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Article:	Branding Politics in Pakistan: An analysis from the perspective of Political Marketing
Author(s):	Saima Kausar Ph.D Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan.
	Saqib Riaz Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad. Pakistan.
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Author(s) Note:	Saima Kausar is serving as Ph.D Scholar at Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: saima.kausar@uos.edu.pk
	Saqib Riaz is serving as Chairman at Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad. Pakistan.

ABSTRACT

Abstract

The politics in Pakistan is varying from conventional to political marketing. The political parties are strategizing political campaigns similar to brands. This article reviews the politics in Pakistan from the perspective of political marketing literature. For this purpose, an extensive review of politics from the view of political marketing in Pakistan is carried out. The literature is selected for study with the keyword "political marketing in Pakistan" in google scholar through the set the search category year 2012 to 2021. All the articles that appear in the search related to the politics of Pakistan are part of this study. The brand equity pyramid of Keller (2001) is the conceptual frame work for this study. The findings of the study reveal that Pakistani politics is evolving and turning into more scientific parameters of political marketing. Political parties are emphasizing the political identity, meaning, responses and relationships. Political parties are significantly employing the strategies of political marketing which are resonance, party image and party performance and it connects with voters through strong communication strategies. Consistent awareness about party manifestoes, confronting opponents through propaganda techniques and symbolic connection through slogans, party anthem, and association of voters with their social and economic issues and charisma of party leader are the core components of political marketing that political parties comprise in their political marketing strategies.

Key words: Political marketing, branding politics, brand equity pyramid, voters, Pakistan

Introduction

Pakistan is the world's sixth most populous country with a population exceeding 207.8 million where thousands of political candidates contest the elections and billions of rupees are spent by political parties during elections (CIA, 2020; Yousaf, 2016). Electoral process in developing countries is followed the technological dynamics that were invented and established in industrialized democracies. Prospects of political candidates among political parties vary and political parties engage experts in various fields (i.e. social media strategists, sociologists, political strategists and ranked public relations and advertising agencies) that consolidate multiple factors, develop manifestoes of political parties and engage experts to launch forceful political campaigns. Subohi(2018) asserts that the elections of 2018 in Pakistan cost an estimated financials. Rs. 440 billion was spent by different parties and this cost is 10 percent higher than the total cost of the 2013 elections. In the past, PPP (Pakistan People's Party) was the winning party four times in different elections over the years and similarly PML(Pakistan Muslim League)-N also got an opportunity to rule the country three times at different elections over the years. But in the 2018 Election the situation was entirely different and PTI (Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf), for the first time emerged as the ruling party of the country. The researchers intend to investigate that how these three political parties presented themselves during election of 2018 and which marketing strategies, techniques are adopted by them by exploring the exiting body of literature. Designing political advertisements is turning to be more market oriented and the area of political communication now needs to be explored from a marketing perspective. Various studies (Shahid et al., 2021; Jain, 2020; Masiha et al., 2018; Ahmed et al., 2017) have been conducted in different countries to explore political marketing through advertisements but in Pakistan the changing trends of political communication in marketing perspective need to be explored. Television, radio, print media, digital media and outdoor media helped political parties to expand their reach to all strata of society. The need is to explore the marketing strategies, techniques, tools and tactics which are used in political advertisements, speeches and interviews by political leaders. There was a time when marketing techniques and tricks were confined to the field of business but now many studies on different countries have revealed that marketing techniques are used by political parties for promotional purposes. A country like Pakistan, where people are significantly relying on media for keeping themselves updated with the day-to-day political happenings. Such studies need to be conducted to explore changing trends in the field of political advertisements and to fill the existing gap in Pakistan. This study is exploratory which reviews the existing body of literature on how political parties brand themselves using the political marketing techniques in Pakistan and how they can frame these strategies in the advertisements to make the political party a brand and political candidate as a product of political party.

Retrospective of politics in Pakistan

Since Pakistan came into existence in 1947, It has had opted asymmetric federal governance system and a federally parliamentary democratic republic. There are two electoral houses, one lower house called National assembly where people of Pakistan directly elect their

representatives whereas the second is upper house called Senate where the members of provincial legislators elect their members. The Prime Minister, head of government is elected by the national assembly whereas the President is elected by the Electoral College where the above said both houses along with four provincial assemblies' members. The elections in Pakistan are executed by the Election Commission of Pakistan that is a constitutionally formed body chaired by the Chief Election Commissioner that supervises all electoral process in Pakistan. The process of election is defined in the constitution of Pakistan (Chapter 2, Part VIII with various amendments) (Constitution of Pakistan, 2015). A multiparty system is enforced where the National assembly is consisting of 342 seats and Senate has 100 seats from all four provincial assemblies. The constitution of Pakistan directs the general elections to be arranged after every five years whereas the term of the Senate is six years after the completion of its terms. Within two months of term completion, the general elections are essentially to be held by law. The story of elections in Pakistan is varying from interruption to continuity. In the first decade of Pakistan's life between 1947 to 1958, there were no straight elections countrywide. There was discontinuity in provincial elections. There were questions about West Pakistan's provincial elections (Khan et. al., 2020). The direct elections were held in 1951 for the provincial assembly of Punjab and seven political parties contested the legislative provincial assembly the turnout was very low. However, the same year in December 1951, the elections were held in NWFP and after two years elections were held for the provincial assembly of Sindh. Both elections were blemished for rigging by those who lose the contest. The general election for the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly in April 1954, West Pakistan's largest political party was defeated by the Bengali nationalist United Alliance (Kabir, 1987). After East Pakistan separated from West Pakistan, democracy was restored in the country. The 1977's elections were turned violent and martial law extended. In 1988, the PPP came into power but was dismissed because of law and order situation in the country. In the election of 1990, the right-wing alliance made government but collapse only in three years. The general elections in 1993 gained came into power with significant seats in the parliament. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto took several decisions but she lost the support in Sindh and her government was dismissed in 1996. In the year 1997, the elections were won by Pakistan Muslim League (N) with the significant majority and he made government. His government was removed by General Pervaiz Mushraf in 1999. Under the direction of Supreme Court of Pakistan, the general elections were held in 2002, Zafarullah Khan Jamali became the PM of Pakistan and he left office for Shaukat Aziz in the year 2004. After 9/11 General Mushraf loose his support in the country because of unconditional support in Afghan war and an unsuccessful attempt to windup of judicial system in Pakistan. In the elections of 2008, PPP won and made government after the assassination Benazir Bhutto. In the consistency of democratic process, in the elections of 2013, Pakistan Muslim League made government. Nawaz Sharif was removed from office on charges of offshore companies one year before his tenure and Shahid Khakan Abbasi complete the term of PML (N). In the elections of 2018, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf won the majority and formed government. See Table 1 for the history of general election in Pakistan. Pakistani politics is consisting on multiparty system where there is significant number of parties are right-wing and left-wing parties. There are several ethnic,

religious and sectarian parties. Political parties develop their manifestoes for election, finding winning candidate and marketing their candidates. In the wake of the various media platforms, political parties now using extensive political marketing strategies for winning elections. The significance of candidates is increase since candidate's stature, image, and background, his past performance for the region or country and other factors that are affecting political marketing.

Table 1.1 History of general elections in Pakistan from 1954 to 2018

Election	Year	Party Won	Type of Election
1 st	1954	Pakistan Muslim League	Indirect elections
2 nd	1962	-	Non-Party based elections
3 rd	1970	Awami League	
4 th	1977	Pakistan People's Party	
5 th	1985	Pakistan Muslim League	Non-party based elections
6 th	1988	Pakistan People's Party	
7 th	1990	Islami Jamiat Ittehad	
8 th	1993	Pakistan People's Party	
9 th	1997	Pakistan Muslim League (N)	
10 th	2002	Pakistan Muslim League (Q)	
11 th	2008	Pakistan People's Party	
12 th	2013	Pakistan Muslim League (N)	
13 th	2018	Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf	

Election Manifesto in political marketing

In the democracy of recent times, the political decision resides with informed choices with possible alternatives. The political parties unite their political agenda of the past on the bases of their performance and future goals. However, in modern democracy, people's desires are an instrument of political drives in the election manifestoes (Carlin & Love, 2018). The election manifestoes are valuable consideration of political parties for the party position, the significant question arises is either electorates actually exploit the policies as basics for their voters' choices of political candidates or they continuously peruse their policies in the future (Poguntke, Scarrow,

& Webb, 2017). Before initiating the political campaigns in elections, all significant political parties announce their party manifestoes and they extensively publicize them. The election manifestoes are usually in line with party manifestoes and describe the party position on various social, political, economic and legal issues. The modern democracy shifts itself from earlier democracies because of changes in the multiple means of communication. Jayo(2020) argues that the changing in communication technology are assisting political parties and political candidates to find ways that how to disseminate their political position on certain issue and these issues are varied from policy preferences to party position. In recent years, social media and multiple communication applications in ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) are major sources of dissemination of election manifestoes announced by political parties. The political parties bring issues in the election manifestoes that can attract significant masses and develop a hope of prosperity to potential voters. Conventional media framing election manifestoes according to their editorial policy and polarization with specific political party whereas social media particularly twitter and political advertisement give time and space to political parties and political leaders that can disseminate their election manifestoes to their potential voters. Ishaq (2020) maintains that election manifestoes are having multiple dimensions in Pakistan that vary from creating mass awareness, internalizing of manifesto by masses and political participation and above all the democratic consistency that result prosperity in a the country. Election manifestoes are providing reasoning to voter to participate in the voting process and review an election manifesto presented in earlier by the same political party in elections, and how much that particular political party acted upon on the manifesto. Election manifestoes are also reflected competition among multiple political parties' leaders, their political rifts and how they can resolve social and economic issues.

Political campaigns through social and conventional media

The significance of political campaign is increased when conventional media is highly polarized and social media is cluttered with maligning the various political parties contesting each other. Vargo and Hopp (2020) study political campaign in the context of social media and observed Facebook and Instagram political advertisements positioned by Russian Internet research organization and scrutinize rhetoric used in political advertisements on social media. The study indicate political advertisements use alleged provocation of anger and fear, maligning through language, verbal inciting, and impropriety regarding political candidates and threatening language corresponding with creation of stimulus emotional response. Vargo and Hopp argue that social media political advertisements are acceptable to political candidates because they are budgeted with click-through rates. Contrary to the use of social media political advertisements Aral and Eckles (2019) questioned the influencing of social media on the democratic process and electioneering, they argue that Facebook Chief Mark Zuckerberg stressed the U.S. government to regulate the election social media manipulation because it cannot accomplish to measure. Aral and Eckles argue that without consolidated agenda on election research, the democracies world over will remain under attack from foreign and local elements. The social media effects are measurable

by academic and market research and it is significant to launch research that can gauge the social media election campaigns. Kaur and Sohal (2019) assert that political advertising is associated with political party brand personality and other related concepts as part of the literature on political marketing and find relationship among the variables of advertising brand personality with voters' satisfaction and party loyalty. Political advertisements is having significance in the regions where there is diverse fragmentation of voters.

Propaganda techniques and their use in political marketing

Propaganda is a common practiced since the Roman and German Nazi regimes but this term was extensively coined during the era of in Nazis before and after 2nd world war. Propaganda is frequently synchronized with politics and political advertisements comprising fragments of maligning political opponents, labeling their policies with debauched practices and on an extreme aligning candidate as treacherous. The notion of propaganda is controversial and specifically when it implies election, politics and media. Pattnaik and Shukla (2020) argue that propaganda is multilayer system and comprises on personal agenda that have potential to influence public opinion. However, satellite channels and modern social media environment present the distorted picture of reality to the masses on global and national issues, politics and environment. In the age of highly polarized media environment globally, the significance of the advertisements increased in the election. In the limited time, the political candidates intend to peruse the large voters and propaganda techniques in political advertisements are extensively engaged. Propaganda style promotion through advertisements are lacking the truth and has high concentration by the political candidates. The issues signified by the candidates in election campaigns are kept by the mainstream and social media and it becomes the election debate. However, propaganda techniques used in advertisements are psychological warfare among political candidates to frighten masses for the manipulation of their opinion. Marmor-Lavie and Weimann (2006) argue that emotional appeals in political advertisements are commonly practiced since earlier times; expectation, fear, pride, wrath and anxiety are commonly practiced in political campaigns.

Branding through Symbols

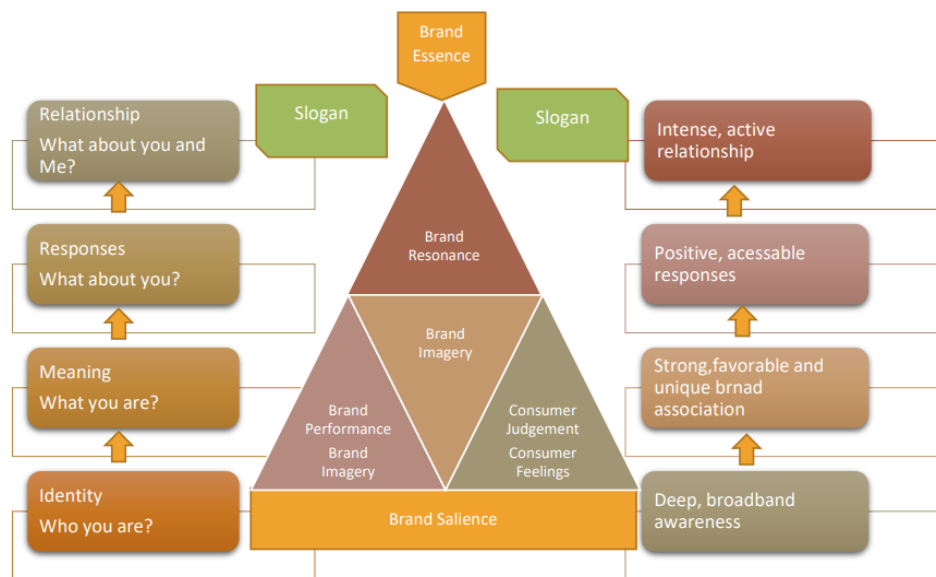
A brand is defined as “a sign, symbol, logo, or design, or combination of them, the purpose is to differentiate goods and services from those of competitors” (Kotler 2009: 442). The purpose of political branding is to highlight its product's salience. A politician's image consists of the characteristics which are being attached to his personality through which people will develop a perception about him. It is done by highlighting his particular personality features and by focusing and highlighting his position or stance on the country's economic and social issues. Brand image is not solely developed by labeling a product with a good name rather it has to be presented in such a way as it may remain in consumer's mind in the form of a perception of a product (Hapsari, 2007). Newman (1999;88) also states, that one of the most influencing marketing tools a politician can use to formulate public opinion is his or her image. Craig(2004) argues that “The personal image of political leaders is a focus of contemporary political communication, but the looks, style

and character of politicians is only the most prominent product of a process in which a broad range of personal deploy their sophisticated skills to produce political texts and images, control the flow of information within and across the organization, and manage relations with the mass media and the public” (p.130). Lalancette and Raynauld (2019) argued that political image is developed with visual impressions, candidate's physical presentation, his/her personality traits, previous record and reputation, attack on rivals, knock ups, etc because this information is gathered in the minds of people which eventually create a strong impact. Political branding is how a political party or individual is perceived overall by the public. Political brand is about the feeling, impression or image the public has towards a politician or the political party. Political branding helps parties to create a good reputation and then maintaining their unique identity in people's minds. In this way, political consumers understand particular party in a better way and they may distinguish it from others very clearly. Winther Nielsen (2017) defining that political brand is demonstration which reflected in a form (symbols, images and associated meaning) that is recognized and distinguished from varied political representations. Dalton (2013) argues that one of the most powerful marketing tools a politician can use to drive public opinion is his or her image. Related to the political image Craig (2004) asserts that “The personal image of political leaders is a focus of contemporary political communication, but the looks, style and character of politicians is only the most prominent product of a process in which a broad range of personal deploy their sophisticated skills to produce political texts and images, control the flow of information within and across organization, and manage relations with the mass media and the public”. Political image is created through visual impressions, candidate's physical presentation, his/her personality traits, previous record and reputation, attack on rivals, knock ups, etc. as all this information is integrated in the minds of citizens which eventually create a strong impact (Fasslabend, 2015; Sanghvi and Hodges, 2015).

Branding of politics and political party

Brand is compound construct that is comprising on unique selling features that are matched with the consumer needs and psychology, it gratifies the emotional needs of consumers. Brand is featured in varied aspects on the basis of its name, presentation, packaging, product claim, and symbol from its competitors. The significant aspect of the brand is, it is distinctive and if well recognized then acknowledged by the consumers. The positioning in the market varied on certain factors that are based on recognition, conceptualization and using exceptional communication strategies to make sure brand in the market (Quach et al., 2020). It is significant to thoroughly internalize the brand knowledge and theories the understanding of the concept of political marketing. When branding politics, the cognitive process of voters work alike the brand recognition process on the encounter to the political campaign, voter associate the content of the campaign with the preoccupied beliefs about the political party and contesting candidate. Similarly in political marketing, we conceptually required appropriate model that better define the brand and political party analogy. The brand equity pyramid best fit the situation where brand is equivalent to the political party and the main objective is to win the consent of consumer (voter)Figure 1.

Keller (2001) recommends four step process model for establishing a significant brand where every step is associated on the previous one for the success of the brand. The brand salience is the foundation step that develops the identity of the brand (See Fig. 1). Strong advertising strategy creates deep and broadband awareness that mediate the brand (political party) recognition among consumers (voters). The strength of the brand (political party) is its salience influences that create the reputation in the form of image and give meanings. The communication strategies used for the awareness, develop the association of the brand and gives recognition to the brand (political party). This association creates the drive for decision-making by the consumer (voter). The strategies of advertising have key role in all brand activity. However, the cognitive connection of the consumer (voter) is very essential with the brand (political party) that comes through the retention of the brand. The political parties in Pakistan reveal their identities as right and left wing political parties. However, the self-identification of the political candidate is developed by himself. The goal of winning the contest, attained strategic way. The first aspect is to develop the party manifesto that



indicates the extended

Figure 1. Brand Equity pyramid, modified from Keller (2001).

program of the political party. The inclination of the party revealed through its program what type of state role she looks for. If the political party insists more socio-economic role then it is left wing political party. However, Individualistic initiatives, concessions on tax and the significance of the national values indicate that party is on the right wing of the political stage. Several elements collectively contribute to the success of the brand (political party). The selection of the name of political party is very important. In Pakistan, the name of political party indicates the values it reflects. The political parties Pakistan Muslim League(s), Pakistan People's Party and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf are the main stream political parties of Pakistan. The second aspect is the meaning of the brand (political party). The retention of the brand (perception about political party) developing significant, favorable and exclusive association of the voter (consumer). The image of

the political party is another aspect that plays significant role in the voters' mind. However, brand's resonance relates with the voter's intense, active and strong relationship that reflects the bond between voter and political party.

Methodology

This is review article on political marketing from the perspective of branding of politics in Pakistan. The literature is selected with key word "political marketing in Pakistan" in google scholar and set the search category from 2012 to 2021. The articles and books appeared with the relevance of Pakistan are part of this study. Brand equity pyramid of Keller (2001) is the conceptual model of this study. The discourse is carried out from the view of manifestoes, propaganda against opponents, political party name, anthem, party insignia, party image, association of voters and retention referring the above literature.

Discussion

The literature on political marketing in Pakistan is evolving. This field of study is relevantly new in Pakistan that explores the political parties, their advertising strategies, political name, the attack on rivals, manifestoes, the use of conventional and digital media, slogans, how they portray themselves among voters and the values that these political parties communicate to the voters. The political party manifestoes are significant in the political marketing literature. Shah, Younis&Kausar(2017) argue that political parties in Pakistan extensively disseminate their political manifestoes and the issue highlighted in their manifestoes are reported by the national and international media. Aziz and Abdullah (2012) assert that other than the economic, political, social, administrative issues the notion of women's representation in the sphere of governance is also considerable phenome among the mainstream political parties' manifestoes. Keller (2001) emphasizes that party manifesto is the first step toward political branding where significant issues are carried out by political parties. The voters (consumers) compare which political party consider their issues in political party manifesto. Towner &Dulio (2012) noted that technology of the media is the key factor that contributes significantly in the election campaigns. Before the invention of digital media, the election campaign planners carefully plan the conventional media to make sure maximum reach. However, the use of Youtube, Facebook and Twitter is recent phenomena among political parties and it gives competitive advantage to the contesting political party which intelligently bring into their election campaigns. Ahmad et al., (2019) find that use of social media ensure online political awareness and offline political participation in the political process in Pakistan. Brand (political) awareness in the Keller (2001) brand equity pyramid is one of the significant part. The association and recognition of the political party are developed the consistent awareness. Usman et al., (2020) argue that propaganda against political rivals also plays important role in declining of the voters' support against the rivals. Ashraf et al., (2016) noted that ruling political elite use the power of propaganda to demonize their adversaries in Pakistani politics. The positioning of political party significantly influenced when the leaders of opponent political party will be demonized on the charges of "corruption" or "traitor". This could change the position of

political party in the political market (Quach et al., 2020). However, the brand image (party image) is also mutilated through the propaganda campaigns against adversaries in politics. In the literature on political marketing, the significant aspect is developing the brand image (image of political party). It refers that what are the feelings of voters that connects with the political parties. Brand feelings and association are another bulges that reflect in the voters' memory. Brand association develops through consistent communication with the consumer (voter). The success of political program is relying on the promising association about the brand. Keller (2001) argues that this step is very crucial in the developing of favorable, understandable identity and meaning of political party. The voters' response to the political marketing program of the political party is essential in the form of slogans and other communications means and voters' analyses or feel about his/her potential connection with brand. The above stated brand equity pyramid reveal continues connection of voter and political party that later turn into if satisfies than brand loyalty. In the Keller pyramid, the resonance of the political party considered the depth or intensity of relationship that creates psychological bond that voters have with the political party and it reveals the potential engagement with the voter that reflects the voting for the same political candidate in successive elections. Potentially strong political parties have the emotional and unique selling propositions (voters' needs revelation in party manifestoes) and "brand equity" (loyalty) that turn from salience to resonance. The literature on political marketing reveal that more elements of brand a political have, the more potentially, it is competitive in their political environment.

Conclusion

In the history of the politics of Pakistan, political parties inherent political legacy and connection with voters. There are two mainstream political parties, Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan People's Party they won significant consent of the voters in the earlier elections. Past two elections in Pakistan contested on the scientific ground of political marketing where Pakistan Muslim League (N) and Trek e Insaf successfully won and formed the governments. In the literature on political marketing, the name of the political party is very significant. The identity of the political party is deeply rooted and retention of the brand identity created through consistent awareness. Meaning of the brand is the association that voter keeps in his mind about the past promises and the claims in the form of party manifesto. Pakistan is among the countries that socially and economically facing several issues, voters feel how much political party is capable of adhering their issues in future performance. However, political marketing is not only communication strategy but it strongly advocates political performance when political party is in power and out of power. The connection between voter and political party is developed based on political performance and image of party that associate with voters' judgment and feeling about the party. The 2018 election results are evident that voters comparatively sought to give chance of the governance to relatively a new political party Pakistan Threk e Insaf. Party manifesto declare the party position and reason of inform choice by the voters. In political branding, the manifesto is significant and in the past two elections political parties significantly disseminate their manifestoes. Propaganda techniques are commonly used as an aggressive strategy to make party

positions better among their voters and trembling the others. The two analogies are commonly used by the political parties "corruption" and "traitor". However, it is common in political marketing in Pakistan to malign political opponents. The symbolic elements of political marketing are very significant in which the charisma of party leader, his communication, the anthem and how political parties exert themselves as the economic, social and national saviors.

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