

THE ROLE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR THEORIES IN UNDERSTANDING VOTER DECISIONS

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ABSTRACT

The study is expected to contribute to the current body of knowledge through exploring the application of consumer behavior theories to political campaigns and their influence on voter decisions. Comparing market rules and political movement strategies, this paper aims to analyze the relationship between marketing psychology and political science. In the qualitative analysis of interviews and case studies, this investigation seeks to explore the role of consumer behavior in the voting process. The specific focus of inquiry is the application of marketing mechanisms such as branding, targeted messaging, and market segmentation in the campaigns and their influence on voting patterns. Furthermore, the paper seeks to investigate the moral issues of manipulation and persuasion associated with political marketing and advertising and determine if democracy is influenced. This study seeks to present the full scope of consumer behavior theory in predicting behavior during voting and the campaigns' efficiency. The results will indicate the high correlation between marketing mechanisms and actual voting turnout and motivation, prompting more research into ethical constraints and the fine balance between motivation and manipulation.

Keywords: consumer behavior theories, political campaigns, voter decisions, marketing strategies, ethical concerns.

1. INTRODUCTION

Applying consumer behavior theory to voting patterns provides a fresh perspective on consumer behavior in the marketplace during a period in which the line between market rules and political engagement is becoming increasingly blurred. Marketing-based concepts have completely changed the dynamics of attracting attention to politicians, pushing policies, and persuading voters to make selections. This research project, which analyzes voter decision-making through a consumer behavior lens, shows the cooperation of marketing, psychology, and political science. While considering voter conduct using consumer behavior theory works in principle, it is practically novel to apply a precise consumer behavior theory systematically to analyze the choices people make with their votes. Historically, competitive marketing research is centered on understanding what, why, and how customers use a product. Understanding the political process by utilizing an analogous structure yields further information about people's political ideologies, messages that grasp their attention, and campaign participation processes; . The findings will be especially significant in light of the ever-changing dynamics of political trends due to the marketing strategies that are shaping voter preferences. Political tale narratives are created and voters are attracted via marketing methods such as branding, targeted messaging, and market segmentation. This transformation makes further scientific study into whether specific consumer behavior theories may benefit politics by enhancing campaign efficiency, which involved preference prediction and launching.

The impact of the development of digital media on several elements of consumer behavior is no less crucial in the context of political decision-making than those elements that existed before. A lot of marketing research has proven that social media impacts consumer's choice and views on the world. Another most researched subject is its impact on people's opinions and political preferences influence. In this respect, voter's association with political belief or candidate and the purchase of the consumer are highly similar, as viral marketing, personalization, and the rapid response of the web environment make demand and electoral behavior identical. With the help of the current study, I will try to learn how a lot of major principles of consumer behavior help explain voting choice. These principles comprise the Theory of Planned Behavior , Theory of Information Processing , and the Consumer Decision Model

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. Using qualitative methods of research, I will explore how much light these ideas may throw upon voting behavior. The literature review corresponds of interviews with political strategists and voters, as well as case-studies. The aim is to understand how certain features affect voters' choices, while the method is to explore previous and current political campaigns in multiple countries. It also aims to assess the applicability of consumer behavior's concepts for voting behavior prediction. Finally, I will explore the moral dilemmas of using the instruments of marketing for a political choice. In particular, several important questions include the impact of target marketing, the place of false information, and the separation between manipulation and argues. Thus, this study will seek to investigate precisely the ethical issues of basing studies on consumer behavior while also reflecting on peculiarities.

The purpose of the present study is an investigation of several key concepts of consumer behavior and their correlation with understanding voting behavior. The combination of theories includes the Theory of Information Processing, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and the Consumer Decision-Making Model. Therefore, this research is trying to implement a qualitative approach to ask if the concepts can explain the reasons behind voters' behavior. Through using case studies such as interviews with voters or political strategists, it is sufficient to determine factors that have a high influence on voters' choice and to check an ability of CBT to predict these factors. It is worth mentioning a focus on cases in the past or the current time from different countries.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Summarizing the literature review, effects caused by the implementation of consumer behavior theories in a political environment to campaign for ethics will be discussed. Marketing Theories for Consumer Behavior. Consumer behavior research has traditionally helped marketers understand how people make decisions. The customer decision-making process and the influencing factors are both psychiatric, societal, and personal, thoroughly described by Kotler and Keller . Schiffman and Kanuk explore the mental processes that impact consumer decisions: perception, learning, and motivation. At the same time, these primitive notions will help us understated why customer behavior is crucial even beyond the buying and selling process. Political decision-making from the point of view of consumer behavior theories. These are relatively new scientific developments. According to Newman , in modern political campaigns, candidates are looked at as "products" to be "sold" to voters. Now, the STP segmentation targeting positioning process has been embraced as a guide to more efficiently and successfully targeting voters in campaigns for public office. The Theory of Planned Behavior also finds that electoral verdicts can be predicted based on the candidate's attitude, their subjective criteria, and their perceived capacity to accomplish anything. How technology affects Voter action? One factor of people's choice in the voting procedure is consistent: the digital innovation revolution has a significant impact on consumer behavior. Gustafsson examines how social media influences consumer selection and judgment processes concerning political opinions creation and mobilization. Although microtargeting and custom algorithms are frequently linked with online trade, they are used in politics Badassarri, and Goldberg .

Consumer Behavior and Marketing Theories . Marketers always used to study the behavior of the customer since the insight on the particular logic of the choices which people like you and me have to make is always helpful . Kotler & Keller present a complete structure of the decision-making process, including societal, individual, and psychological components. Based on the underlying psychological processes, Schiffman & Kanuk present consumer decisions via phenomena in perception, motivation, and learning. These metaphors allow us to see consumer behavior not only in terms of trade and money but as much wider phenomena.

Policymaking through the prism of consumer behavior theories. Voter behavior in terms of consumer behavior theories is a relatively new level of research. As Newman explain the principles of modern political campaigns, a candidate is a "product" which the voter "buys". According to Smith , the STP methodology can help candidates to reach voters via campaigns more efficiently. The Theory of Planned behavior also can be used to predict the intentions to vote according to one's beliefs and the perceptions of the behavior's control . However, developing such a level of research is possible only after the thorough coverage of the main consumer behavior theories.

Ethical concerns with the political interests for consumer behavior theories. The most evident ethical issue is the application of marketing strategies in political campaigns. Personalization of the information may result in data misuse . Negative advertisement is common in marketing as well as in

political campaigns . The privacy and election validity issues concern the concept of personalization even more . At the same time, the applied aspects of the election from the perspective of consumer behavior theory and marketing provide more engaging and knowledgeable electorates. However, considering the fast pace of digitalization and the further development of political campaigns in this direction further research is needed.

3. METHODOLOGY

The nature of this study is to gain a deeper understating of how consumers think and make their decisions. Therefore, a qualitative assessment of how consumer behavior theories can be applied in the target area is important. An approach that should identify the subtler aspects of the behavioral pattern, perspective, and motive that voters have is needed, and since a wide variety of consumer behavior theories that can explain their judgment. Qualitative method is the most suitable for this particular case. The study could offer a more comprehensive approach if it was conducted as a case study with multiple methods used in it, such as: case studies, semi-structured interviews, and content analysis. Thus, would provide a broader understating on the issue.

4. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

In this regard, the researchers could take a qualitative approach; this could provide the necessary information on the cognitive processes in voter decision-making. However, this information could not be obtained reliably via direct observation only. Therefore, the researcher could analyze various political papers used during campaigns, and speeches and audio inscriptions, as well as pre-election programs of the parties' campaigns. The researchers could also use a semi-structured interview comprising voters, marketing professionals, and political strategists. The other approach, which could also express the use of the consumer behavior theory was an investigation into the voter motivations during the political campaigns. The voter motivation theory is described by Consumer Behavior theory. The data collected, and analysis was performed using the analytical method of the current study presents new findings and perspectives on the consumer theory of voter behavior and political marketing methods. Thus, as indicated in the research, the statistical data show that campaigns rely on consumer behavior theory, primarily STP . Political strategists are becoming commercial marketers as campaigns are being segmented . That is marketing focus on particular groups of voters sending awareness messages using demographic, psychographic, and behavioral variables . This strategy yields better results because as claimed by Kotler and Armstrong , segmentation in marketing produces better results. Therefore, the current study also supports this stage. These research materials are used to examine the likelihood of usage of emotional branding and relationship marketing theory. Branding and relationship marketing in the field of consumer theory: a comprehensive view, which can boost voter loyalty and engagement. These strategies offer the work Fournier, S., & Avery, J. (2011). The unknown domain–psychological ownership in political marketing. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 24 : 63-85 May. 2011; , which suggests that voters choose candidates based on emotional reactions to the messages.

4.1 The Impact of Consumer Behavior Methods in Changing Voters' Decisions

Interviews with electors showed that reactions to marketing strategies in politics based on consumer behavior theory were adverse in various ways. While many people felt well-informed and immersed in the process owing to individualized campaign communication, others felt disillusioned and anxious about manipulation of their preferences. McChesney criticizes the use of modern marketing tactics in politics as unethical, and this paradox supports the idea level.

4.2. Function of Electronic Media

Thus, the results emphasize the importance of using and implementing consumer behavior theories into political campaigns via digital media. As Tucker et al. argue, the ability to target individual people accurately, respond quickly, and use viral marketing has drastically changed the nature of political campaigning . More than that, the development of technology has allowed for an unprecedented level of personalization and interaction.

4.3. What is the significance of political participation?

There are some potential benefits of integrating the consumer behavior principles into the political campaigns to improve voter engagement and make information more accessible. At the same time, the

outcomes of the study reflect several critical democratic and ethical challenges. More academic analyses and discussions are required to identify the best equilibrium between effective voter engagement, voter manipulation, and polarization hazards. The points were raised by Ansolabehere and Iyengar as they criticized the inefficiency of advertising on the informativity of democratic discourse.

a. Limitations and Future Research

The present research, however, may be limited in some ways – particularly the potential for the subjective interpretation of qualitative data, the biasness of both interview and content analyses samples. Future research is not limited to investigating the report in task – indeed, research might utilize quantitative methodologies to evaluate how consumer behavior techniques have actually affected political campaigns, turnout, and decision-making. Accordingly, the advancements regarding the combination of consumer behavior theories and political campaigning have radically changed the manner in which political strategy is formulated and executed . This report has examined the consequences of this interaction and the substantive advantages and ethical difficulties linked to voter participation. Future research and contributions to the debate surrounding these differences will be required as political campaigns evolve in reaction to marketing and digitalization developments.

5. CONCLUSION

Considering the remarkable shift that occurred with the inclusion of consumer behavior theories into politics and political campaigns in particular, the current study contributes with a detailed examination of the situation, nuanced and subtleties involved, and identifies several benefits regarding the voter's involvement and ethical considerations. It is critical to research and discuss these issues further as political campaigners are in a continuous state of adjustments to the new opportunities provided by marketing and digital technologies. In this regard, this factor is evidenced by an examination of the role of a single type of digital media here which illustrates better how personalized contact may be used for both benefits and how the disadvantages of micro targeting and the lack of respect for data privacy.

To conclude, one may determine that the impact of the digital environment dynamics of on political campaigning and people's views and voting is a widely studied and complex phenomenon. Yet, one of the most vivid statements is that it is one and the same place where marketing and political campaigning may occupy. The fact is supported by the most popular people's opinion on the usability of marketing based on the customer behavior theory's applications, and electors repeatedly highlighted the importance of such factors as emotional branding and targeting and segmenting . Not only do they raise a moral problem in the form of using manipulation for people and their involvement in the wider context of strong democracy and democracy-making processes, but they are being made anyway, unwillingly allowing for totally positive experience such as democratic educating.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is crucial to note, that the most genuine ways are considered to be the most correct. These methods should focus on education and giving the voters power, as opposed to the manipulation and exploitation approach.
- Different communication channels should be used to effectively target various audiences and create connections among diverse ideological populations. This will minimize the polarizing effect of tailored marketing.
- Guidance on how to navigate the tricky and complex domain of online marketing should be provided to enhance electors' digital literacy. Additionally, the use of specific policies and regulations that ensures a transparent and clear process, as well as, protect voters' data should be strictly monitored.
- The application of quantitative methods to improve the quality of research that is done on consumer behaviour theories and influence of political campaign calls for consideration. This would present a broader picture of how these issues influence voter behavior.
- Additionally, a highlight on transdisciplinary studies should be emphasised. One of the ways to gain a full understanding of how voters act during this digital age is by integrating knowledge from other subject areas.

- The development of frameworks that regulate political campaigns in order to structure policies that compel practice and the utilization of marketing techniques. Public policy initiatives that support voter education on voting strategies could help achieve this goal.
- Also imperative to gain ethical democratic legitimacy is enforcing higher regulatory standards that protect citizen data. It should specifically focus on the racing competition of politics marketing in the hope of creating public trust.
- Moreover, in a progress towards achieving democratic legitimacy, it is fundamental to establish a set of high regulatory standards binding to legitimate advertising, particularly in digital media. These criteria will guarantee that the usage of customer data and marketing strategies remains open and accountable.

The blend of consumer behavior theories and voting tendencies results in an impactful, vital, and beneficial information system that can boost understanding and democratization. The study indicates the importance of ethical consideration in accessing these ideas election campaigns. The advertisement strategies that enclose nonsense are explaining should be stiffly avoided. Instructions provided is aimed at helping people from various sectors such as learning and politics to both understand and participate in the political marketing world. By doing this campaigns would stand to gain a better future that will allow for effective strategies in communication. The instructions will make the political campaign the be safe and responsible.

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