Role of Facebook in Raising the Political Participation of Youth in Karachi

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Abstract: This study aims to interrogate the part that Facebook plays in increasing political involvement particularly among the residents of Karachi. The study was conducted fully with a focus on how the popular social networking site affects one's voting behavior and political knowledge. A quantitative research approach was adopted by issuing a questionnaire to a target population of 400 youths in Karachi regarding their use of Facebook political posts. The results show that indeed Facebook is an important tool for a young person as it provides means for a voting campaign as well as propaganda in a wide range of issues. The study explains how Facebook, through its advertisements, campaigns, and news ultimately helps increase the level of political education within its users. Young people who participated in the platform, claimed to have gained more knowledge of the political candidates, issues, and party politics which led them to be more active within the democratic framework. The findings emphasize the effectiveness of social networks in the mobilization of young voters and the increase of political activity in society. this research explains how Facebook is a potent tool for the residents of Karachi. Usability of the platform together with its social interactions promotes political activities of the youth and therefore enhances the democratic strides of the society.

Keywords: Facebook, Karachi, Youth, Political Participation, Awareness

Introduction:

Social networking sites have changed the way people participate in political processes in the digital age. Particularly Facebook has become a prominent forum for political mobilization awareness-raising and communication. Young people in Karachi the biggest city in Pakistan and a center of political activity are using social media more and more to get involved in politics. This change highlights the significance of comprehending how Facebook affects their political engagement. Social media can promote civic engagement foster discourse and improve political knowledge according to research. For example social

media sites like Facebook are essential for disseminating political information and inspiring young Pakistani voters according to Ahmad and Sheikh (2013). Similarly Ullah and Khan (2016) emphasized that Facebook enables users to exchange opinions and discuss political issues which promotes political activism and awareness among young people. Globally social media use is positively correlated with youth political participation in democracies according to research by Xenos Vromen and Loader (2014). They maintained that digital platforms provide special venues for activism and unofficial political discourse. This study aims to investigate how Facebook has influenced Karachis youths political engagement given the widespread use of social media and its impact on youth behavior. This study intends to shed light on how the platform fosters political awareness mobilization and engagement in order to shed light on how politics is changing in the digital age.

It is better to view "youth" as a developmental stage that falls between childhood reliance and adult freedom, as well as the realization of our interconnectedness as community members. Compared to a set age range, youth is a more flexible category. The UN defines "youth" as people between the ages of 15 and 24 without limiting Member States' definitions in order to maintain statistical uniformity across disciplines (United Nations, n.d). People between the ages of 15 and 29 are considered to be part of the "youth" population. Because of their innate skills, children's formative years are the most productive and significant (Ministery of Youth Affairs Government of Pakistan, 1989). In an increasingly digital world, social media platforms have become pivotal in shaping political landscapes, particularly among youth. In Karachi, where a significant portion of the population is young and tech-savvy, Facebook has emerged as a crucial tool for political engagement and activism. This study examines how Facebook promotes political idea sharing mobilization and communication among young people in Karachi with a particular focus on voter engagement and political activism. Facebook users can connect organize and advocate for a variety of causes thanks to its distinctive features which include groups events and targeted advertising. The platform enables youth to participate in conversations exchange information and mobilize support for political movements in a city known for its diverse sociopolitical fabric. Facebook's impact on political awareness voter turnout and sense of community among Karachi's politically engaged youth will all be examined in this study. By means of surveys interviews and content analysis this study aims to identify the factors that propel young people Facebook engagement and how these exchanges result in concrete political action. This research attempts to shed light on the connection between social media use and political engagement in order to help activist political parties and legislators better engage Karachi's youth. In the end this study will advance our knowledge of how digital platforms can improve democratic engagement in metropolitan settings.

Justification Of the Study

Globally social media's influence on political participation and discourse is becoming more and more obvious. One of the most popular social media sites Facebook is essential for promoting political discourse youth involvement and mobilization. For the following main reasons the current study intends to investigate the precise impact of Facebook on young people's political engagement in Karachi. Pakistan's cultural and economic center Karachi has rapidly become digital in recent years. Since young people make up a sizable portion of the city's population social media usage has increased. Examining Facebook's influence on political behavior is crucial because it has emerged as a major platform for political expression and communication.

Young people are frequently seen as the impetus behind social and political change. Young people in Karachi are becoming more politically conscious and active but their participation is frequently constrained by established political systems. Gaining insight into Facebook's role as a substitute platform for political

engagement can help strengthen the voices of young people in politics. Facebook's live video post and discussion forum features give political Parties activists and civic organizations a way to reach young people. It is vital to examine this platforms effects on young people's political engagement since it not only makes it easier for political information to proliferate but also promotes in-the-moment debates and political activity.

International research has looked at the connection between social media and political participation but little of it has been done in Pakistan especially in Karachi. By offering localized insights and empirical data on the impact of Facebook on youth political participation in the city this study aims to close that gap. Digital platforms are redefining traditional political communication methods. By avoiding traditional media channels Facebook has made it possible for citizens and political leaders to communicate directly. To understand the dynamics of contemporary political engagement it is imperative to analyze this shift in political communication. This study looks at how Facebook encourages political engagement in order to help direct tactics for boosting democratic participation. Political parties civil society organizations and lawmakers can use the findings to develop more inclusive and effective communication campaigns that can inspire youth to engage in democratic processes. One significant issue is the political apathy of Pakistan's youth. Facebook and other social media platforms can combat this apathy by making politics more engaging and approachable. The development of disengagement tactics can benefit from an understanding of how youth engage with political content on Facebook. The findings of the study will be beneficial in creating social and policy programs that encourage young people to get involved in politics. By highlighting how social media affects political behavior the study can assist stakeholders in developing a younger population that is politically engaged and aware. The analysis of Facebook's contribution to Karachi's youth political engagement is not only pertinent but also crucial to understanding how digital technology is transforming politics. Along with encouraging youth to participate fully in democratic processes the study will influence policy and enhance academic discourse.

Significance Of The Study

A large section of Karachi's population is young and their political behavior has a lasting effect on the democratic process. Facebook and other social media platforms are frequently used in place of more conventional forms of communication and are now crucial for political participation. To learn more about how Karachi's youth interact with politics in the digital era the effect of Facebook on youth political participation will be investigated. Social media has revolutionized political communication by offering a free forum for mobilization discussion and debate. Facebook is a widely used platform among young people in Karachi that makes it easier for them to share political thoughts and viewpoints. It will be easier to understand the dynamics of this interaction if you are aware of how digital communication affects voting behavior and political awareness activism. Since many of Karachi's youth are disenchanted with the city's established political systems political indifference among them is a serious problem. Facebook provides a different forum for political participation and expression. By analyzing how this platform encourages or discourages political engagement research will pinpoint tactics to counteract political apathy and produce a younger generation that is more politically engaged. Even though social media's impact on political participation has been thoroughly examined globally there are not many local studies that focus on Karachi or even Pakistan in general. By adding context-specific knowledge to the body of knowledge on digital political communication this study will close that gap. Political parties and civic organizations looking to better engage the youth population will find value in the researches conclusions. By comprehending the ways in which Facebook impacts political engagement these organizations can develop more focused communication tactics that appeal to younger voters. Promoting young people's involvement in politics is crucial to a robust democratic process. This study will clarify how young people in Karachi can use social

media sites like Facebook to encourage democratic participation critical thinking and voter turnout. The study will provide policymakers with information on how to incorporate social media tactics into voter outreach and civic education initiatives. Authorities can create policies that encourage greater youth participation in democratic processes by acknowledging Facebook's role in political engagement.

From grassroots movements to significant political upheavals social media has been a driving force behind social change on a global scale. By enabling young people to become change agents this study will investigate the degree to which Facebook can be used to start social and political change in Karachi. The results of the study will give communication and media professional information about how to use social media for political engagement in the most efficient ways. For content producers digital marketers and managers of political campaigns looking to increase their reach and influence this is especially pertinent. Future studies on the relationship between social media and political engagement in urban settings like Karachi will be made possible by this study. The knowledge acquired will not only be useful in Karachi but also in other cities with comparable youth political engagement opportunities and challenges. Different socioeconomic groups can be found in Karachi and some of them have little access to conventional political platforms. Facebook provides these underserved communities with an easier way to engage in political discourse. Developing strategies to improve inclusivity in political participation will be made easier with an understanding of this dynamic.

Facebook's unique feature is its real-time interaction with political content. The impact of these impromptu interactions on young people's perceptions of political events and their subsequent engagement will be investigated in this study. By raising awareness of political rights and responsibilities Facebook acts as a platform for civic education. The purpose of this study is to determine how much Facebook content influences young people in Karachi's political awareness. The study's data will enable a comparison between global trends and local political engagement realities. By recognizing these parallels and divergences we can highlight distinctive features of Karachi's political engagement and add to international conversations about youth and politics.

Research Objectives

1. To Investigate how much Karachi's youth use Facebook to get political information and how much it effects their voting decision .
2. To examine the political participation of youth of Karachi on facebook and their engagement on political content on facebook.
3. To illustrate if Facebook has an influence on molding political views and getting young people in Karachi to do political activities.

Research Questions

1. RQ1: How much the youth of Karachi use facebook to get political information and and how much it effects their voting decision.
2. RQ2: How much the youth of Karachi participate in politics and engage in political content on facebook.
3. RQ3: Does facebook influence the political opinion of youth of Karachi to do political activities.

Reasearch Hypothesis

H1: Facebook Content usage has a significant relationship with Youth's Political information that positively affects their voting decision.

H2: Political Content on facebook has a significant positive relationship with Youth's engagement in political participation that positively effects their voting decision.

H3: Facebook political content has a significant relationship towards political opinion of youth that positively impact the voting decision of youth of karachi.

Scope Of The Study

Digging into how Facebook ups the game for youngins active in Karachi, this investigation is a big deal. Karachi's young folks are major players in Pakistan's democracy game, no doubt about it. The scoop here is all about the city's internet-savvy peeps and what's up with their clicking and sharing shaping politics. This ain't just talk though; it's gonna beef up what peeps know about how digital hangouts mess with voting and stuff in places that ain't all the way modern yet.

And hey think about the bigwigs making decisions – this study's got stuff to teach 'em. It's about getting the young crowd to care and do something when it comes to their government, all thanks to social nets like Facebook. Speaking of teaching, Facebook's not just for memes; it's all about waking up the kids on what's what in politics getting 'em to step up their game.

Groups pushing for change, and even the party animals, AKA political parties, can grab these hints to hit the right note with the next generation. When you boil it down, this work is cracking the code on tech and tossing your hat in the political ring, which is pretty cool for eggheads, doers, and rule-makers in Pakistan and other spots too.

Literature Review

Ahmed and Sheikh (2021) studied the case of how Facebook was used as a tool for political mobilization among the youth of Karachi. According to their study, 68% of those surveyed reported using Facebook to voice political opinions and to share content. It explains how users became aware of and engaged with political content: The interactive nature of the platform stimulates dialogue, which according to the authors leads to an increased offline political activity like attending a rally and voting.

Basit, L. (2019). examined Facebook's role in political campaigning in Karachi, specifically during the 2018 general election. They reported that the political parties engaged targeted advertisements and live sessions of Facebook for the purpose of targeting youth and inclusion. This will mostly increase political engagement by 12% to first-time voters aged 18-24.

For the Discussion "Facebook and Political Awareness" by Hussain (2020) The research highlighted the role played by Facebook groups in educating the youth of Karachi with respect to their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The participants stated that the platform enabled them to learn about political candidates and party manifestos, which lead to active decision-making when participating in the elections.

Saman, S.(2019).emphasized Facebook's influence in facilitating youth-driven   movements   in   Karachi. Including demonstrations against corruption and environmental concerns. The platform;s real-time communication features facilitated rapid mobilization and coordination demonstrating its ability to elevate youth voices in the political sphere.

Theories of Political Communication and Social Media.

This research uses established theories of political communication and digital media engagement to examine how Facebook affects young people's political engagement in Karachi.

Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT).

People actively choose media outlets to satisfy specific needs such as entertainment social interaction and information seeking according to Katz Blumler and Gurevitchs (1974) Uses and Gratifications Theory. Young people in Karachi can use Facebook to connect with others share their opinions and stay up to date on current affairs (Ruggiero 2000). This theory provides a foundation for understanding the reasons behind young people's political engagement on Facebook.

Theory of Civic Engagement.

A functioning democracy necessitates active engagement in civic and political life according to Civic Engagement Theory (Putnam 2000). Loader Vromen and Xenos (2014) state that social media platforms such as Facebook are becoming more and more recognized as virtual public forums that foster political discourse and civic engagement. In Karachi the theory emphasizes Facebook's role as a digital platform for political discourse protest planning and youth voter mobilization.

Theory of Social Capital.

The idea of social capital as proposed by Putnam (2000) highlights the value of networks and connections in encouraging civic participation and collective action. By connecting them with political organizations and peers Facebook helps young people build and maintain these networks. Research indicates that by strengthening social ties and group identity these relationships influence young people's political behavior and engagement (Ellison Steinfield and Lampe 2007).

The Spiral of Silence Explanation.

People might refrain from voicing their political views if they believe they are in the minority according to Noelle-Neumanns Spiral of Silence Theory (1974). Social media sites like Facebook on the other hand offer a comparatively anonymous forum for expression which may end the taboo and inspire young people to express their political views without worrying about social rejection (Gearhart and Zhang 2014).

Public Sphere Network Theory.

Digital platforms like Facebook have changed traditional media structures by decentralizing the production and distribution of information according to Benklers (2006) concept of the Networked Public Sphere. Facebook functions as a platform for young people in Karachi to participate in political discourse and question conventional wisdom as this theory helps explain (Castells 2008).

Models for Political Participation.

Time money and civic skills are all taken into account as determinants of engagement in traditional models of political participation such as the resource model developed by Verba Schlozman and Brady (1995).

According to research on online activism and digital participation Facebook helps younger people get involved in politics by offering an affordable and easily accessible platform (Boulianne 2009).

Integration Theory

This study attempts to develop a thorough framework that explains how Facebook contributes to the increased political participation of young people in Karachi by combining these theories. Well look at how social media use political communication and civic engagement interact to learn more about the reasons behind actions taken and results of digital political participation.

This theoretical framework adds to the body of knowledge regarding the political behavior of young people in Karachi by offering a strong basis for examining the ways in which Facebook affects political activism and engagement.

Research Methodology

A sample of 400 students took part in the survey of this study. 210 students were males (52.5%), while 190 were females (47.5%). At the beginning, 400 facebook users were selected from different universities of Karachi, who were identified from different data sources comprising' what's App groups, student of different class group from different universities and colleges. It was found that the respondent students usually spend an average of 44.66 minutes daily on the sites of facebook during the working hours while 70.55 minutes they spend using the facebook during non-working hours daily.

A Self-designed questionnaire for this purpose was provided to all the selected students in which a total of 400 appropriate responses were used for 'Data Analysis'. The respondents comprising undergraduate = 219, postgraduate = 155 and Doctoral = 26.

Findings and Data Analysis

H1: Facebook Content usage has a significant relationship with Youth's Political information that positively affects their voting decision.

Table 1 Observed and expected frequencies for hypothesis one

Responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency
Strongly Agree	53	80.0
Agree	187	80.0
Neutral	83	80.0
Disagree	53	80.0
Strongly Disagree	24	80.0
Total	400	

Table 2 Chi-square test statistic value for hypothesis One

Chi-Square Test	
Chi-Square	200.650[a]
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The researcher employed the chi-square goodness of fit test to examine the hypothesis that there exists a significant relationship between Facebook Content usage has a significant relationship with Youth's Political information that positively affects their voting decision. This statistical test was utilized to determine whether the opinions of the respondents differed. In the event of rejecting the null hypothesis, it was inferred that individuals who expressed agreement with the statement were distinct from those who did not show disagreement or remained neutral in their opinion. The chi-square goodness of fit test yielded a test statistic value of 200.650, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05. Consequently, it was concluded that a difference in opinions among the respondents existed. Notably, Table 1 displayed observed frequencies that clearly indicated a considerable disparity between the respondents who expressed disagreement and those who expressed agreement. These findings provide compelling evidence to suggest that respondents disagreed with the notion that Facebook Content usage has a significant relationship with Youth's Political information that positively affects their voting decision.

H2: Political Content on facebook has a significant positive relationship with Youth's engagement in political participation that positively effects their voting decision.

Table 3 Observed and expected frequencies for hypothesis Two

Response	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency
Strongly Agree	50	80.0
Agree	178	80.0
Neutral	44	80.0
Disagree	109	80.0
Strongly Disagree	19	80.0
Total	400	

Table 4 Chi-square test statistic value for hypothesis Two

Chi-Square Test	
Chi-Square	204.525[a]
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The researcher employed the chi-square goodness of fit test to examine the hypothesis that Political Content on facebook has a significant positive relationship with Youth's engagement in political participation that positively effects their voting decision. This statistical test was utilized to determine whether the opinions of the respondents differed. In the event of rejecting the null hypothesis, it was inferred that individuals who expressed agreement with the statement were distinct from those who did not show disagreement or remained neutral in their opinion. The chi-square goodness of fit test yielded a test statistic value of 204.525, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05. Consequently, it was concluded that a difference in opinions among the respondents existed. Notably, Table 3 displayed observed frequencies that clearly indicated a considerable disparity between the respondents who expressed disagreement and those who expressed agreement. These findings provide compelling evidence to suggest that respondents disagreed with the statement that Political Content on facebook has a significant positive relationship with Youth's engagement in political participation that positively effects their voting decision.

H3: Facebook political content has a significant relationship towards political opinion of youth that positively impact the voting decision of youth of karachi.

Table 5 Observed and expected frequencies for hypothesis Three

Responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency
Strongly Agree	75	80.0
Agree	195	80.0
Neutral	59	80.0
Disagree	67	80.0
Strongly Disagree	4	80.0
Total	400	

Table 6 Chi-square test statistic value for hypothesis Three

Chi-Square Test	
Chi-Square	245.450[a]
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The researcher employed the chi-square goodness of fit test to examine the hypothesis that Facebook political content has a significant relationship towards political opinion of youth that positively impact the voting decision of youth of karachi. This statistical test was utilized to determine whether the opinions of the respondents differed. In the event of rejecting the null hypothesis, it was inferred that individuals who expressed agreement with the statement were distinct from those who did not show disagreement or remained neutral in their opinion The chi-square goodness of fit test yielded a test statistic value of 245.450, accompanied by a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05. Consequently, it was concluded that a difference in opinions among the respondents existed Notably, Table 5 displayed observed frequencies that clearly indicated a considerable disparity between the respondents who expressed disagreement and those who expressed agreement. These findings provide compelling evidence to suggest that respondents disagreed with the statement that Facebook political content has a significant relationship towards political opinion of youth that positively impact the voting decision of youth of karachi.

Conclusion

The importance of Facebook in mobilizing youth to participate in electioneering processes in Karachi is immense and soul searching. Results from this study indicate that the content available on facebook is an important factor in voting behaviour of young people and even more important in making them politically conscious. The ability of the platform to spread political ideas, engage people in conversations and even let them see opposing views has made the youth become more active voters in the society.

Using targeted advertisements, opinion surveys, live discussions, and particular topics of concern, Facebook allows the youth to grasp the political schools of thought and evaluate politicians. This kind of exposure to a variety of content at their fingertips can change how they think and endorse candidates during elections leading to a self-awareness in them on the democratic process. Moreover, young users can easily find political, social, or economic forums and advocacy groups on Facebook and take part in a number of initiatives that not only foster broad civic engagement but also call for tangible results from elected representatives.

Facebook acts as a powerful engine for the political involvement of the youth in the city of Karachi. Its role in determining how people vote as well as increasing political consciousness among people justifies the relevance of the digital age in today's democracy.

Recommendations

1. Encourage initiatives for digital civic education. o To teach young people how to critically assess political information educational institutions NGOs and political stakeholders should work together to develop digital literacy campaigns. o Workshops and webinars can be held to promote knowledge of democratic procedures and educate voters on how to conduct themselves when using social media sites like Facebook.
2. Promote the creation of political content in an ethical manner. o Advocacy organizations and political parties ought to spend money producing clear instructive content that appropriately reflects their platforms and policies. o To stop the spread of false information and assist young people in making educated decisions during elections fact-checking procedures ought to be encouraged.
3. Make Youth More Involved with Interactive Platforms. To interact directly with young voters make use of Facebooks features like live discussions Q&A sessions and opinion polls. o To address the concerns of young people and foster more direct communication with voters political candidates can host Facebook virtual town hall meetings.
4. Employ Political Campaigns That Are Targeted. To reach youth segments with customized messages that speak to their particular concerns and goals political organizations should make use of Facebooks targeted advertising tools. Promote issue-based initiatives that give reforms in healthcare education employment and governance top priority.
5. Encourage collaboration amongst multiple stakeholders. o The goal of collaborations between government agencies civil society and media groups should be to create reliable political information sources on Facebook. Youth can be mobilized by advocacy groups through community-based initiatives that encourage political and social engagement.
6. Encourage online advocacy groups and civic forums. Encourage young people to create and make visible Facebook advocacy groups and civic engagement forums where they can discuss debate and suggest political and social reforms. Provide safe forums for political discussion to promote respectful dialogue and a range of viewpoints.

7. Advocate for accessibility and inclusivity. Make sure that youth from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds including marginalized groups can access and understand political content. To reach a wider audience among Karachis multilingual populace create multilingual content strategies.

8. Keep an eye on and respond to online harassment. o Intensify efforts to stop cyberbullying and guarantee a safe online space where young people can participate without worrying about repercussions.

9. Feedback mechanisms and ongoing assessment. o Perform frequent surveys and studies to evaluate Facebooks efficacy as a platform for youth political engagement in Karachi. Utilize the knowledge gained from these evaluations to improve tactics for involving young people in political processes.

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