

Do spin in political marketing destroy democracy?

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



It is possible to encounter political marketing in democratic societies because politicians sell their ideas to public. The more buyers they gain, the higher probability they win elections. While bargaining their ideas, politicians will do whatever needed to be elected. "Spin" is one of the things done during election eves to obtain more votes, for instance. These can ruin the democracy in such countries. For democracy to work properly, individuals should vote under no control of anyone and with clear opinions about politicians.

To say that democracy exists, high percentage of public should participate in the elections by voting, as well. The main reason of this essay is to question whether or not political marketing and spin ruin democracy. Understanding it is crucial in taking necessary cautions for democracy to work. If those are really harmful to democracy, then they should be treated as the enemy of democracy. In this essay, every important impact of political marketing and spin to democracy will be examined and demonstrated how significant they are.

To do these, this essay will start with the effects of "spin", continue with the inequalities among politicians that political marketing causes and the importance of floating voters, which are bad for democracy, and finally, end with explaining how political marketing could be useful for democracy even if this usefulness pales in comparison to these bad impacts. "Spin" in political marketing gives wrong opinions about parties to voters and that contribute to ruining democracy. Politicians intend to gain political advantage and to do this; they resort to deceiving their potential and current voters. Spin" is one of the most moving things they do. To explain what "spin" is, David L.

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Martinson gives an advertisement example, which is quite appropriate and successful for this topic (2001). In that advertisement, the advertisers claimed that one slice of their bread contained fewer calories than any other bread's slice. What makes this an example of spin is that they didn't mention how thin these slices were cut. By doing that, they would make their consumers buy the breads so that they can lose weight.

Martinson also says that this company didn't have to share all the details with their consumers but had to present that significant detail (ibid.). Likewise in politics, politicians avoid to tell some facts so they obtain more votes. After being deceived by the politicians who spin information, the public will vote for them in order to meet their expectations. However, after these politicians are elected, those who vote for them can't find what they have expected. So, actually these people voted for different ideas and promises, and now are governed by others, which is definitely not a democratic process.

To give an example of this in politics, Nick Clegg and his promises about tuition fees can be chosen. Everyone who had voted especially for this problem couldn't receive any solution they expected. What they were expecting while electing him was lowered tuition fees, meaning he was the one who'll provide lower tuition fees for the voters, but he actually was a different politician. In short, "spin" ruins democracy because it prevents people to vote for the right party by deceiving them.

Political marketing promotes inequality among politicians regarding to financial resources and/or being good seller, and these make being elected

nearly impossible for some politicians who lack of financial resources and advertising skills, meaning this causes an incomplete, ruined democracy. Firstly, being a successful advertiser is more important than being a good governor. McNair puts the significance of advertising skills in political marketing. He thinks that Ronald Reagan was successful because of his actor's training. He also gives the example of Michael Foot.

He says that Foot was a great thinker and an intellectual party manager but not able to fit the televisions. Because of this, he was replaced by someone who fits the televisions better (2011). McNair can't refer to any sources because of the subjectivity of those. However, considering the general knowledge, it can easily be said that he is right. These examples show that being a good seller is more important than being a good thinker, meaning those who don't have seller skills don't have chances to be elected.

Secondly, money has a significant role in elections.

McNair explains the importance of money in politics with these words: "Political power becomes something which can be bought rather than won in a democratic contest." (2011, p. 37) He strengthens this statement by giving the Goldsmith example. This example shows how right he is. He also adds that money can be used to buy creativity and innovation to make political communication effective. Similarly, with money, politicians can put themselves everywhere such as on TV, posters on streets. In short, with money, successful advertisements can be applied to public.

Likewise, politicians can give money to the press and the media or buy them to influence public because the press and the media usually have more

influence on public than any political advertising (O'Shaughnessy, 2001). Those who don't have enough financial sources don't have advantage as much as the ones who have enough sources. In conclusion, there are some inequalities among politicians such as financial resources and advertising skills that make some politicians have some advantages that enable them to win elections although there might be better governors that the public would choose.

Floating voters can determine the results of an election and making only these votes change by political marketing can ruin democracy. According to the studies McNair refers to, only few people change their votes because of political advertising (Diamond and Bates, 1984 in McNair, 2011). At first, this statement may seem to tell that political advertising doesn't work and it can't possibly ruin democracy but it does. Floating voters have a crucial role in elections.

They can determine the results of elections in democratic societies even though they form a small percentage of the population in a country. This makes them the most important and an easy target of political marketing. Effecting or manipulating a small group of people is way easier than crowds because some weak points of these people can easily be known and used appropriately to regulate them. Therefore, when advertisements come into play, they will be quite successful and change their audiences' votes.

This leads to the destruction of democracy because politicians eventually get what they want through political marketing. To summarize, floating voters, who may be the determining factor of an election, are very susceptible to

political advertising and can, therefore, be controlled easily by political marketing, which ruins democracy. Despite all these bad effects of political marketing for democracy, there are positive side-effects of it that help democracy to work such as increasing participation in elections; variety of ideas, opinions, promises; and knowledge about various political ideas. When a politician uses political advertising, another one also uses it in order not to be left behind in the competition, another does the same with the same reason and so forth. This chain makes political advertising and, therefore, politics everywhere and the main agenda of the days. Because of this, everyone hears about politics and attains a political opinion unconsciously or not and goes to vote for a party. This may not be the aim of political marketing, but it increases participation of people in elections.

It helps democracy to work properly because the more people say their opinions the better democracy there will be. Other than participation, politicians are now obliged to give what people want. As Scammel writes down on his essay in a convincing and clear way, as the possibilities of transforming information increases, consumers choose what they want but not what producers want (Scammel, M. , ND). In politics, political marketing is the tool that increases the possibilities of transforming information, consumers are public and producers are politicians.

When there is no political marketing, people have to vote for only what are thought for them before and this may not result beneficially for these people and democracy. Likewise, political marketing helps ideas and opinions to be heard. As politicians' competitions take place in agenda, people keep

hearing and reading about them, their ideas and promises. Thus, they can encounter various opinions and find what is the most appropriate for them. To sum up, participation and voting for the appropriate party is important for democracy and political marketing help them maintain or increase.

In conclusion, “ Spin” and political marketing ruins democracy in general. Firstly, spin gives wrong opinions about politicians to people. People can’t elect the governor they want due to obfuscations. Secondly, due to political marketing, there are some inequalities among politicians. Some are good advertisers, some have a vast amount of financial resources and some have them both. The ones lacking of these cannot possibly win elections even if they are good governors and who public would want. Thirdly, politicians can win elections easily by effecting floating voters, who are usually minorities in most of the countries.

Political advertisers can easily determine the result of an election by affecting these minorities. All of these three ruin democracy. Despite those, there are some ways that don’t ruin democracy but help it work. Political marketing may increase participation in elections and it can enable political opinions and ideas to be known. However, these good sides of political marketing are not enough to suppress the bad impacts, meaning political marketing and spin have strong negative impacts on democracy even though they have some positive impacts.