

Methods of persuasion in the 2021 digital election campaigns Emtidad Movement list campaign on Facebook as a model

By

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Abstract

The research deals with a problem related to the mechanisms of influence and persuasion in the elections of the Iraqi Parliament of 2021 AD, especially in light of the growing role of social media and the presence of voters in their environment in a large proportion than those who are present in the streets to see the names of the candidates, their qualifications, their electoral programs and the candidates' methods of persuasion and winning voters; The research aims to study the persuasive methods that candidates use through the Facebook application as one of the largest social media employed by politicians in presenting their political contents. This prompted the researchers to conduct an analytical study to reveal these methods, according to the methodological and theoretical foundations adopted in scientific research, in order to reach results that no one has previously delved into

The research reached important conclusions, the analysis revealed a large use of persuasive methods (meeting the needs of the public, making promises, and insinuations), and a decline in the use of methods (religious recruitment, the method of political defamation, and the method of the street man), and that the Emtidad Movement list focused on the side of the demonstrations that emerged from it, represented by the Iraqi protests in October; therefore, it focused its attention on the demands of the demonstrators, in an opportunity to prove its leadership in front of the masses that rose against the ruling authority; Which made them shed light on the protesters' demands to convince them that this bloc represents them, and that it seeks to achieve the promised political change if it wins

Keywords: Methods of persuasion, Digital electoral campaigns, Iraqi elections, Emtidad Movement list, Facebook

Introduction

The digital shift that took place in the world of technology has given way to technology and its pioneers, to develop and invent new patterns and different types of communication mechanisms between human beings, this change and openness allowed politicians to invest in technological progress and the communication shift in favor of their political projects and goals, taking advantage of the presence of social media, the persuasive methods in them, and the electoral campaigns for this environment, as well as available possibilities for political marketing and gaining and influencing the public, in order to reach to convince him and get his vote in favor of the candidate who conducted an electoral

campaign within the virtual environment of social media, and Iraq is only one of those countries that have been affected and interacted greatly with this technological revolution; this was reflected in the election mechanisms, methods and operations; therefore, laws were established, controls were enacted, and systems were established to organize elections within the country, benefiting from global experiences and effective electoral models in other countries, especially digital electoral campaigns, which are one of the manifestations of communication in light of the new media technology. The electoral lists participating in the Iraqi Parliament elections were keen to employ Facebook to reach the electorate as one of its methods of introducing and presenting their electoral programs, and supporting those contents with several methods of persuasion, in an attempt to win over the electorate and convince them of the political project they adopt, especially that the past elections witnessed a great popular reluctance to participate and mass demonstrations in various regions calling for reforming the economic situation and putting an end to the rampant corruption in the country, therefore, many candidates belonging to Emtidad Movement list and other electoral alliances resorted to designing digital electoral campaigns in order to achieve influence and persuasion for the Iraqi electorate who has the right They have the right to elect and vote, and the candidates have worked on using most of the persuasive methods and ways in their various forms and models; in order to persuade the voter to give them their vote, on which they count a lot, to gain a seat in the Iraqi parliament

TOPIC ONE: Research Methodology

Research problem

With the launch of electoral campaigns for party lists in Iraq, cities, squares, and streets are witnessing electoral manifestations that contradict public taste, as the roads are crowded with electoral posters that are a sign of pollution in cities. Perhaps the motives behind these campaigns is the false feeling of the candidates about the inability to reach the voters and convince them otherwise. The choice of the research comes as one of the scientific contributions to draw attention to the possibility of employing many persuasive methods in digital electoral campaigns through the Facebook application, in order to influence the tendencies and trends of voters, and then win his convictions to vote for a specific list, especially those lists that achieved the highest number of seats in Parliament; This was helped by the presence of the virtual environment represented by social media, then one of the most important digital platforms that attract the attention of voters and a field for electoral competition and debate. This research answers a specific question, which is (What are the methods of persuasion used in the digital election campaign of 2021 AD in the campaign of Emtidad Movement list on Facebook?) To put the research into specific axes represented in monitoring the methods of persuasion, and monitoring the contents of the electoral campaign

The importance of research

The importance of this research is represented in a number of aspects that can be formulated as follows:

Scientific importance

The scientific importance lies in identifying the persuasive methods used in the electoral campaign of Emtidad Movement list on Facebook, which is a new subject and no one has previously monitored it independently, and it constitutes a new and necessary scientific addition.

Societal importance

Building and supporting electoral campaigns with methods of persuasion is one of the most important pillars of the success of the electoral process, and that building persuasive messages enhance public participation in the elections and have a role in serving the community and contribute to achieving security, peace, stability and the success of the peaceful transfer of power

The importance of media institutions

Paying attention to the content of electoral campaigns is one of the pillars of the success of the work of the Independent High Electoral Commission, as well as the success of media workers in electoral campaigns, the success of digital election campaigns contributes to strengthening the role of social media in society and the success of the political process, and research provides a service for the concerned institutions to monitor the application of the general legal and ethical principles that would support persuasion in the electoral campaigns in Iraq

Research Objectives

Candidates express their electoral programs on Facebook in various available methods, and this is what prompted a systematic scientific study whose objectives can be determined by knowing the methods of persuasion that were used in Emtidad Movement list campaign on Facebook. It monitors the methods of persuasion, and the contents of the electoral campaign in the Facebook application as part of their electoral campaign for the Parliament of Iraq 2021

The research community

The research community in human studies is the largest community or group of vocabulary that the researcher aims to study to achieve the results of the study. Accordingly, the research community will be campaign publications for all the nominated lists for the Iraqi parliament elections 2021 AD in the Facebook application, and the researchers chose Emtidad Movement list as a model to identify the extent to which it employs methods of persuasion, and all the list's publications were studied in a comprehensive inventory method to identify the methods of persuasion

Type, method and tools of research

This research is considered a descriptive research that depends on the survey method, with its two parts descriptive and analytical. It is the method that scientific research often uses in its academic methodology. It is flexible and easy to access information accurately. Accordingly, it will be adopted in the study of the persuasive methods of electoral campaigns of Emtidad Movement list on Facebook. In their study, the researchers used the content analysis tool; to know the content of the methods of persuasion on Emtidad Movement list page in the 2021 Iraqi Parliament elections, and this tool is one of the most common tools used in media research and the most appropriate to reach the desired research goals

Concepts and Terminology

As part of the approved methodological context, the definition of concepts and terms in a procedural manner, in proportion to the concept in which they were mentioned in the theoretical chapters, and of these definitions are the following

Persuasion

It is one of the goals of the communicative message; Which are created for utilitarian purposes, which the persuasionist works on preparing, as one of the technical activities to

complete the advanced communication, which has a known or implicit meaning

Persuasion methods

The methods used by the persuasive communicator; for the purpose of gaining the recipient's tendencies, through specific messages formulated in several models, all of which aim to influence the future and convince him of what the persuasive messages aim to

Electoral propaganda

A complementary communication style for candidate marketing, through which the contestants in the elections present their electoral projects and visions in the administration of the state and citizens' affairs, by employing all levels of communication in the messages presented to the public

Electoral campaigns

They are a planned and developed communication model, which emerged after the growing role of elections in shaping the governments of countries in the world, and campaigns take different forms in their production and content, some of which are realistic, and the other digital, and may be for an individual or a group, which are prepared in an intentional way and for specific and clear goals

Social Media

It is a set of digital applications that allow the user to communicate, publish, receive and interact through them in an uncomplicated manner, as well as follow what others publish in their virtual environment

Methods of persuasion in electoral campaigns

The concept of persuasion

Persuasion has been defined in the scientific literature as “the cumulative communicative process, which depends on successive efforts aimed in turn to win over the mind or emotion or both of the targeted individual, whether directly or indirectly; in order to achieve the objectives of the communication process when Dealing with the target audience

Persuasive Communication Methods

The method is presented in the persuasive process as a general framework or a container in which the persuasive message that the persuasive person wants to present to the audience, for the purpose of influencing him and gaining his tendencies and changing his direction, and through the method that should be chosen according to the goal and the desired goal to be achieved, the originator of the message tries to choose one or more methods to achieve his purpose, therefore, the methods exceed the required multiple goals, and the methods of persuasion in the communicative process are usually represented by the following

1-Presenting the message with evidence and confirmations: This method is presented when the message includes factual information or opinions attributed to sources in which it is credible, this is to legitimize the position of the persuasive communicator and his abilities, as well as related to his use of evidence and confirmation, and the recipient's awareness of the credibility of the source, and thus the greater the credibility of the source, will be with the less need for information that supports what he says, while some topics need evidence

more than others, especially topics that are not related to previous experiences of the recipient.

Using the trends or existing needs of the public

The public is usually more willing to support his pre-existing needs, by developing new needs in complete way in the sense that a persuasive message is most effective when it makes the opinion or behavior that presents to the audience and appear as a means to fulfilling needs that really exist.

The influence of the majority opinion

This method is based on the opinion of the majority, which represents more than half of the group, which is the opinion of the effective and influential majority in society ¹, which makes the public embrace some opinions, because it simply believes that these opinions represent the opinion of the majority or agree with popular opinion

In addition to other methods, they are represented in the following;²

Insinuation and winking method

This method is based on directing an indirect accusation against a specific person or entity, and candidates usually resort to using this method if they have information without clear evidence against other candidates or the parties that support them, or for fear of punishment if this information, where defamation or prejudice to others violates the regulations and laws

Reliance on authority and power

where the candidate presents his arguments on the basis of what he is based on or his strength, such as social or economic standing, or his strength in supporting the government, by arousing feelings of submission to authority, where authoritarian feelings raise the individual's desire to control people and secure obedience, loyalty and submission to him

The method of employing the religious factor

The candidates resort to use this method with the aim of tickling the feelings of faith and fueling and directing the religious tendency of individuals, as well as relying on prejudices and releasing the qualities of good and evil, Religion plays a major role in guiding public opinion, as it is an indisputable postulate

Launching slogans

A slogan is a short phrase that is easy to repeat and remember, expressing a specific idea or a goal that is characterized by stability

The street man's style

It is the way through which a speaker tries to convince his listeners that he and his ideas are good because they come from people or the "ordinary street man." It has been common practice to use the technique of the street man in politics more than in advertising, and examples of this use are what was done in the US presidential election campaign of 1992 AD, when the image of President Bill Clinton and his family, along with Vice President Al Gore and his wife,

Abdul Razzak Al Dulaimi, Propaganda, Rumors and Public Opinion, Amman: Dar Al Yazouri for Publishing ¹ and Distribution, 2019, p. 266

Mohsin Abbood Kashkool, Propaganda Persuasion Methods in Electoral Campaigns with an Applied Model, ² UAE: Dar Al-Kitab Al-Jami, 2015, pp. 110-111

was marketed in casual clothes, while they were sitting on straw and talking with farmers, while in the background appeared a picture of a corn field and a hut containing agricultural equipment, and placed a newspaper New York Times Big Picture "Just Ordinary People

The method of political defamation

By accusing some other candidates of spreading rumors and lies³, and candidates resort to the media, the Internet and social media during the election seasons, as they turn into virtual arenas for competition between the candidates and defamation one another, by means of electronic armies to influence the electors trends, persuading them, and attracting new audiences

The method of making promises

All electoral promises are formulated in the future tense; to persuade voters to vote, for example (if you elect us, we will raise the standard of living) or (we will reduce unemployment), where it is clear that all politicians are concerned with the future, and this is logical; Because when the campaign begins with promises such as (If you elect me, I promise to make your past better, such promises are made only by a party that came to clown.⁴

Digital Election Campaigns

The Internet allowed the world to appear in the digital space significantly, and also provided all users in the world with the ability to follow what they wanted, as well as allowing those who wanted to run for election or influence the public to implement for them through a propaganda or marketing campaign presented to them through the social media that were the digital incubator closest to the public in general and the Iraqi public in particular, hence it was necessary to talk about digital election campaigns, in which the use of social media is largely associated with political behaviors that support democracy, and at the same time there are those who use them for non-political purposes, such as communicating with friends or Browse news briefs

Therefore, in light of the great information momentum, the diversity of human ideology, and the rapid development of technology, the digital environment has become a fertile ground for the growth and development of advertising and persuasion methods, through new media and social media applications, and the equation of persuasion control and influence in the current digital climate needs the existence of a base from which every media work is based, regardless of its orientation and goals, through the presence of the most appropriate means that contribute to opinion-making and marketing of products, services and ideas, and communicating them in a way that is in line with the needs and aspirations of the public.⁵ Whether it is in the social or political fields or in the field of electoral campaigns, which have been proven to be highly effective in electoral campaigns, especially because of their potential that can be utilized in conducting electoral campaigns at a significantly lower financial cost, when compared to traditional means of communication.⁶ This prompted many campaign creators to allocate a large part of their budget to digital advertising, which in turn supports

Hala Mahmoud Abdel-Aal, Evaluating Political Propaganda in the Parliamentary Elections, Cairo: Al-Araby³ for Publishing and Distribution, 2017, p. 171

Youssef Banash, Stupids in Politics, memoirs of a sarcastic politician, translated by: Khaled El-Beltagy, Cairo:⁴ Dar Safsafa for Publishing and Distribution, DSN, p. 135

Shafaa Abdul-Zahra Sharqi Al-Kinani, Propaganda Discourse and Soft Power in New Media, Amman:⁵ Dar Amjad Publishing and Distribution, 2021, pp., 75-78

Sameh Al-Sharif, Political Slogans - A Theoretical and Applied Study, Cairo: Dar Al-Arabi for Publishing and⁶ Distribution, 2017, p. 110

efforts to communicate with voters, especially through social media, which for many users is the primary source of news and information gathering, but this topic may recede in the absence of the Internet; Which means that a candidate or a cause does not exist in the eyes of voters.⁷

Characteristics of election campaigns in the digital environment

Social media have changed attitudes that were valid in human societies, and worked to form a more attractive public opinion, especially in light of the direct nature of election campaigns, advertising and shopping tools available to the candidate via the Internet, which affected the perception of most people, and that social media publications became able to change many aspects of people's attitudes, whether political or social, and even contribute to the marketing of political programs and the presentation of the candidates' views and their capabilities in managing service files or government positions in the state

Electoral campaigns are established in the virtual communication space for specific purposes, which are determined by the sponsor and funder, and in order for this campaign to be completed correctly, there must be several specific characteristics, which distinguish electronic election campaigns from traditional ones, which are represented in the following

Interactivity, meaning that the campaign contains an element of interactivity, and the ability for the audience to share and interact with the communicative content.

- Use brief and clear phrases, and stay away from loose phrases²
- It should have a logo that expresses it.³
- The speed of propagation through cyberspace⁴
- Dependence on the various types of communication media⁵

Methods of persuasion in the digital election campaigns of 2021 AD

Emtidad Movement list campaign on Facebook as a model

The official page of (Emtidad Movement) was established in the Facebook application, on January 14, 2021 AD, and it was followed by the time of collecting the sample of the analytical study with 118 thousand accounts, and this list participated for the first time in the parliamentary elections in Iraq that took place in the wake of the October protests, due to the leadership of the list by the pharmacist Alaa Kamel Al-Rikabi, who founded and a number of activists in the Iraqi October protests this list, which is described in her biography on her official page on the Facebook application as: "An Iraqi political movement, neither nationalist nor racist, aimed at building a state of citizenship and institutions⁸. The movement's motto symbolizes the extension of the path towards change and reform, and the straight line towards achieving popular demands

Speaking about the nature of the movement, accurate information indicates that it is: "a popular, democratic political entity that comes as an extension of the October Revolution and the sacrifices of its sons, an entity that takes upon itself to make every effort and develop programs to achieve the hopes and aspirations of the Iraqi people for a better life and future than the previous political regime, as it is political entity for all Iraqis regardless of their

Mohammed Mardi Al-Shammari, Introduction to the Study of Public Relations and Media, Cairo: Dar Al-⁷ .Arabi for Publishing and Distribution, 2016, p. 208

See page link ;<https://www.facebook.com/stateoflaww500> .⁸

national, religious and sectarian affiliations. It is formed from the fusion of Iraqi national groups and components that believe in the unity of federal Iraq and that Iraq is for all Iraqis and is an entity that believes in justice and democracy. The movement was founded in February 2021 AD, and co-founded by: (Alaa Al-Rikabi and Haider Al-Salami), and its official headquarters located in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad

Analytical study and interpretation of results

Categories of persuasion methods used in Emtidad Movement list campaign on Facebook

This table provides a comprehensive presentation of the persuasive methods that were used by Emtidad Movement home page in the electoral campaign through Facebook, and it was found that there were (812) recurrences distributed among (ten) methods, and the method (meeting the needs of the public) was the first method, followed by the method (release). Electoral promises) ranked second, as shown in Table (1)

Table (1) shows the methods of persuasion used in Emtidad Movement list campaign on Facebook .

S/N	Main Category	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	Meet the needs of the public	254	%31,28	First
2	Making promises	158	%19,46	Second
3	Hints	89	%10,96	Third
4	The influence of the majority opinion	74	%9,12	Fourth
5	Presentation of evidence	69	%8,50	Fifth
6	Brilliant circulars and slogans	58	%7,14	Sixth
7	Leaning on power and strength	48	%5,91	Seventh
8	Street man style	35	%4,31	Eighth
9	Political defamation	26	%3,20	Ninth
10	Recruitment of a religious worker	1	%0,12	Tenth
	Total	812	%100	

Emtidad Movement list on Facebook focused on employing the method (meeting the needs of the audience); For the purpose of persuading the voter to vote for them, and it is a persuasive method that employs what the electorate needs as an entrance to gain their convictions towards electing the candidate, especially since the public can be influenced by investing the motives of their needs, and that this list emerged from its presence among the demonstrators, and strongly demanded the right of citizens to provide a decent life for them, as it expressed the discontent and indignation of the protesting Iraqi street at the failure of previous governments to provide the necessary needs for social and service life in a country rich with many wealth; Therefore, the (**Emtidad Movement**) list was interested in employing this proposition in its electoral campaign. The list's page published a speech by Dr. Alaa Al-Rikabi, which he delivered at the electoral conference for the Emtidad Movement's candidates in Babil, in which he said: "We seriously seek to expose and prosecute the killers of peaceful demonstrators. Demonstrations are a constitutional right and are obligatory." The state provides the means for its success, and attacking it is a violation of the constitution and a flagrant violation of freedom of expression. The list and its interest in meeting the public's needs and demands in revealing who caused the deaths of the demonstrators, as well as her rejection of those who try to sow discord among the spectra

of the Iraqi people, which indicates the list's adoption of the unity of the Iraqi class, and its presentation of a persuasive style that expresses its representation of all segments of society, and at the same time aims to punishment for killing demonstrators in the protest squares and submitting them to the Iraqi judiciary to obtain the punishment, and this means that the list seeks to influence the psychology of the voter who will vote in Iraq's elections , 2021 AD, he may have great conviction in her election

The list has also been making (electoral promises) the necessity of achieving political change in Iraq, and creating a new political environment that fits with the demands of the protesters who came out in October protests in Iraq, and it adopted this as a major proposal in its promises during the 2021 election campaign, regardless of whether this change in the faces, the approach, or in the service of the voter, based on this in the repeated references to the new faces that were nominated within (Emtidad Movement) list who are characterized by integrity and patriotism, unlike the other lists that reproduced many faces and re-presented them again, where through these promises they want to persuade citizen that candidates list (Emtidad Movement) adopt and seek real political change, and they are able to achieve it, and lead the citizen towards a different life than what he lived in previous years, and this is what was stated in the electoral conference of the candidate of Emtidad Movement in Najaf Governorate (Fatima Al-Issawi) in the presence of the Secretary-General of Emtidad Movement, Dr. Alaa Kamel Al-Rikabi, where the activities of the conference began with the reading of the national anthem and then the speech of the Secretary-General, Dr. Alaa Al-Rikabi, in which he stressed: "It is all our responsibility not to allow the re-election of the faces who were known for their corruption and their labor, and to give a wise opportunity to those who confronted the responsibility, knowing the rights of the people, advocating democratic change devoid of any uncontrolled weapons and the authority of corruption, to make the change that the Iraqi people aspire to."⁹

Emtidad Movement affirmed her refusal to allow the experienced faces to be brought back to the political scene, rather its clear firmness in the face of loose weapons, the chaos of the threat, and the growth and spread of corruption in the joints of the state. Rather, this movement, through her candidates and their good reputation, seeks to adopt new visions, ideas and different administration from those who preceded them. Thus, they are determined to make a real change if they have the opportunity, and they keep their promises as required by the results of the campaign, and the behavior that changes after that based on the results.

This movement, through its candidates and their good reputation, seeks to adopt new visions, ideas and management different from those who preceded them, and thus they are determined to make real change if they have the opportunity, and they kept their promises as What the results of the campaign require, and the behavior that changes after that is based on the results

Categories of election campaign contents in existing publications (of Emtidad Movement) on Facebook

The main categories of the contents of the election campaign varied in the list of

see link page https://web.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_096fbid ⁹
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publications (Emtidad Movement) on the Facebook, as it was found from the analysis procedures for the content of the page (Emtidad Movement) on Facebook, that the (Emtidad Movement) party was interested, through the publications that the page presented, on a number of topics that reflect their electoral campaign and vision, as the category (Criticism of government performance) ranked first, while the category (Communication with voters' issues and problems) ranked second, as shown in Table (2)

Table (2) shows the contents of the electoral campaigns in Emtidad Movement publications on Facebook

S/N	Main Category	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1	criticizing government performance	121	37%	First
2	Communicate with voters' issues and problems	96	29,36%	Second
3	Attention to community issues	47	14,37%	Third
4	Urging voters to participate actively	38	%11,62	Fourth
5	Electoral conferences and seminars	21	6,42%	Fifth
6	View the electoral program	3	%0,92	Sixth
7	Paying attention to religious occasions	1	0,31%	Seventh
8	Total	327	100%	

The researchers were keen to identify the topics of most interest in the electoral campaign, in order to know the nature of the topics that occupied the list (**Emtidad Movement**), and it appears from the previous table that the topics of criticism of government performance, communication with voters' issues and problems, as well as attention to community issues, are among the topics that received the most interest of a list campaign (**Emtidad Movement**), the issues of urging voters to participate in actively, and electoral conferences and seminars came to a lesser degree. It seems clear that there is a lack of interest in presenting the electoral program, while the topics of interest in religious events came at the bottom of the campaign's concerns. On the other hand, the category (Review of Achievements) did not have any repetition or relative value from the number of posts made by the official (**Emtidad Movement**) list page on Facebook

Conclusions

The analysis revealed that the persuasive method concerned with meeting the public's needs was issued in the "**Emtidad Movement**" list, along with the method of electoral promises, as well as the method of allusions in which the candidates hint in their electoral campaign to topics that may be difficult to reveal directly, and this indicates that the public's needs and what they promise the competing lists by, is a mainstay in convincing them of what they want

Based on the results of the research, the (Emtidad Movement) list has been concerned with the demonstrations that emerged from it, represented by the Iraqi protests in October; Therefore, it focused its attention on the demands of the demonstrators, in an opportunity to prove its leadership in front of the masses that rose against the ruling authority; Which made them shed light on the protesters' demands to convince them that this bloc represents them, and that it seeks to achieve the promised political change in the event of its victory, and side by side it will work to raise the status of the people and make it the most prominent slogan in its defense

and representation of the elected people, and this indicates the basis of the list during the election campaign, focused on the emotional aspects of the revolting masses, and its attempt to persuade them and gain their support

The results contained in the analysis of persuasion methods in the electoral campaigns of the (Emtidad Movement) list on Facebook indicated that some persuasion methods were employed at a weak rate, such as the method of (religious factor employment) which appeared in only one post with a list(Emtidad Movement)

The reason for this is due to the departure of the supporters of the list in the October protests against the religious authority in Iraq - with the exception of the rational reference - and their rejection of political Islam, and it can be concluded that this matter is on the list according to the intellectual principles advocated by the list.

Based on the findings of the research, (Emtidad Movement list has drawn the weight of its campaign's interest in critical implications for the government's performance, and the researchers attribute this to the adoption of Emtidad Movement by an opposition to the government and her policies, as well as its desire to seize the reins of government and revolution on the ruling regime. In addition to their perception that the representatives of this list will be sponsors of reform against the suffering of Iraqis who rose against persecution, and revolted against the policies followed in the politics and livelihood of the Iraqi society, as the young list compared to others.

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