



## **Shaping The Youth Vote: The Influence of Microtargeting and Personalized Ads In India's 2024 Digital Election Campaigns**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Digital election campaigns emerged as a dominant tool for reaching voters in the 2024 Indian General Elections. This marked a significant shift in political campaigning, as both the major parties of India, such as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress (INC), spent crores on digital campaigns. The BJP spent more than three times as much as its rival, the INC, on digital campaigns to ensure visibility and reach out to voters. Based on this observation, this study examines whether digital campaigns, particularly those involving microtargeting and personalized content, have a significant impact on voting behavior, candidate perception, voting decision, and political engagement among young voters in India. To this end, 300 students between the ages of 18 and 25 were selected through stratified sampling to participate in a quantitative survey. The questionnaire was designed to identify whether digital campaign strategies, such as microtargeting and personalized ads, influenced voters' behavior and decisions, as well as shaping their perception of the candidates. The analysis of the responses indicates a positive correlation between exposure to digital campaigns and voting behavior among the study participants. The responses also reveal a correlation between personalized ads and political perceptions, candidate preferences, and the likelihood of voting.

While digital campaigns increase political participation, awareness, and influence voting behavior, there are also ethical concerns, such as data privacy and voter manipulation, that this paper highlights. The findings underscore the need for more transparent, regulated digital political practices to safeguard democratic integrity in India's evolving electoral landscape.

**Keywords:** Digital campaigns, Microtargeting, Personalized Ads, Voting Behavior, Political Communication, social media, Electoral Influence, Young Voters.

### **1. Introduction**

The months leading up to the 2024 General Elections in India saw a significant transformation in the political campaign, particularly in digital media. Digital platforms were flooded with digital campaigns, microtargeting, and personalized ads. Understandably, the political parties leveraged the digital platform's vast outreach, as most of the young people and mobile users are also active on social media. Ever since Barack Obama, the Democratic Party of the United States' candidate, set the trend of using digital media to reach undecided voters in the 2008 election campaign (Johnson & Perlmutter, 2011), there has been a significant rise in the use of digital media to target voters. In the 2016 election campaign, both Donald Trump, the Republican candidate, and Hilary Clinton, the Democratic candidate, employed digital campaigns to reach out to their supporters and influence undecided voters (Chadwick, 2017).

According to reports, Trump’s digital campaign received approximately 1 billion ad impressions in August 2016 alone, while Hillary Clinton’s received 601 million impressions during the same period (The Washington Post, 2016).

Building upon these trends, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Indian National Congress (INC) the two big political parties of India leveraged digital campaigns to influence voters. BJP and their allies (NDA) spent more than ₹116 crore on Google advertisements between January and May 2024. They deployed over 184,000 ads in video and image formats (The Quint, 2024). However, the INC and their allies (I.N.D.I.A. Bloc) invested ₹45 crore during the same period. It is interesting to note that the BJP’s digital strategy centred around microtargeting on digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube. The ads were personalized based on demographics such as age, gender, and location. They had 32 to 35 times more unique ad identifiers on these platforms than the Congress party (Mint, 2024).

The impact of these digital strategies on voter engagement was substantial. According to the You Gov survey, 76% of urban Indian voters received political advertisements on various digital platforms during the election period, with a majority of these ads related to the BJP (The Wire, 2024). This data shows how prevalent the digital campaigns were during the 2024 general elections and how the political parties employed them to influence voters. These digital campaigns make use of data analytics and microtargeting techniques, leveraging data from social media platforms to deliver personalized messages to specific voter segments.

In the months leading to the general elections (from January to May 2024), the BJP spent more than ₹100 crore on digital campaigns, including Google advertisements (India Today, 2024b). It spent more than ₹37 crores on Meta platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, significantly outpacing the Congress and allies (India Today, 2024a). The number of Google Ads was more than 107,000. Of these, 76.8% were video ads and the remaining 23.2% were images (Storyboard18, 2024). BJP included advanced microtargeting and personalized ads in their digital campaign, using 32–35 times more unique ad identifiers on Meta than the Congress party (Mint, 2024). Moreover, the BJP leveraged Artificial Intelligence to translate Prime Minister Modi’s speeches into regional languages and circulating these onto digital platform for regional users (Business Standard, 2024).

The Congress party spent ₹16.07 crore on Google ads, publishing 3,062 ads during the same period (Storyboard18, 2024). The Congress party spent around ₹10.8 crore on Meta platforms (India Today, 2024a). They too focused primarily on video ads. The INC’s use of unique ad identifiers on Meta was significantly lower than the BJP (Mint, 2024).

**Table 1: Summary of Ad Spendings**

Party	Google Ad Spend (₹ Crore)	Meta Ad Spend (₹ Crore)	Total Ads on Google	Video Ad Percentage (Google/YouTube)	Unique Ads on Meta	Notable Strategies
<b>BJP</b>	100	37	107,000+	76.8%	32–35x more than INC	Influencer campaigns



INC	16.07	10.8	3,062	Mostly video ads	Significantly fewer than BJP	Crowdfunding campaigns
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### 1.1 Research Problem

It is essential to highlight that the study examines how specific digital campaign strategies, such as microtargeting and personalized content, impacted the voting behavior of university and college students in India, particularly during the 2024 elections. By focusing on young, digitally engaged voters, this study can offer insights into how political campaigns in India are evolving in the digital age. This demographic is particularly significant since they are highly active on social media and other digital platforms, which makes them more susceptible to online campaign strategies. Highlighting the role of these platforms in shaping political preferences and vote choices would underscore the importance of this research in understanding the future of Indian elections. Moreover, the results could inform political parties, policymakers, and campaign managers about the efficacy of digital campaign strategies, thus making this study an important contribution to both political communication and electoral studies.

### 1.2 Research Gap

Currently, much of the literature on digital campaigns and their effects on voter behavior focuses on Western democracies, where political campaigns have been digital for a longer time. This necessitates a study in the Indian context, especially to examine the role of digital campaigns, including microtargeting and personalized content, in influencing voting behavior. The country's unique political and demographic landscape presents a fertile ground for exploration. The research gap becomes even more pronounced when considering how these digital strategies may interact with the cultural, social, and economic diversity of the Indian electorate, particularly among the younger, more tech-savvy population. Focusing on this gap will ground the study in existing literature and demonstrate its novel contribution to understanding how digital campaigns influence young Indian voters.

### 1.3 Research Objectives

- a) To evaluate the impact of microtargeting and customized content in digital campaigns on the voting decisions of university and college students in the 2024 elections.
- b) To examine the role of recommendation systems and personalized feeds in shaping the political preferences and awareness of young voters in India.
- c) To assess the overall influence of digital campaign strategies on the electoral outcomes among the student population in India in the 2024 elections.

### 1.4 Research Hypothesis

- H<sub>11</sub>:** Exposure to digital campaigns has a significant positive impact on voting behavior.
- H<sub>12</sub>:** Microtargeting significantly alters the effects of digital campaigns in voting behavior.
- H<sub>13</sub>:** Exposure to digital campaigns has a highly significant positive association with the effectiveness of microtargeting in shaping voter behavior.



## **2. Literature Review**

Since the rise of social media and other digital platforms in the early 21st century, digital campaigns have transformed political communication. Traditional media, such as television, radio, and print, were used early on, but new media allowed politicians and political campaigns to reach a wider, more diverse audience. With Barack Obama's 2008 presidential election, which marked the beginning of social media's widespread use in campaigning, the role of social media in electoral strategies became central (Kreiss, 2016). Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, have become essential tools for political involvement, enabling candidates to directly engage with people and conduct real-time conversations (Chadwick, 2013). For example, millennials and Gen Z spend more time online, making digital platforms the primary source of political information and discourse (Binder et al., 2021). Social media's interactive features enable politicians and supporters to communicate and distribute political messages through likes, shares, and comments (Jennings, Suzuki, & Hubbard, 2021). This is crucial because digital campaign provisions allow content to be tailored to certain voter demographics using data analytics and algorithms (Enli, 2017).

Agenda-Setting Theory states that the media sets the public agenda by focusing attention on specific subjects (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Additionally, algorithms and digital campaigns play a significant role in curating political content, making certain issues more salient in the minds of voters (Tufekci, 2014). Online platforms are crucial to digital campaigns because they help set the political agenda by emphasizing voter-friendly subjects. In fact, political campaigns that highlight issues such as health, climate change, and education are highly effective in engaging young voters. It is also observed that the preferences of young voters regarding candidates and policies are influenced by social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (Enli, 2017).

Digital campaigns' targeted commercials, viral content, and influencer endorsements can highlight youth electorate ideals, including social justice, climate action, and economic inequity.

By curating the political agenda through algorithmic suggestions and shared posts, digital campaigns make certain problems more salient in voters' minds (Tufekci, 2014).

Social media influences young voters' political priorities, as they often use it as their primary source of political information.

According to Robert Entman, how issues are presented in the media influences the way people perceive the issues. This suggests that the target audience can be influenced by highlights particular issues or aspects of an issue (Entman, 1993). Leveraging the concept of framing theory, digital campaigns frame the perceptions, views, and attitudes of voters (Gross, 2008). These campaigns effectively influence young voters by emotional appeals, selective storytelling, and opinionated news broadcasts. In addition, by highlighting the imminent dangers of political inaction, these campaigns push young voters to immediate action. (Boulianne, 2015).

Digital political campaigns also utilize influencer endorsements, viral memes, hashtags, and political sound bites to shape young voters' perspectives and opinions on issues and politicians

(Zeng et al., 2020). Through the effective use of algorithms, political campaigns can assess the type of content that generates more engagement and boost it for wider audience reach.

Social Identity Theory (SIT), developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, explains that people often derive a sense of self by associating themselves with groups. This sense of belonging to a group easily influences their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). By the effective use of groups and communities, social media allows individuals to find a sense of belonging by becoming members. These groups and communities play a vital role in shaping and influencing voters.

These groups forge political identity, community interaction, and a platform to raise their concerns. Thus, digital campaigns forge group identity based on common shared values and beliefs like justice, protection of the environment, and peace. Studies have shown that this tendency for selective acceptance of information can lead individuals to overvalue sources that confirm their preexisting opinions, especially when emotionally charged issues are involved. Individuals are more likely to engage with content that aligns with their beliefs and experience greater satisfaction from doing so, reinforcing the existing biases (Boulianne, 2020).

According to the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), people actively seek media information that confirms and meets their needs, wants, and desires (Blumler & Katz, 1974). UGT helps explain how young people engage with news, views, and opinions that are not aligned with their own affiliations. Political messages that satisfy informational, social, or entertainment demands influence their voting behaviour. Social media allows users to like, comment, learn about politics, interact with classmates, share political statements, and express their opinions in addition to passively viewing content (Loader et al., 2014).

The theory also differentiates between active and passive interaction. Active involvement, such as sharing a message or joining a political discussion online, can affect voting behaviour more than passive engagement. Young voters become more interested in politics by actively engaging with political content, especially that which promotes their causes. Digital campaigns, including petitions, challenges, and calls to action, are increasingly used to engage citizens in political processes (Enli, 2017). Active engagement influences political decisions and increases youth voter turnout the most (Jaghatspanyan, 2025).

Social media algorithms and big data analytics are key to digital campaigns and microtargeting. Microtargeting has been shown to influence voter behaviour as it reaches the targeted voting demographics at the right moment. Barberá et al. (2015) and Kreiss (2016) found that social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, engaged voters, particularly young voters who were more likely to be exposed to political content on their social networks. Tufekci (2018) found that targeted political ads and social media influenced voters in the elections in England.

Microtargeting, which customizes political ads based on voter data, is a key tactic in digital campaigns to boost political messaging (Kruikemeier, Sezgin, & Boerman, 2016), besides increasing political engagement among young Indian voters (Nagaraju, 2023). However, microtargeting gives rise to misinformation, disinformation and also creates echo chambers leading to political polarization (Zeng et al., 2020).

According to prior studies, personalized political ads are the most powerful strategy in impacting or influencing voter behaviour. This is because such personalized ads are tailored to the interests of the targeted audience (Tufekci, 2014). Research also shows that personalizing digital ads can boost political efficacy, especially among young voters who feel heard when political campaigns address their problems (Kaid, McKinney, & Tedesco, 2007).

In particular, personalized Facebook ads have a significant impact on voters' behaviour when such ads focus on issues like climate change and student debt (Barberá et al., 2015). Here it has to be noted that digital campaigns like microtargeting and personalized ads raise ethical concerns as they have the potential to manipulate young voters by the use of psychographic data in campaigns without the active consent of the users (Wagner, 2021). Personalized ads may increase political engagement, but using personal data for political benefit is unethical. The Cambridge Analytica crisis has shown the hazards of personalized digital ads in a world where data is misused, and material is designed to influence voters (Cadwalladr & Graham-Harrison, 2018).

The existing literature offers important theoretical and empirical insights into digital campaigning, microtargeting, youth political engagement, and the algorithmic structuring of political communication. However, there are significant gaps in studies concerning young voters, particularly in relation to non-Western contexts such as India. Young voters are both the most digitally active and the primary targets of micro-targeted political messaging. The present study addresses this gap by empirically examining the relationship between digital campaign exposure, microtargeting strategies, and voting decisions among young Indian voters during the 2024 national elections.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The current study attempts to determine, through a quantitative technique, how digital campaigns affected choices in voting decisions in the 2024 elections. For this, students from various colleges and universities located in India participated in the study through an online survey designed to gather data on the topic.

#### **3.1 Sample Size**

As of the 2019 general elections, India had approximately 911.95 million eligible voters. The voter base grew to 977.96 million by 2024 general elections (Election Commission of India, n.d.). Given the vast size of India's electorate, surveying all or even a one percent (which is 9.77 million) of voters is not practically feasible due to limitations in time, resources, and logistics. Instead, a sample size of 300 university and college students was chosen, as they represent a relevant demographic of young, digitally active and engaged voters.

To determine the required sample size with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error (e) of 5.66%, Cochran's formula is used:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 p(1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

- **Z = 1.96** (Z-score for 95% confidence level)

- $p = 0.5$  (assumed maximum variability)
- $e = 5.66\%$  (**0.0566**) (given margin of error)

**Calculation:**

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)}{(0.0566)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0032}$$

$$n = \frac{0.9604}{0.0032}$$

$$n = 300.125$$

Since the sample size must be a whole number, the sample size is chosen to be 300.

As given above, students from colleges and universities in India were provided with the survey. The choice of students reflects a group of young people active on social media and interested in political news. All the 300 students fall within the age groups of 18 and 25. In total, 46% of them were female, and 54% were male. By way of level of studies, graduate students made up 60% of the respondents, while 40% were undergraduate students. The academic backgrounds of the participants were different and varied - 37% from Commerce and Management, 28% from Arts and Humanities, 21% from Journalism and Communication, and 14% from a Science background. Because of this variability, it was possible to research how digital campaigns' use of recommendation engines, personalized content, and microtargeting affected the political preferences and choices of young voters in the 2024 elections.

Based on the information above, the following demographic table has been created.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile**

Category	Percentage (%)
Total Respondents	100%
<b>Age Group</b>	
18-25 years	100%
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	54%
Female	46%
<b>Education Level</b>	

Graduate Students	60%
Undergraduate Students	40%
<b>Academic Background</b>	
Commerce and Management	37%
Arts and Humanities	28%
Journalism and Communication	21%
Science	14%

An online survey that was disseminated by email and other electronic channels was used to gather the data. This made it possible to gather replies from the participants in an effective manner. Because of the survey’s anonymity, participants may answer honestly without worrying about their identity or privacy.

### 3.2 Sampling Technique

In this study, Stratified Sampling was used, where 300 university and college students were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to participate. Stratified Sampling involves dividing the population into distinct subgroups (strata) based on characteristics that are important for the research (e.g., age, gender, region, educational background) and then randomly selecting samples from each subgroup thus ensuring the representation of all relevant subgroups. Students from five higher education institutions of Bengaluru were selected using the above strategy. These students were all active on social media and also interested in political news.

### 3.3 Control Variables

- a) **Age:** The participants of this study are College and University students within the age groups of 18 and 25. Younger individuals may engage more with digital platforms, affecting their exposure to digital campaigns.
- b) **Gender:** Gender differences can impact political views and the types of digital content consumed. Both males and females are more or less represented equally in this study.
- c) **Socioeconomic Status:** Economic background may affect the impact of digital campaigns and personalized feeds. Since all the college students in urban Bengaluru have access to mobiles and social media, the participants of this study are assumed to represent different socioeconomic statuses.
- d) **Educational Background:** Prior education levels can shape political awareness and engagement with digital media. The participants of this study are from different academic backgrounds and different levels of higher education (undergraduates and graduates).

### 3.4 Media Consumption Habits

- a) **Frequency of Social Media Use:** Regular use of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram can increase exposure to digital campaigns.
- b) **Preferred Social Media Platforms:** Different platforms may present varying types of political content, affecting user engagement.
- c) **Traditional Media Consumption:** Exposure to traditional media (e.g., television, newspapers) can influence political opinions and may interact with digital media effects.

### 3.5 Political Variables

- a) **Political Interest:** Individuals with a higher interest in politics are more likely to engage with political content, both online and offline.
- b) **Political Affiliation:** Pre-existing political beliefs can affect how individuals perceive and respond to digital campaigns.
- c) **Political Efficacy:** The belief in one’s ability to influence political processes can impact engagement with political content.

### 3.6 Surveys Instrument

The study was designed to be quantitative. The questionnaire consisted of questions using a five-level Likert scale. The questionnaire was circulated by email and other digital media. The questionnaire was designed to assess the level of exposure to digital campaigns, impact on voting behaviour, influence of microtargeting on voting choices, interest in politics, and online engagement with political feeds.

A pilot test was conducted with a small group of students before administering the main survey to prevent the effects of incorrect replies on validity and reliability. The questions in the questionnaire were tested and fine-tuned due to the pilot. The content validity of the survey was confirmed by consulting academic experts from the fields of digital marketing and political communication.

CFA stands for Confirmatory Factor Analysis, which is a statistical technique used to validate the measurement model of a survey instrument. In simple terms, CFA is used to confirm if the data collected by the survey corresponds to the hypothesized structure or factor model of the instrument.

**Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results**

Variable	Factor Loading	Standard Error	t-Value	p-Value	Cronbach’s Alpha
Exposure to Digital campaigns	0.72	0.05	14.4	<0.001	0.87
Impact of Digital campaigns on Voting	0.79	0.04	19.75	<0.001	0.83
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	0.68	0.06	11.33	<0.001	0.85

**Table 4: Model Fit Indices**

<b>Fit Index</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>RMSEA</b> (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	Measures how the model fits the population (Lower values indicating better fit)	0.05
<b>CFI</b> (Comparative Fit Index)	Compares the tested model with a baseline model (Values closer to 1 indicate better fit)	0.96
<b>TLI</b> (Tucker-Lewis Index)	Assesses incremental model over a null model (Values close to 1 indicate better fit)	0.95

### 3.7 Tools Used for Data Analysis

To analyze the responses to the five-point Likert scale questions, this study carried out descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analyses like mean scores, frequency counts, and percentages were used to identify the recurring themes occurring in the responses to the questions. These were also helpful in understanding the distribution of the responses and to identify how the digital campaigns affected different groups.

Inferential statistics like regression were used to explore the association between categorical variables such as age, gender and exposure to digital campaigns. Further, correlation analysis was employed to determine the degree and direction of the association between voting behaviour and digital campaign strategies like microtargeting and recommendation algorithms.

### 3.8 Ethical Consideration

The research was conducted according to ethical requirements to ensure that the anonymity and rights of the participants were safeguarded. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study and willingly agreed to participate. Consent was sought before administering the survey. Therefore, the participants were clearly informed of the objective of the study and ensured that they would be free to withdraw from participation at any point without fear of retribution. The respondents' anonymity was protected by not recording personal information like name, email IDs, mobile numbers, and college name. The information gathered was used strictly for the purposes of the study. The study also ensured that the responses were not derived through compulsion or manipulation and maintained the transparency of the research throughout.

### 3.9 Limitations

The study, though designed to be extensive and exhaustive, has the following limitations.

- First off, the 300 respondents in the sample might not be adequate to extrapolate the results to the entire population, especially in areas beyond the study's focus.
- Second, college and university students participated in the survey. Because the views and experiences of younger tech-savvy individuals might not be representative of the general public, selection bias may be an issue.
- Self-reported data suggests social desirability bias since respondents may provide information they believe to be wanted or expected.

This implies that respondents who lack technical skills or cannot access the internet were likely to be excluded from online survey methodologies. Therefore, for better quality generalization

from this study, future research may need a large sample size as well as a diversified sample drawn from other data sources.

#### 4. Results And Discussions

##### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics and reliability analysis for key variables in the study.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Statistics**

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Age Group (18-25 years)	300	20.5	2.8	-
Exposure to Digital campaigns	300	3.8	0.9	0.87
Impact of Digital campaigns on Voting	300	4.2	0.8	0.83
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	300	4.1	0.7	0.85

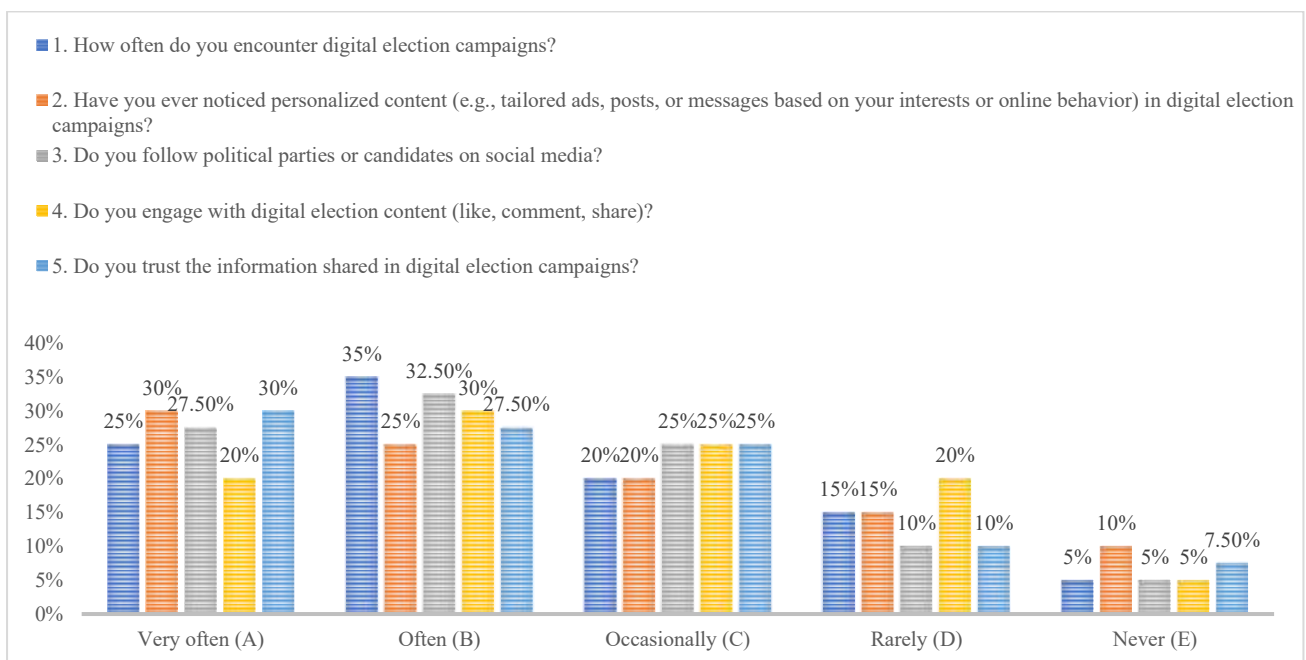
The respondents' average age is 20.5 years, with a standard deviation of 2.8. This population is therefore comparatively young. On a 5-point scale, exposure to digital campaigns has a mean score of 3.8. This indicates that respondents' overall experiences with exposure to digital campaigns range from moderate to high. This measure's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (0.87), which indicates a high level of internal consistency. From the responses to the 'Impact of Digital Campaigns on Voting' question, which has a mean score of 4.2, the majority of respondents believe that digital campaigns have a significant impact on their voting choices. A reliability score of 0.83 suggests that responses are probably quite consistent. Similarly, 'Influence of Microtargeting on Voting' has a mean score of 4.1, indicating that targeted content has a significant impact on voting choices. Additionally, the reliability score of 0.85 confirms the measurement's strength.

The respondents' exposure to online electoral campaigns is displayed in Table 4.

**Table 6: Exposure to Digital Campaigns**

Question	Very Often	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1. How often do you encounter digital election campaigns during the 2024 elections?	75 (25%)	105 (35%)	60 (20%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)
2. How often did you receive personalized feed/content on social media during the 2024 elections (e.g., tailored ads, posts, or messages based on your interests or online behavior) in digital election campaigns?	90 (30%)	75 (25%)	60 (20%)	45 (15%)	30 (10%)
3. How often did you use social media to get political news or	82 (27.5%)	98 (32.5%)	75 (25%)	30 (10%)	15 (5%)

information during the 2024 elections?					
4. How often did you engage with digital campaign content during the 2024 elections (like, comment, share)?	60 (20%)	90 (30%)	75 (25%)	60 (20%)	15 (5%)
5. Do you trust the information shared in digital election campaigns?	90 (30%)	83 (27.5%)	75 (25%)	30 (10%)	22 (7.5%)



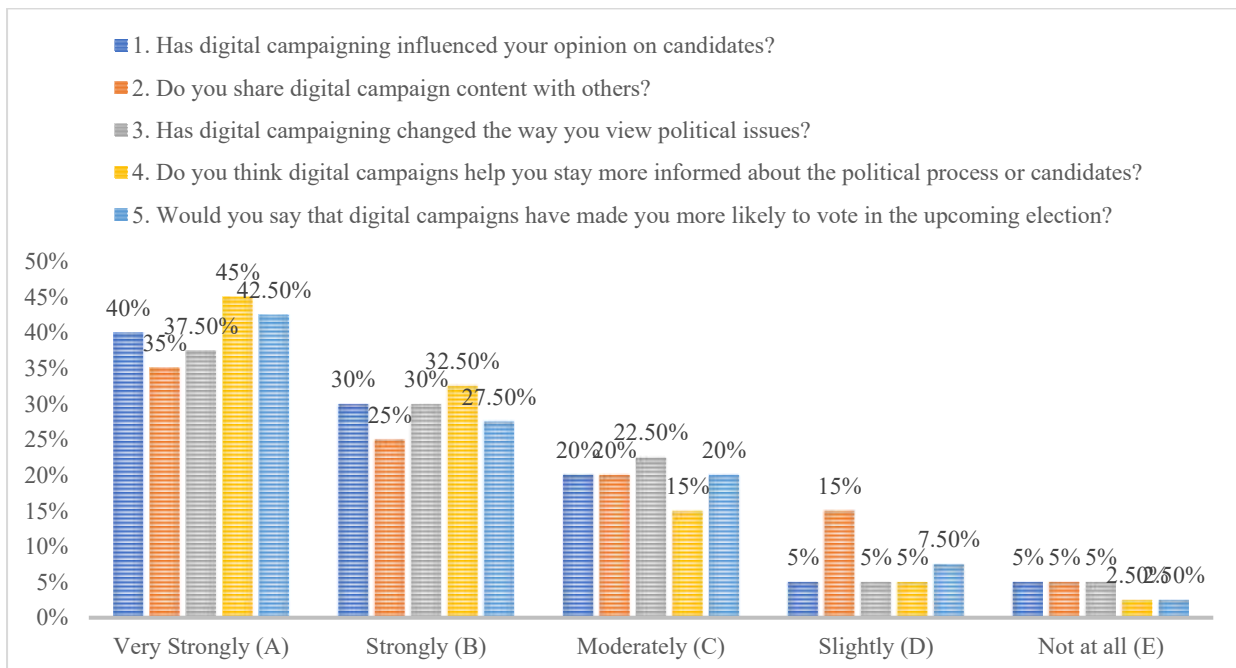
**Figure 1: Exposure to Digital Campaigns**

Table 4 indicates the frequency of young voters' exposure to election-related digital campaigns. The majority of people were exposed regularly, with 25% reporting frequently and 35% often. Customized ads were also the most popular type of personalized content, with 30% of respondents noticing this frequently. The majority of respondents report following political parties or candidates on social media, engaging with content, and believing the information of digital campaigns to be true, indicating high interactions and engagement among those who interact with a digital campaign to some extent and varying levels of trust.

**Table 7: Impact of Digital Campaigns on Voting**

Question	Very Strongly (A)	Strongly (B)	Moderately (C)	Slightly (D)	Not at all (E)
1. Has digital campaigns influenced your opinion on	120 (40%)	90 (30%)	60 (20%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)

candidates during the 2024 elections?					
2. Did you share digital campaign content with others during the 2024 elections?	105 (35%)	75 (25%)	60 (20%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)
3. Did the digital campaigns change the way you view political issues or topics?	113 (37.5%)	90 (30%)	67 (22.5%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)
4. Do you think digital campaigns help you stay more informed about the political process or candidates?	135 (45%)	98 (32.5%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)	7 (2.5%)
5. Would you say that digital campaigns made you more likely to vote in the 2024 elections?	128 (42.5%)	82 (27.5%)	60 (20%)	22 (7.5%)	8 (2.5%)

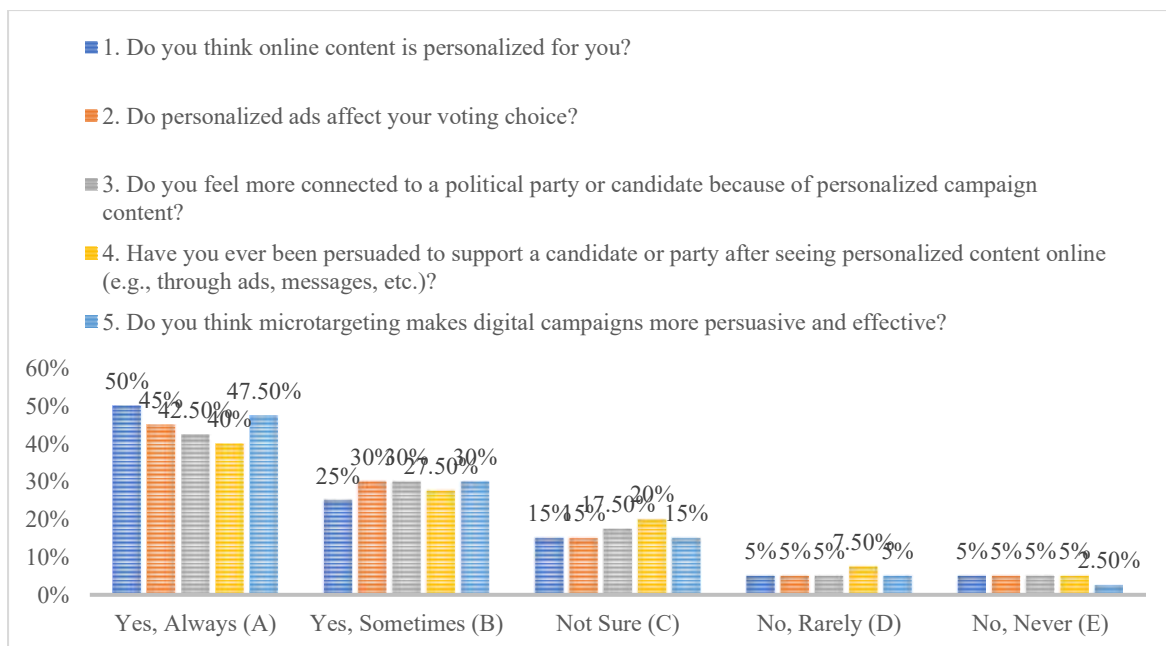


**Figure 2: Impact of Digital Campaigns on Voting**

Table 5 shows that more than half of the respondents believe that digital campaigns have an impact on public opinion on candidates (70%) and issues (67.5%). Respondents shared the majority of the material of digital ads with others, and these initiatives helped them become more informed about the political process. More crucially, 70% of respondents indicated that the digital campaigns encouraged them to vote. This suggests that the internet campaign is effective in motivating young voters to vote during elections.

**Table 8: Influence of Microtargeting on Voting**

Question	Yes, Always (A)	Yes, sometimes (B)	Not Sure (C)	No, Rarely (D)	No, Never (E)
1. Do you think that the online political content during 2024 elections was personalized for you?	150 (50%)	75 (25%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)
2. Did personalized ads affect your voting choice during the 2024 elections?	135 (45%)	90 (30%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)
3. Did you feel more connected to a political party or candidate because of personalized campaign content?	128 (42.5%)	90 (30%)	52 (17.5%)	15 (5%)	15 (5%)
4. Have you ever been persuaded to support a candidate or party after seeing personalized content online (e.g., through ads, messages, etc.)?	120 (40%)	83 (27.5%)	60 (20%)	22 (7.5%)	15 (5%)
5. Do you think microtargeting makes digital campaigns more persuasive and effective?	142 (47.5%)	90 (30%)	45 (15%)	15 (5%)	8 (2.5%)



**Figure 3: Influence of Microtargeting on Voting**

Table 6 focuses on microtargeted and personalized content that influences voters’ decisions. In this regard, the majority of respondents believe that digital campaigns is targeted to them, and targeted ads have a significant influence on their voting decisions (75%). Microtargeting has made respondents feel much more connected to political candidates, and many believe that personalized information convinced them to vote for a specific candidate or party. Furthermore, 77.5% of respondents believe that microtargeting makes digital campaigns more compelling and effective, demonstrating the power of personalized message in affecting political choices. The Pearson correlation coefficients between a number of variables, including exposure to digital campaigns, the effect of digital campaigns on voting, and the influence of microtargeting on voting, are displayed in Table 7.

**Table 9: Correlation Matrix**

<b>Variable</b>	Exposure to Digital campaigns	Impact of Digital campaigns on Voting	Influence of Microtargeting on Voting
Exposure to Digital campaigns	1	0.85	0.75
Impact of Digital campaigns on Voting	0.85	1	0.83
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	0.75	0.83	1

The correlation matrix shows links between the exposure to digital campaigns, influence on voting, and microtargeting. Exposure to digital campaigns positively affects voting at 0.85 and microtargeting at 0.75. Due to the high association values, the perceived effects of digital campaigns on voting and the influence of microtargeting on voting behaviour increase significantly with exposure. The impact of digital campaigns on voting has a substantial positive association with the influence of microtargeting on voting (0.83), implying that the higher the perceived impact of digital campaigns on voting, the more microtargeting influences them.

The impact of digital campaigns on voting is the dependent variable in this table’s straightforward linear regression model, while exposure to digital campaigns and the impact of microtargeting on voting are the independent variables.

**Table 10: Model summary**

<b>Model</b>	<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R-Square</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>
1	0.75	0.66	0.53	7.33

Multiple R value 0.75 implies a substantial positive association between independent variables and voting behaviour. Digital campaigns and microtargeting explain 66% of voting behaviour variation, according to the R-squared value of 0.66. The adjusted R-squared of 0.53 changes

the model's predictors and is still a decent fit. The standard error of 7.33 shows how values deviate from the regression line.

**Table 11: ANOVA**

	df	SS	MS	f	Significance Value
<b>Regression</b>	2	596.336	256.123	6.0233	0.04
<b>Residual</b>	196	482.111	51.233		
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>				

The regression model is statistically significant because the F-value is 6.0233 and the p-value is 0.04. Together, the two independent variables significantly predict voting behaviour.

**Table 12: Coefficients**

Model	Coefficients	Standardized Error	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	2.23	-	5.67	<0.01
Exposure to Digital campaigns	0.42	0.52	6.45	<0.01
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	0.35	0.46	5.80	<0.01

The intercept when the two independent variables are zero is 2.23. Exposure to digital campaigns increases voting behaviour by 0.42 units per unit. The coefficient on microtargeting is 0.35, indicating that an increase in microtargeting influences voting behaviour by 0.35. Both variables' t-values are 6.45 and 5.80, respectively, and p-values of less than 0.01 indicate that both independent factors positively affect voting behaviour.

#### 4.2 Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

To check for multicollinearity, VIF is computed for each independent variable in the regression model. A VIF greater than 10 typically indicates problematic multicollinearity.

**Table 13: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for Multicollinearity**

Independent Variable	VIF Value	Interpretation
Exposure to Digital campaigns	2.5	No multicollinearity issues
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	3.1	No multicollinearity issues
Political Awareness	1.8	No multicollinearity issues

#### 4.3 Heteroscedasticity Test (Breusch-Pagan Test)

Heteroscedasticity occurs when the variance of errors is not constant. The Breusch-Pagan test helps assess whether this assumption is violated in your regression model.

**Table 14: Heteroscedasticity Test (Breusch-Pagan Test)**

Variable	p-value (Breusch-Pagan Test)	Interpretation
Model 1	0.10	No heteroscedasticity detected
Model 2	0.02	Heteroscedasticity detected, adjustment needed

A p-value greater than 0.05 generally indicates the absence of an issue with heteroscedasticity, while a p-value lower than 0.05 suggests a potential issue.

#### 4.4 Logistic Regression Model for Voting Likelihood

In Table 13, the logistic regression model for voting likelihood is computed. The coefficient shows the effect on the log-odds of voting. Odds Ratio is the exponent of the coefficient and indicates how much more likely an event is to occur for each unit increase in the predictor.

**Table 15: Logistic Regression Model for Voting Likelihood**

Predictor Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-value	p-value	Odds Ratio
Exposure to Digital campaigns	0.35	0.12	2.92	0.003	1.42
Influence of Microtargeting on Voting	0.25	0.10	2.5	0.012	1.28

#### 4.5 Accepting the Hypotheses

Table 14 shows the t-value for the hypothesis testing. For the hypothesis  $H_{11}$ , the t-value of 6.45 with a p-value of less than 0.01 indicates a significant positive relationship between exposure to digital campaigns and voting behavior.

For the hypothesis  $H_{12}$ , the t-value of 5.80 with a p-value of less than 0.01 shows that microtargeting significantly influences the impact of digital campaigns on voting behaviour.

For the hypothesis  $H_{13}$ , a correlation coefficient of 0.68 and a p-value less than 0.01 indicate a strong, significant positive association between exposure to digital campaigns and the effect of microtargeting on voting behavior.

**Table 16: Findings of Hypothesis**

Hypothesis	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
$H_{11}$ : Exposure to digital campaigns has a significant positive impact on voting behavior.	6.45	<0.01	Accepted
$H_{12}$ : The impact of digital campaigns on voting behavior is significantly influenced by microtargeting.	5.80	<0.01	Accepted
$H_{13}$ : There is a significant positive correlation between exposure to digital campaigns and the influence of microtargeting on voting behavior.	0.68 (correlation)	<0.01	Accepted

### 5. Conclusion

This study highlights the significance of digital campaigns and microtargeting in shaping voter behavior through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, as they play a crucial role in political communication. The analyses reveal a significant positive relationship between exposure to digital campaigns and changes in voter preferences, with younger voters being most likely to engage with political content on digital media. While the study points out that digital campaigns influence voting behavior, it is worth noting that correlation does not imply causation. The observed relationship between exposure to digital content and voting behavior does not confirm that digital campaigns directly cause changes in voter decisions. It specifically analyzes digital campaigns but does not compare their efficacy to more established campaign strategies, such as TV commercials, political rallies, and door-to-door campaigns. A comparison between digital and traditional campaign strategies would be far more enlightening

for understanding the roles of both digital and traditional campaigning methods in contemporary elections, as well as the extent to which electronic campaigns can surpass traditional forms of campaigning.

This study demonstrates the increasing importance of digital campaigns in shaping voter behavior. The findings indicate that exposure to digital election campaigns is directly related to people's perceptions and voting choices. This study reveals that digital campaigns and exposure to personalized political ads significantly influence people's perceptions of candidates, political issues, and the voting process. This effect is exacerbated by microtargeting, which involves sending a personalized political message that is tailored to users' needs and behaviors. In this study, it is observed that voters are effectively persuaded using microtargeting strategies. This indicates that political parties utilize digital platforms to influence the voting decisions of young voters, particularly, and positively alter voters' perceptions of candidates.

This study highlights the need for further research to investigate the effectiveness of digital campaigns across various demographics, including age groups, geographic regions, and political affiliations. In addition, further studies are needed to highlight the ethical implications of the use of digital campaigns in general and microtargeting in particular in influencing voters' behaviour.

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