



THE APPLICABILITY OF POLITICAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON VOTERS

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ABSTRACT

Every firm, product, person, etc. relies on marketing. Modern politics is similar. Because there are so many, every political faction must contend it's the best. Political party marketing has changed political marketing. Politics and marketing are intertwining. Social and mainstream media have changed politics in recent decades. Political ads are expensive. Corporations and political campaigns rely on the media to reach their audiences and urge action. Both use market research and statistics.

Political success depends on strong political brands, and voter behavior analysis is a critical tool. This research will help candidates, political parties, political groups, and the government understand voter demands and preferences. This exploratory study tries to find, analyse, or review variables for analyzing political marketing's effectiveness on voters. We must understand how voters choose a party and candidate for all the time and money spent on political advertising.

Keywords: Political Marketing, Branding, Social Medias, Voters intention, political advertising, Political product, consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Political parties and leaders employ a range of strategies to win over voters and maintain their support. As a result, they are constantly and avidly seeking new knowledge regarding the factors that influence voter decisions. Consequently, political groups seeking preeminence must, first, identify the primary elements influencing voters' decisions and, second, evaluate the magnitude of each variable's impact on the electorate's final choice. According to a previous research (Dahiya & Vohra, 2022) the terms political, marketing, brand, party, candidate, personality, media, negative, campaign, advertising, social, information, voters, voting etc. are the most commonly used terms when talking about political marketing.

Political marketing promotes a party or candidate to voters through carefully designed messages to seek support. Despite the distinct entities being marketed, politics and product marketing have many parallels (Si, 2019). There are many parallels between corporate and political marketing given that both strive to engage with target consumers. Despite claims to the contrary, highly targeted and optimized political marketing campaigns are more likely to influence voters' choices than the degree to which candidates' platforms align with those of the particular voter (Bruce, 2016; Si, 2019; (Dahiya & Vohra, 2022).

Political parties are in the same position as businesses in that they have to actively seek out new clientele and must move rapidly to implement innovative methods for voter courtship. Cold calling, email campaigns, direct mail leaflet distribution, radio commercials, social media outreach, and appearances on news and talk shows are all components of the modern political marketing landscape (Si, 2022). According to some previous studies (Si, 2022; Bruce, 2016; Hultman, Ulusoy & Oghazi, 2019), the ability of political marketing to communicate with and educate the general public is what gives it its relevance.

Research Gap

In recent years, political marketing research (Smith, 2001; Guzman & Sierra, 2009; Giasson, at. Al, 2012; Dahiya & Vohra,2022; De Asis, 2022) has made tremendous advancements. However, there are few academic research interest groups, academic and practitioner conferences, and articles devoted to this topic. Recent elections in numerous nations (Philippines, Brazil, Kenya, United States, France, etc.) have revealed an upsurge in the use of political marketing. This necessitated the study of political marketing as a discipline.

In addition, particularly in the Philippines, there hasn't been much research on voter behavior intentions. Since 2022 elections, political marketing has changed dramatically. Social media was extensively used to build political brands for the 2022 elections. Parties invested time and money updating leader profiles and pages. First, the party leader became crucial to political communication, and politics became image-based. Plus, rival parties used unpleasant ads online and offline. There's a rising interest in identifying the essential political marketing aspects that influence voter choices.

Contribution

The research will be very helpful to Civil society which relies on elections to represent legal needs, political institutions, and the democratic mandate. Political marketing is essential as election excitement continues worldwide.

Objectives

- The study's overarching goal is to demonstrate the usefulness of marketing as a strategic tool in the realm of political marketing.
- The study sheds some light on the growing importance of marketing as a means of dissemination for political and party messages.
- In the end, the purpose of this research was to determine the effect that political marketing has on voters.

Methodology

For this study, secondary sources that are currently available have been used. In order to understand how political marketing has become an integral component of politics and how it has had an influence on voters, a qualitative analysis and review of the available literature has been explored. In other words, this research uses secondary data.

UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL MARKETING

The process through which commercially successful strategies are transferred to the political sphere is referred to as "political marketing" by experts in the field. Candidates, campaign pledges, and official policies can all be compared to goods and services in the context of the business world. Citizens, acting in their capacity as customers, acquire information regarding a political good (candidate, promise, policy), and then decide whether or not to purchase it (vote) (Dahiya & Vohra,2022). According to a previous study, the term "marketing" as it relates to politics has a far broader scope than just "running for office." When one considers that the term "marketing" refers to a vast

range of activities beyond simply making a sale, it seems reasonable that the term "political marketing" also embraces a wide variety of strategies aimed at altering the preferences of voters (Giasson, et. Al, 2012)

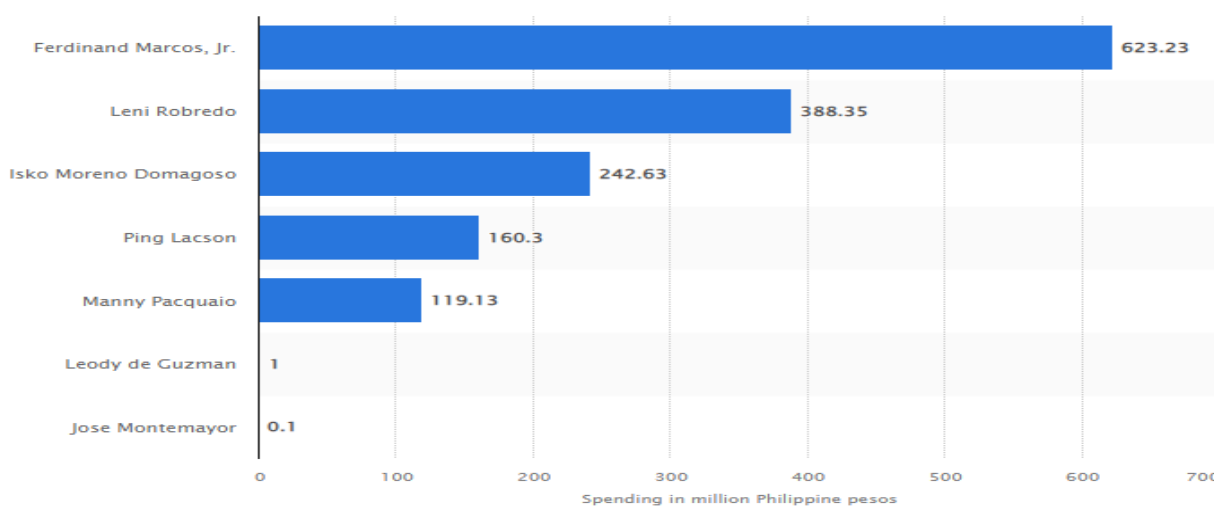
Studies have shown that, the use of marketing techniques and strategies in political campaigns is on the rise in nations that practice democratic government, such as the Philippines (De Asis, 2022). From this point of view, the most up-to-date definition of political marketing that matches our research can be found in Hughes and Dann's work (2009) which states that Political marketers make use of a "set of activities, procedures, or political institutions" in order to develop, convey, deliver, and trade promises of value with voter-consumers, stakeholders in political parties, and society as a whole.

Political marketing is a protracted, ongoing campaign that puts voters' education ahead of politicians' and parties' education concerning the latter. As a result, understanding and gratifying the interests and wishes of the people are at the core of the entire political framework. Therefore, political parties and candidates never stop trying to learn more about the key components of political marketing and how they affect voter decision-making in order to better understand voters (Dahiya & Vohra,2022).

Multimillions Campaign

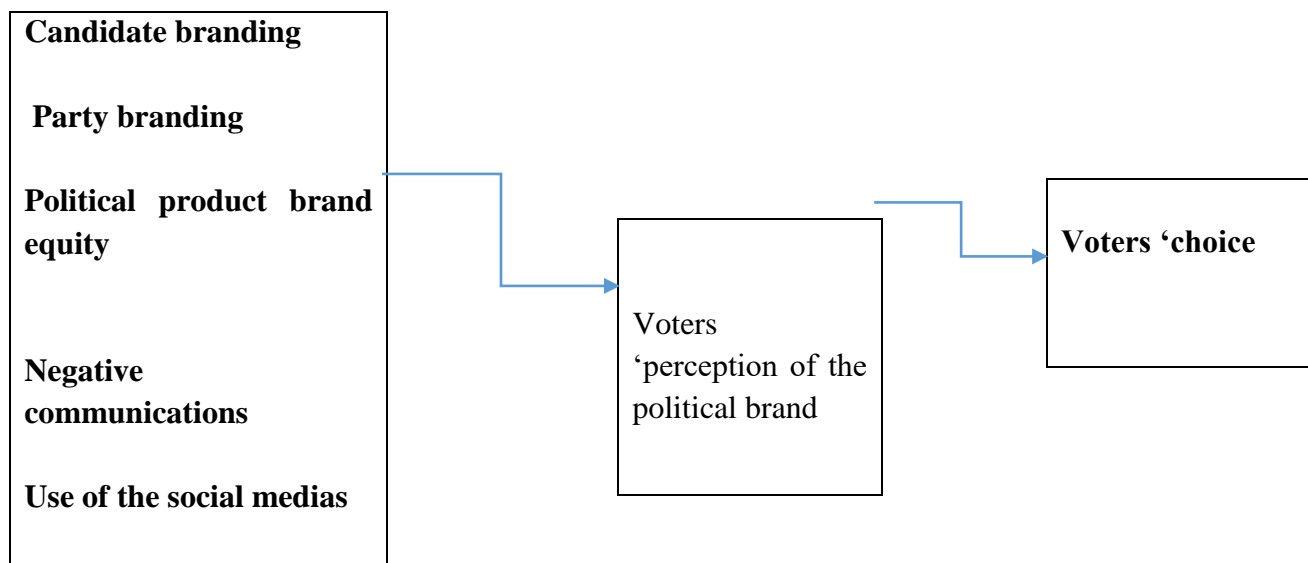
The cost of mounting a successful political campaign has seen a significant rise in recent years. The decisions that voters make are getting increasingly difficult to predict. Their voting decision is growing more erratic and inconsistent as time goes on. As a direct consequence of this, the cost of political campaigning, which is a component of political marketing, has increased. For instance, the website Statista.com reports that more than 623 million Philippine pesos, the vast bulk of which came from cash and in-kind contributions, were spent on Ferdinand Marcos, Jr.'s presidential campaign during the 2022 elections in the Philippines. Meanwhile, Leni Robredo disclosed campaign expenditures of more than 388 million Philippine pesos.

Other candidates also spent several millions of Philippines pesos as per their respective SOCEs in the below table.



Influence of political marketing on voters

Model



Political Branding

According to recent studies (Dahiya & Vohra, 2022) political brands, like commercial brands, are composed of various components that, when taken as a whole, convey significant meaning to the target audience. Humans rely on their memories to recall the experiences they've had with physical items. These names are used by voters to help them decide whether or not to vote in an election. Another study (Smith, 2001) takes a similar tack, noting that candidates often view their varied campaign strategies as opportunities to increase awareness of, and positive associations with, their brand among voters. In politics, both individual leaders and political parties are seen as brands.

Candidate Branding

Politicians compete for voters' attention in the same way that businesses do: by offering a range of identities, platforms, and platforms. Candidates running for office are unable to avoid these campaigns, thus it makes sense to market them like any other product (Smith, 2001; Dahiya & Vohra, 2022; Guzman & Sierra, 2009).

Personal attributes are a greater predictor of voters' decisions than political issues, as evidenced by the 2022 Philippine presidential election. voters use traits substantially in making their choice, and they have a clear picture of their leader's character at all times (Smith, 2001). That's why it's so important for politicians to have a distinct brand identity. Additionally, as the advertising process is becoming increasingly expensive, it is more important than ever to establish a strong brand in order to obtain an advantage over competitors. This correlates with another research (Abuso, 2022) which states that, the Marcoses reaped the benefits of positive branding that hid their family's sins by "publishing YouTube videos that present a revisionist history of the 20-year Marcos government as 'the glorious era of the Philippines.

Party branding

According to other research (Clow et al., 1997 cited by Dahiya & Vohra, 2022), Political party is one of the main predictors of a voter's perception of a political brand because it gives voters with a sense of cohesion, recognition, and predictability. From this point of view, we do assume that Voting intent in the future is strongly correlated with how well-known a political product (party) is among respondents. For example, based on people I interview, when trying to analyze the brand of the two highest profile of the candidate in the 2022 presidential race in the Philippines, Marcos did show the stable brand, portraying himself as the replacement of his father and the continuity of the realizations of major projects of Duterte's administration. On the other hand, Robredo had political branding issue as many voters still see in her the return of the Yellow in power.

Political product brand equity

Based on my interview with some voters about the 2022 presidential race in the Philippines, something came out about political product and brand equity. Saying so, good marketing strategy would like the candidate to be sure to put the message platform ahead of any individual considerations.

The electorate is more engaged and loyal to a message platform that is forceful, timely, relevant, clear, brief, and uses few gimmicks. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr.'s (BBM) message was unwavering in its emphasis on national pride and unity as the first steps toward overcoming the pandemic. appealed for Filipinos to come together, and featured prominently at his rallies was the Philippine flag, a crucial branding symbol (De Asis, 2022).

Furthermore, De Asis (2022) argues that Campaigning for Leni Robredo began with laylayan and lugaw and ended with "gobyernong tapat, angat buhay lahat" (honest government uplifts everyone). Nonetheless, the initial message was not preserved and was revised twice. Clearly, decisions were made in accordance with what strategists considered required more innovative application. Since the beginning of her political career, Robredo has been marketed as an advocate of kindness, philanthropy, and the color pink. Robredo's marketing team waited until the final three weeks of the campaign to unveil the new emblem, which now includes the sun and three stars from the Philippine flag.

In short, consistency in the product that one markets has more influence in voters' choice. In other words, good political marketing that places the primary emphasis on the message of the platform (product) rather than the individual does have influence voters' choice.

Negative Communications or Ads

The term "political advertising" refers to campaigns funded by a political party or a candidate that aim to boost their profile or policy proposals at the expense of their opponents (Nott, 2020). The study further argues that the use of negative advertising has become one of the most divisive aspects of political marketing. From this point of view, it may be said that negative campaign advertisements aim to damage a candidate's reputation and discourage voters from supporting them. The results of 2022 presidential race in the Philippines have shown that negative communications against a given candidate did not really change voting intention of their supporters.

This results go along with other researches which have shown that negative advertising does not distract voters but invigorates them by increasing their understanding of the electoral process and interest in the election results. In other words, unfavorable ads cause a shift in viewers' mental state, but not in their voting intentions (Rahn & Hirshorn, 1999; Finkle & Geer, 1998).

Use of the social medias

The term "social media" refers to a collection of web-based technologies that enable users to communicate with one another and distribute content that they have created in an effort to sway the opinions of others (Kaitlyn, 2021). The use of social medias according to people we interview played a pivotal role in 2022 election in the Philippines. For instance, Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Leni Robredo were in a tight two-way contest on Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, according to Rappler and Manila-based Nerve (Macaraeg, 2022). According to Macaraeg (2022), Marcos Jr. did have the best-coordinated network on Facebook of any of the contenders. The voices of those who disagreed with him were drowned out by the chorus of his supporters. Leni on the other hand, had volunteer-driven communication. From this point of view, it is clear that well-coordinated political marketing would influence voters.

The election debates or platforms were also discussed in Tiktok. A previous study argues that Bongbong, has maintained a low profile in the mainstream media, focusing his attention on a savvy social media campaign(Tiktok) with millions of followers (Buddhavarapu, 2022). From this point of view, we came up with the statement that in the 2022 Philippine presidential election, lawmakers used social media effectively. Voter confidence was boosted, citizens were attracted, disillusionment was averted, involvement rose, and direct communication and interpersonal relationships were strengthened.

In conclusion, from the perspective of marketing, it is essential to comprehend the impact of social media on voter behavior and voting intention.

Conclusion

The practice of political marketing has been proven useful in modern politics, particularly in the areas of public policy formulation, public service delivery, and the cultivation of support among voters as shown in 2022 presidential race in the Philippines. Since so much time, energy, and money is spent trying to meet voters' preferences, it is essential that politicians and the government know what kinds of things people expect from their representatives in government. For instance, during the presidential race in the Philippines as per official declaration, the candidate BongBong Marcos did spend 623.23 Millions of the Philippines pesos while Leni Robredo did spend 388.35 Millions. An experience of such multimillions pesos campaign shows how political marketing becomes crucial or essential to master for better political strategies in the future.

This research has qualitatively shown that political marketers should focus on spotting patterns in voter behavior if they want to create a powerful political brand, effectively communicating with voters and swaying their votes.

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