Chapter 8

Understanding Indian Political Parties Through the Lens of Marketing Management: Towards a Conceptual Political Marketing Model

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ABSTRACT

This chapter identifies and develops an understanding of various nuances and the synchrony between the concepts of marketing management and usage by political parties while electioneering. The chapter also evaluates various political marketing models and has developed a comprehensive model to better understand its applicability in an Indian context. It is based on substantial literature review to develop a holistic understanding of Political Marketing and Models of Political Marketing. A Case study of the Bharatiya Janata Party is used to evaluate the proposed model. This chapter adds insight from the Indian viewpoint on existing literature concerning political marketing models.

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INTRODUCTION

In theory as well in practice, political parties have adopted various realms of management. Logistics management techniques while campaigning for elections to the use of big data analysis for voter influence are evidence of the presence of management techniques in the political sphere. However, the extent of the usage of marketing management techniques by political parties seems to be insufficient in existing literature.

Our survey of literature helped us develop a conceptual clarity on the subject matter of Political Marketing. Progressively it became evident that sizable research has been conducted in developed countries in the European as well as America. However, similar research is limited in the context of Asian Countries and, therefore, no such attempt has been done to better understand the situation in India.

This chapter makes an attempt at understanding how political parties in India have used aspects of marketing management in the full cycle of campaign design, delivery and closing the loop with feedback from the electorate. The authors, through analysis of available literature, have made an effort at developing a 4 stage conceptual model for political marketing. The 4 stages of the comprehensive model include: conception, research & analysis, planning the marketing campaign and finally the implementation & follow-up stage.

In this article, the authors have also attempted at making an evaluation of the model through a case study of one of the largest political parties in India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) through an analysis of the marketing management techniques adopted by it during the 2014 as well as 2019 General Elections.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Political Marketing plays a pivotal role in the strategies implemented by the political parties. It provides a complete skeleton for the political party when they approach the electorate. Political marketing would facilitate the political parties in understanding the electorate, creating effective communication channel during the few months prior to the elections and engage with the voters in a better way and finally implementing/delivering the designed campaign to the electorate. Political marketing also helps the candidates and the political parties to create campaigns and implement them according to the current trend in the election market. It also facilitates the parties and candidates to utilize the new technologies present in the marketing field and
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