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Political communication via electronic social networks (Facebook) and its impact on youth electoral participation in Algeria.

ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to understand the political communication process via electronic social networks in general, and Facebook in particular, and its impact on electoral participation. The extensive and widespread use of social media has allowed election candidates to articulate their ideas, principles, and goals by promoting their election campaigns via Facebook. This has significantly impacted the target audience and, consequently, the level of electoral participation among youth. The importance of employing political communication to promote positive political participation is highlighted, particularly in the electoral process, which typically witnesses intense competition among candidates to win seats. Thus, candidates are able to professionally use social media tools to promote their electoral platform and reach the largest possible segment of voters.

Keywords: Political communication, electronic social networks (Facebook), electoral participation.

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Comunicación política a través de redes sociales electrónicas (Facebook) y su impacto en la participación electoral de los jóvenes en Argelia

RESUMEN

Este documento de investigación tiene como objetivo comprender el proceso de comunicación política a través de las redes sociales electrónicas en general, y Facebook en particular, y su impacto sobre la participación electoral. El uso extenso y generalizado de los medios sociales ha permitido que los candidatos electorales articulen sus ideas, principios y objetivos mediante la promoción de sus campañas electorales a través de Facebook. Esto ha afectado considerablemente al público destinatario y, en consecuencia, al nivel de participación electoral entre los jóvenes. Se destaca la importancia de emplear la comunicación política para promover una participación política positiva, en particular en el proceso electoral, que suele ser testigo de una intensa competencia entre los candidatos para obtener escaños. Por lo tanto, los candidatos son capaces de utilizar profesionalmente las herramientas de medios sociales para promover su plataforma electoral y llegar al mayor segmento posible de votantes.

Palabras clave: comunicación política, redes sociales electrónicas (Facebook), participación electoral.

Comunicação política via redes sociais eletrônicas (Facebook) e seu impacto na participação eleitoral dos jovens na Argélia.

RESUMO

Este artigo de investigação tem como objetivo compreender o processo de comunicação política através das redes sociais eletrônicas em geral, e do Facebook em particular, e o seu impacto na participação eleitoral. O uso extensivo e disseminado das redes sociais permitiu aos candidatos às eleições articular as suas ideias, princípios e objetivos, promovendo as suas campanhas eleitorais através do Facebook. Isto impactou significativamente o público-alvo e, conseqüentemente, o nível de participação eleitoral entre os jovens. Salienta-se a importância do emprego da comunicação política para promover a participação política positiva, particularmente no processo eleitoral, que normalmente testemunha uma intensa competição entre os candidatos pela conquista de lugares. Assim, os candidatos podem utilizar profissionalmente as ferramentas das redes sociais para promover a sua plataforma eleitoral e alcançar o maior segmento possível de eleitores.

Palavras-chave: Comunicação política, redes sociais eletrônicas (Facebook), participação eleitoral.

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INTRODUCTION

Political communication is one of the fundamental pillars of modern democratic systems, as it represents the means that connects citizens with decision-makers and contributes to shaping and directing public opinion. With the development of traditional and digital media, young people today are more exposed to political content and more capable of interacting with it, paving the way for their effective participation in public affairs, especially through elections.

Despite young people's intellectual energy and capacity for influence, their political participation, particularly in elections, remains a subject of controversy and debate in many countries, where their rates of voter turnout and political engagement vary. Hence, the importance of studying the relationship between political communication and youth participation in elections is highlighted, to understand their motivations, constraints, and the role of media and modern technology in motivating this vital segment of society.

This study aims to shed light on the reality of political communication and its impact on youth participation in the electoral process, while attempting to provide a deeper understanding of the factors that promote or hinder their engagement in the political sphere, given its significant impact on the future of democracy and the stability of political systems.

Based on this, the following question must be answered: How does political communication take place via electronic social networks (Facebook)? And how does it affect youth electoral participation?

First: Theoretical Approaches to Explaining the Relationship between Media and Political Communication in Elections:

Theory of Opinion Leaders or the Two-Stage Flow of Communication:

A- Origins of the Theory:

The origin of the concept of public opinion leadership dates back to the field of research into the impact of mass media with the emergence of traditional media in the 1920s. Academic research began examining the impact of mass media on shaping political public opinion. Lippmann analyzed political propaganda and its critical role in influencing public opinion in his famous book, *Public Opinion*. Lippmann also stated in his 1922 analysis that mass media

play an important role in spreading democracy by encouraging the exchange of opinions and motivating citizens to participate politically. Lasswell followed the same approach through his research into the impact of media messages transmitted by mass media channels (Odefey, 2012, p. 4).

Many theorists have also adopted the hypothesis of a staged flow of communication, and this view has been adopted by many scholars of the diffusion of innovations model. The opinion leader theory holds that media messages reach the public through opinion leaders, whom Rogers described as being more communicative and active in their interaction with mass media. The concept of opinion leaders in this diffusion of innovations is no different from the two-stage information transfer approach, but it adds more detail about the personality of opinion leaders. Rogers and Shoemaker defined opinion leaders as individuals who are able to informally influence others' attitudes and apparent behavior in a repetitive manner (Wright, 1983, p. 76). Rogers and Shoemaker provide details of the theory in the following points: (Al-Abdullah, 2006, pp. 270-27).

B- Its Hypotheses:

- Opinion leaders are exposed more than Their followers are exposed to the media and communication media. They are keen to follow newspapers, listen to radio stations, and watch television programs related to their field of expertise.

- Opinion leaders are more creative than their followers. They possess new ideas and are able to innovate solutions and adopt new ideas more than their followers.

- Opinion leaders have more contact than their followers with change agents. They are in contact with those responsible for change programs, such as development project managers and others.

- Opinion leaders are distinguished by their followers' social standing, whether at social events or on social issues of greatest concern.

- Opinion leaders have the ability to generate ideas and innovations, as well as find solutions, if the social system favors change. However, if societal norms are traditional, opinion leaders are less innovative and adhere to the directives of their social system.

C- Criticisms of the Opinion Leaders Theory or the Two-Stage Communication Flow:

Among the criticisms directed at the two-stage communication flow theory, or opinion leaders, is that it assumes that the media is merely an agent of persuasion, forgetting that it is an institution that produces news and agendas and shapes public spaces. Furthermore, it reduces politics to the electoral process, considering the media's political role to be electoral guidance. It also warns against accepting the idea of a mass society and the limited influence and power of the media.

According to the critical school, the limited media influence theory exaggerated the public's positivity and ability to confront the media's content. It also exaggerated the superiority of opinion leaders within society, similar to the media, and argued that leaders compete with mass media and have a significant influence on their followers. The limited influence theory also overestimated the power of the media, claiming that these outlets lack the ability to change attitudes, given their deep-rooted roots in the audience and the inclusion of other mediators in this structure (Akoubas, 2018-2019, pp. 51-52).

Media Richness Theory

A- Concept of the Theory:

The media richness theory is based on the information theory, which dates back to 1977 and was founded by Galbraith. It first emerged in the research of Daft and Lengel in 1984. This theory is based on measuring the direct and rapid response and its effects on individuals

through the use of new and rich media to achieve the goals of the communicator, given that the stage of broadcasting the media message during the stages of the election campaign is considered very critical, as the targeted individuals are already prepared to carry out the intended and planned action or response, given the degree of strength and richness of the medium used to deliver this message. This is what distinguishes the Internet as a new, very rich and integrated means of communication in the field of media and politics at the same time (Williams, 2003, p. 212).

Richness refers to the ability of a communication medium to achieve immediate and direct interaction with the audience. Therefore, communication media such as email, blogs, social networks, and others can be richer in conveying the message from candidate to voter, due to the availability of immediate and direct feedback, in addition to the interactive nature of the internet and the use of natural language (Pickering, 2001, p. 69).

The richness of a medium depends on four criteria: resonance, multi-role, language diversity, and personal or interest focus. The more a medium meets these criteria, the richer it is (Machin, 2002, p. 178).

While Lingle, Daft, and Trevino point out that the primary goals of any organization are to reduce message ambiguity by selecting media that achieve a degree of interaction with the audience. This is what the media richness perspective suggests, which differentiates communication media based on their degree of richness in achieving the greatest degree of interaction between the medium and the audience (Al-Sayed and Mervat, 2006, pp. 219-220).

B- Theoretical Assumptions:

This view has been employed more in the field of political communication. Therefore, it assumes that experts and administrators in election campaigns make choices between one medium and another, which is the primary goal of achieving media richness and which media can achieve what the communicators in the election campaign aspire to (Stanley et al., 2003, p. 303).

This allows the communicator to choose between media, which proceeds through the following stages: (Werner & James, 2001, p. 23).

- The objectives of the election campaign are precisely defined, along with the audience and target groups' desires.
- The elimination of advertising media that are not appropriate for the election campaign. Some media may be impossible to use due to high costs, such as some newspapers.
- The selection of the richest media, such as the internet.
- The comparison of the available combinations between the primary media and other media that may ultimately be used, and the final combination used is critiqued.
- The success of communication in media organizations in contemporary societies is due to the ability of communication media to convey information that can achieve mutual understanding between the organization and its audiences.
- The ambiguity of the message influences the choice of media, and the most effective media are those used to reduce message ambiguity. In this context, face-to-face and interactive communication is viewed as the richest form of communication due to its ability to achieve the greatest possible degree of interaction (Williams, 2003, p. 247).

C- Criticisms of the Media Richness Theory:

The media richness theory has been subjected to numerous criticisms, including: (Newberry, 09/13/2021).

-It attempts to ignore the nature of communication media and the characteristics of each, and to view them from a single perspective, namely resonance.

-Social circumstances can influence the audience's choice of the appropriate medium, not the degree of richness of one medium over another.

-The cultural and social backgrounds of individuals play a prominent role in their choice of the medium most appropriate to their needs.

Second: The Concept of Communication and Political Communication:

1-The Concept of Communication:

A- Language: The word communication is derived from the Latin word *communio*, meaning shared. In the original English word, common means common and familiar (Fonseca Yereña et al., 2016).

B- Technically: "It is the process or method by which information and knowledge are transmitted from one person to another until they become common" (Al-Du'aj, *Communication and Media*, 2011, p. 11).

It is the process by which information, skills, tendencies, or values are transferred from one individual to another, from one individual to a group, or from one group to another (Al-Du'aj, *Communication and Educational Media and Technologies*, 2011, p. 12).

It is an ongoing process that involves one party converting specific ideas and information into an oral or written message that is transmitted through a means of communication to another (Maher, 2009, p. 16).

It is the process by which the receiver and sender of a message interact, living beings within specific social contexts, and through which ideas and information are transferred between individuals about a particular issue, meaning, or reality. Communication is based on the sharing of information, mental images, and opinions (Ahmed Rashti, 1978, p. 51).

Muhammad Abdel Hamid, however, views it as: "The social process by which information, opinions, and ideas are exchanged in the form of meaningful symbols between individuals and groups within society and between different cultures to achieve specific goals" (Abdel Hamid, 1998, p. 21).

The concept also indicates that the communication process is a dynamic and continuous interactive process, highlighting the most important elements of communication: the sender, the message, the recipient, and the medium. C- Political Communication:

It is a communication activity, and various definitions and opinions have been given regarding it. John Meadow views it as the way political conditions influence the formation of communication content, or the way communication conditions shape politics. He defines it as "the exchanged symbols and messages influenced by or affecting the political system" (Meadow, 1989, p. 90).

WOODWARD defined political communication as "a relationship for the exchange of opinions and arguments, or what is called public discussion, about the distribution of public and official resources and their representatives who have the authority to issue legislative and legal decisions—and the official rewards or punishments imposed by the state in one form or another" (Al-Qasabi, 2007, p. 23).

Political communication, according to the subject of this research paper, is the process by which information is exchanged between candidates and voters via social media networks, especially Facebook. The goal of this process is to influence the opinions of the electorate, motivate them to participate in the elections, and persuade them to vote for a particular candidate. This is known as electronic political communication.

T-Media and Political Communication

There is a relationship between political communication and the media process, which researchers define as: political communication. It is also "the space in which opposing discourses are exchanged by political actors who enjoy the legitimacy to express their opinion on politics, including politicians, journalists, and public opinion through opinion polls. Political communication has been considered the driving force of public space" (Asidah & Ismaili, pp. 137-138).

While political communication is defined as the activity undertaken by institutions specializing in the dissemination and exchange of information, ideas, and trends regarding governmental affairs, the definition limits political communication to institutions specializing in governmental affairs, political institutions, executive, judicial, legislative bodies, and political parties (Al-Aifa, 2014, p. 294).

While some studies link political communication to the techniques used by governed political actors and political consulting professionals to communicate with voters, these techniques, as researchers confirm, are in most cases borrowed from marketing, such as polling, public relations, and advertising, to which modern communication techniques linked to modern technology, automation, and audiovisual media in the field of politics have been added (Si Moussa Abdullah (2016).

-Political media:

It is that part of the communication activity undertaken by specialized bodies in disseminating information, opinions, and positions on political affairs. It also refers to the conscious efforts to disseminate ideas and beliefs in order to consolidate a point of view in society, as one of the means to consolidate or change the regime after mobilizing the public with the greatest possible amount of politically oriented content around a specific issue, leading to debate, discussion, and dialogue. This, in turn, achieves the desired participation, which serves as a center for creating public opinion within the framework of the political function of mass media (Abdullah, 2016, p. 101).

Th-Elements of Political Communication:

The political communication process consists of: (Filali, s/n. p. 397).

Political activity: This is the content of the political communication process.

The communicator: This includes politicians, media professionals, or the general public.

The goal: This includes the impact and intended meaning of the message, whether related to the function of influencing public opinion or the process of socialization.

The medium: This is any communication medium that embodies the political activity undertaken by the government, media professionals, or the general public.

The Internet is also considered a technological tool and organizational form that distributes information power, generates knowledge, and labor energy within networks across all spheres of activity. Consequently, the use of information by research centers, politicians, and leaders who control or influence public opinion is a means of strengthening and increasing their structural dominance, which impacts political and social affairs (Hassan, 2010).

C-Political Functions of Communication

The Informational Function: The informational function represents one of the most influential political functions in society and the political system alike. It aims to disseminate domestic and foreign political news and information, as well as data, conferences, images, documents,

messages, and analyses, in order to understand societal, national, and international conditions and act upon them with knowledge and awareness (Ajwa, 2004, p. 12).

Political socialization is a developmental process by which knowledge is acquired, attitudes and values are formed, and political culture is shaped, maintained, or changed, through political communication. This process continues throughout a person's life, and through it, the individual becomes aware of the characteristics of society and the prevailing political trends and ideas, both internally and externally. It also leads to a necessary adaptation to the political system (Abu Amoud, 1986, p. 18).

Political Marketing: Butler and Collins view political marketing as the marketing of ideas and visions associated with specific candidates, political issues, or public policy issues to influence voters' decisions through the use of advertising and publishing tactics. O'Shaughnessy, on the other hand, views political marketing as the process by which political institutions build and maintain strategic relationships with voters to achieve "common interests" through the exchange of pledges and achievements. Aaron O'Cass offers a more comprehensive definition of political marketing as the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of political and electoral programs that ensure the building and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships between a political entity or candidate and voters in order to achieve the political marketer's goals (Aron, 2001, p. 1003).

Assisting in decision-making: Political decision-making is one of the most important political processes. The role of communication media in political decision-making varies depending on the nature of the prevailing political system in society. In democratic systems, communication media are free to transmit information and interact with issues and events, and thus their decision-making capacity is strong. However, in authoritarian systems, where information is transmitted from top to bottom, the role these media may play is weakened (Mujahid, 2014/2015, p. 47).

Influencing public opinion trends: The way communication media handles issues and events greatly impacts millions of people's perception of the truth. Political authorities rely on communication media to guide and influence local public opinion, determining its support for government policies and supporting its political, economic, and social programs. Public opinion serves as a thermometer that measures the public's temperature toward a particular issue (Mujahid, 2014/2015, p. 47).

Third: Electronic Social Networks:

1-Definition of Social Networks

A- Definition of the word "network" in the language: It comes from the word "shabak," meaning to interlock parts of something. Shabak means mixing and interlocking, and from this comes the term "interlocking fingers." A "network" is a fisherman's net used for fishing on land and at sea. The plural is "shabak" and "shabak" (Ibn Manzur, 1990, p. 447).

As for the word "meeting," it is the plural of "jim," "mim," and "ayn," with a single root that denotes the coming together of something. It is said, "We gathered the thing together" (Al-Zayat et al., DS, p. 471). "Social" is a singular noun referring to a meeting, which is a gathering of individuals in a specific place and time to exchange views (Ahmed Mukhtar et al., 2008, p. 393).

Technically, we mean by "meeting" that this description is used to describe a fabric composed of social connections defined by mutual understanding between the two parties. (Al-Masry, DS, p. 12).

B- Definition of Electronic Social Networks Technically:

Electronic social networks are defined as a group of social media that allow their users to create, organize, edit, and integrate web content (Chu, Shu-chuan, 2009, p. 17).

The Spanish sociologist, Manuel Castells, believes that electronic social networks are the social structure of the information age, the age of the network society composed of networks of production, power, and experience. These networks play a role in building a virtual culture within the context of globalization, transcending the concepts of time and place (Shoman, 2012, p. 9).

Social networking sites are web pages that can facilitate active interaction between members of an existing online social network. They aim to provide various means of interest that facilitate interaction among members. These features can include instant messaging, video, chat, file sharing, discussion groups, email, and blogs (Khader Fadlallah, 2010, p. 6).

However, modern technological developments in the mid-1990s brought about a qualitative shift and a true revolution in the world of communication. This led members of society to live in a technological sphere and a virtual society that dominated their social communication interests, made possible through social networks on the internet, through which the Facebook website was created.

T-Facebook: Face Book

Facebook is a free, open-access social networking website run by Facebook. Users can join networks organized by their city, workplace, school, or region to connect and interact with others. Users can also add friends to their list, send messages, update their profiles, and introduce themselves to friends. The name of the site refers to a directory of photos that it is offered by colleges and preparatory schools in the United States to faculty members and new students (Hussein Amer, 2011, p. 203).

It is also considered one of the largest social networking sites in terms of rapid spread and expansion. Its market value is high, and the largest companies are competing to acquire it. Facebook's primary strength is its applications, which allow programmers from around the world to program their own applications and add them to the main website. Facebook employees have facilitated the task for programmers by creating APIs (assistant programming codes) that greatly reduce their workload and help them access personal files and build useful applications (Al-Ali, 2015, p. 26).

Fourth: Electoral Participation:

1-The Concept of Electoral Participation:

First, we understand political participation, from which the electoral process stems:

Political Participation:

Political participation is defined as a set of administrative actions aimed at influencing the process of public policymaking and managing societal affairs, as well as those through which political leaders are selected at all levels, regardless of whether these actions are organized or unorganized, temporary or ongoing, legitimate or illegitimate, whether successful or unsuccessful, or whether they occur at the local or national levels (Brou, 1998, p. 301).

Electoral participation is considered the core of political participation and falls under it. It is its most prominent form and an important part, especially since it encompasses all traditional forms, such as running for office, active work, and voting. Electoral participation is therefore the best and most effective means of achieving political participation, because it is characterized by a sufficient degree of regularity and sustainability compared to other forms and types of participation (Bin Yamina, 2013/2014, p. 48).

Electoral participation is a conscious, ongoing, and cumulative voluntary process, albeit seasonal, through which individuals can exercise their political rights and be able to make choices and vote for those who represent them or act on their behalf. It is a reciprocal process. While it is a right guaranteed by the constitution and the law, it is also a duty

stemming from the individual's social and political institutions toward their society (Mansouri, 2013/2014, p. 27).

Electoral participation is a voluntary process characterized by independence. It is also seasonal but ongoing, and takes many forms, including: participating as a candidate in elections, participating by casting votes, and participating in monitoring the electoral process (Mansouri, 2013/2014, pp. 27-28).

Electoral participation is circumstantial and is called automatic participation because it is an act performed by an individual once or several times on various occasions. One of its manifestations is voting in elections and referendums (Ghalioun et al., 279).

Fifth: Social Media, Political Communication Campaigns, and Their Impact on Electoral Participation:

Examples:

These are studies we relied on to understand the process of political communication via electronic social networks.

-Researcher Faiza Bouzid's study on Algerian politicians' use of social media and their priority issues - A study of the content of a sample of Algerian political parties' Facebook pages and their users - A thesis submitted for a PhD in Media and Communication Sciences.

According to her: Social media, in all its forms and shapes, plays a fundamental role in shaping public opinion, as they have created a welcoming and free space for acquaintance, dialogue, and interaction between individuals in various societies regarding many common problems and issues, i.e., a place for dialogue and the formation of public opinion. Social media can activate the available energies within people and direct them toward construction and innovation within the framework of developing old values and behaviors and replacing them with new ones. This can expand the public's knowledge base, and increase their ability to empathize and accept change. Therefore, communication plays a significant role, not only in disseminating information, but also in presenting the reality and understanding the social and political context within which events occur (Bouzid, 2019-2020, p. 118).

-Social media such as Facebook have revolutionized public discourse because they encourage citizens to participate in politics and engage with politicians. However, the fact that there is public debate on political issues does not yet say anything about the quality of specific deliberation. From the perspective of Habermas's concept of deliberative democracy, it is known that only political debate that is oriented toward the principles of communication and understanding can foster the development of a deliberative public sphere (Bouzid, 2019/2020, p. 119).

-Personal contact via social media brings politicians and parties closer to potential voters. It allows politicians to communicate more quickly and reach citizens in a more targeted manner, and vice versa. Without the traditional media, reactions, conversations, and online discussions are generated, as are support and participation in offline events. The messages sent to personal networks are multiplied when participating, allowing them to reach new audiences. The emergence of interest in the political role of new media, with its various applications and platforms, in the Middle East and Maghreb was linked to the Iranian protests that followed the Iranian presidential elections in 2009, which were called the Twitter Revolution, in addition to the Green Revolution. However, the peak of this interest, both media-wise and research-wise, came with the outbreak of the so-called Arab Spring in late 2010 and early 2011, which a number of media professionals and researchers, particularly Western ones, were quick to consider its revolutions to have resulted primarily from social media, especially Facebook (Bouzid, 2019/2020, p. 119).

-While blogs, private political pages, and groups established by party or political group loyalists are penetrating the totality of communication activities on social platforms, their influence in directing and shaping public opinion and decision-making is increasing. This is what the American presidential elections, for example, revealed with the victory of candidate Trump despite the various distorted campaigns against him, as well as candidate Barack Obama before him despite his reliance solely on social networking sites to gather and mobilize supporters and funders for his campaign. And nominate him." Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Flickr, MySpace, Jumo, and Wellington...etc. have all created virtual worlds and electronic blogs that have finally been taken into account, and have become primary means of communication used in various parts of the world. They have been able to increase social communication skills over the Internet, enhance the presence of a broad segment of people in electronic conversations and gatherings between web surfers, and attract large numbers of people of all ages, orientations, trends and policies, announcing the beginning of a new phase. "From political communication" (Bouzid, 2019/2020, p. 120).

-Personal communication via social media also brings politicians and parties closer to potential voters. It allows politicians to communicate more quickly and reach citizens in a more targeted way, and vice versa. Without the traditional media, reactions, conversations, and online discussions are generated, as are support and participation in offline events. The messages sent to personal networks are multiplied when participating, which allows access to New audiences (Bouzid, 2019/2020, p. 121).

-The political elite also relies on new media to conduct referendums and elections via electronic voting, in order to expand political participation. New media, through its open spaces, has also provided the opportunity to protest decisions that do not meet public demands, such as social networks and blogs. Especially Facebook, and on the other hand, modern means of communication have provided a service to parties, as they have contributed to facilitating the process of joining, through marketing parties and their ideas and providing all procedures for joining and participating electronically (Bouzid, 2019/2020, p. 123).

Al-Sari and Al-Alusi also argue that social media has been used for political mobilization and campaigning, allowing political candidates to abandon many traditional efforts and activities such as conferences, seminars, and public speaking, and instead conduct them electronically. Instead, their electoral headquarters becomes their Facebook page, allowing them to engage with their voters and supporters, inform them of their ideas and slogans, and update them on the most important developments and events in their campaign, in order to organize their campaign (Fahd Al-Sari & Al-Alusi, 2013, pp. 134-135).

-In another study, researcher Mansouri Fatima Zahra, in her memorandum titled "The Role of Political Communication in Electoral Participation: A Case Study of the National Democratic Rally's Election Campaign During the May 2012 Legislative Elections," concluded that the relationship between political communication and electoral participation is clearly evident during the election campaign period, which showcases various political communication mechanisms, such as political marketing and electoral propaganda, which incorporate numerous methods and means that can influence electoral participation. She indicated that there is an intermediary in this relationship, namely the media, which in turn mobilizes public opinion and directs it toward participation in the electoral process (Mansouri, 2013/2014, p. 79).

-In addition, a study by researcher Nahla Hafizi titled "Modern Communication Technology and Political Campaigns: An Analytical Survey Study of the Uses and Influence of the Internet in the 2008 US Presidential Election Campaigns".

-a supplementary thesis for a Master's degree in Media and Communication Sciences-

revealed: (Hafizi, 2011-2012, pp. 260-262).

- The limited use of colors representing the colors of the national flag in the titles of various content.

- The musical sounds accompanying written content, such as invitations and congratulations.

- The possibility of publishing personal photos of the candidate and participants on the website or on social networks.

- The American colloquial language played an effective role in attracting visitors to the candidates' websites and making them feel at home.

The study reveals that those responsible for communication, namely the managers and designers of candidates' websites, have paid great attention and caution in managing their candidates' campaigns. This is evidenced by the continuous, daily updating of websites, issues, and media materials, the constant broadcasting of official statements and events by their candidates, and the close monitoring and supervision of everything issued or published on websites or social media pages to protect the candidates' mental images from distortion or damage to their reputation. As for voters, the study demonstrates their level of interest in managing election campaigns, through their extensive participation in websites, their opportunities to participate in self-determination, and their marked loyalty to the candidates' websites. The American public's extensive and highly conscious use of the internet has increased their political awareness, which has subsequently positively impacted their level of political participation.

Research Paper Results:

By presenting the most important elements in the field of political communication via Facebook and its impact on electoral participation, we reached the following conclusions through the researchers' studies:

- The process of political communication is the directed activity undertaken by politicians via Facebook, which reflects specific political and electoral objectives related to issues within the political environment and influences the means and methods of communication used by political actors to sway public opinion, especially among young people. It expresses a set of messages sent from candidates to young voters and members of the public, relying on certain supports, including speeches, banners, and slogans on Facebook, which are frequently prominent during the election campaign period with the goal of gaining or remaining in power. Through political communication, candidates aim to disseminate ideas, gain support, and attract people using various modern methods and means. Candidates have turned to social media, especially Facebook, for political communication. These networks represent an important aspect of political life. Their role is no longer limited to social communication among members of society; rather, they have begun to play many political roles. Their role has emerged as a political tool used to target various segments of society, given that they are the most receptive to and interactive with modern technology, on the one hand, and as one of the means through which users obtain information, on the other. This has prompted many political parties and political figures to create pages and groups promoting their ideas and serving their agendas. This aims to influence electoral participation, which is a principle of democratic action. The role of political communication via social media is to activate and improve electoral participation and increase political awareness.

Youth electoral participation is at the heart of political participation and falls under it. It is its most prominent form and part, especially since it encompasses all traditional forms, such as candidacy and voting, and is the result of the effectiveness of candidates' political communication via social media, including Facebook. The impact of political communication via Facebook is most evident during election campaigns, which utilize both traditional and

modern means to maximize voter turnout among young voters. A range of mechanisms are employed to achieve candidates' goals through the campaigning methods they employ in their campaign platforms and political speeches. The relationship between political communication and electoral participation via Facebook is also clearly evident during election campaigns, which showcase various political communication mechanisms, such as political marketing and electoral propaganda, which incorporate numerous methods and means capable of influencing electoral participation. Meanwhile, the media plays a key role in this relationship, mobilizing young people and guiding them toward participation in the electoral process.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Although this study provides a meaningful insight into the relationship between political communication through electronic social networks (particularly Facebook) and youth electoral participation in Algeria, it faces certain limitations. One of them is its reliance on secondary sources and previous studies, which restricts the possibility of empirically validating the findings through surveys or direct interviews with young voters. Moreover, the analysis focuses exclusively on a single digital platform, thereby limiting the scope to understand the broader impact of other social networks that also influence youth political interaction. Finally, the research is framed within a specific geographical and temporal context, which constrains the generalization of the results to other social and political realities.

FUTURE STUDIES

Future research should broaden the analysis by incorporating empirical methods, such as questionnaires and interviews, to directly capture the perceptions and behaviors of young people regarding political communication on social networks. It would also be relevant to conduct comparative studies on the impact of different platforms (Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, among others) in the processes of electoral participation, in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Likewise, it is important to explore the influence of cultural, educational, and socioeconomic factors on the way young people engage with political discourse in digital environments, as well as to examine the evolution of these dynamics in future electoral contexts.

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