

Role of Branding in Indian Politics – A Study with reference to General Elections 2019

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Abstract-Political Branding and Digital Marketing have made their venture into the Indian Political space. This primary objective of the paper is to analyze the various modes of branding of different parties, especially focusing on BJP and how the voters have been getting influenced by it. The Indian elections of 2019 were a major example to observe the party's branding techniques. The paper has been divided into the effectiveness of Political branding on voters and has given voters perspective, especially for General elections in 2019.

The secondary objective of the paper is to analyze what went into creating the brand "Modi" and what were the factors that made him a suitable candidate or was it him that influenced the voters or the party in general. India's political culture is more than just a reflection of a local lifestyle. Additionally, it serves as a link between the demands of new political formations and previous political experiences and model identities. As a result, it acquires the characteristics of both an emerging national vernacular and a cultural vector that is gradually permeating local culture and acting as a legitimate agent of social change. Social networking sites are currently one of the key media platforms for political campaigns. The impact of social network site usage factors on voter participation, attitude, and confidence, however, has not received much attention. As a result, this study also expands on the idea of earlier studies and tries to investigate the connections between the factors influencing social networking site use, political engagement, voting attitudes, and voting confidence.

Keywords-Political branding, candidates, leaders, parties, voters, General elections, Digital Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding Political Branding

Political branding is the expression of how a population perceives a political candidate, party, campaign strategy, or other related terms as a policy through the aid of both tangible and intangible cues, as

well as language. Brands now decide which social good initiatives succeed. Voting becomes viewed as a social good by the electorate after a successful campaign. The current era's protracted political campaigns are a testament to the effective use of branding. We observed how the Obama campaign's 'rootedness and thorough awareness of American culture resonate strongly with the audience. The political brand must connect with voters on a cultural level. We can observe something similar in India as well.

The successful management of a brand generates brand equity and political branding is no different. Strong brand equity results from favorable brand associations.

Importance of Political Branding

Political marketing offers a ton of fresh opportunities to interact with potential voters and influence perceptions. The numerous new generation campaigning sources in political marketing include TV and radio advertisements, hoardings, advertising, on-road campaigning, social media, emails, and more. Voters have fantastic obscure candidates, and political marketing supports the popular rule. Democratic nations come to like India thanks to political marketing.

Elections have always been a crucial national activity for any nation because they determine the future of the entire nation. Political parties with distinctive platforms will surely present their candidates in the best light. For instance, the phrase "Ache din aane wale hai" provided the nation's citizens with a dream that was encouraging and influential.

The communication channel used to engage with the public should be focused on technology and social media in the modern world because of how much they influence individuals. Facebook, Twitter, Google+ Hangouts, and YouTube are examples of modern

social media platforms. The political parties would benefit the most from a political campaigning process that was restricted to revolving around these cutting-edge media.

Political Branding in the Indian Context: The 2019 General Elections

2019 saw India hold the largest election process in human history to choose the sixteenth Lok Sabha. Of India's 834 million eligible voters, more than 553 million — more than the whole population of South America — exercised their right to vote. Voting reached an all-time high of 67.7%, up from 57.61% in 2014. The high turnout was largely a result of the consumer citizen's aspirations and hopes being raised by the election promises made by the brand Modi, which ran for office on the platform of development, job opportunities, the eradication of corruption, and other issues that were well-received by the electorate. Approximately 140 million more voters showed up at polling places in the most recent general election than in 2014. This was around 40 million more than the 100 million new voters that were added to the electoral rolls over the previous five years. These 40 million more voters were overwhelmingly young, female, or both. When brand Modi easily defeated all other brands (leaders as well as parties) in the most recent general election, it was clear that political branding had arrived in India in the most comprehensive way ever.

Further in this article, we will understand in detail the Political Branding and Strategies used by the Winning Party and the Leader especially, the voter's perception and how it has changed with time, About how the brand "Modi" was created, About the Digital marketing being the important aspect, and about the brand loyalty and how it has grown for the Politicians through their branding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Political Branding- Rajadhyaksha(2019), Akhmad & Ahmad(2016), Singh(2019), Banerjee & Chaudhuri(2016), mainly talks about the current scenario and social life of people revolving around social media, and how it plays a critical role to influence political behavior. So to build a strong image, candidates resort to all ways

and means. The widespread presence of social media is a cheaper way to persuade voters to vote for a particular party or leader. Political parties in recent general elections had developed smart strategies to reach voters.

Thus, the 2014 Lok Sabha elections in India demonstrated the effectiveness of political marketing. The 2014 election will always be remembered as the first in which publicly available social media support played a significant role in influencing dialogue. Mr. Narendra Modi, the PM candidate for the Bharatiya Janata Party, effectively used cutting-edge Social Media administrations and 3D modern tools to persuade the nation's youth. This was the beginning of the presentation of innovation in decisions. The promotion campaign's planning was their start and the change in voters' perception to change from Competitors to BJP, was their end of the game.

The Voters vs Brand Modi-

Banerjee & Chaudhuri (2021), Nagpal(2017), Marshment(2008), Gujral(2018) and Singh & Kumar R(2020), majorly talks about the voters and parties at how political brand loyalty affected young voters' preferences for political parties. How does a voter decide which candidate to support? Voting orientation encompasses both institutional patterns, such as the communication process and its influence on elections, as well as individual psychological processes, such as perception, emotion, and motivation, and their relationship to political action. Voting orientation is not limited to the examination of numbers in election results and records of electoral spin orientation. That is where brand preference comes in the game. Voters are greatly influenced by both brand love and brand trust and the article focuses that after The Modi-zation, Citizens or the voters, don't just support a party because of their experience. guardians or ideology. They are more difficult, less simple to please, and more demanding of the politicians they look up to. But when they do, they are the most Loyal. Thus, Parties need to answer this new appointive market. At the same time, The article also mentioned the importance of the change in Politics scenario. The electoral market has therefore changed and with it the way that parties must compete to win elections. The market is more open to voters and parties. And thus, The parties utilize political promotion, that is most effective for today's rigid voters. The Brand Modi has proved to be the

biggest example in India to change the Voter’s perception.

The Political “Image”-

Serazio(2015), Singh & Kumar R(2020) and Maryani(2015), majorly talks about how an image of a candidate affects the voting preference of a candidate today in this era. The candidate’s image is the precursor for the change in voting behavior and casting votes. This image building is done by Political branding. It also talks about the emotional marketing the Political party does to influence the voters and the medium majorly becomes their voice through social media. It also explains how far political marketing mixes in influencing the image or the reputation of political parties and their impact on competitiveness. Politics as currently known will continue to evolve as marketing tactics and strategies are applied to the political marketplace. Those are several factors, including the product sophistication, packaging, labeling, and image formation and the effectiveness of advertising can capture viewers' attention and will influence the party's political vote total. advancements in political life.

Brand Loyalty-

Kaur & Seerat Sohal(2016) and Prasoon(2019) talk about the authenticity and emotions behind the strategies, especially the digital marketing, that politicians use when marketing themselves. Regardless of the natural or socially acceptable possibilities, a higher level of trust influences party choice. The poll also reveals that young voters' preferences for political parties are unaffected by their gender. Because these elements affect young voters' trust and voting inclinations, this study can inspire political marketers to use effective communication and voter engagement tactics to instill a love quotient in political brands. Brand love increases party preference both directly and indirectly through inner and social self.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used elaborative Quantitative Research of primary data along with the blend of reference data from papers of other authors who worked on similar topic. This was used for the content analysis of various political parties during the elections. Convenient

sampling of College Students has been used for this research from April 2022 to August 2022 and we have received 120 responses through our questionnaires.

SOURCE OF DATA

This report consists of various sources of primary as well as secondary sources of data to explain how politicians do their branding and how voters get affected by it.

The primary data consists of a survey using a questionnaire, conducted online through google forms which assesses the perception of voters during and after the General elections in 2019. The major states and cities involved were Jharkhand, Delhi, Maharashtra, UP, Bihar, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, taking a major part in the General Elections of 2019. 100 respondents were surveyed in this primary research.

The secondary data involved referring to the research papers, online news articles, and books, which are already mentioned. <https://forms.gle/uLjJPro1CWBagFbb8>

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the overall impact of branding on the 2019 General Elections, India.
2. To understand the effect of Digital Marketing used on voters by the BJP Party.
3. To understand how Political “brands” are created.
4. To learn about the voter’s perception of the strategies used on them by the BJP/Modi or the candidates.

FINDINGS

- By looking at the table, We observed that almost 69% of respondents fall under the age group of 18-25. This analysis was done to segment and interpret our data about which agegroup has been getting influenced by political branding.

Age Group	Number	Percentage
18-25	82	68.33333333
25-40	24	20
Above 40	14	11.66666667

- 41.7 % of voters voted for the leader and 15.9 % voted for the party. Most of the respondents voted that they

are not influenced by the candidate, party, or leader of the party during the 2019 elections. This shows the face of the party ie. A leader plays a really important role in influencing the voters, with their marketing strategies.

Preference	Number	Percentage
Leader	53	33%
Party	16	14.70%
Candidate	36	48.60%

- 58% voted for BJP as their most preferred party during the election of 2019. Since 2014, it has been highlighted that young people are among the Bharatiya Janata Party's most ardent supporters (BJP). The party has made an effort to ardently court this group. Before the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, it launched several campaign initiatives to appeal to young people.

Preference	Number	Percentage
BJP	68	56.66666667
Congress	35	29.16666667
AAP	10	8.333333333
Shivsena	5	4.166666667
Communist Party	2	1.666666667

- The respondents believe that politicians should talk about local and national issues and how to deal with them rather than trying out political branding.
- 47% of the sample voters have been getting all their political information through television news or online news. Thus, it is observed that social media and digital media play a very important role, as it is an easy way of communication for the party or leader to influence the voters through their campaigns.

Source of Information	Number	Percentage
National/Local Newspaper	32	26.67
Magazines	4	3.33
Online Platforms	56	46.67
Journals	5	4.17
Campaigns	21	17.50

- The majority of people from the states of Jharkhand (24.2%) and Karnataka (16.5%) voted that their opinion is not taken care of when a party leader is elected. The primary source of information about political parties, issues, and events are collected Television and online news. If we talk about Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the majority of people agree that political parties influence their voting decision.
- 69% responded that they have significant influence

from digital strategies used by parties during their election campaign.

This study has its limitations — one being the small sample size of respondents. However, it does reveal the types of insights that political parties could glean from brand perception studies. By getting a sense of public sentiment, and how the parties are perceived relative to each other, political parties can see how to improve their communication of what their party brand stands for. This could enhance their appeal to voters in elections.

INTERPRETATION

The “Digital” Strategies-

With over 260 million active social media users in India, political parties are aware that failing to take advantage of it would be a grave error. The majority of political figures have an active social media presence and regularly interact with their fans. Through highly organized and focused campaigns using digital marketing, political parties are attracting a significant amount of voters. Another reason why political parties are focusing on using digital media as a tool for PR and advertising is the fact that young people can be persuaded through social media.

It was analyzed that more than 50% of the sample voters of this generation were influenced and affected by Television news or online news and we can observe that Over the past ten years, there has been a significant advancement in the use of online social networking for political marketing. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and even Instagram are used as platforms to stage fights and connect competitors with voters. To effectively recruit volunteers and increase their offerings on the platforms for the multiplier effect, online networking activities should be used. Because the targeted interest group can easily access the campaigns, rallies, and speeches made by political parties via web-based social networking platforms, advertising campaigns can be tailored to voters' responses more strategically. By utilizing localized internet networking and communication tools, the volunteers can easily speak with various voters in the same area. Since February, the ruling party has spent six times as much on Facebook and Google adverts than Congress has, according to data from the two companies. Modi marketing websites and goods are widely available. The funding gives the BJP an

incredibly strong position, especially when it comes to practical matters like how to transport its leaders to campaign rallies. A representative of the Congress claimed that the BJP had the resources to reserve the majority of India's helicopter fleet for hire for 90 days, making it difficult for rivals to obtain them.

BJP in this Digital war tops the chart and spends 20 Crore on political advertisements on digital media platforms. When it comes to using social media for politics, no one does it like the BJP. The party has emerged as the highest spender on advertisements on Google, Facebook, etc. The use of digital media in the Lok Sabha 2019 has been unprecedented in many ways. The BJP has spent Rs 4 Crore on Facebook, between February to May 11, which is 200% more than the main opposition party, the Indian National Congress. Across Google platforms, BJP again topped, with an expenditure of Rs 17 Cr. "Bharat with Man ki Baat" and "Nation with Namo" were the top spenders with a total budget of Rs 4.5 Crore on Facebook. (*Secondary data*)

Creating a "Brand" through Political branding-

Just as in business, politicians are selling a product. That product is themselves. They sell their image, their opinions, and sometimes even their appearance. A good business marketing strategy can lead to increased sales of goods or services, but a good political marketing strategy can lead a party to lead the country. The term "brand" is everywhere now, applied not just to products, companies, organizations, and celebrities but also cities, nations, and even private individuals. During the 2019 General election in India, the Brand "Modi" was created and the role of Political branding was and is still a major part of their strategies to gain voters and votes. Television and Digital media, especially social media played a major role in this election campaign. The political marketing strategies by the hired Marketing companies work so successfully for the party to win the election with a historic majority. This election campaign and the massive success of the BJP in the elections opened a new big window of political marketing to the India Reputation of the leader or the candidate doing it. The BJP and Congress in major elections were observed to try out mudslinging. The BJP received Congress chief Rahul Gandhi's "PM chor hai" allegation against PM Narendra Modi. Rahul Gandhi accused him of indulging in "Khoon ki dalali", again triggering off a massive political controversy. The BJP believes such

phrases have worked to the benefit of Modi. The PM said the Congress was unable to accept that a 'chai wall could attain power.

In a political world. The four key points in creating a brand are brand identity, branding meaning, branding response, and branding relationship. "Modi" made sure that his identity is different from the competitors and that his philosophy targets the right emotions of the voters. He arranged and effectively carried out a showcasing and marketing effort.

Mudslinging being an essential part of the political war, did create a positive effect on the voters but when asked, they agreed that it was wrong, But they considered it to be a game and they knew "Modi" had won it.

The Voting Behavior-

Voting behavior reflects how and why people vote in public elections. It also reflects voter choices, preferences, ideologies, concerns and alternatives. As a result, we found that they were keen to vote for the same party in the next election even though they knew they were being affected. When asked why they voted, it was mostly about the leader or how he sold himself to voters. said like this.

The candidate worked for his constituency. The party showed a great deal of responsibility to the public interest because of the local work done by the candidates. Leaders have a strong personality and a clear vision Leaders have stood the test among the public. They believe Modi is a dynamic leader and they trust the leader.

The majority of voters from the sample indicated that they voted for the leader because they trusted him and saw him lead the party and outperform its competitors. The party leader they chose was the BJP. Current research has proven that the Modi brand is the most popular brand among the masses. Electronic and social media have played a key role in shaping Narendra Modi as a brand in Indian politics. The brand has helped other party leaders win elections that are held from time to time. It also brings up the curiosity that if the BJP had a different leader, they might or might not have voted for their party. The main reason they might not have voted for the party if Modi wasn't the leader would have been for 'branding'. The party needs proper branding of its leader and Modi has created a great essence with his personality to make voters feel like celebrities. Modi branding changed that. They

were aiming to get the party leader to vote, not the party. Because instead of focusing on whether the party is a good choice for the country, Modi, who named himself the party leader, made this change. Branding is influencing voter perceptions, and digital marketing is an important part of that.

Party, Leader, Candidate and their reputation-

The understanding of the Party's reputation is a knowledge that shows the number of values that are attributed or perceived by the public and other stakeholders to a political party based on the perception that had been embedded in the minds of society, resulting in their interpretation of an image of a political party from time to time when they hear or think about or remember the name of a political party.

Political communication plays an important role in building the reputation of any political party, leader, or candidate. Some believe that the leader is the face of the party. It is also believed that candidates and leaders together make the party visible. Voters need to understand the branding strategies used to build the image and reputation of candidates and political parties. You can build a candidate's image and the party's reputation by seeing how party members belong to the party. Several attempts have been made to find candidate images in both verbal and non-verbal methods in order to present them to voters' tastes. Manipulation and creation of images shaped the voting preferences of voters. We can see how party members adhere to the party and build up the candidate's image and the party's reputation. Several attempts have been made to find out candidates' images both in verbal and nonverbal ways to present candidate images for voters' preferences. Image manipulation and creation have shaped the voting orientation of the voters. The most imperative discovery of this study is to determine the mediating role of party brand personality on the relationship between political advertisements, voter satisfaction, and party loyalty. Such a study of an emerging economy contributes significantly to the marketing theory and practice owing to the diversity and fragmentation across India concerning religion, caste, creed, and race of voters.

The main finding of this study is to determine the role mediated by the party brand her personality in relation to political advertising, voter satisfaction, and party

loyalty. Such emerging economy studies contribute significantly to marketing theory and practice because of the diversity and fragmentation across India in terms of voter religion, caste, creed, and race. This reputation, once established, sticks in people's minds as long as it is maintained. The Modi brand is still valid. When asked, 75% of his sample of voters said they expect the same party to win the next election because they have built loyalty and trust in the party leader. They believe that their reputation and image will be preserved thanks to their leaders.

CONCLUSION

The main goals of the research were to investigate the overall function of branding in Indian politics, gain a better understanding of the self-promotional strategies used by political parties, ascertain the relative importance of specific leaders and parties to political branding, and discover the effects of political branding on voters. Understanding how individuals are impacted by branding when it comes to politics was the key goal. We came to our conclusions about voting patterns, party leaders, and their influence on people using data from a survey to which 100 people replied. When you examine branding, you'll typically find that every decision—down to the color scheme—has been carefully considered.

The article majorly concludes -

- There was no doubt that the BJP will have an advantage in the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections
After political branding, PM Modi had emerged as a strong personality who truly believes in hard work and dedication, linking him with the young people who make up about 65% of India's population.
- Prime Minister Modi and his team's campaign and political propaganda were outstanding, unique and innovative and helped the BJP achieve great success in every election and will continue to do so. prize.
- Digital advertising, effective television and radio advertising, well-crafted speeches and public speaking allowed PM Modi to create an image of a very strong and confident leader.
- Prime Minister Modi and his team used social media very effectively. Social media is now the best way to connect with people of all ages and from all walks of

life. Several initiatives and programs such as 'Main bhi Chowkidar', 'Chai Pe Charcha' and 'Man Ki Baat' have attracted millions of Indians and eventually led the government to influence their ideas on the population.

- The lack of a strong opposition leader had also helped Modi gain more public support. This research paper described the concept of branding, how branding has emerged in politics, and how it has influenced voting behavior. Emphasis was placed on emotional branding and related concepts to connect with the audience. Their importance carries over into the realm of political branding.
- The report also examined how political branding has changed over time and is widely accepted for its wisdom and legitimacy. The discussion also included political marketing ideas and the authors linked it to the central idea of their study, political branding.
- By highlighting the emergence of the Modi brand and how it influenced voters, The research report also drew attention to the application of political branding in the Indian context. This research paper seeks to link the emergence of political brands, in this case the Modi brand, to increased engagement and representation on social media.
- We deduced from the results that, despite being aware of their influence, they are eager to vote for the same party in the following election. When asked why they voted, the majority of the responses concerned the candidate and how he had presented himself to the electorate. The branding tactics used to enhance the candidate's and the party's reputations must be understood by the electorate. We observed how party members uphold the party and enhance the standing of the candidate and party. Finding the mediating impact of party brand personality on the relationship between political advertisements, voter happiness, and party loyalty is the most important finding of this study. Given the diversity and fragmentation among voters in India in terms of religion, caste, creed, and race, a study of a rising economy has a considerable impact on marketing theory and practice.

The 2019 election campaign can serve as a marketing handbook for brand managers and marketers. The most important lesson for marketers is to build brand campaigns around their strengths and pay more attention to the intangible than the tangible. We all know how the economy is going under Modi. Through images, words, text, film, web and other means of

communication, Modi has always delivered the right message to the right audience.

Today, the only way to reach millions of young people with a single click is through the social media and digital platforms that political parties use to promote themselves. India started using social media in earnest in 2014, the year of the election. At that time, millions of people were using social media platforms. During the 2014 election, India only had 2G and 3G internet networks, but now his 4G network is much faster than the old one. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) used social media to win his 2014 election, with Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp being the channels used to reach the youth with the party's message. Congress and other political parties had little presence on social media in 2014. The BJP has much to teach Congress and other political parties about using social media games for political marketing. As of 2019, India has more active users on Facebook, Whatsapp and other social media platforms than in 2014. In short, they conclude that political branding has a significant impact on voters and the strategies used are highly effective.

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