

# Political Marketing Maintenance and Re-Election of Deputies in Likasi Constituency

Kazadi Nkulu Kamuyele<sup>1</sup>, Nkulullunga Cosmos<sup>2</sup>, Tshiyala Kavumbi Didier<sup>3</sup>, Mbaya Maweja<sup>4</sup>

University of Likasi, Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Abstract:** *This study is motivated by a finding of the political approach of three deputies from the Likasi constituency, elected in the 2006 election, but only one of whom had the chance to be re-elected and the two others having failed. The objective of the present research is to demonstrate that the political marketing of maintenance is a determining factor in the re-election of the political operators of the electoral district of Likasi in DR Congo because it would promote the notoriety of the politicians who apply it.*

**Keywords:** Political Marketing, Election Campaign, Awareness Campaign

## 1. Introduction

Since 2001, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been engaged in the election process to try to renew the political class at the level of parliament as well as at the level of the government. It is in this context that the campaign for elections has become a mode of seduction of the population and an obligation for any politician who wants to remain on the political scene in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in general and in the city of Likasi in particular.

Indeed, this campaign is a means of communication and political marketing to which several political actors sometimes engage, without any perspective, or a preliminary study of various parameters required to convince the population for re-election.

For this purpose, for Bongrand quoted by Mazinga (2011, p.22) "It is not during the campaign or at three weeks of voting day that candidates can convince the general public of the disinterested value of their commitment. It is at the moment when they have nothing to ask, and do not solicit any mandate that they are credible in their devotion to public affairs. In this area, more than anywhere else, time does not forgive what one does without it. This thinking is the foundation of all marketing policy maintenance strategies.

### Political Marketing and Marketing Maintenance Policy

The political field is becoming more and more sensitive and competition is getting tougher. With the advent of democracy, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo, marketing is becoming more and more a tool for managing and conquering power. Whether in power or aspiring, it makes sense to be accompanied by marketing.

In this sense, a candidate for an election must put in place techniques that will allow him to make himself known and then prefer his target. In order to achieve his objectives, he must then find points of differentiation (thus his ACD: Competitive Advantage Defensible held) compared to other parties or persons (competitors).

Transposing the general marketing approach to the policy area is neither simple nor automatic. The approach and the spirit remain the same, but "we do not sell a politician like we sell a coke or a sandwich".

In the political marketing action plan, it is important for political organizations to establish decision-making processes that are close to 4Ps (price, product, place and promotion). As such, we reconceptualize, from the point of view of political communication, the terms pertaining to commercial marketing as follows:

The product is the politician, his party and the program he defends. Citizens must find enough values for them to agree to pay, that is, to give their voice.

The price here represents the voice of the citizen, usable only once, during an electoral operation (the vote).

The promotion is the set of communication actions to inform about the existence of the party or the candidate, to make it appreciate by the citizen elector, so that it votes for the candidates of this party; adhere to them and revote for them as often as possible.

Place means all spaces and places visited or frequented by the politician in his daily actions or during elective operations. The politician is above all a public man; he does not belong (almost) more. Everything he does or says (does not do, does not say, etc.) is clearly visible to citizens - voters who will not hesitate to interpret it, make real or virtual connections and draw conclusions (not always relevant) from which they will build their electoral positions.

Gicquel (2010, p.115), political marketing means a set of techniques favoring the design of a solution, taking the form of parties, personalities or political organizations, in order to meet the needs of citizens called voters. These parties and personalities take into account the cultural, social, economic, technical and political environment to put in place strategies to optimize the attainment of objectives that are presented in a program. The whole process aims to influence the behavior of voters.

Indeed, political marketing aims to "organize the know-how of a politician and his ideas, to measure and ensure its reputation and, in the final term, to trigger a phenomenon of membership in its favor. (Mazinga, 2011, p.7). To do this, he uses the campaign, mainly the election campaign and the awareness campaign.

With regard to the electoral campaign, Mazinga (2011, p.84) states that the electoral campaign is the period during which the candidates present their programs and their projects of society through a decisive debate. It is during this stage that clashes between protagonists occur. Elections are a key moment in the life of a party, a candidate.

The election campaign is a tool for the preparation of a party, a candidate for these elections and to inform the citizen - voter, arouse his interest and convince him to vote for the candidate.

The electoral campaign, Mumba notes (1993, p.57), is both a period of civic education that must help to understand the mode, the functioning of a democracy and the time, says the electoral period, during which Candidates strive to persuade and convince their fellow citizens to vote for them.

Much of their techniques come from constructing conditioned reflexes that associate the object desired by the population with the socio-political project of a candidate. Propaganda will associate the value or greatness of a politician with the happiness of the community or region where he is a candidate. But the means used to convince can lead to a kind of constraint. An election campaign law must ensure that it is not limited to this type of propaganda, which some authors denounced as "crowd rape".

The election campaign is an action taken to publicize and promote a candidate for election, his personality, his ideas and his program (Balle, 1998). His declared goal by the politician is to increase his notoriety and gain public support and in other words to be elected. During the election campaign, for example in DR Congo, we saw candidates use various means and techniques in order to reach the greatest number of voters from far or near, to push them to act positively as argued by Mazinga (2011, p.52).

Knowing your electorate helps to organize an effective campaign. You must never go blind. All of this involves organizing an electoral campaign team.

Moreover, the awareness campaign is defined as marketing of notoriety which applies during the elections and its objective is not to elect but rather to increase the capital of notoriety of the political actor, to position his image for future elections.

The goal of a celebrity campaign is often to position the political operator as the best possible candidate at a later stage. Like the case of J. Chirac who started his marketing of notoriety since 1981 and arrived in 1994, he beat his electoral marketing and he came to power. (Mazinga, 2011, p.18).

In a political process, the candidates to an election are called to choose either the electoral campaign or that of notoriety. The awareness campaign assumes that the politician is campaigning, not to be elected, but rather to increase his notoriety in order to positively position his image and to trigger an election later. While in the election campaign, the politician invests himself to be elected. In the light of these

theories, let us present the electoral campaign of the political operators of the city of Likasi.

As we can see today, there is too much competition and competition in the political space in DR Congo, especially for election candidates. Many of those who apply, invest significant budgets in election campaigns. But not everyone passes. In the next elections, the elected officials of yesterday still come back as candidates. Unfortunately, some of them lose the election and the others get re-elected. Following this observation, it is necessary to evoke the words of Charles Mazinga (2011, p.8) who states in his book "Electoral Marketing Strategies", that "the politician must convince himself that his success election does not begin on the day of the campaign. He must constantly deploy political presence marketing during the exercise of his mandate, including electoral marketing (campaign marketing) will be only a circumstantial complement.

This issue was motivated by a finding of the political approach of three deputies from the Likasi constituency, elected in the 2006 election, but only one of whom had the chance to be re-elected and the two others having failed.

This situation has given rise to questions that constitute the problem of this research and can be summarized as follows:

□ What is the role of political marketing in the re-election of political operators in the electoral district of Likasi in DR Congo?

Many of the elected deputies from 2006, in DR Congo in general and those from the Likasi constituency in particular, did not get re-elected in 2011 because they failed to be close to their electorates during the exercise of the mandate of deputy. Indeed, most of the deputies in DR Congo are businessmen. As a result, they spend a short time in their political career and in the population of which they are an emanation.

The political marketing of maintenance is a determining factor in the re-election of the political operators of the electoral district of Likasi in DR Congo because it would promote the notoriety of the politicians who apply it.

It turns out, moreover, that most of these political actors do not apply political marketing maintenance, lack of advisers in political communication.

Indeed, without being the sole factor of reelection, we think that the marketing policy of maintenance is a determining factor in the maximization of chance of reelection. To make the present study rational, some techniques and method of research, we have been of great use.

## 2. Methodology

The descriptive method allowed us to explore, to describe, to verify the causal relations, the failure of two national deputies who were not able to be re-elected in the parliamentary elections of 2011 yet elected deputies in 2006. This method is based on the principle of explanatory causal relationships (Morin, 1982, p.264).

To materialize this method, the techniques of document analysis, questionnaire, maintenance, direct observation, allowed us to produce the data by questioning some personalities in order to have the necessary information. For more relevance, the spatio-temporal delimitation of this study is necessary. Indeed, this constituency aims at the fluidity of our reflection and to avoid an imprudent generalization.

In this order, we inscribe these investigations in the city of Likasi as an electoral district. The city of Likasi is a city in the Democratic Republic of Congo located in the province of Upper Katanga (Ex-Katanga). It is the constituency of the MPs in the study. It covers the period from 2006 to 2011. It targets two elections, namely the elections of 2006 and those of 2011. Three national deputies elected in 2006 in the electoral district of Likasi, were concerned by this study which aimed to highlight the strategies put in place by each one of them for its political marketing with a view to its re-election.

### 3. Results

#### The DBL candidate

National Legislative of 2006	Legislative of 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Donates computers to schools and universities;</li> <li>- Donate sports equipment to football teams;</li> <li>- Acts of liberality towards the needy persons;</li> <li>- Hospice visits and food assistance;</li> <li>- Input and seed donations to market gardeners;</li> <li>- Donations to the winners of the State Examinations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of the TV channel ALFAJIRI;</li> <li>- Creation of his political party, "ACO";</li> <li>- Input donations for the Likasi population;</li> <li>- Visit of some needy people.</li> </ul>

It should be pointed out that during the election period from 2006 to 2011, the DBL candidate was absent in the constituency of Likasi. The results revealed that the DBL candidate was re-elected in 2011.

The consequence of these strategies was the re-election of the DBL candidate.

#### The candidate DKL

National Legislative 2006	National Legislative 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to socio-cultural groups</li> <li>- Support to churches</li> <li>- Well-structured campaign coordination committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to socio-cultural groups</li> <li>- Support to churches</li> <li>- Campaign Coordinating Committee consisting of family members</li> </ul>

The consequence of these strategies has been the failure of the 2011 elections that is the lack of reelection.

#### The IPL candidate

National Legislative 2006	National Legislative 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The support of his party;</li> <li>- Sociocultural groups</li> <li>- Reminder of his management of the affairs of the state in the past,</li> <li>- The members of his family;</li> <li>- The president's campaign.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewal of the techniques applied in 2006,</li> <li>- Hiding behind the actions taken on behalf of the presidential candidate,</li> <li>- Stir feelings of tribal frustration,</li> </ul>

The consequence of these strategies has been the failure of the 2011 elections that is the lack of reelection.

### 4. Discussion

Certainly, political marketing maintenance reassures re-election to the political operator. We dare to believe that there would be only one valid definition of the political actor who intends to return to the next elections and seek re-election with his population: to build up an electoral clientele and maintain its base. Every politician says he has a base, that is, his natural voice tank. The electoral base is also called fief. In an electoral base, the vote is automatic but provided you know how to maintain the base in non-election period. The base is like the pond where fish are kept.

However, some bases are not automatically acquired from where, it takes acts of political marketing of presence, permanence and maintenance in order to position oneself for the future elections.

The electoral campaign, Mumba notes (1993, p.57), is both a period of civic education that must help to understand the mode, the functioning of a democracy and the time, says the electoral period, during which Candidates strive to persuade and convince their fellow citizens to vote for them.

It is therefore necessary to seize the opportunities offered to the political actors by events of the daily life to be grafted with the population which offers the mandate of which they are enjoyers.

As a strategy, political marketing seeks to help the political operator to position his public image in the face of competition. To understand this mechanism, it is worth noting the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies used by the three actors mentioned in the political scene of the electorate of 2006 and that of 2011 in the electoral district of Likasi in DR Congo.

In 2006, during the national and provincial legislative elections, the marketing strategies used by the DBL candidate were a success for both polls (national and provincial elections). However, in 2011, the lack of popular enthusiasm tarnished a very small image that was positive in the minds of his constituents, disappointed by the long absences of the constituency.

Indeed, during the entire mandate of 2006, the candidate DBL was domiciled in Lubumbashi, 120 km from Likasi. The lack of direct and permanent contacts has harmed his popularity relatively. Despite everything, he was saved by the implementation of his TV channel that spoke of him in a loop. And so at this deadline, the DBL candidate has more or less failed in terms of communication, specifically, maintenance marketing.

Political marketing must be understood by the political actors of Likasi in the sense of Yohan Gicquel, (2010, p.115), means by political marketing a set of techniques favoring the conception of a solution, taking the form of parties, personalities or political organizations, in order to meet the needs of citizens called voters.

These parties and personalities take into account the cultural, social, economic, technical and political environment to put in place strategies to optimize the attainment of objectives that are presented in a program. The whole process aims to influence the behavior of voters.

With regard to the DKL candidate, it should be noted that the electoral strategy defined and observed in 2006 was a success that led to his election. This can be explained on the one hand by its political marketing and on the other by the political immaturity of competitors and voters.

In 2011, due to a lack of maintenance marketing materialized by a decisive break with the electoral base, the lack of contributive participation in institutional and media political debates, the DKL candidate lost more than 90% of his electoral support. Which inevitably led to the electoral pit? The result demonstrates in a very significant way the dire consequence of the lack of a maintenance marketing strategy and the irrelevance of the strategies adopted for the 2011 election campaign.

Another element which caused the failure of the candidate DKL is the lack of the systematic questioning of the past campaigns. Because it is noted that "one cannot repeat a campaign, even if it had been a success", it is clear that the candidate DKL did not think that a good campaign requires a redefinition communication policy as a whole and prohibits the renewal of the previous approach as it has been, even if successful.

In addition to what has just been noted, one can, without fear of being contradicted, conclude that the lack of communication strategies and maintenance marketing was a fatal determination in the electoral failure of the candidate DKL in 2011. In this regard, Mazinga (2011, p.8), continues to state that "The politician must be convinced that his electoral success does not start on the day of the campaign. He must constantly deploy political presence marketing during the exercise of his mandate; including electoral marketing (campaign marketing) will be only a circumstantial complement.

As for the IPL candidate, we realize that, although insufficient and impertinent, the campaign strategies defined and implemented in 2006 led to electoral success. This is explained by the political immaturity of the voters who faced for the first time elections in a particularly democratic context and also by the absence of a real political competition.

Indeed, in 2006, the real opposition had refrained from standing for election.

In 2011, the lack of deep and serious analysis of the political context in general and the political and socio-economic situation of the electoral district of Likasi, which was manifested by the renewal of the campaign strategies of 2006 by the candidate, as well as the absence of the interview marketing during the legislative mandate 2006 marked inconsistently by an almost total rupture with the electoral base, by the lack of exit media and the non-

participation in the institutional debates and media, led to the electoral defeat .

All in all, it can be concluded that the re-election in 2011 was largely dependent on the maintenance strategies during the 2006 fiscal year and the redefinition of campaign strategies. As Bongrand states, quoted by Charles Mazinga (2011, p.22), It is not during the campaign or three weeks of voting day that candidates can convince the general public of the selfless value of their commitment. It is at the moment when they have nothing to ask, and do not solicit any mandate that they are credible in their devotion to public affairs. In this area, more than elsewhere, time does not forgive what one does without it.

At the end of this critical analysis, it turns out to be imperative to formulate suggestions that fit with political marketing.

### **1. To neophyte candidates**

Due to their inexperience in political communication, specifically in political marketing, candidates who compete for the first time in a political election campaign need to internalize and operationalize the following guidelines:

- a) Know that the electoral campaign consists in selling the positive image of the candidate;
- b) A The electoral campaign is preceded by a campaign of notoriety;
- c) The tool to sell one's image is political communication;
- d) Political communication is materialized by political marketing strategies;
- e) Political marketing strategies involve prior and accurate knowledge of what the electorate wants, wants to know, wants to hear and wants to see;
- f) The candidate must identify all the means of communication within his reach;
- g) It must contextualize each means of communication.

### **2. To candidates for re-election**

Candidates who stand for re-election often have great challenges to overcome. Of course, in that they have to defend their balance sheet from the previous year, it is important that they incorporate the following provisions:

- a) Communicate continuously throughout the legislature;
- b) maintain permanent physical contact with the electorate;
- c) Due to a change in scenography brought about by the emergence of new contextual political, economic and sociological data, rethink and update political marketing strategies;
- d) Be attentive to the problems of the constituency;
- e) Manage the political communications of potential competitors in the next elections;
- f) react in all circumstances to events, unhappy or happy, occurring in the constituency;
- g) Stay consistent with the commitments of the previous election campaign;
- h) To preserve sentimental ties of the electorate by acts of generosity and benevolence, in favor of the population.

### **5. Conclusion**

The political marketing of maintenance is a determining factor for the re-election of the political actors during the

exercise of mandate. Indeed, in a political context of democracy or, better, political democratization, the legislative mandate is obtained through elections. And the elections imply a competition between several candidates. These last ones are realized through the political communication which places in communication the political actors, requestors of mandate, and the elective population, the mandatory.

Our study aimed to examine how and to what extent, the 2006 elected representatives of the electoral district of Likasi in DR Congo, applied the political marketing of maintenance and, finally, to appreciate the consequences through the electoral results of 2011.

Thus, during the five years that covered their mandate, they organized only four raids at the base and no social action in favor of the population. And the unfortunate consequence was not only their non-reelection, but also and above all the dramatic drop in their popularity rating.

Conscious of the fact that the application or the non-application of the political marketing strategies is not the only determining factor which presided over the re-election of the first candidate and the non-re-election of his two colleagues, we wish to see other studies approach the question from other angles to finally explain this situation completely.

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