

- a) Are communication strategies more influential than political platforms in shaping electoral success?

Election campaigns are a time when candidates communicate their platforms. Meetings, meet-and-greets, and advertising are some of the tools political teams use to persuade voters. With the rise of social media, these methods have evolved and often place more emphasis on form than on substance.

It has been well documented that Barack Obama was the first presidential candidate to use social networks extensively to reach voters. His team purchased personal data to target specific groups, and his success may have been shaped by this strategy. By sending tailored messages to potential supporters, the Democratic Party proved more effective at mobilizing voters. Today, those who win elections tend to master their online presence and know how to leverage algorithms.

Still, a strong political platform remains essential. People are not always easily swayed by ads and slogans. Campaign promises continue to matter, as shown by Zohran Mamdani's campaign – his success was not only due to his online presence but also to proposals that reflected the priorities of many New Yorkers, such as free public transportation.

To conclude, a strong PR strategy can help determine electoral success, but it must be grounded in policies that genuinely appeal to voters. That said, in the United States, campaign budgets are no longer capped, which can give wealthy candidates an unfair advantage. 216 words

- b) “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Do you agree with Nelson Mandela?

Access to knowledge is a prerequisite for understanding the world we live in. For anyone who wishes to improve society — to fight injustices or end conflicts — education is essential. But is it truly the most powerful weapon one can possess?

Through education, people gain access to facts and develop a deeper understanding of the world. It also cultivates critical thinking. These two skills are crucial for recognizing injustices. Education helps individuals move beyond “common sense” explanations and understand the social forces that shape our lives. For instance, it allows us to see how someone's social environment can affect their health. Moreover, education can offer a pathway to higher social positions, giving individuals more resources to defend their ideas.

Yet education alone is not enough to reach positions of power. Political influence often remains in the hands of financial elites, making it difficult for underprivileged groups or minorities to enter the political sphere. Similarly, in other sectors, wealth continues to shape who has control. Billionaires, for example, own major media outlets, such as the Murdoch family.

Although education is a powerful catalyst for social change, it operates within broader political and economic structures that can limit its impact. It equips individuals with knowledge and critical awareness, but meaningful change also requires access to power and resources. 215 words