

A Conceptual Framework To Political Marketing

Dr. Monika Chopra

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, DAV College, Chandigarh, India

INTRODUCTION

Political Marketing uses both politics and marketing tools, methods, techniques, know-how, strategies or various approaches in the political process of positioning a party in the electoral market. During the last 20-25 years, governments, political groups, special interest committees, and organizations etc. not only act but also frame various policies, campaigning or electioneering to persuade public/ people to vote/ support for particular party/ candidate in an election. In political marketing, support for candidate and ideas is gained by focussing on the political needs of the voters. Both, marketing of products and political candidates make use of statistical methods, computers techniques, media and market research tools for informing, reminding and to know the behavioural pattern of consumers/ voters. Both, marketing of products and political candidates make use of statistical methods, computer techniques, media and market research tools for informing, reminding and to know the behavioural pattern of consumers/ voters.

Marketing of political candidates use idea or products to attract voters during the campaigning period. Voter Behaviour becomes the focal point of political process and candidate of particular political party promise to satisfy voter's requirements/ needs. Political party emphasizes on understanding of values and services expected by voters on specific issues.

Political marketing with the help of marketing concepts such as exchanges in a transaction, strategic and policy framework, segmentation, brand management, determination of needs, goals and wants of target markets, deliverance of desired satisfaction levels than competitors etc, combined with various theories can help political parties to apply these techniques to cater to the needs of voters and make them a realisation of an important part of politically responsive institution. Political parties must understand the basic marketing concepts to make their political campaigns more effective and their positioning in the electoral market. The product mix of political marketing aims at providing – product : the specific issues, ideas/ themes, promotion : a mix of media advertising and personal communication or meetings with voters, price : not only restricted to support a vote for the candidate rather candidates brand image (based on loyalty, attractiveness, party affiliation) as compared to competing candidate place : availability of the candidate to the voters, promotion : party loyalty of the voters makes a difference from and using voters and makes a solid positioning of the candidate political marketing is a recent development to analyse political activity based on management marketing assumptions for political behaviour.

Political marketing is the combination of marketing and politics, borrowing various tools and techniques from marketing to provide a complete picture of behaviour of political parties. Earlier family, friends, peers used to influence the political behaviour of a voter but now a days, digital marketing and social media (internet, mobiles, facebook newspapers, television etc.) sources have taken over traditional methods of canvassing and has become successful in influencing the political choices of the people and contributed towards the improved communication between political parties and voters.

Robert P. Ormrod has defined political marketing as a phenomena in the political sphere to facilitate political exchanges of value through interactions in the electoral, parliamentary and governmental markets to manage relationships with stakeholders Robert P. Ormrod has quoted example of Mahatma Gandhi's burning British cloth as a symbolic event in the history, having great impact on the minds of Indian people.

Thus, political marketing includes various activities such as identifying voters requirements, grouping of voters based on various dimensions, framing of policies, strategies and programs for political

setting, political campaigns, influence people to behave in specific manner, application of marketing tools and functions to political arena etc. to make this process more meaningful.

Elements in Political Marketing

Political Marketing emphasizes on the consideration of three elements :

- **Content development** : It is based on slogans, speeches, punch lines, manifestos etc.
- **Medium** : Social media, television, radio, newspapers, advertising, loudspeakers etc.
- **Event** : Road shows, rallies, protests, religious visits or various forms of public meetings.

Objectives

- to study a literature review for theoretical base of political and commercial marketing.
- to study characteristics and functions of political marketing.

Review of Literature

Lock and Ham's (1996) have pointed out the role of political marketing in communicating with party members, media, various sources of funding as well as the electorate.

Wring (1997) has defined political marketing as candidate's or party's use of opinion research and environmental analysis to promote a competitive offering to voters to satisfy organisational goals and electoral groups in exchange for their votes.

Newman (1998) has discussed the use of tools and techniques of marketing to design political campaigns (planning, management, execution) for various political organizations to disseminate political philosophies, influence public opinions, winning political warfare to meet the expectations of voters or groups in the society.

Lees-marshment (2001) also emphasized on adaptation of commercial marketing tools, techniques and methods by political marketing for the attainment of organization's goals and objectives.

American Marketing Association (2007) has highlighted the role of marketing to influence the behaviour of target audiences to support and vote for a particular political party, leader/person or proposition.

Osuagwu (2008) has defined political marketing as application of tools and techniques of traditional marketing to resolve political issues of groups, organisations, persons or nations.

Menon (2009) took the redefined view of marketing as the planning and execution process of conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to exchange and satisfy individual and organisational objectives.

Noorultiq (2017) in his paper 'Dimensions of Political Marketing in India' has presented a broad view of the concept of political marketing in different political and social contexts and its influence in electoral campaigns and policy making. The paper has explored the area and tools of marketing in relation with the politics and explained various functions of political marketing such as product, distribution, communication, cost, campaign, fund-raising, cost, management and internal cohesion policies.

Vineet Kumar (2019) in his article, 'Political Marketing in India : A Review of Key strategies' has emphasized that electioneering period needs political marketing for making successful effort to win the voters for power. Political marketing helps the political parties through application of right channels and tactful strategies to target the specific audience. Selection of strategies can build or destroy political figures. With digitilization, credibility and transparency are the issues that can be faced by political marketing.

Gopal, Veena, Chandel (2019) in their study entitled 'Successful political Marketing : A Punjab Voter's Point of view' have studied the influence of different factors affecting political marketing.

Market Orientation, Market Research, building and managing strong and favourable image are the factors that influence political.

Features of Political Marketing

Political marketing term was first used by Kelley in 1956. John Beckley, one of the members of campaign team around Thomas Jefferson, was considered as first political consultants. Although this term was used in earlier societies, but political marketing has gained importance these days due to media exposure, changing political and electoral systems, improved communication levels satisfying organisational and individual objectives. The characteristics of political marketing revolves around political product, political organization, political market, political behaviour, communication, research, voters, promotion strategies, environmental analysis, managing favourable image etc.

- **Product :** Product concept in political marketing is voter's viewpoint. Image of the political party, commitments towards society, policies and strategies to meet goals of the public, recent achievements of the party, Media's role in building image of the political leaders, satisfying target group's needs. Political product is the multi-component part comprising of integrated activities.
- **Organisation :** The party offers various organisational goals and satisfy voters voters select on the basis of performance of candidate in recent years, party affiliation, issues of party, flow of communication – exchange of ideas between a party and group of voters.
- **Market :** Political candidates select voters based on different baselines such as age, sex, family size, race, life-style, occupation, income etc. by providing them various themes, issues/ ideas, values. The candidate uses canvassing, mass-media advertising, speeches, rallies etc. to reach the target voters. Voters select the candidate on the concerns being met as compared to competing candidates.
- **Market Intelligence :** Political parties identify voters needs and wants through the process of market intelligence, which is based on the use of primary – secondary, formal – informal and Quantitative – Qualitative techniques. Honesty, credibility, prudence, intellectual and loyal behaviour, strengths, weaknesses, leadership and communication etc. factors influence voters choices.
- **Promotion :** Political parties adapt themselves to modern techniques that help them to position in market place. political parties frame a campaign advertising targeting voter's cultures, needs, wants, expectations, preferences, family background, race, economic status etc. Political parties deliver their messages to voters combining both traditional and modern methods such as, through telephones, direct mail, posters, fliers, banners, concerts, rallies, tours, publicity, public opinion polls, digital marketing tools, social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ and online professional networks) etc. to create a multiplying effect in providing voters to give them views regarding political leaders in an interactive manner.
- **Placement :** The political parties can make their party offices at local or regional levels, which can provide crucial inputs at the time of elections. Such type of arrangements play a very influential role in voting process through keeping a liaison/ co-ordinating national and local level happenings and leader's agents. Voter's preferences to the candidate in relation to competitors help in positioning which describes the parties/ candidates capabilities being matched with opportunities in external environment.
- **Market Research :** For measuring political party's performance, potential voters, analysing voters issues and providing solutions, gathering information, conducting interviews, panel discussions etc. tools are used meeting the purpose of candidate and voter.

- **Testing** : Political candidate/ party concept-testing is based on introducing candidate's manifesto to the voter, voters preferences or reactions to candidate's concepts, voters choice for selecting the candidate and overall voters characteristics. Different market segments are created on the basis of evaluation of candidates by voter groups. Market orientation helps political parties/ candidates to win elections, by being in touch with voters concerns and satisfying voters requirements.

Thus, political marketing features start from membership incorporating various policies, regulatory framework, values, statements provision of literature, building party image, party's manifestos and ability to meet voters requirements.

Functions of Political Marketing :

- **Product Function** : In political marketing, just representing the candidate, there is more to market before the voters such as exchange of ideas, ideology, policy framework, good governance, loyalty adaptability to voters perspectives etc. Party wants to present a product that is able to attract the voters among various competitors.
- **Distribution Function** : This function aims at offering all relevant and reliable information about the political product (such as party policies, programmes, matching ideology to cater the needs of various voter groups, canvassing through right channels, reaching right target market) to the political partner.
- **Cost Function** : Effective and efficient communication tools providing political party/ candidate's information, goals, commitment levels to the voters ----- spending any money by them. This function aims at managing behavioural and attitudinal barriers of voters through proper promotional measures.
- **Financial Function** : Political marketing survives on fund raising, appropriate financial resources, do nations, membership fees, volunteering etc. Advertisements undertaken by political groups/ parties, Government, various interest and lobby groups help in making political campaigns more effective by taking issues of public interest and focuses on varying extent of financial resources.
- **Information/ Communication function** : Political party's/ candidates history, policies, programmes, image, decision-making, leadership, political contemp, ideology, political messages, political dialogue with exchange partners etc. needs to be communicated to the target audience/ voters.
- **News management Function** : In digital world of communication, news management plays an important role in publicity of the political candidate and party, various medias, online websites, public relation activities, promotional exchange partners help in making positive image of the political party.
- **Parallel Campaign Management Function** : This function aims at co-ordinated efforts of a political party to match with those of parallel organisations to increase the trustworthiness of the political messages and employing effective campaign resources.
- **Internal Cohesion Management Function** : This function manages internal structure and functions of a political party in a very professional manner to strengthen the relationship among party members, activists and representatives. It helps in creating internal stability, credibility and maintaining party's image in the outside world.
- **Result Function** : This function caters to know the behaviour of voters towards political candidate/ party regarding positive/ negative perception, attitude, approval, loyalty from the public. Keeping in consideration common underlying needs and connecting it to the benefits, can only bring success with same theme, using same media, platforms, magnifying impact of 19 advertising and promotional campaigns should be seen among various age-groups, geographies and sections of society.

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