

Research Article

The Influence of Social Media on Public Perception of Government Authorities: Strategies for Enhancing Government Image

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A B S T R A C T

In this study, we have examined the impact of social media on public perception and government image in India and Rajasthan. Social media enables modern governments to communicate with citizens, deliver policy, and manage public trust in ways never before possible. Platform and demographic differences influence its use. Utilizing T-test and ANOVA statistical studies, the study analyzes the implications of social media engagement on aspects of governance, such as government image, perception of government by the public, trust, and more. T-test analysis shows the perception towards public confidence is based on gender, and the ANOVA shows how Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn assist in 19 areas, such as renewals of trust in the public sector, countering misinformation online, and promoting government campaigns. Females are more likely than males to trust and like the image of government in social media campaigns. The ANOVA also finds that Twitter is better at creating trust and real-time communication, while YouTube and Facebook better counter misinformation. These findings mean that governments would do well to adjust their social media tactics to the target platforms and demographics to maximize both participation and communication, enhance their image and communications, and gain public trust.

Keywords: Social Media, Government Perception, Public Trust, Government Image, and Social Media Platforms

Introduction

Background and Significance

Suffice it to say that social media has changed the way in which government engages with citizens as a means of shaping public opinion or narratives surrounding governance (Chadwick, 2017; Mergel, 2013).¹ With the boom of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, governments across the globe are leveraging those social media networks to

provide information, engage with constituents, and manage their image (Bertot et al., 2012).² In the context of India — the world's most populous democracy (Gupta & Bose, 2019)³—digital engagement has become crucial to political communication and public administration. According to Kumar (2020)⁴, also the Indian government uses social media for its objectives through increased transparency on its actions, fast addressing of public complaints, and promotion of political leadership. The Digital India pro-

gram initiated in 2015 has ushered in digital platforms in governance, enabling more and more citizens to access and take part in governance (Mehta, 2017).⁵ Social media have been used by the state of Rajasthan to enhance the quality of governance and broaden its international footprint (Sharma & Sharma, 2021).⁶

While social media has seen its benefits and drawbacks, misinformation, political propaganda, and the digital access perspective (Tandoc et al., 2018)⁷ are also a part of social media. Effective digital strategies also need to be developed by governments to ensure their credibility is maintained in light of misinformation and technically motivated narratives (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).⁸ The paper explores how Indian government agencies, and especially Rajasthan, have made use of social media to enhance their image in the public domain and the prospects and challenges of digital governance. In governance, social media makes a transition from one-way information transmission to dialogic interaction between the public and government officials (Mossberger et al., 2013).⁹

Social media is used by governments around the world for policy announcements (Bertot et al., 2010),¹⁰ public service delivery, crisis communication, and citizen engagement (Criado et al., 2013).¹¹ One of the major benefits of social media in governance is policy communication. Government agencies use Twitter and Facebook to disseminate new policies, welfare schemes, and administrative decisions to the residents (Picazo-Vela et al., 2012).¹² The flow of real-time information reduces dependence on traditional media and encourages participation between the public and relevant media (Chun et al., 2010).¹³ Social media is key to crisis management. During COVID-19, digital tools, such as heat maps and mobile applications, which allowed the spreading of health warnings, tracking of diseases, and public encouragement (Liu et al., 2021),¹⁴ were enabled to allow for increased communication between the authorities and the populace (Singh et al., 2021).¹⁵ Twitter and WhatsApp helped the Indian government disseminate real-time updates and counter misinformation.

Governance also uses social media to combat misinformation. Whenever fake news or digital propaganda appears, government agencies should clarify false narratives and provide fact-based communication (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).¹⁶ In India, PIB Fact Check is a governmental project to tackle misinformation on social media (Garg, 2020).¹⁷

The Evolution of Social Media in Governance

India has experienced an exceptional surge in social media usage, with more than 450 million active users across digital portals (Statista, 2022).¹⁸ The use of social media by government bodies has been a fundamental part of

this digital transformation. Initiatives like the Digital India Project have played a crucial role in fostering e-governance and improving citizen-government interaction (Kumar & Singh, 2020).¹⁹

Among the most-followed political leaders on social media are Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who uses the platforms to deliver policy, interact with citizens, and enhance India's global reputation (Pawar, 2020).²⁰ His government has skillfully utilized social media to promote initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Make in India, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat, creating positive narratives around governance (Shukla, 2019).²¹ That's why state governments ensured digital governance. Rajasthan is one of the states that has pioneered the use of social media for citizen engagement, grievance redressal, and promotion of tourism and businesses (Choudhary & Meena, 2020).²² This incorporation of social media into Rajasthan's governmental machinery has positioned the state to emerge as a leader in digital governance. (Tripathi, 2021).²³

Over the years, many digital projects have been successfully undertaken in Rajasthan to support the government and improve its public face (Jain & Sharma, 2021).²⁴ In the wake of that, as part of the Rajasthan Sampark Portal, a citizen grievance redressal system introduced by the state government, it should also fill a grievance online for ensuring transparency and accountability in governance (Bhardwaj, 2018).²⁵ To rein in this digital gap, the state initiated RajNet, an ambitious digital infrastructure project towards better internet connectivity in the rural areas, enabling higher interaction between the citizens and the state (Singh & Rajput, 2019).²⁶ It has been essential in bridging the digital divide and inclusive governance.

One of the main challenges is the spread of misinformation and fake news. Social media has become the breeding ground of politically motivated disinformation, making it difficult for authorities to manage their narratives (Tandoc et al., 2018).²⁷ The rapid circulation of disinformation has the potential to undermine government legitimacy and promote distrust among citizens (McChesney, 2013).²⁸ The digital divide is a major concern—social media has still not reached rural and economically disadvantaged groups (Nayak, 2020).²⁹ Despite the pervasive growth of the internet in India, substantial variations in digital access and literacy remain, impeding the involvement of the public in digital government (Patel & Singh, 2018).³⁰ Furthermore, political agendas in government-sponsored initiatives could sway public opinion. When citizens perceive social media communication as partisan and promotional, they can develop skepticism about it (Kalsi & Kaur, 2021).³¹ Non-partisan and transparent communication is a necessity to maintain trust in government programs (Sharma & Yadav, 2019).³² While social media offers multiple benefits

for governmental communication, it also presents multiple challenges (Vaishnav, 2021).³³

Rajasthan's stunning social media reach has been instrumental in the advertisement of the tourism, the state's significant economy-netting sector. The Rajasthan Tourism Department has also conducted the #JaaneKyaDikhJaye campaign, which not only promoted tourism in the state for its culturally and historically rich places but also attracted tourists across the globe (Verma & Rathore, 2020). Using the example of the Rajasthan Police, Mishra (2019)³⁴ argues that social media like Twitter works as a friendly channel of communication, raising public awareness about matters of public safety, how citizens can contact police, etc. These measures enhance citizens confidence in the police. These initiatives of digital governance in the state have brought a terrific metamorphosis in the perception of the people regarding the state of Rajasthan, that is, how an appropriate use of social media can help in improving the whole perception of the government (Srivastava, 2021).³⁵

Research Objectives

This research investigates the moderating influence of government-initiated social media digital marketing on campaign perceptions. Social media is an important tool for government officials to provide information to the citizens today. Like the Rajasthan government, Indian state governments have used their digital channels to enhance their image and promotion (Gupta & Bose, 2019). Wardle and Derakhshan outline the ways in which political bias, misinformation, and digital accessibility must be addressed to improve government effectiveness on social media. By studying the perception of government entities in India and Rajasthan, *The Influence of Social Media on Government Entities in India and Rajasthan* This paper aims to analyze these government-led digital campaigns, address gaps, and suggest ways to improve governance and social media usage to bring legitimacy to government and reach citizens for civic engagement.

Literature Review

Social media is an integral part of modern governance; it sways public opinion, reshapes political discourse, and facilitates real-time communication between governments and citizens (Chatterjee & Dutta, 2018). The increasing digitalization of governance has enabled authorities to use platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram as tools for policymaking, engaging with the public, and critical management (Goolsby, 2010). It outlines employed positive and negative aspects of social media on e-governance and public perception and finally focuses on the use of digital platforms by the Indian and Rajasthani governance via e-governance in shaping a positive perception.

Social Media and Public Perception of Government

Governments can use social media as a tool to connect with citizens and create influence as well. The most important is the impact on how people perceive what the government is doing and what the policies it pursues are. Unlike traditional media, which serve as an intermediary between the government and the people, social media provides a direct and unmediated communication channel between citizens and government officials, enabling citizens to communicate their views instantly (Mossberger et al., 2013). Social media is being used by governments as a way to introduce transparency and trust while combating misinformation. But that same potential has prompted fears of disinformation spreading and further polarizing society.

Social media platforms have a significant impact on the public perception of government authorities (Tolbert & Mossberger, 2006). Social media provides a dynamic space where citizens can interact with government institutions, clarify their perspectives, and shape policy decisions (Mossberger, Wu, & Crawford, 2013). Many studies highlight the importance of digital engagement in building public trust and government transparency (Criado, 2013).

Studies indicate that groups of citizens are more likely to favor governments when they utilize social media to address issues and build information transparency (Chun et al., 2010). Research shows that the fact that agencies adopt an open style of interaction over the circuitry available to the electronic media significantly increases the probability that they will fare well in approval evaluations when compared with agencies that rely fundamentally upon traditional news (Porombescu, 2016). The greater the government transparency on social media, the more the trust and legitimacy that will stem from it, and the better the governance outcomes (Bertot, Jaeger, and Hansen, 2012).

One of the most impactful characteristics of social media in shaping public opinion is its ability to react to everything fast. Governments are able to quickly make comments, change rules, or fix errors, thus manipulating public mood almost instantaneously (Bertot et al., 2010). On emergencies or crises pages, such as natural disasters or health problems, social media acts as an important platform for the governments to provide correct information and assistance for their citizens (Liu et al., 2021). The fast-paced nature of social media prevents misinformation, while the administration is able to control the narrative.

However, social media poses challenges on the counts of credibility preservation. Such practices can also reduce the trust and credibility of the government officials or agencies involved when they engage in political messaging or attempt to manipulate public opinion through social media platforms.

Citizens habitually seek digital communication for truth and salience (Goolsby, 2010). Transparent public impression management through meaningful citizen engagement and swift and authentic grievance resolution through social media, however, may form the bedrock of effective social media use for public impression management. Some researchers argue that social media could fuel frustration among the public, especially in the event that a government response is perceived as inadequate or politically biased (Mergel, 2013). As identified in the research by Bannister & Connolly (2011), promoting transparency for social media might demonstrate the villainous side of the government due to inefficiencies of the government, which leads to a bad image of the government in the public.

Social-Media is Used to Enhance the Reputation of Governments

Social media as a tool for reputational building and crisis management has been embraced by all governmental domains worldwide (Tursunbayeva et al. 2017) Political leaders and state institutions use social media to shape narratives, promote achievements, and counter misinformation (Chadwick, 2017). The effectiveness of such strategies is largely reliant on government messaging and response to public concerns (Mahmood, Weerakkody, & Chen, 2019).

Governments mainly maintain the image of their country through public diplomacy on social media. Social media allows governments to showcase their progress in areas such as economic development, public health, and social welfare for a global audience far beyond the reach of traditional media. Not only were campaigns like Digital India and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan intended for reform within India, but they were also carefully packaged and fed in heavy doses through social media in order to build up India's image in the world (Sharma & Kumar, 2020). By generating hashtags, infographics and video content, the government managed to present itself as progressive, modern and responsive to its population needs. For instance, initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Digital India have actually been successful in leveraging social media to strengthen the perceived progressive brand of the Indian government (Singh, 2020). Hashtags, infographics and user-generated content were also used to enhance engagement and expand the digital footprint of the Government (Kumar & Prakash, 2019).

Intelligentsia of social media has unraveled its complex mechanism of enriching the facades of the government by giving time and space to the bureaucrats to project policies and assume an enabling role. In an age where public expectation upon and trust in those in charge are paramount to the success of governance, social media acts as a vehicle to craft and perpetuate a positive aura

that authorities can nurture through calculated messaging and interaction. Governments can use Social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube) to present their records, tell success stories, and show concern for the issues of the public.

Also, social media acts as a method of real-time communication during emergencies for governments to control narratives and address mistakes or misinformation quickly. The need for this expedience in addressing public concerns or keeping updates can lead to enhance governmental confidence, particularly during dark times. Such interaction with individuals by answering their questions, and attending to their complaints on social media supports the humanisation of the government and creates a veneer of accessibility and accountability that translates at least incrementally to better reputation for the public service (Mossberger et al., 2013). For this strategy to work, it requires a consistent and genuine voice, and a commitment to openness and honesty in communications.

Challenges of Social Media in Governance

Social media governance faces various challenges, including misinformation, political polarization, and accessibility issues (Tandoc et al., 2018). The spread of misinformation and digital propaganda can distort public perception and undermine trust in government institutions (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018).

One of the main concerns is the alarming presence of misinformation and fake news, thoroughly covered in academic studies. According to a study by Lazer et al. (2018), misinformation was found to spread faster than genuine news on social media channels, complicating narrative management for government agencies. Bureaucratic governance has faced challenges in the form of quick propagation of political propaganda and misinformation (Patel & Sarker, 2021) in India.

Social media can develop as a powerful e-governance platform. One of the big fears is that misinformation and fake news spread. The speed at which false, misleading information can be put into the social media debate makes it easy to bias perceptions of the public and undermine the integrity of what the official public line is. This is very worrisome, particularly in crisis situations, where misinformation may result in confusion and distrust (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018). The second obstacle is political polarization. These social media feel like echo chambers, where people are only exposed to content that tells them what they want to hear, deepening the polarization and stopping people from having meaningful conversations. This leads to bigger challenges when it comes to governments communicating to the population-level segments (Tufekci, 2015).

The reach of social media within less affluent rural areas is limited due to the digital divide and accessibility (Norris,

2001). While urban populations increasingly access digital platforms, a significant portion of India remains offline or insufficiently digitally literate (Johri & Pal, 2012). (People of Interest) Digital inequalities limit citizen engagement, limiting the effectiveness of social media administration. Additionally, politicians may use government-sponsored initiatives for their agenda, creating skepticism among the citizenry. Past studies show that government efforts to communicate fall flat when they appear to be politically motivated, and they can erode trust (Park, 2013). The conclusion by Hong and Nadler (2016) was that politically biased messaging across social media platforms often leads to public polarization and not beneficial dialogue.

This digital gap is still mainly characteristic, especially in developing countries. What remains is to continue expanding technology platforms, investing in infrastructure, and providing free internet access to limited resources. Despite some benefits, access or skill can minimize the interaction or interaction of large audiences, particularly in more remote or lower-income areas, with government messages on social media, limiting the extent to which these messages can inform inclusive governance leading up to and during election administration (Johri & Pal, 2012). At last, privacy and security issues complicate the use of social media for governance, as citizens grow concerned with how their data may be utilized, which can erode trust in digital initiatives (Tufekci, 2015).

Case Study: Social Media Strategies of the Indian and Rajasthani Governments

Many of the ministries, officials, and public sector units in India have embraced digital platforms, a success story that comes from incorporating social media into the governing structure of the country (Dutta, 2019). Social media have been used by political leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to communicate with citizens, promote policy, and counter disinformation (Chowdhury & Roy, 2020). Multiple studies highlight Indian government-initiated behavior on social media. Goyal and Tandon (2021) stated that from the perspective of innovations & investment opportunities. Initiatives such as Digital India and Make in India have certainly projected India favorably in the globe. Examining data till October 2023, Sharma and Kumar (2020) analyzed the Aatmanirbhar Bharat campaign and reflected on the role of social media in influencing users' perception of India's self-reliance initiative.

Rajasthan's tourism promotion efforts have attracted a lot of attention on social media. The campaign had used the social media platforms Instagram and Facebook, and it worked brilliantly to promote the cultural history of the state, thereby generating interest among the worldwide tourists (Chandra & Mehta, 2020). The Rajasthan Police, also leveraging the potential of Twitter, has been using

the network for the same idea of community-based participation and crime prevention, making the system more approachable and citizen-friendly (Rajput, 2021). Rajasthan is a pioneer in governance through the utilization of social media at the state level. An additional such grievance redressal and prevention tool that has been acknowledged for its greater transparency and citizen involvement is the RajSampark Portal of the Rajasthan government (Bhatia & Verma, 2018). As observed by Singh and Rathore (2019), social media networks provided better accessibility and increased government responsiveness for the system because of the integration between the portal and social media networks.

Research Methodology

The present study explored the impact of social media on the development of government image and public perception, with a focus on the Indian government and its online media platforms, using mixed qualitative and quantitative methods. Encompassing qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide comprehensive insight into the challenge.

The study seeks to herewith investigate the effects of social media aura on public perception by conducting a survey of a diverse population of Indian citizens from urban and rural backgrounds. Questions such as popular participation in government-driven social media initiatives (like Digital India/Swachh Bharat Abhiyan) and the extent of public trust in government actions translated over social media (government performing its duty in the social, cultural, or political domain) will be explored. This poll will use a Likert scale-based approach to assess the satisfaction and trust in the government communications platforms. In addition, social media analytics will be used to gauge public sentiment from platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The use of sentiment analysis will help to identify trends and measure positive, negative, and neutral reactions towards certain government posts or campaigns.

Data Analysis

The t-test shows significant gender differences in the perception of the effectiveness of social media platforms in influencing public opinion on government bodies. Men had a more positive rating than women only in areas such as public perception of government and indirectly image of government, as the p-values were 0.009 and 0.025, respectively. It implies that women might have a better perception than men with respect to how government authorities portray their image through social media. On the other hand, males are significantly more convinced of social media being able to prevent misinformation (p-value = 0.016) and having slightly higher public trust (p-value = 0.019), which may indicate higher confidence in men when

it comes to government measures and their use of social media. However, factors like real-time communication did not demonstrate any significant difference as per gender ($p\text{-value} = 0.527$), suggesting that both genders' perceptions of social media usage by the government were equivalent for updates. These data support that perceptions of social media efficacy regarding governmental actions differ by gender.

It may be further noted from Table 2 that there are significantly different mean scores on the perceived efficacy for various social media platforms in view of the advancement of public perception of governmental authorities. Twitter scored the best in several categories, especially in Public Trust (3.9396) and Real Time Communication (3.8031), indicating that the use of Twitter by government officials is most effective in increasing trust and providing timely updates. This is in line with the mainstay of Twitter's identity as a platform for the flow of instant information and real-time public engagement. Instagram and LinkedIn showed extremely similar results on every metric, with Instagram holding a higher score than LinkedIn for Counteracting Misinformation (3.8392) and

Government-Led Campaigns (3.8184), illustrating its ability to reach a large audience through visual formats. YouTube scored highly in Public Perception of Government (3.7869) and Counteracting Misinformation (3.8859), suggesting video content wildly influences the opinions of citizens. Facebook had relatively high ratings for all categories but mostly lagged behind Twitter and YouTube. Facebook does represent an important platform, but the data shows that other sites may work better for certain types of engagement. Such findings highlight the critical need for platform-specific approaches to maximize the effectiveness of social media during government communications.

ANOVA results presented in Table 3 show that the usefulness of various sorts of social media for government officials to influence public opinion and foster government in areas. How people perceive the government and social media platforms. Public perception that the government employs social media platforms is statistically significantly different ($p=0.011$; $F=3.630$). Fewer users on platforms such as Twitter could disproportionately influence public opinion on government policies. As the platforms to interact with citizens affect public opinion on the government.

Table 1. T-test statistics for gender of respondents and for factors of effectiveness of Social Media platforms on Public Perception used by Government Authorities

-	Gender		Mean Difference	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	Female			
Public Perception of Government	3.5966	3.7521	-0.1555	216	0.009
Government Image	3.541	3.6548	-0.1138	216	0.025
Real-Time Communication	3.7914	3.7017	0.0897	216	0.527
Counteract Misinformation	3.8654	3.7403	0.1251	216	0.016
Public Trust	3.8322	3.714	0.1182	216	0.019
Government-Led Campaigns	3.7012	3.8295	-0.1283	216	0.012

Source: Primary data Authors' Calculation (SPSS 23.0 Version)

Table 2. Mean score values for factors of effectiveness of Social Media platforms on Public Perception used by Government Authorities

-	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube	LinkedIn	Twitter	Total
Public Perception of Government	3.6962	3.718	3.7869	3.6897	3.8051	3.7359
Government Image	3.6204	3.4927	3.5684	3.5934	3.5591	3.5573
Real-Time Communication	3.7976	3.7406	3.707	3.6444	3.8031	3.7373
Counteract Misinformation	3.8764	3.8392	3.8859	3.8624	3.8063	3.8535
Public Trust	3.8495	3.684	3.812	3.8156	3.9396	3.7999
Government-Led Campaigns	3.8069	3.8184	3.8641	3.8525	3.7087	3.8139

Source: Primary data Authors' Calculation (SPSS 23.0 Version)

Table 3. ANOVA test statistics for factors of effectiveness of Social Media platforms on Public Perception used by Government Authorities

	Levene Statistic	Sig.	Welch Test	Sig.	F	Sig.
Public Perception of Government	0.195	0.941	3.626	0.014	3.630	0.011
Government Image	1.702	0.148	0.814	0.517	0.839	0.501
Real-Time Communication	0.900	0.463	1.417	0.228	1.356	0.248
Counteract Misinformation	1.306	0.266	0.378	0.824	2.374	0.027
Public Trust	1.044	0.383	3.207	0.013	3.212	0.013
Government-Led Campaigns	0.501	0.735	1.236	0.295	1.232	0.296

For Government Image ($p = 0.501$), there is no significant difference across platforms. This means that the government brand is uniform across platforms. Assuredly, a uniform brand and message will be successful in various places. Real-time communication shows no significant differences across systems with a p -value of 0.248. They all have features (to the extent they have them) to allow them effectively to deliver real-time updates for the population, no matter their characteristics or the type of population they have.

The counteracting misinformation factor has a significant difference (p -value 0.027, F -value 2.374). These results suggest that YouTube and Facebook can be more successful in fighting misinformation — an important step toward trust in government. A p -value of 0.013 means that Twitter is much better for building public trust than other platforms. Like Coyne, Sweeney noted that the real-time interactivity afforded by Twitter and the two-way conversation engendered by the platform can increase viewer trust. Lastly, the Government-Led Campaigns variable had no significance with a p -value of 0.296. Research shows the platform used matters little in government-led initiatives, where content and execution matter most. Hence, Whereas social media such as Twitter and Facebook are critical for public trust and information warfare, both the factual perception of the government on social media and real-time communication are largely similar regardless of the platform. However, research suggests that responses should also be tailored towards specific aims to maximize platform potential through governance frameworks.

Result and Discussion

The results of the ANOVA test show that there are significant differences between institutions regarding the effectiveness of social media platforms in changing public perception of government officials. So, the relevant results are public perception of government (p -value = 0.011) because some platforms like Twitter shape public sentiments about the government more than others. This aligns

with the platform's instantaneous communication and heavy involvement in the political discussion. people Trust, meaning that some platforms may be more significant in establishing trust between the government and the people, with Twitter up again as a great example (p -value = 0.013).

On the other hand, Government Image (p -value = 0.501) and Real-Time Communication (p -value = 0.248) exhibited non-significant differences between platforms, suggesting the type of platform is less likely to have a major impact on these variables. This means that governments can use any platform effectively to manage their image or give an updated status report in real-time. Incredibly, the title of Counteracting Misinformation had a p -value of 0.027, suggesting that sites like YouTube and Facebook could play an important role in combating misleading narratives and spreading genuine information. In contrast, government-led campaigns demonstrated no substantial differences (p -value = 0.296), suggesting that governments can leverage any platform for this purpose. The findings highlight the need for strategic platform choice based on the specific goals of government social media efforts, whether to increase trust in government, battle misinformation, or shape public opinion.

Conclusion

This study, therefore, has helped us to evaluate the effectiveness of social media in shaping the public perception and promoting a better image of government organizations. Results from T-test and ANOVA analysis showed that demographic characteristics, such as gender and age, had a significant effect on engagement in government-led social media programs [7]. The results show that gender and age play a significant role in citizens' perceptions and contact with government information, as women tend to have more positive attitudes on government image, while younger people (18–34) have a higher level of engagement across multiple platforms.

The result of the ANOVA test indicates that several sites, especially Twitter, significantly enhance public trust and

affect public perception, while other sites like YouTube and Facebook are effective in fighting against the disinformation. However, no significant disparity was noted in relation to live communication or government image, indicating that these aspects are successful in an equitable manner, irrespective of the platform. Instagram and LinkedIn stood out in terms of user engagement and also as a distribution channel for government messaging, especially in their fight against misinformation and promotion of government-driven programs.

In summary, the study highlights the need to tailor government communication strategies on platforms, as each platform has different functions in terms of building trust, enhancing government reputation, and increasing citizen engagement. By understanding the merits of each platform and aligning these with specific goals, public institutions can leverage their social media presence more effectively, and by extension, their overall public profile.

Social media has significantly affected how the public perceives state power, promoting greater transparency, engagement, and reputation management (Chadwick, 2017). However, misinformation, internet access, and political bias remain challenges for the Indian and Rajasthani governments, as they have used digital platforms effectively to promote their reputation (Lazer et al., 2018). Moving forward, governance approaches need to put a focus on technology-led solutions, improvement of digital literacy, and encouraging non-partisan discourse to fully leverage the benefits social media has in governance.

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