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Digital Democracy: Social Media and Political Participation

OUTLINE

A. INTRODUCTION:

Thesis Statement:

In the modernised era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which has evolved the world more prosperously, digital democracy is established through social media platforms that caused increase in ^{political} participation of people by increasing their awareness.

B. How Digital Democracy is Achieved through Social Media Usage that Increases Political Participation:



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1. Increase chances of the disabled people to cast their votes through online sources. through increased awareness by social media

2) For climate changes mitigation measures

Case in study: In Barcelona, through social media, people engage in climate mitigation measures

3) Increase accountability of the Policy makers.

i. open government Partnerships

4) Through digital platforms, accountability of the leaders is ensured

a) Success of the "Change.org" Campaigns

5) At the local government level, through digital platforms, efficiency of the local governance is enhanced.

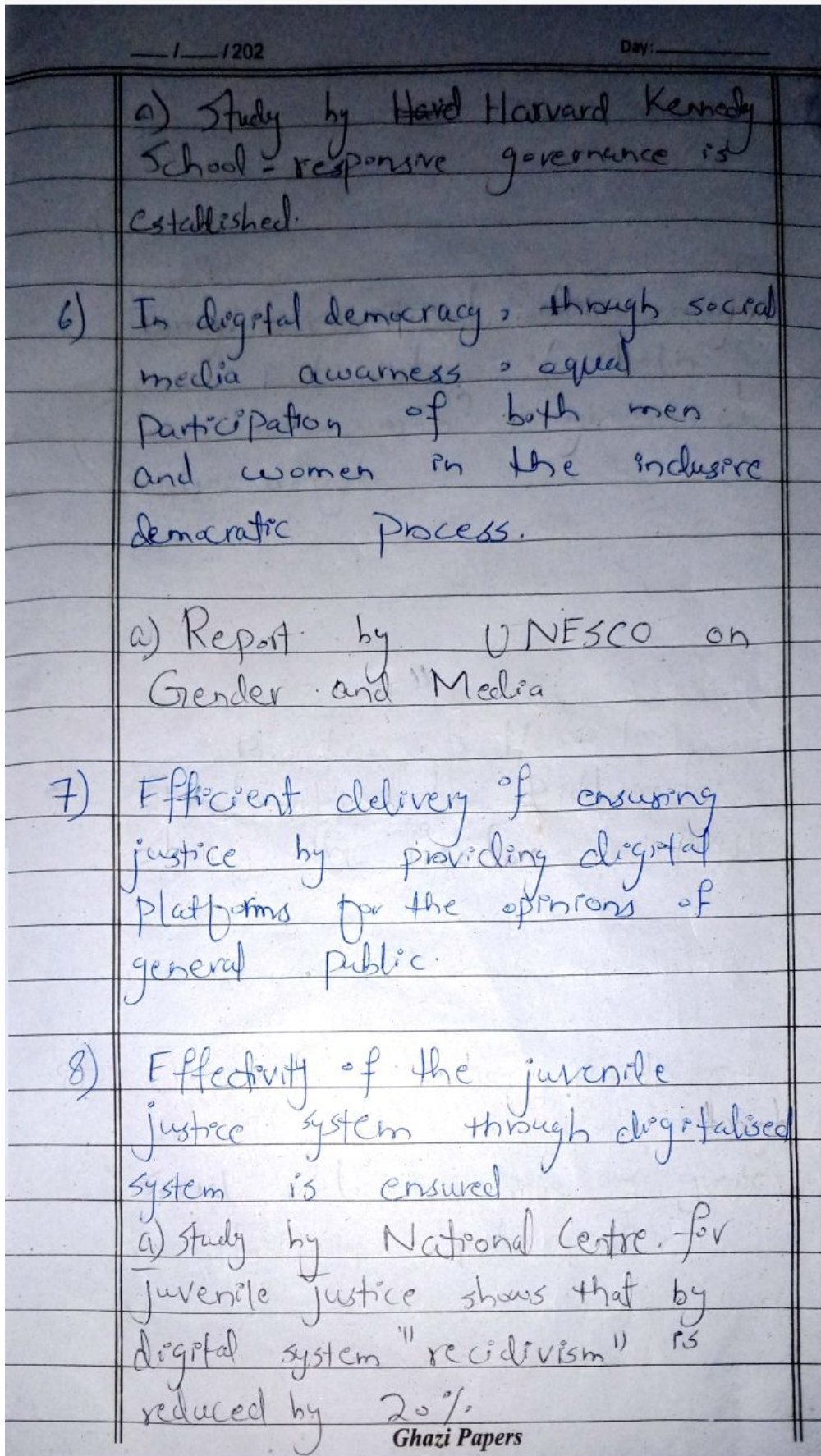


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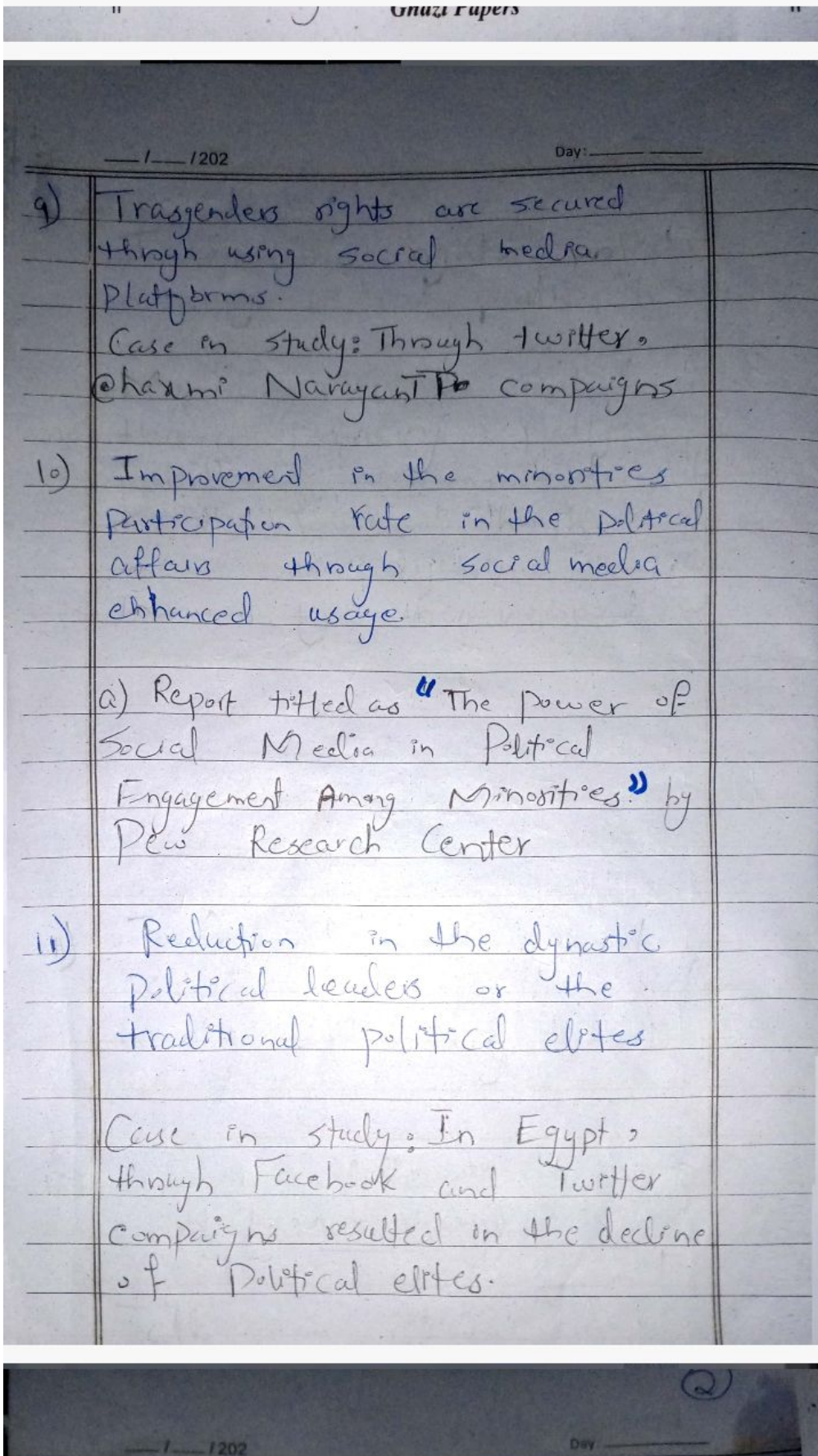


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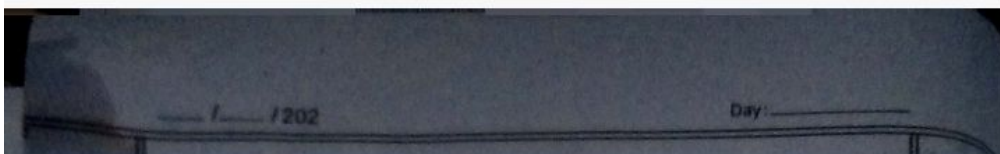
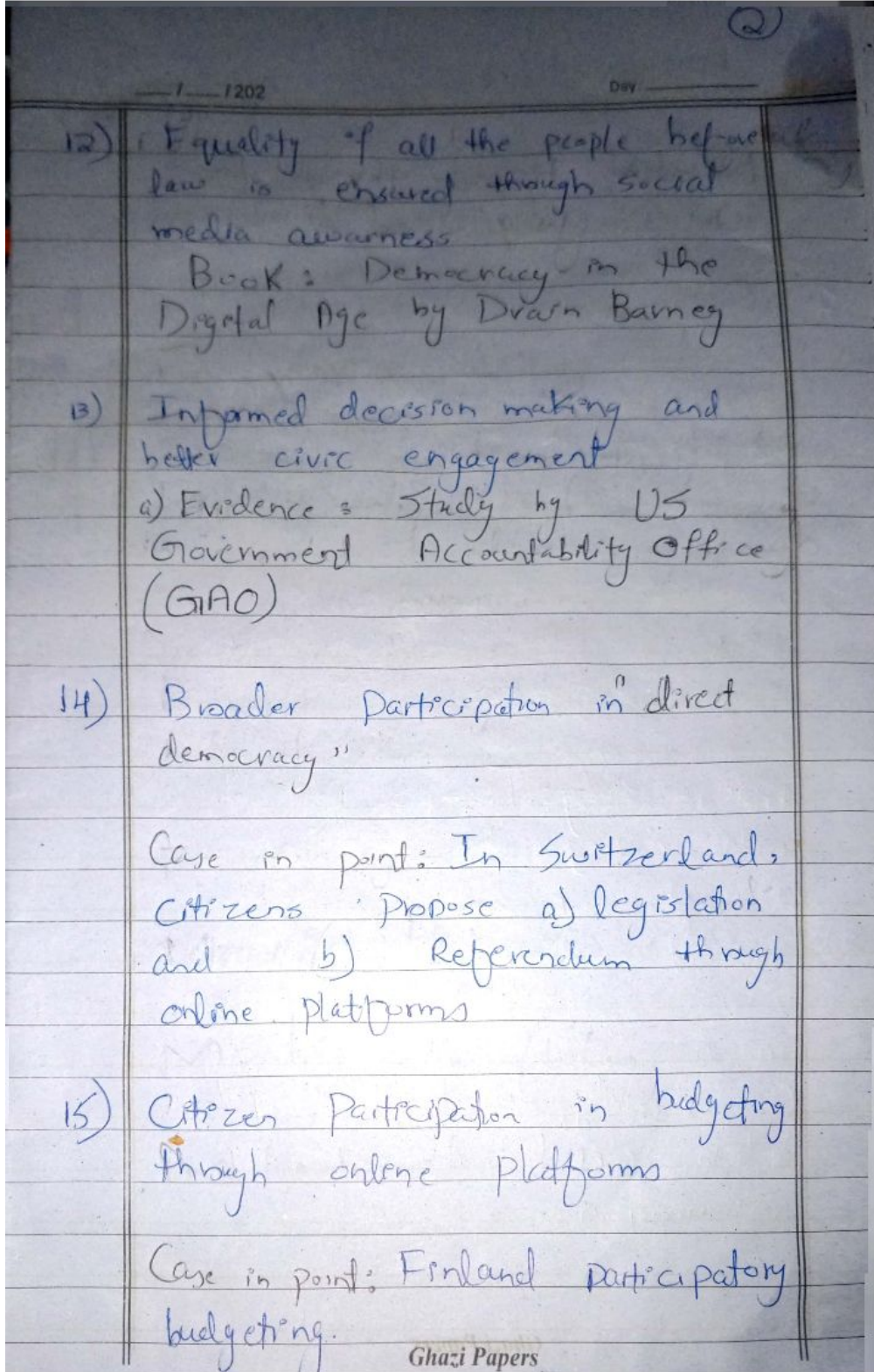


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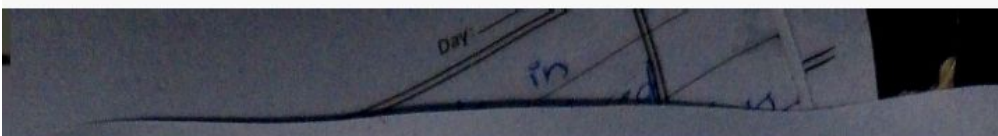
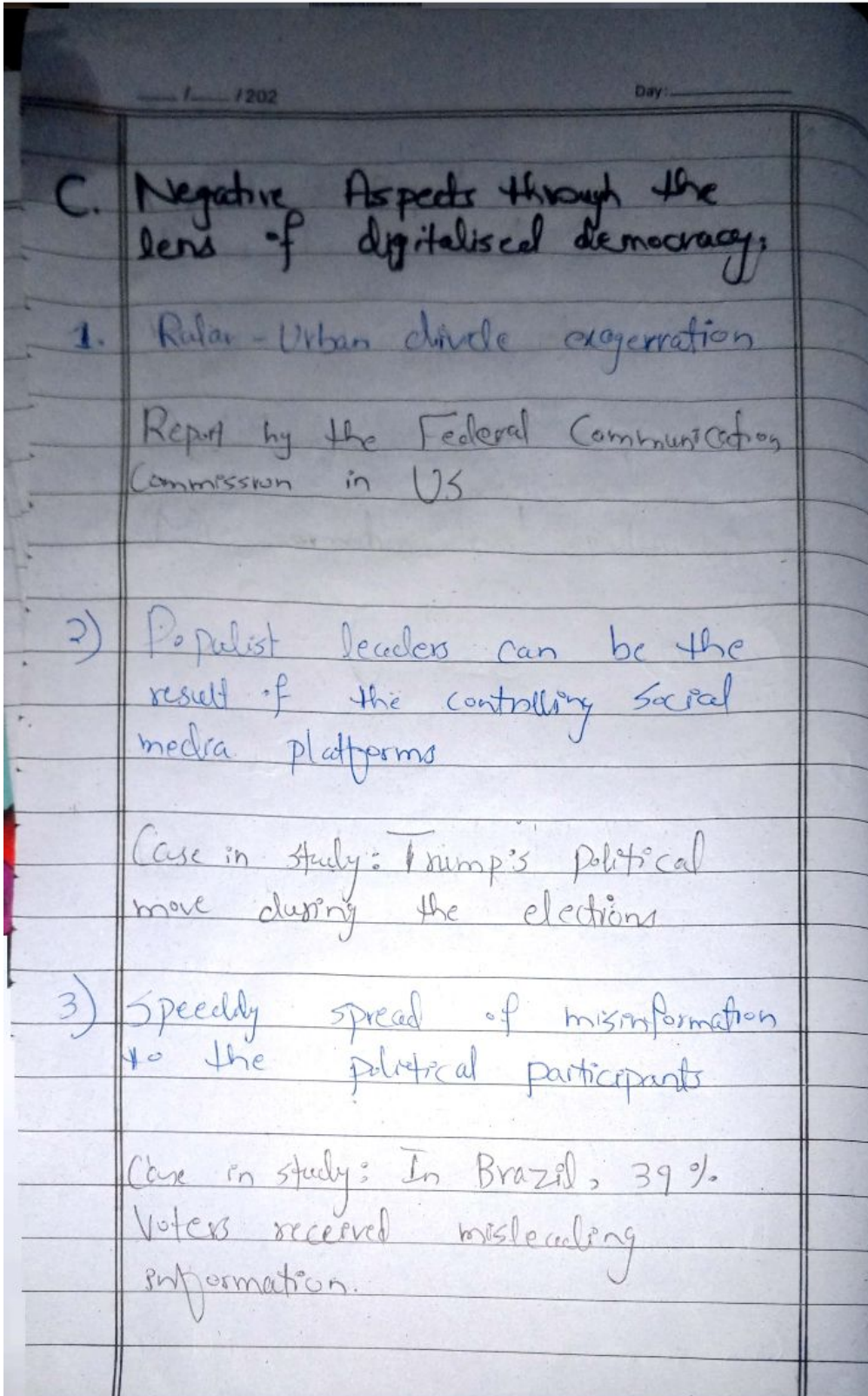


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D. Conclusion:

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optional ???

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Once, Barack Obama told, "The technology revolution has freed us from the tyranny of distance, connecting us in ways that are extraordinary. It has the potential to bring together the voices of grassroots movements, connecting them to the halls of power." Hence, the digitalisation has changed the world not only economically, technologically, socially but also politically. By digitalised democracy, large number of people can participate. The increase voter turn out rate is noted in multiple countries. The disabled ones can contribute in sharing their views. Men and women also equally participated in the ongoing policy making process. Furthermore, the digitalised platforms such as twitter, facebook and instagram including other platforms allow the marginalised communities such as minorities and

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Transgender can also participate in sharing their view. Due to digitalised techniques, both minorities and transgender have acquired their due rights efficiently.

Not only political rights of people are ensured but also the enhanced accountability and transparency can be acquired as people have direct access to the leader or policy makers. Thus through digital democracy increased in the political participation is obtained by increasing awareness of people.

Through the digitalised platforms, disabled people can cast their votes. As compared to the traditional system of electoral methods, there is no need to go to the voting centres. In the digitalised world, large number of people can cast their votes especially the disabled ones. They get information through the social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram about



the candidates and their policies. Thus the disable can be more informed about the electoral process. In addition, they can be more informed about the ongoing situations. It can be seen in the report of Elections in Canada that 80% of voters with disabilities reported that voting was easy or more more easy in 2019 Federal elections as compared to 2015 elections. Thus, increased voter turn out rate can be noted by the social media usage.

Another notion in the today's world is the climate changes that require mitigation measures. In the digitalised world, social media allows the people to share their views for climate change. Most of the people want government to take immediate actions by the digital platforms.

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→ large number of people carry



change. Most of the people want government to take immediate actions by the digital platforms.

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→ large number of people carry campaigns in order to aware about people timely about its risks. By using social media platforms, there is more community engagement where there is welcoming approach for people to share their views or mitigation measures. The requirement of digitalised democracy is freedom of expression of people from all the strata. This freedom can be related to climate action. In the Barcelona, people of this country through using technology has created a more transparent, inclusive and effective approach for climate change. This clearly shows that in the digital democracy, social media helps in increasing participation of people for climate change policies.



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In the digital democracy, accountability of the policymakers is enhanced through direct access of citizens. The people are able to either complement or criticize the policies being made for them. In the democracy, whether it is classical or digital, the opinion of people should be respected at any cost. This can be achieved when the accountability of the policymakers is ensured. Now it is possible because the social media allows people to make policymakers directly accountable. Due to this, the effectiveness of the service delivery is enhanced. It is even noted in studies that open government partnership, where people can directly access to the policymakers will regulate the policies fairly. In short, the social media allow common people to be the main determiner of the policies.

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In addition to holding the policy makers accountable, accountability of the political leaders is enhanced by many folds. Through social media a large number of people get the chance to analyse the political leaders' tasks, duties and obligations towards public. Hence, in the modern world, social media give extra benefits to general public to be empowered. As a result, as compared to the past, leaders are more obliged towards their duties. They perform their tasks with honesty and on proper time. Through the "change.org" campaigns, the policy makers are being held accountable more successfully. Thus, in digital democracy, people has the power to be more strengthened in determining the accountability of the leaders.

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Moreover, delivery of past delivery services to people through local government bodies is enhanced. Local government bodies are more strengthened. In terms of financial, political, and accountability of the economic policies in the local government system is improved via social media campaigns. The federal and provincial government have devolved their power to the local government to regulate the day to day activities of the local administration. In case of any delay, people can complain against the policies. Rather, in addition, this can affect the political participation to a specific party. As per study of Harvard Kennedy, which proved that the responsive governance is established due to enhanced political participation via social media usage. Therefore, local governance system works more efficiently for the well being of people.

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Further, in the democratic process digitally has emboldened to participate both men and women equally. The usage of social media by both men and women helps in equal awareness regarding their due rights. Unlike as compared to the past, where patriarchal mindsets were dominating. Due to which, the women were unable to contribute in the electoral process. Besides electoral process, women were not given chance either at economic, social, technological and legal forums. However, the situation is changed now. The equal chance is adequately given to show their opinions at any forum. According to the report by UNESCO on Gender and Media, the social media enabled both genders equally to share their decision or view and cast their votes. Hence, the democratic norms can be materialised. In case both men and women have given equal freedom to participate in the

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Through social media participants get their due justice timely. By sharing their problems within the respective domains, the stakeholders or government make sure to give them ultimate purpose. Political participation through social media usage, not only give adequate justice to people but also within the time frame. This means there is no delay in justice delivery. Ultimately, this protection of justice delivery causes democratic values strengthening. In Pakistan, bureaucracy has developed the online platforms to resolve the issues of public and provide them the main purpose which is justice. So it can be stated online platforms provide help to people when people participate actively in their affairs.

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Similarly, in providing justice to adults, the juvenile justice system is implemented successfully through social media help. The political process tried to provide the safety to the underage children, so the need of juvenile justice system was more. Whenever, there is any injustice with the children, either at domestic level with young girls, sexual harassment and child labour, social media campaigns by the active participations of people shows the juvenile justice resultantly. By the digitalised democratic system, the National Centre for Juvenile Justice shows that recidivism is reduced by 20% due to social media control on the juvenile justice system. Thus, the protection of children is increased more spontaneously due to digitalised democratic system.

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Transgender's rights are

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Transgender's rights are more safeguarded through digital democracy. Through By using social media platform as their strength to tell the world about their issues, violence and brutal treatment by society.

The transgender have now participated now in the electoral process and they have their reserved seats. In addition they have acquired the educational, societal and health rights. Due to this, the true meaning of democracy is achieved. The example is a trans woman - Kanchi Narayan Tripathi in India. She achieved broad level success for her community through her twitter account. Resultantly, their participation in politics was also welcomed. Henceforth, transgender rights in the digital democracy are adequately protected.

Not only transgenders rights, but also the rights of minorities are also adequately protected via the digital democracy. The marginalised sectors on the basis of language, religion, caste or creed can adequate their power by using social media freely. It is the beauty of the democratic system that it welcomes the opinion of people from any sector. In many countries, the minorities are given their due rights due to their voices being raised. Social media helps in creation of large community groups of minorities which can influence the political decisions according to their demands. In the Pew Research centre, report titled as "The power of Social Media in Political Engagement among Minorities" narrates their power in political engagement.

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Consequently, the rights of the minorities are adequately given



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Consequently, the rights of the minorities are adequately given to them in the democracy.

Another main component is the reduction of the political elites due to digitalised democracy.

This reduction is due to their enhanced electoral process

transparently. The preference is given to the merit, not to the dynastic or hereditary role.

The political leaders are selected whose image is more good among public. The social media helps in the selection of the political leaders who are more competent, honest,

and moralistic. The rejection of the dynastic political elites is consequential

when they are lacking all the qualities of competent political leaders. The

actual power of the leaders selection is with the public in the digital

democracy. It can be proved in Egypt, where through Facebook

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and further comparisons, the political elites are ^{decreased} ~~reduced~~ in number hence, the political leaders are selected more honestly due to their performance rather than dynastic political elites.

Similarly, the equality before law of all the people is prioritized through digital democracy. Treating each and every person equally in terms of rule of law. Whenever, there is some quios in the affairs of the states, the people has the strenght of social media, of which they take advantage fully. In the globalised world, the people can share their view across the burders, but in terms of law, no one is above the law. Constitutional supremacy is maintained when the digital democracy requires the rights of people from any sector. Same is

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referenced in the book "Democracy in the Digital Age". The people



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is maintained when the digital democracy requires the rights of people from any sector. Same is

referenced in the book "Democracy in the Digital Age". The people can show their grievances when the supremacy of the law is challenged, by using social media platforms. Therefore, the equal treatment of all people is a requirement before law in the digital democracy.

Meanwhile, better decision making by government and civilian engagement is another outcome of digital democracy. The government is aware of the needs of its people through enhanced civilian engagement in the policy making. Moreover, social media has empowered people to participate politically in determining the policies of the government. People can aware the government through digital platforms directly without any delay. The outcome of this will be economical, technological, socially and cultural

of these this will be economical, technological, socially and cultural

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advancement of people. The same statement of better decision making and better civilian engagement through digital democracy is given by US Government Accountability Office (GAO).

Resultantly, informed decisions will be obvious when digital democracy is implemented.

Broader participation in the digital democracy is another important factor which is possible by enhance social media participation. Large number of people in a large size state will shape their opinions through twitter, face book, and instagram. This will affect the participation in political affairs in a better way. It will give clear direction to the people for voting their concerned leaders.

~~They will~~ It can be stated as direct form of democracy being

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implemented on a large scale as

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uting their concerned leaders.

They will It can be stated as
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implemented on a huge scale as millions of people have direct access for using social media. The best example of direct democracy is in Switzerland where people can directly propose legislation and even referendum through online platform measures.

This shows that even the direct democracy is possible through digital methods. Hence, democratic assurance is complementary to the will of people directly.

The opinion of people in budgeting system through online platforms is also ensured in the digital democracy. People directly or indirectly know about the future policies. However, in case of sanctions by people against government policies will be obviously affect the budgeting ~~step~~ system. Whenever, the people are "tax evaders"

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increase of sanctions by people against government policies will be obviously affected the budgeting ~~system~~ system. Whenever, the people are "tax evaders"

especially the industrialists or the stockholders. In return, the mass campaigning against these people will cause strict actions against these tax evaders. Therefore the burden of paying taxes by the lower income class will be reduced. As in the Finland's participatory budgeting, it is possible through online platforms which enable the common citizens to participate in the budgeting procedure. Due to this, people are more contented with the budgetary measures. So, the social media can be advantageous in the budgetary reforms.

transition paragraph
In the digitalised democracy, there are not only benefits but there are some of the negative aspects which can be more worsening in nature. This will lead to erosion of democratic values if they are not controlled adequately.

will lead to erosion of democratic values if they are not controlled adequately.

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Foremost, the exaggeration of rural-urban divide is noted due to digitalization. In democracy via digitalisation, most of the people in rural areas are not able to get enough training and education. On contrast, people of urban areas are more educated and trained to raise their voice by social media platforms. Another important factor is access to the internet facility. Rural areas still in many parts of the world do not have internet access while urban areas maximally take the advantage of this. Its evidence can be noted by report of Federal Communication Commission in the United States which states that there is greater access to ~~urban~~ urban areas people of technology. While the urban areas are facing issues and hence the digital divide is more noted in United States. Therefore, in digitalised democracy, digital divide can be consequential due to

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internet access and literacy rate differences.

Another negative aspect is of the populism in the digital democracy. The revival of the populist leaders is also due to social media usage. The famous politician exploit the emotional behaviour of his public. He can also use the propaganda. He make promises to people for their economical benefits by controlling their thoughts through his speeches among public. The greatest and best example and evidence is Donald Trump. who used twitter and made contact with his follower and youth. He amplify the emotional behaviour of people for his own favour. As a result, the populist leader like Donald Trump revived. Thus, digitalization in democracy can cause populism or populist leaders phenomenon.

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To add to above arguments, in digitalised democracy, spread of misinformation is propagating in the world. Through social media platforms, scams & false information spreads very rapidly across the nations. This will lead to the propaganda that will shape the public opinion. This public opinion will either increase or decrease the participation politically. In addition, false information can lead to polarized societies. There can be more segments of the society on the basis of the information provided to them through social media usage. The best evidence is the Brazil, where through social media, almost 39% of the voters received false information related to the political affairs of the state. Due to this there cannot be any accountability and transparency in the electoral process. Hence, false information spreads through social media in digital democracy.

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Hence, false information spreads through
social media in digital democracy

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In a nutshell, digitalised democracy in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI), enabled huge number of people to be able to participate in the political affairs of the state. The social media usage by all citizen worldwide caused more informed decisions making and their implementation efficiently. The people can express their opinions easily regarding their rights assurance. Even the climate change mitigation policies has been made by the government as people carry campaigns on social media. At the state level local governance is being made more independent for service delivery to the common citizens. To ensure justice either to the adults or minor by juvenile justice system is given more transparently and efficiently with in less time. While the concept of direct democracy is also noted by digital platforms.

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Moreover, the reduction in



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is given more transparency and efficiency with in less time. While the concept of direct democracy is also noted by digital platforms.

Moreover, the reduction in dynastic political leaders and political elites is proved as digital platforms give more power to the common public for their leaders selection. However, as compared to old democratic ways, digital democracy results into informed decision making. Hence, it is optimistically hoped that with reduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the world will become more peaceful where all people will have freedom in their opinions sharing. Due to which, the rights of people either economically, political, social, and legal rights will be given more efficiently and transparently.

"Social Media is a powerful tool for global communications allowing anyone with access to demand change and hold authorities accountable." ----- Elon Musk