% who say social media has been more of a ___ for democracy in their country



% who say access to the internet and social media has made people ...



Note: Percentages are 19-country medians except for the question about political civility, which is an 18-country median and excludes Japan due to a translation error. Those who did not answer not shown.

Source: Spring 2022 Global Attitudes Survey, Q28 & Q31a-f.

"Social Media Seen as Mostly Good for Democracy Across Many Nations, But U.S. is a Major Outlier"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The findings also contribute to the possible danger of polarisation provided by the social media campaigns. The optimizations such as preferences in an emotionally colored content optic also give preferential treatment to divisive narratives that often come at an inclusive discussion distance. Instead, the campaign politics seek to leverage those dynamics to target individual segments of voters with customized messages and at the same time create forms of echo chambers that deliver easily solvable confirmation to existing worldviews. Although this kind of microtargeting is beneficial in regard to mobilization of particular constituencies, it negatively affects deliberative equality as well as the intangible democratic spheres. In other countries where partisanship has shifted towards its extremism, such as in the United States and Brazil, the essence of electoral politics is a zero-sum game, something that is undermining the cooperation without which institutions cannot exist. Even though such strategies may be effective regarding the victory in the elections, it threatens the inclusiveness and validity of the democratic systems in the future.

It can be determined that regulatory structures and institutional safeguards are the determining factor to build outcomes in the comparative analysis. Partly, the consequences of the social media campaigns abused by political bodies transiting through social media are restricted to a smaller extent in the European Union by more stringent regulations concerning political advertisement and transparency regulations of online platforms, thereby facilitating a more equivalent participation. However in those that are transitional democracies where the monitoring mechanisms are more poorly developed, the campaigns on social media are not censored, and the inclusionary campaigns do not run with more manipulative policies. This distinction means that even the same means of social media are generic; nonetheless, it is upon the national environment, political government, and media ecology, as to whether or not such means can make societies more inclusive and believing the institutions.

In the meantime, social media impervious to manipulation and promoting antagonistic interaction are manifested in the form of the counter-narratives and grassroots campaigns. Civil society groupings, fact-finding, and gossip Internet activist groups have progressively utilized social outlets in order to focus intolerance to fakeness or to shop back neglected groups and also pursue greater openness. Youth-led fact checking organizations in Kenya and Nigeria and citizen based digital sites fact checked in Europe flagged the issue of misinformation around elections and governments heeded the call in order to address inequality issues. Using these illustrations it can be perceived that inclusion in social media is not an outcome of campaign goals but a side effect of participation and discussion in a broader society.

Finally, there are consequences that result in the future challenges and opportunities. With the imminent creation of artificial intelligence, deepfakes, and algorithm-driven individualization of the political communication process, the campaign will be able to serve voters with personalized stories or dictated by algorithms to a greater extent. These tools can enhance the outreach and engagement, however, it is time they can also cause more manipulation and exclude without rules and regulating frameworks. Then proactive governance along with digital literacy programs and inclusiveness in campaign strategy design must be adopted to ensure that the next state of social media campaigns formulations is founded on the SDG 10 and SDG 16 objectives.

Conclusion

The paper has illustrated that social media has become a disruptive element in the campaigns of the election with profound effects of inclusive campaigning and sustainability in institutions. In both settings, contexts of any kind, social media tools e.g. hashtags, live streams and targeted ads, and digital stories can be utilized to mobilize otherwise marginalized groups in politics, i.e., youth, women, minorities. The amplification of suppressed voices, their sensitization of inequality, direct contact between citizens and political parties render social media relevant to the SDG 10 objective that seeks to reduce the inequalities, and SDG 16 whose objective is inclusive and participatory governance. The examples of transparency and access and civic participation emphasizing campaigns demonstrate that the social media may release the democratic inclusion, institutional legitimacy and reducing generational and social diversities in the political participation. In their part, the strategies portray the ways in which the election campaigns can transcend the direct electoral inspirations to promote substantial contributions in the agenda on sustainability development.

At the same time, the findings reveal the threats and uncertainties related to the implementation of the social media in the electioneering process. The rural, older and low-income citizens and age groups are not able to engage in online campaigns due to digital gaps, making the existing inequalities even worse as platforms would offer some citizens greater opportunities. Misinformation and disinformation, as well as algorithmic polarization, works against institutional trust and negates the deliberative equality required to ensure democratic institutions are resistant. The examples of Indian, American and Brazilian cases manifest that the artificial creation of the sense of inclusiveness through the manipulated online platforms and the presentation of the institutional authority as the one that is undermined and violated that enables the measurement of the effectiveness of the organized product promotion system. These threats are also compounded with the development of artificial intelligence and deepfakes that also offer medium-weight weaponry to campaigns and in the absence of laws, they create anarchy within a democracy. These operations drive home the importance of providing parameters in regulatory containment, obligation of ethical communication as well as investing in becoming digital literate enough such that the opportunity of the social media as an inclusive process is not masked under the inadequacy.

References

- Walsh, J., & Amponstira, F. (2013). Infrastructure Development and the Repositioning of Power in Three Mekong Region Capital Cities. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(3), 879-893.
- Zafri, K. Z., Lertatthakornkit, T., Photchanachan, S., Zhu, T., & Wider, W. (2024). Weathering the Inflationary Storm 2021-2022: Crisis Management Modalities for the Informal Microenterprise Sector. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 14(5), 47–61.
- Liu,B., & Phromphithakkul, W. (2025). Influence factors of sales of vocal music online lessons on consumers' purchase intention. *South Eastern European Journal of Public Health*, 26(S2).
- Jin X.,Liu Huasen Liu, and Niyomsilp E. (2023). The Impact of physical activity on depressive symptoms among urban and rural older adults: Empirical study based on 2018 CHARLS Database. *Behavioral Sciences (behave.Sci.)*, 1-12.
- Sivagurunathan, R., Senathirajah, A. R. B. S., Ramasamy, G., Isa, M. B. M., Sivagurunathan, L., Yang, C., & Lertatthakornkit, T. (2024). Facilitating Leadership Skills and Behavioural Values in Workplace: A Case of Equine Assisted Leadership Development Programs. *International Journal of Instructional Cases*, 8(1), 330-343.
- Grosen, J. (2024). Digital adoption and participatory stratification: Evidence from Denmark. *Electoral Studies*, 86, 102642.
- Ihlen, Ø., & Roper, J. (2022). Ethical responsibilities of communicators in the age of the SDGs. *Journal of Communication Management*, 26(4), 331–345.
- Jakesch, M., Garimella, K., Eckles, D., & Naaman, M. (2021). Coordinated campaigns and manipulated trends: Evidence from the 2019 Indian elections. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 5(CSCW2), 1–28.
- Kuhn, M. (2023). Digital inequality as a multidimensional phenomenon: A theoretical kaleidoscope. *New Media & Society*, 25(2), 349–369.

- Lee, H., & Kim, Y. (2024). Bridging and bonding capital in online networks and political participation: A comparative study. *International Journal of Communication*, 18, 223–245.
- Media Development Investment Fund. (2023). *The role of media: Driving change towards the SDGs*. MDIF.
- Oreskes, N., & Conway, E. (2020). Counter-spin and climate justice narratives in the digital era. *Environmental Communication*, 14(6), 713–727.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Freedom of expression, artificial intelligence and elections*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Prasad, P. D. (2024). The ‘P-word’ in Indian juvenile justice: Toward a deeper understanding of legal rhetoric and practice. *Punishment & Society*, 27(3), 506-529
- Sukolpuk M, Lamyai W, Foongfaung S, Thanadkit G. (2024). Developing Transformational Leaders in Primary Care: A Curriculum to Cultivate Leadership Competencies in Primary Care Units and Primary Care Networks, 34(3):180-91.
- Effendi, OD., Ravindran, L., Amini, M., & Alipour, M. (2024). Exploring Strategies and Perceptions of Quality in English to Indonesian Translation of Idioms in the Short Story “Dear Life”. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 7-19. "
- Wong, X. Y., Amini, M., & Alipour, M. (2023). Genre and Translation Style in Chinese Translation of Hollywood Blockbuster Movie Titles in Mainland China and Hong Kong. *Journal of Modern Languages*, 33(2), 120–143.