# "YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES: TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS"

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## ABSTRACT

*Young people may influence democratic governance and the policies that are implemented by being active with political parties. This study examines existing trends, barriers, and possible solutions to determine what encourages or deters young people from being active with political parties. Social movements and internet activity have increased youth political awareness in recent years, but institutional barriers, under-representation, and discontent with traditional political institutions often prevent them from participating in policymaking. By analysing existing laws, leadership opportunities, and the evolving use of technology in political mobilisation, this essay highlights potential strategies to boost youth involvement in mainstream politics. More funding for youth involvement in political parties is necessary to advance dynamic and inclusive democracies globally.*

*Keyword:- Youth Political Participation, Political Parties and Youth, Democratic Engagement, Political Activism, Youth Leadership, Electoral Politics*

## INTRODUCTION

Political parties and representational institutions play a crucial role in fostering an inclusive democracy, which is essential for its health and resilience. However, it is becoming more and more difficult for parties to preserve an inclusive climate, especially when young people and women are severely under-represented in representative institutions. Neither in party leadership nor in legislatures are members of the younger generations adequately represented. Because they have the power to shape future forms of representation, young people's marginalization and disillusionment with established party politics are causes for grave worry. There is tension between young people and political parties in a lot of nations. Party officials often gripe that young people aren't interested in joining their ranks, but many young people just don't trust political parties. To run for office, one must first get acceptance from one of the several political parties. Therefore, parties greatly affect the extent of youth political engagement on all levels of government. Which candidates are nominated and elected and which topics are given national attention are usually decided by political parties in most nations. Who gets on their applicant lists and for what roles is entirely up to them. Political parties' nomination procedures haven't always been kind to youthful candidates; under proportional representation "closed list" election systems, for example, they're often well down the list of candidates, giving them little to no chance of actually winning. In their role as go-betweens, they facilitate communication between the government and the general public and channel public opinion into tangible political action.

**Political Parties**

Political parties have varying degrees of legitimacy and organisational structures throughout nations. There isn't a single political party in several nations. Some just have one side. Two primary factions dominate in some. However, India is only one of several nations with many political parties. A democratic political system's foundational idea is the role of political parties. In a social system, political parties stand for the power dynamics and the people and organisations vying for positions of authority. They have been the primary tools for keeping track of data, enforcing rules, and settling disputes between parties. Thus, political parties are associated with social system objectives, social mobility, social change, social barrier to change, and social movement. Sociologists and political scientists both study political parties, although they use quite different terminology. Politicians see political parties as a crucial institution for contemporary state government formation, but sociologists see them as social groupings.

**Cross-party and multisector coalitions and networks**

It is the goal of worldwide cross-party networks to provide young people with the information, resources, and support they need to become active and engaged citizens in the political process. The mission of Generation Democracy is to provide young people throughout the world the tools they need to take the lead in political campaigns. Over 400 young journalists, activists, civic society leaders, and elected officials from 70 different countries make up Generation Democracy, an organisation founded and supported by the International Republican Institute. Part one another international group that promotes democracy, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPSU), has formed the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the members of which must be younger than 45. Its stated goal is to get more young people elected to parliament and to make sure they're fully involved in parliamentary activities. In order to gauge the level of experience and engagement of young lawmakers in parliamentary procedures, the IPU gathers a substantial quantity of data via the Platform.

**Social organization of political parties**

Political parties as we know them now have a very short history. Even before their inception in the nineteenth century, human-formed organisations had a significant impact on shaping public opinion and communicating requests to rulers, even if they were not explicitly affiliated with the government. Many different reasons have contributed to the formation of political parties in today's society. The psychological underpinnings, or inclinations intrinsic to human nature, play a significant role in the process of political party creation. Humans have a natural inclination for organisation and unanimity. A political party is an organisation of people who share common beliefs and ideals, and its members work together to uphold those principles. Those who want to keep things the way they are having banded together to establish the British Conservative Party. Some individuals join liberal parties in an effort to reform the conservative system, while others join reactionary parties in an effort to return to a bygone age. Throughout human history, religious leaders and politicians have had a significant impact on politics. This influence persists to this day in several nations. A political party's social structure is heavily influenced by religious beliefs. In India, for instance, it is fundamental to the social structure of Hindu Mahasabha, Jan Sangh, the Muslim League, and Akali Dal. Another important factor in the emergence of political parties is the concept of regionalism. In order to swiftly resolve regional issues and safeguard regional interests, several regional parties are established. The DMK, the Telangana Praja Samiti, the Assam Gana Parimad, the Jharkhand

Mukti Morcha, and many others in India.... Another way that political parties are structured is according to socioeconomic status. The key to understanding the state and politics, according to Marx, is the interplay between different social classes and political parties. In most nations, political parties serve as representatives of the electorate's interests, and several studies have shown a substantial correlation between class interests, party affiliations, and elector choice. Kisan Union, the British Labour Party, the Indian Labour Party, etc.

**OBJECTIVE**

1. To analyze the factors influencing youth participation in political parties, including social, economic, and ideological motivations.
2. To examine the challenges faced by young individuals in political party involvement, such as leadership opportunities, policy influence, and structural barriers.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Mangesh Govindrao Acharya (2022)** In any nation, the most important agents of social change are the young people. Whatever revolutionary changes have taken place in the world up to this point, whether they be social, political, economic, cultural, or scientific, the primary backing for these changes has been provided by young people. History is a testimony to this fact. Even India has a long and illustrious history of youth. The young men of ancient times, beginning with Adiguru Shankaracharya and continuing on to Gautama Buddha and Mahavir Swami, were the ones who took the initiative to change both religion and society.

**Dishant Parakh (2020)** This article investigates the impact that institutions had in the diminishing engagement of young people in electoral politics in India during the 16th Lok Sabha Elections, which took place in 2014. There is a disparity in the number of youthful members of parliament (MPs), particularly those who belong to the dynastic succession paradigm. As of 2018, the median age of India was 27.9 years old, whereas the average age of a Member of Parliament in India is 56 years old. This information was gleaned from demographic data. Based on comparative and historical examination, there might be a number of reasons for this style of representation. These reasons could include socioeconomic issues paired with institutional impediments that take a route dependent trajectory. The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that are contributing to the youth's aversion to electoral politics, which is destructive to the vitality of democracy. This article takes a critical look at the modern forms of political engagement that are being led by the younger younger population. It would seem that the under-representation is the result of a drop in student-led ideological organisations, the presence of political nepotism, and the culture of gerontocracy in a country where young make up the majority of the population.

**Dr MOHD TARIQ Mir (2022)** The current research is descriptive in nature and is being carried out with the purpose of examining the role that the media plays in the political engagement of young people in India. This is being done with the current status of young people's political participation in general elections in mind, as well as the ways in which the media plays an effective role in that. In addition, the research comes to the conclusion that the media has a favorable influence on the political engagement of young people.

**Bishakha Majumdar (2023)** Youth, which is the period of time between infancy and early to middle adulthood, is an essential component of human life. During this time, individuals are committed to acquiring education, occupational skills, a profession, marriage, and autonomous social engagement. By virtue of this, the young constitute an intriguing period of interaction with several institutions, including the government, civil society, the legal system, religion, and the economy. What's more, it makes the young people a significant stakeholder in the many policies and initiatives that are implemented by the government of a country. The political engagement of young people, on the other hand, is often confronted with obstacles such as indifference, ignorance, violence, anti-institutional attitudes, and a lack of faith in the political and institutional processes of the generations who came before them. In addition, social media has been a game-changer in the realm of youth politics. It has provided millions of young people with a forum to express their opinions, but it has also been a significant source of hate speech and false news in the realm of youth politics. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the recent trends in political participation among young people all over the world, including in India. It also discusses the factors that influence the political participation of young people, as well as the policy interventions that encourage political activism among young people in a manner that is constructive and beneficial for the next generation. Additionally, it promotes programs that have the potential to increase young engagement in politics, provide them with training in political processes, and guarantee that they will participate in politics and policymaking in an engaged and educated manner.

**Jisan Binte Haider (2024)** The purpose of this study is to define youth and emphasize the fundamental traits that distinguish them, as well as to evaluate the relevance of young engagement in political processes. The first step in accomplishing this goal is to investigate the definition of youth, which is then followed by an investigation into the variables and obstacles that impact the engagement of young people. In addition to this, the requirements of young people and the part that the media plays in political participation are taken into consideration. In addition, the dynamics of young engagement in activities such as voting, volunteering, and participation in youth programs and organisations are analyzed. Young people need to be engaged in formal political processes and given a voice in determining both present and future policies in order for there to be a shift that is sustainable over the long run. Conducting interviews with young people, political activists, and members of youth organizations will be done in order to investigate the experiences, motivations, and obstacles that young people have when it comes to participating in political processes.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study looks at how political parties affect young people using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Using scholarly publications, policy papers, and case studies, a comprehensive literature analysis is conducted to get insight into the trends, challenges, and emerging patterns in young people's political involvement. Survey methods are used to gather primary data in order to get a better understanding of the motivations, difficulties, and viewpoints of young people who have a direct or indirect connection to political parties.   The institutional barriers to youth engagement and possible remedies were further clarified via discussions with political leaders, young activists, and party officials. Comparing case studies from different political systems may provide the study depth and a varied, comprehensive perspective on the subject.

**Democratization of Political Parties**

In democratic thought, there are two branches: procedural democracy and substantive democracy. In this context, "procedural democracy" means things like holding elections at regular intervals and using a secret vote, whereas "substantive democracy" means things like how political parties, who claim to represent the people, really work.

- **Power decentralization:** There are state and local branches of every major political party. By holding elections at all tiers of the party, several power centres may be established. As a result, decision-making and the distribution of power will shift to the local level. Politics as a crime: In India, candidates get election tickets based on a subjective assessment of their "win ability" rather than any kind of methodical procedure. This has exacerbated the difficulty already faced by politicians who lack integrity, such as those with criminal records, hefty campaign coffers, or both.
- **Dynastic Politics due to Lack of Democracy:** The prevalence of nepotism inside political parties is exacerbated by the absence of intra-party democracy. Members of the senior party's family run for office. A Political Party's Centralised Structure: The anti-defection statute passed in 1985 and the centralised way political parties operate make it impossible for elected party members to vote in state and federal legislatures according to their conscience or personal choice.
- **Absence of Law:** Currently, the only statute that governs political parties in India is Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which mandates their registration with the Election Commission of India. However, there is currently no clear mechanism for internal democratic governance of these parties. Even while political organisations sometimes conduct internal elections to choose party officers, these elections are severely restricted due to the lack of a punishment clause.

**Growing Importance of Regional Parties**

Over the years, India's parliamentary democracy has seen the emergence and continued existence of a number of regional parties. The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and Shiromani Akali Dal were among the political groups that emerged before to India's 1947 independence. On the other hand, upon independence, the majority of the other regional parties were created. After 1967, when the Indian National Congress Party began to lose support among Indian voters, the rise of regional parties gathered pace. The party had been instrumental in the country's fight for independence. Approximately forty state-level parties have been acknowledged by the Election Commission so far, while another twenty-two have not. With some still on the sidelines, several of them have assumed positions of authority in their respective states. A new threat to the dominance of the national parties has emerged in the form of the increasingly popular regional parties.

Although Akhilesh and Shivpal are in the thick of things right now, there are plenty of influential party members who are taking a stand on one side or the other. However, they can switch allegiances in the near future depending on who they perceive to be winning. Amar Singh, who was just named party general secretary, will next take the stage. Akin to this, the party's head in the Rajya Sabha is Ram Gopal Yadav. Not only is he cousins with the party supremo, but he is also supposedly such a party thinker that Mulayam undoubtedly consults with him on every major topic. In contrast, there is Sadhna Gupta, Mulayam's second wife, and Prateek Yadav, his ambitious son and a successful real estate entrepreneur. In the Yadav family's internal strife, everyone's interests are on the line. Seven young leaders connected to Akhilesh were

removed by Shivpal immediately after he took over. He has already taken action against a lawmaker with ties to Mulayam's cousin Ram Gopal Yadav's family.

What matters most is how long the enforced agreement will remain in effect, as opposed to whether it will expire after a few weeks or months. Given the number of ongoing disputes inside the SP, the agreement's longevity is quite doubtful.

**Features of Indian political party system**

The characteristics of India's political party system make it very evident that the country has always operated with more than one major political party. Seventy parties sought recognition from the Election Commission in the first general election. There have been around six since then In addition to the many national and state parties in India, there are also several regional and local ones. It is referred to as the "one party dominated multiparty system" in India. Between 1952 until 1967, the Congress party had sway in both the federal government and the majority of the states. Some states' administrations were created via coalitions from 1967 to 1970. There was once again a scenario when one party was dominant from 1971 until 1977. In the 1980 and 1984 elections, Congress was re-elected with a majority. The situation in Congress worsened after that. In 1989, 1991, 1996, and 1998, Congress was unable to secure a majority.

The Congress party stayed in power from 1991 to 1996 because to P.V. Narasimha Rao's skilled party-hopping tactics. Atal Bihari Vajpayee formed an alliance with partners in 1998 while leading the NDA. Through the formation of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Congress has maintained its hold on power since 2004. Leadership within parties has always been at the individual level. There has been a tremendous amount of personal influence on political parties in India from leaders. After 1971, Indira Gandhi followed in Jawaharlal Nehru's footsteps as the centre of attention for the whole Indian populace owing to her enchanting personality. Outside of Congress, you may find this kind of captivating personality in other political parties as well. Take Mayawati's Bahujan Samajwadi Party as an example. Mulayam Singh Yadav's influence on the Samajwadi Party, M.K. Karunanidhi's on Tamil Nadu, and Chandrababu Naidu's on Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh are all signs of this. The pursuit of power and the pursuit of narrow interests are the root causes of political party divisions. In India, every political party has experienced internal strife and instability at some point. There have been three splits in Congress thus far, and by 1980, the Janata Party had divided into four separate factions. Likewise, there are two factions inside the Communist Party. There have been splits within parties such as Telugu Desam and Bahujan Samaj Party. The unique aspect is that parties are founded today and then quickly experience division and splits; as a result, the party system is characterized by instability and uncertainty, which is undeniably a defect. Many political groups form coalitions in the run-up to elections, only to disband afterwards as members pursue their own agendas. Recognizing a political opposition party started in 1978 after there had been none from 1952 to 1977.

A feeling of responsibility, dedication, moral purpose, renunciation, and sacrifice were the primary motivating factors in the formation of the party system in contemporary India during the colonial era, when party support in India took its current shape. As the only political party in India before to independence, Congress did not seek votes for its own members but rather was motivated by a moral obligation to hasten the Indian people's fight against the British, settle their complaints, and free India from outside interference. Backing Congress means being prepared to give up some freedom in the pursuit

of it. Congress shifted from being a movement to a political party after gaining independence. Congress was met with profound devotion and appreciation from the people. This sense of appreciation persisted all the way up to the top brass. To achieve the lofty objective of national freedom, the people were drawn to Congress. Adjustment between opposing ideologies became a policy in Congress. In India, ideological support has always played a deciding role, and this approach has contributed to the creation of ideological ambiguity. It is unnecessary to do this. For this reason, leadership, rather than philosophy, has always played a deciding role.

## CONCLUSION

The degree of youth participation in political parties is a crucial aspect of democratic governance and policymaking. Although they have historically been in the front of social and political change, teens and young adults don't always participate in formal political processes due to institutional barriers, political apathy, and the influence of more experienced politicians. However, grassroots movements, social media activity, and digital platforms have given rise to new avenues for youth political engagement. Without adopting inclusive policies, funding youth political education, and giving young people leadership opportunities, political parties cannot afford to overlook the significance of youth engagement. Increasing youth participation in political parties is the only way to create a more dynamic, forward-thinking, and representative democratic system.

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