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The Role of Political Marketing in Enhancing the Perceived Image of the Candidate an Analytical Study of the Views of a Sample of Iraqi Society

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ABSTRACT

In light of the technological competition and modern marketing theories produced by globalization and the pursuit of the customer wherever he is, and the need to spread the principles and ideas that need laws, means and methods that govern them, devices, equipment and men specializing in the field of marketing to implement them, a new reality has emerged, which is the transfer of commercial marketing traditions to a new type of marketing. It is political marketing that deals with political events instead of dealing with goods and services and using them intelligently in achieving the required policy. It aims to name political symbols, increase financial aid and build a political program using the elements of the political marketing mix to reach a predetermined goal in order to employ the aspirations of public opinion, which has now occupied a wide place in contemporary democracies, especially in directing government systems and guiding their politicians to act in a specific way, and to take decisions that suit the broad public base. As a result, there has been an increase in interest in public opinion polls, which have become one of the features of life in modern democracies. The coordination process has also become clear between opinion research centers and decision-making centers to create harmony and harmony between decisions taken on various issues and public opinion trends towards them. In pursuit of the objectives of the study, a public opinion poll directed at a sample of Iraqi society was used on the practical side. On the theoretical side, a group of Arab and foreign sources, articles, and what was published on the Internet were used.

KEYWORDS

Political marketing, Perceived image, Iraqi Society

INTRODUCTION

Presidential elections are considered a form of rotation of power in developed societies, and respecting public opinion through referendum and referring to the people in crucial issues is an important matter. The problem of the study comes from the lack of awareness of the concept and importance of political marketing in gaining the support of public opinion and the success of politicians in their political life, similar to the successful experiences that have emerged from the practical application of this aspect. In other countries, therefore, the following inquiries can be made:

1. Is there a role for the political producer in changing the perceived image of the candidate?
2. Is there a role for political finance in changing the perception of the candidate?
3. Is there a role for political promotion in changing the perceived image of the candidate?
4. Is there a role for political distribution in changing the perceived image of the candidate?

First: Significance of the Study:

This study is important on the theoretical and practical levels, as it:

1. It is a new marketing topic that is distinct from traditional market research.
2. The importance of the study stems from the need of politicians to market themselves to the public in the most convincing way possible.
3. The research is an attempt to reach the most accurate methods leading to finding the local public opinion trends for later use by the candidates.

Second: Objectives of the Study:

It can be summarized as follows:

1. Presenting some marketing ideas and opinions related to political marketing that the candidate relies on in the presidential or local elections.
2. Choose the factors and variables that affect the formation of Iraqi public opinion regarding the elections.

Third: Hypotheses of the Study:

The study seeks to test the following hypotheses:

The first main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant correlation between political marketing and the perceived image of the candidate.

The following sub hypotheses are divided into:

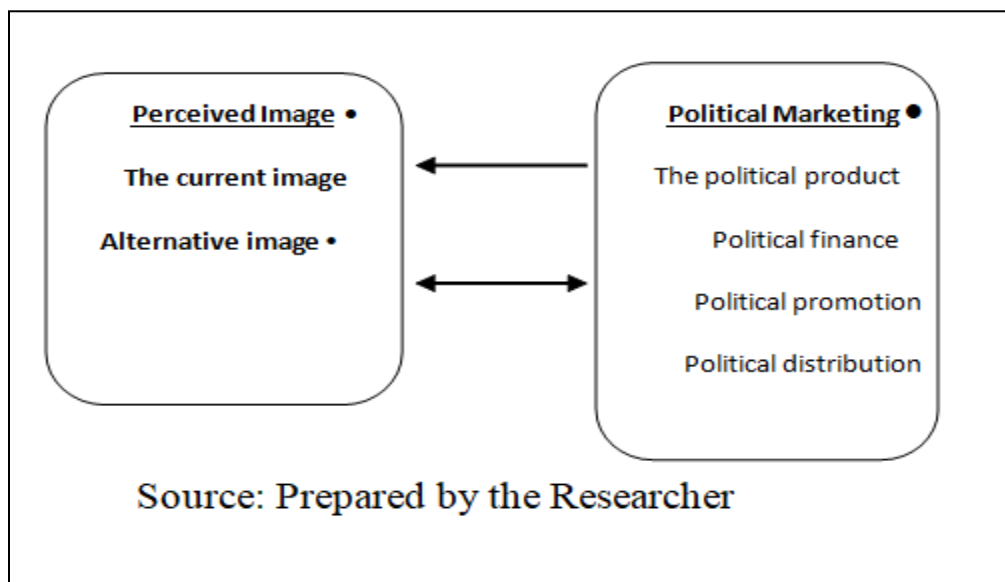
- 1- The first subset: There is a statistically significant correlation between the political product and the perceived image of the candidate.

- 2- The second subset: There is a statistically significant correlation between political finance and the candidate's perceived image.
- 3- The third subset: There is a statistically significant correlation between political promotion and the perceived image of the candidate.
- 4- The fourth subset: There is a statistically significant correlation between the political distribution and the perceived image of the candidate.

The second main hypothesis: There is a statistically significant influence relationship between political marketing and the perceived image of the candidate. The following sub hypotheses are divided into:

- 1- The first subset: there is a statistically significant influence relationship between the political product and the perceived image of the candidate.
- 2- The second subset: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between political finance and the candidate's perceived image.
- 3- The third subset: There is a statistically significant influence relationship between political promotion and the perceived image of the candidate.
- 4- The fourth subset: There is a statistically significant influence relationship between the political distribution and the perceived image of the candidate.

Fourth: Hypothesis Development



2. DEFINITION OF POLITICAL MARKETING

The Legal Institute for Marketing, which is considered the largest professional administrative body for marketing in Europe, defined political marketing as “those activities performed by persons or organizations, whether benefiting or not benefiting, in order to convince two parties.” (Scammell, 1995: 7) This definition is general and comprehensive and does not specify the most beneficial party. He is the political candidate.

As for the American consultants 'definition of political marketing, it is" strategic campaign planning, "or" technical and appeals to a strategic target group. "(Farrel, 1998: 52)

He also defined “the different processes through which the perception of the voter is transformed” (Baines, 1999: 33).

The intense competition surrounding the election atmosphere and the need for absolute victory in the ballot box (the referendum) led to the definition of focusing on every procedure that leads the candidate to victory.

How to Build a Market-Adapted Political Candidate Model:

The market-adapted candidate is the candidate who seeks to confirm his general behavior in order to ensure that his needs are met in order to achieve his goals, and that the market-adapted candidate is not interested in changing his ideas or people's minds, but in following them and focusing on the needs of voters, and there are four main activities through which the candidate tries to use political marketing, namely: (Marshment, 1998: 3) 0

1. Use of Market Intelligence

The term Intelligence is defined as "the secret gathering and distribution of information, especially confidential and ambiguous information, for the purpose of preparing it for decision-making in order to increase the capacity of the organization." (Sadiq, 2003: 12) Through this intelligence, the political party can discover the needs and requirements of the voters and who are looking for their support through marketing experts such as vote collection agencies, direct mail consultants, and local experts, in order to know the results of vote collection.

2. Behavior Modification

The candidate designs his behavior (or political product) based on results obtained with Market Intelligence. The design of the new product takes several considerations (Cott, 1995: 70)

- A. Designs a candidate capable of communicating results and promises.
- B. Estimate how voters react to the proposed change.

C. He may change the design of the product, if necessary, to ensure its acceptance after studying the reasons for its strength and weakness.

3. Organizational Implementation

In order for the candidate to guarantee the design of his new production to be effective and attractive, he needs a convincing organization because the change may meet public anger and arouse the opponents of the candidate's party (Cannon, 1996: 6) and so that the candidate is wary of potential problems and is ready to solve them.

4. Transforming the New Behavior

Political Marketing Mix

Marketing is an activity that consists of a group of activities called Marketing Mix. The first was given by Edmund J. Mc Carthy in his book Basic Management in the mid-1960s (Barwari, 2002: 67). The importance of this mixture for the product is no less than its importance for the candidate in political marketing, as the basis for the success of marketing activities and programs depends mainly and fundamentally on the appropriate and integrated selection of the elements of the mixture in order to achieve its purpose.

What is meant by the marketing mix "is a group of elements through which the organization can influence the consumer reaction towards a product (good or service)." (Joseph, 2001: 253). It is "a group of means that can be controlled for the purpose of managing and directing the changing and uncontrolled marketing environment, which consists of four main elements: product, price, distribution and promotion." ([http / upetd. Vp.Ac. Zed](http://upetd.Vp.Ac.Zed)). The elements of the marketing mix are integrated and interact with each other, so the speech delivered by the political candidate in any council or hall will not be political marketing unless it is integrated with modern music, balloons, colored flags, laser lights, dazzling banners and video screens in order for the candidate to deliver his speech. (Eggn, 1999: 12) 0

The political marketing mix consists of four elements: (Kotler, 1982: 332)

1. Product (political candidate) Product.
2. Promotion.
3. Financing.
4. Place.

Party Image:

That is, what is the image of the party to which the political candidate belongs, which is the extent to which the public knows the party or what image the public has in the party to which the

political candidate belongs. In the 1987 elections in London Thatcher, when the candidate was chosen in the Conservative Party, it was great news, as it is a major party and does not need A professional marketing expert to familiarize the public with this party for the elections (Marshment, 2003: 4).

Political Promotion

Promotion is one of the important elements of the political marketing mix, and the word promotion in Arabic means “promote - boom - boom: a tunnel and its promotion: its expense.” so the word recreation means the execution of something, and in order for the thing to be spent, one must communicate with others and introduce him to them. (Al-Alaq & Rababa'a, 2002: 9). Promotion defines "it is communication that builds and maintains relationships by informing and convincing the audience of viewers of the organization's viewpoint in a positive manner and acceptance of its products." (2000: 435) (Pride: It is also meant "one of the free marketing systems that uses effective communication as a tool for influence, in our social system. The free economist shows promotion in actions that influence the feeling, belief, and behavior of the consumer (Stanton & other, 2001: 490).

3. PERCEIVED IMAGE

First: Concept of the Perceived Image

An image expresses people's thoughts about an object, person, or organization (Okay, 2000). And that these thoughts are either positive or negative as they are formed in the mind of the individual after a long period of time and interaction with the elements of the system (Dichter, 1985). Moffitt (1994) describes the picture as a concept that has evolved through personal, environmental, and cultural factors and throughout history (Polat, 2011: 257). The perceived image is a very important matter for the organization because it reflects the nature of the internal relations of the organization through the interaction of workers with each other and their interaction with the management in order to achieve their goals that they want to achieve that are consistent with the objectives of the administration, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the image perceptions are of great importance because they represent the opinions and beliefs of individuals outside the organization about the organization and therefore the continuous organizational work to enhance and improve the image has a very positive impact in enhancing the competitive position of the organization among its competing organizations in the same industry (Dutton et al., 1994: 240).

The social cognitive theory that focused on direct and indirect cognitive processing and symbolic sources of information in determining the behavioral patterns of individuals indicated that individuals make judgments and act based on personal experiences and factors as well as socially constructed beliefs that interact with each other. Accordingly, members can extract these perceptions from individual and external experiences of their organizations. According to these sources, the images that the members of the organizations carry about their organizations can be understood in two ways: the way in which the member personally thinks about his organization or the way in which he believes that others think about the organization. Image is a complex concept. It has different conditions, as it relates to the perceptions of individuals outside and within the organization (Riordan et al., 1997: 402). According to researchers in the Organizational Perception Department, the perceived image is a relatively organized view of individuals outside and within the organization that reflects the current status of the organization from the discriminatory classifications (organizational honesty, organizational consistency, and trust).

Elsbach (2006) can also be said that the perceived image expresses the beliefs of the organization's members about how others think about the organization (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991: 547). A number of studies in the administrative literature, especially organizational behavior, concluded that the perceived image has positive and negative relationships with many variables, for example the image of the organization is positively related to job satisfaction but it is negatively related to work turnover (Riordan et al, 1997: 404).

A study (O'Neill & Gaither, 2007) shows a positive relationship between the external perceived image and identity. Some research in the healthcare sector has found a positive correlation between perceived external perception and cooperative behaviors of clinicians (Gunalan & Ceylan, 2014: 150). The cognitive efforts made by writers concerned with the behavioral aspect of the organization have attempted to formulate a set of definitions that would clarify what the perceived organizational picture is and explain it in a way that contributes to clearly clarifying it to the recipient, the student, or the concerned person in the behavioral sciences. Table (1) presents some definitions of the perceived image presented by some writers, according to chronological precedence.

Table 1: *Some Definitions of the Perceived Organizational Picture*

No	Year	Source	Definition
1	1994	Treadwell and Harrison ,1994:66	Perception, which includes beliefs, attitudes, and impressions related to behavior and related aspects of the organization.
2	1997	Riordan et. al.,1997:402	Individuals' perceptions of the actions, activities, and accomplishments of the organization and the organization's ranking in comparison with other organizations.
3	1998	Barber ,1998:626	It is a general impression based on facts, beliefs and feelings about an organization.
4	2000	Bromley, 2000:240	Perceptions on the part of insiders of how people outside the organization view the organization.
5	2000	Gioia et al., 2000:66	Perceptions of organization members of how others (external components) see and those inside the organization (internal components).
6	2007	O'Neill & Gaither, 2007 :442	The organizational reputation that individuals maintain outside the organization from the organization and the information that the individuals working within the organization have.

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the literature on the topic

The researcher sees that the perceived image (the set of characteristics and characteristics that characterize the organization or individual that are evaluated by individuals within the organization as well as individuals outside the organization).

Second: Importance of the Perceived Image

The perceived image has always been a way for organizations to communicate with the basic values and goals of the internal members of the organization and its external audience, and although the image affects many different business operations of the organization, and plays a pivotal role in the polarization phase in employee selection systems, it is important for organizations to convey information to providers. Requests during the recruitment phase. The image of the organization shows information about its values, culture and goals, which in turn allows the researcher what he needs about the job in order to be more familiar with the personality of the organization, and recent technological developments have affected the way in which organizations can transmit their image to individuals outside the organization (Braddy, et al., 2008).

The role and importance of the perceived image of the organization is not limited to this limit, but there are many areas in which the perceived image can affect, and these areas can be included in the following points:

1. The perceived image affects many outputs, whether directly or indirectly, as a positive image affects the quality, reputation, position and attractiveness of the organization in a positive way. Moreover, the perceived image influences some employee-related variables. For example, perceived image influences employee performance, motivation, work, collaboration, job satisfaction, and commitment as well as sustainability (Polat, 2009: 12).
2. The employees who have a more positive image are more likely to identify themselves with the organization more and that there is an important positive relationship between the positive perceptual image and the positive organizational behavior of individuals. Consequently, employees with perceived positive images are less likely to have Duran intentions (Dukerich et al., 2002: 522).
3. The importance of perceiving the perceived image comes in its ability to influence the performance of the organization's employees and the behaviors and attitudes of external stakeholders. The first impression that organizations leave on consumers is very effective in forming perception of the image and it is crucial in creating a positive image towards the organization (Collins & Stevens, 2001: 6). Organizations strive to create a positive image among their target audiences, as organizations need to evaluate their image frequently. This is to ensure its durability (Gray & Balmer, 1998).

4. The perceived image not only contributes to achieving success but also maintains that success (Rüyam, 2017).
5. The perceived image is an important element in attracting individuals who are outside the organization and recruiting them and working to employ the individuals that the organization needs for the sustainability of its work, through the symbolic features and meanings of the organization (Nolan, 2010: 646).
6. Workers' perception of the image contributes to improving performance, and has a significant impact on employee attitudes and behavior and increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and well-being at work (Torres, 2017: 124).
7. Attracting the best number of candidates to fill the positions in the organization, and retaining high-performing employees. The perceived image is the link between the members of the organization (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2004).
8. The perceived image enhances the social responsibility of the organization through the organization's contribution to preserving the environment and enhancing environmental awareness (Melew, 2005). The perceived image is an important resource in the competitive race and the positive image helps to attract customers to the organization (Flavian: et al., 2005).

Third: Managing the Perceived Image

Perceived image management is a practical model through which organizations try to create and maintain their image, and in some cases, restore the image of the organization itself in the eyes of stakeholders. (Botan & Hazleton, 1989: 14). Perceived imagery management refers to actions taken to create and preserve, and when necessary, to restore the desired image in the eyes of stakeholders. The image of the organization "is a holistic and comprehensive impression conveyed by a specific individual or group towards an organization, and communicating with it, as this communication occurs by the organization through managers or spokespersons for the organizations, and as a result, deliberate attempts to influence the general impression (Hatch & Schultz, 1997: 359) Research shows that organizations must maintain a desirable image in order to be successful, as there are more failures for organizations that are unable to effectively and efficiently manage the image of the organization (Seeger et al., 1998) .Over the past three decades, researchers have shown an interest. Increase in the general concepts of organizations, including concepts such as credibility, reputation, identity and image Despite the presence of some kind of confusion or single treatment of the mentioned concepts, however, we can explain

each concept independently with an explanation of the similarities and differences between the concepts.

1- Credibility The interest in credibility has increased dramatically in recent years due to openly unethical practices, crises, and the increasing role of the media as a regulatory watchdog. The credibility of the organization is defined as “the perceived experience and reliability of the organization” or it is “the extent to which consumers feel that the organization has the knowledge or ability to meet its demands and whether or not the organization can be trusted to know the truth (Newell & Goldsmith, 1997: 235).

4. PRACTICAL SIDE OF THE RESEARCH

First: The research community and sample

The research was practically applied by distributing a questionnaire containing (16) questions to a sample from the Iraqi community of (50) persons of voting age from the age of 18 years and over, and of both sexes in the Muthanna Governorate, as shown in the following tables:

1- Distribution of the sample according to gender.

Table 2

Distribution of the Sample According to Gender

Gender	Number	Ratio
Males	35	%70
Females	15	%30
Total	50	%100

Source: Prepared by the researcher

2- Distribution of the sample according to age

Table 3

Distribution of the Research Sample According to Age

Age	Number	Ratio
30-18	15	%30
40-31	13	%26
50-41	12	%24
51	10	%20
Total	50	%100

Source: Prepared by the researcher

Second: Present the results of the research statistics and interpret the results

Apply the research in the current discussion to the present research results statistics with analysis and interpretation until the results. Among the two variables, the first variable is the political adjustment, but the second variable is the accredited image, including all the balance sheets for the calculated and standard deviations.

One of the answers to the level of answers in the light of median arithmetic is to determine the extent to which it is possible. Although the research is based on the five-letter scale (agreed - agreed - agreed - disagreed - disagreed), then there are only five complementary arithmetic mediums. The length of the span is determined by the length of the span ($4 = 1-5$), and then the span of the span is equal to the number of spots (5) ($0.80 = 5 \setminus 4$). Then add (0.80) to the limit of scales (1) or from the higher limit of scales (5), to make it more efficient (Dewberry, 2004: 15).

- 1 1.80: abbreviated separation

1.81 - 2 - 2.60: Decreased

2.61 - 3 - 3.40: Moderate

3.41 - 4 - 4.20: High

4.21 - 5 - 5.0: Separate plateau

1: Political approval

Table 4 shows the balance of balance and standard deviations, the level of response, and the intensity of political change. Note from the table (4) that the poverty (9) has a higher average arithmetic balance (2.16), and deviations from the standard (1.06), which means that the previous record and the permissions have a strong effect on the attention of the public. The response from the eyewitness account is as high as the poverty rate and the deviation from the standard of deviation when the rate is (1.06) and it is clear that there is a difference in the number of eyewitness accounts. Achieved averaging of accounts (1.82), deviating from the standard (0.89) and increasingly answerable (36.40%) from the point of view of the eyewitnesses, and this poverty has been reduced to a lesser degree than what has been reported. The table shows (4) that the variable of political appropriation is medically calculated to be equal to the general amount (2.009) and the deviation from the standard (0.959), and the excess of the answer (40%) and the result of this variable is equal to the answer (excluded). Table of Contents (4) measuring balance and standard deviations and the level of responsiveness and intensity to change the political apparatus.

Table 4

Weighted Arithmetic Means, Response Intensity, Standard Deviation, and Response Level for the Competitive Flexibility Dimension

No	Relative importance	Level of the answer	Standard deviation	Severity of the answer	Arithmetic mean	Phrase
1	Ninth	Low	0.80	37.20%	1.86	The best candidate for my district, sub-district, or district in which I live.
2	Third	Low	1.04	42.80%	2.14	The candidate of the city in which I live is more interested in it than others.
3	Eight	Low	0.95	39.07%	1.95	During the election period, the candidate conveys a good idea for political promotion.
4	Fourth	Low	1.03	41.73%	2.09	The best candidate who professes his political affiliation.
5	Fifth	Low	0.97	41.07%	2.05	The candidate's affiliation to his clan and reliance on it for nomination is a negative case.
6	Tenth	Low	0.89	36.40%	1.82	The candidate's personality influences my choice.

7	Sixth	Low	1	42.00%	2.1	The image of the party the candidate belongs to influences my choice.
8	Second	Low	0.99	43.07%	2.15	The promises made by the candidate are important to my choice.
9	First	Low	1.06	43.20%	2.16	The candidate's record and past achievements influence my selection
10	Seventh	Low	0.93	39.20%	1.96	A candidate's funding sources influence my choice.
11	Tenth	Low	0.89	36.40%	1.82	Donation of money by the public enhances the candidate's success in the election.
12		Low	0.959	40%	2.009	The overall rate of the political marketing variable

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the questionnaire

Table (4) shows that the sample masses are not affected by the political marketing and political advertising campaigns carried out by the parties in order to promote their candidates in the electoral campaigns, and the sample members interact in a low manner with the programs of the candidates they campaign before the elections.

2- The perceived image

Table (5) shows the weighted arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the level and intensity of the response for the perceived image variable. It is noted from Table (5) that Paragraph (4)

obtained the highest weighted arithmetic mean of (2.16), and a standard deviation (1.06), which means that despite the candidate's endeavor to introduce himself and his electoral program using modern means, he is still below the required level. What supports this is that the value of the standard deviation of the answers of the sample members was the most dispersed compared to the answers of the rest of the paragraphs, and the paragraph got a low level of the answer, and the response intensity reached (43.20%) from the point of view of the sample members, while paragraph (1) got the least arithmetic mean As it reached (1.82) with a standard deviation (0.89) and the intensity of the answer reached (36.40%) from the viewpoint of the sample members, and this paragraph has a low response level, which indicates the weakness of the services provided by the candidate in the community in which he lives and the weakness of his interaction with community and work issues. Find solutions. It is evident from Table (5) that the perceived image variable achieved a general arithmetic mean of (2.04) and a standard deviation (0.98), and the response intensity amounted to (40.77%) and at (low) response level, which indicates the weak effect of the candidate's image in the research sample.

Table 5

Weighted Arithmetic Means, Response Intensity, Standard Deviation, and Response Level for the Competitive Flexibility Dimension

No	Relative importance	Level of the answer	Standard deviation	Severity of the answer	Arithmetic mean	Phrase
1	Fifth	Low	0.89	36.40%	1.82	The candidate provides quality services to the community to which he belongs.
2	third	Low	1	42.00%	2.1	The candidate informs about his activities through periodic newsletters or social media.
3	second	Low	0.99	43.07%	2.15	You have a good impression of the candidate and their activities.

4	first	Low	1.06	43.20%	2.16	The candidate uses modern and sophisticated means to identify himself.
5	fourth	Low	0.93	39.20%	1.96	The candidate makes an electoral promise that he is able to fulfill.
6	second	Low	0.98	40.77%	2.04	The general rate of the perceived image variable

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the questionnaire N = 50

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First: Conclusions

After conducting the statistical analysis on the sample responses based on the questionnaire that was distributed to the research sample, the researcher came out with a set of conclusions, which are as follows:

- 1- The results of the statistical analysis showed that the candidate's record, history, and previous achievements had a strong influence on the public's orientation towards choosing the candidate.
- 2- The results of the statistical analysis showed that the personality of the candidate and the electoral promises he makes do not affect the decision of the research sample choosing him as their candidate in the provincial councils or parliamentary elections.
- 3- The results of the statistical analysis are clear. Despite the candidate's use of social media and modern technologies in order to interact and gain the support of the public, this influence is limited and does not significantly affect the decision of the sample members to choose the candidate.
- 4- The results of the statistical analysis showed that the candidate has little interaction with the issues of the society in which he lives and shows increased interest in these issues only during the electoral campaign period, which caused a lack of confidence between the public and the candidate according to the opinion of the research sample.

Second: Recommendations

The research came out with a set of recommendations that could enhance the candidate's image during and after the election campaign he adopts, and these recommendations are:

1. The candidate must have a good history in order to be respected and trusted by the voter.
2. The necessity for electoral promises to be applicable and not to exaggerate the fanciful promises.
3. The candidate's interest in ways of interacting with the electorate and not being satisfied with the virtual world.
4. The candidate's focus on providing services to the community in which he lives, and not only providing this service during the election campaign, but rather the need to continue even after the end of the elections, regardless of the election results.

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