

A Functional Analysis of a Political Leader in Terms of Marketing

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Abstract : The new economic, social and political world order has led to the emergence of a wide range of persuasion strategies and practices based on an ever expanding marketing axis that involves organizations, ideas and persons as well as products and services. It is seen that since the 1990's, a wide variety of competitive marketing ideas have been offered systematically to target audiences in the field of politics as in other fields. When the components of marketing are taken into consideration, all kinds of communication efforts involving "political leaders", who are conceptualized as products in terms of political marketing, serve a process of social persuasion, which cannot be restricted to election periods only, and a manageable "image". In this context, image, which is concerned with how the political product is perceived, involves not only the political discourses shared with the public but also all kinds of biographical information about the leader, the leader's specific way of living and routines and his/her attitudes and behaviors in their private lives, and all these are regarded as components of the "product image". While on the one hand the leader's verbal or supra-verbal references serve the way the "spirit of the product" is perceived -just as in brand positioning- they also show their self-esteem levels, in other words how they perceive themselves on the other hand. Indeed, their self-esteem levels are evaluated in three fundamental categories in the "Functional Analysis", namely parent, child and adult, and it is revealed that the words, tone of voice and body language a person uses makes it easy to understand at what self-esteem level that person is. In this context, words, tone of voice and body language, which provide important clues as to the "self" of the person, are also an indication of how political leaders evaluate both "themselves" and "the mass/audience" in the communication they establish with their audiences. When the matter is taken from the perspective of Turkey, the levels of self-esteem in the relationships that the political leaders establish with the masses are also important in revealing how our society is seen from the perspective of a specific leader. Since the leader is a part of the marketing strategy of a political party as a product, this evaluation is significant in terms of the forms of relationships between political institutions in our country with the society. In this study, the self-esteem level in the documentary entitled "Master's Story", where Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's life history is told, is analyzed in the context of words, tone of voice and body language. Within the scope of the study, at what level of self-esteem Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was in the "Master's Story", a documentary broadcast on Beyaz TV, was investigated using the content analysis method. First, based on the Functional Analysis Literature, a transactional approach scale was created regarding parent, adult and child self-esteem levels. On the basis of this scale, the prime minister's self-esteem level was determined in three basic groups, namely "tone of voice", "the words he used" and "body language". Descriptive analyses were made to the data within the framework of these criteria and at what self-esteem level the prime minister spoke throughout the documentary was revealed.

Keywords : political marketing, leader image, level of self-esteem, transactional approach

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