



RESEARCH PAPER

Impact of Packaging Politics and Branding of Political Leaders on Public's Political Perception

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Received: February 11, 2022</p> <p>Accepted: May 24, 2022</p> <p>Online: May 27, 2022</p> <p>Keywords: Heavy Media Consumer, Light Media Consumer, Media Consumption, Packaging Politics, Political Branding, Voting Behavior</p> <p>*Corresponding Author: Faiza.bajwa@uog.edu.pk</p>	<p>This study examines the impact of political branding and packaging through the use of mass media as a means of disseminating political information to the general public. Packaging politics and political branding can be important sources of influence on the political perception of public. For this purpose, literature related to branding and packaging techniques being used in political communication, and cultivation analysis has been reviewed. The findings of this study enable research to raise awareness by identifying various techniques of packaging and branding used in political communication by the political parties which ultimately have noticeable impact on political perception and the voting behavior. This study includes the quantitative approach of data collection employing non-probability sampling technique. The sample size of this study is 600 respondents, divided into 67% to 33% male and female respectively. This study has revealed that majority of the respondents are heavy media user in regard of politics and projection of political leaders to the highest pedestals by using branding and packaging techniques has subjugated the importance of manifestos of political parties. This study has also resulted in the findings that the voting behavior of the respondents is greatly influenced by the media presentation of political leaders and political parties. The study's cultivation analysis indicates the impact on media consumers from light to heavy viewers. The findings revealed that heavy viewers are more influenced by media content than light viewers.</p>

Introduction

Political marketing is defined as a collective evaluation of public new perspectives and ideas to influence political conduct and political choice in elections. (Twum et al, 2022). The political market is a concept where certain political parties aim to catch up with the public, to entice the public towards them, through various activities that capture the public's attention and provide public services. (Antoniades, 2020). Political marketing is the process of tailoring a politician's ideas, programmes, and image to the public's demands, therefore earning their trust. (Haris, 1996). Politics marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association (AMA, 2007) as targeting the voting behaviour or choice of voters using advertising to gather votes from the public in an effective and easily approachable manner. History of political campaigning has evolved, with the influence of globalization and revolution information (Marshment, 2006). Political marketing and satisfaction of

voters are primary objectives of political parties to assist voters in making the right choice (O Cass, 1996).

Party Brands

Brands are vital in people's life because they help them choose among numerous options. Similarly, in politics, a brand party is one that the public trusts and consequently votes for without hesitation. (Marsh et al, 2011).

A party's image should always be improved, as should its manifestos. Uncertainty or a bad party image among individuals harms a political party's appeal and makes it the public's least favorite. (Stokes 1963).

Political Leader

A political leader can persuade his followers to take the right path and guide them through it. In order to gain international respect, a leader prioritizes his country's economic status. (Gill, 2006). A leader is someone who can lead with courage and faith in others (Mustafa et al, 2011).

Politician

A politician is a person who regularly participates in political activities and is currently employed by a political party. A politician is defined as a person who seeks to gain power and govern a country for the good of the people (Gaines et al, 2012). Politicians have a terrible reputation in society because they are perceived as nasty individuals (Heidenheimer et al, 2011).

Media and Politics

Politics cannot exist without a support structure that continues to sustain the political activities and also reflect the happenings of politics. The media is a tool that tends to support politics by receiving and transmitting political information to the public (Baugut, 2019). The media is vital in informing the public about current political campaigns and acts. The media, however, tends to mislead crowds for its own purposes, leading to disastrous effects (Antoniades, 2020).

Public Perception

Public perception is a word used to describe how people react to a situation. It was also noted that most of the time, public perception is their own point of view (Scheufele, 1999).

Media and Public Perception

The general population uses the media to comprehend what is going on in situations where the public's perspective differs from the media (Wilson & Wilson, 1998).

Literature Review

Lalancette and Raynauld (2019) analysed the dynamics of an image that is shaped online on the websites of social media and at the same time studied the effect on political leaders in view of the ongoing digital campaign together with the 'Celebrity Politics' in

North America. Data show that visuals play a crucial role in evaluating politicians by the public using imagery as well as branding.

Simons (2006) defined transitory politics as image politics focused on images and facades. Style is more important than content or logic in this type of politics. Likewise, personalities are more important than official policies.

O'Shaughnessy (2001) sprang to the subject of marketing politics. It is the author's contention that there is harm present in political marketing initiatives, and he goes on to evaluate two case studies, one from the United Kingdom and one from Canada. Marketing is deemed irrelevant to politics in both prescription and description contexts.

Locke and Harris (1996) asserted that Marketing and politics are fundamentally different. The growing awareness of politics and political marketing coincided with a decline in party membership in Britain and a growing divide between the party and the voter. This study also highlights the lack of prescriptive and protective political marketing theories and the relative importance of exogenous elements in a candidate's electoral success.

Henneberg (2003) proclaimed that political marketing is a technique in which one adapts the tools and tactics that are utilized in commercial on a market size in order to be more effective in political situations. Thus, growth in politics through marketing instruments is the essence of political marketing.

Idea of Political Branding: Transition in communication within the office

Simons (2018) examines how the notorious terrorist organization Islamic State ISIS uses political marketing and branding to enhance their desires and possessions to attract practical applications. The ISIS brand uses systematic communication methodology to raise awareness, differentiate itself from other terrorist organizations, and build credibility and authenticity in an ever-growing marketplace of terrorists.

Fernandez-Vazquez (2019) noticed everyday politics, common man perspective, and party policy, which are essential elements in shaping vote choices. However, in contrast to the recent studies in Europe, public opinion is not formed through campaigns but rather makes their own perception through the campaign which the political parties promote.

Haman (2020) investigated how several leaders used Twitter during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study sought to understand how it influenced the people and how they used it. It was found by analysis that as compared to the months prior to the pandemic, the number of people following the leader increased dramatically. The study also concluded that the public prefers to be informed about emergencies via social media and government authorities should make advantage of these resources.

Savigny (2010) argues that political marketing is not only vital but also provides a framework for politicians to run in elections. The author described the current political marketing situation as the following: marketing is not media-conscious, denies its existence and its significance as a means for leaders to communicate with their constituents.

Shama (1976) stated that political advertising is a subset of political marketing, but political marketing is a vast field that is always expanding as new ideas emerge. Political marketing is an important component of politics because practically every political party uses it to get benefits in various ways.

Hypotheses

- H1: Majority of the people are heavy media consumers in regard to politics.
- H2: Packaging politics has considerable impact on people while choosing their political leader.
- H3: Majority of the people are affiliated with political parties based on positive media coverage towards that political party.
- H4: People follow the same political perception which they get from political branding through media.
- H5: Voting behavior is largely based on media coverage.
- H6: Electronic media is the most important factor in building political perception.

Theoretical Framework

Maxien et. al. (2008) proved that political beliefs and ideology can be preconceived concepts that are difficult to cultivate, suggesting that cultivation theory can be applied to political branding and advertising. The candidates in the political realm want people to believe that the reality they have created is true and that they should vote for them and follow their policies. The study revealed how television viewers' political reality is shaped by the media they see.

Material and Methods

The modern democratic age has brought significant changes to the political realm, particularly in the area of political communication. The study is based on quantitative methodology and deals with data acquisition. Questionnaire was used to collect data. The study's population was broad, including both children and adults. The sample size was 600 young people who were asked about political influence through TV shows. The 600 responses were chosen from 200 female and 400 male youths. Target population were people aged 18 to 25 in Lahore.

Result and Data Analysis

H1: Majority of the people are heavy media consumers in regard to politics

A chi squared test is used to examine the independence of two variables.

Table No: 1 Media Consumers in Regard to Politics

			Media Consumption		Total	
			Yes	No		
Heavy media user	Once a day	Count	158	72	230	
		Expected Count	145.7	84.3	230.0	
	More than once	Count	186	131	317	
		Expected Count	200.8	116.2	317.0	
	Once in 2 days	Count	20	14	34	
		Expected Count	21.5	12.5	34.0	
	Rarely	Count	16	3	19	
		Expected Count	12.0	7.0	19.0	
	Never			0	0	0

Total	Count	380	220	600
	Expected Count	380.0	220.0	600.0

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.674	3	.692
Likelihood Ratio	10.185	3	.017
N of Valid Cases	600		

Result

The chi squared test calculates 9.6 and a p-value of 0.692. This suggests that most people are avid political media consumers in terms of politics. In other words, most of the people depend upon media to get political information. Hence, there is insufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis, the hypothesis is accepted.

H2: Packaging politics has considerable impact on people while choosing their political leader:

A chi squared test is used to examine the independence of two variables.

Table No: 2 Impact of Packaging Politics on Choosing Political Leaders

		Packaging		Total	
		Yes	No		
to choose leader	Yes	Count	369	32	401
		Expected Count	254.0	147.0	401.0
	To some extent	Count	0	161	161
		Expected Count	102.0	59.0	161.0
	No	Count	11	27	38
		Expected Count	24.1	13.9	38.0
Total	Count	380	220	600	
	Expected Count	380.0	220.0	600.0	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	439.541	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	519.680	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	600		

The chi squared test results in a test statistic of 439.541 and a p-value of 0.000. Political packaging does allow people to choose their political leader. Hence, there is insufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis, the hypothesis is accepted.

H3: Majority of the people are affiliated with political parties based on positive media coverage towards that political party:

Table No: 3 Relationship between affiliation with political parties and positive media coverage towards that political parties.

Each person's reaction was categorized as good or negative.

Positive	Not Positive
216	84
214	86
142	158
161	139
195	105
208	92
165	135
178	122
76	224
199	101

Calculations

Test Statistic t: 1.878

Confidence interval: (10.38, 111.98)

Significance (p-value): 0.039

The t-test result shows a test statistic of 1.878, which is below the crucial zone. The p-value of 0.039 also indicates that the two variables are related. So, based on positive media coverage, it is safe to claim that most people are linked positively with political parties through the positive coverage of that political party. Hence, the hypothesis accepted.

H4 People follow the same political perception which they get from political branding

Table No: 4 Association between political perception and political branding

		People follow the same political perception			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	421	70.16	70.16	70.16
	No	42	7.00	7.00	77.16
	To some extent	137	22.84	22.84	100.0
	Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

According to the above table and the hypothesis, the investigator tries to determine whether the people follow the same policy perception in which the above table shows that participants consider that 70.16% of the people follow the same political vision, 7% of the people are disregarded and 22.84% of participants believe that they are not. The results of the table show that the hypothesis 3 “People follow the same political perception as they acquire from political branding” is accepted.

H5 Voting behavior is largely based on media coverage

A chi squared test is used to examine the independence of two variables.

Table No: 5 Association between voting behavior and media coverage

		Media Consumption		Total	
		Yes	No		
Heavy media user	Once a day	Count	158	72	230
		Expected Count	145.7	84.3	230.0
	More than once	Count	186	131	317
		Expected Count	200.8	116.2	317.0
	Once in 2 days	Count	20	14	34
		Expected Count	21.5	12.5	34.0
	Rarely	Count	16	3	19
		Expected Count	12.0	7.0	19.0
	Never		0	0	0
	Total	Count	380	220	600
Expected Count		380.0	220.0	600.0	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.674	3	.692
Likelihood Ratio	10.185	3	.017
N of Valid Cases	600		

The chi squared test calculates 9.6 and a p-value of 0.692. This suggests that most people are avid political media consumers in terms of politics. In other words, most of the people depend upon media to while taking decisions for vote casting. Hence, there is insufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis, the hypothesis is accepted.

H6: Electronic media is the most important factor in building political perception

Table No: 6 Association between consumption pattern of media and building political perception

		Electronic media is the most important factor			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Electronic Media	253	42.17	42.17	42.17
	Print Media	111	18.5	18.5	61.23
	Social Media	201	33.5	33.5	100.0
	Total	600	100.0	100.0	

The researcher attempts to determine if electronic media is the most important factor in forming political perceptions, in which the above table indicates that 42.17 percent of adolescents feel electronic media is the most important component in forming political perceptions, 18.5 percent of adolescents believe print media is the most important factor in forming political perceptions. 33.5 percent of respondents said social media is the most important role in shaping political perception.

Conclusion

Politics is something that affects the current and future of a country, so it is something that everyone is familiar with. Politics tends to decide whether a country advances or lags behind in the globe. Politics is a broad concept, since people from many

backgrounds gather to discuss ideas and plans, allowing a political party's brand to grow as the party's strategies and ideas evolve. Branding in politics is sometimes associated with power in politics, but power in politics means having a firm grip over everything. The study proposed 6 Hypothesis. Cultivation theory was applied to the study which highlights how media viewers' political reality is shaped by the content they watch. The researcher used the correct methodology to meet the study's goals and answer all research questions. Present study achieved its objectives and the hypothesis given is proved statistically by evaluating the data. The studies have provided the results that most people are heavy political media consumers. Packaging politics does allow people to choose their political leader. People are linked with political parties, and they follow the same political perception as they acquire from political branding. Packaging and branding are the marketing techniques which have been started using vividly in political communication.

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