

Political Propaganda and the Youth: The Impact of Social Media Platforms

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Abstract: *In the digital era, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for political communication, significantly influencing the perceptions and behaviours of youth. This study investigates how political propaganda spreads through social media and affects university students in Lucknow. As active users of platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp, students are routinely exposed to political narratives—both factual and misleading. Despite their digital fluency, many lack critical media literacy, making them vulnerable to biased or emotionally manipulative content. A quantitative survey was conducted among 100 students from four major universities in Lucknow, using a structured questionnaire distributed online. The results indicate high levels of social media usage, moderate political engagement, and a notable gap in the ability to recognize propaganda. Instagram was the most used platform, with most participants encountering political content occasionally but not always verifying its authenticity. The study highlights the importance of media education and awareness to counter digital misinformation and enhance democratic participation among youth.*

Keywords: Political Propaganda, Social Media, Youth Engagement, Media Literacy, University Students, Digital Misinformation, Political Communication, Lucknow

