

# **The Rise of Social Media and the Fall of the Muslim Minority in India: The Case of WhatsApp**

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to establish how WhatsApp usage has shifted people's perception of the BJP and India's political strategy since 2014. From interviews with Academicians and students of Delhi, it can be pointed out that through the application of WhatsApp, false information and hate speech are shared, especially regarding Muslims and the support of Hindu nationalism. Many students unknowingly participate in spreading propaganda when they still hold these lies to be true. Moreover, all the analysts' opinions indicate that WhatsApp is a perfect platform for sharing false news that can harm the party among voters. Thus, due to the WhatsApp tales, the work shows that there remains a dualism between ideologies on the right and secular ones. Lastly, the objective of this study is to have an understanding of how WhatsApp affects politics and the Hindunization of Muslims and continues to fuel anti-Muslim sentiments in order to suit the political lingua of the BJP.

***Keywords:*** Anti-Muslim Propaganda, WhatsApp, Religious Sentiment, Electoral Politics, Right-Wing Nationalism

## Introduction

The new political order ushered in by the result of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2014 led to changing the political dynamics of India. The change led to debates in the positions of religious minorities, especially the Muslim minority (Wallace, 2015). Fears have been expressed over the disruption of social cohesion through the BJP's correct nationalism formula within democracy during this change (Öniş & Kutlay, 2020). Regarding communication and mobilization, social media, or, more specifically, WhatsApp, comes into play to a large degree. Given the specifics of the channel, which lets the messages spread within a few minutes and without any regard for geographical or temporal limitations, the later has become a critical part of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) branding toolkit. It is worth mentioning that the BJP has changed its political persona and altered the controversial values that it occupied previously. This has occurred simultaneously with the rise of religious passion in the domain of political competition and with the help of WhatsApp (Ooko, 2021).

As noted by Wallace (2015), the ideology and political terrain of India have been fundamentally transformed after the victory of the BJP in 2014, which was backed by the smart application of WhatsApp and other social media platforms for declaiming anti-Muslim' propaganda. Leveraging the communication strategy, the BJP employs WhatsApp to paint the party as a social innovator in India, which simultaneously deems the Muslims' citizenship as worthless.

BJP tried to alter its political discourse after entering into the WhatsApp platform, deliberately intending to whip up anti-Muslim sentiments among the populace (Bhatt & Arshad, 2016). However, its specifics how the BJP alters the narrative in Indian society and the state by occupying multimedia features in WhatsApp, including pictures and videos of the party in portraying itself as the only one capable of protecting the society from what is considered negative from the minority Muslims. Further, this research looks into the BJP's status of using WhatsApp during the election campaign. It recognizes the heightened relevance of sharing emotionally charged content during the time indicated (Jaffrelot & Verniers, 2020).

The strategic use of WhatsApp by the BJP, Mr. Amit Shah (Minister of Home Affairs of India) Pioneers, implies a change in political brand association and distancing from its previous image (Lal, 2017). This realignment, therefore, is as befitting the more distinct rebranding efforts in India. In the usage of WhatsApp, the party has blatantly tried to mobilize people against Muslims as a religious group for the conversation created by politics. It stressed the consequences that have been caused on democratic principles, tolerance, and even interfaith harmony.

### **Research Objectives**

The primary objectives of this study are:

- To examine WhatsApp as a tool for political communication in India, with a particular emphasis on the Muslim network and the cognitively influenced anti-Muslim animosity.
- To evaluate the extent to which the BJP has employed WhatsApp to disseminate narratives that are laced with animosity toward Muslims, thereby nurturing divisive sentiments within society.
- To investigate the manner in which WhatsApp has been used as a platform for the dissemination of abusive language and misrepresentations that are consistent with Hindu nationalist ideologies. Additionally, it explores the repercussions of such digital communication on societal harmony, the erosion of democratic concepts, and inter-religious dynamics, with a particular focus on the Indian context.

### **Research Questions**

The following key research questions guide this study:

**RQ1.** How has the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leveraged WhatsApp's multimedia features to disseminate politically charged content, emphasizing Hindu nationalism and mobilizing support while exacerbating inter-religious tensions in Indian society since 2014?

**RQ2.** How does the BJP use WhatsApp to spread emotionally charged content during election campaigns, and how does this content mobilize constituents around Hindu nationalism and escalate inter-religious tensions?

**RQ3.** What impact has WhatsApp's political usage had on the collective identity of Hindu nationalism, and how has it contributed to the polarization of Indian society?

### **Literature Review**

The BJP-led government's use of WhatsApp as a platform for the dissemination of anti-Muslim messages holds all-encompassing socio-political implications (Banaji & Bhat, 2020). This strategic navigation and utilization of the platform's characteristics becomes evident in fashioning a story that portrays the party as the only force capable of defending the perceived threat from the Muslim population.

#### **The BJP's Strategic Utilization of WhatsApp**

Social media's emergence has significantly impacted the political discussions of the BJP, with WhatsApp playing a crucial role in the party's overall strategy (Amoncar, 2020). Due to their adeptness in harnessing the platform's functionalities, such as image sharing and video dissemination, the party has

effectively reached a wide audience, namely the religious masses and the youth residing in India (Fahad et al., 2023). The study analyzes the emergence of BJP's political discourse since 2014, using WhatsApp's physical application, especially its multimedia components (Narayanan et al., 2019). The propagation of false news and erroneous information through the WhatsApp platform in India is one of the most critical aspects of the BJP's strategic usage of WhatsApp in that country (Garimella & Eckles, 2020). The political party uses the reach and characteristics of WhatsApp to disseminate politically motivated misinformation in the guise of 'news' (Fahad, 2020; Rajan, 2019). They do this to contribute to their broader aim of constructing a Hindu country, and they do this by spreading false narratives of material innovations from Hindu myths as if they were the basis for current scientific breakthroughs (Farooq, 2018). The BJP has used political branding strategies to create its brand image among young voters, which has elevated the significance of the BJP's brand image among voters (Jain et al., 2017).

### **Party Politics and the Projection of Fresh Faces**

In 2014, the BJP had a noticeable transformation in its political identity, simultaneously with its remarkable prominence. As a result of this transition, it was able to separate itself from its troublesome origins, presenting a fresher image in the political scene of India. An essential aspect of this transformation was integrating religious feelings into electoral politics, a strategy further enhanced by the powerful tool known as WhatsApp. Vaishnav (2019) emphasizes that religious sentiments have been strategically used and transformed into sweeping movements across the country that target Muslims. There are several reasons why the BJP is able to spearhead new leadership in India. First of all, a new method of political marketing has also been adopted by the BJP wherein voters are directly communicated to and through social media, which creates an emotional bond between politicians and the public (Jain et al., 2017). The party has also managed to transcend linguistic, cultural, and regional barriers, thereby making it possible for the BJP to function as a national political party (Palshikar, 2019). This enables the BJP to construct an overarching and integrative notion of India. In addition, the BJP has also sought to assimilate welfare measures for the poor within a framework of a majoritarian cultural agenda, thus merging left-wing populism with right-wing cultural populism. This shift has permitted the party to gain moral capital and the trust of the voters (Aiyar, 2019). With regard to the emergence of the BJP as a national party, the weakening of the Congress party's organizational dominance and regional parties has also facilitated the BJP's rise (Wyatt, 2001).

### **Election Campaigns as Catalysts for Propagation**

The BJP has effectively harnessed religious sentiments to push for electoral gains. The emotionally charged imagery and videos captured the attention of the

target demographic and aided in uniting the electorate within the framework of Hindu nationalism (Amarasingam et al., 2022; Fahad et al., 2023). From the BJP's campaign to its election and correspondence with the public, there was a deliberate effort to reach out to earn the voters' registers. Narendra Modi's style of leadership during the election in 2014 was a clear break from BJP's traditional campaign style. His personal achievements and 'term' as Chief Minister became the focus of the campaigning (Jaffrelot, 2015). The perception of the BJP as a party has been "dominated" by upper caste, upper-class Northerners also work to augment the electoral appeal and reach of the Party. (Wyatt, 2018). Campaigning remains an important marketing communication tool for political parties to promote and explain their respective parties' policies and determine each's strength in the various districts (Zhirnov, 2016). On the other hand, criminals who sponsor contrastingly beneficial activities, such as getting more time and easier access to filing clauses for the campaign, tend to forget their sponsors and connections (Gama et al., 2015). These campaigns also influence voters' participation and voting (Harisman et al., 2021). Take, for instance, novice voters during the 2019 elections who sought campaign information from social media. This illustrates the increasing importance of information technology in electioneering.

#### **WhatsApp as a Party-Sponsored De-Essentialization Tool**

The study done by the newspaper illustrates how WhatsApp acted as an instrumental resource sponsored by the BJP to alter the impression of Muslims in India. The BJP has strategically painted Muslims as potential sociocultural inferiors who may undermine and threaten the peace of Indian society's social cohesion. This campaign is sustained through the systematic manipulation of information intended to impact the public's perspective. Although this process paradoxically promotes unity among some sectors of society, it concurrently exacerbates differences and conflicts across religious communities. The use of WhatsApp by the BJP has various repercussions for democratic processes. On the one hand, digital technology can boost political involvement and access to information (Shah et al., 2015), leading to a better-educated electorate (Gil et al., 2023). However, using WhatsApp as a political weapon raises worries about the propagation of disinformation and the manipulation of public opinion (O'toole, 1997; Fahad, 2020). WhatsApp allows users to send and receive messages for free. In addition, due to the networked structure of WhatsApp, echo chambers can form, reinforcing pre-existing prejudices and reducing users' opportunities to be exposed to various viewpoints (Pavlik, 2011). In addition, using WhatsApp for political communication may sidestep traditional media routes, which diminishes journalism's role in providing objective and dependable information (Bowler et al., 2018). In general, WhatsApp can make political communication and mobilization easier; nevertheless, the influence it has on democracy is

contingent on how the platform is utilized, as well as the behaviors of political players.

Thus, this study aims to call attention to the fact that erasing the negative consequences of such measures on the actual state of democracy, social integration, and religious tolerance in modern India requires further profound research. WhatsApp being used politically is not a part of the technology trend only; it is a new chapter of Indian politics that needs much research and analysis. Such a prospect must not be dismissed since it is a fact.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

This research utilizes Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's Spiral of Silence principle (1974) to research how WhatsApp influences the Muslim minority in India. In line with this perception, folks regularly avoid expressing their beliefs after they observe they're part of a minority, typically because they fear approximately dealing with mockery or social exclusion. This viewpoint allows an understanding of ways algorithmically pushed echo chambers and insulated interactions on WhatsApp can sustain anti-Muslim attitudes. These dynamics now not only exacerbate the marginalization of minority populations but additionally impose stress on individuals to align with prevailing narratives, in addition to alienating them. By scrutinizing these elements, the investigation gives considerable insights into how WhatsApp and analogous structures mold public discourse, especially regarding minorities in India.

#### **Integration of the Spiral of Silence Theory in This Research**

The research analyzes the phenomenon of WhatsApp's participation in the marginalization of Muslims in India using the Spiral of Silence Theory. The theory was originally developed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, who argued that individuals do not express their views, which are in the minority, mainly because of fear of social rejection or isolation. This framework is used to analyze the role of WhatsApp and its algorithmic group polarizations in the dissemination of anti-Muslim attitudes.

The constant flow of US politics robustly anti-Muslim rhetoric within these circles shuts down any counter-narrative and leaves the out-numbered minorities—specifically Muslims—permanently disempowered. The study aims to answer these questions considering a relevant political context: How does WhatsApp allow the pro-Hindu majority stance to become the overarching public narration, muffling dissent and thereby making communal tensions worse? Such a theoretical perspective is helpful in understanding the role of the socio-political connection of WhatsApp in the construction of social reality and inter-religious relations in India.

## **Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative research technique to understand better the complex relationship between the BJP's strategic use of WhatsApp and the spread of anti-Muslim attitudes. The investigators organized a series of 20 comprehensive, qualitative interviews, which included the participation of experts chosen for their valuable insights in media studies. The majority of the study's subjects and experts were residents of Delhi. The present research employed interviews with young persons living in Delhi using the Zoom application. The study encompassed queries about the participants' utilization of social media platforms, their exposure to religious content, and their perspectives on religion.

The interview participants were recruited using social media channels, with their survey replies serving as the criteria for selection. The interviews were performed face-to-face, during which the participants were questioned about their religious convictions, exposure to religious information on social media, and their viewpoints on religion. To thoroughly examine the religious and political material that is widespread on WhatsApp and Instagram, as well as the negative attitudes towards Muslims among young people in Delhi, it is essential to gain an understanding of the perspectives and actions of the specific population that will be the main focus of the research. To gain meaningful insights, it is critical to conduct in-depth interviews with university students and academicians who are critical to this study. The student members range from pursuing undergraduate tiers to finishing their PhDs, ensuring perspectives from unique levels of academic existence (Aged 18-35). The scholars who participated in this research had considerable experience in higher education institutions based in Delhi, specializing in media, religion, and culture. Their considerable practical knowledge that accompanied PhDs and postdoc research added immense value to the study.

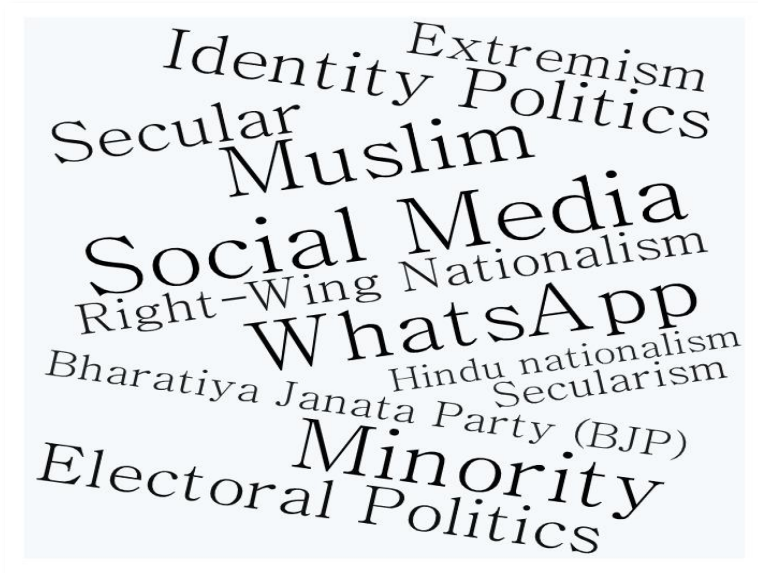
A qualitative approach was chosen to capture and understand the complexities of the BJP's use of WhatsApp for politics. This approach ensured a complete understanding of the participants' points of view, experiences, and meanings.

## **Sampling**

This study aimed to have a wide range of participants to collect diverse opinions that could enrich the findings. All of the participants are Muslim. This was done through convenience sampling, where a specific population segment is the focus. The sample included 15 students and 5 teachers from different schools and colleges in Delhi who regularly participated in social and political activities

on WhatsApp. This allowed the study to investigate how people from different backgrounds understand and construct meaning about the communications from the BJP. The primary data for the research was collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews with the participants. These interviews followed a longitudinal design for the purpose of providing the researcher with an opportunity to probe participants who experienced particular phenomena. Participants were also welcome to express their thoughts in detail. Participants were directly asked how they linked with political issues on WhatsApp, what meaning they attribute to the BJP's proclamations, and how it impacted their political ideologies. The questions focused on the participants' perceptions of the BJP's messages. There are several possible answers to these questions, but no definitive correct one.

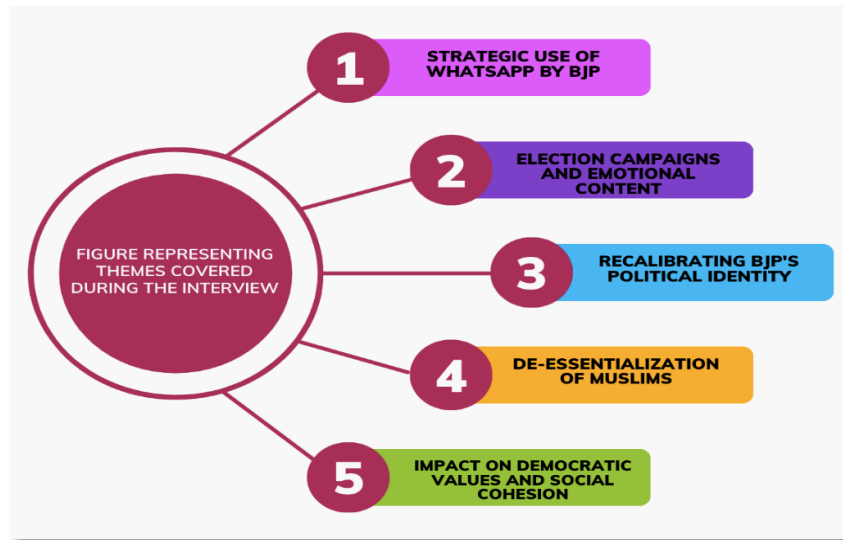
The interviews were conducted face-to-face at a time convenient for the participants, and ethical considerations about informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were scrupulously followed throughout the procedure. The participants were instructed to discuss their encounters with political material on WhatsApp, encompassing their thoughts, narratives, and emotions.



*Fig 1. Most frequently used terms in the Study*

### **Analysis of the Data**

The data obtained from the interviews were subjected to a comprehensive qualitative analysis to discover recurrent themes, patterns, and insights (*Figure 2* Themes Covered during the Interview). An approach known as thematic analysis was used for the study. This involved the researcher doing a methodical examination of the transcripts to locate relevant information units. After that, the codes were organized into topical groups according to their conceptual similarities, making it possible for overarching patterns and linkages within the data to become apparent. *Figure 1* in this study illustrates a complete word cloud representing the proclamation. It displays the prevalence of vocabulary used by far-right Hindu fundamentalists on social media to refer to Islam and Muslims. The purpose of this repeated coding and categorizing procedure was for the researchers to discover the subtle ways in which individuals engage with and interpret the anti-Muslim information that the BJP spread on WhatsApp. The qualitative study comprehensively explains participants' responses, feelings, and cognitive processes in response to such information. This helps throw light on the degree to which WhatsApp functions as a vehicle for the transmission of anti-Muslim attitudes.



*Fig 2. Themes Covered During the Interview*

## **Findings and Discussion**

The researchers conducted interviews and discovered that a considerable ten students expressed satisfaction with the entrance of the BJP due to the frequent

reception of WhatsApp messages that highlight perceived social instability within the Muslim population and emphasize the notion of this nation being primarily intended for Hindus. Nevertheless, not all pupils hold this perspective. Data was gathered from Delhi by Interviews, a city known for attracting individuals from many regions of the country who come to pursue education and engage in teaching activities. This diversified population contributes to the vast array of viewpoints in the collected data.

***RQ1-*** *How has the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leveraged WhatsApp's multimedia features to disseminate politically charged content, emphasizing Hindu nationalism and mobilizing support while exacerbating inter-religious tensions in Indian society since 2014?*

According to the interviews, the BJP has used WhatsApp extensively to spread information that supports its political platform, particularly when it comes to Hindu nationalism. Some university students expressed satisfaction with the BJP's emphasis on India as a state typically for Hindus. In contrast, many others advised getting WhatsApp messages that depict social instability among the Muslim population. A student said, "Some university students express pleasure with the BJP's narrative that portrays India as a state primarily meant for Hindus, based on WhatsApp messaging."

This feeling is a reflection of how Hindu nationalism has been shaped via WhatsApp forwards. Students also pointed to the propagation of false information about Muslim politicians, which exacerbates anti-Muslim attitudes. As one academician said, "In college students' WhatsApp groups, false information about Muslim political leaders and figures, as well as the false representation of Indira Gandhi's partner as Muslim, widely spread." With scholars' assistance, WhatsApp's function in disseminating contentious material—particularly related to the Muslim community—became more widely recognized. An academician commented, "Academicians warn that WhatsApp has come to be a platform that endangers interfaith concord with the aid of fostering divisive narratives that undermine democratic principles." This demonstrates how WhatsApp, as a multimedia tool, exacerbates conflicts among spiritual communities while amplifying the BJP's (Bharatiya Janata Party) political agenda.

***RQ2-*** *How does the BJP use WhatsApp to spread emotionally charged content during election campaigns, and how does this content mobilize constituents around Hindu nationalism and escalate inter-religious tensions?*

WhatsApp is a crucial tool for the spread of emotionally charged materials, especially during election campaigns. Students emphasized that right-wing

messaging on WhatsApp depicts the BJP's (Bharatiya Janata Party) constitutional modifications as essential while also mobilizing support for the Bharatiya Janata Party. A student stated, "Students influenced by right-wing propaganda on WhatsApp contend that the alterations to India's constitution, as conveyed through BJP messaging, are essential and warranted." This emotionally charged content serves to mobilize factions by depicting the BJP's actions as essential for safeguarding Hindu interests.

Moreover, the emotionally charged content and the echo chambers formed inside WhatsApp groups lead to increased polarization. An academician stated how "WhatsApp's echo chambers within academic enterprises reinforce anti-Muslim narratives, increasing the likelihood of acceptance or silence in response to prejudicial content." This illustrates how emotionally compelling and polarizing information on WhatsApp exacerbates inter-religious tensions and supports the BJP's agenda during election campaigns.

***RQ3-** What impact has WhatsApp's political usage had on the collective identity of Hindu nationalism, and how has it contributed to the polarization of Indian society?*

The political usage of WhatsApp has played a pivotal function in shaping the collective identity of Hindu nationalism. Interviews with students and academicians found that WhatsApp's function in spreading the BJP's narrative has appreciably contributed to the polarization of Indian society, particularly concerning non secular minorities. One student noted, "The spread of misinformation through WhatsApp forwards has brought on students to unknowingly contribute to the polarization of opinions regarding spiritual minorities in India."

Academicians echoed comparable issues, acknowledging that WhatsApp's impact on shaping public perception frequently reinforces divisive ideologies. One academician mentioned, "Academicians with an ordinary outlook express worry over the constitutional changes which have taken place, regularly justified with the aid of misinformation unfolding through WhatsApp." This displays how WhatsApp's role in spreading political content material has inspired the public's collective identity, particularly concerned with Hindu nationalism, and contributed to the growing polarization in India.

The following statements summarize the key observations and insights derived from the research, forming the basis of the findings and discussion presented in this study:

**(Student Informants)**

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| <p><i>"The use of WhatsApp forwards among students has led to the acceptance of false narratives about the Muslim population, influencing their perception of social instability."</i></p>             |
| <p><i>"Many students believe in the misinformation that labels the Indian opposition party as Muslim, which is often shared through WhatsApp forwards."</i></p>  |
| <p><i>"Some students express satisfaction with the BJP's narrative that portrays India as a nation primarily intended for Hindus, based on WhatsApp messaging."</i></p>                                |
| <p><i>"In WhatsApp groups among students, misinformation about Muslim political figures and leaders, such as the inaccurate portrayal of Indira Gandhi's spouse as Muslim, circulates widely."</i></p> |
| <p><i>"Students inadvertently accept falsehoods as truth due to the constant exposure to disinformation on WhatsApp, supporting the BJP's political propaganda."</i></p>                               |
| <p><i>"Students, especially those living in Delhi, frequently use WhatsApp to seek clarification from peers, unknowingly becoming susceptible to misinformation circulated on the platform."</i></p>   |
| <p><i>"WhatsApp's echo chambers among student groups reinforce anti-Muslim narratives, making them more likely to accept or remain silent in the face of prejudicial content."</i></p>                 |
| <p><i>"Students influenced by right-wing propaganda on WhatsApp assert that the changes in India's constitution, as presented by BJP messaging, are necessary and justified."</i></p>                  |
| <p><i>"The spread of misinformation through WhatsApp forwards has caused students to unknowingly contribute to the polarization of opinions regarding religious minorities in India."</i></p>          |
| <p><i>"Among right-wing-leaning students, WhatsApp serves as a powerful tool to rally support for Hindu nationalism and increase suspicion towards the Muslim community."</i></p>                      |

**(Academician Informants)**

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| <i>"Academicians acknowledge the spread of disinformation on WhatsApp but admit to occasionally falling prey to its allure despite their awareness of its inaccuracy."</i>  |
| <i>"Faculty members express concern over WhatsApp's ability to propagate division, which they believe can favor political parties like the BJP in shaping public opinion."</i>                                      |
| <i>"Academicians with a secular outlook express fear over the constitutional changes that have occurred, often justified by misinformation spread via WhatsApp."</i>  |
| <i>"Academicians warn that WhatsApp has become a platform that endangers interfaith harmony by fostering divisive narratives that undermine democratic principles."</i>   |
| <i>"Many academic informants agree that the BJP is using WhatsApp as a strategic tool to manipulate public emotions, posing risks to India's democratic framework and promoting a skewed sense of nationalism."</i> |

The study revealed that there are multiple WhatsApp groups among students and that much of the material shared within these groups contained serious misrepresentations or incomplete truths. For instance, certain groups circulated ridiculous claims, such as placing a Muslim label on the members of India's principal opposition party or calling the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's husband a Muslim and claiming that he converted for his wife. This was further confirmed in interviews when a number of students confessed to having accepted these lies, underlining the extent to which misinformation on WhatsApp was believed.

The results indicate that the uncritical circulation of such relayed messages results in the belief of misinformation in its most blatant forms. In turn, this helps to fuel the misuse of information by the BJP and its political propaganda. Most of the students admitted that their views were driven by those forwards, which were sent by schoolmates or were the subject of house group chats, regardless of any fact-checking for validation of the assertions made therein.

Discussions with the faculty brought additional layers to the analysis. Most faculty members expressed that while they knew about misinformation, they confessed that the amount of convincing alternative narratives made it easy to

fall for it. Some faculty pointed out certain politically charged forwards that clearly served the BJP's agenda. A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts showed that faculty members frequently recognized WhatsApp's role as an information source but, perhaps more importantly, an instrument of division.

Both students and faculty agreed that communicating through WhatsApp may be easy and effective, but it can also be easily abused. This is especially true in politics, where the BJP has tried to first impose an awkward sense of nationalism, then "nationalism," culminating in the domination of a won-over base through bulk forwarded WhatsApp messages. The implications of such a phenomenon are dire not only in terms of influencing ideology but also in terms of directly altering the electoral support of the party.

The results revealed that WhatsApp facilitated the amplification of content that supports Hindu nationalism and heightened religious divides, thus shaping the political landscape of India. Students and faculty highlighted the misinformation WhatsApp spreads, as it greatly impacts the perception of Hindu nationalism and worsens communal relations. The interviews showed that the incessant circulation of politically provocative material on WhatsApp has fueled an already divided and more fractured society.

## **Conclusion**

The researchers' observations carry a giant weight. This study sheds light on how the BJP has strategically used WhatsApp as a tool to disseminate visible content material, which includes photographs and motion pictures, designed to provoke negative sentiments closer to the Muslim network. The utilization of emotional manipulation disguised as nationalism on the messaging platform WhatsApp exhibits a unilateral approach, with a focus on singling out a particular population. WhatsApp, a widely used medium for information and communication, is currently used to establish a political vote bank. This is achieved through the efficient distribution of material to both households and individuals. This material aims to influence individuals' cognitive processes, fostering a distorted sense of nationalism and priming them for imminent elections. This strategy resembles previous electoral campaigns, whereby the propagation of concepts like Hindu Rashtra, Ram Mandir, and cow protection was employed (Noronha, 1994). To safeguard the integrity and unity of the nation, the Supreme Court of India must adopt robust measures to ensure equitable electoral processes and deter illicit conduct.

The spiral of Silence theory is included in the present study; the conclusion that can be drawn is how the app WhatsApp enables the oppression of minority Muslim voices in the Indian political context. This view is consistent with the

spiral of silence theory, which states that the fear of being isolated from society makes people not speak out about their opinions, which are in the minority. Considering the situation on WhatsApp, where people belong to closed groups and echo chambers, anti-Muslim voices are dominant, hence silencing the opposition. This state of affairs also strengthens the majoritarian angle, discourages any opposing reviews, increases the extent of societal polarization, and, as such, has a vital effect on political and social members of the family in India.

#### **Limitations And Future Research**

Though the study is informative, it has some shortcomings which should be considered before making any conclusions. Nevertheless, the results give new insights into how young people associate religious sentiments with social media activities. In conclusion, there are many areas to be researched in the future that can strengthen the foundation laid by this study. An extended report about different zones and other social media platforms apart from WhatsApp as an interaction instrument may increase our knowledge regarding these ambiguous digital environments.

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