



## **The Virtue of Emotional Political Advertising - A Study on Voter Turnout in Karnataka**

*<sup>1</sup>Mrs Rashmi H N, <sup>2</sup>Dr Supriya R*

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Davangere University

<sup>2</sup>Research Supervisor, Department of Commerce, Davangere University

---

### **ABSTRACT:**

Democracy has a special place in India. Furthermore, India without a doubt is the biggest democracy in the world. One of the most ascribed of democracy is the Rule of the majority. Moreover, the party which wins the most seats forms and runs the government. And another fundamental feature of the Democratic Government is seized by the statement: "By the People, For the People and From the People". In essence, people have the right to elect the candidate or representative of their choice by exercising their vote. To bring off these features, many political parties came into existence and took off their own race by using their own ideologies, policies, campaigns and programmes to attract voters. In General, advertising plays a very prime role in consumer behaviour, likewise, political advertising also impacts voters' behaviour and for achieving more efficacy, the marketer can add the content of emotions. This paper attempts to explore the relevance of using emotional political advertising and to investigate the perception of the role of emotional political advertising in affecting voting behaviour regarding voter turnout. For achieving the objective, the study used an empirical study that has been confined to the state of Karnataka. For this, the study collects both primary and secondary data from voters and different agencies and analyses the same by using the chi-square test and percentage basis. After meticulous analysis, the study found that emotional political advertisements are important and also stated that emotion-filled political advertisements can definitely affect the voters' perception and progression of voter turnout.

---

**KEYWORDS:** Emotions, political party, voters' Perceptions, voter turnout

---

### **Introduction:**

Marketing is the process of promoting a business or product or service by using different means of marketing tools and techniques with the intent of consumer satisfaction and profit maximisation. With the extension of these main objectives, marketers try to build a long-term relationship with the customers by creating a psychological attachment between the business and the customers. The field of marketing switches its orientation from transactions to relationships. And the archetype shift and this new relational paradigm led to the concept of Relationship Marketing. Relationship marketing is concentrated on customer loyalty and holding customers for the long term rather than the short-term goals of the business. This can be possible by appending emotional content and this leads to achieving the goal of the business. This notion of marketing could be applied in the field of politics. It paved the way for political organisations i.e., political parties to market themselves to voters. This was formally known as political marketing. In India, the concept of political marketing was not muchly noticeable in the past but nowadays, Political marketing draws attention to the use of methods and approaches of marketing to facilitate the politicians and political parties in establishing the relationship with the voters by using different modes of advertisements.

This political marketing is like mass communication by using campaigns at the time of election periods. And political campaign or electoral campaign is an organised and systematised effort which seeks to influence the decision-making progress of a particular group. In the year 2021, the political parties are spending up to 220 crores on election campaigns and a prediction that expenditure on political ads will rise to 150% as compared to the last election campaigns on social media, this shows that political advertising is no exception from another kind of business advertisement. The usual political advertisements are door-to-door advertising, print ads, television advertising, digital ads, and direct mailing are the most common ways that a political candidate chooses to communicate through political campaigns and the foremost objective of the political campaigns is to earn the most votes and win.

---

### **LITERATURE OF REVIEW:**

Several research papers were identified relating to political advertisement. But, there was a gap in research with regard to the effectiveness of emotional political advertisement on voters' perceptions with particular references to voter turnout. Yet, the following reviews in this regard:

**Jorg L. Spenkuch and David Toniatti (2018):** In their paper, they tried to show the persuasive effects of political advertising. This paper's empirical strategy exploits Federal Communications Commission(FCC) regulations that result in plausibly exogenous variation in the number of impressions across the borders of neighbouring counties. and they reexamined the impact of political advertising on elections in the United States. Empirical Study Authors

found a positive and economically meaningful effect of advertising on candidates' vote shares. Political advertising impact on the results Considered only US States people.

**CHARLES ATKIN AND GARY HEALD (1976):** In their paper, they investigated the relationship between television and radio advertising exposure to various cognitive and affective variables in a typical congressional campaign. Highly exposed voters were more likely to attach higher agenda priorities to issues and candidate attributes emphasised in the commercials. Interviews were conducted with a random telephone sample of 323 Explore Research "Exposure was moderately correlated with political knowledge and interest. Highly exposed voters were more likely to attach higher agenda priorities to issues and candidate attributes emphasised in the commercials. Personal effect toward each candidate was mildly associated with advertising exposure frequency."

**Safullah, M., Pathak, P., Singh, S., & Anshul, A. (2017):** In their study, they try to investigate whether the use of social media (Twitter) had an effect on the 2014 General elections outcome In this research, a total of 8,877,275 social media buzz for 100 days from January 01, 2014, to April 09, 2014, of 12 Indian political parties has been considered The result of the paper was social media buzz has a positive and significant impact on the outcome of the General elections in 2014.

**Tiffany Winchester and Binney (2016):** Political Marketing has borrowed and adapted many terms from mainstream marketing. This conceptual research aims to add to the knowledge of political marketing through the application of the consumer behaviour concept of product/service usage to political party usage in voting behaviour This paper Draws from the literature on usage, and a model is developed and applied to four voting environments: British, Australia, Russian, and Belarus.

---

## OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand the amount of spending on advertising
2. To understand the cast of mind of voters
3. To recognize the significance of emotional content in advertisements

---

## METHODOLOGY:

This research follows a Descriptive and Empirical Research Design. It uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected from respondents using structured questionnaires. The quota and convenience Sampling techniques are used to collect primary data from the respondents. This study collected responses from 72 voters, who are eligible. The dependent variable used in the study was voters' perception and emotional advertisement was an independent variable. The virtue of emotional political advertising on voters' behaviour, particularly voter turnout, was measured using a Likert-type scale and other scales.

Further, the collected data are analysed by using percentages, the Chi-Square test, and a statistical chart.

## HYPOTHESES:

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no association between gender and their interest in watching political advertisements.

H<sub>1</sub>1: There is an association between gender and their interest in watching political advertisements.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no association between the age of respondents and influences regarding political emotional advertisements.

H<sub>1</sub>2: There is an association between the age of respondents and influences regarding political emotional advertisements.

---

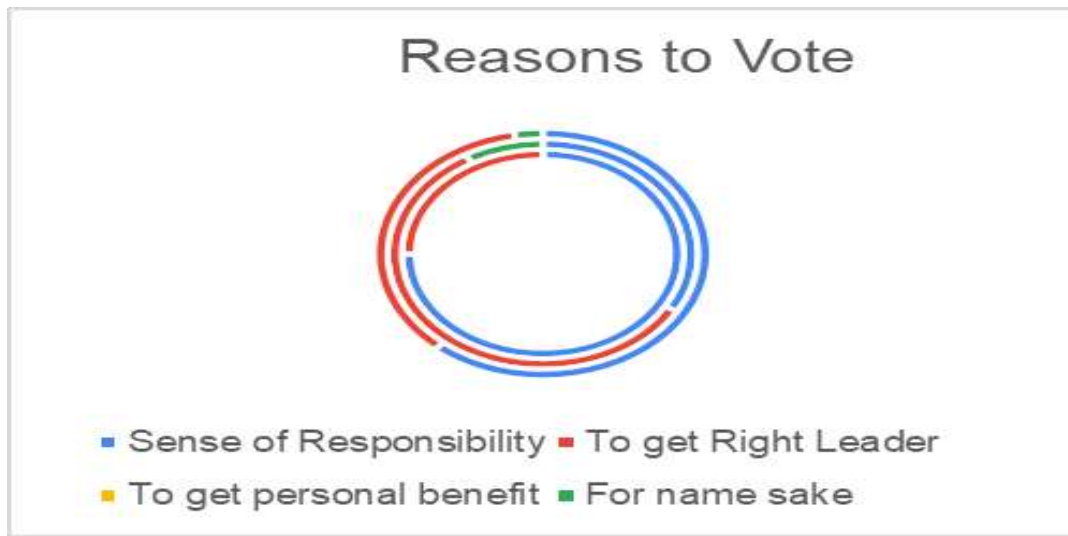
## ANALYSIS:

As per the latest publication dated 23 September 2021 from the Election Commission of India, the total number of parties registered was 2858, with 8 national parties, 54 state parties and 2796 unrecognised parties. And in the last five years, the BJP has spent 54.87% (over Rs 2,000 crore) of their total election expenditure on "Advertisements and Publicity" Similarly, Congress, in the five-year period, has spent 40.08% (Rs 560 crore) of the total election expenditure on election-related publicity.

AIADMK, AIMIM, JD(U), JD(S), and Akali Dal, in their audit reports, have not reported any election expenditure for 2017-'18. Also, JD(U) has reported no election expenditure in 2016-'17.

Based on the results of the questionnaires a complete summary of data analysis is as below:

Chart 1: Chart showing the cast of mind of voters - Reasons to vote



Source: Derived from Questionnaire

From the 72 samples, we find the reasons to vote. This helps to understand the cast of minds of voters. According to the chart, the majority i.e., **53.1%** voted reason a *sense of responsibility*, and **43.8%** of the public voted *to get the right leader*. The least i.e., **3.1%** voted reason *for name sake* and **none** *to get the personal benefit*.

Table:1 Table showing the number of respondents regarding their interest in watching political advertisements based on their gender (Observed value-O)

| <i>Do you like to watch political advertisements</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Yes  | 24          | 12            | 36           |
| No   | 22          | 6             | 28           |
| Maybe  | 2           | 6             | 8            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>48</b>   | <b>24</b>     | <b>72</b>    |

Source: Derived from questionnaire

Table 2: Table showing Expected Values for the observed values (E)

| <i>Do you like to watch political advertisements</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Yes  | 24          | 12            | 36           |
| No   | 19          | 9             | 28           |
| Maybe  | 5           | 3             | 8            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>48</b>   | <b>24</b>     | <b>72</b>    |

Source: Researcher’s Calculation based on Observed Values

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(Observed\ Values - Expected\ Values)^2}{Expected\ Values}$$

$\chi^2 = 6.27368$

df= 2

P-value=5.99

Since  $\chi^2 > p$ -value, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative can be accepted. Hence, There is an association between gender and their interest in watching political advertisements.

**Table 3: Table showing the number of respondents about the influences regarding political emotional advertisements based on their age (Observed Values - O<sub>i</sub>)**

| Political advertisements influence your emotions | Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) Table of observed values |              |                          |           |
|--|--|--------------|--------------------------|-----------|
|  | Influence me to Vote                             | No influence | Influence me not to vote | Total     |
| 18-29 years                                      | 10   | 4            | 0                        | 14        |
| 30-49 years                                      | 28   | 18           | 0                        | 46        |
| 50-69 years                                      | 8  | 0            | 0                        | 8         |
| 70 years and above                               | 0  | 4            | 0                        | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>46</b>  | <b>26</b>    | <b>0</b>                 | <b>72</b> |

Source: Derived from questionnaire

**Table 2: Table showing Expected Values for the observed values (E)**

| Political advertisements influence your emotions | Table of Expected values |              |                          |           |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------|
|  | Influence me to Vote     | No influence | Influence me not to vote | Total     |
| 18-29 years                                      | 9                        | 5            | 0                        | 14        |
| 30-49 years                                      | 29                       | 17           | 0                        | 46        |
| 50-69 years                                      | 5                        | 3            | 0                        | 8         |
| 70 years and above                               | 2                        | 2            | 0                        | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>45</b>                | <b>27</b>    | <b>0</b>                 | <b>72</b> |

Source: Researcher's Calculation based on Observed Values

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(\text{Observed Values} - \text{Expected Values})^2}{\text{Expected Values}}$$

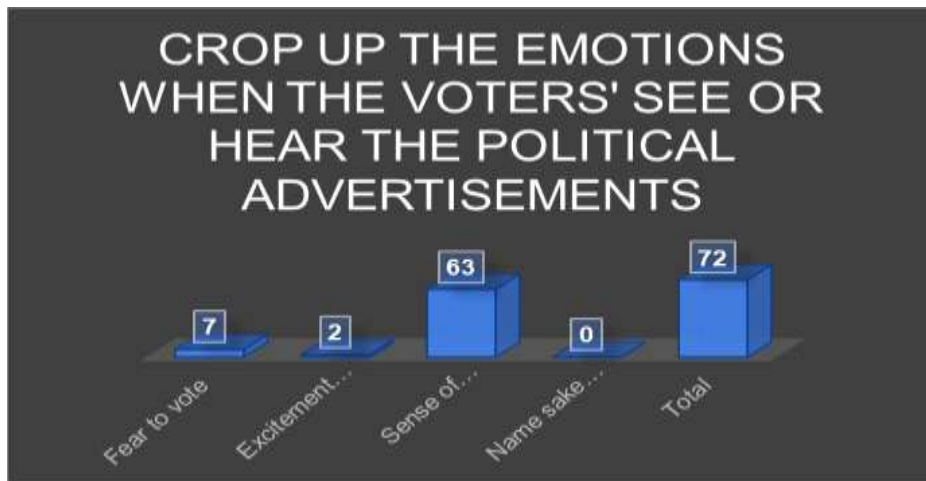
$\chi^2 = 9.2042$

df= 6

P-value=12.59

Since  $\chi^2 < p$ -value, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative can be rejected. Hence, there is no association between the age of respondents and influences on political emotional advertisements.

**Chart 2: Chart showing the significance of emotional content in advertisements**



Source: Derived from a questionnaire

When the voters see or hear political advertisements (with emotional content), then it constructs some positive emotions like the responsibility to vote, Excitement to vote etc. Based on our studies, out of 72 respondents, the majority of the voters got an emotional sense of responsibility to vote.

---

**FINDINGS:**

With a thorough analysis, the following findings were drawn:

1. Few political parties are spending much amount on advertisements but less attention on voter turnout
2. The majority of voters' reasons for voting are a sense of responsibility and to get the right leader.
3. Most of the voters' are assessed by the political parties based on their past development, and party fame and thereafter based on the educational qualification of the candidates, the background of the candidates etc.
4. The present percentage of vote rate is only 56% in Karnataka. And many respondents are not satisfied with this rate.
5. Based on the observation, there is an association between gender and their interest in watching political advertisements.
6. Based on observation majority of voters prefer the most effective media of advertisements are Social Media, Television, and Newspaper advertisements.

---

**SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Political leaders play a prominent role in running the nation for a long period. For this public should elect the right candidate. But unfortunately, the present voting rate in India is only 56%. So we can not able to choose the perfect leader. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "A high turnout augurs well for our democratic fabric." hence high poll turnout is required.
2. Political parties are spending much amount on advertisements with intention of earning more votes and winning. For achieving these objectives, political parties should focus on high poll turnout by applying emotional content in their advertisements.

---

**CONCLUSION:**

Every political party are having the objective of earning more votes and winning. This objective can be fulfilled by increasing the voter turnout rate also. For increasing poll turnout, political parties should make an awareness of the voting rights of the public through advertisements and campaigns. For effectiveness, emotional content should add to the advertising. Because emotional advertisements will reach the message to the public in an effective manner by creating some positive emotions toward voting rights. Therefore, emotional advertisements are not circumscribed only to businesses. It is way too common in every advertisement these days.

How emotional content in political advertisements is important likewise, choosing the media of advertisements is also important for making the aware of voting rights to the public. Based on the studies, the most effective media for advertisements are social media, television, campaigns etc.

---

**REFERENCES:**

- Spenkuch, J. L., & Toniatti, D. (2018). Political advertising and election results. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(4), 1981-2036.
- Atkin, C., & Heald, G. (1976). *Effects of political advertising*. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 40(2), 216-228.
- Safiullah, M., Pathak, P., Singh, S., & Anshul, A. (2017). *Social media is an upcoming tool for political marketing effectiveness*. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 22(1), 10-15.
- Winchester, T., Hall, J., & Binney, W. (2016). *Conceptualizing usage in voting behaviour for political marketing: an application of consumer behaviour*. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 15(2-3), 259-284.
- <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/257394>
- <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-7811-history-of-democracy.html>
- <https://www.toppr.com/guides/essays/essay-on-demo>.
- <https://www.financialexpress.com/brandwagon/elections-2021-political-parties-to-spend-up-to-rs-220-crore-in-election-campaign-see-which-regional-media-will-get-more-ads/2218799/>
- <https://theprint.in/opinion/3-charts-challenge-lazy-thinking-on-voter-turnout-and-its-link-to-literacy-urbanisation/207142/>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_political\\_parties\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_parties_in_India)