

Impact of Philosophy of Democracy in The Digital Age in The New Modern Indian Era

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Abstract

This study examines the Democracy of the Future from the standpoint of the dynamic changes brought about by the emergence of the digital era in people's daily lives. "Democracy" describes a form of government in which all citizens, in addition to exercising their political rights, also choose the form of government for their country or region, contribute to its development, draft laws, and exercise their right to universal suffrage which gives them the power of governance. This idea includes the social, economic, and cultural frameworks that enable individuals to exercise power in a way that is both free and equivalent to political self-determination. To effectively and efficiently exercise political leadership, political forces in a representative democracy face additional obstacle. A fresh methodical approach is needed to search for a comprehensive vision for the ongoing enhancement of meeting the social and economic needs of the populace in light of traditional theoretical and practical political leadership. The goal of this is to better meet the demands of the populace. The biggest problem facing theory and practice now is identifying efficient tools for future democracy and deliberative processes. This is required to guarantee that the choices taken are seen as freedom, reason, transparency, and legitimacy. Protecting each citizen's human rights and making sure they feel valued, included, and dedicated to seeing these decisions through to completion are also essential.

Keywords: *Digital Age, Democracy, Philosophy, Digital Democracy, New Modern Indian Era.*

1. Introduction

From its Greek roots, the word "democracy" literally means "government of the people." It differs from other forms of governance, such monarchy or oligarchy, and from those other forms of government in that it is now ambiguous due to modern governments combining elements of monarchy, democracy, and oligarchy [1]. Unlike dictatorship and tyranny, democracy is characterized by the people's ability to wield authority over their leaders without resorting to revolt. When it comes to democracy, representational democracies are characterized by elected officials' indirect power exercise, whereas direct democracies are characterized by the ability of all citizens to exercise their political rights. The representative democratic leadership role is changing with the arrival of the digital age and globalization, adding a new dimension to the function. However, this new component emphasizes the interaction between dynamic realities like as the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic crisis, social unrest, and the war in Ukraine, and representative leadership.

A relatively recent concept, deliberative democracy is a cross between representative and direct democracy, incorporating aspects of both forms of governance. It is becoming more and more popular, and it now has a significant role in the contemporary constitutional government. It is feasible for efficient and effective leadership to live in a harmonious symbiosis; yet, public deliberation is necessary to produce timely and comprehensive judgements.

1.1. History Of Democracy in India

The Indian National Congress Party (often referred to as "Congress") first became the dominating political party in the government after the nation gained independence from Britain in 1947. The party was commonly thought to have been closely connected to Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the independence movement, who was assassinated in 1948 by a Hindu nationalist.



Figure 1: Indian democracy

India is a diverse country that has successfully managed its differences; the Congress has formed regional powerbrokers and managed state boundaries. Despite her best efforts, Indira Gandhi was unable to consolidate control within the federal government [2]. Over the years, Congress's backing waned, and 25 years of coalition governments ensued. The coalition led by Congress from 2009 to 2014 was described as having no vision.

1.2. Digital Democracy

Digital democracy, also known as Internet democracy or digital democracy, is a kind of democracy that makes use of information and communication technology (ICT) in order to enhance democratic processes and electoral participation. Other names for digital democracy include Internet democracy and digital democracy [3]. When it comes to the procedures for making decisions, it promotes openness and provides citizens with the opportunity to make significant contributions.



Figure 2: Digital Democracy

To gather social, economic, and cultural data, Digital Democracy makes use of both more modern interactive internet-enabled devices like polling systems and more conventional broadcast methods. Digital democracy has the ability to promote more participatory government and balance power distribution, despite obstacles including developing complex platforms, managing populism dynamics, encouraging inclusive participation, and resolving cybersecurity and privacy issues.

2. Literature Review

Kud, (2021) Globalization's growth has a lot of effects on modern civilization. Limitations within the global community have been minimized by the current rapid globalization. This is predicated on how quickly technology and information are developing, making it simple for people all over the world to access information [4]. Globalization and the rapid advancement of information technology have coincided with changes in democratic social and political structures throughout the world.

Dwifatma, (2021) The study of democracy in the digital age has advantages and disadvantages. The good things make it simpler for people to communicate their goals, organize into groups, oppose laws, monitor government regulations, and other things [5]. The idea is that, from this angle, democratic nations are growing more democratic because internet access and virtual spaces allow people to voice their thoughts.

Blühdorn and Butzlaff, (2020) Sometimes, society's fundamental concept of how to use and communicate freedom of expression on digital platforms goes well beyond what is acceptable. One of the issues and difficulties facing democracy in the current digital era is this [6]. As previously explained, digital democracy has a big impact on government and society.

Charnock et al., (2021) The implementation of digital democracy can aid in a nation's democratization efforts. This is possible because people may control and communicate their desires regarding current issues more easily in the digital realm. However, the government should also act as a policymaker and offer regular socialization and instruction on how to utilize digital networks appropriately [7].

3. Empowering Democracy: The Digital Age in New Modern India

The introduction of digital technology offers a cross that can be used in both directions with regard to India's democratic system. You can take use of this cross in both directions [8]. It is a fantastic chance to support the fundamental principles of democracy, including greater public involvement, improved government accountability and transparency, and improved access to political discourse and information.



Figure 3: Future of Democracy in the Digital age

Better access to political speech and information are two more essential democratic values. Although technology has many inherent risks, it also presents a significant opportunity to increase the accessibility of these ideas.

3.1. Increased Citizen Engagement

- **Digital platforms:** Web-based events and entertainment can promote public dialogue and discussion on policy-focused topics, enabling locals to participate outside of traditional venues like public gatherings.
- **Grassroots movements:** Digital tools can help citizens organize and get ready for social and political issues, amplifying marginalized voices and fostering a sense of community involvement.
- **Direct communication:** Through platforms like online conferences and e-petitions, citizens can communicate directly with their agents, increasing collaboration within the dynamic cycle [9].

3.2. Enhanced Transparency and Accountability

- **Right to Information (RTI) online:** Digitizing RTI applications and responses facilitates faster access to public data and promotes greater transparency in government operations.
- **Whistle-blower protection:** Online platforms can provide people with safe routes to expose corruption and unethical behaviour inside public authority, promoting accountability.

- **Public service delivery:** Public administrations can become more accountable by increasing efficiency, reducing waste, and enhancing transparency for citizens through online entries [10].

3.3. Facilitation of Access to Information and Political Discourse

- **Digital news media:** Online news platforms provide a variety of viewpoints and information sources, empowering citizens to make educated political decisions.
- **Fact-checking and verification:** Digital gadgets can help fight misinformation and "phoney news," ensuring access to reliable information for well-informed vote-based interest.
- **E-learning platforms:** Online learning resources can increase citizens' political literacy and awareness with majority rule norms, promoting greater public engagement.

It is important to understand that these possible benefits are not guaranteed and call for caution. To ensure that the digital age truly enables a robust and comprehensive democracy in India, concerns including gaps in digital education, hate speech on the internet, and the possibility of control through web-based entertainment should be addressed [11].

4. Challenges Of the Digital Age for Indian Democracy

While the internet era brings tremendous opportunities for democratic engagement, it also poses serious challenges to India's democratic system. To ensure a robust and all-encompassing democracy, these challenges call for careful consideration and constructive responses.

4.1. Challenges

1. Rise of Misinformation and "Fake News"

- The quick dissemination of false information online, often disguising itself as real news, can mislead voters, undermine guidance, and erode confidence in traditional media sources [12]. This control has the potential to disrupt democratic cycles and affect popular opinion, particularly when it comes to strategy discussions and decision-making.
- A larger percentage of the population may be more vulnerable to adopting and disseminating misleading information due to their lack of digital literacy and critical thinking skills.

2. Digital Divide

- Diverse segments of the public may be isolated from one another by uneven access to innovation and digital literacy, which can lead to uneven participation in online political discourse. This marginalizes certain groups, such as those from less socioeconomic backgrounds or rural areas, further depressing them from participating in the political process.

- Additionally, the digital divide has the potential to exacerbate already-existing social divides by giving some groups of people greater access to data and the ability to influence political discourse than others.

3. Threats to Privacy and Freedom of Expression

- Confidential materials and public authorities' online surveillance can pose a threat to people's privacy and freedom of speech. This may serve as a reminder to exercise restraint and deter individuals from engaging in simple dialogue or asking questions.
- The anticipated misuse of personal data collected online might also have a chilling effect on political participation and free speech since people may fear repercussions for voicing their opinions.

4. Algorithmic Bias and Echo Chambers

- The use of algorithms by online entertainment platforms can create safe, gated spaces where users are mostly exposed to information that supports their preexisting beliefs. This may limit their receptivity to diverse viewpoints and hinder well-informed guidance.
- In addition, computations may reinforce preexisting tendencies, perhaps limiting the observability of particular political viewpoints or information, which would obstruct a rational and thorough vote-based discussion [13].

4.2. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including

- Improving citizens' digital literacy and critical thinking skills so they can spot and combat deceit.
- Bridging the digital divide by advancing web accessibility, stability, and moderation—particularly in underprivileged areas.
- Establishing legal frameworks to ensure responsibility for the dissemination of misleading information while also preserving security and online expression opportunities.
- Promoting media literacy and a foundational understanding of using internet data sources.
- Using algorithmic simplicity and increasing media diversity to combat restricted, protected zones and propensity.

Through acknowledging and addressing these challenges, India can ensure that the digital era enhances, rather than hinders, its framework of majority rule.

5. Conclusion

India's information and communication technology infrastructure has significantly expanded as a result of the "Digital India" programme, with developments taking place in both urban and rural

areas [14]. The country has installed a four-kilometer optical fibre network, installed wi-fi hotspots, and linked fifteen lakh panchayaths to high-speed broadband internet. The percentage of people who regularly use the internet has risen to almost 50 crores, indicating that internet penetration has peaked. For Digital Democracy to succeed, there must be widespread citizen participation in governmental operations. More transparency and legitimacy will be possible as a result. Government initiatives include expanding data availability, digitizing services and procedures, and creating websites that let citizens regularly address issues. Additionally, online voting may increase the number of people who cast ballots in elections [15].

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