

Dissertation Report on Political Marketing and its Influence on Voters

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CERTIFICATE FROM THE INSTITUTE

This is to certify that project titled **Political Marketing and its Influence on Voters** is a bona fide work carried out by **Mr. Rishabh Singh Chauhan** who is a student of **MBA 2012-2014 batch**. The project is submitted to Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-110042 in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of Masters of Business Administration

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DECLARATION

I, **Rishabh Singh Chauhan**, student of MBA 2012-14 of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-110042 declare that Dissertation Project Report on **Political Marketing and its Influence on Voters** submitted in partial fulfillment of Degree of Masters of Business Administration is the original work conducted by me.

The information and data given in the report is authentic to the best of my knowledge.

This report is not being submitted to any other University for award of any Degree, Diploma and Fellowship

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The satiation and euphoria that accompany the successful completion of the project would be incomplete without the mention of the people who made it possible.

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I hope that I can build upon the experience and knowledge that I have gained during the dissertation project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marketing is about identifying and meeting human and social needs. One of the shortest good definitions is “meeting needs profitably”. The American Marketing Association offers the following formal definition: Marketing is an organizational function and a set of process for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Now days in various democratic countries, political parties have started adopting marketing concepts and strategies. Political parties try to market persons (contestants), organizations (their own parties) and ideas (their philosophies) which has given birth to the field of political marketing.

Political marketing can be defined as, "the application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by various individuals and organizations. The procedures involved include the analysis, development, execution, and management of strategic campaigns by candidates, political parties, governments, lobbyists and interest groups that seek to drive public opinion, advance their own ideologies, win elections, and pass legislation and referenda in response to the needs and wants of selected people and groups in a society"

For much of the years since India gained independence, political marketing was in a dormant state and was confined to rallies and a few advertisements on the mass media. This was mainly because of the presence of a single political party at the national level. But, as more and more political parties started marking their presence felt at the national level, competition between the various political parties increased and each tried to differentiate themselves from others by making use of various new and innovative sources. Thus, political marketing was born in India

BJP with its ‘India Shining’ campaign, which it launched just before the 2004 Lok Sabha election is credited for bringing innovation in political marketing into India. Although BJP was not able to influence the voter segment with its campaign and it had to face defeat in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, its campaigning style was and is still widely copied in national as well as state assembly election.

Indian democracy is at the cusp of a revolution in political marketing with digital technologies taking a centre stage and social media being used heavily to target the voter segment, in both state assembly elections as well as Lok Sabha elections. Political parties have also realised that now they cannot just depend on traditional media to market themselves and are fast adopting other forms of media such as, social media to establish a formidable presence in the minds of the voter segment.

The Indian voter segment does no longer believe in just casting its vote and then sitting back for the next five years, instead it believes in standing up and taking things into its own hands, it believes in questioning the political parties and monitoring their conduct. Hence, political marketing has gained a lot of importance in contemporary India. Political marketing provides the political parties with a way to effectively connect with the voter segment and influence their decision to vote in favour or against a political party.

Through the research in this report, we have tried to understand the various political campaigning techniques that the political parties use and how these techniques are able to influence the voter segment. For the same we have analysed the political marketing techniques employed by the top 2 national parties – the ruling Congress, the principal opposition party BJP and also AAP which has established a formidable presence just by employing intelligent and innovative political marketing campaigns.

Data has been collected through secondary sources and then validated by the means of a survey conducted using a questionnaire in which 250 participants from varied backgrounds participated. The questionnaires were analysed using pie charts and bar graphs and results interpreted to identify the various political marketing techniques employed and their influence on the voter segment in the ongoing Lok sabha elections.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Marketing

Marketing is about identifying and meeting human and social needs. One of the shortest good definitions is “meeting needs profitably”. The American Marketing Association offers the following formal definition: Marketing is an organizational function and a set of process for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Coping with these exchange process calls for a considerable amount of work and skill. The definition presented above reflects the managerial side of marketing. We can distinguish between a social and a managerial definition of marketing. A social definition shows the role marketing plays in society. Here is a social definition that serves our purpose: Marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and freely exchanging products and services of value with others.

Aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous. The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself. Now the question arises what all things can be marketed. Marketing people market several types of entities such as goods, services, events, experiences, persons, places, properties, organizations, information and ideas.

Now days in various democratic countries, political parties have started adopting marketing concepts and strategies. Political parties try to market persons (contestants), organizations (their own parties) and ideas (their philosophies).

1.2 Political Marketing

Let us discuss what is political marketing, its scope, characteristics, relevance etc. Political marketing can be defined as, "the application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by various individuals and organizations. The procedures involved include the analysis, development, execution, and management of strategic campaigns by candidates, political parties, governments, lobbyists and interest groups that seek to drive public opinion, advance their own ideologies, win

elections, and pass legislation and referenda in response to the needs and wants of selected people and groups in a society" (Newman, 1999).

1.3 Difference between Mainstream and Political Marketing

Lock and Harris (1996) identify seven main differences between mainstream and political marketing:

1. Unlike every other purchasing decision, all voters make their choice on the same day. Moreover, although there are similarities between opinion polls and brand shares' tracking methods, the latter are based on actual purchasing decisions while the former are based on hypothetical questions.
 2. Voting choice, unlike any other purchasing decision, has no direct or indirect individual costs attached to it.
 3. Voters have to live with the collective choice even though it may not have been their preference
 4. In elections winner takes all, especially in countries such as the UK where the electoral system is "first past the post".
 5. Political parties and candidates are complex intangible products which the voters cannot unbundle and thus they have to decide on the totality of the package
 6. In many countries it is very difficult to form a new and successful party
 7. In most mainstream marketing situations, brand leaders tend to stay in front.
- Kotler and Kotler (1999) also add that the political arena, unlike the commercial world, is highly charged with ideas, emotions, conflict and partisanship. Moreover, O' Shaughnessy (1999) points out that the use of negative advertising does not apply to mainstream marketing.

Lock and Harris (1996) conclude that political marketing is at a "craft" stage and they find the assumption that there is direct transferability of mainstream marketing theory to political marketing "questionable". They claim that political marketing has to develop its own frameworks by adapting the core marketing literature and develop its own predictive and prescriptive models.⁽¹⁾

1.4 Objectives of Study

- To study the various aspects of political marketing, its models, functions and techniques.
- To understand the various political marketing techniques used by the leading political parties in India in the past as well as the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.
- To study the influence of the various political marketing techniques used by the political parties on the decision of the voter segment to vote in favor of or against a political part/candidate.
- To identify the future prospects of the various political marketing techniques used.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

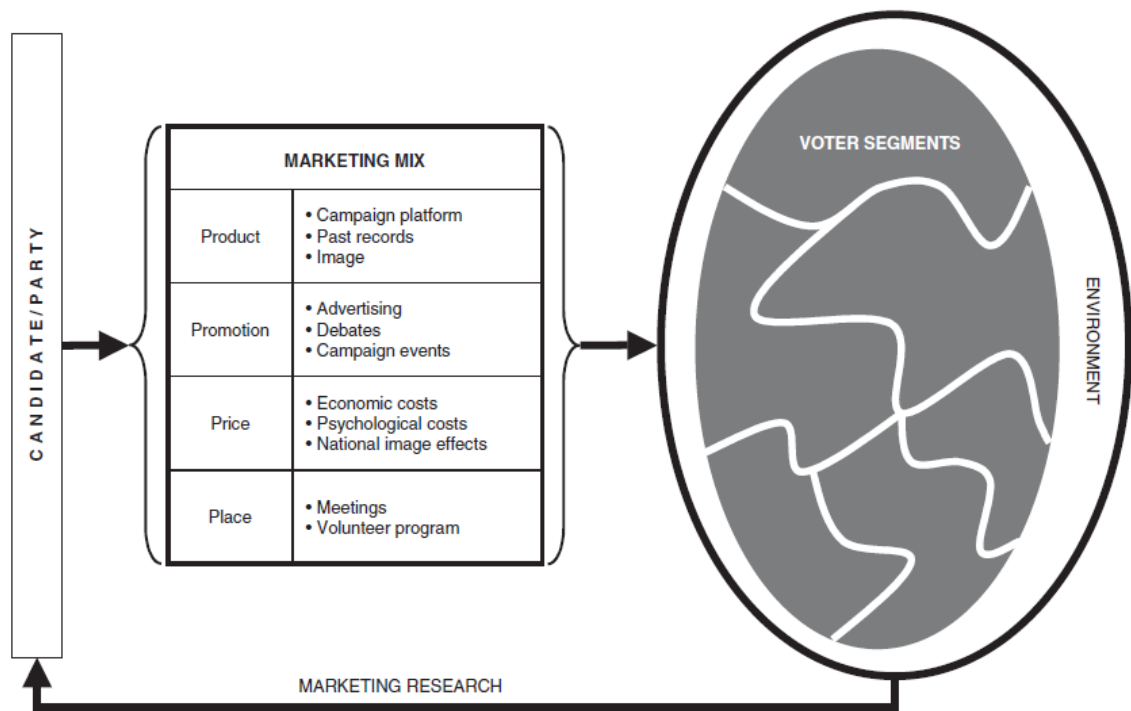
2.1 Models of Political Marketing

Earlier theories of political marketing originated, to a large degree, from theories of marketing developed for the consumer goods market (Kotler 1975; Reid 1988; Shama 1975; Wring 1997). However, in the course of time, important differences have emerged between the practice and efficiency of marketing theories used for political and economic purposes. Political marketing, to a larger and larger extent, drew from disciplines such as sociology, political science, and psychology (Cwalina, Falkowski, and Newman 2008; Lees-Marshment 2003; Scammell 1999). That led to defining political marketing as a separate branch of science, with its own subject matter and methodology of research (Lock and Harris 1996; Newman 1994).

2.1.1 Process of Political Marketing According to Niffenegger

Phillip B. Niffenegger (1988) proposed a concept of political marketing showing the use of the classic marketing mix tools for political campaigns. He stresses that political marketing includes efforts aimed at integration within the *marketing mix*, known as the four *Ps*—traditionally product, promotion, price, and place—to control the voters' behaviours efficiently. Advertising is not set apart here as an independent research discipline; rather it is closely connected to the process of marketing research, in which the segmentation of the voting market plays an important role. The framework integrating elements of political marketing emphasizes the importance of market research, as shown in Figure 2.1. It is evident that the political marketing concept is based on Kotler's approach to marketing research for non profit organizations. According to this approach, a political party participating in parliamentary elections or a candidate running for president must identify the needs, interests, and values of voters and present himself in such a way so as to best fit these requirements. Even if the candidate is able to identify the country's key social, economic, or political problems, without systematic research he is not able to determine how various voter groups perceive these problems. It can be assumed that the problems hold different weight for particular groups. Therefore, the candidate should try to fit his voting strategy to different voter segments—that is, to find the best position for himself in each of them. Such a procedure requires marketing

research, which is illustrated by the arrow in Figure 2.1, connecting the four *Ps* marketing program with voter segments. This link is mediated by marketing research whose results, given to the candidate, show him what marketing mix he should use to be most successful. In political marketing, being successful mainly means expanding one's electorate.



Source: Adapted from Niffenegger (1988).

Fig 2.1: Political Marketing Framework according to Niffenegger

The *price* of the product offered by the candidate refers to the total costs that voters would bear if the candidate were elected. It includes economic costs, such as tax increases or budget cuts. Other costs listed by Niffenegger include national image effects: whether the voters will perceive the new leader as a strong one, someone who will increase people's national pride, or someone who will be a disgrace to his compatriots on the international stage. There are also psychological costs: will voters feel comfortable with the candidate's religious and ethnic background? The general marketing strategy for the price consists in minimizing the candidate's own costs and maximizing the opposition's. In his presidential campaign, John F. Kennedy recognized a potential cost in being the first Catholic president, a prospect that made some non-Catholics feel uneasy. But he was able to successfully minimize this cost

with TV spots in which he was shown meeting Protestant audiences. During the presidential campaign in Poland in 1995, Aleksander Kwaśniewski similarly stressed that he would be the president of all Poles—irrespective of their religion and views.

The concept of the candidate's price is thus similar to the price of a product in mainstream marketing. Selecting a candidate on the political market or buying a product or service on the economic market, one must incur some costs. The major difference is the fact that on the political market, these costs are to a large extent intangible or psychological, whereas in the economic market they are tangible and represented by the money or products for which the money is exchanged.

Place (distribution) is the marketing stimulus that refers to the candidate's ability to get his message across to voters in a personal way. The marketing strategy for the distribution of the campaign's message combines the personal appearance program with the work of volunteers who are used as a personalized extension of the candidate into local markets. This includes the work of activists ("door to door") who by canvassing, distributing the candidate's badges, registering voters, and soliciting funds familiarize the voters with the candidate's program and his image during direct contact with the electorate. The places and forms of a candidate's meeting with voters can vary—from rallies in city centers to club meetings and meetings at workplaces. Since the goal of the politician on the campaign trail is to meet as many voters as possible, he tries to be in as many places as possible in the shortest possible time. Gary Hart, a candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984, used a plane to move quickly from one town to another. His press conferences were staged in every airport he flew into, and listening to the evening news gave voters the feeling that Hart was in many towns at the same time. More recently, satellite technology makes it easy for candidates to stage interviews with journalists who are in a remote place.

Promotion consists, to a large extent, of advertising efforts and publicity, through free media coverage of the candidate, his program, and the campaign. Niffenegger distinguishes four fundamental promotion strategies:

1. *Concentration strategy*—concentrating a disproportionate amount of money and promotion efforts on particular voter segments (for instance on regions or provinces);

2. *Timing strategy*—spending the heaviest promotion money and the highest promotion activity where it does the candidate the most good, thus forcing the opposition to increase their activity and thus deplete their resources;
3. *Strategy of misdirection*—avoiding a frontal assault against a stronger opponent and trying to catch the opponent off balance to make him commit a mistake (this may be a particularly successful strategy for underdogs); and
4. *Strategy of negative campaign*—staging a direct or indirect comparative assault against the position of the opponent and/or her personal characteristics.

Recognizing the reasons for his poor showings in political debates in 1980, during the next election Ronald Reagan decided to change the strategy he had been using and focus in his political spots on evoking positive emotions in his voters. His spots featured sunrises, colourful parades, landscapes, and friendly faces. They contrasted with Walter Mondale's spots, which gave rise to negative emotions by presenting the visions of atomic holocaust, starvation, and poverty.

According to Niffenegger, the *product* offered by the candidate is a complex blend of the many benefits voters believe will result if the candidate is elected. The major voting promises are spelled out in the candidate's party platform. Then they are publicized through political advertising, press releases, and the candidate's public appearances. Whether the offer is recognized as reliable and acceptable to their expectations mainly depends on voters' knowledge about the candidate and his achievements, his personal profile formed by his staff, and the evaluation of the state's economic condition connected with the previous ruling team. For instance, in his presidential campaign in 1984, Ronald Reagan very cleverly used the arguments of his Democratic opponent, Walter Mondale, for increasing taxes. Reagan showed what the consequences of such a policy might be by referring to the economic crisis during Jimmy Carter's presidency. This tactic led to a decrease in the support for Mondale.

Whereas creating the product in political marketing is the purpose of the candidate and his staff, the "packaging" part is almost solely the task of political consultants. An example showing how various packaging is created for various situations is the changing of strategy by Reagan's consultants during his presidential campaign in

1980. They were quick to spot that in his speeches, the Republican candidate was perceived as a political warmonger and as dangerous and uncaring. Instead of using the phrase the “defensive position,” the candidate began to talk about the “peace position.” The “armaments race” was replaced by the phrase “a need to restore a margin of safety.” After such changes, the image of Reagan came closer to the image of an ideal president. He was perceived as a politician who would strengthen peace.

2.1.2 Marketing the Political Product According to Reid

David Reid’s concept (1988) is also an attempt to apply some concepts from mainstream marketing to political marketing. It focuses on this element of the voting process that refers to voting understood as a buying process. Reid stresses that by looking at the problem from a consumer perspective, a broader marketing approach could make a useful contribution toward a better theoretical knowledge of the “voting decision process.” The core of the buying process involves the following stages:

1. *Problem recognition*: This stage refers to motivation, which triggers the recognition that there is a problem to be considered. In its essence, the process boils down to asking the voter the following question:

“Whom will I vote for?” Recognition of the problem is determined by the voter’s needs, which, to a different extent, refer to the candidate’s voting problems. For instance, if the voter has problems finding employment, he will be sensitive to a program in which the politician stresses lower unemployment as one of her major goals.

2. *Search*. At this level, the voter seeks various sources of information (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines), which highlight the recognition of a problem. Naturally, each source may have a different influence on the voter’s opinions.

3. *Alternative evaluation*. The voter must weigh the accumulated information against a set of evaluative criteria. These criteria are linked with the voter’s motivation, which refers to the first stage of the decision-making process: problem recognition. If the voters’ evaluative criteria match their motivation very well, then it is very difficult to cause any change in their voting behavior. For instance, a businessman

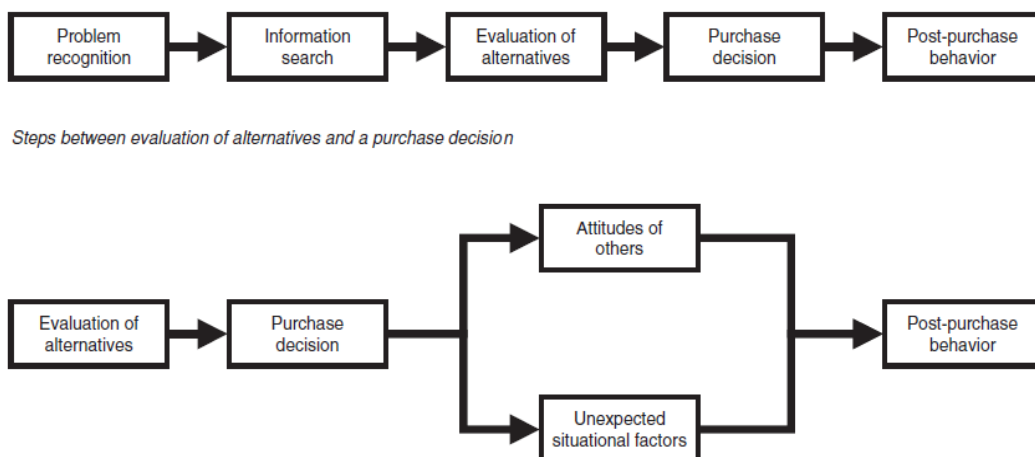
will be interested in lower taxes because the current level inhibits the development of his company. The candidate will then be evaluated through the tax policy he is proposing.

This stage of the decision-making process is also related to the segmentation of the voting market. Candidates and political parties have to identify various evaluative criteria among the voters and use marketing strategies that will reach segments of voters with similar preferences. This stage is connected with the candidate's creating a political platform that will promote issues important for these voters and might attract voters from other politicians' electorates.

4. *Choice*. Choice is a particularly important element of the decision making process. Seemingly, it should be logically connected to alternative evaluation. However, the voter may change it in the very last moment due to last-minute influences such as an article read, a news broadcast viewed, or a debate with a friend. Such unexpected situational factors are particularly related to last-minute voters, belonging to the segment of undecided, floating voters

5. *Outcomes*. This element corresponds exactly to post purchase behaviour in consumer behavior. A politician needs to maximize the satisfaction of voters, including those who did not vote for him. Ongoing public relations activities and political patronage of influential groups can achieve this goal.

Figure 2.2 **Buyer Decision Processes**



2.1.3 Harris's Modern Political Marketing

According to Phil Harris (2001a), the changes taking place in modern democracies, in the development of new technologies, and in citizens' political involvement significantly influence the theoretical and practical aspects of political marketing efforts. Above all, modernization causes changes from direct involvement in election campaigns to spectatorship. Campaigns are conducted primarily through mass media and citizens participating in them as a media audience. In this way, politicians more and more often become actors in a political spectacle rather than focus on solving real problems that their country faces. They compete for the voters' attention not only against their political opponents but also against talk shows or other media events. For instance, during the Polish presidential campaign in 2005, the debate between two major candidates—Lech Kaczyński and Donald Tusk—was rescheduled for another day because otherwise it would have competed for the viewer against the popular TV show *Dancing with the Stars*. And it is doubtful whether it would have attracted a large audience.

This modernization process leads to changes in voting strategies that candidates and political parties have been following. According to Harris (2001a), the key elements of modern political campaigning include the following:

1. *The personalization of politics*, where the voters' choice depends increasingly on their relationship with the individual candidate, which replaces ideological bonds with a political party.
2. *The politicians' image*, whose importance is still growing. According to Harris, even if the candidates present their position on the issues, they do so, to a large extent, to reinforce the existing image because the image rather than substance is central in political marketing.
3. *The role of public relations*, particularly in candidate image creation. Political public relations are the inevitable consequence of the process in which mass media have become the centre of opinion formation and decision-making. On the one hand, the goal of these activities is not only to initiate changes in voters' opinions but also to influence the media. On the other hand, the goal of public relations is to react to events with potential negative consequences for the candidate, limiting the potential

damage. Public relations may then be a vital component in the political marketing mix, concerned with image and persuasion.

4. *The scientificization of politics*, which makes politicians use technical and scientific expertise in conducting their campaign but also in taking political decisions. Furthermore, modern political campaigns are more and more characterized by direct linkage between political marketing and interest lobbying (Harris and Lock 1996, 2002).

Harris's concept of political marketing (2001a) is thus consistent in its fundamental assumptions with Niffenegger, Kotler and Kotler, and Lees-Marshment's assumptions. In his model, he includes the function of placement strategy, which is based on such traditional activities as canvassing and leafleting and "getting the vote out" on the polling day. Besides, his model stresses that the key element of success is not the development of persuasion activities, but the possibility of identifying and contacting potential supporters. As for price, Harris believes that in the case of voters it is shifted to the psychological domain and not expressed through money (the so-called feel-good factor). Following Dominic Wring (1997) in his concept of product, he assumes that it consists of three fundamental elements: the party image, the image of the leader, and policy commitments (manifesto). As opposed to the previous models, he attaches much more importance to the area of political promotion activities, which play the crucial role in the political marketing mix. According to Harris, political promotion consists of a number of components, the most important of which are advertising (particularly, negative advertising), direct mail, public relations, and news management, as well as debates and pseudo-events planned to gain publicity and attention. Harris stresses that debates, like other pseudo-events, are meant to look spontaneous but in fact are carefully staged in order to attract the attention of the media and gain publicity for the political players.

In summary, in his concept of modern political marketing, Harris stresses the need to adapt both marketing theory and practice to the changing requirements of the modern world and politics. He also points out that political marketing cannot only be a copy of the solutions developed within mainstream marketing because the area it applies to has different constraints and often requires more complex and advanced strategies. Harris and Rees (2000) believe that marketing must strike a balance between

beautiful academic reasoning and the real politik of what the constituents of marketing need. Marketing should be wary of throwing out the marketing mix or marketing concept in favour of outright replacement by new shibboleths such as relationship marketing. In other words, “marketing needs to regenerate itself and not fear change or ambiguity in its quest to seek the truth” (Harris and Rees 2000, 368).

2.1.4 Newman’s Model of Political Marketing

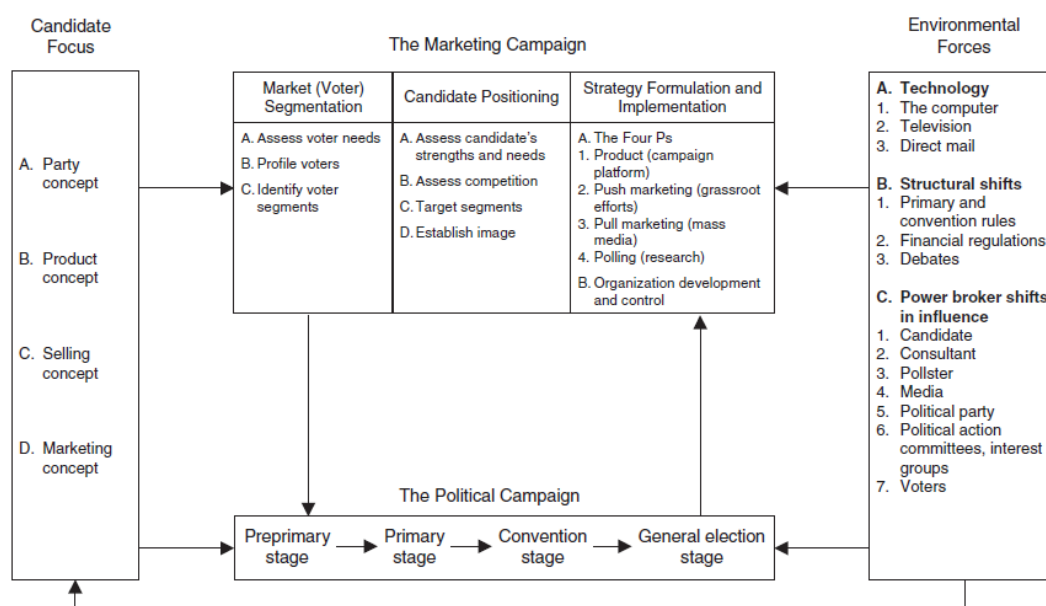
Bruce I. Newman’s concept of political marketing (1994, 1999c) is the most thorough model of those discussed so far describing the marketing approach in political behavior. It provides procedures for a number of concepts related to marketing activities on the voting market. It has also been the source of inspiration for a number of empirical researches expanding the theory (Cwalina, Falkowski, and Newman 2008). In his model, Newman (1994) introduces a clear distinction between the processes of a marketing campaign and those of a political campaign. The marketing campaign helps the candidate go through the four stages of the political campaign, including everything from the pre primary stage of a politician’s finding his own place in politics to his already formed political image at the general election stage. It is natural then that both campaigns are closely connected. The process of a marketing campaign is the foundation of the model because it includes all the marketing tools needed to conduct the candidate through all the levels of the political campaign. Figure 2.1 presents a schematic representation of Newman’s model. Despite the fact that foundations such as market (voter) segmentation, candidate positioning, and strategy formulation and implementation are also the foundation of consumer market mainstream marketing, their definition and meaning are distinctly different and fitted to the specificity of the voting market. At the heart of the political marketing campaign is the candidate’s realization that he is not in a position to appeal to all voters of every persuasion. This means that he must break down the electorate into distinct voting segments and then create a campaign platform that appeals to the candidate’s following.

It is obvious that the unemployed or those who may lose their jobs will be more sensitive to messages in which the candidate stresses those elements of his program that refer to fighting against unemployment and to such economic changes that will create more jobs. Entrepreneurs with high income, on the other hand, will be more

sensitive to the messages presenting the candidate's position on the taxation system. It is not only demographic characteristics, including the citizens' economic status, for instance, that are important for the division of the political market, but also their needs, attitudes, interests, and preferences, all of which are part of psychographic segmentation and play an important role in the division of the market into segments. An important criterion of voter segmentation in political marketing is also the time voters take to make their decisions. Some voters know for a long time whom they are going to vote for, and any persuasion efforts will inevitably fail in their case. But there are also floating voters, who make up their minds during the campaign or just before the act of voting. Because their behaviour is more impulsive than reasoned, it is relatively easy to convince them by particular arguments, but it is much more difficult to reach them because usually they are not interested in politics.

After identifying voting segments, the candidate needs to define his position with each of them in the multistage process of positioning. It consists of assessing the candidate's and his opponents' strengths and weaknesses. The key elements here are (1) creating an image of the candidate emphasizing his particular personality features and (2) developing and presenting a clear position on the country's economic and social issues. Such an image and program should follow the strategy of the election fight. For instance, a candidate competing against the incumbent has an advantage because he can try to attract the voters' attention to a new, completely innovative approach to economic and social problems in his voting program.

Figure 2.4 **Newman's Model of Political Marketing**



The same principles that operate in the commercial marketplace hold true in the political marketplace: successful companies have a market orientation and are constantly engaged in creating value for their customers. In other words, marketers must anticipate their customers' needs, and then constantly develop innovative products and services to keep their customers satisfied. Politicians have a similar orientation and are constantly trying to create value for their constituents by improving the quality of life, and creating the most benefit at the smallest cost.⁽²⁾

2.2 Functions of Political Marketing

Functions of political marketing are pre- requisites for successful political marketing management. According to political marketing theorist, there are 8 generic functions of a successful political marketing which includes the following:

1. Product Function: In political marketing practice, there should be an exchange between political parties and electorate in the electoral market. Like mainstream marketing each political party has to offer some product which they wanted to sell in the market. Here party wants to market its product which is the promise of a good government. In some cases, the product may be image of the candidate, an ideology or certain specific foreign policies.

2. Distribution Function: The distribution function refers to the conditions regarding the availability of exchange offer to the exchange partner. The function has two aspects campaign delivery and offering delivery. The campaign delivery function provides the primary exchange partner- the electorate-with access to all relevant information about the political product. This includes the dissemination of information regarding crucial party policies and programs, placing the candidates in right channels, making sure that medium of distribution fit the ideology of the party etc.

3. Cost Function: One of the main functions of mainstream marketing is to sell a product which is cost effective compared to other products in the market so that customer gets greater monetary satisfaction. In political marketing, cost function refers to the management of attitudinal and behavioural barriers of voters through calculated campaign strategies. The voter should receive all the information regarding the product without spending money for it.

4. Communication Function: Communication involves the function of informing the primary exchange partner of the offer and its availability. It is often seen as the heart of political marketing. For a political party, it implies, providing political content, political ideas and future and sense making of a complex political world programs but also aiding the interpretation Often the communication function involves simplification of political messages, concise political stand etc. The communication function interacts with the campaign delivery aspects of the distribution function-the latter provides the medium while the former defines the content. The communication function prescribes a dialogue with the exchange partners – a multidirectional flow of information and shared agenda setting.

5. News Management Function: This function is closely linked to communication function. But news management function is targeted to secondary exchange partners or intermediaries of which media is an important part. In other words it is the management of publicity of the candidate and party. Public relation activities, media management, online advertising campaign management etc are news management functions. In the era of communication revolution news management plays a vital role in success of political marketing.

6. Fund Raising Function: In mainstream marketing fund raising is not an issue. But political marketing management cannot survive without fund raising. In fact the success of other functions largely depends on fund raising function. In order to provide the political actor with appropriate resources, a distinct fund raising function needs to be addressed. A political party depends to a varying extent on membership fee, donations, etc.

7. Parallel Campaign Management Function: This function describes the requirement of co-coordinating the campaign management activities of a political party with those of parallel organizations. Coordinated and synergic use of managerial activities allows for a more efficient deployment of campaign resources. Furthermore, the use of parallel campaigns and the endorsements by other organizations can increase the trustworthiness of the political messages.

8. Internal Cohesion Management Functions: Besides the external management aspects, internal structure and functions of the political party also needs to be managed professionally. The function is concerned with relationship with party members and activists as well as the spoke persons. The internal marketing functions play a critical role in creating internal stability and therefore the credibility of the party regarding its outside image.⁽³⁾

2.3 Political Campaign and its techniques

2.3.1 Political Campaign

During the past decade even the Indian political parties realized the importance of marketing and advertising in elections. Parties started hiring political consultants and ad agencies, to develop their positioning strategy among different socio-economic classes of Indian public. Before understanding the whole strategies and view point of political parties we must learn what political campaigning is and its various techniques.

A political campaign is an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group. In democracies, political campaigns often refer to electoral campaigns, wherein representatives are chosen or referenda are

decided. Political campaigns also include organized efforts to alter policy within any institution or organization.

Politics is as old as humankind and is not limited to democratic or governmental institutions. Some examples of political campaigns are: the effort to execute or banish Socrates from Athens in the 5th century BC, the uprising of petty nobility against John of England in the 13th century, or the 2005 push to remove Michael Eisner from the helm of The Walt Disney Company.

2.3.2 Techniques

A campaign team (which may be as small as one inspired individual or a heavily-resourced group of professionals) must consider how to communicate the message of the campaign, recruit volunteers, and raise money. Campaign advertising draws on techniques from commercial advertising and propaganda. The avenues available to political campaigns when distributing their messages is limited by the law, available resources, and the imagination of the campaigns' participants. These techniques are often combined into a formal strategy known as the campaign plan. The plan takes account of a campaign's goal, message, target audience, and resources available. The campaign will typically seek to identify supporters at the same time as getting its message across.

2.3.2.1 Campaign advertising

Campaign advertising is the use of paid media (newspapers, radio, television, etc.) to influence the decisions made for and by groups. These ads are designed by political consultants and the campaign's staff.

2.3.2.2 Media management

The public media may run the story that someone is trying to get elected or to do something about such and such.

2.3.2.3 Mass meetings, rallies and protests

Holding protests, rallies and other similar public events (if enough people can be persuaded to come) may be a very effective campaign tool. Holding mass meetings

with speakers is powerful as it shows visually, through the number of people in attendance, the support that the campaign has.

2.3.2.4 Modern technology and the internet

The internet is now a core element of modern political campaigns. Communication technologies such as e-mail, web sites, and pod casts for various forms of activism to enable faster communications by citizen movements and deliver a message to a large audience. These Internet technologies are used for cause related fundraising, lobbying, volunteering, community building, and organizing.

2.3.2.5 Other techniques

- Writing directly to members of the public (either via a professional marketing firm or, particularly on a small scale, by volunteers).
- By distributing leaflets or selling newspapers.
- Through websites, online communities, and solicited or unsolicited bulk email.
- Through a new technique known as Micro targeting that helps identify and target small demographic slices of voters.
- Through a whistle stop tour - a series of brief appearances in several small towns.
- Hampering the ability of political competitors to campaign, by such techniques as counter-rallies, picketing of rival parties' meetings, or overwhelming rival candidates' offices with mischievous phone calls (most political parties in representative democracies publicly distance themselves from such disruptive and morale-affecting tactics, with the exception of those parties self-identifying as activist).
- Organizing political house parties.
- Using endorsements of other celebrated party members to boost support.
- Remaining close to or at home to make speeches to supporters who come to visit as part of a front porch campaign.
- Vote-by-mail, previously known as 'absentee ballots' have grown significantly in importance as an election tool. Today, campaigns in most states must have a strategy in place to impact early voting.⁽⁴⁾

2.4 History of Indian Politics and Political campaigns

Parties want to reach to the maximum number of voters and earn largest share of their minds and hearts. Political parties indulge themselves into political communication to influence masses. The political campaigns though have existed since post independence era but it is only the recent times when parties have adopted modern techniques to reach maximum number of people .

Since the first elections held in 1952, there had been 15 Lok Sabha elections in India, including that held in 2009. The Congress has been a major political party and had formed the government maximum number of times. In 1977, the Congress was defeated by the Janata Party. Morarji Desai became the first non-congress PM of India. However, his government did not last long and the Congress regained power in 1980 under the leadership of Indira Gandhi. Indira was the daughter of India's first PM, Jawaharlal Lal Nehru. Indira remained as PM till October 31, 1984 when she was assassinated by her personal bodyguard. Following her death, the Congress fielded Indira's son Rajiv Gandhi (Rajiv) as the Prime Ministerial candidate.

Riding on the sympathy wave generated by Indira's assassination, the party won by a huge margin, bagging 415 of the 542 seats in the 1984 elections. In 1984, the BJP got only two seats in the Lok Sabha.

The BJP consolidated its position in the 1989 elections and won 86 seats. In 1989, though the Congress was the single largest party with 197 seats, the Janata Dal, which had won 142 seats, formed the government with the support of the BJP. The coalition government lasted for 15 months, after which midterm elections were announced. During the election campaign, Rajiv was assassinated at an election rally in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu. Again, a sympathy wave swept the country and the Congress returned to power with P V Narasimha Rao (Rao) as PM.

The new government served its full term. However, the BJP had emerged stronger, winning 120 seats.

2.4.1 Emergence of Political Advertising in India

In India the major credit of introducing political advertising on large and programmed way goes to BJP which had launched an ad campaign on television. The 'India Shining' campaign that marked the beginning of a new age of political advertising in India. It discusses in depth the political advertising strategy of the erstwhile NDA government and examines how the campaign was aimed as a tool to win votes.

In mid January 2004, the former Prime Minister (PM) of India - Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Vajpayee) announced plans to dissolve the 13th Lok Sabha and go for early elections in April-May 2004. The term of the Vajpayee government was scheduled to end in October 2004. The announcement of early dissolution did not surprise political analysts in the country.

Analysts felt that the decision to go for early elections was made in view of the booming Indian economy, encouraging state assembly election results, peaceful relationship with India's neighbouring countries and the major opposition party – the Indian National Congress (Congress) being in a demoralized state. They felt the popularity of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was at its peak.

A leading newspaper of India reported, "The popularity of the National Democratic Alliance and the standing of the PM himself have never been as high as they are currently." The BJP decided to leverage its popularity and initiated a major poll campaign with the slogan 'India Shining.' The campaign was aimed at highlighting the progress India had made during the tenure of Vajpayee as PM. The campaign was supported by another catch phrase 'Feel Good Factor.'

By the end of January 2004, almost all leading television channels, newspapers and magazines in India had carried advertisements as part of the campaign. Reportedly, the BJP spent close to Rs 5 billion on the campaign. As the polls neared, the BJP gained more confidence. Several opinion polls conducted before the elections and exit polls on election days predicted that the NDA was coming back to power. The BJP's President, Venkaiah Naidu (Naidu) claimed the alliance would get more than 300 Lok Sabha seats. On the other hand, the Congress hoped it would win more than

the 112 seats it had won in the last elections. Party leaders expressed the opinion that the maximum they could win was 135 seats

2.4.2 The Campaign and its Response

The genesis of the 'India Shining' campaign began in July 2003. The NDA government approached 20 advertising agencies in its efforts to get an advertisement campaign developed that would highlight India as a fast developing country.

The campaign was aimed at highlighting India's achievements under the NDA government. The government reviewed all the proposals submitted by the agencies but was not satisfied. It then approached 11 other agencies in October 2003. Finally, Grey Worldwide-India (GWI), a part of the Grey Global Group, bagged the contract.

During the conceptualization stage of the campaign, the government told GWI that the campaign should focus on the improving economic conditions and the rapid progress made by India in recent years. The 'India Shining' slogan was created by Prathap Suthan (Suthan), national creative director, GWI. Before selecting this slogan, Suthan also considered some other lines such as 'India Alive,' 'India Rising' and 'India Dazzling.'

However, he felt that none of these were as appropriate as 'India Shining.' Suthan said, "Each of them were wrong in certain ways. India Alive carries with it the implication of death or sickness. India Rising takes you back to the Independence era when we were just formulating an identity. India Dazzling was an overclaim." According to him, 'India Shining' conveyed a sense of health, prosperity and radiance. After finalizing the slogan, GWI's planning department gathered preliminary information including key statistics and information on Indian economy.

The Ministry of Finance also provided the company with some relevant facts and figures to use in the campaign. Further, a search was done on the Internet to gather useful information.

2.4.3 The Debate

The Congress, under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi (Sonia), the wife of the late Rajiv, vehemently opposed the claims made in the 'India Shining' campaign. In the

initial days of the campaign, Congress opposed the campaign by terming it as 'India Cheated.' The party leaders said that in reality, the Indian economy was not booming and there was no reason for the country to feel good. It also ridiculed Advani's catch phrase by terming it as 'Fail Good.'

The campaign showed 10.4% growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India in the third quarter of the fiscal year 2003-04, compared to the third quarter in the fiscal year 2002-03. However, the Congress- insisted that the increase in GDP was largely due to better monsoon. Jairam Ramesh (Ramesh), a senior leader of the Congress commented, "The large picture looks good only because the monsoon has been good in 2003. Otherwise, the Vajpayee era could have been written off." The Congress also said that the GDP growth for 2003-04 was high as it had been compared with a dismal growth of 4.2% during 2002-03. It also claimed that during the five years of the NDA government, the Indian economy had grown only by 5.7%. The 'India Shining' campaign claimed that 8.4 million new jobs were created every year.

2.4.4 The Campaign of the Congress

The Congress also took professional help to counter the "India Shining" campaign. It hired Orchard Advertising, an Indian subsidiary of Leo Burnett; a US- based advertising company. The company structured its campaign in the form of a question, which asked 'Aam Aadmi Ko Kya Mila?' (What did the common man get?). The campaign argued that the masses were not benefited by the 'feel good' factor that the NDA was stressing. Orchard's advertisement strategy was to counter the mood set by the "India Shining" campaign. Most advertisements by the Congress did not use colors and concentrated more on the poor. One advertisement showed an old, poor man. The punch line said, "Woh hukumat kis kaam ki jisme gareeb ki zindgi mein sukh chain nahi hai? Sochiye! Congress ka haath, Gareeb ke Saath" ("What is a use of that government which cannot bring peace and prosperity in the lives of the poor. Think! "The hand of Congress is with the poor.")

2.4.5 The Result

Various opinion polls and exit polls too suggested that the NDA government would be re-elected. However, the election results stunned all political parties in India as

well as leading political experts. The NDA managed to get only 188 seats with the leading party - the BJP getting 138 seats. The Congress and its allies got 219 seats of which the Congress on its own bagged 145 seats. With the support of the Left parties, who bagged 53 seats, the Congress formed the next government.

The defeat of the NDA's major allies - the TDP and the AIADMK, meant that the NDA did not have any support to draw on. The defeat of the NDA in the Lok Sabha elections ignited a debate not only among its leaders but also among psephologists and other experts. They tried to draw conclusions on why the NDA had lost despite a major advertising campaign. A few analysts felt that the "India Shining" campaign made false claims since the whole of India was not shining.

They said that the campaign alienated the common man for whom India was not shining at all. Salman Rushdie, a well known writer in India, commented, "The gulf between India's rich and poor has never looked wider than it does today, and the government has fallen into that chasm."⁽⁵⁾

2.5 Different media used for Advertisements in recent elections

During the recent assembly elections concluded in December 2013 and ongoing Lok Sabha elections many conventional and non-conventional media are used by various political parties. The biggest difference in recent and past elections is that all the parties hired their consultant ad agencies, planned a framework and laid aggressive ad campaigns.

With political advertising crossing over Rs 600 crore in ad spends this year, all kinds of advertising agencies, big and small, shoved and pushed for a slice of the pie. For some like the JWT, advertising in the political arena is a first. The agency, that tasted success with its campaigns for Pepsi and Nike, now has the challenge of selling a party as old and as varied as the Congress to as complex a market as Electorate India.

Let us discuss all the media types used by the political parties and their advantages.

2.5.1 Television

Only 15% of the total campaign budgets is spent on television ads. Advertising experts believe it is because TV does not give political parties enough bang for the

buck. A 10 second spot can sell for anywhere between Rs. 5,000 on a regional language channel to at least Rs. 1.5 lakh on a popular channel during prime time, say media buyers, while other platforms such as radio and outdoor are as effective and cheaper.

“Voter banks are not in big cities but in rural areas where posters, meetings and mobile vans reach out to more potential voters than a TV ad which costs 10 times the amount,” says Sumira Roy, founder of Mumbai-based advertising agency Postscript. “And spending so much on a political campaign like the BJP did with the India Shining campaign last elections, can actually backfire and work against the party.”

“At a time when Indian advertising has become so creative and has set standards internationally, the quality of political campaigns on TV remains poor and reflects badly on the industry”, says a senior advertising agency executive who didn't want to be named. “Especially the BJP ads that featured politicians using the attacks in Mumbai to gain votes on TV and print was atrocious and will make them lose supporters.” Adds Emmanuel Upputuru, National Creative Director, Publicis India, “Earlier, political ads on TV looked like an A/V (audio-visual), so at least now they look like an advertisement as the production has improved after advertising agencies were hired, but at the end of the day, the advertising will be just as good or bad as the product, so maybe product is bad.” However with 400-Plus TV channels, 60-70% of which are regional language channels, the media does hold potential —if used intelligently.

2.5.2 Outdoor advertisements

While door-to-door campaigning and political rallies continue to be the mainstay of election campaigns, political parties in India are looking at advertising campaigns across media platforms to reach the elusive voter, especially in urban areas. Political parties are now more focused in their marketing strategies, and communication campaigns are going beyond reinforcing the party symbol. The proportion of poll budgets allocated to advertising has gone up and professional advertising agencies are being used. For advertising agencies, too, it has been a learning curve—the target group is diffused and most ads take the regional language route. Outdoor media, with its banners, hoardings and pamphlets, is the most obvious choice in political

campaigns, with print ads a close second. The digital media has gained significance because of its ability to interact with urban voters; radio ads made their debut in the ongoing assembly elections. Television, despite its potential, has failed to click with parties and voters alike, mainly due to the poor quality of the ads. Campaign looks at how political parties are using these mediums to spread the word-and how effective each is. Hoarding, bus stands, mobile vans and floats have proved to be most effective forms of communication and are used extensively by political parties. In fact, the outdoor medium gets a higher budget than television. According to a media buyers, 20% of the total advertising budget of the political parties was spent on outdoor, while 15% was spent on television during the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. “Outdoor advertising is the first indication that elections are coming up because all of a sudden, streets and parks in cities and villages across the country are filled with banners and hoardings of politicians, says Sumira Roy of Postscript.

“This platform connects with the rural populations on the best because it talks to them in the language they understand and is effective in delivering results.” Adds Gullu Sen of Dentsu India, “We know the leaders of political parties such as Sonia Gandhi or Manmohan Singh but how many of us know the other politicians standing for elections in the states? So outdoor advertising helps spread awareness and educate people on who is who”. Apart from effectiveness and recall, outdoor media is more cost effective than advertising in the main stream media. According to a leading outdoor advertising agency in Delhi, hoardings in a city such as Delhi cost political parties Rs. 2.5-5 lakh for a month depending on the location and can be as low as Rs. 50,000 a month in smaller towns. The cost of advertising in bus shelters for a month can be between Rs. 80,000 and Rs. 1.5 lakh for digital print banners. Compare this to approximately Rs. 1.5 lakh for a 10-second TV spot ad during prime time on a general entertainment channel or a full-page advertisement across all editions of a national newspaper that can cost up to Rs. 1.7 crore a day.

2.5.3 Print

The lion’s share has traditionally gone to newspapers, and even though platforms such as digital and radio have gained significance, loyalties have not shifted yet. According to a media buying agency, print accounts for 40–50% of the Rs. 400 crore budget in the latest assembly elections. “Newspapers account for 50% of our spends

because it reaches out to the masses, yet it is a very localised form of advertising that gets the message across to the lowest local denominator,” says Ranjan Bargotra, President of Crayons Advertising Ltd., the agency handling the Congress account.

According to the latest figures of the Registrar of Newspapers in India, or RNI, India had 64,998 registered newspapers as of March 2013, with a total circulation of 190 million. A political party can pay anywhere between Rs. 5 lakh and Rs. 45 lakh for one full-page advertisement in a newspaper, depending on the reach it has, says a senior media buyer who did not want to be identified. Print ads also allow parties to respond to unexpected situations. “Yes, print is a localised form of advertising but the main reason for using so much of this media is because these political campaigns are all developed (at the) last minute and print is the fastest way to do it. All it needs is some script, party symbol and mug shots of the politicians”, says Gullu Sen, Executive Vice Chairman and Creative Director of advertising agency Dentsu, India. Despite all this, experts believe the entire efforts may be a waste. " the Quality of print Advertisements is still very tacky and seem like a big sham to me,"says Anil Madan, Founder and Creative Director, Aqua Communications. Adds Sen, " They are bad leaflets, not advertisements-all it does is familiarize voters to their faces, so when someone does go to the poll booth, they might just recall the face and make a connection."

2.5.4 Radio

On 21 November, The Election Commission allowed political campaigns on airwaves. From the very next day, radio stations in Delhi and other states going to the polls aired political advertisements, mainly from the BJP and Congress. Analysts say the speed with which parties integrated radio into their campaigns is indicative of the potential it has to reach out locally. “Radio is a localized medium that reaches out to

19 crore listeners (above the age of 12) and unlike print and TV, where there are time and space restrictions, radio allows parties to actually communicate to listeners in their language” says Sunil Kumar, Managing Director at Radio Business Consultancy Big River Radio (India) Pvt. Ltd. “With the poll panel putting restrictions on the expenditure for campaigns, parties are looking at less expensive outlets. It is natural for political parties to use radio channels which are popular

among youngsters,” says BJP spokesperson Rajiv Pratap Rudy. According to a senior executive from a media buying agency, who did not want to be identified, radio accounted for Rs. 20 crore of the Rs. 400 crore political advertising budget during the recently concluded assembly elections.

The Congress took six radio spots, the BJP took three. The ads ranged from 10–50 seconds and cost the parties between Rs. 250 and Rs. 1,200. Reaching out to 23% of the population, radio may be a more effective and cheaper medium, but experts say political parties will have to learn how to use it to debate and discuss opposing viewpoints instead of using it as a platform for mud-slinging.

In Delhi where Congress was the ruling party, radio ads highlighted the work done so far—no promises were made. But in Rajasthan, where the Congress was in the opposition, the ads looked at the inefficiency of the government and pointed out what could have been done better. Similarly, BJP's campaign warned voters about the shortcomings of the government and rhetorically asked voters if they would make the same mistake. “These ads were not fancy and did not need much production work as they basically had voice-overs communicating to voters. So the ads were probably developed in a span of two days and were all set to air as soon as the government gave the green light,” says Prathap Suthan, Creative Director of Cheil Communications. Confirms Ashit Kukian, Executive Vice President of Radio city 91.1FM, “The commercials were ready. We were waiting for the Election Commission, for the broadcast certificate and as soon as the formality was met, the ads were aired on our station.”

The growing reach of private FM radio is expected to find political expression for the first time in India as parties tap it for their campaigns, bringing in welcome revenue to the Rs.8.3 billion/\$165 million radio industry in the country. “Many political parties realise the reach of the radio and the play that the ads would get and are warming up to the idea of broadcasting their ads on radio,” Panday, who is also senior vice president of the Association of Radio Operators for India (AROI), told IANS. Broadcasting of political ads was not allowed on private radio stations until 2005 when the second phase of FM radio privatisation was rolled out. This is the second time general elections will be held after that. Prior to this, only stations like the All India Radio (AIR) or BBC's Hindi station used to air such campaigns. Taking

advantage of the new development, most major parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) as well as a few regional parties are already making use of the facility. While the Congress has roped in three known ad agencies - Percept, Crayons and James Walter Thompson (JWT) – to prepare the party's campaign strategy, the BJP has hired the services of Frank Simoes-Tag and Utopia Consulting. Nisheeth Sharan of Utopia Consulting told IANS: "We have placed BJP campaigns on all private FM channels as well as on All India Radio because any means of communication during the elections only helps. There is no debating that the radio is the best local media available to connect with people even in far-flung areas. And it makes more sense to campaign through it rather than print because it is cost effective and is a mass medium; it cuts across all literacy levels. According to report compiled jointly by global consultancy KPMG and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the country's radio industry is set to grow at 14.2 percent per annum and reach the size of Rs.16.3 billion by 2013. The growing reach of private FM radio is expected to find political expression for the first time in India as parties tap it for their campaigns, bringing in welcome revenue to the Rs.8.3 billion/\$165 million radio industry in the country.

2.5.5 Internet

"In 2004 the Internet accounted for less than 1% of the advertising budget of political parties. Today however, the digital media makes up at least 10% of the budget," says Atul Hegde, Chief Executive, Ignitee India Pvt. Ltd., the agency handling digital advertising for the Congress.

With 243 million Internet users and Internet penetration in urban India at around 13% the importance of digital media in political campaigns cannot be ignored. Add to that the fact that around 100 million, half of whom live in urban India are expected to cast their votes for the first time in the Lok Sabha polls, and the Internet emerges as very useful tool to engage with young people. "The focus on digital and mobile media is to engage the urban youth in India who make up a large voters base," says Hiren Pandit, managing partner of GroupM ESP, the entertainment, sports and partnerships division of media buyer GroupM. "While they are involved in political

affairs, they may not be interested or inclined to vote, so these digital initiatives aim at interacting with them and getting the message out”

The BJP and congress have tracked US President-elect Barack Obama’s successful online campaign-social networking sites such as Facebook, Orkut and MySpace have communities built around the two parties and individual politicians.

The BJP has launched a website for its prime-ministerial candidate Narendra Modi. It had one too, for Dr. Harsha Vardhan, its chief ministerial candidate for Delhi. The Congress opted for a dedicated Internet campaign for the Rajasthan assembly elections. In addition, the two parties have engaged voters through videosharing sites such as YouTube and video ads on popular websites such as MSN and Rediffmail.

The approximate cost for an extensive online campaign can be Rs. 1 crore over a month. “40% of a typical advertising campaign goes towards contextual search and advertising networking and 60% is spent on popular websites such as Facebook, Google, Twitter, Yahoo, MSN and Rediff, among others,” says Sidharth Rao, chief Executive and co-founder of Webchutney, a leading digital marketing company. According to a report published, Facebook could swing results in as many as 160 Lok Sabha constituencies.⁽²⁰⁾

2.5.6 Mobile Phones

Around 900 million Indians use mobile phones. Therefore political parties are targeting these voters through SMS and telecalling voters directly. This way of targeting people has all the advantages of Direct marketing. During these Lok sabha elections all the parties have used this medium but definitely BJP raced much ahead.

The attempt to reach voters who usually do not turn up at polling booths is driven by an estimate that many of them might share BJP’s vision for a strong Centre and a "nationalist" approach to security that includes "hard" views on anti-terror laws and illegal infiltration. These groups could motivate people to shed both their cynicism and lethargy to actually go to the polling stations.⁽⁶⁾

2.6 Major Parties and Their Marketing Campaigns – The Rise of Social Media

Comparative advertising is the cornerstone of political marketing. The idea is to portray competitors in an unfavourable way without being perceived as attacking them. Political advertising does this by creating FUD: fear, uncertainty and doubt. Research shows comparative advertising lowers the image of the attacked candidate without affecting the attacking candidate because voters believe negative advertising gives them more information to make a better decision.

Constituency is the equivalent of local markets in marketing. It is crucial for parties to think differently of the 543 Lok Sabha constituencies. The candidate who presents the best chance in the constituency is a combination of optimising many variables and micro-targeting. The party must manage spurned candidates who play spoilers in at least a fifth of the constituencies. "Think national but choose local" is the best strategy, similar to brand marketing campaigns.

‘Indian politicians are expected to spend around US \$5 billion (Rs 30,000 crores) on campaigning for elections next month (April 2014) - a sum second only to the most expensive US presidential campaign of all time - in a splurge that could give India's floundering economy a temporary boost.’⁽⁷⁾

The year 2014 is a very interesting year for India as the majority of the audience that will be voting this year will be very young. At a news conference in New Delhi, the election commission said that the process of voting in the sixteenth Lok Sabha will see the largest ever population of eligible voters, led by over 814 million voters, 100 million more than in 2009. This time round, more than 23 million voters are aged between 18 and 19. For the first time in a general election in India, voters will be allowed to cast a ballot for “None of the Above.”

To the extent that the ultimate decision might also be in the hands of India's youth because of the existing majority, the marketer has set up shop in the marketplace, i.e., political advertisers have looked into reaching out to the audience where they currently 'hang out'.

With advertising and communication being churned out faster than widgets, there is no thinking time for the creators; hence they all narrate versions of the same story, with a different overtones, over different platforms.

It's a good strategy especially in India as young people here are not averse to politics unlike in other countries. A study done by Pew Research says nearly 45% of Indian web users connect on social media to discuss politics. So while internet penetration is small, the number of users is rapidly growing and is dominated by first time voters.

The Congress alone plans to spend around Rs 500 crore for its poll campaign. The party has allocated Rs 400 crore for its mass media ads, which include, television, print, radio, outdoor and digital and around Rs 100 crore for on-ground activities. Agencies that have bagged the Congress contract are JWT India, Dentsu India and Taproot. A high-voltage television and radio campaign highlighting the government's initiatives and achievements has already been kicked off.

Indian democracy is on the cusp of a revolution led by social media users. At a very conservative estimate, the fortunes of contestants seeking election to the next Lok Sabha from not less than 160 constituencies will be determined by facebook users making them the newest Vote Bank with the power to shape Indian politics. As of mid-2014, the number of Indian users of social media networks, largely Facebook, are close to 120 million — equal to the Congress' popular vote in the 2009 Lok Sabha polls. Facebook's Q1 2013 shows that its users were already on a par with the BJP's 2009 popular vote of 78 million.

In the run up to Lok Sabha polls, Facebook users would also be able to discuss the electoral agenda of country's top politicians including Narendra Modi, Mamata Banerjee, Akhilesh Yadav, Arvind Kejriwal among others from next month.

Facebook users would be able to pose questions directly to key political contenders for 2014 general elections with the launch of a special initiative, 'Facebook Talks Live', by the social networking website. "This is the first social media election in the country. India is where the US was in 2008," says Ankhi Das, public policy director, Facebook India.⁽⁸⁾

**Refer Annexure 1 for more on social media exploitation by political parties*

2.6.1 Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP)

BJP's campaign has not only turned the polls into a presidential form of elections, pitching Modi as the PM candidate but it is also the first time that product marketing principles have been used in elections and that regardless of whether it created "a tsunami, a wave or a ripple", there was a lesson in this for the future.

BJP's advertising, all of it focusing sharply on one man, has been like a relentless series of carpet-bombings; there's been copious use of hi-tech aids such as simulcasts of his campaigns using 3D holography and real-time feedback analysis from key constituencies; and, not to forget, an eager media has generously covered the blitz, particularly the TV news channels, which have lapped up feed from every meeting he's addressed and telecast it live. Although BJP claims to be having an advertising budget of Rs. 750-800 crores, well placed sources in the party on condition of anonymity have confirmed that it is well over Rs. 5000 crores.⁽²⁷⁾

2.6.1.1 Television

The advertising campaign in support of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its PM candidate Narendra Modi, has had many firsts, advertising industry executives and brand experts say. Quite apart from its ubiquity, the campaign is also unique — at least as far as far as political advertising is concerned — in its use of textbook corporate story-telling techniques, with initial ads pitching a big theme followed by shorter edited versions taking the story forward.

The corporate analogy goes further. The party has also used so-called roadblocks — in which one 75 second BJP ad ran on nine Star Plus shows between 6 and 11 PM on April 14 — tactics that are normally the preserve of the likes of Vodafone.

For good measure, the party, which is closely linked to the RSS, has carried out so-called brand integration activities on Channel [V], a youth channel with sometimes edgy content which competes with MTV. Four programmes Channel [V] shows : The Buddy Project, Dil Dosti Dance, Confession and Sadda Haq has seen brand integration exercise by the BJP, probably a first for an Indian political party. Brand integration refers to the BJP 'brand' being part of the show's content. Besides a team from Channel [V] have created 4 youth oriented television commercials for BJP

which the party has played across channels in India catering to the youth. It has also been bold in its use of new media.

In March, for instance, the BJP launched two two and-a-half-minute-long music videos with the punchline "Achchey Din Aaane Wale Hain" (Good Days are about to come) and "Desh nai mitne doonga, desh nahin jhukne doonga" on Youtube which has now been extended to traditional media. Eminent artists from the music industry Abeer Vajpayee and Udit Narayan were roped in for composing and singing the song. Narendra Modi has also sung a few lines in one of the songs to add more effect. The party is now taking the "Achchey Din" and "Desh nai mitne doonga, desh nahin jhukne doonga" story forward on TV and has launched three 20-second TV commercials around it. Both the music video and the ads are made by Soho Square which is handling BJP's poll campaign this year.

Needless to say the "Achchey Din" is on account of the imminent arrival of Modi (Modiji to aane wale hain). While Congress has also launched shorter edits of its main advertising campaign, it lacks the width and depth of BJP's poll campaign, say leading brand analysts in the country. "I don't think any other political party has seen or approached advertising the way BJP did this year", says Santosh Desai, MD & CEO at Futurebrands. While Samrat Bedi, head of Soho Square Mumbai was not available for comments, a source in BJP's advertising team, said, "We first identified our target groups and then designed different ad campaigns in a language which they would understand." For instance, BJP launched a TV commercial targeting the youth which said, "We continuously update our status on Facebook. It is also important to update our country."

The party's poll campaign, be it the creative aspects or media planning, appears to be drawing from the playbook of leading brand campaigns in the country. For example, the party ran a series of tailor-made graphic ads around cricket during the India-Pakistan match of the Twenty20 world cup. A corporate analogy would be that of Vodafone, which launched its famous animated ZooZoo ads, which were specifically made for the IPL. "I don't think there is any other political party in the country that used cricket the way BJP did. The planning around cricket was like any other brand and was very specific," said Desai. Desai says while other political parties are focussed on packaging "issues", BJP has "Packaged an individual." "The BJP's

campaign is an indication that the productisation of the political persona is now complete. The campaign positions BJP like any other corporate and Modi as a product of this corporation or company. And one should appreciate this initiative because it looks like a good, solid campaign", says Harish Bijoor, brand-strategy specialist & CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults. In TV, the BJP has bought about 2,000 spots a day across Hindi, English and regional news, general entertainment and sports channels. A spot in most popular entertainment channels cost about Rs. 80,000 per 30 seconds. The budget: Rs. 800-1,000 crore. It spent another Rs. 150 crore during the T20 World Cup. ⁽⁹⁾

2.6.1.2 Print Media and Radio

These are amongst the most used mass media for advertisements due to them being much cheaper than other mass media. In the print media, the BJP has bought the most prominent ad slots across national, regional and vernacular newspapers for 40 days. "We have chosen 50 top national and regional newspapers across India and plan to release about four to five ads everyday till the end of the election process," The budget: Rs. 500 crore. The advertisement budget for magazines is an additional Rs. 150 crore." Said one of the BJP's planner on condition of anonymity.

The budget for radio is Rs. 35 crore where BJP is using the top 4 radio channels in each of the regions to reach their target audience.

2.6.1.3 Internet

Under Chris Hughes' leadership, the Obama campaign team created the brand MyBO, with the tagline 'Keep it real and keep it local'. MyBO merchandise flooded the market ahead of US elections to entice voters. Similarly, Modi has launched the NaMo store (Narendra Modi Store) online, which sells merchandise inspired by Modi's life and values.

The Barack Obama Dashboard, a national online platform for organising volunteers, was introduced during Obama's 2012 re-election campaign. The site ranked campaign volunteers and supporters on a point-based system to better strategise recruitment and organise grassroots events. The winning volunteer was rewarded with direct interaction with Obama. In September 2013, Team Modi launched

the 'India 272+' initiative, which resembles the Obama Dashboard. It also has a points-based system to rank volunteers who can mobilise voters on ground, and the 'winner' will participate in a one-on-one meeting with Modi.

During his re-election bid in January 2012, Obama participated in a Google Plus Hangout, which included an "Ask Me Anything" question and answer session. Up to 200,000 people logged in to the live session with the president.

Taking a cue from that success, Modi in September 2012 participated in a Google Plus Hangout, which drew 20,000 questions and was viewed by nearly four million people on the web and TV. The Key highlight of BJP's social media strategy is the seamless integration across various platforms with consistent communication and messaging. The party has launched some exceptionally innovative 360 degree campaigns and initiatives like Mere Sapnon Ka Bharat, NaMo Number, Chai Pe Charcha and the latest in the block Ab Ki Baar Modi Sarkaar to register their presence synonymous with Growth, Development and Good Governance.

To engage diverse voters, Team Obama created separate Twitter accounts for separate states. Team Modi too has set up Twitter accounts in Assamese, Kannada, Manipuri, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya, Marathi and other Indian languages. In his rallies outside the Hindi-speaking belt, Modi uses insights gathered from these Twitter account to construct his speeches.

BJP also has its online presence in the form of a website available in close to 20 regional languages. The BJP page on twitter has 464 thousand followers and its facebook page has around 4 million likes. Apart from that BJP's PM candidate Narendra Modi also has a facebook page which has 13 million likes and he is followed on Twitter by 3.84 million people and has 68 million page views on Google Plus.

The party has been phenomenal in terms of the usage of different social media platforms to the best of their capabilities. The numbers, facts and figures depict that 'BJP is definitely shining on the Social Media Forefront and because of the innovation in their efforts, its getting difficult for the competitors to catch up with them.

**Refer Annexure 2 for more on BJP Advertisements*

The brilliant Offline-Online Integration of the party's activities has definitely helped the party in expanding their reach. Overall, the party's approach towards the digital and social media has been outstanding and impressive.⁽¹¹⁾

2.6.1.4 Mobile Phones

There are more mobile phones in India today than toilets, according to the latest census data, and just over half of the country's 1.2 billion population owns one.

"Mobile is very integral to our strategy," said Arvind Gupta, who heads the BJP's IT and social media cell. One of the BJP's most unique electioneering tools allows potential voters to listen in on Mr Modi's rally speeches in real time on their phones from anywhere in India. "It's our own innovation," said Mr Gupta.

The number of smartphone users is growing in India and it's how most of the country's web users go online. "Looking forward, I think the medium will continue to be a heavily-invested area for a political party," Mr Pathak said.

The party also intends to increase voter turnout by using mobile applications that will be available across platforms. The party is also using mobile applications available across platforms. The most prominent of the voter apps which is available across iOS and Android platforms will carry information regarding the location of electoral booths as well as mechanism for voters to make sure that they are registered to vote.

The app also carries details of the candidates contesting across constituencies as well as details of how to reach out to BJP volunteers and party members.

Party sources said this would be accompanied by a massive SMS campaign which hopes to ultimately reach 10 crore voters. BJP managers claim that with close to half the voting population connected by mobiles, this campaign is now a must. They agreed that the party was looking forward to a sustained effort by Sangh organisations to reach and motive both the faithful and sympathisers. The saffron party BJP used state-of-the-art campaigning, including the recorded telephonic voice of its election candidates.

**Refer Annexure 3 for BJP & Narendra Modi on Internet*

2.6.1.5 Outdoor Media

For the first time, the Delhi Metro has become an advertising ground for the political parties with BJP racing ahead of its rivals, including Congress, by putting 3,400 posters inside the train coaches so far.

“Metro is a place to get the best exposure. People of all age groups and classes travel in metro and spend 20-45 minutes at an average. They can pay attention to what these advertisements read. They are better than placing huge hoardings on road sides,” Sanjay Kaul, a member of Executive Committee and spokesperson for Delhi BJP, said. “This is the election season and people are used to the political ads being put up by the parties all over. Metro commutes lakhs of people daily and the ads are at least better than the ads of shampoos and soft drinks,” said a young commuter.

Starting a few days ago, BJP hoardings can be seen at bus stops and on main roads across cities. The ad is simple. It’s a prophecy, the party is convinced, and it has decided and announced, “*Abki baar Modi sarkaar.*” It’s like telling the voters, don’t bother voting, you like it or not, we’re coming to power.

The party has booked 15,000 hoardings across India for up to three months. The cost: From Rs. 2-3 lakh per hoarding per month in cheaper locations to as much as Rs. 20 lakh per hoarding per month in Mumbai’s Nariman Point. The total cost: Rs. 2,500 crore.

2.6.1.6 Digital and Other Technologies

In the currently ongoing Lok Sabha elections, Gujarat's Chief Minister Narendra Modi is also using 3D holographic technology and satellite link-ups to address a wider audience during the election campaign. He speaks from a studio in one of the cities of the state while simultaneously projecting his image to more than 50 separate rallies across the country.

Pinstorm, a digital marketing agency used by some of India's biggest companies to monitor what is being discussed online, now has political parties like BJP as clients to monitor and analyse their digital presence. Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) election backroom in New Delhi, has a team of over 100 young techies and consultants who have propelled prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi to the lead position. An

expert in digital marketing commented “Politicians are realising that large numbers of the population are directly addressable(through digital media), they are not going to cut down on television or print but they are going to add a lot more on digital. So in the upcoming elections, you'll see a lot more digital media strategy by politicians."

Modi's unique digital events like 'Chai pe Charcha' (Talk over tea) are unprecedented election events that put the political leader directly in touch with people at tea stalls in villages at publicized localities through a combination of satellite, DTH, internet and mobile. "Modi is perhaps one of the most tech-savvy politicians in the world and certainly the most active in India," says Amit Sheth, a professor at Wright State University's Knowledge Computing Center in Ohio. ⁽¹²⁾

2.6.1.7 Rallies

Narendra Modi, the BJP prime ministerial candidate would have undertaken the largest mass outreach in India's electoral history by travelling about 3 lakh km and addressing public meetings in 25 states by May 10, 2014 when the elections end.

BJP has been spending huge amounts of money on organise rallies and are also able to attract thousands of people to attend the rallies. According to sources BJP spent Rs. 300 crores on the Modi rallies organised in Uttar Pradesh with the maximum expenditure of Rs. 40 crores on the Lucknow rally organised on March 2, 2014.

BJP has even charged people ranging from Rs.5 to Rs 100 to attend rallies being addressed by Narendra Modi to fund their election campaign.

2.6.1.8 Other Forms of Marketing

- Train, Rath, Bus yatra
- Door to Door Campaigning
- Road side meetings
- Street play

2.6.2 Indian National Congress (INC)

The party has initiated a nation-wide Rs700 crore mass publicity drive aimed at wooing various sections of the electorate. The advertisements are being aired through

television, radio, newspapers, hoardings etc. US-based Taproot, JWT and Dentsu India, a Japanese publicity major have been roped in to give a massive image makeover for the party and its vice-president Rahul Gandhi. Although congress claims to be spending only Rs. 700crores on advertisements, well placed sources put the figure at much over Rs. 2000crores.

2.6.2.1 Television

Congress is using advertisement space on television to promote Rahul Gandhi and development issues with tag lines like “Har Haath Shakti, Har Haath Taraki’ and ‘Main Nahin Hum’ They are also using advertisement strips to communicate to the audience during primetime hours. These advertisements are also highlighting the achievements of the UPA government in the last 10 years, mainly concentrating on development work down for the poor and the youth of the country. The Congress ad campaign will comprise TV spots, 18 short films, print ads and even the new media like web and radio. Its signature jingle will be developed into a caller tune with catchy party slogans. The ads would be dubbed/translated into every regional language.

The Congress party's focus is on food security bill, right to information act , NREGA—government employment scheme, Aadhar card, land reform policy, etc.⁽¹⁵⁾

2.6.2.2 Print Media and Radio

Congress has been using Radio to communicate with the masses, but they started exploiting the media much later than BJP and AAP. They are currently advertising on the four main national radio channels. Overall, about Rs. 25-50 crores have been spent on radio advertising in this year’s elections – at least 200 percent more than during the 2009 elections, Sunil Kumar of radio consulting firm Big River Radio estimated, who is handling the Radio advertisements for the congress.

Congress has also been using print media to effectively target the voter bank and is giving quarter page advertisements in leading dailies of the country as well as some regional dailies. It started with a half page advertisement featuring Rahul Gandhi and nine other people from different communities with the slogan Har Hath Shakti, Har Hath Tarakki (power in every hand, progress to everyone)

2.6.2.3 Internet

Party leader Rahul Gandhi has scrambled to build an online presence; his facebook page currently has around 350,000 Facebook likes, around 10,000 page views on Google Plus and less than 100,000 followers on a Twitter page set up by party workers. "The upset win of new incumbent Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi polls, a few months ago, has been a catalyst for political parties to take social media data analysis seriously," said Pinstorm Founder Mahesh Murthy. The Congress is getting into the act slowly but ambitiously with plans to spend Rs.100 crore on social media. Many young Members of Parliament of the congress have an online presence as well.

Technology is clearly being leveraged in a big way. A youtube channel completely run by volunteers posts videos on achievements of congress, a missed call campaign is on to solicit ideas from the public on a constituency specific manifesto, several blogs highlight the work done by various congress politicians in the fray, professionals networking site LinkedIn is used to connect with professionals in the various constituencies and WhatsApp is also being used for communication with voters.

The Congress Party candidate from Bangalore South constituency, Nandan Nilekani, has also tapped into online platforms to spread his message in the IT capital of India. His 'ideas for Bengaluru' campaign on Twitter that invites suggestions for the city's improvement mirrors Obama's micro-listening approach of parsing constituents' concerns in fine detail

2.6.2.4 Mobile Phones

Congress has not under taken any campaign on mobile phone, apart from launching a SMS service where in people who opt for the service get SMS about the latest developments in the Indian National Congress.

2.6.2.5 Outdoor Media

Congress Party is also buying spaces on hoardings, in metros and bus stops around the country to display its ads with the theme 'Har haath shakti, har haath taraki'

In Mumbai, the congress party has purchased space on hundreds of BEST buses to display its ads featuring Rahul Gandhi. The party is extensively using hoardings to drive its message across to the voter segment and has purchased large number of hoardings in almost all parts of the country. One thing that stands out in all hoardings is Rahul Gandhi⁽¹⁷⁾

2.6.2.6 Digital and Other Technologies

Congress is currently using digital technologies only to interact with the voter base over media such as video conferencing and collecting and analysing data to design its advertising strategies.

2.6.2.7 Rallies

Congress stalwarts Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi have been addressing rallies and huge public gatherings in various parts of India for the past few months and latest to join them in their campaigns is Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's entry into the scene is seen as a sign of congress losing its trust on Rahul Gandhi driving them to a victory. Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi have together addressed more than 200 rallies since September, 2013.

2.6.2.8 Other Forms of Marketing

- Train and bus yatra
- Door to Door Campaigning
- Road side meetings
- Street play⁽¹⁸⁾

2.6.3 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)

One radio ad, some on-ground campaigns and aggressive social media activity was all that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) did to build its brand during the Delhi assembly elections in 2013. And it plans to use the same strategy for the upcoming Lok Sabha (LS) polls. AAP doesn't intend to hire advertising, public relations or any form of communication agency, but will use an in-house team to craft its messages, and its volunteer bank to execute its communication strategy.

**Refer Annexure 5 for Indian National Congress & Rahul Gandhi on Internet*

As it did for the Delhi polls, the theme of the AAP's campaign will depend on the issues faced by the districts it is active in. Door-to-door campaigning and digital marketing will be the main thrust of the campaign.

The party has not earmarked a formal budget for its advertising activities but according to some sources it is close to Rs. 70-80 crores that is less than one fifth of the total permissible limit of Rs.500 crores and around 50 times less than that of BJP.

2.6.3.1 Television

Owing to the high cost of placing advertisements on television and Aam Aadmi Party, which is a new party not having sufficient funds, it has not released any television advertisements and gets almost all of its television publicity through media interactions and interviews.

2.6.3.2 Print Media and Radio

Due to its low advertising budget, AAP is not using print media for its campaigns in any part of India, but it is making extensive use of Radio for its campaigning.

Three private radio stations in New Delhi — Radio Mirchi, Radio One and Radio City – cited emergence of a new political party in AAP, higher advertising costs on print and television and better audience targeting as key reasons radio is gaining traction among political advertisers.

Anshul Munjal, vice president for sales at Radio City, expects a 15 percent boost in revenue for the sector because of the elections. “On TV, creating an ad is very expensive. In that money you can run a 15-20 days campaign on radio,” he said. Such campaigns by political parties are proving to be a boon for broadcasters, helping them fight the “lull in the market” after the Diwali festival season and its accompanying advertising boom, Munjal said.

2.6.3.3 Internet

AAP has a huge online presence and Arvind Kejriwal, its leader is amongst the top 5 most popular politicians in the world. AAP has been leveraging the power of social media since its inception in a big way. It is currently active on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and also has a dedicated website, while other political parties like BJP post

on an average 3 posts on an average daily and have around 46000 people talking about them, AAP posts 5 posts on an average daily and has 552 thousand people talking about them.

AAP's facebook page is liked by more than 2 million people and its twitter account has 667 thousand followers, while Arvind Kejriwal has 1.75 million followers and his facebook page is liked by more than 5 million people, all numbers are much bigger than what Congress and Rahul Gandhi have on social media.

Modi and the BJP are not the only ones learning from Obama's campaign strategies. For two years before Obama's electoral win, his campaign organised thousands of paid staffers to fan out across battleground states to register and persuade Obama supporters and get them to vote on election day – it was called the 'ground game'.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) implemented a volunteer-driven campaign like Obama's during the Delhi state election, which was managed online. The AAP created a large support base of online volunteers who were tasked with speaking to at least 20 voters per day. This online volunteer campaign continues to be AAP's key communications methodology for its general elections campaign. AAP's fundraising techniques also resemble those of the Obama campaign, and are driven both by small-time and large contributions that are mobilised online.

"For every district, we have pages on social networking sites. Moreover, some candidates have their own pages to communicate with those active on social media. More importantly, social media has helped immensely in collecting donations and increasing membership in the state," said Akash Dutta, in charge of state AAP's IT cell. He added that social media has been the best tool to measure the sentiments of people with the election nearing. "We prefer social networking sites to booking hoardings as, through such sites, we have been able to get feedback from voters directly. This has enabled us to know what should be done and what should be avoided to garner public support. Through social networking, we have been able to clarify our stand on the false propaganda that is being spread against our party and leaders like Arvind Kejriwal," Dutta said.⁽²⁸⁾

In a nutshell, AAP has a very restricted budget to spend on various advertising activities. Owing to that, it has been putting all its efforts into social media, and due

to its farfetched presence and innovative use of the social media, it has been possible for the party to be recognised on the national front in such a short span of time.

2.6.3.4 Mobile Phone

Political parties like AAP have signed up tens of thousands of members by urging people to give them a missed call for free - party officers then get in touch and formally enrol them as supporters. There is no advertising done on mobile phones. “It is just used as tool to stay connected to common people” commented one of the senior leaders

2.6.3.5 Outdoor Advertising

Due to budget constraints AAP’s outdoor advertising is limited to putting banners across the flyovers of the city and using Auto rickshaw to drive the message across to the voters. Apart from these the party has selectively used billboards in some cities like Mumbai to attract voters.

2.6.3.6 Digital and Other Technologies

From its Mumbai office, AAPs media agency has been collecting, storing and analysing tens of thousands of political statements from over 100 online platforms daily for the past six months to allow the party to find supporters and tweak their political message.

The agency is able to track conversations at national and local level, making it a useful tool for both national and regional parties.

The anti-corruption AAP, taking part in its first general election after an impressive debut in local polls in Delhi last year, uses Pinstorm to "compare how we are faring against others", said Ankit Lal, the party's social media strategist.

2.6.3.7 Rallies

Arvind Kejriwal is touring around India and addressing crowds at various locations but he is getting a lukewarm response from almost all parts of the country. Also due to budget constraints, only small scale rallies are being organised that too only in some parts of the country.

2.6.3.8 Other Forms of Marketing

- Organised small gathering of people in different localities to understand their issues and try to make them a part of their portfolio
- Train and bus yatras, door-to-door campaigns.
- Harness street theatre
- Nukkad Charchas(Road side meetings)
- Mohallah Sabhas
- Internship Program for the youth

2.6.4 Impact on Voters

Leading up to elections, voters often rely on the media as a source of information for each candidate running for office. Since the average voter does not know each candidate personally, they will turn to newspapers, TV, radio or the Internet to get information on where the candidates stand on particular issues in order to make an informed decision. Media exposure can therefore play a direct role in how a person ultimately casts their vote.

One of the most obvious ways the use of media influences voting behavior is through the use of advertisements by political campaigns. A typical political ad will tout a candidate's experience or highlight where they stand on certain issues. In many cases, those same ads will be used to cast their opponent in a negative light. The ad might, for example, draw attention to them taking an unpopular stance on a certain social or political issue. Such political ads are designed to draw voters into supporting one candidate over another by appealing to their desire to vote for someone who aligns closely with their own political philosophy.

By their nature, opinion polls influence what choices voters make going into an election. An opinion poll can create what is called a bandwagon effect. In this situation, a poll can prompt some voters to back a candidate who is shown to have a significant lead in the poll because they believe that candidate will win the election. These voters act out of a desire to align themselves with the popular candidate. Opinion polls can also work to influence public perception of a candidate. If a poll is taken after a candidate makes a major speech or debate, poll numbers will frame the context in which voters view that speech or debate. If they are trailing, the candidate is viewed as struggling in the campaign. If they lead, they are seen as the front-runner. Media coverage of elections can go a long way toward determining which issues end up becoming most important or relevant during any given election. If several newspaper articles and TV reports choose to emphasize economic issues, for example, a candidate running for political office may tailor their message to tell voters how they will deal with economic problems once elected or re-elected. Media influence can dictate what talking points emerge during the course of an election simply by pointing out a candidate's previous record and experience in dealing with whatever hot button issues are before the public.

Unbiased reporting is a foundational element of journalistic ethics. The reality is that mass media political bias has existed almost since the invention of the printing press and has influenced plenty of elections since that time. The rise of 24-hour news channels on cable TV during the 1990s fuelled public perception that media bias plays a major role in shaping the political environment. A common criticism on these channels is many of the reporters and talk-show hosts report in a manner slanted to put the political ideology of their corporate owners in a positive light. This can include favourable reports on candidates or parties who match that ideology and attacking candidates or parties who are opposed to it. In India advertisement for political parties by media is very common. For example, in West Bengal (Indian state) communist party ruled for 35 years. But in 2011 government was replaced and media played very important role at that time.

The way a good marketing campaign can influence the voters was visible during the assembly election in Delhi held in December, 2013 where a political party(AAP) was able to form a government only because of its good marketing. Congress which was

confident of winning the elections did not do any marketing and lost at the hands of a party formed barely an year back. While AAP extensively used social media and outdoor media to connect with all sections of the society, by the time congress realised that it needed to do marketing, it was already too late. Although AAP did not have enough cash to do an extensive marketing campaign which other big parties like Congress and BJP could do, but still it was able to connect with the common voter since the party was able to understand the problems of the common people and connect with them effectively and had put in a lot of efforts in data mining and analytics and hence was able to do proper segmentation, targeting and positioning.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a quest for knowledge through diligent search or investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of new knowledge (WHO). Research is an art of scientific investigation. ⁽²⁴⁾

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. Its aim is to give the work plan of research. It is necessary for a researcher to design a methodology for the problem chosen. Even if the method considered in two problems are same, the methodology may be different. It is important for the researcher to know not only the research methods necessary for the research under taken but also the methodology.

3.1 Significance of Study

This project is a research project involving both primary as well as secondary research. The project aims to understand the various political marketing techniques employed by the political parties and their influence on the voters to vote for or against a particular party/candidate.

3.2 Scope of Study

The scope of the study was to identify the different techniques used by the political parties to market themselves, the ones which were most effective out of them and whether they were able to influence the voters decision to cast vote for or against a particular candidate/political party in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections in India.

3.3 Research Design

The research conducted here is descriptive research. Using this research, a relationship is being tried to establish between political marketing and its influence on voters i.e. a relationship between two variables.

3.4 Data Collection

Data is a collection of information. Data collection is the process of collecting data for conducting the study. Data can be collected from various sources. These sources can be primary data sources such as focus group interviews, personal interviews or questionnaires or secondary data sources such as newspapers, magazines and internet. In our research we have used both primary as well as secondary source to collect the data. Secondary data has primarily been collected from the internet and newspapers. Primary data has been collected by administering an online questionnaire to participants. This questionnaire consisted of three parts analysing the background, political awareness and influence of political marketing on the decision to cast vote for or against a particular candidate or political party.

3.5 Sample Design

The sample size here can be determined by considering the population size, margin of error, confidence level and standard deviation and comes down to 250.

The sampling area was mainly the New Delhi area and the villages and towns adjoining the New Delhi area, one village and one town in Uttar Pradesh were also surveyed.

The sampling unit was all the individuals who were Indian citizens and above the age of 18 years.

The sampling technique used in this study was convenience sampling i.e. the sampling units was selected due to their ease of availability/accessibility.

3.6 Tools of Analysis

Analysis involves working on the collected and observed data to verify if the objectives of the study are achieved or not. It is done by using various tools.

Open ended questions are Unstructured question in which (unlike in a multiple choice question) possible answers are not suggested, and the respondent answers it in his or her own words. Such questions usually begin with a how, what, when, where, and why (such as "What factors you take into account when buying a vehicle?" or "In

your opinion, what is the reasonable price for this item?") and provide qualitative instead of quantitative information. Open ended questions are asked generally during exploratory research and where statistical validity is not a prime objective.

Close ended questions provide a set of answers from which the respondent must choose. Multiple choice questions are closed ended questions ⁽²⁵⁾

A questionnaire was designed and administered online to 250 participants. The data in the study was analysed primary by depicting it using various Pie Charts and Bar charts and basic Microsoft excel functionality. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

- Section 1: To understand the background of participant.
- Section 2: To understand the level of political awareness, the participant had
- Section 3: To understand how political marketing affected his/her decision to vote in favour of or against a particular political party/candidate.

3.7 Limitations of Study

- Tools available to search the data were limited. Hence verification of data and getting accurate data was not possible in some cases.
- Since the survey was conducted online, it was not possible to physically verify the information given by the respondent.
- Respondents might be biased towards a certain political party, which could not be checked, so inconsistencies might arise in the findings of the study.
- Limited data was available through secondary sources. Hence, there is a high reliability on primary sources which might lead to errors in the results.
- Research has been undertaken with the context of one country i.e. India only.

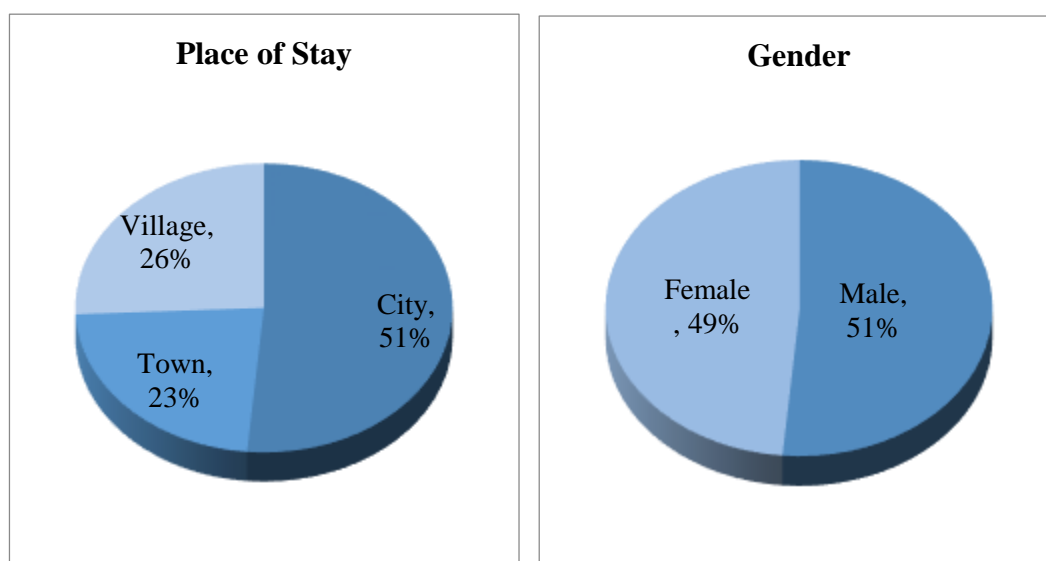
4. DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATIONS AND FINDINGS

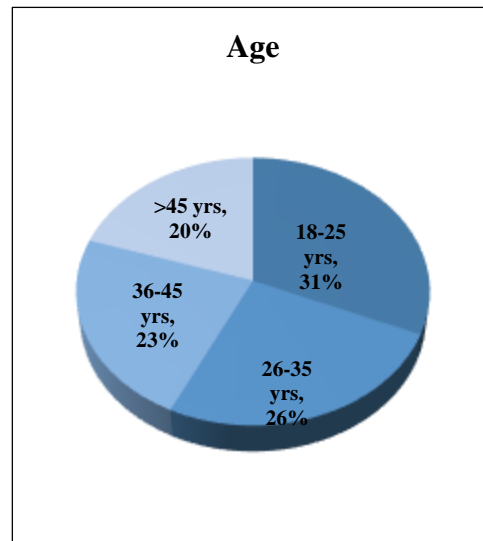
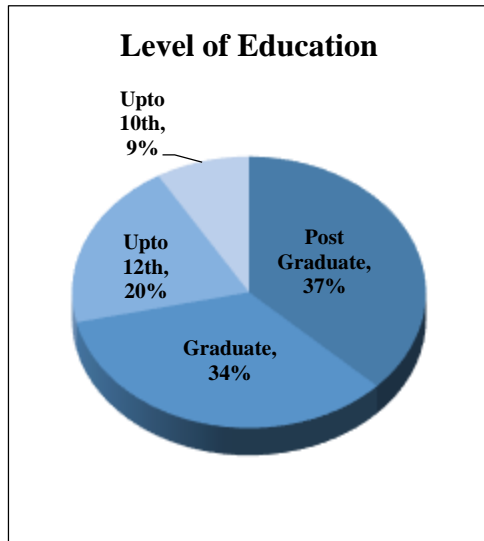
To better understand, how the political marketing influences the voters, a survey was conducted with a short questionnaire containing 11 structured and unstructured questions. All were close ended questions.

The survey was divided into three sections to understand the background of the participant, his/her awareness about politics and whether he/she is influenced by political marketing to vote for or against a particular political party/candidate.

4.1 Section 1:

This section contained four structured questions and was designed to understand the demographic background of the participants



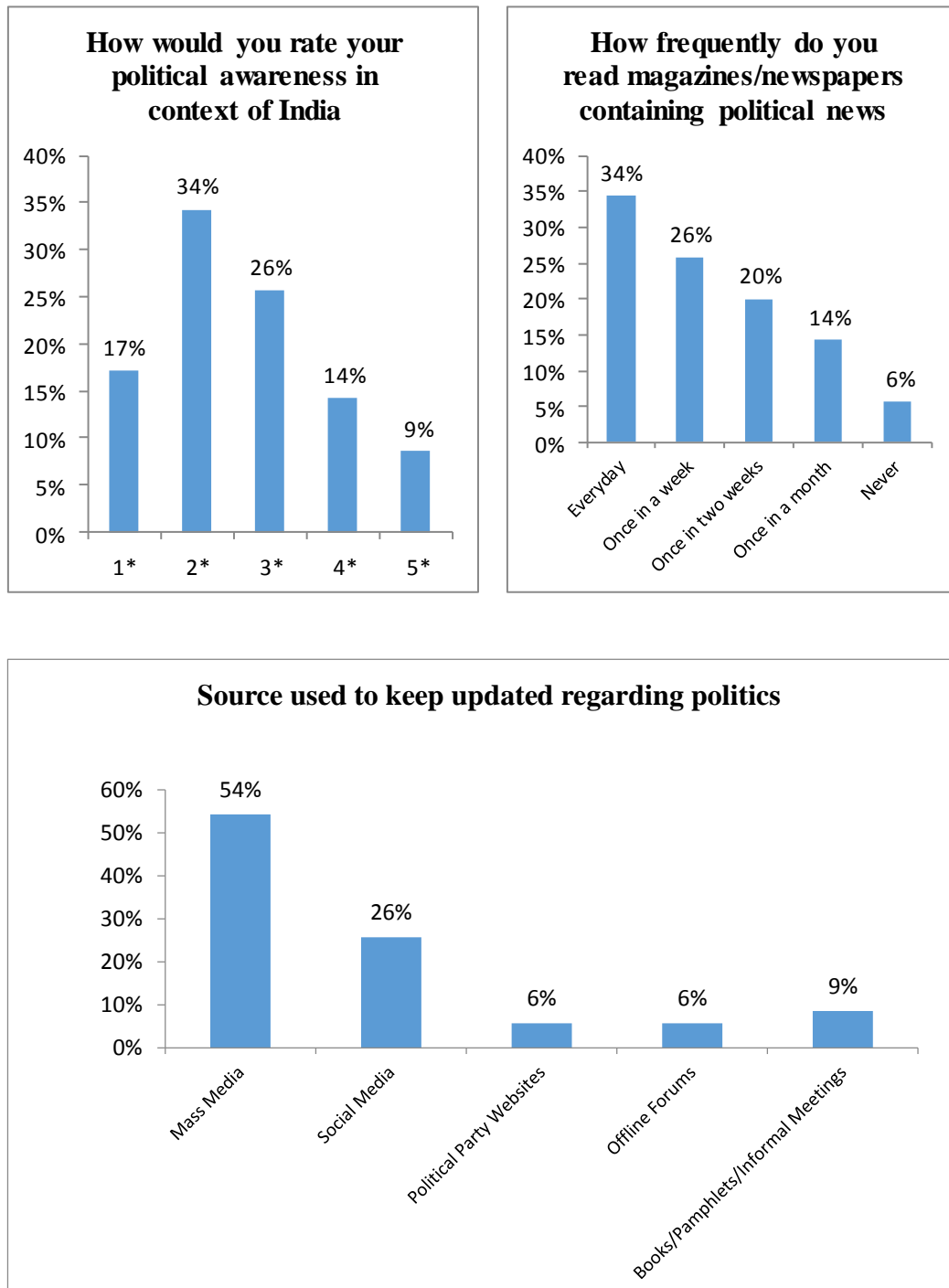


Interpretation:

- Most of the participants were staying in cities or towns where all types of media exist for communication.
- Most of the participants were well educated and were either graduates or post graduates. So it can be assumed that they cast their votes after putting a little thought process into it and don't get influenced by illegal political marketing practices.
- Most of the participants were between 18-45 years of age. Since almost 70% of India's population lies in this age group, hence it was a good sample to give us an understanding of psyche of these voters.
- There was a good balance of participation in terms of gender. The participation was almost in the ratio 1:1

4.2 Section 2:

This section contained 3 questions, all were structured questions and one was based on likert scale. This section was designed to understand the awareness level of participants and how the participants kept themselves updated regarding the latest happenings in the field of politics in India.



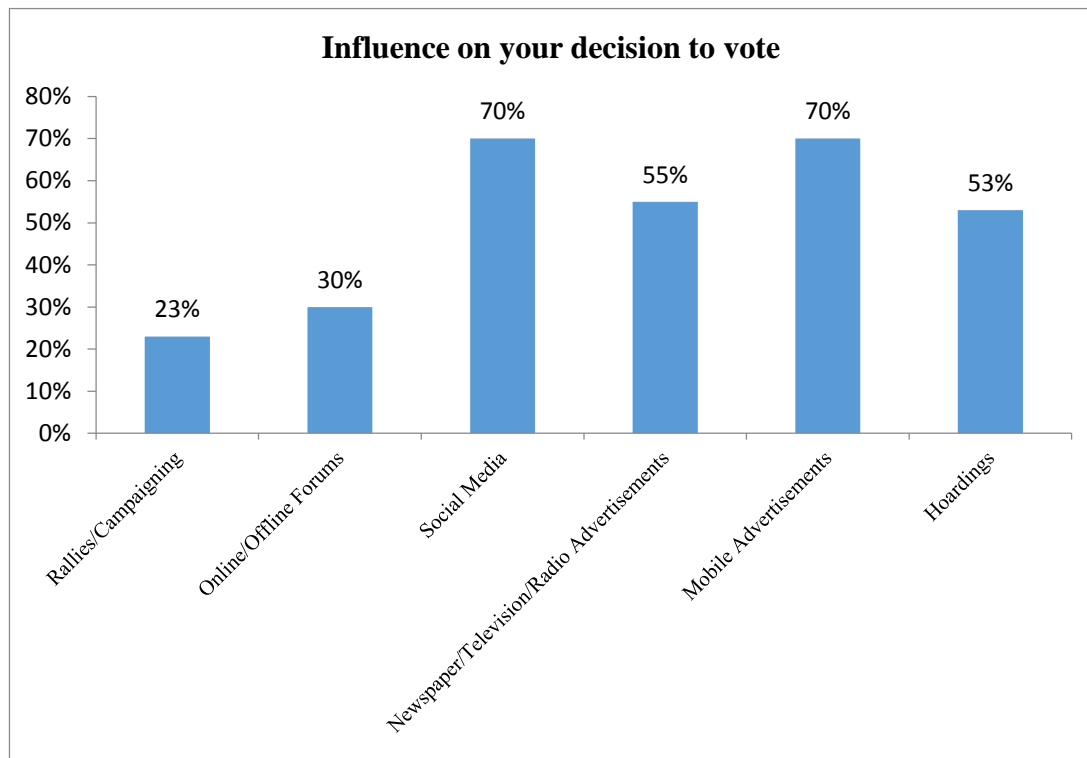
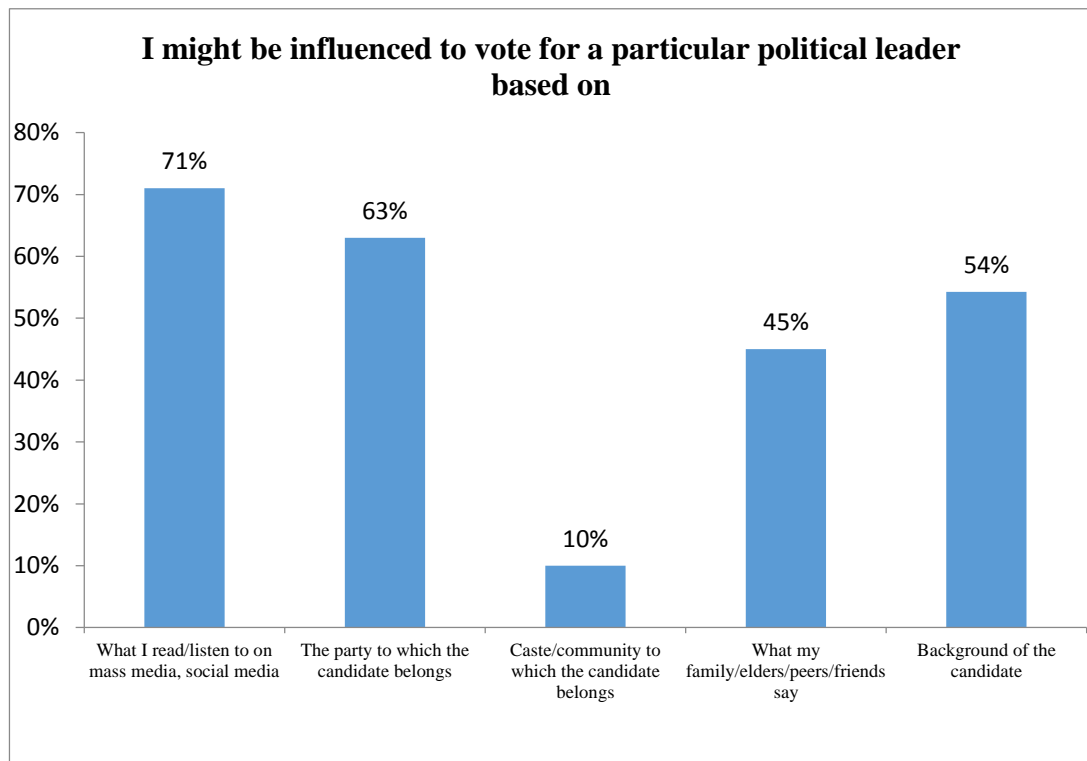
**Where 1- Extremely aware, 2- Aware ,3- Somewhat aware ,4- Not aware,5-Not at all aware*

On the basis of the analysis of the data obtained, the following results were obtained:

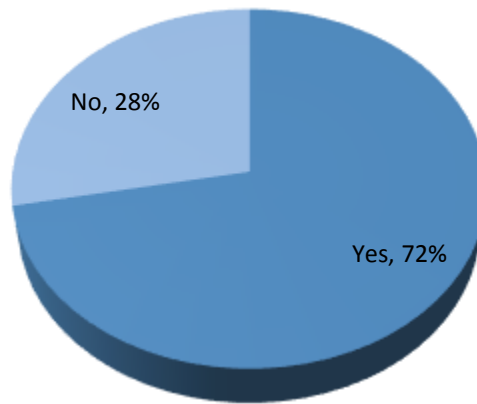
- Most of the people had good knowledge about the political scenario in India and kept themselves updated regarding the latest happenings in the field of politics in context of India.
- From this, we can interpret that most of the people in our sample would take a sound decision to vote for a particular political party after carefully considering, analysing and comparing various aspects.
- Since more than 70% of our sample is exposed to various media, which contains political advertisements and for almost 80% of the respondents, mass media and social media are the sources of political news. Hence we can easily assume that most of the people in our sample are exposed to political

4.3 Section 3:

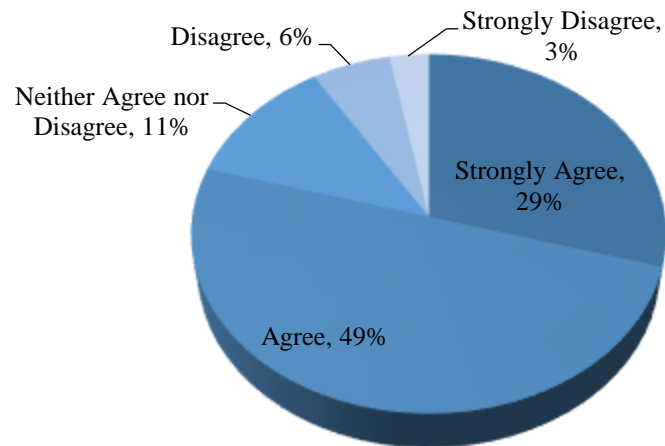
This section contained four questions, all were structured questions and three of them were based on likert scale to understand how political marketing influences the decision of the voters to vote.



Will you change your decision to vote for a particular political party, incase it has a negative image in the media?



Good marketing campaign helps a political party get an edge in elections?



On the basis of the analysis of the data obtained, the following results were obtained:

- Most of the people (>70%) were influenced by what they read/listened to on mass media/social media, also several voters were loyal to certain political parties and chose their leaders on the basis of the political parties to which they belonged. For more than 50% of the people, another important criteria was the background of the candidate.
- Most of the people were influenced by advertisements on Newspaper/Radio/Social Media/Hoardings/Mobile Phones and very less population was influenced by other forms of marketing such as rallies/campaigns and online/offline forums. Also, more than 70% people believed that a good marketing campaign helped a political party get an edge in the elections.
- Most of the people were ready to change their decision to vote for a particular political party, in case it was being projected negatively by the media.
- This leads us to interpret that most of the people are influenced by political marketing and mass media and social media have the biggest influence on an individual's voting decision.

5. CONCLUSION

Success in politics is measured by the ability of a leader to move public opinion in the direction he or she wants it to move in. This is a short term measure of success, but it is also the one barometer which everyone will look at on election day before the results come in. Moving public opinion in a desired direction is the marketing challenge to leaders in all democracies.

Marketing has played a key role in reshaping political ideology in India. Political ideology is being driven by marketing, not by party affiliation. In earlier election campaigns, ideology was based on fundamental differences in the way in which government was run. Today, the issues at the top of everyone's polls determine what leaders in both parties advocate. Election campaign themes are based on focus groups and polls. Political images are crafted with the same sophistication as leading products are. The packaging, labeling, image-building and advertising power is so great today that almost anyone can be made to look and sound politically appealing even to the most scrutinizing citizen. The application of marketing techniques and strategies to the political marketplace is a paradigm shift that will continue to change politics as we know it today.

Today's India is very different from the India we had 10 years back when political marketing was limited to rallies and mass media. Indian democracy is on the cusp of a marketing revolution led by social media users. With the advent of social media, today's politicians need to stay connected with the voter population 24x7 on a personal level through social media. At a very conservative estimate, the fortunes of contestants seeking election to the next Lok Sabha from not less than 160 constituencies will be determined by Facebook users making them the newest Vote Bank with the power to shape Indian politics.

In this information age when mobile phone subscribers and internet penetration is increasing in India at a rapid pace, political parties need to be on their toes and think of new and innovative ideas to attract voters. Voting population is now more well informed and is asking more and more questions before going out to vote, they want to see their leaders and stay connected with them, the Indian population has become more and more demanding and only a good marketing campaign which can strike a

positive chord with the general public at large can ensure victory for a political party. This was recently witnessed when a newcomer Arvind Kejriwal's party AAP defeated Congress in the Delhi assembly elections, that too by huge margins. All the credit for the victory was given to the effective marketing campaign done by the party.

With our research we have successfully proved that Political Marketing has a strong influence on a voter's decision to vote for or against a political party or a candidate and a good marketing mix enhances the chances of victory for a political party. Also during the course of the study we have observed that social media is one of the most important tool for Political marketing now. Since, it helps build a personal rapport, which may be more effective than door to door campaigning.

6. FUTURE SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

- This study can be used by political parties to design effective political marketing campaigns
- Further research can be done to understand the most effective marketing mix which can be employed by the political parties to attract the voter segment.
- Further research can be done to identify the political campaign technique that is most effective in influencing the voter segment.
- This study can be extended to include the indirect political marketing techniques employed by the political parties.
- Since India is the largest democracy, this research can be used as a base for research in other democratic developing countries

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8. ANNEXURES :

1) Social Media

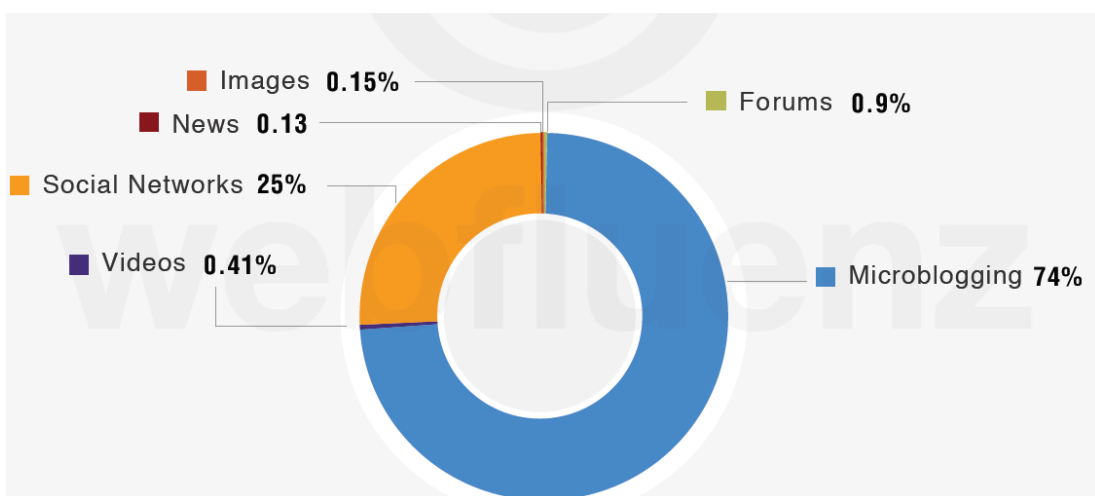
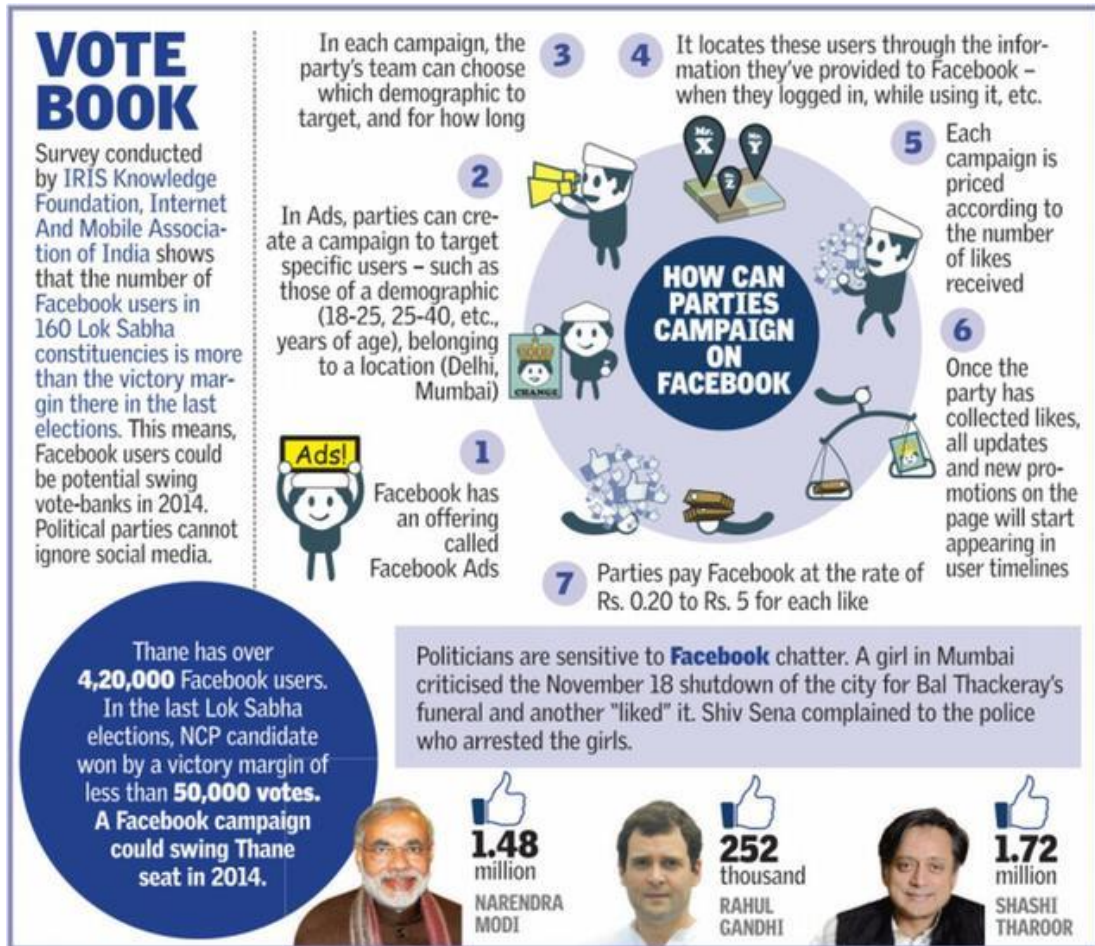
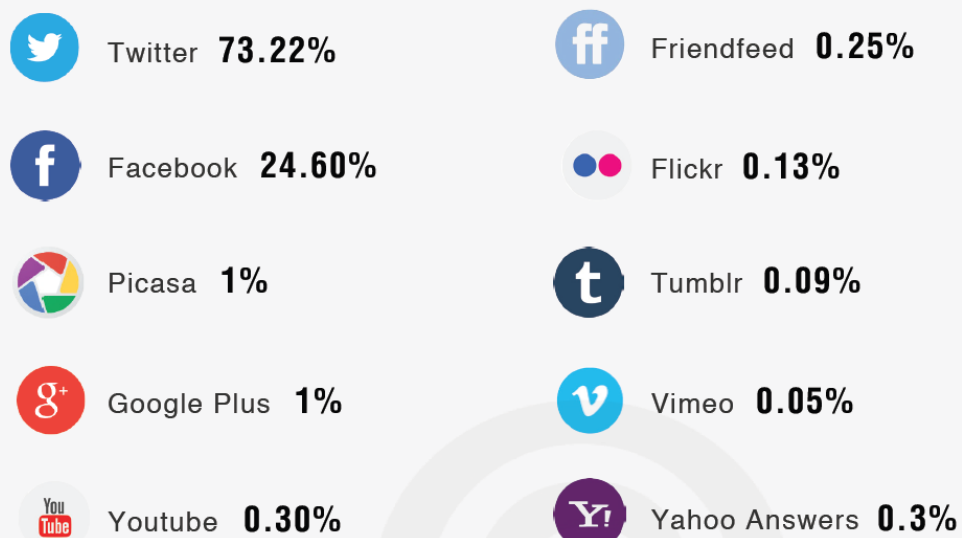


Fig 1: Social Media Gamut used by the various parties

Top Sources



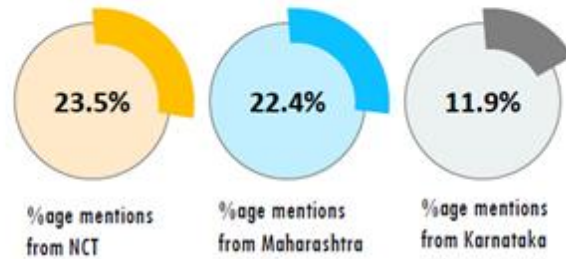
SOCIAL MEDIA SCORE OF MOST PROMINENT POLITICAL PARTIES

Following is the list of 10 most prominent national and regional parties with their performance stats on social media. Total score is arrived by considering four broad parameters. Details of the methodology is given in the appendix

Party Name	Buzz Volume	Unique People Talking	Simplify360 Social Index (SSI)
Bharatiya Janata Party	8,27,418	1,35,729	71
Indian National Congress	3,89,965	1,21,097	71
Aam Admi Party	6,40,833	1,14,868	68
Nationalist Congress Party	28,279	14,787	64
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	40,847	24,547	64
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	7,370	5,229	50
Bahujan Samaj Party	10,336	6,983	47
All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	2,894	2,038	46
Janata Dal (United)	7,123	4,983	45
Biju Janata Dal	9,339	6,121	45

Delhi continues to top the states talking about politics and elections followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Top 3 States discussing on Indian Elections



Gender wise distribution



2) BJP Advertising

What Saffron Party Borrowed from Top Advertisers?

STORY-TELLING TECHNIQUE

where initial ads pitch a big theme and are followed by shorter versions that take the story forward

ADOPTING ROADBLOCK

One 75-second BJP commercial was the only one that ran on nine Star Plus shows between 6 and 11 PM on April 14

BRAND INTEGRATION

A number of shows on Channel [V], a youth channel with edgy content, including The Buddy Project, Dil Dosti Dance, Confession and Sadaa Haq had BJP brand integration. Channel [V] also created four youth-oriented television commercials for BJP that the party played across youth channels in the country




DIGITAL FIRST In March, BJP launched a music video on Youtube, which has now been extended to traditional media


GRAPHIC ADS The party launched a series of tailor-made graphic ads around cricket during the India-Pakistan match of the T20 World Cup.

ALL FOR YOUR VOTES

Parties are gearing up for a big media campaign

₹2,000 crore
Estimated media budget

 **₹500 cr**
Congress' ad budget

 **₹500 cr**
BJP's ad budget

₹1,000 cr
Ad spent by all other parties put together

AGENCIES EYEING DEALS

Percept/H, Grey Group, Dentsu India, Madison World, Rediffusion Y&R, JWT, Crayon

UPA's FOCUS

- Development
- Bharat Nirman
- Direct cash transfer
- Rural schemes
- Food security

NDA's FOCUS

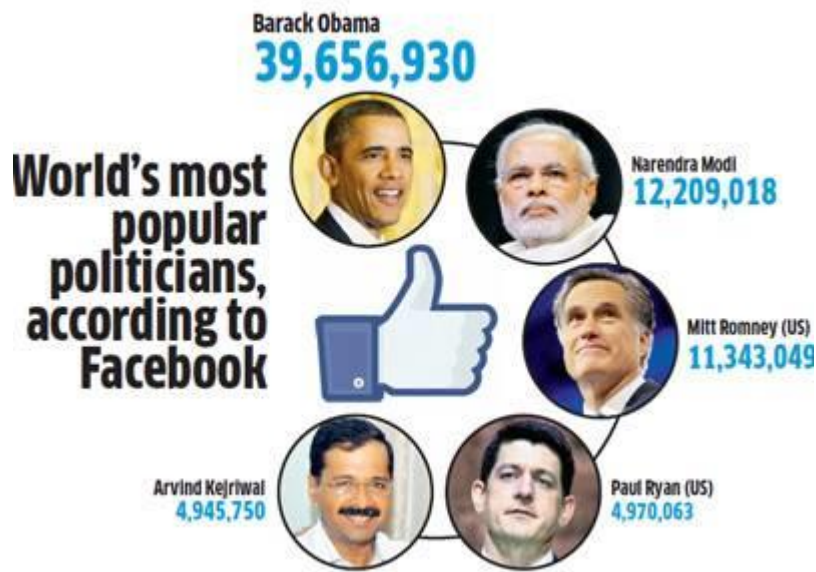
- Personality ads on Narendra Modi, LK Advani and Vajpayee
- Gujarat's success story

Agencies will pitch for regional party mandates only if they fail to win Cong, BJP campaigns

3) BJP & Narendra Modi on Internet:



4) AAP & Arvind Kejriwal on Internet



Arvind Kejriwal ✓
5,384,288 likes · 451,202 talking about this

Public Figure
This is Arvind Kejriwal's official page to talk about issues related to corruption, ineffective governance and solution to these problems in form of AAP.

About · Suggest an Edit

Photos · Likes · Events · Donate to AAP

Like · Follow · Message

5.3m Likes

Google H. ARVIND Sunday 13th April

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5) Indian National Congress & Rahul Gandhi on Internet



6) Questionnaire

Political Marketing

* Required

Age *

☐ 18-25 yrs

☐ 26-35 yrs

☐ 36-45 yrs

☐ > 45 yrs

Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

Place of Stay

☐ City

☐ Town

☐ Village

Level of Education *

☐ Below 10th class

☐ Upto 12th Class

☐ Graduate

☐ Post Graduate

How would you rate your political awareness in context of India? *

1 2 3 4 5

Extreemly Aware ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not at all aware

How frequently do you read magazines/newspapers containing political news? *

☐ Everyday

☐ Once in a week

☐ Once in two weeks

☐ Once in a month

☐ Never

Which source do you use to keep yourself updated regarding the latest happenings in politics? *

- ☐ Mass Media(TV/Newspaper/Radio)
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Political Party Websites
- ☐ Offline Forums
- ☐ Books/Pamphlets/Informal Meetings

For each question below, check the box that most represents your level of agreement *

I might be influenced to vote for a particular Political Leader:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Based on what I read/listen to on Mass Media, Social Media about the candidate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on the party to which the candidate belongs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on caste/community to which the candidate belongs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on what my family/elders/friends /peers say	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on background of the candidate (education,criminal,etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Level of Influence of the following on your decision to vote for a particular politician/political party: *

	Extremely Influential	Very Influential	Somewhat Influential	Slightly Influential	Not at all influential
Rallies/Campaigning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online/Offline Forums	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Television Advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media Advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newspaper Advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio Advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mobile Advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Political Party Websites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoardings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you agree that a good marketing campaign helps a political party get an edge in the elections? *

- ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ Agree
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly Disagree

Will you change your decision to vote for a particular political party, incase it has a negative image in the media? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

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