

Political communication in the algorithmic age: Analyzing the tools and systemic implications of digital social media



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Abstract Social media has played an increasingly important role as a communication and activism platform; thus, the subject of this paper is even more relevant. The significance of this issue is emphasized by the situation in international politics that has seen the escalation of conflicts and disputes to include wars, armed collisions and so forth. The war in Ukraine is a hotbed of information warfare, where political communication plays a key role. To a great extent, the internet became indispensable for its population; therefore, understanding the role of social media in shaping public opinion and electoral processes is crucial for political life. The overarching aim of this article is to explain the relationship between social networks and the political sphere from the constructivist scientific paradigm with qualitative studies and quantitative analysis. Electoral marketing and strategies of media incorporation into electoral campaigns are analyzed through a focus on main practices as well as the effects that these practices have on voters. The key to using social platforms in politics is introduced, and a study on the formation of a leadership image is developed. Moreover, much effort is dedicated to detecting such hinderances in the utilization of online social networks that cause political campaigns in an endeavor to suggest methods for better development. This study is in the structure of a literature review that helps us identify key theories and issues central to mobilizing voters using social media in political contestations. The paper is based on a systematic review approach, which allows an in-depth understanding of how social media is used during election campaigns. A great deal of emphasis is also placed on how rapid advances in technology have affected the growth of the digital social environment and its effect on political campaigns as well as civic engagement. The analysis makes clear that digital platforms are taking a politically relevant role as time passes. This calls for an informed, political reaction to the change, which is also inherently ethical in nature.

Keywords: populism, influence strategies, election campaigns, political process, online discourse, electoral process

1. Introduction

Both the state power system and political mechanism need to be updated and refreshed because modern society is changing at an alarming rate, making the renunciation period irrelevant. In this context, governments can and should, to the extent that technological advancement allows them to use their resources swiftly and efficiently toward this goal, seek new ways of addressing difficult opportunities. In the modernization of practices, specific means and techniques in municipal authorities, state commercial institutions are implemented through innovations at the public administrative structure level, which are worth using methods and knowledge taken from other fields. Given the rapid development of technology, even in the current constitution and society of the economy, such a process is necessary. Simultaneously, the company must maintain its market position and resources as efficiently as possible.

The political communication of key players that emerges in wartime or armed conflict is being increasingly affected by the digital realm. The formation of public opinion and communication is implemented through digital, one of the chief instruments, which can also result in confrontation escalation. This is because the actors in conflicts have entered into the digital environment or the cybersphere of digital information, shaping public opinion and their international responses (Papathanassopoulos & Giannouli, 2025; Velasco Molpeceres et al., 2025). As protracted contests, communication strategies are key for Ukraine and its allies—spanning crisis messaging, internal/external communication and countering disinformation. Practical information is subsequently guaranteed by keeping up support, controlling the way in which things are perceived and thus forming a currency narrative about the war. The mainstays of Ukraine's strategic communication are focused on countering Russian propaganda and improving the country's reputation in general. This is accomplished by gathering feedback



from experts, involving a lively civil society, and the use of media space—including social networks. In contrast, the aim of enemy propaganda is to foment internal strife and confrontation between political forces and structures in the country and to make two countersides (ideological and emotional) in the society of Ukraine. Practical tools for doing this are social networks, which also assume primacy.

The rapid rise and growth of social media killed traditional media consumption but greatly engendered the distribution of and access to political information. The potential for two-way interaction on a social network also creates new feedback, argumentation, discussion and contradiction that serve to entice the participation and endorsement of tangible actions. Forwarded messages make it thus far through personal relationships. Many areas suffer from a paucity of credible coverage about specific towns and cities or even regions, which is tied to the collapse of local news sources and the creation of so-called “information deserts” (Bailey, 2021). Social media is the single most influential source of information in many sectors in terms of shaping public opinion. This shift has an impact on the quality of political debates and civic participation (Novitskyi et al., 2025).

The use of social networking as a tool for different types of political activities has become increasingly prominent (Puri, 2025). Particularly during election periods, the likes of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter offer an opportunity to further develop how we engage our citizens in political life. Politicians and political parties use social media to communicate directly with prospective voters,” they write. As a result, parties are able to send and receive messages more directly with voters than if they rely on an intermediary (Tan et al., 2024).

Globally, social media has drastically changed how political campaigns and elections are conducted. Since 2012, social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have developed from straightforward conduits of communication to tactical battlefields that have a large impact on voter behavior and election results. Social media has become a double-edged sword, as digital disruption threatens traditional campaign tactics. While it provides politicians with tools for tailored engagement, it also raises concerns about bias, false information, and algorithmic influence (Kumar et al., 2025). Today, the practical impact of social platforms has a significant impact on the behavioral patterns of potential voters and on the results of the elections themselves. Current scientific research (Bond et al., 2012; Sunstein, 2017) determines both negative (for example, strengthening ideological information bubbles) and positive (in particular, higher voter turnout) consequences of such an impact. As practice shows, populist leaders (including Donald Trump, USA and Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil) have actively engaged the potential of social platforms for better feedback with the electorate and promotion of the necessary narratives. With this in mind, the article aims at systematizing the facets of the ‘platformed politics’ phenomenon in the landscape of social media as a ‘cultural medium’ for society to electorate the creation of moods.

At the same time, even the growing body of research on social media and political communication cannot fill all the existing gaps: most studies primarily consider digital platforms either as simple information channels or as isolated tools, without considering their systemic, algorithmic, and sociotechnical nature. Much of the existing work focuses on individual platforms or electoral events, leaving underexplored the interplatform dynamics through which political discourse is shaped, amplified, or suppressed. Furthermore, the area where constructivist theory intersects with empirical evidence on algorithmic influence, voter mobilization, and disinformation remains fragmented across disciplines. This article addresses these gaps by offering a systemic, theoretically grounded analysis of the functioning of digital social media as complex sociotechnical ecosystems in contemporary political communication. The primary goal of this study can be formulated as follows: what mechanisms do digital social media platforms use to change the conditions of political communication, and what are the systemic implications of these transformations for democratic participation and electoral processes?

2. Method

The foundation of our research model is constructivism, as shown in Figure 1 below. The proliferation of social networks has dramatically altered subjective evaluations and human interactions. However, the proxy of cognitive skills could be a partial in-between factor between the content on online platforms and the phenomenon related to the sociopolitical dichotomy (Sarwar et al., 2025). Since information space has been developing rapidly in many countries, both developed (Global North) and developing (Global South), online platforms have become important tools that influence political opinions or inadvertently fuel societal polarization.

The unusual development and complexity of digital political communication together with the lack of in-depth scientific work within this field argue for such a guideline for a constructivist methodology. Content analysis was employed as a research tool. The processed source dataset was identified by searching electronic databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, JSTOR and Wiley publishing house archive. Furthermore, the qualities of the case study methodology (thematic research) and grounded theory were at play—although not overt. The main topics used to structure the search were number and politics, social media in electoral cycles, online discourses on politics, digital democracy and level of political activity.

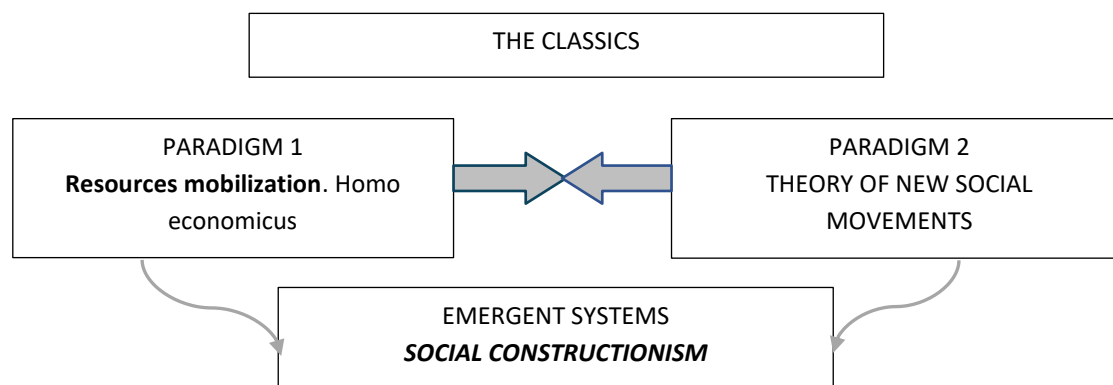


Figure 1 Research paradigm.

This study aims to provide an analytical review of the literature on the role of social media in political polarization, drawing on various fields of research, including political science and political communication, as well as sociology and psychology. Owing to this interdisciplinary interest, we conducted a systematic search on ScienceDirect (Elsevier), Springer, and MDPI, which are aligned with previous reviews (Amsalem & Zoizner, 2022; Tsfaty et al., 2020; von Sikorski & Allern, 2018), as they provide access to multiple interdisciplinary studies. For our search, we entered the following keywords: “Political communication”, “Digital media”, “New media”, “Civic journalism”, and “Digital media in the election process”.

The selection of articles was based on two inclusion criteria: (1) the articles had to be peer reviewed, and (2) the articles had to be specifically focused on the issue of how media shapes (or relates to) political communication as a whole and elections in particular. With these inclusion criteria, we gathered 45 entries for our analyses. After coding all the studies, we examined them both quantitatively and qualitatively. For our qualitative analyses, we split all the articles into three categories to understand the role of the media in political polarization -: (1) media content ($n = 7$), (2) media exposure ($n = 25$), and (3) media effects ($n = 13$). However, when qualitatively exploring the tools and systemic implications of digital social media for political communication, we analyzed all the articles together rather than in three separate groups. The literature search strategy is depicted in Figure 2.

The final sample of 45 articles spans the period from 2012 to 2025, with particular emphasis on publications from 2020 onward, reflecting the accelerated transformation of digital political communication in the post-pandemic era. Inclusion criteria required that articles: (1) be peer-reviewed; (2) address explicitly the relationship between digital or social media and political communication, elections, or civic engagement; and (3) be published in English. Articles were excluded if they were editorial pieces, conference abstracts, or if their primary focus was unrelated to political processes or media effects. The search was limited to three major interdisciplinary databases (ScienceDirect, Springer, MDPI) to ensure consistency and comparability of sources.

Several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the restriction to three databases, while ensuring methodological coherence, may have resulted in the exclusion of relevant studies published in other repositories or in languages other than English. Second, the systematic review methodology, by its nature, is subject to publication bias: studies with statistically significant or novel findings are more likely to be indexed in major databases and thus more likely to be included in the final sample. Third, the rapidly evolving nature of digital platforms means that some findings related to specific tools or platforms (e.g., Twitter/X, TikTok) may become outdated quickly. These limitations notwithstanding, the breadth and recency of the sample support the reliability and validity of the conclusions drawn.

3. Results and Discussion

After 2020, digital social media clearly became a key element of political communication and greatly transformed the ecosystem for interactive behavior among political actors, citizens, and media organizations. Where previously social networks were primarily thought of as supplementary instruments for the spread of political content, current scholarship increasingly views them as fully fledged communication ecosystems in which political identities are congealed, agendas are assembled, and voter mobilization is conducted.

Social media may also offer a window into how the electorate is reacting to candidates and the issues that most interest and worry them. The information received in this fashion can be quite different from that reported in the media. Deprived of political oxygen, neo-Fascism takes refuge in the far right. As a consolidated case, we could point out that, for example, with Marion Maréchal in France (see Figure 3). According to social media analysts, in 2024, the proportion of votes that candidates receive through virtual discussions is almost equally distributed and significantly different from that given by conventional polls. Thus, Valérie Hayer (Renaissance candidate, with liberal points of views) or Marion Maréchal (Reconquest candidate, far-right affiliated) would be more “represented” according to the data from the social network in regard to the number of voters than Jordan Bardella (from Renaissance List, running for liste d’union de la droite des républicains et des indépendants), who

is ahead in sociological polls and overall popularity. The high level of far-right activity on social networks in the past might also explain the considerable representation of Marion Maréchal (Russmann, 2022).

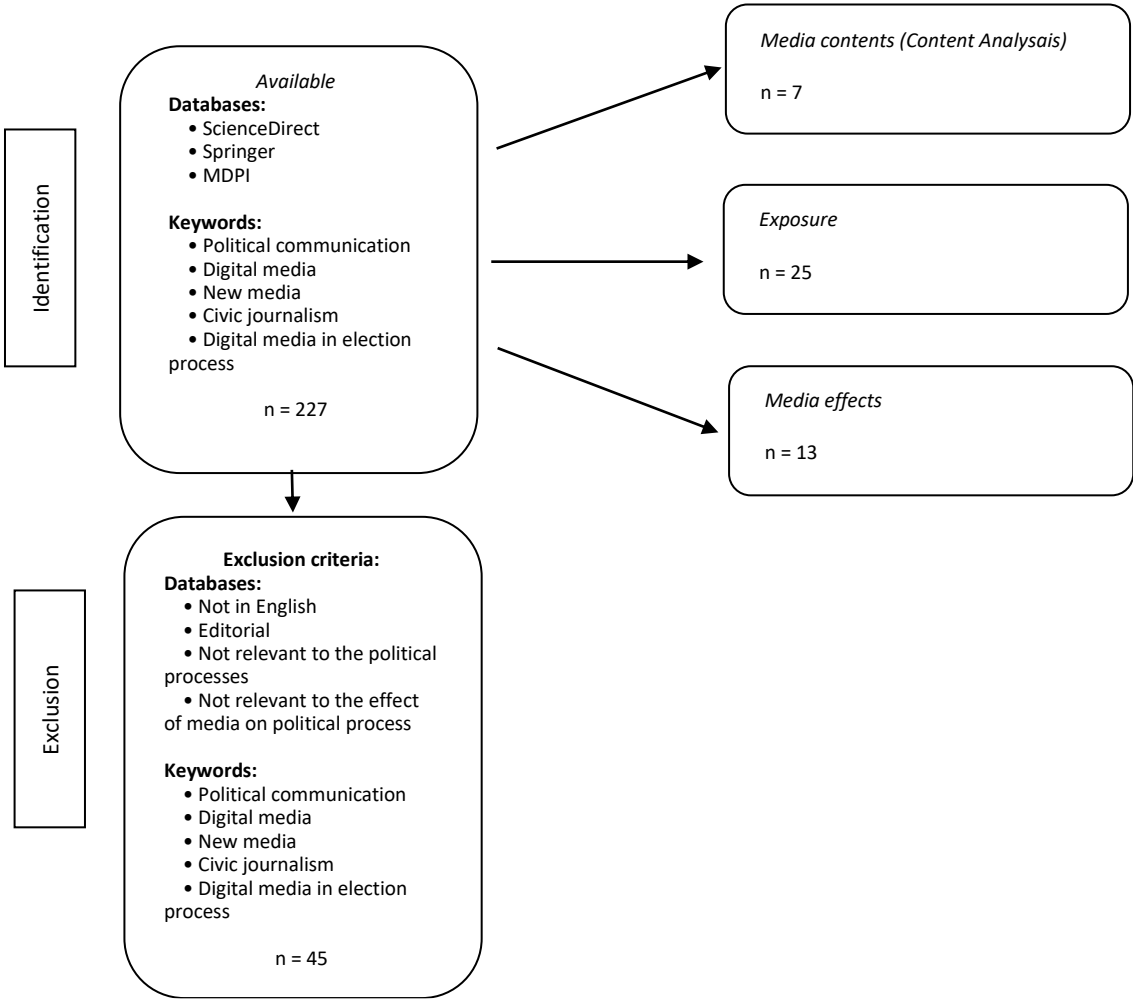


Figure 2 Literature search strategy.

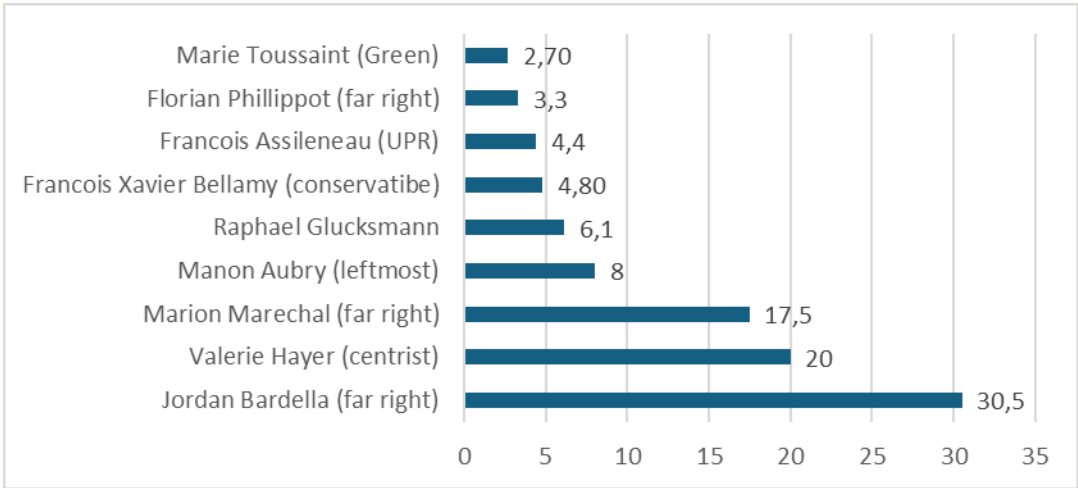


Figure 3 Percentage of the top ten candidates for the European Parliament seats in France. Source: Russmann (2022).

In the future, the use of social media in various election campaigns will evolve, creating both new favorable conditions and specific challenges. In view of this, the impact of social networks on electoral processes is the subject of detailed research and scientific study.

Carter and Dale (2025) discuss the phenomenon of ‘political capitalism’. In keeping with this, the authors look at the social dynamics that underlie algorithmic prejudice and offer a framework for addressing these problems from the perspective

of algorithmic political capitalism. They investigate how detrimental algorithmic consequences, such as social bias, data exploitation in the knowledge economy, biased forecasts, and unconsidered user biases that mask power imbalances and damage society, are frequently reproduced via sociotechnical-ecological relations of power. This article addresses algorithmic bias, and the injustices of the knowledge economy necessitate a sophisticated grasp of the interactions between public policy, technological systems, and societal structures. It also emphasizes the critical roles that accountability, transparency, and democratization play in promoting meaningful innovation.

In terms of rethinking the role of social media platforms, studies that concentrate on the transformation of political participation indeed play an important role. According to Vaccari and Valeriani (2021), social media widens the repertoire of ways in which citizens can engage in politics, but it also reproduces new forms of participation inequality. On the one hand, digital intermediaries lower the cost by reducing the threshold bar of access to political information and entry in political activities. On the downside, they serve to centralize attention and influence among a relatively small group of politically activated users, while most of their audience becomes passive spectators.

Moreover, according to Keith (2023), the ability of social media to influence political change depends on how well online and offline efforts are coordinated. Successful campaigns have shown the value of combining digital advocacy with in-person involvement, providing that online platforms are tools rather than goals in and of themselves. Research on social network effects, which influence political agenda setting, has produced conflicting results. According to the research by Gilardi et al. (2022) and Radchenko et al. (2023), digital news platforms must have more recently digitally created a new world where they do not compete against traditional media. Sometimes they preempt the agenda that journalists and political elites follow. The implementation of algorithmic content selection machines creates two main security risks, which lead to public areas becoming separated and content becoming more emotionally powerful.

However, according to Kim et al. (2025), social media is thought to encourage greater online political participation since it is less constrained by time and location. However, according to normalization theory, social media use might only serve to maintain the status quo rather than encouraging further interaction. The interest of scholars after 2023 has been redirected to a new phase of analysis about the strategic and normative aspects of digital political campaigns –; digital analytics, microtargeting, and tailored communication campaigns close the gap of success between political campaigns. Ate et al. (2023) offer two contrasting perspectives on these practices because they argue that such processes undermine democratic transparency and political accountability at the expense of both persuasion and manipulation. We also identified trends and issues that should be further investigated in recent systematic reviews. According to Tan et al. (2024), today's generation no longer relies on traditional media as their source of political information but is receiving the news from social media. The authors highlight the increasing significance of visual, short and interactive content that alters the perception of political messages and decreases the threshold for cognitive involvement.

Owing to the works that later emerged in 2025, gesturing toward politics as a “platformalized” process, we can identify yet another turning point in political communication research. Abid et al. (2025) demonstrate in their systematic review of Facebook political marketing that modern campaigns now work with users and use influencer marketing and emotional appeals in their strategies. At the same time, however, they emphasize the existence of a number of important theoretical voids—most clearly political advertising regulation and ethical limits on personal data use. Papathanassopoulos and Giannouli (2025) present an alternative perspective on political communication during the platform era. In their view, one of the defining aspects of the contemporary stage is a new allocation of power between historical political institutions and digital platforms that now happens to effectively “govern” not only in terms of moderation but also vis-à-vis recommender engines and actual visibility lent (or not) to political actors or issues. The current system needs a complete transformation of its fundamental democratic communication principles.

The problem of how social networks influence political debate is discussed in detail by Puri (2025), with particular emphasis on the increase in emotionality and polarization. The quickness with which news and reactive ways of communicating predominate, claims the author, is radicalizing positions and hindering rational political conversation. Moreover, social media is still an important site for otherwise excluded groups who can have a voice beyond traditional media outlets.

The sociopsychological impacts of online political communication are also discussed by Sarwar et al. (2025). Research shows that digital celebrities working together with high social media usage rates create two opposing effects that increase political involvement among young people but also make them more divided into social groups. Digital environments operate as a power system that creates both social bonds and social divisions between different sections of civic public areas.

On the empirical level, the platformed politics are illustrated through Velasco Molpeceres et al. (2025) on the 2024 EP elections. The authors show that particular platforms train different approaches to political communication, with some promoting quick emotional outbursts and others allowing for extended debate. This means that what platform one chooses to campaign on has begun to matter at a strategic level.

On the basis of a review of the literature, we can conclude that research on digital political communication changed after 2020, from one dominated by specific tools to systematic attention being given to social platforms as complex sociotechnical environments. Key Areas of Scientific Research The (further) Regulation of Digital Platforms Countering

Disinformation Ethical Questions surrounding Political Campaigning the Impact of Platformization on Democratic Processes in the Long Term

As a new platform, social media can promote internet services and goods in an experience economy. Studies of different strategies, tactics and formulas for promotion in social networks are gaining increasing popularity, judging from a variety of publications in the domestic and international press (Dutchak et al., 2020; lastremiska et al., 2023). Moreover, civic journalism in digital media—often driven by citizen reporters, bloggers, and social media users—has significantly transformed electoral processes by enhancing transparency, enabling rapid mobilization, and challenging mainstream media narratives. While it empowers voters to act as producers of political information, it also introduces risks related to disinformation, polarization, and the erosion of professional journalistic standards (Nah & Yamamoto, 2020; Gevorgyan, 2022; Kim, 2023)

Theoretical and empirical work during the past two decades has taken social media from a fledgling topic in the literature to an established field of study (Peltier et al., 2024). However, the research is too disconnected to offer a clear path forward, or understanding (Li et al., 2023) is included as well. Political marketing is not the exception and uses these tools to shape people's political needs. It allows politicians to put the principles of marketing into practice and obtain messages to voters. In this context, it is necessary not only to establish links between all these elements of the process and with management over them but also to consciously affect some events and phenomena or even produce them.

In social networks, these are the opinion leaders—experts who produce content and communicate with subscribers and whose number, in a sense, indicates how much the internet recognizes and knows about a brand or product. Political influencers can be characterized as social media content providers with a position on a political cause or candidates conveyed through media created and/or shared on one specific platform. Political influencers might engage in this process to influence the political behavior of members of their audience, establish coalitions for a social or political cause (Carter & Dale, 2025), and gain financial or other forms of profit, or some mixture of these. Political influencers are separated from nonpolitical influencers in a “preference to attach their online influence to political and social causes”.

The word “brand” is increasingly used in political conversation. Political branding In a subset of political marketing, political branding combines the use of tangible and intangible attributes to create product/individual/organization identity and recognition, which ultimately improves brand reputation or worth. The chief purpose of the branding strategy is to separate one company from another. The notion of branding has extended from consumer products to a wide array of services and institutions, such as political parties and candidates. Political branding has led political parties to learn of the preferences of voters to articulate an opinion and then develop a positive image (Chuchu et al., 2025).

Political brands include party brands, which should not be confused with the party's own brand. When we discuss a party's brand, we refer to a package of positive psychological attributes that are embodied in symbols and can shape certain social groups. The goal of such influence is to promote selective voting. In politics, they are called potentials, as in potential voters—the potential electorate. On the one hand, the party brand is a smarter way to differ and separate from the other party's method of doing parties because of different psychological effects embodied in some specific activities and actions; on the other hand, it is a positive psychological assessment about what this or that party has been doing for many years already embedded into the average person's subconsciousness (in this case, voter) (Dimitrova & Matthes, 2018). Dimitrova and Matthes (2018) claim that “while social media have clearly affected our understanding of political communication and its effects on the public, it is difficult to see clear monolithic effects”.

In contrast, the value of social media use and presence during campaigns in terms of politicians' overall popularity has a distinctive relationship with candidate ratings. With Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube. Looking at online exposure to political figures during the 2020 presidential campaign—a natural context that introduces new potential biases—national survey data reveal an association that is positive between following a candidate on social media and feelings about the candidate, even when accounting for things such as gender, age, race, education level (emphasis added), party affiliation and consumption of online media. In particular, those following Trump on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube were more supportive of him than people who did not. Being a follower of Biden on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or Snapchat was significantly related to sentiment ratings toward him, controlling for demographic factors, party identification and use of online media. The analysis also suggested that the beneficial effects were especially strong among people without a party label. However, trailing a candidate did not mean declining prospects for the rival candidate (Cavedon-Taylor, 2025).

Another aspect of social media that greatly enhances the dissemination and reach of information is what has come to be known as the repost or retweet (in the case of Twitter). A high retweet count reflects the power of a political player. Romancini (2023) suggests considering two whose presence is gaining visibility, for example, influential politicians and politicized influencers. Infectious politicians refer to influential politicians (that is, those whose messages are easily retweeted), who propagate their messages with high propensity, and politicized influencers are users who not only retweet those politicians' messages but also receive many retweets themselves. Romancini (2023) concluded that, as a result, politically sensitive influencers with large retweets are unofficial and nonpolitically affiliated influencers; they were influential in politics but not in the formal political domain.

He does so by combining Twitter data with the charts to 2016 US Congressional election results. He shows that the number of retweets is positively related to the percentage of votes (for wealthier candidates and incumbents) and that high-

retweeter retweeting is also associated with it as well (on both ends for poorer candidates and challengers). Thus, the rich candidate should attempt to become a powerful politician, and the poor candidate should try to obtain retweets from powerful users. The author contends that the development of social media calls for new forms of research, which can be labeled as politics of influence research, to open up new empirical terrain on the “use” effect (i.e., impact) of social media in contemporary democracy (Shmargad, 2018).

One can see relatively quick trends for Facebook content from individual 2016 US candidates here (Figure 4), broken down by type of media. Inasmuch as Trump won, it was likely a strategy that involved using each kind of content to relatively equal degrees (Cohen, 2021).

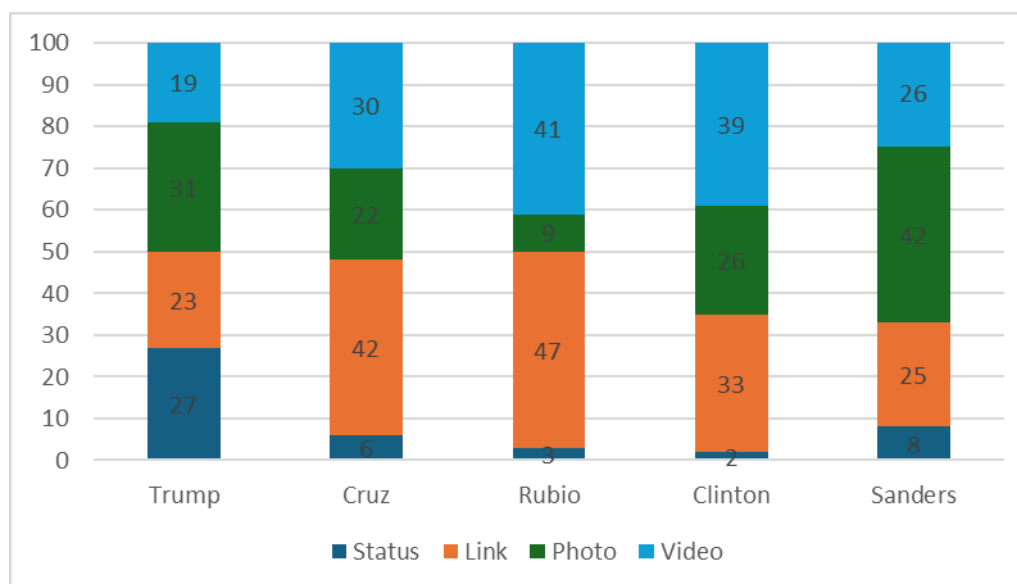


Figure 4 Distribution of content on Facebook by media type (in percent) associated with candidates in the 2016 US election.
Source: Cohen (2021).

Saying something is very political of people’s everyday use of social media. Platforms are full of an ongoing stream of content about what governments have done, have not done or are supposed to do. These are discussions from various sources, such as political parties trying to market programs and journalists trying to cover events (news) or even citizens providing opinions about what is happening in politics. In the past several years, there has been a sea change with regard to social influencers who are professional content creators whose primary source of revenue comes from posting stuff to social networks. The influencer category consists of political celebrities who gained their fame by keeping an active presence on the internet. The organization conducts three main activities: distributing political information, creating social issues, supporting political candidates and promoting voter engagement. Rather, some influencers end up being unwitting or complicit pawns in coordinated disinformation campaigns or foreign influence operations (Cohen, 2021).

Influencers are somewhat panoptic figures in the ecosystem of political communication blending features that have been attributed to journalists, celebrities, advertisers and political activists. The campaign is backed through physical support and financial help and content collaborations and individual personal views that do not stem from institutional sources. The content includes political analysis, which some authors create from scratch, while others conduct public figure interviews, and political criticism appears in their lifestyle and entertainment. The combination of adverganda with personal voicing and political messaging makes it difficult to determine when politicians receive actual support from their constituents versus when they use tactics to influence public opinion (Wilcox & Feld, 2008).

Social media networks have certainly made it easy for all other citizens to engage in politics and public dialog, but they also make vulnerable the kind of fast-paced spread of misinformation that one sees on social media. The spread of manipulated images together with made-up stories and false conspiracy theories outpaces authentic information, which results in multiple conflicting views about political facts. Political rivals, coordinated networks and opportunists often take advantage of this state of play to promote specific agendas—all factors that contribute to wider information disorder. The platforms added new content moderation tools and third-party fact-checking systems, yet their users kept sharing deceptive content. Deepfake technology has become more difficult to detect because its advancement continues to produce fake audiovisual content that resembles real videos and audio recordings (Bondarenko et al., 2021; 2022).

In contrast to legacy media, there is still more limited regulation of social media in relation to political advertising and campaigning. The system allows users to perform microtargeting, which allows them to develop specific messages for particular user segments, which creates ethical problems regarding voter manipulation and data privacy and transparency issues. The increasing demand for better political data control measures creates a worsening problem for regulators because digital

technology advancement continues to expand. The public remains concerned about data collection, yet they now want politicians to establish specific rules for campaign data disclosure and to provide easier-to-understand information about their campaigns (Enli & Moe, 2017).

AI-enabled analytics have the potential to further alter how political campaigns are conducted in the future. In the end, the GOTV can determine a few percentage points each way for candidates and causes, which is why it is way past that the Left catch up with technology—and now, with GoVoteBot campaigns, even automate engagement, calibrate their message and better predict shifts in public opinion. Predictive analytics generated from these processes can contribute to strategic decision-making, everything from the formulation of messages to the allocation of resources. General solutions to these challenges, including blockchain-based voting and microsocial networks with decentralized data stores, are thus far recommended as potential solutions to secure elections and personal data, respectively. From enhanced forms of identification to these new requirements, they are aimed at increasing visibility and reducing fraud (Enli & Moe, 2017).

However, technological change by itself will not solve the structural challenges of digital political communications. Continual microtargeted political advertising also impedes regulation because tailor-made communications are difficult to regulate or evaluate in the aggregate. As such, regulatory interventions and organizational investments focused on deepfake images and the rampant proliferation of disinformation are needed. Ultimately, they argue that the fate and health of democratic practices will remain dependent on mapping out alternative regimes of ‘good enough’ governance assemblages from configurations that are plausible to find within platforms and public authorities (for hybrids, these too will probably be expected eventually).

We can say that the current political communication system functions through multiple digital platforms that enable users to select their preferred options. From electoral mobilization and public opinion formation to protest movements, these and other possibilities demonstrate the twin potential of digital platforms to reinforce or undermine democratic participation. More research that combines empirical evidence with theoretical analysis is needed to study the present modifications in regulatory systems.

4. Final Considerations

The political system underwent a complete transformation because online political campaigns spread throughout the world after their first appearance. In the current environment, campaigns should not only bring in supporters but also serve as force multipliers of information and even direct contact with voters. The creation of political communication strategies requires two fundamental elements: technological advancement and strong regulatory systems. It is the revolutionary effect of social networks on political campaigns that should remind us that this granted “toolbox” has its place in our democratic process and must be handled with care and consideration.

The internet has revolutionized electioneering through its creation of multiple information distribution channels that enable politicians to reach voters and collect financial support.

Social networking platforms pose a number of issues, such as social isolation, the circulation of fake news and ethical dilemmas. Political parties, together with their campaign operations, must transform their activities because they function in a digital environment while using contemporary tools to safeguard democracy and secure election systems.

The future of social media politics will depend on how politicians together with internet companies and citizens manage the current development issues. The ability of platforms to deliver democratic opportunities to citizens will remain strong when they receive proper implementation. From a digital perspective, the changing political milieu is influenced by and responded to on digital platforms—all participants are called upon to act with ethical judgment in this dynamic context.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach: by combining constructivist theory with a systematic review of interdisciplinary literature spanning political science, communication studies, and computational social science, the article offers a unified analytical framework for understanding digital social media not merely as a tool of political communication, but as a structuring force that reshapes the very conditions under which political identities are formed, agendas are set, and democratic participation is enabled or constrained. Unlike previous single-platform or single-election studies, this paper synthesizes cross-platform and cross-regional evidence to map the systemic implications of platformization for democratic discourse. In doing so, it contributes to the emerging field of algorithmic politics by linking empirical findings from the reviewed literature to broader normative questions about transparency, accountability, and regulatory design.

Based on the results of this analysis, several promising avenues for interdisciplinary research can be considered. First, large-scale studies at the intersection of political science and computer science using network analysis and natural language processing are needed to track political agenda-setting over time and across platforms, including through algorithmic content moderation. Second, the psychology of online political communication—in particular, the mechanisms of polarization and the undermining of rational debate through emotionally charged content—certainly deserves deeper study in collaboration between social psychologists, cognitive scientists, and communication specialists. Third, comparative legal and political research is needed to examine how different regulatory frameworks (e.g., the EU Digital Services Act versus voluntary platform self-regulation in other jurisdictions) influence the quality of political discourse and the integrity of elections. Fourth, regional studies and perspectives—including the specific dynamics of information warfare in conflict zones such as Ukraine—should be

systematically integrated into the broader theoretical framework of digital political communication, given its increasingly global significance. Taken together, these research programs point to the need for a more profound and integrated scholarship on democratic communication in the age of algorithms.

5. Declarations

5.1. Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

5.2. Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The authors declare that no generative artificial intelligence tools were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript.

5.3. Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

5.4. Funding

This research received no external funding.

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