

The Role of Public Relations in Promoting Election Campaigns

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Abstract

The research is addressed specifically to all members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, as they constitute the legislative authority in Iraq represented by the Iraqi Council of Representatives, which legislates laws and monitors their implementation. Marketing election campaigns to influence voters get their votes and win a seat in the Iraqi parliament. This study is a descriptive study, so the researcher relied on the survey method.

Keywords: elections; public relations; social treatment; democracies

Introduction

In light of modern democracies that require directing politicians to take decisions that are compatible with all the masses, which led to an increase in interest in public opinion, which is one of the important tools in democracy, and as a result of the development of mass communication means, the need to disseminate ideas and principles that need various means and methods to control them, as well as To specialists in the field of political marketing to achieve the desired policy that aims to name its political symbols based on electoral campaigns by using the elements of political marketing in order to achieve the desired goal

The first topic / Methodological Framework in Research

First: Research problem

In light of the voter's interaction with the political and social environment to which he belongs within the democratic work in Iraq, political marketing campaigns provide an opportunity for competing candidates to present their electoral programs to win the votes of voters and urge them to political participation. Regarding political pluralism and democracy, the research problem stems from the following main question:

What are the mechanisms of employing political promotion, advertising, and public relations in political marketing campaigns for members of the Iraqi NUBA Council for the year 2018?

Second: Research Goals

The importance of this research is evident by identifying the methods of political promotion and public relations for the members of the Iraqi (Nuba) Council for the year 2018.

Third: Research Significant

The importance of this research comes in providing logical scientific justifications that add something new to the cognitive and applied aspect, as well as the importance of the subject of political marketing itself, as it plays a major role in achieving exchange and benefit between the

political institution and its audience (the electorate), and it also contributes to bridging the gap between the two parties (The party and its audience) and transforming it into a continuous and effective communication, thus representing the pivotal activity in achieving the real exchange of the two parties and consolidating the relations between them on an ongoing basis.

Fourth: Research Type and Method

This research belongs to the descriptive research that describes the phenomenon in its current state, as it highlights the importance of descriptive studies in media research as it has the ability to be used to study some phenomena and problems related to the human being and his attitudes, opinions and points of view. In light of this, the researcher followed the steps of the survey method and its methods, both descriptive and analytical, which depend on analyzing data related to political marketing campaigns through a careful monitoring and follow-up process of the phenomenon. Deep interpretation of it (Al-Debei et al., 2021; Al-masaeed et al., 2021).

The second topic: the theoretical framework for research

The impact of political promotion on public opinion

Identifying and addressing issues has an impact on voters' awareness of these issues, by providing information to voters about the electoral process and the political environment. There are various factors that affect public opinion, including political factors, cultural factors, and social factors, as well as the role of leaders in shaping opinion trends. General. The media also has an impact on the perception of voters through promotional messages that are transmitted through its various means, as communication and political promotion through these means is one of the most important media that carry out the task of transmitting information to and from the political system, as well as to public opinion. (IlahBelkeziz, pp. 32-33)(Al-Shammari, 2021).

The influence of promotional means in public opinion may vary and varies according to the nature of the media and their relationship to the political system. In totalitarian regimes, these media are subject to state control and operate under its control. Based on its political philosophy, which sees that all of his money has to do with the means of influence in society must be in the hands of the government and under its control. And the relationship of the media to politics is related to the relationship of the development of these media to the formation of public opinion. And to what extent it contributes to creating a space for discussion of ideas and opinions by everyone. (The influence of the media on public opinion and foreign policy,2018)

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that promotional means are important in influencing public opinion, which led to officials using them to influence political decision-making. Parties differ in choosing their promotional tools and in designing their promotional mix,

According to the nature of each tool and its compatibility with the desired goals. Thus, various personalities and political currents can rely on the following tools

1- Political advertising

Political advertising is one of the most influential types of political communication in the masses, so it has become an essential and effective variable in the political process, in addition to the emergence of advisory bodies for electoral campaigns, which are run by advertising specialists in order to provide political messages to convince the public and then win their votes (Filali, 2005, pp. 12-14) to be a source Political advertising is a party that benefits from paying the amounts for

the advertising medium. A political party, candidate, or group determines this party. A specific period is chosen from a television or radio broadcast or a specific area of a newspaper for which a price is paid for its purchase in order to deliver political messages to the electorate to bring about change in ideas and behavior. Thus, political advertising is used by the sender to identify specific alternatives and promote them in front of the receiving audience on the impact of the advertisements that are used by organizations to promote their economic and commercial products, and this indicates the extent of the impact of these terms in the products used on the political marketing process.

Studies and research concerned with political advertising during electoral campaigns indicate the possibility of categorizing the way advertisements are presented through different media into main types:

A- Advertisement of the mental image:

The candidate's image is: (The set of subjective impressions formed about him in the minds of political consumers, and these impressions can be ideas about the candidate's political values, personality or leadership ability through what is provided by mass communication media. (Aiwa p. 6, 2004)

And you know (that the image that a political consumer forms about a party or a candidate, and it is the set of characteristics, preparations, political positions, competencies and defects that he attributes to this party or this candidate or that because of right or wrong) (Boy, p.12)

Thus, advertising the mental image focuses in its content on the feelings and emotions of the future of the advertising message (the political consumer) towards a certain political figure (the candidate) by emphasizing the characteristics of this personality such as strength, honesty, experience in political work, oratorical talents, personal elegance and everything that affects this personality in an audience voter. (Al-Bishr1997, p. 115)

b- Case Advertisement:

It is how to provide the electorate with sufficient information about issues related to their lives and this type is used in electoral campaigns. (Buraq2014, p. 2232)

C- Offensive Advertisement:

This type of political advertising determines the nature of the information, which is represented by negative information about the competing candidate to reveal weaknesses and criticize ideas and opinions directed to the public through negative advertising messages directed through the available communication means. (Ibid p. 224)

Thus, we find that there are differences between the two types of political advertisement, including the advertisement of the image or what is called the advertisement of the personality and the negative advertisement. The method of immoral application is offensive advertising that focuses on sending objective negative messages to draw attention to the weaknesses of the rival party. Therefore, comparing the presence of the political personality on the political stage is related to his ability to market his personality and his control over the desires of voters and directing them according to what he aspires to, and on the one hand, Others The withholding of confidence from the candidate and his distance from the political arena is based on his inability to market his

personality, which represents the way that conveys his ideas well.

2- The political poster:

The diversity of expressive means in the political field, including the political poster, plays a role in addressing minds, as it contributes to the development of political and intellectual awareness among consumers.

It is considered a political and ideological discourse and a means of communicating the candidate's ideas to his voters. The political poster contains a set of expressive elements, and its goal is to convey the idea to the political consumer by employing a set of design elements and foundations that constitute it, represented in drawing, image, symbol and writing.

The political poster: (It is a means of communication for conveying and exchanging ideas and meanings through visual forms, regardless of its political, social, economic, media, cultural or educational content). (Khalif,2018, p. 223 - p. 225)

In order for the political poster to be a successful poster that achieves its main goal, it must employ clear signs and in an attractive manner that is consistent with the value system of society by taking into account public taste. As well as avoiding excessive ambiguity, interference and artificial strangeness, taking into account the integrity in defining the message and focusing on presenting the icon.

3- Political debates:

A political debate is defined as a dialogue between two different people or from two different parties, each of whom seeks to raise his point of view on a particular topic and defend it by various scientific and logical means and by using evidence and proofs of its diversity in an attempt to refute the opinion of the other party.

The importance of political debates shows that they are an effective means of giving information that allows voters to exercise their political choices in an atmosphere of foresight and the ability to sort out the discrepancies between electoral programs and promises of candidates and parties (Maarek,2014, pp. 203-205)

4- Political publications

Parties use political leaflets by presenting small brochures or magazines that contain short messages that focus on the most important basics of the candidate's electoral program. (Al-Hafnawi,2012, pp. 24-25)

5- Political propaganda

Propaganda sheds light on individuals in order to control their thoughts and actions and to reach certain results. The goal it seeks is embracing an idea or principle or abandoning an idea or principle. Its activity is broad, as it includes many aspects, including commercial markets, the political party, or the field of government activity - and it works to address the instincts and beliefs of members of society. Propaganda has its limits related to the limits of the personality of the individual and his deep-rooted beliefs and traditions. (Rabie2007, p. 44)

The election campaign is:

A - The tactical framework of the party, as it seeks to achieve specific and temporary goals within the framework of political propaganda.

b- It aims to strengthen confidence in the party and its candidates, provide the public and voters with information and try to influence them by all available means, capabilities and methods.

C - Employing all channels of communication and persuasion with the aim of winning the elections or increasing the party's supporters and presenting a positive image to the voters.

Thus, the researcher can clarify some principles that lead to the success of political propaganda in the process of political marketing, including:

- Presenting advertisements to consumers directly, and not directing them to ideas or issues.
- Relying on reliable information, reviewing and following up on events.
- Focusing on issues that are important to the public and presenting proposals objectively.
- Follow up on political, cultural, social and economic developments.

1- Public opinion Survey:

Public opinion is one of the most important elements of the democratic political system. Opinion polls gain their importance as they show the public opinion's attitudes towards different topics. The political authorities can identify the society's views and attitudes towards certain issues, and benefit from these opinions in developing strategic plans for their work, and the society can also Through opinion polls to reflect his views on the various problems, obstacles and issues to the political authorities, Hamid Abdullah Rabie mentions the importance of opinion polls when he considered "public opinion as one of the elements of existence, whether political or non-political

The third topic: the practical framework for research

This axis focuses on the communication patterns that were used in the political promotion of members of the House of Representatives in the political marketing campaigns that took place in the 2018 elections. These communication patterns were represented in advertisements public relations and what is related to the political promotion process. The following tables represent the intensity of the respondents' tendency towards the elements and patterns of the political promotion process.

Table (1) Shows the range of respondents' attitudes towards political advertisements in political marketing campaigns.

Variable	Ads in political marketing campaigns	Often		Sometimes		Rarely	Total	percentage	
		k	%	k	%	k	m	%	
1	Respondents' trends								
2	Presenting the candidates ideas on determine the candidate leadership ability	182	%59,3	84	%27,4	41	%13,3	307	100
3	Demonstrating the candidate's personality and oratorical ability	177	%57,7	127	%41,3	3	%1	307	100
4	Criticizing the negative thoughts of competitors	190	%61,9	109	%35,5	8	%2,6	307	100
5	Build a compelling advertising message	124	%40,4	109	%35,5	74	%24,1	307	100
	Total	214	%69,7	84	%27,4	9	%2,9	307	100

The political survey through five statements representing the measurement of its indicators

and ranges according to the variables (mostly, sometimes, and rarely). Of them sometimes support it, and (8.8%) rarely support it, and the highest percentage achieved by a group was mostly in the fifth statement that (building a convincing advertising message) by (69.7%), followed by the statement that (showing the candidate's personality and his oratorical ability) by (61.9%), then the category (presenting the candidate's ideas on political values), which achieved a level of mostly (59.3%), then the phrase (determining the candidate's leadership ability) by (57.7%), and finally the phrase Negative thoughts of competitors) by (40.4%), and it is clear from these indicators that the political promotion ads achieved some basic requirements in political marketing campaigns with a percentage of It is confined between (40.4%) - (69.7%), which indicates that the pattern of promotional advertisements for candidates was strongly present in political marketing campaigns.

Table (2) *The extent to which candidate advertisements are submitted in the available means*

Respondents' trends		k	%	k	%	k	%	m	%
1	Newspaper	115	%37,5	102	%33,2	90	%29,3	307	100
2	TV	220	%71,7	61	%19,9	26	%8,4	307	100
3	Radio	115	%37,5	79	%25,7	113	%36,8	307	100
4	Social Media	284	%92,5	10	%3,3	13	%4,2	307	100
5	Face book	274	%89,3	21	%6,8	12	%3,9	307	100
6	Twitter	62	%20,2	115	%37,5	130	%42,3	307	100
7	YouTube	158	%51,5	122	%39,7	27	%8,8	307	100
8	Advertising in public places	250	%81,4	37	%12,1	20	%6,5	307	100
9	Using walls and buildings for advertising	201	%65,5	78	%25,4	28	%9,1	307	100
10	The right timing for advertising	201	%65,5	32	%10,4	74	%24,1	307	100
Total		1880	%61,2	657	%21,4	533	%17,4	3070	100

For the purpose of identifying the extent to which political promotion advertisements were presented in the available communication means on which political marketing campaigns relied, ten communication methods were counted, and the respondents' trends ranged towards how these means were employed by political promotion advertisements for candidates for the 2018 parliamentary elections. A percentage of (61.2%) of the respondents believe that the available communication means presented all these advertisements mostly, while (21.4%) of them believed that they presented these advertisements sometimes, and (17.4%) believed that these means were rarely All of these advertisements are presented, which means that a large percentage of these means were interested in presenting these advertisements in the means of communication,

Often by more than half of the volume of the respondents by (19.7%). Politics often say:

1 Social networking sites: It achieved the highest percentage in a variable often with a percentage of (92.5%), and Facebook pages were the highest among these sites, achieving a percentage of (89.3%), and the reason for the interest of political marketing campaigns in this method is more than others The number of users of these sites has increased to a very large degree, especially among the voters, who are the target audience of political marketing campaigns.

2. Publishing advertisements in public places: It came in second place in the communication means that promoted advertisements and on which political marketing campaigns

relied with a percentage of (81.4%).

3. Television: It came in third place in political marketing campaigns with a percentage of (71.7%), and the reason for relying on this method is because it can attract the audience and introduce the candidate, especially if advertisements are broadcast in the prime period, as well as television enjoying technical advantages that combine sound and image.

4. Using walls and facades of institutions and buildings for promotion and choosing the right time to broadcast advertising messages to voters: These two categories ranked fourth in their political marketing campaigns, with a rate of (65.5%) for each.

5. Newspapers and radio: These two media ranked in the fifth rank equally, at a rate of (37,5%) for each, which indicates that political marketing campaigns used all available means to display political promotion advertisements in them, but in varying proportions according to the plan and requirements of the campaign and analysis of the political market, and the following chart It shows the range of respondents' attitudes towards the means of communication that promoted the political advertisements of the candidates for the elections.

Conclusions

- 1) The political marketing campaigns used all available means to display political promotion advertisements in them, but in varying proportions according to the plan and requirements of the campaign and the analysis of the political market.
- 2) The success of the candidates' political marketing campaigns requires following more than one communication style to ensure the candidate's victory in the elections.
- 3) The persuasive methods adopted represent the third stage of the candidate's promotion in political marketing campaigns, which are complementary to public relations activities.

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