Analysis of the literature on political marketing using a bibliometric approach

Krishna Teja Perannagari | Somnath Chakrabarti

Department of Marketing, Indian Institute of Management Kashipur, Kashipur, India

Correspondence
Somnath Chakrabarti, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, Indian Institute of Management Kashipur, Kashipur, Uttarakhand 244713, India.
Email: somnath.chakrabarti@iimkashipur.ac.in

The current study presents a quantitative investigation of the literature on political marketing using a bibliometric approach. This study has analyzed 214 documents collected from the Web of Science database for the period between 1996 and 2018 using VOSviewer software and bibliometrix R package. Based on the insights gained from the analysis, the authors discuss the structural characteristics of various scientific agents involved in the publication process. The results of this study indicate that the literature on political marketing is highly fragmented and is still in its nascent stages. It further stresses the need to improve collaboration among researchers and promote this discipline within the research community.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The marketing concept has evolved, and its scope extends beyond conventional products and services to include offerings by nonbusiness organizations (Kotler & Levy, 1969). Given that each political party has a mission, structure, competition, and a reporting hierarchy for the members, it can be considered a nonbusiness organization (Katz & Mair, 1994). Analogous to other organizations, political parties also strive very hard to communicate their policy offerings and ensure the party's victory in general elections (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

Political marketing is the application of different marketing techniques and concepts by political actors to achieve the goals of the political organization (Ingram & Lees-Marshment, 2002). Political marketing is descriptive as it explains the exchange dynamics involved in political activities and prescriptive as it helps in understanding constituents and recognizing sympathizers and provides recommendations about how to accomplish the goals of the political organization. This concept was first used by Stanley Keller to explain mass persuasion in political propaganda (Scammell, 1999). When the definition of marketing was modified in 1985 to add the word ideas by the American Marketing Association, this concept received acceptance into the marketing literature.

As the discipline received acceptance among academicians, studies focused on voter behavior, political branding, social media marketing, and image management, among others. However, there is a shortage of research papers focusing on the publication activity, characteristics of existing studies, and their contribution to the advancement of literature. To fill the mentioned research gaps and explain the relevance as well as penetration of political marketing within the academic discipline, the authors have identified bibliometric analysis as the most appropriate technique.

This study presents an up-to-date overview of the research literature to facilitate a greater understanding of the concepts of political marketing and acts as a preliminary reference for new entrants to get familiar with the discipline. The approach adopted in the current study provides useful information to guide the researchers about publication opportunities, key actors (publication sources, institutions, and countries, among others), and cooperative practices. The study also highlights the structural characteristics of different scientific agents involved in the publication process. Based on the insights from the analysis, research agenda for advancing the literature in the political marketing discipline is developed.

2 | THEORY AND BACKGROUND

Political marketing is an outcome of societal-level changes resulting in a decline in political partisanship, technological advancements such as the emergence of Web 2.0, and environmental trends like globalization and marketization. Political marketing emerged as a separate discipline by borrowing the notion of exchange, relationship perspective, and market intelligence techniques from marketing; definitions and models that help in distinguishing and determining the behavior of

political parties from political science; and the art of persuasion, communication channel management, and advertising strategies from political communications (Scammell, 1999). The most important distinction among campaign studies, political communications, and political marketing is that political marketing puts strategy at the core of the entire political process, whereas earlier approaches emphasize promotional techniques and ideologies (Harrop, 1990; Nielsen, 2012).

Marketing concepts have been developed primarily for the commercial world and not for the political arena. The political arena is highly competitive, with the competition governed by a set of rules and political decision-making power vested with the electorate. Political offerings are complex, intangible, and bundled and have no costs associated with them (Scammell, 1999). Further, usage of slogans, names, symbols, and other brand associations of the political party are mostly unrestrained and create ambiguity about the brand image (Lock & Harris, 1996). Due to these substantial differences, applying marketing principles and techniques to politics needs adaptation to improve the predictive power and to increase the validity of prescriptions in the complex environment (Scrivens & Witzel, 1990).

The marketing paradigm advocated by political marketing has three distinct strategic orientations: selling, instrument mix, and relationship building (Vankov, 2013). Selling orientation focuses on the policies of a political party, uses undifferentiated one-way communication involving push marketing instruments, and has a short-term electoral orientation. Instrument-mix orientation focuses on the voter needs, uses differentiated targeting strategies with an emphasis on channel management, and employs both push and pull marketing instruments. In the instrument-mix orientation, the policy promises are formulated based on the needs of the floating voters for attracting more votes and resources. Relationship-building orientation focuses on both the voter and societal needs, employs microtargeting strategies directed towards different voter segments, and displays a long-term governance orientation. In the relationship-building orientation, the emphasis is laid on dialogue-based strategies and implementation of the policy promises. The orientation adopted by a political organization is not specific, and parties employ the orientations to varying degrees based on the circumstances of the political arena, institutional factors, and voter characteristics.

The relationship-building orientation is not widely adopted due to some practical considerations, even though the orientation is most appealing due to its focus on deliverable voter demands. The consumer focus ideology promoted by relationship-building orientation contradicts the traditional political view, which advocates arguing the rationale for existing manifesto rather than redesigning it to meet the voter and societal needs. The beliefs of leaders, party members, voters, and their relationships need to be reformed to incorporate the consumer focus into politics. Other factors such as the ideology adopted by the political party, resources constraints, voter characteristics, and competition among the political parties also impact the orientation of the political party (Ormrod, 2011).

Political marketing concepts have also received criticism from policymakers due to the emergence of issues related to ethics, advertising standards, regulatory restrictions, and shifting of focus from real issues concerning public welfare (Lock & Harris, 1996). Many complexities and governance rules make it difficult to test the marketing models in the political environment. In many instances, political marketing literature was unable to provide a causal explanation of the political phenomenon as it was beyond the scope of the subject, and this raised several questions among the academia about its status as a separate discipline (Henneberg, 2004).

Another major criticism associated with political marketing is the transformation of a citizen representing a country to a mere consumer of the political offering. Although the transformation is considered an outcome of changes in the environmental factors resulting in individuals experiencing insecurity as a citizen and empowerment as a consumer, the perceptions associated with consumer and citizen have raised many concerns (Scammell, 2007). Whereas a citizen is considered to be a rational authority of the political sphere who shares moral obligations towards societal problems, a consumer, on the contrary, is a passive actor focused on own self-consumption and subject to emotional manipulation (Varey, 2010).

In the last few years, political marketing discipline has experienced a significant rise in the quantity and quality of publications despite the above criticism. Academia also witnessed special issues, handbooks, and conferences dedicated to political marketing discipline in the last decade. *Journal of Political Marketing* and *Journal of Public affairs* have emerged as two leading journals in this discipline and have contributed significantly to the advancement of literature (Harris & Lock, 2010).

The present section discusses the most crucial concepts of political marketing to provide a brief outline of this discipline and assists in setting the context of the study. Summarizing the vast amount of existing research literature using traditional review techniques is beyond the scope of a research paper, and hence to overcome this limitation, the authors have chosen the bibliometric approach in the current study.

3 | METHODOLOGY

In the current paper, bibliometric analysis is used to measure, analyze, and summarize the available literature on political marketing. Bibliometric methods have been used earlier by researchers to measure publication activity in various domains (de Araújo, Pedron, & Picoto, 2018; Pasadeos & Renfro, 1992). The bibliometric analysis uses objective and quantitative perspective to delineate, retrospect, and monitor research activity within a domain and reports the relationships using a systematic, clear, and consistent review process (Chen & Xiao, 2016; Morkunas, Moore, & Duncan, 2019; Rey-Martí, Ribeiro-Soriano, & Palacios-Marqués, 2016).

The current study uses the Web of Science (WoS) core collection to gather information about the existing literature. WoS is an internationally recognized research platform managed by Clarivate Analytics and provides access to more than 50,000,000 articles published in prominent journals belonging to various disciplines of research (Merigó, Mas-Tur, Roig-Tierno, & Ribeiro-Soriano, 2015). WoS core

collection contains records about documents dating back to 1996. The search was performed using the following filters to ensure all available pieces of information were collected:

- Topic: "Political Marketing"
- Timespan: 1996–2018

The search strategy used here ensured that the results precisely reported the documents that were of considerable importance to this discipline. Bibliometric studies in other domains have also employed similar search strategies (González-Alcaide, Gorraiz, & Hervás-Oliver, 2018). To gather a broad perspective of scientific activity in political marketing, the scope of the current study includes all types of documents, languages, and countries for the analysis. The current study employs bibliometrix (R package) and VOSviewer to perform bibliometric analysis on the search results consisting of 214 records.

Bibliometrix package is used in the current study to analyze the data collected from the WoS core collection. Bibliometrix is based on R (an open-source statistical language) and is designed to assist the researchers in conducting automated science mapping (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Bibliometrix is highly flexible and can be integrated with other R packages to support statistical operations. This package provides a wide range of functions to assist the researchers in analyzing the complete workflow associated with science mapping.

The software used to visualize the collected data is VOSviewer, a freeware developed by Nees Jan Van Eck and Ludo Waltman. The bibliometric indicators used by VOSviewer include bibliographic coupling (Kessler, 1963), cocitation (Marshakova, 1973), co-occurrence (Montemurro & Zanette, 2013), citation (Van Raan, 2003), and co-authorship (Glänzel & Schubert, 2004). The interpretation of the VOSviewer output is subjective that leaves the reader to explicate the results according to his cognizance (Hsieh & Chang, 2009).

In the VOS viewer output, each node represents the unit considered for analysis and is depicted by a rectangle or a circle. A cluster, marked by a distinct color, contains those nodes that are highly related to each other. The distance between the nodes is a reflection of the degree of relatedness of the nodes, and the weight acquired by each node, indicated by the number of publications or citations, determines the size of the node in the output (Van Eck & Waltman, 2013). The links of the above-mentioned software, the data file containing the search results and the R code used for the analysis have been included in the supporting information of this article and can also be accessed using the link provided in the data availability statement.

4 | RESULTS

The current study focuses on the productivity of the scientific agents and the influence of the existing literature to measure research activity in the political marketing discipline. The frequency of publications by the scientific agents reflects productivity, and the influence is estimated using the citations received by the documents (Cancino, Merigo, Torres, & Diaz, 2018). The study also focuses on structural indicators like bibliographic coupling, co-occurrence, and citation analysis to examine the relationship between different entities.

4.1 | Overview of collected data

Table 1 summarizes the data collected from the WoS core collection. The dataset consists of 214 documents possessing an annual growth rate of 13.9%. These figures indicate that the political marketing discipline, still in its nascent stages, is gaining popularity among the researchers. The documents are scattered among many sources, and nearly one half of the documents are single-authored documents. Interestingly, the authors of single-authored documents have also published multiple documents on political marketing. The statistics in

TABLE 1 Summary of the data

Documents	214
Period	1996–2018
Sources (journals, books, etc.)	127
Average citations per documents	5.505
Annual percentage growth rate of articles	13.97222
Single-authored documents	102
Authors of single-authored documents	73
Authors of multiauthored documents	252
Authors per document	1.52
Collaboration index	2.25

FIGURE 1 Evolution of the number of documents published on political marketing
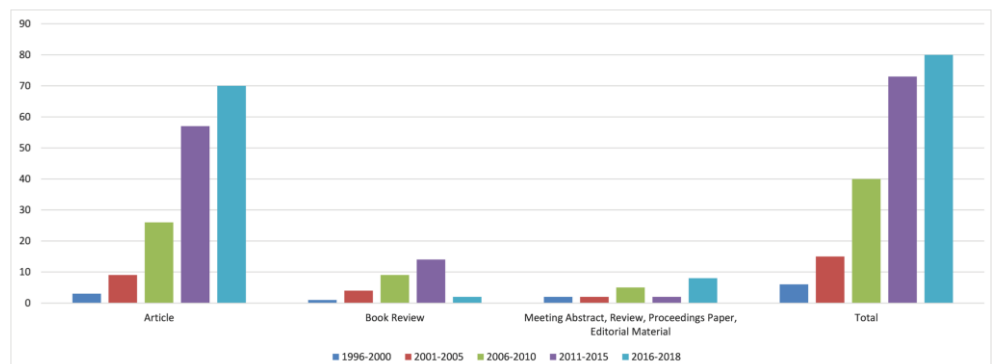
Table 1 signify the need to improve collaboration among the researchers and to promote the discipline within academia.

Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of the different types of documents during the 1996–2018 period. The graph shows that the number of documents published every year has been increasing except for book reviews, which show a negative trend in recent years. The number of documents nearly doubled every 5 years, and journal articles have accounted for the majority of the growth. Figure 1 also reveals a lack of conference proceedings and editorial material in this discipline.

Figure 2 shows the evolution of the top five research areas in which documents related to political marketing are published. There has been a steady growth in the number of documents published under "Government & Law" and "Business and Economics" areas, indicating the importance of the political marketing discipline for the social and economic infrastructure of the country. Most of the documents related to general elections in different countries were published during 2006-2010, resulting in a significant rise in the publications in the communication area during this period.

4.2 | Manuscript characteristics

Table 2 presents the most cited documents in political marketing. *Political Studies* published the two seminal and most cited papers in this discipline. Most of the highly cited documents are single-authored documents and possess an average age of 10.6 years. The highly cited documents are mostly theory based and employ case study research methodology to introduce the concepts of political marketing.
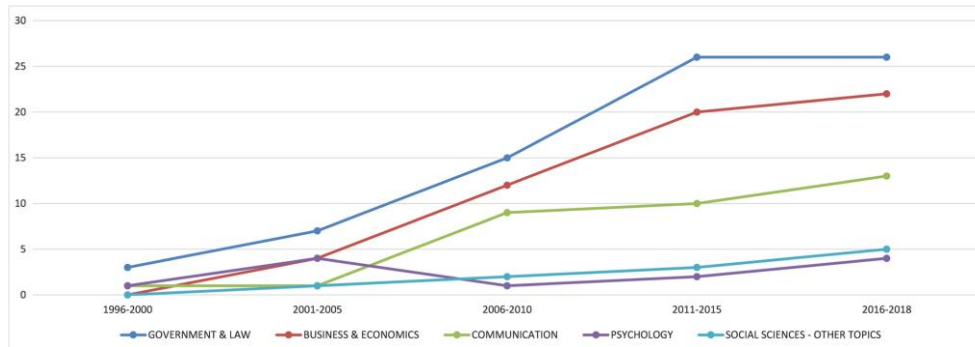
FIGURE 2 Evolution of the top five research areas associated with political marketing

TABLE 2 Most cited documents in political marketing

Cites	Authors	Title	Year	Source	Cites per year	Cites per author
125	M. Scammell	Political marketing: Lessons for political science	1999	*Political Studies*	6.58	125
70	J. Lees-Marshment	The marriage of politics and marketing	2001	*Political Studies*	4.12	70
60	D. Campus	Mediatization and personalization of politics in Italy and France: The cases of Berlusconi and Sarkozy	2010	*International Journal of Press/Politics*	7.5	60
51	D. Garzia	The personalization of politics in Western democracies: Causes and consequences on leader-follower relationships	2011	*Leadership Quarterly*	7.29	51
50	M. Scammell	Political brands and consumer citizens: The rebranding of Tony Blair	2007	*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*	4.55	50
41	W. A. Smith	Social marketing: An overview of approach and effects	2006	*Injury Prevention*	3.42	41
38	M. Z. Sobaci and N. Karkin	The use of Twitter by mayors in Turkey: Tweets for better public services?	2013	*Government Information Quarterly*	7.6	19
38	C. Conaghan and C. de la Torre	The permanent campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's plebiscitary presidency	2008	*International Journal of Press/Politics*	3.8	19
28	P. Butler and P. Harris	Considerations on the evolution of political marketing theory	2009	*Marketing Theory*	3.11	14
26	P. Harris and A. Lock	Mind the gap: The rise of political marketing and a perspective on its future agenda	2010	*European Journal of Marketing*	3.25	13

The first document "Political marketing: Lessons for political science" is a review article by Margaret Scammell (1999). The article explores the emergence of political marketing by illustrating the works of scholars from Britain, the United States, and Germany, whose endeavors have granted the discipline a unique position within the academic field. The article also illustrates the characteristics of the political market, the role of marketing in political campaigns, and the criticism associated with the practice of political marketing. Political marketing is broader in scope compared with its counterparts, owing to its fundamental nature, and focuses on changing the behavior of the political actors to accomplish long-term strategic objectives.

"The marriage of politics and marketing" by Jennifer Lees-Marshment (2001) is one of the seminal works aimed at differentiating political marketing from political communication terminology. The article explains the adaptations undergone by marketing and political science concepts to suit the needs of the ever-changing political arena and shed light on their applicability in different areas of politics. By illustrating the various events that are related to the marketing of conservatives in the 1979 election timeline, the article also differentiates between the product, sales, and marketing orientations. Another crucial contribution of this article is the explanation of different activities involved in the marketing process of political parties.

Using detailed case study exploring the role of media instruments in the election campaign of two iconic leaders, the article "Mediatization and personalization of politics in Italy and France: The cases of Berlusconi and Sarkozy" by Donatella Campus (2010) studies the mechanism through which institutional and cultural settings have acted as intervening variables in the formation of political leadership and construction of political reality. The article explores the adaptations undergone by political actors to match the media patterns and promote themselves as visionaries. The author also shed light on the usage of marketing techniques, publicity events, relationship-building strategies, and storytelling elements by Berlusconi and Sarkozy.

The fourth article, "The personalization of politics in Western democracies: Causes and consequences on leader–follower relationships," employs a revised funnel of causality diagram to investigate the role played by candidate's personality traits in influencing voting decisions. The author Diego Garzia (2011) states that technological innovations, changes in the party structure, and individualization of social life have led to the personalization of politics by lowering the candidate's aura and weakening the party-partisan bond. The author shows that the influence of personality traits is more pronounced in contexts involving a dominant climate of opinion, the situational crisis of the system, and the closeness of electoral outcome. Further, voter characteristics such as ideological orientation and political sophistication also exert a significant impact on the importance given to politician's personality traits.

In "Political brands and consumer citizens: The rebranding of Tony Blair," the author Margaret Scammell (2007) examines the role of branding in politics and reviews few important models that could assist marketers in the process of political branding. The document states that the practical value of branding to political entities emerge from its familiarity in managing the reputation of complex, vulnerable,

and dynamic nature. The document also establishes that branding provides conceptual value to political marketing discipline by offering a mechanism to differentiate and link concepts from multiple disciplines. The article also illustrates the approach used by promise pie consultancy to reconnect Tony Blair with the dissatisfied voters during the 2005 Britain elections.

"Social marketing: An overview of approach and effects" by William A. Smith (2006) explores social marketing concepts and was included in the WoS search results because of the applicability of the concept in the context of political marketing. In the document, the author states that the social marketing concept is composed of five major components and illustrates the nine fundamental principles that characterize the nature of social marketing. The article concludes by demonstrating the social marketing concept in the form of a logical framework.

"The use of Twitter by mayors in Turkey: Tweets for better public services?" by Sobaci and Karkin (2013) uses tweet categorization and content analysis to investigate the use of Twitter by politicians. The study finds that Twitter usage was influenced by individual factors such as gender, age, and location and by organizational factors such as position occupied by the politician's party in governance decisions. The document classifies the tweets sent by the mayors into 11 categories and reveals that Twitter is mostly used for self-promotion by politicians. The results of the study also indicate that the majority of the mayors in Turkey do not have Twitter accounts.

The article "The permanent campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's plebiscitary presidency," by Conaghan and De la Torre (2008), demonstrates the mechanism through which the combination of permanent campaign and plebiscitary presidency debilitate a government's societal accountability by undermining the checks and balances kept for safeguarding democracy. The article also explores the conditions that led to the restructuring of the existing political system in Ecuador, a developing country with vulnerable political mechanisms, thereby giving more authority to politicians in power and leading to the emergence of an extreme form of plebiscitary presidency. The authors show that although the permanent campaign is ubiquitous in recent times, it has unanticipated effects like difficulty in forming coalitions in the future, creation of an uneven playing field between political entities, and a decrease in the effectiveness of the formulated public policy.

Butler and Harris (2009) in the research paper, "Considerations on the evolution of political marketing theory," illustrates the manner the social, technological, and environmental trends have led to the parallel evolution of both marketing and political science disciplines. The article also discusses the implications of above-mentioned advancements for political marketing research. The authors describe political marketing as both an art and a science as it involves a combination of strategy and communication to craft value propositions that cater to the needs of the different voter segments. As political marketing is an emerging discipline, it requires commitment and engagement of the research community to formulate contingency approaches aimed at building robust midrange theories applicable in different political settings.

The final article is an editorial material by Harris and Lock (2010). In their work "Mind the gap: The rise of political marketing and a perspective on its future agenda," the authors highlight the contribution of the *European Journal of Marketing* to political marketing literature. This study also presents a summary of works published in 2010 special issue and explains the emerging political marketing concepts introduced in different conferences, journals, special issues, and colloquiums. In the future research agenda, the authors stress the need for more articles employing cross-cultural and longitudinal studies to investigate topics such as virtual communities, campaign effectiveness, voter behavior, and social media impact, among others.

Table 3 shows the list of most relevant keywords assigned by the author and the keywords generated by the Thomson Reuters WoS references (also referred to as keyword-Plus). Whereas author keywords represent the words, the authors presume will describe the substance of the document, keyword-Plus entries comprise the words that occur in the titles of cited references and represents the essence of the document (Zhang et al., 2016). Analysis of the most frequently

TABLE 3 Most relevant keywords

Rank	Author keywords	Articles	Keyword-Plus	Articles
1	Political marketing	78	Behavior	12
2	Social media	14	Perspective	11
3	Political communication	13	Model	9
4	Elections	10	Media	8
5	Political parties	8	Democracy	7
6	Political branding	7	Party	7
7	Politics	7	Election	6
8	Twitter	7	Elections	6
9	Market orientation	6	Equity	6
10	Branding	5	Impact	6

occurring author keywords reveals that social media marketing, branding, and communications happening before the general elections form the core subjects of the documents. Similarly, when the analysis was carried on the most frequently occurring keyword-Plus entries, it was noticed that the documents focused on aspects related to studying voter behavior, analyzing diverse perspectives associated with political organizations, measuring brand equity among voters, and extending the existing models of communications and political literature to be incorporated into political marketing literature. The data in Table 3 indicates that the existing literature is mostly concerned with studying the effects of communication on electoral outcomes. The focus of this research discipline needs to shift to marketing concepts like the creation of value, the building of long-term relationships with the community, and the impact of adopting the marketing orientation on societal well-being, among others.

Figure 3 shows the VOSviewer output related to the co-occurrence analysis involving both author keywords and keyword-Plus entries. Co-occurrence analysis denotes the frequency of occurrence of common keywords in multiple documents (Montemurro & Zanette, 2013). The filtering criteria set for the analysis include all keywords, which have occurred at least five times. Only 33 out of 839 keywords satisfy the set criteria and were classified into five clusters with items ranging from 2 to 11 keywords per cluster. The keyword political marketing is at the center of the output connecting various clusters.

Cluster 1 consists of 11 keywords: democracy, equity, framework, market orientation, model, party, political brands, political communication, political marketing, political parties, and strategy. The keywords in Cluster 1 occur very frequently indicating that they represent widely studied concepts of political marketing literature. Further, Cluster 2 comprises eight keywords: campaign, communication, election, internet, politics, power, social media, and Twitter. The keywords in Cluster 2 are associated with political communications literature.
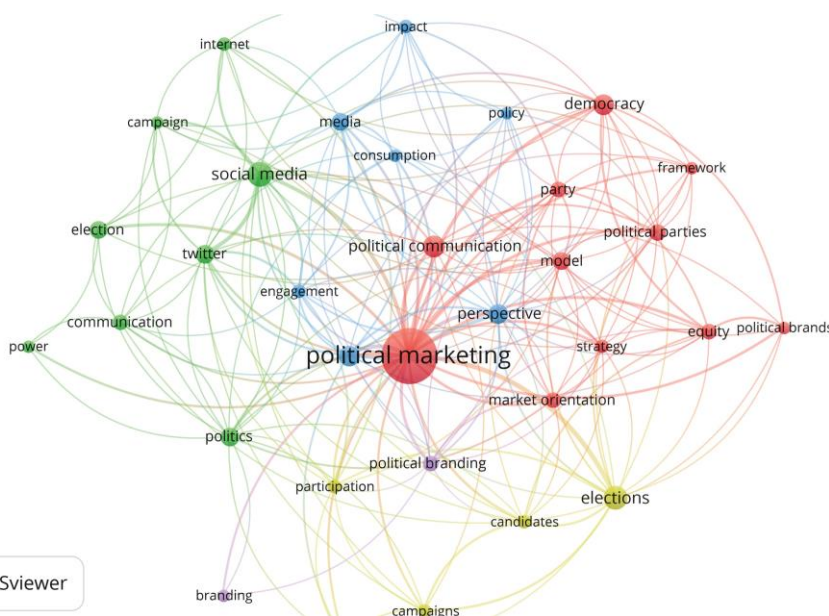
FIGURE 3 Co-occurence of all keywords

They are mostly connected to keywords in Clusters 1 and 4, indicating the focus of political marketing literature on communication strategies adopted by the political parties, especially during the elections.

Cluster 3 consists of seven keywords: behavior, consumption, engagement, impact, media, perspective, and policy. The keywords in Cluster 3 emerge from studies focusing on aspects associated with human psychology. Analogous to the focus of marketing discipline on voter behavior, political marketing research focuses on voter behavior. Cluster 4 comprises five keywords: campaigns, candidates, elections, participation, and turnout. The keywords in Cluster 4 are related to research literature from campaign studies and focus on general elections. Cluster 5 consists of two keywords: branding and political branding. Similar to marketing literature placing branding concepts in a unique position, political marketing also treats branding separately due to the complexities associated with the process of branding a

political party. Unlike the situation for traditional goods or services, political branding concepts operate in contexts involving a relatively large number of associations leading to the concepts gaining considerable attention from the discipline.

4.3 | Journal characteristics

Table 4 lists the most productive journals in the political marketing discipline. *Journal of Political Marketing* has the maximum research publications related to political marketing as the focus of the journal is to investigate the applicability of marketing techniques in politics. However, other journals mentioned in Table 4 possess a high impact factor and contribute to the advancement of knowledge on political marketing.

Table 5 lists the most influential journals in the political marketing discipline. It also lists other journal metrics such as total number of publications in political marketing (TPP), total number of citations in political marketing (TCP), total number of publications of the journal (TP), total number of citations of the journal (TC), and ratios such as TCP/TPP, TC/TP, and TPP/TP. The journals in Table 5 have published all the highly cited documents in Table 2. The average number of citations received by documents on political marketing (TCP/TPP) is higher than the average number of citations received by various publications of the journals (TC/TP), indicating the high impact of documents published on political marketing. A low TPP/TP ratio indicates that the journals in Table 5 are not specific to the political marketing discipline.

Citation analysis was performed using VOSviewer software and using publication sources as the unit of analysis. Citation analysis in Figure 4 measures the influence of the current source on other sources (Van Raan, 2003). Only 44 of the 127 publication sources are interconnected and are classified into 11 clusters with items ranging from two to six in each cluster. Most of the above-mentioned clusters are formed based on the journal publication themes such as human psychology, theory building, quantitative methods, political science, and cultural issues, among others.

**TABLE 4** Most productive journals

Rank	Sources	Articles
1	*Journal of Political Marketing*	26
2	*European Journal of Marketing*	7
3	*Marketing Theory*	6
4	*Party Politics*	5
5	*Psychology & Marketing*	5
6	*Canadian Journal of Political Science-Revue canadienne de science politique*	4
7	*European Journal of Communication*	4
8	*International Journal of Press/Politics*	4
9	*Journal of Business Research*	4
10	*Journal of Marketing Management*	4
11	*Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*	4
12	*Journal of Public Affairs*	4
13	*Political Studies*	4
14	*Computers in Human Behavior*	3
15	*Parliamentary Affairs*	3

TABLE 5 Most influential journals in political marketing

Rank	Journal	TPP	TCP	TCP/TPP	TP	TC	TC/TP	TPP/TP
1	*Political Studies*	4	213	53.25	2,747	23,896	8.70	0.0015
2	*International Journal of Press/Politics*	4	117	29.25	410	4,169	10.17	0.0098
3	*Marketing Theory*	6	104	17.33	332	5,163	15.55	0.0181
4	*European Journal of Marketing*	7	65	9.29	1,267	22,688	17.91	0.0055
5	*Leadership Quarterly*	1	51	51	1,189	60,136	50.58	0.0008
6	*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*	1	50	50	2,818	32,233	11.44	0.0004
7	*Psychology & Marketing*	5	45	9	1,414	36,486	25.80	0.0035
8	*Injury Prevention*	1	41	41	4,759	23,059	4.85	0.0002
9	*Government Information Quarterly*	1	38	38	1,387	20,897	15.07	0.0007
10	*Parliamentary Affairs*	3	38	12.67	1,815	7,716	4.25	0.0017

Abbreviations: TC, total number of citations of the journal; TCP, total number of citations in political marketing; TP, total number of publications of the journal; TPP, total number of publications in political marketing.
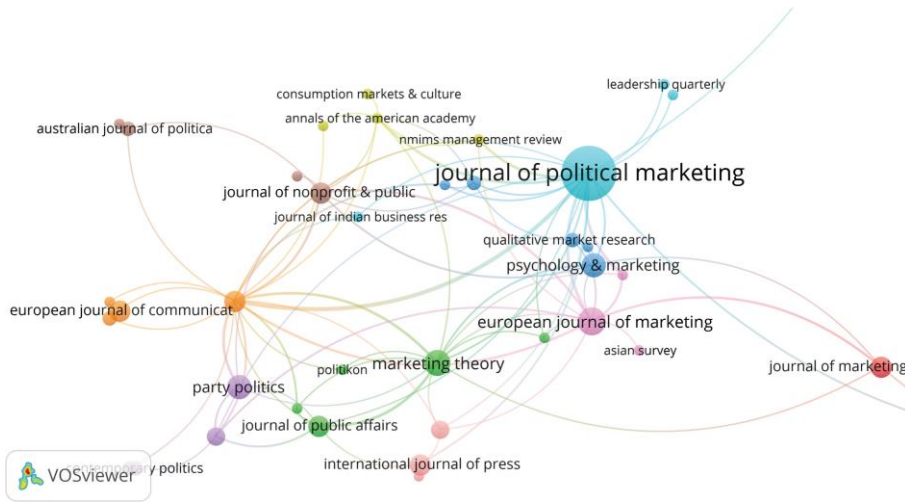
TABLE 6 Most productive authors

Author	Number of documents	Multiauthored documents	First authored documents	h-index	g-index	Total number of citations
J. Lees-Marshment	8	8	2	5	8	110
D. G. Lilleker	6	1	0	2	5	25
D. Dean	5	5	1	1	1	4
C. Pich	5	5	3	1	1	3
W. Binney	4	4	1	1	1	3
R. P. Ormrod	4	4	2	3	3	13
M. Scammell	4	1	0	4	4	204
P. R. Baines	3	3	1	2	3	26
P. Butler	3	3	1	2	3	38
G. P. Castillo	3	0	0	0	0	0

4.4 | Author characteristics

Table 6 shows the most productive authors ranked according to the number of documents published on political marketing. It also lists the number of documents involving multiple authors; number of multi-authored documents in which the specified author was the first author; author's h-index, which indicates that h papers of the specified author are cited at least h times (Hirsch, 2005); g-index, which indicates that top g documents of the author have received in total a minimum of g^2 citations (Egghe, 2006); and the total number of citations. The above-mentioned two indices measure the research output of the author and the influence of his publications. Most of the authors in Table 6 have collaborated with other researchers to improve their research output.

Table 7 illustrates the most productive countries in the political marketing discipline. The statistics in Table 7 are calculated based on the data about the author's affiliation in the published document. Table 7 also lists other metrics such as the ratio of documents originating from authors affiliated to a country to the total number of documents (frequency), total count of publications involving only authors

from the specified country (SCP), total count of publications involving international collaborations (MCP), ratio of MCP to the documents originating from authors affiliated to a country (MCP_Ratio), total citations received by publications of all authors belonging to a country, and the average number of citations per document. Five out of the 10 most productive countries are from Europe, indicating that researchers from European countries have contributed significantly to the evolution of the literature on political marketing.

All the countries except Denmark possess a low MCP ratio, and this calls for a focus on international collaboration in this discipline. Majority of the countries shown in Table 7 have a high per capita indicating that most of the existing studies are from developed countries. The total citations and the average citations received by documents from countries with high per capita income are greater than the citations received by documents from countries that have a lower per capita income. Another interesting observation is that the presence of authors from different countries improves the chances of getting a higher number of citations.

Figure 5 shows VOSviewer's bibliographic coupling output using the country as the unit of analysis. A link between the two countries

TABLE 7 Most productive countries

Rank	Country	Documents	Frequency	Single country publications	Multiple country publications	MCP ratio	Total citations	Average document citations
1	United Kingdom	50	0.2451	44	6	0.12	444	8.88
2	United States	26	0.1275	20	6	0.2308	166	6.39
3	Australia	13	0.0637	9	4	0.3077	117	9
4	Spain	13	0.0637	12	1	0.0769	25	1.92
5	Canada	12	0.0588	9	3	0.25	89	7.42
6	New Zealand	11	0.0539	7	4	0.3636	58	5.27
7	Denmark	7	0.0343	4	3	0.4286	27	3.86
8	Romania	6	0.0294	6	0	0	5	0.83
9	Brazil	5	0.0245	5	0	0	0	0.00
10	Poland	5	0.0245	4	1	0.2	19	3.8
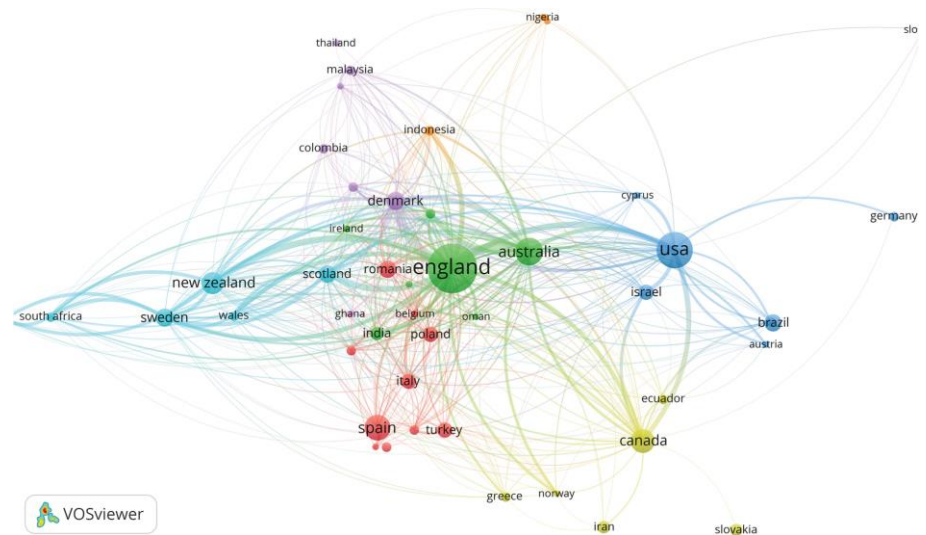
FIGURE 5 Bibliography coupling of countries

in Figure 5 indicates that the publications from the two countries cite the same third entity. Forty-eight out of 49 countries were interconnected and classified into nine clusters with each cluster containing items ranging from one to 10. England, Australia, Denmark, the United States, and Canada possess the highest number of links in the output, indicating a greater level of international collaboration. The clusters in Figure 5 reveal themes like economic structure, political ideology, and inter-country geographical distance. The year 2016 is the average publication year for the majority of the countries and marks the time when political marketing concept started receiving recognition among various journals.

5 | FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

The statistics in Table 1 reveal that political marketing is an underresearched discipline and is receiving attention from the research community. The growth rate of articles indicates that research on political marketing is going to enter into institutionalization phase in a few years (Butler & Harris, 2009). The results also indicate that political marketing literature is highly fragmented and borrows concepts from various other disciplines resulting in the development of innovative theories, models, and methods.

Political marketing holds significant potential to transform the political arena, and top journals in marketing should focus on encouraging publications in this discipline by announcing special issues dedicated to political marketing. As the results of Table 6 indicate that few researchers are active in this discipline, conducting conferences on political marketing will promote the research activity and also improve collaboration among the researchers. The findings also suggest the necessity for more journals dedicated to this discipline.

The insights obtained from the bibliometric analysis helped the authors in identifying the limitations of the existing research and in suggesting directions for further research. The future research agenda is organized into the following constituencies.

5.1 | Employing a comprehensive political marketing approach

The results of the co-occurrence analysis in Figure 3 reveal that political marketing research revolves around communications happening

before general elections and in measuring the impact of marketing strategies on election outcomes. The usage of marketing techniques and concepts by political organizations has a significant impact on the behavior of other governing bodies such as the legislature, executive, judiciary, and media. The comprehensive political marketing approach advocates employing broader conceptualization while investigating political marketing phenomenon by including a wide range of stakeholders and organizations that are related to the political arena (Lees-Marshment, 2003). Future research on political marketing should incorporate this approach to get a better understanding of the implications of marketing to the political arena.

5.2 | Assessing the role of political marketing in strengthening democracy

Usage of marketing concepts and techniques by political organizations have attracted strong criticism, and there is a need to establish the legitimacy of this field by focusing on its contribution towards strengthening democracy and improving citizen engagement. To achieve this objective, future research should investigate the role played by political marketing in making the government responsive to citizens' needs and explore the mechanism through which the policy promises are delivered. Political marketing discipline is also heavily criticized for neglecting the viewpoints of knowledgeable political experts due to its overemphasis on citizen needs (Scammell, 1999). Politicians and political organizations play a key role in governance decision, and there is a need to study political organizations using network-based approach to understand the means of making the government responsive without compromising the standards advocated by the political experts. The statistics in Table 4 also indicate that articles related to political marketing have not been published in journals focusing on leadership and organizational behavior. Future research should try to improve the representation of political marketing research in these journals.

5.3 | Developing a theoretical base for the political marketing literature

Research on the concepts related to political marketing involves adopting an open system perspective to study the complex stakeholder relationships existing in contexts influenced by economic, social, and legal forces (Ormrod, 2017). Political marketing discipline lacks midrange theories and contingency approaches that can guide researchers in obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the complex political phenomenon (Butler & Harris, 2009). The discipline is still in its formalization stage, and academia should focus on a strong theoretical base for political marketing literature. There is also a need for empirically testing and refining the existing theories to meet the requirements of the ever-changing political environment. The statistics in Figure 1 indicate that there is a shortage of editorial material in the political marketing discipline. The preliminary stage of research in this discipline calls from more editorial materials, especially from the

journals mentioned in Table 5 as they are highly influential in this discipline.

5.4 | Placing greater emphasis on the usage of marketing concepts

Content analysis of the documents published on political marketing reveals the usage of marketing terminology and techniques but not concepts. The statistics in Table 3 also support the above findings indicating that existing research literature has not focused on core marketing concepts such as value, satisfaction, co-creation, relationship, and experience. There is a need for incorporating these concepts into research to unfold new opportunities for advancement and protect political marketing status as a separate discipline. Future research scope also lies in suggesting the guidelines that can assist the practitioners in placing marketing concepts at the core of the political strategy.

5.5 | Acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of political marketing

Political marketing is truly interdisciplinary in nature and demand significant effort to get accustomed to the discipline, especially from the new entrants. Owing to its complex nature, concepts and techniques from other disciplines cannot be employed directly and need adaptations to meet the demands of the ever-changing political arena. Political marketing is also influenced by the continuous developments in the marketing and political science disciplines (Butler & Harris, 2009). Existing literature has neglected the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline, and this is also confirmed by the fact that only a few sources (44 out of 127) are interconnected in the citation analysis shown in Figure 4. Future research should try to overcome this limitation by incorporating concepts and techniques from other disciplines while investigating the political marketing phenomenon. Other than the research areas mentioned in Figure 2, political marketing research should also focus on areas such as sustainability, development, culture, and ethics, among others.

5.6 | Advancing the discipline towards international political marketing research

The application of marketing concepts in politics has emerged as a global phenomenon and is spreading rapidly to different countries. The political marketing strategies employed in developed countries are being replicated by other developing nations, and this has serious implications for society. Future research should explore the role of government as a regulator of political marketing and political lobbying (Dann, Harris, Mort, Fry, & Binney, 2007). The metrics in Table 7 indicate that most of the publications on political marketing are from European countries, the United States, Canada, and Australia, among others. Research on issues and concepts of political marketing from Asian, African, and South American countries should be given precedence to further extend the knowledge in this discipline. Similarly,

international collaboration can assist in producing high-quality research and improve the generalizability of the findings. Future studies on political marketing should also focus on comparative studies investigating the impact of applying marketing principles on various governmental levels.

6 | LIMITATIONS

Bibliometric analysis plays a descriptive role by providing details about the most impactful papers. However, it cannot play a prescriptive role as it does not explain the context and intention for citing a document. This poses a methodological challenge as the keyword political marketing is used without much reflection in the existing literature. The analysis is quantitative, and the results of the analysis should be used in combination with techniques that can help evaluate the contents of the retrieved articles (Morkunas et al., 2019). The keywords "political" and "marketing" are also widely used in academic literature resulting in the retrieval of thousands of documents not related to political marketing discipline when the search was performed without using search quotes. To overcome the above limitation, the authors have employed strict filtering criteria while shortlisting the papers, limiting the number of documents considered for the study.

The study is conducted only on documents indexed by the WoS database, and future research should employ other databases such as Scopus, EBSCOhost, and Google Scholar, among others to study the evolution of the discipline. Future researchers can make use of advanced statistical features provided by the bibliometrix package to get a better understanding of scientific activity in the political marketing discipline. Future researchers are also advised to compare the results of studies employing different databases to overcome the data limitation encountered by using a single database (Albort-Morant, Leal-Rodríguez, Fernández-Rodríguez, & Ariza-Montes, 2018).

The exponential growth of the number of publications in this discipline also implies that there will be a need for another bibliometric analysis to update the outdated studies. Owing to the initial stage of the discipline and the availability of only a few published research documents, the authors have not focused on the characteristics of the documents published during different periods. Future research should investigate the progression of political marketing discipline by performing a quinquennial analysis, after categorizing the documents according to periods (Cancino et al., 2018).

7 | CONCLUSION

The current study presents a comprehensive vision of the state of political marketing literature and discusses developments in this discipline since 1996. The most impactful research papers described in the current study provide a good starting point for researchers to understand the concepts of political marketing. The study also evaluates various journals that publish articles related to political marketing, and this information can help researchers in determining prospective journals for publishing their research. Based on the insights gained

from the study, future research agenda for advancing political marketing discipline is formulated. Researchers can make use of these insights to address the emerging issues, thereby increasing the relevance of their research.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are openly available in the "Open Science Foundation" data repository at http://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/DB5CS.

ORCID

Somnath Chakrabarti https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7625-4814

REFERENCES

Albort-Morant, G., Leal-Rodríguez, A. L., Fernández-Rodríguez, V., & Ariza-Montes, A. (2018). Assessing the origins, evolution and prospects of the literature on dynamic capabilities: A bibliometric analysis. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, 24(1), 42–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2017.06.004

Aria, M., & Cuccurullo, C. (2017). Bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *Journal of Informetrics*, 11(4), 959–975. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007

Butler, P., & Harris, P. (2009). Considerations on the evolution of political marketing theory. *Marketing Theory*, 9(2), 149-164. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593109103022

Campus, D. (2010). Mediatization and personalization of politics in Italy and France: The cases of Berlusconi and Sarkozy. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 15(2), 219–235. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161209358762

Cancino, C. A., Merigo, J. M., Torres, J. P., & Diaz, D. (2018). A bibliometric analysis of venture capital research. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Science*, 23(45), 182–195. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEFAS-01-2018-0016

Chen, G., & Xiao, L. (2016). Selecting publication keywords for domain analysis in bibliometrics: A comparison of three methods. *Journal of Informetrics*, 10(1), 212–223. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2016.01.006

Conaghan, C., & De la Torre, C. (2008). The permanent campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador's plebiscitary presidency. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *13*(3), 267-284. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161208319464

Dann, S., Harris, P., Mort, G. S., Fry, M., & Binney, W. (2007). Reigniting the fire: A contemporary research agenda for social, political and non-profit marketing. *Journal of Public Affairs: An International Journal*, *7*(3), 291-304. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.269

de Araújo, C. C. S., Pedron, C. D., & Picoto, W. N. (2018). What's behind CRM research? A bibliometric analysis of publications in the CRM research field. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *17*(1), 29-51. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2018.1440139

Egghe, L. (2006). Theory and practise of the g-index. *Scientometrics*, *69*(1), 131-152. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-006-0144-7

Garzia, D. (2011). The personalization of politics in Western democracies: Causes and consequences on leader-follower relationships. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(4), 697-709. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.05.010

Glänzel, W., & Schubert, A. (2004). Analysing scientific networks through co-authorship. In *Handbook of quantitative science and technology research* (pp. 257-276). Dordrecht: Springer.

González-Alcaide, G., Gorraiz, J., & Hervás-Oliver, J.-L. (2018). On the use of bibliometric indicators for the analysis of emerging topics and their evolution: Spin-offs as a case study. *El Profesional de La Información*, *27*(3), 493. https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2018.may.04

Harris, P., & Lock, A. (2010). "Mind the gap": The rise of political marketing and a perspective on its future agenda. *European Journal of Marketing*, *44*(3/4), 297-307. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090561011020435

Harrop, M. (1990). Political marketing. *Parliamentary Affairs*, *43*(3), 277-291.

Henneberg, S. C. (2004). The views of an advocatus dei: Political marketing and its critics. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *4*(3), 225-243. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.187

Hirsch, J. E. (2005). An index to quantify an individual's scientific research output. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *102*(46), 16569-16572. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0507655102

Hsieh, P.-N., & Chang, P.-L. (2009). An assessment of world-wide research productivity in production and operations management. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *120*(2), 540-551. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2009.03.015

Ingram, P., & Lees-Marshment, J. (2002). The anglicisation of political marketing: How Blair 'out-marketed' Clinton. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *2*(2), 44-56. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.93

Katz, R. S., & Mair, P. (1994). *How parties organize: Change and adaptation in party organizations in Western democracies* (Vol. 528). London: Sage.

Kessler, M. M. (1963). Bibliographic coupling between scientific papers. *American Documentation*, *14*(1), 10-25. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.5090140103

Kotler, P., & Levy, S. J. (1969). Broadening the concept of marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, *33*(1), 10-15. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224296903300103

Lees-Marshment, J. (2001). The marriage of politics and marketing. *Political Studies*, *49*(4), 692-713. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00337

Lees-Marshment, J. (2003). Political marketing: How to reach that pot of gold. *Journal of Political Marketing*, *2*(1), 1-32. https://doi.org/10.1300/J199v02n01_01

Lock, A., & Harris, P. (1996). Political marketing-vive la difference! *European Journal of Marketing*, *30*(10/11), 14-24. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569610149764

Marshakova, I. V. (1973). Bibliographic coupling system based on references. *Nauchno-Tekhnicheskaya Informatsiya Seriya, Ser*, *2*(6), 3-8.

Merigó, J. M., Mas-Tur, A., Roig-Tierno, N., & Ribeiro-Soriano, D. (2015). A bibliometric overview of the Journal of Business Research between 1973 and 2014. *Journal of Business Research*, *68*(12), 2645-2653. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.04.006

Montemurro, M. A., & Zanette, D. H. (2013). Keywords and co-occurrence patterns in the Voynich manuscript: An information-theoretic analysis. *PLoS ONE*, *8*(6), e66344. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0066344

Morkunas, V. J., Moore, S., & Duncan, S. Y. (2019). A bibliometric analysis of the Journal of Public Affairs. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *19*(1), e1833. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1833

Nielsen, S. W. (2012). Three faces of political marketing strategy. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *12*(4), 293-302. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.434

Ormrod, R. P. (2011). Limitations and implications of product-oriented, sales-oriented and market-oriented political parties: Evidence for public affairs. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *11*(4), 395-405. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.428

Ormrod, R. P. (2017). Stakeholders in the political marketing context. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *17*(4), e1671. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1671

Pasadeos, Y., & Renfro, B. (1992). A bibliometric analysis of public relations research. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *4*(3), 167-187. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjprr0403_03

Rey-Martí, A., Ribeiro-Soriano, D., & Palacios-Marqués, D. (2016). A bibliometric analysis of social entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(5), 1651-1655. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.10.033

Scammell, M. (1999). Political marketing: Lessons for political science. *Political Studies*, *47*(4), 718-739. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00228

Scammell, M. (2007). Political brands and consumer citizens: The rebranding of Tony Blair. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *611*(1), 176-192. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716206299149

Scrivens, E., & Witzel, M. L. (1990). *Not-for-profit marketing*. Bradford: MCB University Press.

Smith, W. A. (2006). Social marketing: An overview of approach and effects. *Injury Prevention*, *12*(suppl 1), i38-i43. https://doi.org/10.1136/ip.2006.012864

Sobaci, M. Z., & Karkin, N. (2013). The use of Twitter by mayors in Turkey: Tweets for better public services? *Government Information Quarterly*, *30*(4), 417-425. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2013.05.014

Van Eck, N. J., & Waltman, L. (2013). VOSviewer manual. *Leiden: Univeristeit Leiden*, *1*(1), 1-53.

Van Raan, A. F. J. (2003). The use of bibliometric analysis in research performance assessment and monitoring of interdisciplinary scientific developments. *Technology Assessment-Theory and Practice*, *1*(12), 20-29.

Vankov, N. (2013). The strategic dimensions of political marketing. *Economic Alternatives*, *3*, 74-80.

Varey, R. J. (2010). Marketing means and ends for a sustainable society: A welfare agenda for transformative change. *Journal of Macromarketing*, *30*(2), 112-126. https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146710361931

Zhang, J., Yu, Q., Zheng, F., Long, C., Lu, Z., & Duan, Z. (2016). Comparing keywords plus of WOS and author keywords: A case study of patient adherence research. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, *67*(4), 967-972. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23437

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Krishna Teja Perannagari is currently enrolled in a doctoral pro- gram at the Indian Institute of Management Kashipur. His research interests include consumer psychology and political marketing.

Somnath Chakrabarti has obtained Ph.D. degree from Department of Management Studies, IIT Delhi, India; Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Oklahoma State University,

from Regional Engineering College (REC), Durgapur (now named NIT Durgapur), India. He has also obtained GloColl certificate based on participation at Harvard Business School programs in Boston and in Shanghai, which has given him expertise in the case writing process. He has more than 26.5 years of professional work experience since 1992 in India composing of about 9.5 years of experience primarily in leading MNC advertising agencies and 17 years of full-time experience in academics in leading Manage- ment Institutes of India. He has published in leading academic journals like *International Journal of Advertising* (published by World Advertising Research Centre [WARC]); *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Wiley; *British Food Journal*, Emerald; *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, Emerald; *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Taylor & Francis; *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Taylor & Francis; International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management, Emerald (paper accepted); and *IIMB*

been published in IVEY Publishing, Canada, and in Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies. He has global work experience in McCann Erickson, Sydney, Australia, in sales response modelling research.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.