

Studies of Political Marketing: An Annotated Bibliography

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Abstract

The selected annotated bibliography presents snapshots of researches published all around the world and are considered as milestone researches in the area of political advertising. Political scientists, psychologists, communication theorists and marketing scholars have used experiments, surveys and case studies to examine the impact of political marketing on voter's belief and behavior. The authors have categorized the literature by broad themes such as conceptualization, typologies, surveys, analysis of when candidates should go negative in approach, and provide annotations of the researches in each category. Since the focus of this bibliography is to shed some light on the concept for a country like India, only the article that serves the purpose of basic needed research in the field are only included.

Keywords – *Political Marketing, Advertising, Negative Advertising, Empirical study.*

1. Introduction

The application of mainstream marketing to politics has been in practice for over a century. Political marketing though was developed as a term comparatively late but it was first talked of when Kotler and Levy in 1969 wrote a paper on "broadening the concept of marketing". They pointed out that the tools of marketing can be used in areas other than business. The expansion of marketing can embrace non-commercial entities, such as police, churches and public schools. In their article entitled 'Broadening the Concept of Marketing,' they point out that 'one of the most striking trends in the United States is the increasing amount of society's work being performed by organizations other than business firms'.

This new marketing concept should also include the marketing of ideas and individuals, which caused resistance from other theorists, such as David J Luck,

who considered any expansion of marketing techniques into domains other than business as evil. They believed that only business firms 'sell' products: churches do not sell religions and political parties do not sell specific services 'unless corruptly committing illegal acts' (Luck, 1969).

Notwithstanding, Kotler continued to speak out for a broader definition of marketing and in 1972 formulated his 'generic concept of marketing,' according to which 'marketing is specifically concerned with how transactions are created, stimulated, facilitated and valued' (Kotler, 1972). Popular books, such as White's *The Making of a President 1960*, and scholarly research noting the marketing character of election campaigning, such as those carried out by Kelly (1956), Glick (1967) and Nimmo (1970) further contributed to the growth of political marketing (Kotler, 1982: 461–2).

Political marketing is a fundamental part of political life. Presidents and Prime Ministers; politicians and parties; government departments and councils all use marketing in their pursuit of political goals. Market research is used to understand what the people they serve want and need when deciding on policies and service design; voter profiling helps create new segments to target; strategy guides creation of the political brand to develop an attractive vision; internal marketing guides the provision of volunteer involvement; analytics and experimental research tests and refines communication messages and delivery management sets expectations and helps to convey progress.

Scholars in the area of political marketing have come from the political science, communication, psychology and marketing, which reflects the subject's cross disciplinary approach. Methodologies applied by the varied scholars have varied as well that's why this study includes rhetorical and content analysis, experiments and surveys. Subjects in the empirical studies have ranged from college students to respondents recruited from general public to the representatives of the political parties.

Similar to the recent Indian elections of 2014 the negative range of advertising was well established in United States in 1988, a systematic evaluation of campaign commercial through advertisement watches, coverage such factors were used for critiquing for the accuracy of claims. Such type of qualitative research is required in India. The major aim of this selective meta analysis is to illustrate the research trend that has followed in past few decades. The major focus of this study is on the journal articles as those are peer reviewed and thus it excludes any government document, doctoral thesis, chapter in edited books, and articles in popular press. Even after all the exclusion the research is too voluminous to be reviewed entirely.

This analysis begins with the discussion of the concept as the term was coined along with the word marketing which for several decades in its initial stage has been a part of debate whether to call it marketing or not. To what extent the word marketing justifies the term if coined along side. The next section explain the concept further by developing typologies of political advertisements, categorizing it as valence, content, type of appeal and so on.

2. Conceptualization

Avaraham Shama (1975) "An analysis of Political Marketing"; association of consumer research, pages 106-116

This study was done to check the applicability of marketing on politics and the author concluded with sufficient evidence. Marketing concept can serve as the base for political marketing. The major focus of this study was on the angle of understanding the concept through 'consumer behavior'. By studying the concept of consumer behavior, the understanding of voter's behavior is judged. Although the major concept studied supported the theory and assured the applicability but few concepts and approaches were left which created points of difference for e.g. normative approach, legal approach and system approach. These approaches help define the function and role of an individual in the legal and political system. Such approaches provided few conceptual differences. Nevertheless, the similarity between the streams in spite of the few differences is still sharp.

Aron O' Cass (1996), "Political Marketing and the Marketing Concept", European Journal of Marketing, Vol. – 30.

Author of this paper checked the applicability of marketing on politics in a new manner. Not basing the research on not basing the research on mere secondary data or the provided literature, an approach to the key position holders in the political parties was made. These position holding people were interviewed to check their knowledge of

marketing and how they apply it in politics. The level of knowledge of marketing was found low. Just because the concept of marketing was not well understood doesn't mean that the applicability is not there. The philosophy of marketing is adopted in the field of politics.

The number of barriers were identified, first being the misconception of marketing, second is the conflict of party objectives and voter's needs, third the management perception of the voter's needs and in the end the short term focus on the votes obtained as the ultimate measure of success. All the above barriers were there as the concept of marketing research was missing in political parties. This has caused a huge gap between the parties and voters and a big loss of feedback and focus.

Andrew Lock and Phil Harris (1996), "Political Marketing – Vive La Difference!", European Journal of Marketing, Vol. – 30, No. 10/11, pp 14

The author tried to explain the phenomena of political Marketing. In 1996 political marketing although was a recent term, but certainly was not a recent practice as it has been used for over a century. According to authors, the decline in party membership was a big reason of political marketing success. Models and theories provided at that time were incapable of covering all actors and entities of political government processes.

The author also endeavored to show that political marketing is sufficiently different from the main stream marketing. There is considerable amount of applicability of models and concepts, still the basic concept of exchange fall under the hat of dilemma, questioning whether politics is a good fit in marketing attire.

Nor, Asaari, Karia and Haron (2006), "Political Marketing Vs Commercial Marketing: Something in common for gains", Global Conference for Business Economics, October 15 – 17.

This study contains an extensive literature review with the help of which the authors have compared political marketing with commercial marketing. The major focus was made on the basic concept of exchange. In business marketing in exchange for the goods, services and communication the business receives money, information and consumer loyalty. In political marketing in exchange of promises, favors, policy preference and personalities parties get vote, support and contributions. Many concepts and tools of research are shared in two streams. Marketing offers political parties the ability to address, diverse voter's concern and needs through marketing analysis planning, implementation and control of political and electoral campaign.

Political marketing doesn't get active during election, it's an ongoing process. Marketing research is done for a very long time to know the voter's

behavior and the communication spins around accordingly.

Norman Peng and Chris Hackley (2009), "Are Voter's Consumers", Qualitative Marketing Research: An International Journal, Vol. – 12, No. 12, pp 171 – 186.

The authors of the paper review the literature in a vast amount in order to reach to the conclusion whether voters are to be treated as consumers. To study this two perspectives were taken one was macro when studied broadly, the authors concluded that voters can be considered same as consumers. The basic processing of political and commercial media message is similar. The voters may be influenced by the political message or the politician's image, just as he or she might be influenced by a product's image or brand image. The practice of political communication and marketing communication are interchangeable.

On the contrary in a micro level analysis, some important contextual differences were found. The voters evaluated the media text critically and tried to analyze the meaning behind the message. The voters can easily identify the differences in political and commercial arena and make judgment about how these could influence them.

3. Typologies

Kaid, L. and Johnston, A. (1991), "Negative versus positive television advertising in US presidential campaigns, 1960-1988", Journal of Communication, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 53-64

The authors examined advertisements that were telecasted from 1960-1988 and classifications were done based on the nature of the advertisements whether the advertisements were positive (focused on the candidate) or negative (focused on the opposition). All the advertisements were further coded with categories based on the appeal in the advertisement. Although there has been other research in the area that has tested the same but two new things were studied in this research. First, a further classification was done based on the appeal was humorous or name calling was done, which can be coded as direct or indirect advertisements also. Secondly, the attack style negative ads were classified in to two classifications, one being the attack on character and two being the attack on the issue. Negative advertisements are also more logical than positive advertisements but are also unethical in comparison. In the world of political marketing most of the negative advertisements carry a common type of appeal that is the fear appeal.

Holtz-Bacha, C., Kaid, L. and Johnston, A. (1994), "Political television advertising in western democracies: a comparison of campaign broadcasts

in the United States, Germany and France", Political Communication, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 67-80.

Authors conducted a comparative content study of political television advertising in the USA, France and Germany. Dimensions coded include format and production techniques, content (issue or image), type of spot (positive or negative), and type of appeal (emotional, logical and ethical). Of particular interest here are the results regarding negative advertisements. Attacks were found in 49 per cent of the ads from the USA and 32 per cent of the German ads, and 25 per cent of the French ads were negative. Anonymous announcers were used in 78 per cent of the attacks in US spots, while in France all attacks were made by the candidate, and in Germany 67 per cent were made by the candidate. Interestingly, in all three countries, the focus of the negative advertisements was most often the issue positions of the opposition, not the opposition's image or character

Klotz, R (1998), "Virtual Criticism: negative advertising on the internet in the 1996 senate races", Political Communication, Vol. 15 no. 3, pp 347-65.

Author in this paper focused on the negative advertising done on the new and effective platform, the internet. Almost 75% of the candidate has presence on the internet. The author examined these in order to examine the level of negative campaigning. Who was using it when and how much. Klotz studies and analyzed the pages of each candidate's profile for further categorization as primarily oppositional, superficially comparative or engagingly comparative. The result highlighted that internet as medium was primarily positive. Only 34% of the pages were primarily oppositional. The majority fell under the category of challengers and only 26% were has focus on issues. The paper was concluded with although the majority didn't made direct attacks on their pages but utilization of this medium was found in indirect content.

4. Impact of Political Marketing

4.1 Surveys

Kahn, K.F. (1993), "Gender differences in campaign messages: the political advertisements of men and women candidates for US Senate", Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 46 No. 3, pp. 481-502.

The author compared the content of televised advertisements of male and female candidates in the US elections of 1984 and 1986 Senate. The results showed that men used more of the positive appeal in their campaigning than women. The status of the candidate was regardless in this context whether female was in power or was challenger. Males were

also using lesser amount of negative advertisements against the female candidate in comparison. Female candidate I their attack focused more on issues that were substantive in nature than on the character or ability of male candidate. Rest personal attacks were there and the change was not much reflected on this fact what the gender of the opponent was.

Weaver-Lariscy, R.A. and Tinkham, S.F. (1996), "Advertising message strategies in US congressional campaigns: 1982, 1990", Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 53-66.

The authors used the surveys done by the candidates for US congressional from 1982 – 1990 for assessment of the impact of message strategy on the outcome of the election. The results were that the candidates who focused on negative appeal and pointed out the opponent's characteristics were unchanged there was a significant fall in the use of the mix technique where the candidate is utilizing a combination of positive about himself and negative about the opponent. The major finding was that the incumbent's using negative advertising fell down and the outcome of their campaign also failed

Freedman, P., Wood, W. and Lawton, D. (1999), "Dos and don'ts of negative ads: what voters say", Campaigns & Elections, Vol. 20 No. 9, pp. 20-25.

The author conducted the study in the state of Virginia to find out what type of charges or allegation by the Candidates are perceived to be "fair", "Moderate" or "unfair" by the voters. A statewide telephonic session was conducted on less than 10% voters. Then the second phase of the research was done in which a hypothetical situation was discussed with respondents and to know whether to what type of allegation should have what kind of response from the candidate. Like to a fair/moderate/unfair charge one should respond in fair/moderate/unfair manner. The research offered several practical tips to running candidate of the time also. It is alright to attack an opponent with the charge that will be perceived as fair by the public was one practical tip. Like "ratcheting down" in debate to retaliate against an attack with a less fair attack should be avoided. Ignoring such an attack and to proceed further is the right option. The study also suggested that use of unfair ads reduces voter's turnout.

David S. Waller, Michael Jay Polonsky. (1999), "Student Attitudes towards Political Advertising and Issues", Journal of International Consumer Marketing, Vol. 11(2), 79-98

The author compared the views of students' from two universities from different countries and found that their views on political marketing were quite similar. The views other than on political marketing the views that they share about the politicians are

also the same. Despite the cultural differences and the political differences the major views on most of the statements were found similar and even the electoral issues were found to be similar based on which the young students vote

Michael M. Franz, Travis N. Ridout. (2007), "Does Political Marketing Persuade", Polit Behav Journal, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 465-491

The author has checked the impact of advertising on an individual based on the exposure of one's towards the advertisements. Two types of campaigns were studied and the audience was categorized as partisans and general audience. The impact was found to be more in general then partisans as they have comparatively less inclination and knowledge f a candidate. Among the partisans the results were a little contradictory as to the impact were more on the strong partisans then it was on the weak partisans. Keeping the environment of 2004 U.S election in mind the model was designed to overlook a few barriers and the results were conclusive to the evident. The study clearly depicted that advertising matters everywhere, the impact varies from strong to negligible amount but study safely quotes that it matters.

4.2 Experiments

Garramone, G.M., Atkin, C.K., Pinkleton, B.E. and Cole, R.T. (1990), "Effects of negative political advertising on the political process", Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, Vol. 34 No. 3, pp. 299-311.

Author in this study created a controlled environment by manipulating the numbers and type of advertisements in order to assess the impact of positive and negative advertising. The variable on which the study was based was candidate's image discrimination, attitude towards the candidate, involvement in the election communication behavior. All respondents were made to read biographies of two fictitious candidates. Respondents also viewed on or two 30 second commercials that were differed in appeal (positive and negative). The results were not very significant in involvement in election voters' turnout or communication behavior; however, negative advertising did result in greater image discrimination and attitude formation. The paper concluded that negative political advertising is more informative than the positive one.

Thorson, E., Christ, W.G. and Caywood, C. (1991), "Effects of issue-image strategies, attack and support appeals, music, and visual content in political commercials", Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, Vol. 35 No. 4, pp. 465-86.

Authors manipulated four dimensions of political advertising content in order to study recall, voting

intent, attitude towards the advertisement, attitude towards the sponsoring candidate, perception of candidate's character, and arousal. The dimensions were valence, focus, presence and absence of music, and visual context. Recent advertisements of US senate candidate were edited and given a new script read by new announcer for a group of 161 undergraduate candidates who were not at all familiar with those candidates. Each respondent was shown the 30 sec edited advertisement of each candidate rotation wise. The impact of it was a mix. The support appeal had significant positive result in comparison to the attack ad of the sponsoring candidate. But at the same time support appeal was also less arousing in comparison to attack appeal. Voting intent and candidate's ability in contrast to author's hypothesis came out insignificant to the study. In contrast for the retention of memory and recall support appeal has a greater impact than attack appeal.

Dinzes, D., Cozzens, M.D. and Manross, G.G. (1994), "The role of gender in 'attack ads': revisiting negative political advertising", *Communication Research Reports*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 67-75.

The authors experimented by manipulating the genders of the attack and target candidates in advertisements to assess the impact of gender of the candidate on its evaluations and voting likelihood. The respondents were undergraduates and were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions which varied the gender of the candidates sponsoring and the candidate being targeted. The four campaign advertisements were identical just the candidate names and gender pronouns were altered. The results showed that respondents were in favor of the sponsor of the negative advertisement when the target was of the opposite sex than the genders of the candidates sponsoring and candidates target were similar. A similar, although weak statistically, outline was found for candidate evaluations. A justification based on level of audience participation and information seeking was recommended by the authors.

Houston, D.A, Doan, K and Roskos Ewoldsen, D. (1999), "Negative Political Advertising and Choice Conflict" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 5 no.1, pp 3-16

The authors had 6 advertisements from two candidate one liberal and the other conservative from a US senate campaign. Candidate was considered in-group and out-group candidate based on how much it matched the subject's ideology after they were shown the commercial edited to create a well planned controlled environment. Each of the candidates in the session ran either a positive of

negative campaign judging the situation based on prediction. The results presented that both candidates received high evaluation when they ran a positive campaign and comparatively low evaluation when they ran a negative campaign. The paper concluded with the remark that both the appeals together creates a synergy which is to be studied together rather than in isolation.

4.3 Positive impact of negative campaigning

Brians, C.L and Watterberg, M.P (1996), "Campaign Issue Knowledge and Salience: Comparing reception from TV commercial, TV News and Newspaper", *American Journal of political science* Vol. 40, no.1 pp 172-93.

Above concluded several studies under the section of experiment showed that negative advertising carries more issues than the positive ones. This means that negative advertisements are more content enriched. This can be considered as "positive" effects of the negatives. The authors used survey data from 1992 US presidential elections to determine the effects of watching television news program or newspapers. The respondents then were asked to recall the campaign advertisements. 77% were able to recall the advertisements that were too negative in appeal. The impact of the recall variable when tested earlier the candidates who recalled the negative campaign had higher knowledge of the issues and were capable of making better evaluation than the ones who recalled negative advertising. Neither reading of newspaper nor watching news on television showed any significant relation to any dependent variable.

Mayer, W.G (1996), "In Defense of Negative Campaign", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 111, no.3, pp437-55.

Few paper above concluded based on their research that the attitude of people towards the positive appeal is more evaluating than the negative appeal. The author has defended such remarks against the negative campaigning. He quoted that negative campaigns often carry valuable information that the voters analysis must be provided with. The bold changes are justified by higher level of criticism. He said targeting the opponent's policies and abilities are justified but false and misleading facts are not. He said if voters value the candidate's character in their voting decision as many do then running a negative campaign based on an opponent's character too is justified. Author concluded that banning the negative campaign would work to the advantage of those faces that are already well known to the public.

4.4 Formal analysis of when candidates should go negative

Riker, W. (1991), "Why negative campaigning is rational: the rhetoric of the ratification campaign of 1787-1788". *Studies in American Political Development*, Vol. 5 No.2, pp. 224-83.

The author is a well known name in the field Riker was the first to develop the model of "Rational Choice" that is explaining why negative campaigning is rational. To develop this model he studied the milestone debate in the US election history. His case study involved the debate in 1787-1788 on ratification of U.S constitution. He began with the analysis of all the essays and briefers produced by the Federalist and Anti-Federalists. The analyses found that overwhelming majority of appeals by the candidates were negative. He then relies on the literature for further analysis and found that the strategy that dictates stressing the risk involved with opponent's position is negative campaigning.

Skaperdas, S. and Grofman, B. (1995), "Modeling negative campaigning", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 89 No. 1, pp. 4961.

The author presented in paper a mode that is highly based on game-theory or a mathematical logic is applied on campaigning method. Every campaign ran by the candidates is either positive or negative in nature. Based on further assumption a model was developed, e.g. positive campaign helps in turning the undecided voters in to favorable voter but negative campaign turns the opponent's supporters in to undecided voters, at the same time negative campaign also drives one's own supporters in to undecided voters. According to the model positive and negative are equally effective, the key is to strategize the amount of negative and positive in the appropriate number. Like keeping a less amount of negative and more amount of positive I the campaigning will work better. But keeping no negative advertisement will not be considered a wise decision.

Hale, J.F., Fox, J.C. and Farmer, R (1996), "Negative advertisement of US Senate campaigns: The influence of campaign context", *Social Science Quarterly*, vol.77 no.2, pp329-43

The author analyzed the advertisements telecasted for US election over a decade, from 1984 till 1994. There were more than 420 advertisements, these advertisements were randomly selected from the database of university of Oklahoma and were categorized as positive or negative based on their appeal. About 43% of the ads were considered negative. These ads were then further analyzed, categorized and regressed based on characteristics of the campaign. The results indicated that the

advertisements were more likely to be negative when was being sponsored by the challenger.

5. Conclusion

This study is a mere part of the vast literature that is out there in the sea of political marketing. It helps us see the variations in the field suggesting the different aspects in which research can be conducted and should be conducted. None aspect is less important and ignorable from various perspectives. This paper successfully highlights on two major aspects of political marketing, one in explaining the concept for the country like India, second it shows the impact of political marketing on various segment in various manners. The presence of political marketing is of absolute necessity was also justifies in papers above and also to what extent mud slugging in politics is necessary. The knowledge of people of their leader will be less than half if political marketing is not deployed in a proper manner.

The worth of the political marketing industry in India was equivalent in size to any of the developed nation. There is a huge gap of research in this field in our country and this meta analysis with various aspects sheds some light on that.

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