An Explorative Study of Social Media's Effect on Family Feuds and Voting Behavior

Ranjeet Kaur and Sneha Sengupta
The Bhopal School of Social Sciences, India

1 INTRODUCTION

The world has witnessed advancement in a plethora of fields, the foremost being 'technology' which is reigning the human mind, by and large. The dissemination of information is not just propagated through a single channel rather the networking has gone strong and beyond. Nowadays, data is at your fingertips, social media which acts as the instant messenger is brimming with content captured from multiple fields. People are not dependent on print media alone, or waiting for news at 9 to glance through the current affairs. For instance, every second notification which pops up on the device delivers information on variegated political issues within the spur of the moment. People have become spontaneous in terms of reacting to a specific news and changing their mindset according to the information planted in their minds. Nonetheless, the only concerning factor is the probability when misleading and false/ unverified information with no background or reliability check is circulated through different mediums by the masses. People are prone to accept the information without verifying the facts which in turn can bring a multihued and perplexed mixture of opinions and recommendations on the table. Drop of the hat, this often leads to disagreements in the family and among peer members. When information is perceived differently by each individual, it tends to create a gap between individuals and groups.

2 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H1- Social Media and news channels have significant influence on family feud.

H2- Artificial Intelligence does lead to family feuds.

H3- Social Media and news channels do impact the voting behavior of individuals.

H4- Artificial Intelligence impacts the voting behavior of individuals.

H5- Party Politics use Social Media to influence voting behavior during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1 Research Methodology

The exploratory research study incorporated a non-probability convenient sampling technique for collecting the data through a questionnaire. It applied the measurement using a 5-point Likert Scale and assembled using Google Forms. The questionnaire was circulated and conferred to the known group of

beneficiaries, friends and acquaintances in Indian States, including Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka and West Bengal. The questionnaire primarily targeted the audience who were eligible to cast their vote in India. The form minted 142 responses from different age groups (18 and above).

The sample size for the exploratory research was ascertained using Raosoft Software. The sample size calculated by the software was 104. Jamovi Software has been used for further exploration, enhancement, calculation and analysis of data. The reliability (N-142) falls under the ideal reliability range of 0.708. This clearly indicates that the questionnaire survey is admissible for further scope of study.

Table 1: Social media platform preferences..

Social Media Platform	Percentage	Number of Responses
Print Media	2.1%	3
Digital Media	48.6%	69
Both	49.3%	70

Table 2: Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Human Behaviour.

Variables (AI1- AI5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
My political ideologies are influenced by social media and news channels.	3.62	0.857
AI has changed my family's perspective too.	3.51	0.951
I referred to AI during lockdown for quick access to information	4.17	0.790
AI is not wholly neutral in decision making.	3.83	0.808
AI could take control of my mental processes.	3.25	1.216

Table 3: Chances of Family Feud while watching News.

Variables (FF1- FF5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
My hours of watching new channels increased during pandemic times.	3.77	1.11
My family's political opinion often matches mine.	3.27	1.02
Due to political differences, feuds are common in my family.	2.81	1.21
Creates a communication gap between the family members.	2.88	1.29
Sometimes, it leads to an unsettled family environment.	2.73	1.23

Table 4: Influence of Social Media on Voting Behaviour.

Variables (VB1- VB5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Media campaigns develop my inclination towards a political party.	3.40	0.946
My family's voting behaviour is influenced by these campaigns.	3.14	1.095

I followed comments/ tweets of a leader, especially during lockdown.	3.08	1.179
I rely on social media to derive information about a political party.	3.32	1.170
Misleading information on social media diverts voting choice.	3.99	1.017

Table 5: Party Politics and Social Media during COVID-19 Pandemic.

Variables (PP1- PP5)	Mean	Standard Deviation
During the pandemic, I only shared news with prior verification.	3.71	0.950
Social Media offered an exposure to understand party politics during lockdown.	3.81	0.798
I generally promote content which fulfills my political preference.	3.24	1.017
I analyse the news with a balanced approach.	3.92	0.817
Social Media has been a game changer for political parties during elections.	4.20	0.774

Table 6: Hypothesis tested are supported in the analysis.

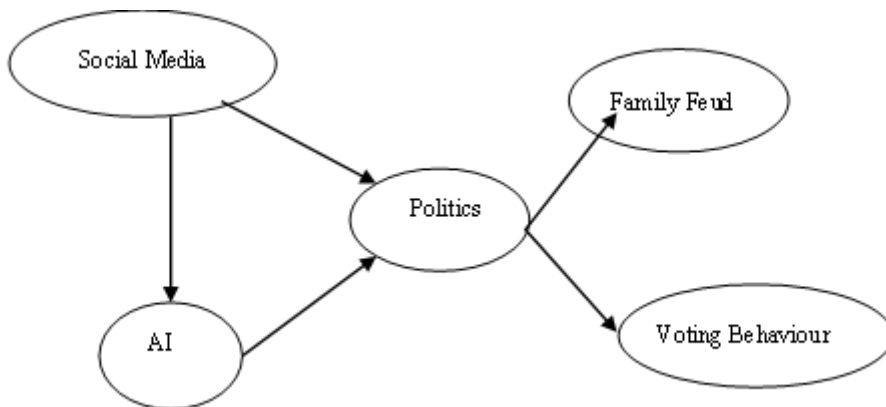| Hypothesis	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Accepted/ Rejected
H1	SM	FF	Accepted
H2	AI	FF	Accepted
H3	SM	VB	Accepted
H4	AI	VB	Accepted
H5	PP	VB	Accepted

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the research; Social Media, Artificial Intelligence and Politics are the independent variables whereas Family Feud and Voting Behaviour are the dependent variables.

2.2 Demographic Output

The questionnaire was a close-ended sampling space to collect responses from people considered from the age group of 18 to 50 and above. The demographic details post collection of the responses showed 67.8% females (96 responses) and 32.4% males (46 responses). Majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 18-30 years i.e. 86.86% (123 responses), next in line was the age group of 50 and above which accounted for 6.3% (9 responses). Thereafter, the least responses were observed in the age category of 31-40 and 41-50 respectively for which the percentage was equitably noted to be 3.5% (5 responses).

Amidst the given responses, 64.6% (93 responses) of the population belonged to the Nuclear setup while 35.4% (51 responses) belonged to the Joint Family setup.

2.3 Analysis and Interpretation

This explorative study involves the analysis of four distinct variables namely- Artificial Intelligence (AI1-AI5), Family Feuds (FF1-FF5), Voting Behaviour (VB1-VB5) and Party Politics (PP1-PP5). For each variable five constructs were developed and thereafter the mean scores and deviation were ascertained.

I generally promote content which fulfills my political preference. 3.24   1.017
I analyse the news with a balanced approach.   3.92   0.817
Social Media has been a game changer for political parties during elections.   4.20   0.774

3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research study has tried to explore the influence of social media on family feuds and voting behavior. Social Media and Artificial Intelligence were introduced as the independent variables laying direct effect on voting behavior of an individual and circumscribing family feuds. Politics/ Party Politics plays a dual meditating role between family feuds and voting behavior.

In the yesteryears, when news was merely a stipulated bulletin, it wasn't everyone's cup of tea to track the immediate instances and agenda of each political party. However, with the advancement of private news channels, it has become easier to gauge the political framework at large. Political branding and promotion have also become frequent. The fiery political debates are not just limited to the panels of the newsroom but are also reciprocated within the domestic settings leading to disagreements in the family. Fake and paid news, lower quality journalism make media just a lapdog of political parties.

Awareness is crucial. Fact-checking platforms must be funded and endorsed by government agencies to realize the void created through waves of misinformation. Moreover, the Election Commission of India ensures to display authenticated data for the candidate whose nomination is filed for the given constituency. This will in turn help the voters to gauge their political decisions and choose the right candidate for the given post. Hands-on exposure must be introduced from the early stage in schools and colleges by establishing induction programmes, certificate courses and awareness drives for the young minds which will help to cipher the voting process, study the voting manifestos and choose the ideal candidate as per their discretion.

REFERENCES

Pantic, I., & Damjanovic, A. (2012). Social networking and family conflict. The Journal of Family Psychology, 26(5), 726–733.

Moqbel, M., & Neimeh, M. (2019). The Role of Social Media in Family Conflict: A Study on Jordanian Families. International Journal of Business and Management, 14(4), 16–26.

Brooks, S. K., et al.. (2020). 395(10227), 912–920.

Goldfarb, A., & Tucker, C. (2020). Digital Social Distancing: Social Media and the Fight Against COVID-19. Journal of Public Economics, 189, 104244.

Agarwal, A. (2020). Fake news, hate speech and social media abuse in India. Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, 15(2), 149-159.

Chaturvedi, A., & Mukherjee, S. (2019). Role of social media in influencing voting behaviour in India. Journal of Political Marketing, 18(3), 307-324.

Kumar, A., Kothari, S., & Shukla, V. (2018). Influence of social media on voting behavior: A study of Indian youth. International Journal of Emerging Research in Management and Technology, 7(6), 97-103.

Kendall, C. (2017). Political ideologies: An introduction. Routledge.

Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. Business Horizons, 53(1), 59-68.

Livingstone, S., Ólafsson, K., & Staksrud, E. (2020). Social media regulation in Europe: A comparative analysis. Journal of Children and Media, 14(4), 400-411.