# Party's Image And Reputation: An Analysis Of Voting Behaviour In Orissa 2019 Elections

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***Abstract: 2019 Election was called by many voters as the election on image. In a changing trend of political voting behaviour, how an image of a candidate affects the voting preference of a candidate today is the study in this chapter. Candidate's image is the precursor for the change of voting behaviour and casting votes. Day by day the change is seen due to the extremely standardised and smoothly localised strategies of political marketing. The strong political image attracts the various voters segments in political preferences and decision making. The study dives into the sea of political preference to find out the latest types of preference that which shapes a political candidate's image. The implication of the post electoral information and orientation helps to decide and deal with political context of the state.***

***Keywords: Political Branding, Candidate's Image, Voting Orientation***

## 1. Introduction

Indeed, Election is *"DeshkaMahaToyhar"* the biggest festival of India that occupies a significant position in the democratic government. In the second democracy of the world people express their political opinion to administer the political social life in the society through election franchising their right, right to vote. The days before the overall election 2019 of Bharat had been seen as an enormous battle ground of promotion of political parties and candidates using doable tools of communication. There are many efforts to stay voters within the hands by each party. The dynamic trend in Odisha Political ground is found in three broad areas; from the aspect of media, from the part of political candidate and the facets voters. In India, the empirical study shows that the determinants of casting a ballot direction is affected by a few reasonable and unreasonable components like; cash, belief system, religions, network, language, arrangement, surveys details, establishment range and political wave (Akhter and Sheik 2014; Biraj, 2015).

In this juncture question arises, infact, what did drive the voting orientation in the Odisha election to vote for BJD for the fifth time? What was the communication strategies used for voting orientation? A pre-election question on voting orientation was asked to the ruling BJD party supremo Mr. Naveen Pattnaik by Mr. Rajdeep Sardesai (India Today, April 15 2019) in an interview, 'that what drives the voters in odisha to vote for BJD a regional party?' The answer by Mr. Pattnaik was simple, 'from all the good work, the welfare and development scheme done for the people'. It was a right question in a right moment. While throughout the nation Modi wave was running, Modi Maniac was found, 'Is bar ModiSarkar' slogan was heard, the Son of Kalinga dared to fight the battle placing great majority for the consecutive fifth term. Infact, (TIMESOFINDIA.COM | Apr 30, 2018) there were long term chief

ministers and consecutive winner like Mr. Pawan Kumar Chamling of Sikkim and Mr. Jyoti Basu of West Bengal yet in the case of Mr. Naveen Pattanik it is something unique as there was very heavy wind of breaking the castle of Kalinga by BJP President, Mr. Amit Saha with the mission 120 (Kanak News, Apr 5, 2018).

The confidence of Mr. Naveen Pattnaik was turned into the reality with full majority the party own the state assembly election. 'In the battle of Kanlinga you have own', India today Anchor Rahul Kanwal asked BJD Supremo, the Chief Minister of Odisha that 'what is the secret of success in 2019 election of Odisha?'. Ofcourse the short and similar type of answer given by Mr. Naveen Pattnaik was 'the welfare and development'. In another TV discussion, Pradeep Gupta, MD, Axix APM questioned, '20 years of ruling, does not know local language, no publicity, no much campaign, no visibility, one cannot count on development; yet own the election'. Mr. Gupta said, 'to me, Naveen Pattnaik is the matter of case study in Indian politics; to study about the public, party or Mr. Naveen Pattnaik or no opposition.' While Mr. Gupta suggests to study for the certitude of the electoral victory of BJD, Mr. Abhilash Khandwale in (News Nation, 2019) exit poll discussion speaks, 'Naveen Pattnaik has far from corruption and brought the model that must be studied'. India Today news (September 28, 2018) time Rajdeep and Rahul Kanwal presented from the Poll traker, the political stock exchange that 'Next CM of Odisha' where Mr. Naveen Pattnaik gets 59% while 'performance of state govt in Odisha' was voted 44 % satisfied. The percentage of the performance of the party is less than his personal rating. Personal popularity is high. Mr. Ruben Banarjee, Journalist of OUTLOOK magazine who wrote a book on Mr. Naveen Pattnaik spoke to (BBC Hindi News 3 December 2018), 'Naveen Pattnaik has brought civility in political discourse and his image is good and maybe he is honest'; keeping up his clean image (Rajya Sabha TV, April 11 2014). This poses a question that how did the agencies, media, PR and policy worked by the candidate and party in several stages engaging consistently targeting to build candidate's image and party's reputation?

For several decades candidate's image studies are typically conceptualised candidate's images as source credibility traits or persona impressions. Candidate issue positions have been minimised in such research and excluded from the candidate's image construct. In recent days the candidate's image and party's reputation has been constructed by every national party in the centre and in the state by the regional parties. It is hypothesised that the candidate's image and party's reputation are the precursors for the change of voting orientation in Indian national today and region as well. The conceptualisation of political parties and candidate as 'brand' has turn into an accepted format and a standard area of research that continues to evolve and develop (French and Smith 2010; Harris and Lock 2010; Lock and Harris 1996). Rawson (2007) argued that political brands are powerful important devices, which need to be thoroughly understood (Needham 2006, Van Ham 2001). Speed, Butler, & Collins (2015) have come up with assessment that political branding within the scope of multidisciplinary analysis. Taking this result, therefore, the analysis associated with this subject may be conducted from numerous views as well as management, economics, sociology, and journalism.

The research, first of all would study the branding strategies of building the image and reputation of the candidate and that of the party which directs voting orientation of the regional voters of Odisha. Secondly, it will analyse the latent interrelationship of promotional techniques between the candidate's image and party's reputation in regional political communication; and evaluate the impact of brand factor on voting behaviour. The study will use quantitative methodology to understand and to analyse tools and the process of political communications strategies, the latent interrelationship factors between the candidate's image and the party's reputation that used for voting orientation of Odisha in 2019 election. Political actors enter and exit from the scenes but the need for and significance of political

communication remains. Through the study, it is perceived that it can create an interactive process of transmission of information among politicians, the news media and the public for the good of the democracy.

**Political Communication in Candidate's Image Creation**

Political communication(s) is concerned with information spreads, influences politics and policy makers, the news media and welfare of citizens. The research aims to give an advance understanding of theoretical and applied knowledge on strategy that builds image and reputation of candidate and of party which influence public knowledge, beliefs, and action on political matters and vote for.

According to Meadow (1985) political communication is "the exchange of symbols and messages between political actors and institutions, the general public, and news media that are the products of or have consequences for the political system". The working definition provided by Perloff (Perloff 1998; as Cited Akhmadand Azhar 2016) that "the route by which a country's political actors, media, and citizen's exchange meaning upon messages that relate to the behaviour of public policy". While the observation of Neyazi, (2018) the process of political communication is affected by the gap between urban and rural, as well as inter- and intra-state differences on various development indicators such as literacy, poverty, urbanisation and media availability. India has experienced rise of print media followed by radio then television and more recently the cell phone, the internet and social media and as the time passed by the political actors and media have grown dependent on each other. Politics has become not only a persuasive but a performing art, in which considerations of style, and presentation and marketing are of equal if not greater importance than content and substance (McNair, 2011). The political actors use communications in volumes with loaded contents to present party and themselves to the voters. Probably for each factors of voting orientation different strategies have been implemented with political communication tools. Interestingly, the political branding strategies of building of candidate's image and party's reputation along with UK and USA (Butler & Harris (2009) the former to (Farhan and Ahmad, 2016) later the regional level of developing countries found increasing.

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Richard Speed, Patrick Butler & Neil Collins (2015) put forwards the
challenge infront of the managers that one need to identify and utilize the
associations customers currently hold about their brand to get success so
to the political actors need to know whether their party is oriented by the
voters.
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Speed, Butler, & Collins (2015) observe that political branding is within the area of multidisciplinary research. The concept of political branding, determinants of party's reputation, factors of candidate's image and component of voting behaviour requires establishing a correct understanding of concept before building theory on interrelationship of factors and usually hidden claims to light. (Scott L. Althaus, Forthcoming 2011)

**The determinants or dimension of these variables listed below:**

**Candidate Image**
- Recruiting celebrities
- Bureaucrats in Politics
- Social Worker in Politics
- Avoiding tainted politician
- Social entrepreneurs
- Selecting Non Political Members
- Royal lineage
- Joining Social Events by Candidate
- Standing for Promotion and issue
- Character
- Leadership

- Benevolence
- Charisma (Charming – Age)

**Party Branding**
- Social Media Groups
- Paid Advertising (PPC)
- Mobile Message
- Policies (*KaliaYojana ...*
- *Yatara*
- Youthful brand offering
- Brand slogan (*Swatchha    'O'    Niramal* )
- Brand Ambassador
- Creating Political Events
- Spoke persons
- News Channel

- Organised party
- Creating Government service and suppor

**Voting Behaviour**

- Forming Youth Association
- *(BijuYuvaBahini)*
- Age group Policy
- Gender wise policy
- Education and Employment message
- *Antaranga* (Youth Peace and Culture Initiator
- Political homogeneity
- Activation and reinforcement though youth engagement programme
- Engaging in political parties
- Performance Party
- Religion
- Caste
- Sub Nationalism
- Money
- Culture
- Secularism
- Strong leadership
- Election          Manifesto

**Political Branding**
"A brand is a multidimensional assembles regarding the mixing of practical and emotional values to healthy purchasers' overall performance and psychosocial needs. A brand may be defined as a call, time period, signal, image, or design, or combination of them that is meant to identify the goods and services of 1 supplier or organization of sellers and to distinguish them from the ones of competition'' (Kotler 1991: 442 Jenke, Libby and Huettel Scott A., 2016).

The term brand is everywhere now, applied not just to products, companies, organizations, and celebrities but also to cities, nations, and even private individuals. (Scammell, 2007; the field of political brands has been investigated that, how a brand is used by voters to differentiate between political parties (Scammell, 2007); (Smith and French, 2009) differentiate political branding from the prospective of political marketing, Smith, 2009) learns the project of identity or establish brand loyalty.  Against this background, (SiggeWinther Nielsen*, Martin Vinæs Larsen., 2013) studied the two fields of voting behavior and political brands to examine whether a party brand influences a voter's propensity to vote for that particular party.

Political brand is carefully related with balloting behaviour as (Nielsen & Larsen, 2014) stated that political brand value (PBV) has an effect on vote casting behavior.  Similarly, political party loyalty was discovered to have a strong impact on vote casting conduct (Schofield & Reeves, 2015). Consequently, non-public activities associated with the candidate, candidate's photo, cutting-edge activities surrounding the elections technique, interest in problems, and policies and spiritual ideals are factors that influence voting behavior (Farrag&Shamma, 2014).

**Candidate's Image (Brand Image)**
Why is political image so important? Nguyen and Leblanc (1998) defined image as a subjective knowledge, or mind-set which includes recognition is the sum values that

stakeholders characteristic to a business enterprise, based on their perception and interpretation of the image that the agency communicates over time.  Kinder (1986) additionally suggested that persona, i.e., image and identity building are seen as long period of stability by the candidate and when the voters ascribe developments to their political actors having a few basis for gauging the response in their political management to future needs.

The issue of how to deconstruct brand image insights extends to the context of political brand image. Research in political brand image 'is of critical importance and as such merits further analysis' (Smith 2001, 992) and continues to be the case (French and Smith 2010; Needham and Smith 2015; Phipps, M., J. Brace-Govan, and C. Jevons. 2010.)

The determinants or dimension 'Candidate Image' is understood in terms with Recruiting celebrities, Bureaucrats in Politics, Social Worker in Politics, Avoiding tainted politician, Social entrepreneurs, Selecting Non Political Members, Royal lineage, Joining Social Events by Candidate, Standing for Promotion and issue, Character, Leadership, Benevolence, Charisma.

In the book Hacker (1995, Ed., p 8 online) writes that studies have time after time confirmed that voters mostly interested in candidate characteristics than in particular issues and further likely to vote on the basis of the candidate's image. (Khatib 2012) writes that study findings indicate that candidate/party image exerted the strongest effect on influence on the electorate.

**Party's Reputation (Brand Reputation)**
Whether USA or Asia, the political actors are in the business of selling hope to people by several means and outlets convincing voters that it is this particular politician or political party that guarantees, as Lloyd (2005) puts it, successful management of national security, social stability, and economic growth on behalf of the electorate. Every party is extremely keen about building their reputation and influencing voters.

Experts like Aaker and Keller (1990) define that corporate reputation as a insight of quality associated with the corporate name. Further Fombrun (1996) states, that the reputation illustrates the relationship between name, identity, image and reputation of the company. While John Kay stated that reputation is the principal means through which a market economy with consumer offer section ignorance. It means that a company's reputation is the perception of the quality associated with the company name. It can also be defined as a knowledge that shows a number of value attributed by the stakeholders to the company based on the perception that communicated, resulting in their interpretation of the description of the company from time to time.

Based on the expert opinion of the above, the writer can conclude that the understanding of the organization's reputation when applied to the organization of political parties is a knowledge which shows the number of values that are attributed or perceived by the public and other stakeholders to a political party based on the perception that had been embedded in the minds of society, resulting in their interpretation of an image of a political party from time to time, when they hear or think about or remember the name of a political party.

**Voting Orientation**
Voting orientation of citizens have been spoken and written in volumes.  Samuel S. Eldersveld (2014) writes 'voting behaviour' is not new yet, it has been considered as applicable for study to understand political reality. The terms are used to understand as voting orientation, voting choices, voting behaviour, electorate choices. The process of dividing the

whole electorate into many different groups is called voter segmentation (Baines 2003; Cwalina 2011).

Why does a voter choose one candidate over another? Voting orientation is not confined to examination of numbers in election results and records of electoral spin orientation but involves an analysis of individual psychological processes  i.e., perception, emotion, and motivation and their relation to political action as well as of institutional patterns, such as the communication process and their impact on election.

Rui Jorge da Silva Antunes, (October 2008) mentions the main theoretical models that explain the electoral behaviour — sociological model of voting behaviour, psychosocial model of voting behaviour and rational choice theory, stressing the continuity and theoretical complementarity between them.

In the words of Plano and Riggs (as cited in Hazarika 2015), "Voting Behaviours is a field of study concerned with the ways in which people tend to vote in public election and the reasons why they vote as they do."  Voting orientation studies open windows on the minds of the millions of people who are involved in the political process as voters. Most major models of voter choice assume that voting reflects a rational judgment that compares what a voter wants to what a candidate promises – and thus maximizes the chance of desirable policy outcomes. One of the fundamental problems is voter's rational choice based on policy positions (e.g., key issues) and non-policy information (e.g., social identity, personality). (Jenke and Huette 2016)

Research in political science exhort that voting choice has long term determinants of party identification and ideology; short-term determinants like candidate characteristics and issue positions (Abrahamson, Aldrich & Rohde, flanigan & Zingale, 1998), Abrahamson P.R, Aldrich, J.H., & Rohde, D.W, 1999).

According Bhuian (2010) in the 2000 and 2004 elections Naveen Patnaik had two factors favouring him-being Biju Patnaik's son and a pro-NDA- Vajpayee wind. But in 2009 for the first time in the political history of Orissa it was Naveen Patniak and a regional political party-the BJD formed the government on his own capacity and personality.  But now according to Prakash Chandra Nayak, (Mar 28, 2019, Delhi Post) it is difficult to relate voting behaviours of people with political branding in Odisha, but there is a positive correlation between BJD, its number of elected party MLAs and MPs, and the vote margins.

Most important component are standardising the image of a candidate and building reputation of the parties through political communication.  The major challenge for campaign is the candidates' realization that they are not in a position to appeal to all voters of every persuasion. This capitalize that the candidate must break down the electorate into segments or groupings and then create a campaign platform that appeals to these targets.

**Exploring Image Effect on Voting**

India's political system as a developing democratic political system is gradually training the Indian voters. The process of emergence of an issue based political struggle in place of a caste or religion or personality dominated struggle for power is very slowly but gradually taking shape. Elections occupy a prominent place in the democratic government. It is a means through which people express and enforce their political opinion and regulate political organization of the society. An empirical study of the electoral orientation displays the astounding fact that the behaviour of man is influenced by several forces. The role of these forces can be discovered or discerned through empirical politics focused attention on how the favourable results of and elections are obtained.

There has been numbers of strategies proposed in the political marketing for win of the election. Nikolay Vankov (2013) outlines three different strategic dimensions, i.e. a selling-oriented, an instrument-oriented, and a relational political marketing.

Keller's suggest a Brand Equity Model which is also known the Customer-Based Equity (CBBE) Model. The four key points in the model are brand identity, branding meaning, branding response and branding relationship. The strong brand factors influence the strength of a particular product or brand. Once the factor is understood those factors a lunch of a new product effectively turns out to a successful one.

However the behaviour of a voter is influence by several factors such as religion, caste, community, language, money, policy or ideology, purpose of the polls, extent of franchise and the like political parties and groups make use of these variables for the sake of winning the battle of the ballot box.

"Electoral victors are those who excel at projecting imagery and symbolism. Iyengar.Kenneth L Hacker, (2004) an expert on political images, considers a candidate image as a sort of total impression of a candidate held by a member of the voting public Includes issue beliefs as well as personality considerations.

Scammell (2015) argue that a brand concept is a powerful tool for understanding political images. Smith (2005) believes that internal and external factors will affect the power of a particular event to influence party image. Meanwhile, the study of Pich & Armannsdottir (2015) focuses on operationalizing external brand image. The importance of brand image in politics has been studied by Khatib (2012) that a candidate's or a party's image employed the resilient effect on the success of political marketing. Accordingly, Guzmán, Paswan, &Steenburg (2014) shows voters see themselves and the candidate as a distinct brand.

There are measurement and techniques used to measure brand image. Guzmán& Sierra, (2009) use a combination of Aaker's brand personality and Caprara et al's candidate personality frameworks. Similarly, (Rutter et al., 2015) also use Aaker's brand personality scale to analyze the comparative brand positions of political parties. Whereas Cwalina & Falkowski, (2015) test the associations of the political brand in consumer mind by employing associative overlap technique while Pich& Dean (2015b) applied qualitative projective techniques.

The impact of hierarchical satisfaction factor type on voting behaviour in 2010 election was was studied Schofield and Reeves (2015) on the basis of three factors; basic factors (dissatisfiers) (2) excitement factors (satisfiers): (3) performance factors (hybrid factors):  In 2016 Banerjee, Saikat, Ray Chaudhri and Bibek explored the factors that need to be considered by the political parties to influence preference of voter for political brand but have not touched the views of political experts, into how preferences change when different national ruling party is in the centre, how much time is given to its implications for political branding. The correlation technique is used to compare one set of measure with another In voting behaviour research, the concern it with "why the voters for a candidate are distributed over a space and time.  The study will delve into analyse the strategic priority by the parties to build the image and reputation of the candidate and party through communication strategies.  The important point is to study from the political communication prospective what is interrelationship between the candidate's image and party reputation that drives the voting orientation in a regional politics.

There is a need to study the determinant of the candidate's image and the party's reputation to analyse the factors that interrelates and also find the latent factor the plays vital role for voting behaviour in regional political condition. In this study these factor/factors would enhance the strategies of the political communication to disseminate proper information to the electorate and the citizens.

Resulting framework explains which elements of a candidate's brand image are taken into consideration when making an electoral decision; it has a practical application for future political communication.

**Future Trend in Image Casting**

A well planned political communication effort involves people and empowers people to take rational and informed policy decisions through appropriate knowledge, inculcates necessary skills and optimism, facilitates and stimulates pertinent action through changed mindsets and modified behaviours.  The resulting change in the balance of power between policy producer (political parties and politicians as well as media) and policy consumer (Citizen), and the empowerment of self-authorship, has some potential impact on the future possibilities for a democracy which can be channelled via relational practices. The quiet Odisha, demanding a fully-fledged state of Odisha is being noticed for its constancy in voting behaviour to a single party for the Assembly and Parliamentary election to a single party inspite of the pressure and waive of other national parties.
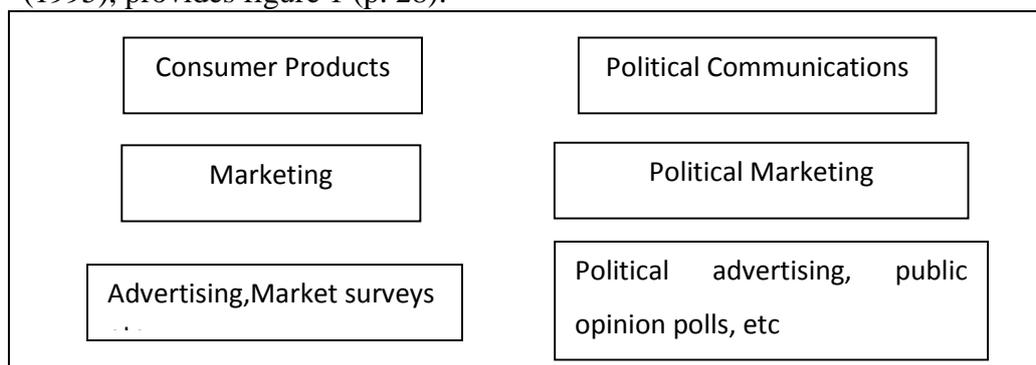
Assertively, as responsible political communicator should grab an opportunity to study the political communication taken place in the 2019 election in Odisha to understand study the branding strategies that took place to build image and reputation of the candidate and that of party.   There is a bigger scope to investigate the interrelationship of promotional techniques,with party's reputation and candidate's image in voting orientation in regional political communication. As in contrast, before election found shift from one party in the other regional and national politics. The possibility of analysing how party members adhere to party and building up of the candidate's image and party's reputation can be learnt from the regional parties of Odisha. The basic strategies followed by the parties are the background for our studies.

A sample is a smaller collection of units from a population used to determine facts and truths about that population (Field, 2005). The purpose of sampling is to gather data about the population in order to make an inference that can be generalized to the population. The population is too large for the researcher to venture to survey its entire member. A small but cautiously chosen sample can be used to represent the population. The sample reflects the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. In sampling sample size is important feature of empirical study.

Many studies have been done in this aspect with significant findings (Gopal K. et al. 2019, Ahmadbhat J. and Rajeesh C.S., 2019,  Sahoo B.K. 2016, Gopal K. and Verma R. 2018, Dhir P. 2009).

**Political Communications with marketing promotional strategies**

**Table 1.[1]** Kolovos and Harris (2005). As a visual aid for his use of terminology, Maarek (1995), provides figure 1 (p. 28):

| Consumer Products | Political Communications |
|---|---|
| Marketing | Political Marketing |
| Advertising,Market surveys | Political advertising, public opinion polls, etc |

Commercial and political marketing: two parallel strategies (adapted from Maarek),

**Table 1. Personality Traits[2]**

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[1] Kolovos and Harris (2005). As a visual aid for his use of terminology, Maarek (1995), provides figure 1 (p. 28)

[2] Rutter, Hanretty & Lettice (2015)

Rutter, Hanretty & Lettice (2015) have tried to understand the personality trait. The table is given below. (Selected Words from Opoku's Brand Personality Dictionary)

| Trait | Selected Words |
|---|---|
| Competence | Competent, guarantee, responsible, staunch, unshakable |
| Sincerity | Authentic, affable, down-to-earth, heartfelt, realistic |
| Sophistication | Celebrated, charismatic, distinguished, graceful |
| Ruggedness | Challenge, endeavor, rigorous, tough, unrestrained |
| Excitement | Bold, courageous, fresh, inventive, stirring |

Table 3: **Construct of Image and Promotional Technique of Party**[3] Elizabeth & Melissa (2013)

| Factors of image and Party Promotional Technique | |
|---|---|
| **Candidate Image** | **Party Branding** |
| Recruiting celebrities | Social Media Groups |
| Bureaucrats in Politics | Paid Advertising (PPC) |
| Social Worker in Politics | Mobile Message |
| Avoiding tainted politician | Policies (*KaliaYojana* ... |
| Social entrepreneurs | *Yatara* |
| Selecting Non Political Members | Brand Ambassador |
| Royal lineage | Youthful brand offering |
| Joining Social Events by Candidate | Brand slogan (*Swatchha  'O' Niramal* |
| Standing for Promotion and issue | News Channel |
| Character | Organised party |
| Leadership | Creating Political Events |
| Benevolence | Spoke persons |
| | Charisma (Charming – Age) |
| | Creating Government Service |
| | Support |

**Conclusion:**

"Electoral victors are those who excel at projecting imagery and symbolism, but not necessarily those who offer substantive expertise, political experience or pragmatism." Iyengar. Kenneth Hacker, an expert on political images, considers a candidate image as a sort of total impression of a candidate held by a member of the voting public Includes issue beliefs as well as personality considerations.[4] Experts debate the importance of pure image vis-à-vis other vote influences such as political party and issue stands, but most acknowledge that it is a significant factor in vote choice. Greater for the less-well-informed voters who perceive and make preferences through image.

There is a growing concern to express regarding shaping candidate's image through political communication. There are several attempts have been made to find out candidates' images both in verbal and nonverbal way to present candidate image for voter's preferences. Image manipulation and creation have shaped the voting orientation of the voters.

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