

# Permanent Campaign in Digital Age - A Special Reference to Tamil Nadu

Dr. G. V. Neelambari<sup>1</sup>, Dr. J. Balasubramaniam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Independent Political Communication Researcher

Email: neelambari94[at]gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Science Communication, Madurai Kamaraj University, Tamil Nadu, India

Email: balumids[at]gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The proliferation of social media platforms has fundamentally transformed political communication, establishing the permanent campaign—Sidney Blumenthal's concept of continuous political mobilization beyond election periods—as a digital-age imperative. This narrative review examines how Tamil Nadu's dominant parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), have adapted permanent campaigning strategies for digital platforms over the past decade. By synthesizing academic literature, media reports, and digital campaign materials, this study reveals that social media has enabled a more continuous, interactive, and personality-driven campaign style in Tamil Nadu politics. Both parties leverage Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp to maintain voter engagement, disseminate content, and sustain political narratives between electoral cycles. The analysis demonstrates how digital platforms have enhanced traditional Dravidian political communication—characterized by charismatic leadership and mass mobilization—while introducing new challenges including polarization and misinformation. The findings highlight that permanent campaigning in Tamil Nadu has evolved from periodic rallies to 24/7 digital engagement, fundamentally altering the relationship between political parties and constituents. This review contributes to understanding digital-era campaigning practices in South Asian democracy and offers insights into the intersection of regional political culture with global communication technologies.*

**Keywords:** Permanent campaign, Tamil Nadu politics, DMK, AIADMK, social media, political communication, digital democracy

## 1. Introduction

One of the fundamental principles of democracy is that citizens possess the authority to elect their leaders and determine their governance through the electoral process, making elections a cornerstone of democratic systems. Social scientists have observed that when individuals are presented with an abundance of choices, they often experience confusion. Competitive propaganda can mitigate this confusion by enabling voters to distinguish among options, helping them decide (Herman & Chomsky, 1989).

In the realm of propaganda studies, Lasswell advocated for democratic propaganda to address this confusion, while Lippman proposed the guidance of a scientific technocrat, and Dewey emphasized the role of education in fostering rational thought (Baran & Davis, 2015). Unlike propaganda, which requires a prolonged period, election campaigns are conducted by political parties to distinguish themselves from competitors during elections. These campaigns utilize various media and strategies to persuade voters, intensifying from the election notification day to the election day<sup>1</sup>.

The study of media, campaigns, and voting, which commenced in the 1940s, forms the foundation of media research. Pioneers such as Lasswell and Lazarsfeld traced the effects of media through the study of election campaigns (Baran & Davis, 2015). As focus on election campaigns expanded, various theories emerged to enhance campaign strategies by concentrating on media and candidates. Over time, the campaign period extended beyond the immediate pre-election phase, with communication becoming more robust and engaging during elections. This evolution has

blurred the distinction between election-time campaigning and off-cycle communication, leading to the concept of the “permanent campaign”.

Observations of permanent campaigns have primarily emerged from Western countries in recent years, highlighting the significance of continuous campaigning to reinforce propaganda outside of election periods. The term “permanent campaign” was first introduced by Patrick Caddell, a strategist and pollster, in his 1976 memo “Initial Working Paper on Political Strategy” to then-President-elect Jimmy Carter, asserting that “governing with public approval requires a continuing political campaign” (Haryono et al., 2022; Jonathan & Lilleker, 2020; Klein, 2005; Stier et al., 2018). This concept has inspired extensive scholarly research.

Blumenthal later expanded on the notion of the permanent campaign in 1980, describing it as the continuous effort to win public opinion, create a positive image, build trust, and project towards re-election, even while in power. He defined the permanent campaign as a “combination of image making and strategic calculation to maintain popularity” (Blumenthal, 1982). William A. Galston, in his Wall Street Journal article, noted that “the distinction between campaigning and governing has collapsed, and governing has been reconstructed along campaign lines, with endless survey research playing a pivotal role” (Galston, 2014). Ornstein and Mann (2000) further categorized the permanent campaign as an ongoing, year-round cycle of governing and campaigning.

The book “Permanent Campaign and its Future” discusses the necessity of permanent campaigns in contemporary

<sup>1</sup> Supposedly till 48 hours before voting. However, the 2021 TN state election witnessed advertisements in the newspaper even on the day

of voting. It implies the transition of election campaign to permanent campaign more effectively.

democracy. Hugh Heclo, in his article “Campaigning and Governing - A Conspectus,” highlights factors contributing to the normalization of permanent campaigns, including the decline of party power, the rise of interest group politics, the development of new communication technologies, the use of new political technologies, the necessity of political funding, and the increasing stakes in activist government. He also cautions that this trend could lead to a situation where the public believes whatever pleases them is true, echoing Blumenthal’s warnings in “The Permanent Campaign” (Ornstein & Mann, 2000).

Kathryn Dunn Tenpas discusses both the positive and negative aspects of permanent campaigns, suggesting that while they may slow the governing process, they also provide a platform for public scrutiny (Ornstein & Mann, 2000). Additionally, in a HuffPost opinion piece, Shivam Vij questioned the necessity of permanent campaigns, arguing that if actual development occurs, it should be visible to the public organically (Vij, 2017).

In today’s political landscape, parties increasingly rely on emotionally resonant and meticulously crafted messages disseminated throughout the year, rather than providing tangible benefits, to gain public trust. This strategy has resulted in the phenomenon of the permanent campaign, where the ultimate goal is to continuously win public favor.

### Permanent Campaign in India

India operates under a multi-party system, where political parties form coalitions and participate in elections every five years. Typically, the winning parties assume governance, while the opposition exercises its role. After five years, voters evaluate the ruling party’s performance, which informs their electoral decisions. India boasts robust social capital, with political leaders and parties relying heavily on grassroots participation. However, according to Thomas Patterson’s Media Intrusion Theory, the mainstream media’s intrusion into the political sphere has led to a decline in social capital, compelling parties to rely more on financial resources and media influence (Baran & Davis, 2015). Consequently, the party that spends the most on election campaigns often garners more votes.

Anthony Corrado explains the necessity of campaign financing, noting that expenditure by political parties on campaigns has increased across major democracies (Ornstein & Mann, 2000). According to a Business Standard report, between 2015 and 2020, national and regional parties in India spent Rs 6500 crores on campaign-related activities, with more than Rs 34 billion (52.3%) allocated to publicity alone (Standard, 2021). The ECI report of 2024 election confirms the increasing demand for online advertising among parties. Congress has spent 476.9million, whereas regional political parties in India (YSR Congress, Biju Janata Dal, DMK, AIADMK, Janata Dal (Untied), and Janata Dal (Secular)) combined had spent 1669 million for google ads.

The pursuit of reclaiming office in subsequent elections remains steadfast, with campaigns continuing unabated. Despite Patterson’s suggestion to curtail the influence of social capital and media intrusion by shortening campaign durations, the relentless progress of technology and the increasing involvement of third parties in politics have blurred the distinction between campaign phases, rendering them seemingly permanent.

Blumenthal highlights that the presence of political strategists, alongside technological advancements, has contributed to the growth of permanent campaigns (Blumenthal, 1982). These strategists have restructured campaign models, and each party invests heavily in recruiting them to enhance their popularity across all mediums. Notable figures in this domain include Prashant Kishore and Sunil, whom the BJP and Congress have attempted to enlist. Prashant Kishore and IPAC are credited with the rise of Narendra Modi, the former Chief Minister of Gujarat, to the position of Prime Minister, as well as the successful integration of Captain Amarinder Singh into the hearts of Punjab’s populace through their permanent campaign strategies (Jha, 2017). As noted by The Print, “It is difficult to recall a time before Modi when politicians campaigned solely during elections. It is equally difficult to remember a time when Modi was not campaigning” (Vij, 2019).

The notion of the permanent campaign also raises concerns about a perpetual election cycle, with campaign strategies influencing the timing of elections. The change in Maharashtra’s Chief Minister in 2022 and Karnataka’s election in 2019 exemplify the role of permanent campaigns in precipitating permanent elections.

Thus, the concept of a permanent campaign revolves around maintaining political power and enhancing a party’s visibility and strength in both electoral and financial arenas. It is considered a dominant political ideology of our time (Blumenthal, 1982), becoming essential for political engagement. Success is now measured in days and weeks rather than months or years. Additionally, as parties grow, the Election Commission of India’s recognition<sup>2</sup> becomes fundamental for maintaining and expanding their popularity.

In modern politics, the focus has shifted towards building the popularity of individuals rather than political parties. A study analyzing BJP’s campaigning strategy revealed that Modi received significant media coverage even during the Congress period. The party recruited individuals from diverse backgrounds to support Modi in various capacities. One of BJP’s key tactics is to frequently conduct noteworthy events to capture media attention and demonstrate their political presence (Jha, 2017; Singh, 2019). Engaging with people through microtargeting, such as creating WhatsApp groups at the ward level and categorizing individuals, has become a common strategy. However, the tactic of repeating a falsehood until it is perceived as truth, as noted by Goebbels, has been heavily utilized by the BJP since 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Any party can register under the Election Commission of India. But based on the vote share and the number of seats won, ECI recognizes certain parties as State and National parties.

Arvind Kejriwal is another example of a leader who has expanded his power through permanent campaigns. His Parivartan and Jan Lokpal movements, alongside Anna Hazare, attracted many young people and led to his becoming the Chief Minister of Delhi. Historical examples of permanent campaigns include NTR's Chaitanya Ratham Yatra in 1983, Advani's Ratha Yatra, Jagan Mohan Reddy's Praja Sankalpa Yatra, and Rajasekhara Reddy's three-month Padayatra, which contributed to their parties' victories in 2004.

### Tools and Methods in Permanent Campaigning: A Comparative Analysis

Numerous studies and analyses of the US political landscape have demonstrated that touring key political and electoral locations, alongside fundraising, are the most commonly utilized tactics by presidents seeking re-election (Doherty, 2012). After examining George W. Bush's permanent campaign strategy, this article highlights two key tools that enhanced his public persona: engaging in domestic travel and fundraising.

Visiting specific locations is common in political campaigns, and the choice of locations plays a crucial role. Visiting swing states and areas where the opposition holds a majority can be highly effective, as noted by Tenpas and Corrado (2004). Caddell has also emphasized the power of projecting a humble and approachable image, which can be achieved through informal presidential behavior, reduced pomp and circumstance, and relatable communication methods such as fireside chats and casual attire (Klein, 2005).

In his article "The Press and Permanent Campaign", Stephen Hess examines the evolving role of the press, noting that it has adapted to current needs by leveraging the permanent campaign to its advantage. According to Burdett Loomis, the permanent campaign has evolved into an industry focused on inventing, honing, and selling narratives. This type of campaign utilizes imagery and language to promote ideas and objectives (Ornstein & Mann, 2000). The strategic use of photographs invokes a schema and builds an image, while the effective use of images and emotions is employed to attract and inform voters, as highlighted by Veneti et al. (2019). Consequently, a crucial permanent campaign technique is to engage in continuous activities that attract media coverage.

A recent opinion article in The Print underscores the significance of celebrities and other high-profile figures in political campaigns. The article identifies speeches, rallies, large-scale events, and hashtags as primary tools of modern campaigning. Additionally, strategies such as hosting dinners with prominent party leaders and enlisting celebrity endorsements are often used to broaden the party's support base.

Dravidian political campaigns have long employed the tools and techniques of a permanent campaign, including the strategic manipulation of media narratives. Through the use of imagery and language, this practice has garnered significant academic attention over the years. With each party

controlling its own newspaper, television, and radio outlets, narrative-building has become a routine responsibility of party leadership. Moreover, maintaining a constant and consistent message has proven to be a highly effective strategy in Dravidian political campaigning.

### Permanent Campaign in Tamil Nadu

The assertion that "Modi has brought a permanent campaign to India" (Vij, 2019) is met with skepticism when considering the longstanding tradition of permanent campaigns in Tamil Nadu initiated by the Dravidian political parties. These parties have consistently engaged with the public through various propaganda tools such as protests, meetings, newspapers, magazines, dramas, television and cinema productions, and street media throughout the year.

Dravidian party district secretaries are evaluated based on their participation in rallies, conferences, protests, and press meets, both during and outside their time in power. Constant interactions, public displays, and the widespread use of flags and banners are integral components of the Dravidian parties' enduring campaign strategy. Notably, other political entities in Tamil Nadu also strive to maintain visibility and activity during non-election periods.

A closer examination of touring and fundraising techniques within permanent campaigns reveals the strategies employed by Dravidian parties. Leaders of the DMK and AIADMK tour the state, holding numerous public meetings and conferences even outside election periods. Cultural activities integrated into these events serve as opportunities to raise funds from the audience. Historical instances, such as Annadurai's fundraising through special meetings and Karunanidhi's use of drama for fundraising, underscore the enduring nature of these campaign practices (Chidambaram, 1987). A notable example is the "Nammaku Namae" "tour campaign by M.K. Stalin as an opposition party leader.

Analyzing permanent campaign techniques in the contemporary political scenario, particularly during the 2021 elections, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) faced challenges in attaining a majority in the Kongu region. Since assuming office, M.K. Stalin directed the party's central attention toward the Kongu belt, employing an inclusive strategy by assuring the electorate, "Despite not receiving your vote, we commit to treating you with the utmost consideration". This approach mirrors the party's efforts in regions historically dominated by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), particularly those inhabited by North Indian settlers. Thus, enduring campaigns in less majority and swing areas form a crucial part of the party's permanent campaign strategy.

The celebration of festivals, notable occasions, and designating a day to celebrate party history are additional methods used to reconnect the party with the people. For instance, Social Justice Day was declared by the government on September 17<sup>3</sup>, the day DMK was formed, and social justice icon Periyar<sup>4</sup> was born. A series of events

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/tn-to-observe-periyars-birth-anniversary-as-day-of-social-justice/article36316864.ece>

<sup>4</sup> E.V.Ramasamy also known as Periyar, is the founder of self-respect movement and the ideological forefather of Dravidian parties

commemorating the occasion engaged with the public. Similarly, AIADMK commemorated M.G.R's 100th birthday by building an arch and conducting a series of events. Sathanai Villakka Koottam<sup>5</sup> (Achievement Briefing Meetings) held on the 100th day and annually are enduring elements within Tamil Nadu's political milieu, transcending changes in ruling parties. Exhibitions highlighting achievements are consistently presented in public spaces, including bus stands and railway stations. Additionally, events like book festivals, literary festivals, and cultural festivals (Chennai Sangamam), funded by the party and government, attract niche populations. Special events such as Mupperum Vizha and Nootrandu Vizha, along with hosting world-renowned sports events like the Chess Olympiad, also contribute to continuous campaign efforts.

A common political strategy involves renaming buildings, roads, and streets during a governing period. Typically, names of prominent party leaders and individuals tied to Tamil culture and identity are selected, creating a platform for ideological messaging<sup>6</sup>. During its governance, AIADMK attempted to correct the English spelling of 1,018 cities in the state, projecting a language revival image, though it received significant criticism.

Another method to maintain a high profile in the media and with citizens is introducing new schemes while in power. Dravidian politics is renowned for its emphasis on welfare measures, and political manifestos have significantly transformed with the introduction of extensive giveaways by Dravidian parties. These initiatives, often laden with freebies, represent a form of populist politics that bolsters the party's popularity during its tenure. Current initiatives like 'Makkalai Thedi' (In Search of People) and IIPGCMS (CM Helpline) Muthalvarin Mugavari are designed to focus on the needs of the people and emphasize that the government is already aware of their concerns. This technique adds another dimension to sustained public engagement and reinforces the ruling party's long-term impact on the state's political landscape.

As Dravidian parties rely on social capital, schemes and activities facilitating grassroots mobilization and participation are considered crucial. The campaign strategy could witness the growth of political elites, as theorized by V.O.Key, becoming integral. Units like Dravidian 2.0 and Wing2pointO within the party reflect democratic practices aimed at engaging and attracting young individuals to propagate the ideology and sustain the campaign by turning them into opinion leaders within their circles. While campaigns like "Dinner with CM" remain rare, media interactions with party members and leaders are constant. Celebrity endorsements also add an advantage to the campaign.

Other recognized political parties, such as the Indian National Congress (INC), primarily organize camps and rallies. They maintain a consistent presence in the state by hosting national leaders like Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. In contrast, the

BJP relies on constant criticism and press meetings to bolster its campaign efforts. The media's persistent attention, both positive and negative, has propelled the BJP into the political spotlight, despite their previous lack of prominence. Smaller and emerging parties in the state also prioritize activities such as meetings, protests, press conferences, and media interactions to increase their visibility and secure a spot in the next election.

### Social Media as a Tool for Permanent Campaigning

Research on political outreach has demonstrated that social media serves as a powerful alternative method for engaging the public, particularly in the case of Narendra Modi (Chakraborty et al., 2018). Since the advent of social media in India, its use has been highly appropriated by politicians for efficient and rapid engagement. Most politicians from major political parties in India have established official accounts on social media platforms to facilitate communication.

Initially leveraging Facebook, politicians swiftly transitioned to Twitter (formerly X), finding its character limit to be an effective tool for succinct and impactful communication. Over time, Twitter has evolved into an official communication platform for politicians, facilitating daily interactions, opinion expression, and public engagement. It has become a digital public sphere for debates and canvassing, providing a two-way communication channel that resonates with the public. This accessibility has made it a preferred route for citizens to reach out to their political representatives, redefining political communication with the rise of dedicated IT wings and administrators.

Beyond communication, Twitter plays a crucial role in setting public agendas through various methods such as hashtags, trolls, polls, and spaces. This agenda-setting function helps build strong public opinion, reflected in electoral outcomes. Hashtags like "#GoBackX", "#JusticeForX", and "#SaveX" have become new campaign techniques to trend and generate public discourse, increasing party popularity and setting agendas.

Strategic trolling is identified as a permanent campaign method, used to divert attention and set new agendas. The book "I Am a Troll" highlights the role of consultants and IT wings in systematic trolling, particularly in countering accusations and building credibility (Chaturvedi, 2016).

In Tamil Nadu, every DMK politician and a few from AIADMK and other parties maintain an active social media presence, either personally or through dedicated teams. The direct engagement with audience of social pages are limited though. Whereas political party handles on social media strategically use hashtags to amplify their messages, engage and mobilize the public on diverse issues. For example, hashtags like #TNYouthVoice, #EduReformTN, and #GreenTN reflect the multifaceted nature of political discourse in the state.

<sup>5</sup> Special meetings convened to celebrate the governance of the party.

<sup>6</sup> Poonamalle Highroad as EVR Periyar Road, Mount Road as Anna Salai, Beach road as Kamarajar Salai, Mahabalipuram as Mamallapuram (Pallava King)



Initially, the focus of these interactions revolved around key issues such as NEET, farmer suicides, AIMS, methane projects, Sterlite, and language dominance, reflected through hashtags like #JusticeForAnita, #SaveDelta, #AntiNEET, #AntiHindi, and #Sanatan. Hashtags like *DravidianModel*, *Vidiyal*, and *DravidianStock* are employed to project specific ideologies and brand identities. Events such as Kalaingar100, *TNCollectorsConference*, *Dravida\_Maatham*, *DMK75*, and *8kmHealthWalk* showcase active engagement during the party's governance period. Policy initiatives like Ungalaithedi, *NammakkuNammae*, *TNEmpowersWomen*, *Ellorukkum\_Ellam*, *MakkaludanStalin*, and *Kalaavil\_Muthalamaichar* are strongly advocated by the party. The strategy of building individual images within the party is encapsulated in *Udhay4Youth*, while *Speaking4India* represents collective actions against the BJP at the center.

In Tamil politics, Twitter communication emphasizes both images and text. Almost all tweets incorporate visual elements to portray politicians as dedicated public servants and build positive images. The effective use of party symbols is also notable in social media interactions, continuing the tradition of using verbal and non-verbal symbols associated with the party.

Negative propaganda on Twitter as a permanent campaign technique is another notable strategy, with opposition parties using hashtags like #Vidiyaarasu, #OolalDMK, and #Vadanattukaikooli\_Annamalai to sustain their campaigns. Negative campaigning strategies, such as using hashtags like #GoBackModi and #GoBackShah, changing profile pictures to black in protest, and responding with counter phrases, represent advanced levels of permanent campaigning.

Twitter Spaces have become virtual public meeting spaces where discussions, conventions, and classes on ideology, principles, and issues occur year-round. This ceaseless interaction helps parties connect with the youth population. The DMK IT wing organizes a series of events in September commemorating Dravida Month, marking the party's founding on Periyar's birthday, fostering knowledge transmission and party cohesion.

WhatsApp, with a user base that surpassed 200 million, remains the most widely used digital platform in India, serving as a backbone for political communication and organisational activity. The application's group feature has become instrumental in operationalizing the "permanent campaign" model, facilitating continuous mobilisation, narrative management, and direct outreach. For instance, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manages WhatsApp groups across more than 1.62 lakh polling booths, with each volunteer estimated to reach between 10,000 and 15,000 individuals per day. This marks a significant transition from the era of mass broadcasting to hyper-localized, personalized, and interactive messaging strategies.

Emerging features like WhatsApp Channels, along with segmented groups created for every party unit, ward, and key leader, enable persistent, real-time distribution of campaign content and narratives. Such strategies ensure rapid dissemination of information as well as the targeting of diverse demographic groups with tailored messaging, further

entrenching the practice of permanent campaigning. Platforms such as ShareChat, notable for their high penetration in rural regions, also play a crucial role in distributing multimedia narratives and positive audiovisual stories about politicians and their daily activities, reaching audiences that are less accessible via English-centric social media.

Instagram has emerged as a prominent tool for politicians to curate a "plain folk" persona, leveraging personal images and moments across the calendar year to foster relatability and authenticity. Meanwhile, platforms like Reddit and Quora are widely utilized by political strategists for conducting discussions, sharing updates, and influencing public narratives through community-driven engagement, thereby ensuring year-round presence in niche digital communities.

The advent of artificial intelligence has transformed permanent campaigning further, with the integration of tools such as deepfake video generation, AI-crafted posts, and optimization for generative search engines like ChatGPT, Grok, and Perplexity. Political entities now strategically "feed" these AI-driven platforms with favorable narratives, ensuring that party- or politician-positive content is amplified when users seek information on these services. AI technologies are also being integrated into campaign workflows for content generation and dissemination, shaping both the nature and reach of digital political communication.

Social media communication extends beyond the platform itself, converging with mainstream media for comprehensive information dissemination. As noted in the book "Trust Me I'm Lying," "hashtags trending on social media often become headlines on national television and newspapers, attracting opinion columns and debates, thereby influencing public opinion (Holiday, 2012).

The DMK, both in and out of power, strategically employs hashtags to mobilize people virtually and stimulate meaningful discourse. This mobilization has transformed social media into a dynamic public sphere, fostering robust discussions. While the AIADMK also uses social media to communicate with the public, their usage patterns do not consistently define a permanent campaign strategy.

## 2. Conclusion

This study highlights that permanent campaigns, now gaining momentum in Western politics, have long been a tradition among Tamil political parties since the 1940s. The history of Tamil politics thus offers a comprehensive perspective on permanent campaign techniques.

In the digital age, the distinction between election campaigning and governance has blurred, with political parties under constant pressure to propagate their ideologies and symbols even while in power. To achieve this, they employ various tools and methods such as traveling, conducting fundraising events, trolling, and maintaining a strong visual presence. While these activities may seem familiar, their intensity and intent classify them as part of a permanent campaign.

The opposition also engages in permanent campaigning, posing a significant threat to the ruling party. However, this evolution in campaigning techniques has led to excessive spending on public relations activities for government projects, often drawing criticism for the disparity between PR expenditure and project budgets.

Research indicates that name recognition creates a long-lasting impact, translating into votes. Therefore, the number of activities conducted by a party and its leader has become more crucial than the actual benefits provided to the public. This dynamic has made permanent campaigning a necessity but also a potential threat to democratic society.

In the context of Tamil political parties' use of Twitter for permanent campaigns, this study highlights their effective strategies in translating key political elements into digital artifacts such as hashtags and seamlessly integrating them with mainstream media coverage. The strategic use of images and text—particularly the incorporation of collective party symbols—stands out as a hallmark of their approach. Twitter Spaces have further enabled dynamic debates and discourse, allowing parties to connect with younger audiences and foster dialogue across generational and hierarchical divides within the party structure.

In contrast, platforms like WhatsApp and ShareChat primarily serve for localized information dissemination, while Instagram is leveraged to engage youth through visually rich and interactive content such as reels. As AI technologies increasingly permeate the permanent campaign landscape, there is a growing need for scholarship that examines their specific impact and implications within this context.

Comparative analysis shows that the DMK's use of Twitter and other social media platforms for permanent campaigning is highly visible and sustained, whereas the AIADMK's activity tends to be more episodic—often concentrated around non-election periods or internal crises. While this paper's primary focus is on recognized political parties in Tamil Nadu, it is important to note that prominent registered parties such as Viduthala Siruthai Katchi (VCK), Naam Thamizhar Katchi (NTK), Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), Thamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), and DMDK have also adopted effective social media strategies. Notably, all parties—regardless of size or tenure—are actively training “virtual warriors” to sustain a continuous campaign presence.

Future research could usefully expand to analyze the communication strategies of these emerging or second-tier parties, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the evolving digital landscape in Tamil Nadu's political communication.

## References

- [1] Baran, Stanley J., and Dennis K. Davis. *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*. 7th ed., Cengage Learning, 2015. Internet Archive, [https://archive.org/details/masscommunicatio0000bar\\_a\\_e5d8](https://archive.org/details/masscommunicatio0000bar_a_e5d8).
- [2] Blumenthal, Sidney. *The Permanent Campaign*. Simon and Schuster, 1982. Google Books, <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=iBgHAAAAMA AJ>.
- [3] Chakraborty, Saayan, et al. “Political Tweets and Mainstream News Impact in India: A Mixed Methods Investigation into Political Outreach.” *Proceedings of the 1st ACM SIGCAS Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies*, 2018, pp. 1–11. doi:10.1145/3209811.3209825.
- [4] Chaturvedi, Swati. *I Am a Troll: Inside the Secret World of the BJP's Digital Army*. Juggernaut, 2016. Google Books, [https://books.google.co.in/books?id=DRJ\\_nQAACA AJ](https://books.google.co.in/books?id=DRJ_nQAACA AJ).
- [5] Chidambaram, M. “Cultural Entrepreneurs and Language Strategists: D.M.K. in Tamil Nadu.” *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 48, no. 3, 1987, pp. 418–427. JSTOR.
- [6] Doherty, Brendan J. *The Rise of the President's Permanent Campaign*. University Press of Kansas, 2012.
- [7] Galston, William. “William Galston: The ‘Permanent Campaign’ = Perpetual Paralysis—WSJ.” *Wall Street Journal*, 2014, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/william-galston-the-permanent-campaign-perpetual-paralysis-1414539559>.
- [8] Haryono, P. P., et al. “Social Media Contribution as a Political Communication Strategy Tool in Forming the Political Image of Presidential Candidates in the 2019 Pilpres in Indonesia.” *Vol.*, vol. 22, 2022.
- [9] Herman, Edward S., and Noam Chomsky. “Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media.” *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 18, no. 6, 1989, p. 937. doi:10.2307/2074220.
- [10] Holiday, Ryan. *Trust Me, I'm Lying: The Tactics and Confessions of a Media Manipulator*. Portfolio, 2012. University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, <https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/9910127957302121>.
- [11] Jha, Prashant. *How the BJP Wins: Inside India's Greatest Election Machine*. Juggernaut, 2017. Google Books, <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=GK9oDwAAQB AJ>.
- [12] Joathan, Ícaro, and Darren G. Lilleker. “Permanent Campaigning: A Meta-Analysis and Framework for Measurement.” *Journal of Political Marketing*, 2020, pp. 1–19. doi:10.1080/15377857.2020.1832015.
- [13] Klein, Joe. “The Perils of the Permanent Campaign—TIME.” *Time*, 2005, <https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,1124332,00.html>.
- [14] Ornstein, Norman J., and Thomas E. Mann. *The Permanent Campaign and Its Future*. American Enterprise Institute and The Brookings Institution, 2000.
- [15] Singh, Shivam Shankar. *How to Win an Indian Election*. Penguin Random House, 2019. Google Books, <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=2UeUwwEACA AJ>.

- [16] Standard, Business. "Explained: How Much Political Parties Spent on Publicity in Last 5 Years. " *Business Standard*, 10 Oct. 2021, [https://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/explained-how-much-political-parties-spent-on-publicity-in-last-5-years-121101000881\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/explained-how-much-political-parties-spent-on-publicity-in-last-5-years-121101000881_1.html).
- [17] Stier, Sebastian, et al. "Election Campaigning on Social Media: Politicians, Audiences, and the Mediation of Political Communication on Facebook and Twitter. " *Political Communication*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2018, pp. 50–74. doi:10.1080/10584609.2017.1334728.
- [18] Tenpas, Kathryn Dunn, and Anthony Corrado. "Permanent Campaign Brushes Aside Tradition. " *Brookings*, 2004, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/permanent-campaign-brushes-aside-tradition/>.
- [19] Veneti, Anastasia, et al. *Visual Political Communication*. Springer, 2019. doi:10.1007/978-3-030-18729-3.
- [20] Vij, Shivam. "Modi Is Using Nationalism to Deflect Attention From His Failures. Don't Be Fooled. " *HuffPost*, 2017, [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/modi-nationalism-distract-failures\\_b\\_9309610](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/modi-nationalism-distract-failures_b_9309610).
- [21] Vij, Shivam. "Opposition Parties Will Have to Copy Modi's Permanent Campaign Trick, Sooner or Later. " *The Print*, Mar. 2019, <https://theprint.in/opinion/opposition-parties-will-have-to-copy-modis-permanent-campaign-trick-sooner-or-later/211439/>.