

A Theoretical Analysis of Consumer Behaviour for Voters in Ghana

Stanley Nelvis Glate¹

Darlington Peter Onojafe²

Dennis Yao Dzansi³

Edmund Owusu Amoakoh⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Business Management, Central University of Technology Free State, South Africa

¹Author's correspondence: sglate@htu.edu.gh

Abstract. This paper identifies evidence of political marketing and, more specifically, consumer-oriented political marketing to analyse the theories of consumer behaviour and identify evidence of consumer behaviour in marketing in the behaviour of Ghanaian voters. The examination used quantitative research to analyse the relationship between three elements: (1) psychology, (2) personal and (3) social to understand the theory of the relationships between campaign messages and voters' behaviour. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey with semi-structured questionnaires administered to 7203 randomly selected respondents from participating political parties and voters in Accra, Ghana. Data received were analysed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between the behaviour of voters in Ghana and the campaign messages of political parties. This paper concludes that there are opportunities for political marketing and change in voter behaviour. Still, sufficient attention should be given to the understanding of consumer behaviour theory that recognizes the behavioural dynamic of voters in the design of effective campaign messages that are responsive to voters' needs.

Keywords: Campaign messages; Consumer behaviour; Marketing theories; Political marketing; the Ghanaian voters; Voter behaviour.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bukti pemasaran politik dan, secara lebih khusus, pemasaran politik yang berorientasi konsumen untuk menganalisis teori perilaku konsumen dan mengidentifikasi bukti perilaku konsumen dan kegiatan pemasaran pada perilaku pemilih di Ghana. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif untuk menganalisis hubungan antara tiga elemen, yaitu psikologi, personal, dan sosial guna memahami teori hubungan antara pesan kampanye dan perilaku pemilih. Data dikumpulkan melalui survei cross-sectional dengan kuesioner semi-terstruktur yang diberikan kepada

7.203 responden yang dipilih secara acak dari partai politik dan pemilih yang berpartisipasi di Accra, Ghana. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Temuan menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang signifikan secara statistik antara perilaku pemilih di Ghana dan pesan kampanye partai politik. Hasil penelitian ini menyimpulkan adanya peluang untuk pemasaran politik dan perubahan perilaku pemilih. Namun, perhatian yang cukup harus diberikan pada pemahaman teori perilaku konsumen yang mengakui dinamika perilaku pemilih dalam merancang pesan kampanye yang efektif dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan pemilih.

Kata kunci: Pemasaran politik; Pemilih Ghana; Perilaku pemilih; Perilaku konsumen; Pesan kampanye; Teori pemasaran.

Article Info:

Received: March 18, 2024

Accepted: June 9, 2024

Available online: June 26, 2024

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30588/jmp.v13i2.1797>

BACKGROUND

The analysis of the theory of a voter's behaviour in Ghana is based on the evaluation of political marketing, specifically consumer-oriented political marketing. The approach is to study voting behaviour as inherently psychological, with the choice and scope of psychological theories bounded by voting behaviour as it appears in the consumer behaviour literature. This paper analysed the relationship between three elements: (1) psychology, (2) personal and (3) social to understand the theories behind the choice message and the target needs of voters. In this paper, the voter is depicted as a consumer, while the political campaign is viewed as their marketing mix or marketing strategy. This conceptualisation allows the study to draw on the psychological theories such as stimulus-response (SOR) of Mehrabia and Russell (1974) and others as applied in consumer behaviour to understand the complex interplay between political marketing and voter's behaviour (vote for; vote against; do not vote). The study, therefore, resides in the marketing domain.

Behavioural dynamics is concerned with descriptions of behaviour change (Davis, Campbell, Hildon, & Michie, 2015) and is defined as the underlying overt behaviour caused by internal patterns of motivation influenced by competitive strategies of political parties (Park, 2016). The principles underpinning the dimension of consumer behaviour in the commercial domain have gained traction in politics to include personal, psychological, and social dimensions of voting behaviour (O'Cass, 1996). These dimensions have different interest levels and provide the basis for the consumer behaviour model. As political parties compete for support and votes, voters' behaviour choices should be used to measure democratic maturity and development. Can political parties compete and influence voters' behaviour? In traditional marketing, companies exploit consumer behaviour (choice-making) where the marketer uses glossy advertisements and promotional messages to stimulate consumer interest in products and services (Keller, 2016). Consumer purchase

decisions are also influenced by videos and audio messages to attract attention. stimulate needs and desires (Kotler, 2017).

Marketing theories, techniques and models have been applied in almost all areas of human behaviour ranging from consumer to business markets and from religion to culture. The understanding and application of the marketing concept is arguably the foundational principle used to identify and satisfy consumer needs (Kotler & Levy, 2007). It is debated that marketing insight in consumer behaviour is also relevant to other areas beyond the commercial domain (Phillips & Bradshaw, 1993). Notably, political marketing utilises many of the same techniques used in product marketing such as advertising and publicity (Rayner, 2014).

According to Scammell (2013), there are parallels in the development of consumer and political markets. Just as the consumer is empowered through increased choice and vastly expanded information resources, so too is the political consumer. Indeed, significant distinctions between consumer behaviour and voting behaviour is no longer drawn by scholars (Hansen & Jansen, 2007). Voting behaviour shares characteristics that are common to other kinds of human (consumer) behaviour. One could categorize a political party as a service provider. The political party promises to deliver some societal and other benefits in return for a fee (a vote), with the typical justification that these benefits will enhance people's lives and society at large. Voters can therefore be viewed as customers who are consuming a service based on the decisions and actions made by political parties in a marketing setting (O'Shaughnessy & Henneberg, 2007).

As customers are an essential element of the firm's environment, so too voters are an essential element of the political sphere (Harris & Lock, 2010). It has also been advocated that voters are the decision-makers in this relationship (Butler & Collins, 2014; Graefe & Armstrong, 2010), although how similar this is to the decision making of a consumer may not yet be as clear. What is clear is that the voter is relied on to make an eventual choice: which candidate or political party (or both) to vote for during an election. When analysing voter behaviour at a macro level, there are characteristics of voter behaviour that mimic consumer behaviour, such as influence from a politician or party image and politicians' appearance/celebrity endorsement appeal (Peng & Hackley, 2019).

Arguments were made for the application of marketing models and theories to the electoral marketplace as well as the relevance of the theory of consumer behaviour to domains beyond commercial markets (Yorke & Meehan, 2017; Tweneboah-Koduah, Akotia, & Akotia, 2015). Clarifying the principles and theories of consumer behaviour and its implication in the political market is essential. The understanding of the political market is conflated with societal and personal interests (Schwartz, 2014). These interests are mediated by campaign messages of political parties to attract and inform voters' desire to act by way of vote and support for the party. Political parties select societal problems and use them to produce exciting and sometimes humorous campaign messages to evoke a set of promises that lies at the heart of voters' personal and socio-economic needs. It is important therefore to model the behaviour of voters (consumer) by incorporating the reaction of the consumer towards the product in the process of decision making. Whilst there limited or evidence of

applied theories of political marketing suitable for managing voter behaviour and design of effective campaign messages, the analysis of consumer behaviour theory can be used to improve understanding of the nexus between voters' behaviour and campaign messages of political parties for improved participation in the political marketing process.

This analysis would help to understand the relationship between three elements: (1) psychology, (2) personal, and (3) social and their influence on the theory of the relationships between campaign messages and voters' behaviour. This understanding is specifically important for a developing country like Ghana where the needs of voters do not seem to form part of the campaign messages (Haron & Mokhtar, 2010). From the preliminary literature search, it became abundantly clear that a theoretical analysis of the behavioural dynamics of voters is conflated in the context of consumer behaviour giving rise to the following questions: (a) What elements of consumer behaviour influence Ghanaian voters? and (b) What influence do campaign messages have on voters' choices?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

To understand different aspects of consumer behaviour, Belch and Belch (2004) provide a link between human behaviour and consumer behaviour, by stating that consumer behaviour has been defined as the study of human behaviour in a consumer role. Consumer behaviour, according to Walters (1974), represents specific types of human actions, namely those concerned with the purchase of products and services from marketing organisations. From the understanding that the behaviour of the consumer is founded on human behaviour, Walters (1974) referred to consumer behaviour as the process whereby individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how, and from whom to purchase goods and services.

Schiffman (2007) provided a different definition by explaining consumer behaviour as the study of the buying units and the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas. This definition focuses on buying units in an attempt to include not only the individual but also groups that purchase products or services. From the perspective of Schiffman and Kanuk (2008), consumer behaviour is regarded as the display of activities in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products, services, and ideas by the consumer. Schiffman and Kanuk (2008) elaborate on the definition by explaining that consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption-related items. It includes the study of what, why, when, where and how often they purchase and how they use the purchased product. In addition, it encompasses all the behaviours that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs.

Consumer behaviour is a set of activities aimed at obtaining, using, and managing products and services, as well as decisions taken before purchase. They include purchasing, possessing, and using products (Makarewicz, 2013). Consumer behaviour is manifested by buying products and services to satisfy needs. The act of purchase is a complex process preceded by the act of selection, which has its guidelines. Economic criteria, secured by psychological elements, are important because a customer's finances are compared to the

price of a product or service. The buyer intends to move to the expected aspiration level, which is manifested by the needs that must be satisfied by purchased products (Makarewicz, 2013). Consumer behaviour can be explained by the description of consumers' internal responses to different incentives and their perceptions since such situations trigger various behaviours during the buying process (Karczewska, 2010).

This behaviour is therefore divided into rational and irrational. The former is understood as internally coherent behaviour resulting in maximum satisfaction (Makarewicz, 2013). The buyer behaves rationally if s/he uses the available income to purchase goods which will bring him/her maximum satisfaction. Irrational consumer behaviour is characterized by the incoherent behaviour of the consumer, who consciously makes buying decisions that may not be in their best interest. Irrational buying decisions do not result from the cold calculation, but rather from the need for imitation, incentives, snobbery, and subconscious motivation. The buyer is often unaware of these dependencies (Rudnicki, 2011).

Consumer Behaviour Elements

1. Psychological Behaviour

This behaviour of the consumer is born out of the psycho-social theory and the understanding of consumer behaviour. In consumer behaviour, psychology is highly noted to have shaped the behaviour in decision choice. There are characters, attributes or traits of the consumer that define their psychological behaviour (Durmaz, 2014; Jonsson, 2010) and these factors are defined mostly as psychological factors that influence consumer behaviour. The key psychological factors to understand when considering consumer behaviour include motivation, perception, attitude and belief systems along with lifestyle (Cetina, Munthiu, & Radulescu, 2012; Rani, 2014). Perception, motivation, beliefs and attitudes all determine the conscious and subconscious thought processes that a consumer undergoes before eventually making a choice. The psychological factors influence the behaviour of the consumer and are therefore appropriate when looking entirely at the psychology behind consumer behaviour (Kimmel, 2013; Lorenzetti, 2020).

The psychological factor "motivation" Motivation is an activated internal need state leading to goal-directed behaviour to satisfy that need (Durmaz, 2014). Accordingly, motives can be defined as relatively enduring, strong, and persistent internal stimuli that arouse and direct behaviour toward certain goals (Trehan, 2019). Therefore, the motivational psychological process is considered to persuade an individual to behave in a certain way. According to Kimmel (2013), various forms of situations are likely to start consumer "disturbance" which could either be psychological or physiological. An internal psychological factor could be an unfulfilled need that arises as a tension and drive for the individual to satisfy the need. This type of behaviour is goal-oriented and impacted by previous learning and cognitive processes. The starting point in the buying process is recognition of need. The needs of consumers are intricately linked, and as a result, they can influence behaviour simultaneously. Some needs are emotionally related, while some are status-related, mutually reinforcing a purchase (Kimmel, 2013). Furthermore, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, such as achievement, status, and self-actualization, has been helpful for

marketers to clarify various types of product benefits claimed by individuals consequent to environmental and developmental circumstances (Wahba & Bridwell, 2017). A person can be motivated to buy a product for convenience, for style, for prestige, for self-pride or being at par with others (Khan, 2007). If the marketers (political parties) know what creates motivation, they may be able to develop marketing tactics to influence consumers' (voters') motivation to think about, be involved with, and/or process information about their brand (Yoo & Gretzel, (2011).

Another angle of looking at psychological behaviour is the perception of the consumer about the product or service. Perception is how consumers understand the world around them based on information received through their senses. In response to stimuli, consumers subconsciously evaluate their needs, values and expectations, and then they use that evaluation to select, organize and interpret the stimuli (Pelau et al., 2018). The marketplace's perception of a brand or industry is extremely important, which is why big brands work so hard to ensure that the general perception surrounding them and their industry is as positive as possible (Taylor et al., 2016). Belief, on the other hand, is a descriptive thought that a person holds about something and attitude as a person's enduring favourable or unfavourable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea (Kotler, 2010). Individuals can have specific beliefs and attitudes about specific products and services (Sarangapani, 2019). The interest is the beliefs that voters (consumers) formulate about specific political campaign messages because these make up the ideas or products being offered by the political parties as brands that affect consumer (voter) decisions. Consumers tend to develop a set of beliefs about a product's attributes and then, through these beliefs, form a brand image about a particular brand (Lee, 2017).

- (1) *Social Behaviour*: Consumers are influenced by various people in their lives including relatives or families, friends, neighbours, co-workers, acquaintances and the like (Quintelier, 2014).
- (2) Influences from these categories of people have an impact on the consumer (Kardes & Wyer, 2019) in several ways such as what products or services to buy, how to use them, where to shop, what brands to prefer, and which ones to avoid. Just as established by the social-cognitive theory which is a component of the psychological theory of consumer behaviour, the social-cognitive traits of the individual consumer determine their behaviour (Sears & Funk, 2003). The consumer may want to behave in a way that depicts him/her as a social influencer thereby developing a sense of identity and loyalty with a brand.

This dimension of consumer behaviour is seen as the consumer's social value which implies individual perception about what the society would think or how it would respond if a purchase was made by the individual (Smith & Colgate, 2017). As per Merton and Rossi (2009), consumers' behaviour is shaped with a frame of reference produced by the social groups to which each individual belongs. Douglas and Isherwood (2002) stated that consumers buy products not only for economic reasons but also to create and retain social relationships. Status-seeking in society was also found to be one of the objectives behind consumers' use of a particular product (Nelissen & Meijers, 2011). It is therefore essential to

comprehend the dynamics of social practice/norms and anticipate changes in people's behaviour towards the consumption of a product (Shove & Walker, 2014). Some people have a desire to attain status by appearing to be informed or expert in front of their peers, as well as an altruistic disposition to help others, which are some of the underlying desires that lead a person to brag about a product or service. This explains why some people are more likely to express their opinions. However, social pressures make recommendations based on what they believe others should do and what they want others to do, and what is done (East, Singh, Vanhuele, & Wright, 2008).

2. Personal Behaviour

Consumers are individuals and as such have different personal traits by which they behave. Pikturnienė and Kurtinaitienė (2010) described personality as traits of individuals which have an impact on their behaviour. Among several other factors, personality traits have been shown to have a substantial influence on consumer purchasing behaviour (Khatri, et al., 2021). On the other hand, consumer personality does not only influence behavioural intention but also consumer evaluations of products and brands (Sirgy, 2012; Belk, 2018). Landon (2014) states that consumers show interest in products that are consistent with their personality and self-concept. Azoulay and Kapferer (2013) define personality as a clear construct that is dissimilar to the cognitive construct, skills and capabilities. Personality traits are inferred by an individual's physical characteristics, attitudes, values and behaviour (Park, 2016). Aaker (1997) advocated that consumers' personality affects their evaluation of brands, and the choice of product is based on the congruency consumers feel with the product and their characteristics. Consumers seek image congruence in their purchase decisions (Grubb & Hupp, 2008; Ericksen & Sirgy, 2012) as the choices mirror their personalities.

A five-factor model (FFM), sometimes known as the big five, emerged for assessing personality in individuals and was deemed sufficient to cover the trait-descriptive elements of personality (Khatri, et al., 2021). Benet and Waller (1995) hypothesized that this five-factor structure accounts for a large portion of the covariation between self-ascriptions and peer judgments of personality characteristics. Despite some of the precise factor labels changing, the composition's fundamental structure has not changed (John & Srivastava, 1999). The same five elements or domains are taken into account by the majority of measurements of individual differences in people's behaviour, in part or in full (McCrae & John, 2012; Tupes & Christal, 2012). Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, negative emotionality (also known as neuroticism vs. emotional stability), and open-mindedness are the most typical descriptors for these domains (alternatively labelled openness to experience, intellect, or imagination) (John et al., 2008; McCrae & Costa, 2008). Extraversion is a measure of a person's social and outgoing tendencies. Its characteristics include assertiveness, sociability, and strong amounts of energy. The term "agreeableness" describes a person's tact, friendliness, and warmth; it is also characterized by compassion, respect, and trust. Organization, productivity, and responsibility are characteristics of conscientiousness, which is related to one's degree of self-discipline. Negative emotionality is concerned with a person's capacity to maintain equilibrium and stability, and the traits linked to it include anxiety, depression, and emotional turbulence. Finally, open-mindedness

reveals a person's level of open-mindedness. Its characteristics include creative imagination, artistic sensibility, and intellectual curiosity.

The Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (EKB) Model

This model describes the consumer decision process and how decisions are made when choosing among a list of alternatives available. The model builds on the field of consumer psychology theories and models such as Howard and Sheth (1969) theory of buyer behaviour and Nicosia (1976) theory of the consumer decision process. In this theory, a consumer performs an external search for more information and is dissatisfied. Thus, while the decision-making process happens, the same may not translate into actual buying. The information thus gathered may act as feedback for being utilized later when s/he goes out for buying the next time. Moreover, the decision-making process may halt owing to some pertinent issues at hand or the consumer's failure to make the conclusive decision for some other reason. The EKB theory is considered one of the most important works in the field of consumer behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2008). The theory fundamentally consists of five sequential steps where information is processed before consumption decisions are made. These include need or problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, product choice, and outcomes or pre-purchase evaluation.

Need Arousal Recognition

Need recognition measures whether there is recognition by individuals of the need to find a solution to a problem and the choice to activate the process. This is regarded as the first step or a component in the decision-making process, and it is expected to elicit the continuation of the process (Bruner & Pomazal, 1993). According to Bruner and Pomazal (1993), to address the problem of consumers adequately, there is the need for the problem first to be delineated. This is the beginning of the consumers' (voters') process of deciding to vote as to if the campaign messages as advertising and promotional mix tools properly define the problems or challenges confronting them. Therefore, in building a behavioural model for predicting consumer (voter) decisions, need arousal has been identified as the starting point.

Information Search

This is the second stage or construct of the EKB consumer decision process model. Solomon (2004) referred to information search as the process by which the consumer surveys their environment for the appropriate data to make a reasonable decision. At this stage, the consumer is aroused to search for more information about the product. consumers actively collect and utilise internal and external information to make better purchase decisions (Masini, & Menichetti, 2012). Haridasan et al. (2019) emphasised that Internal search occurs when consumers access information previously stored in memory. It is regarded as the primary source used for habitual and limited decision-making. On the contrary, external search involves searching for information from sources outside of memory because the required information was not previously acquired or cannot be recalled. Therefore, when a consumer has limited expertise about a product, they tend to feel unable to search for

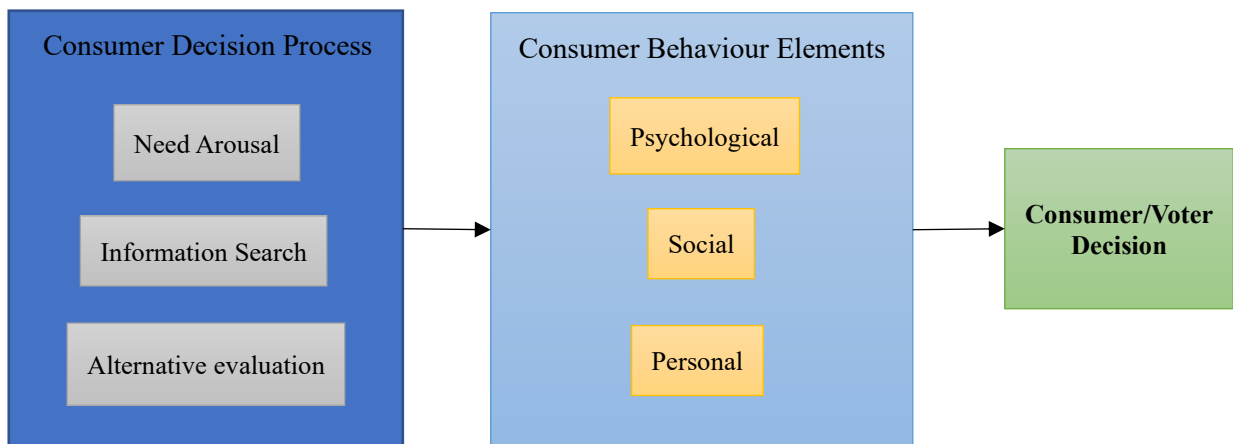
information extensively. Haridasan et al. (2019) outlined that the search for information by consumers is based on factors such as knowledge of the consumer, price, perceived risk, experience, involvement, and uncertainty.

Evaluation of Alternatives

The major question at this stage of the consumer decision process is, how does the consumer choose among alternative brands. The consumer uses the information from the search to evaluate alternative brands in the choice set (Kotler et al., 1996). After gathering enough information, the consumer evaluates them to make the best decisions (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011). Alternatives are usually evaluated by applying criteria depending on consumer value preferences. Specifically, consumer value preferences might be oriented towards price, quality or additional features and capabilities of products and services (Blythe, 1997). Neal and Quester (2007) discuss this issue with greater clarity by specifying quality, price, and features as product attributes, specifying the degree of importance of each attribute as the most important factor impacting the outcome of the evaluation of alternatives.

Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework which connects the components to be modelled for describing the behaviour of the consumer (voter). This model is based on the insight from existing theories. Despite theories backing the behaviour of the consumer in terms of psychology, and social and personal behavioural elements, predicting voter (consumer) behaviour would be more comprehensive by integrating elements of the consumer decision process into the model. In a nutshell, the behaviour of the consumer would be driven by considerable factors of the product in the decision-making process towards the final choice.



Source: Adapted from Kotler and Keller (2012, page 188).

Figure 1. Consumer Behaviour Model for Voters in Ghana

RESEARCH METHODS

This research utilised the theoretical research approach to develop a consumer behaviour model for voters in Ghana. Using this approach to research, information towards achieving the objectives was gathered from existing knowledge, assumptions, and intuition. Relevant information was drawn from existing literature on consumer behaviour and consumer decision process using journal articles, books, web-based search engines and conference papers. Specifically, some of the relevant information drawn from these sources was based on knowledge linking voter behaviour in political marketing to consumer behaviour. The use of this research approach is to tap into the existing ideas on consumer behaviour and its application in politics to mimic the behaviour of voters in the electoral market. This paper proposed a conceptual framework based on a decision-making process using consumer behaviour elements in voting decisions that can be tested with empirical data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In consumer behaviour models, three key elements were identified that define consumer behaviour. These included psychological behaviour, social behaviour, and personal behaviour. These behavioural attributes similarly relate to the behaviour of the voter in electoral markets. Psychologically, motivation, perception, belief, and attitude significantly influence the behaviour of voters and party members as they relate to consumer behaviour (Schiffman & Kanuk, (2008). Auf et al. (2018) concluded that motivation is among the most important factors that determine consumer buying behaviour. According to a study by Singh (2020), the behaviour of voters is influenced by their psychological motivation. Furthermore, Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) opined that consumers psychologically create perceptive imagery towards certain products/services which defines their behaviour and purchase decisions. This claim is also backed by Luchs & Mooradian, (2012). Just as perception influences the consumer's behaviour, voter behaviour in the political market is also defined by their psychological perception of a political party, candidate, or party. Moreover, it was deduced that a consumer's behaviour relates to his or her cognitive and affective attitude towards the product (Chaparro-Africano & Garzón-Méndez, 2021). The attitude of the voter is based on perceptions that will define the choice of political parties/candidates. It has a psychological tendency that affects the choice of a political party (Radulescu et al., 2021), during which the behaviour changes according to the psychological and emotional state of the voter.

Social behaviour is another behavioural element that defines consumer (voter) behaviour. The behaviour of the voter (consumer) would be defined by their friends, family neighbours, social groups, co-workers, and other social influencers (Melnyk & Carrillat, 2022). Per the findings of Griskevicius and Kenrick (2013), these social influencers change the behaviour of consumers towards a brand or products/services. From the psycho-social theory, it is assumed that the behaviour of the voter is a function of partisanship. Voters therefore behave socially to please their social influencers and fulfil their social value in society. Biesta (2011) believes people demonstrate great loyalty towards the political values of their family, peers, and organisations. According to Lane, (1983)., attachment to political

parties and a voting decision is associated with social influences, including parents, family members and others.

The study further proposes that the behaviour of the voter is defined by their personal behaviour element. Consumers have their individual/personal traits which define their purchasing behaviour. It is argued that consumers show interest in brands and products/services that are consistent with their personality and self-concept (Landon, 2014). The personal behaviour of voters would define their political self-efficacy. Shang and Lau (2015) identified that personal behaviour could lead some voters to behave like “motivated reasoners” who rely heavily on partisan heuristics in voting decisions instead of actively consuming the political information available.

It is also indicated from the review that three major factors namely need recognition (arousal), information search and evaluation of alternatives are elements of a political product (campaign messages) that influence voter behaviour. In political marketing, campaigns are seen as advertising to induce or invite the consumer (voter) to consider purchasing (voting). The three elements mentioned above were deduced from the EKB model, which outlines the consumer decision process.

Studies found that need recognition significantly influences consumer behaviour. Researchers (Homer & Kahle, 1988; Kim et al., 2002) conclude that individual needs and psychological behaviour towards products/services are positively and strongly correlated; hence, consumer needs remain an important predictor of consumer psychological behaviour. Lars (2018) confirmed that the consumer desire to satisfy certain needs motivates them psychologically to purchase certain products. It is emphasised that when the needs are met, motivation increases (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017). These views articulated by scholars proposed that, in terms of politics, when the voters (consumers) can identify their needs in campaign messages provided by political parties, their psychological behaviour in terms of motivation towards the decision to vote would increase. Moreover, the needs and desires of the consumer play a vital role in their perception of a product/service (Schwartz (2014). Consumers at different levels of needs and desires perceive the same thing differently (Sree, 2019). The need arousal of the political campaign messages may therefore change the psychological behaviour of the voter (consumer) in terms of perception. It is also indicated need recognition influences consumer behaviour.

Arora et al. (2019) confirmed in a study that consumers would want to recognise the need for a product to boost their social needs. It is deduced that if a voter recognises a problem or a need that campaign messages can help solve, they prove to others that they are socially affiliated with the political party/brand. However, research on the need for arousal (recognition) of a product and the personal behaviour of consumers is very limited. According to Tuten and Bosnjak (2001), the need for recognition usually correlates with certain personality traits, particularly openness to experience. For instance, Kearney et al. (2009), introverts who are reluctant to new experiences might enjoy thinking in a reassuring environment. In a similar situation, a consumer (voter) who is an introvert may be reluctant to new issues in campaign messages of political parties and, hence may not necessarily be concerned about identifying the needs in the message.

The review further pointed out that information search influences consumer (voter) behaviour. Scholars perceived a relationship between psychological behaviour and information search activities (Burnkrant, 1976; Nicosia, 1966; Brinberg & Lutz, 1986). According to Bettman and Park (1980), the extent of information search depends on one's motivation and perceived ability to search, and higher ability induces increased information search activities. It is believed that information search is related to social behaviour among consumers. Through social behaviour, the consumer would use information-seeking behaviour through communication and interactions that influence human information search (Khan & Liu, 2018). Submissions per literature propose that the search for information in the political campaign messages could be related to the social behaviour of the voter (consumer).

The behaviour of voters is also strongly linked to the evaluation of alternatives as usually done by consumers in the field of marketing. The psychological, social, and personal behaviour of the consumer changes per their evaluation of alternative products/services. As alluded to by Mishra (2018), the motivation for consumers to buy a product depends on the evaluation of other alternative products on the market. It is also argued that psychologically, consumers make perceptual judgments that inform behavioural changes and decisions on various products after careful evaluation (Folkes & Matta, 2004; Ordabayeva & Chandon, 2013; Banerjee, 2016). Largely, is a connection between the evaluation of alternative products and consumer psychological behaviour. According to Brinberg & Lutz (1986), voters (consumers) likely evaluate the alternative political campaign messages, which could influence their motivation, perception, and attitude towards the message.

As posited by Hawkins, Best & Coney (1998), the Hawkins, Best and Coney model supports the influence of alternative evaluation on social behaviour. The behaviour of the consumer can be defined in terms of psychological behaviour, social behaviour, and personal behaviour and these can be equally linked to the behaviour of voters in the electoral market. Moreso, tapping from the consumer decision process, the evidence provides that the recognition of needs, information search and evaluation of alternatives are key factors that could significantly influence the behaviour of the voter towards a voting decision.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis of consumer behaviour theory combined aspects of the three behaviour elements and their relationship with campaign messages. This was done to help understand theory development requirements for improved political marketing process in Ghana. The conclusion based on the literature suggests that consumer behaviour theory in marketing is very relevant and can be applied by political parties for improved effectiveness of campaign messages.

Recommendation

The proposed voter behaviour model or framework in this study and the findings can be explored further with empirical data or evidence to validate the voter behaviour and elements of political party products (campaign messages) that influence voter behaviour and

voting decisions. This would assist political parties and candidates to adopt campaign strategies which are consumer (voter) focused.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, J. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347-356. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224379703400304>
- Arora, A., Bansa, S., Kandpal, C., Aswani, R. and Dwivedi, W. K. 2019. Measuring social media influencer index- insights from facebook, Twitter and Instagram. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 49, 86-101.
- Aruma, E. and Hanachor, M. E. 2017. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and assessment of needs in community development. *International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability*, 5(7), 15-27.
- Auf, M. A., Meddour, H., Saoula, O., & Majid, A. H. (2018). Consumer buying behaviour: the roles of price, motivation, perceived culture importance, and religious orientation. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, 12(4), 177-186. <http://doi.org/10.24052/JBRMR/V12IS04/ART-18>
- Azoulay, A., & Kapferer, J. N. (2013). Do brand personality scales really measure brand personality? *Journal of Brand Management*, 11(2), 143-155. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540162>
- Banerjee, S. (2016). Influence of consumer personality, brand personality, and corporate personality on brand preference: an empirical investigation of interaction effect. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(2), 198-216. <http://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-05-2015-0073>
- Belch, E. G., & Belch, A. M. (2004). *Advertising and Promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective*. McGraw-Hill.
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), 139-168. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/209154>
- Benet, V., & Waller, N. G. (1995). The big seven-factor model of personality description: evidence for its cross-cultural generality in a Spanish sample. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 701-718. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.4.701>
- Bettman, J. R., & Park, C. W. (1980). Effects of prior knowledge and experience and phase of the choice process on consumer decision processes: A protocol analysis. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 7(3), 234-248. <http://doi.org/10.1086/208812>
- Blythe, J. (1997). *Essentials of Marketing*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Brinberg, D., & Lutz, R. (1986). *Perspectives on methodology in consumer research*. Springer-Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-8609-4>
- Bruner, G. C., & Pomazal, R. J. (1993). Problem recognition: The crucial first stage of the consumer decision process. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 5(1), 53-63. <http://doi.org/10.1108/eb008219>
- Butler, P., & Collins, N. (2014). Political marketing: Structure and process. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(1), 19-34. <http://doi.org/10.1108/03090569410049154>

- Burnkrant, R. E. (1976). A motivational model of information processing intensity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 3(1), 21-30. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208647>
- Chaparro-Africano, A. M., & Garzón-Méndez, J. D. (2021). Consumer profile and factors determining the purchase of agroecological products. A case study: UNIMINUTO Agroecological Fair and Minuto de Dios Solidarity Market, Colombia. *Agronomia Colombiana*, 39(2), 179-195. <http://doi.org/10.15446/agron.colomb.v39n2.89013>
- Douglas, M., & Isherwood, B. C. (2002). *The world of goods: Towards an anthropology of consumption*. Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203434857>
- Durmaz, Y. (2014). The Impact of Psychological Factors on Consumer Buying Behavior and an Empirical Application in Turkey. *Asian Social Science*, 10(6), 194-204. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n6p194>
- East, R., Singh, J., Vanhuele, M., & Wright, M. (2008). *Consumer behavior: Applications in Marketing*. Sage Publications Ltd.
- Ericksen, M., & Sirgy, M. J. (2012). Employed females' clothing preference, self-image congruence and career anchorage. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 22(5), 408-422. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1992.tb01547.x>
- Folkes, V., & Matta, S. (2004). The effect of package shape on consumers' judgments of product volume: Attention as a mental contaminant. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(2), 390-401. <https://doi.org/10.1086/422117>
- Gigerenzer, G., & Gaissmaier, W. (2011). Heuristic decision making. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 62(1), 451-482. <http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120709-145346>
- Graefe, A., & Armstrong, J. S. (2010). Predicting elections from the most important issue: A test of the take-the-best heuristic. *Journal of Behavioural Decision Making*, 25(1), 41-48. <http://doi.org/10.1002/bdm.710>
- Griskevicius, V., & Kenrick, D. T. (2013). Fundamental motives: How evolutionary needs influence consumer behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 23(3), 372-386. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2013.03.003>
- Grubb, E., & Hupp, G. (1968). Perception of self, generalized stereotypes and brand selection. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 5(1), 58-63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224376800500107>
- Hansen, T., & Jensen, J. M. (2007). Understanding voters' decisions: A theory of planned behaviour approach. *Innovative Marketing*, 3(4), 88-96. http://www.businessperspectives.org.esc-web.lib.cbs.dk/component/option.com_journals/task.issue/id,68/jid,5/
- Haridasan, A. C., Fernando, A. G., & Saju, B. (2019). A systematic review of consumer information search in online and offline environments. *RAUSP Management Journal*, 56(2), 234-253. <http://doi.org/10.1108/RAUSP-08-2019-0174>
- 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. <http://doi.org/10.1108/03090561011020435>

- Haron, M., & Mokhtar, K. (2010). *Political marketing mistakes: Lessons drawn from the Malaysian political competition*. University Sains.
- Homer, P. and Kahle, L. R. (1988). A structural equation test of the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 638-646.
- Howard, J. A., & Sheth, J. N. (1969). *The theory of buyer behaviour*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- John, O. P., & Srivastava, S. (1999). The big five trait taxonomy: History measurement, and theoretical perspectives. In L. A. Pervin & O. P. John (eds.), *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (pp. 102–138). Guilford Press.
- John, O. P., Naumann, I. P., & Soto, C. J. (2008). Paradigm shift to the integrative Big Five Trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and conceptual issues. In *Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research* (3rd edition) (pp.114-158). Guilford Press.
- Jonsson, C. V. (2010). *Consumer Psychology*. Boyd Open University Press.
- Karczewska, M. (2010). *Determinanty zachowań konsumenckich na rynku, in: Krakowska Konferencja Młodych Uczonych*. Kraków: Sympozja Konferencje KKMU.
<http://doi.org/10.14254/2071-8330.2013/6-1/10>
- Kardes, F. R., & Wyer, R. S. Jr. (2019). *Consumer Information Processing*. In D. E. Carlston (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of social cognition* (pp. 806–828). Oxford University Press.
- Kearney, E., Gebert, D., & Voelpel, S. C. (2009). When and how diversity benefits teams: The importance of team members' need for cognition. *Academic Management Journal*, 52(3), 581-598. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMJ.2009.41331431>
- Keller, K. L. 2016. Integrating marketing communications: New findings, new lessons and new ideas. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 122-145.
- Khan, M. (2007). *Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Management*. New Age International Publishers.
- Khan, S. S., & Liu, H. (2018). *Exploring the impact on user information search behaviour of affective design: an eye tracking study*. Institute of Research and Applicable Computing.
- Khatri, J., Marín-Morales, J., Moghaddas, M., Guixeres, J., Giglioli, I., & Alcañiz, M. (2021). Recognizing personality traits using consumer behaviour patterns in a virtual retail store. *The Journal Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 2-17.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.752073>
- Kimmel, A. J. (2013). *Psychological Foundations of Marketing*. Taylor & Francis.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315436098>
- Kotler, P. (2010). A generic concept of marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 36(4), 46-54.
<http://doi.org/10.2307/1250977>
- Kotler, P., & Levy, S. J. (2007). Broadening the Concept of Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 33(1), 10-15. <http://doi.org/10.2307/1248740>
- Kotler, P. 2017. Philip Kotler: some of my adventures in marketing. *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 9(2), 203-208.

- Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Saunders, J. & Wong, V. (1996). *Principles of Marketing*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Landon, E. L. (2014). Self-concept, ideal self-concept, and consumer purchase intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2(1), 44-51. <http://doi.org/10.1086/208590>
- Lane, R. (1983). Political Observers and Market Participants: The Effects on Cognition. *Political Psychology*, 4(3), 455-482. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3790869>
- Lars, P. (2018). *Consumer Behaviour: The Psychology of Marketing*. University of Southern California.
- Lee, S. (2017). *Motivation Study Based on Expectancy Theory*. The Florida State University College.
- Luchs, M., & Mooradian, T. (2012). Sex, personality, and sustainable consumer behaviour: elucidating the gender effect. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 15, 127-144. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10603-011-9179-0>
- Nicosia, F. M. (1966). *Consumer Decision Processes*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Makarewicz, A. (2013). Consumer behavior as a fundamental requirement for effective operations of companies. *Journal of International Studies*, 6(1), 103-109. <http://doi.org/10.14254/2071-8330.2013/6-1/10>
- Masini, A., & Menichetti, E. (2012). Impact of behavioural factors in the renewable energy investment decision-making process: conceptual framework and empirical findings. *Energy Policy*, 40(1), 28-38. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2010.06.062>
- McCrae, R. R., & John, O. P. (2012). An introduction to the five-factor model and its applications. *Journal of Personality*, 60(2), 175-215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1992.tb00970.x>
- McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (2008). Validation of the five-factor model of personality across instruments and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(1), 81-98. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.1.81>
- Mehrabian, A. and Russell, J. A. (1974). *An approach to environmental psychology*. The MIT Press
- Melnyk, V., & Carrillat, F. A. (2022). The Influence of Social Norms on Consumer Behaviour: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 86(3), 98-120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429211029199>
- Merton, R. K., & Rossi, A. K. (2009). Contributions to the theory of reference group behaviour. In *Social theory and social structure*. The Free Press.
- Neal, C. M., & Quester, P. D. (2007). *Consumer Behaviour; Implication for Marketing Strategy*. McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Nelissen, R., & Meijers, M. H. C. (2011). Social benefits of luxury brands as costly signals of wealth and status. *Evolution of Human Behaviour*, 32(5), 343-355. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2010.12.002>
- O'Cass, A. (1996). Political Marketing and the Marketing Concept. *European Journal of Marketing*, 30(10/11), 45-61.

- O'Shaughnessy, N., & Henneberg, S. C. (2007). The selling of the President 2004: A marketing perspective. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 7, 249–268.
- Ordabayeva, N., & Chandon, P. (2013). Predicting and managing consumers' package size impressions. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(5), 123-137.
<https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.12.0228>
- Park, B. (2016). A method for studying the development of impressions of real people. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(5), 907-917.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.51.5.907>
- Pelau, C., Serban, D., & Chinie, A. (2018). The influence of personality types on the impulsive buying behavior of a consumer. *Proceedings at International Conference of Business Excellence*, (pp. 751-759). <https://doi.org/10.2478/picbe-2018-0067>
- Peng, N., & Hackley, C. (2019). Are voters, consumers? A qualitative analysis of the voter consumer analogy in political marketing. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 12(2), 171-186. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13522750910948770>
- Phillips, H., & Bradshaw, R. (1993). How customers actually shop: Customer interaction with the point of sale. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 35(1), 51-62.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/147078539303500104>
- Pikturnienė, I., & Kurtinaitienė, J. (2010). *Vartotojų elgsena: teorija ir praktika*. Vilniaus Universiteto Leidykla.
- Quintelier, E. (2014). The influence of the big 5 personality traits on young people's political consumer behaviour. *Young Consumer*, 15(4), 342-352.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-09-2013-00395>
- Radulescu, V., Cetina, I., Cruceru, A. & Goldbach, D. (2021). Consumers' attitude and intention towards organic fruits and vegetables: Empirical study on Romanian consumers. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 94-105. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/su13169440>
- Rani, P. (2014). Factors influencing consumer behaviour. *International Journal of Research and Academic Review*, 2(9), 52-61.
- Rayner, J. (2014). What About Winning? Looking into the Blind Spot of the Theory of Campaign Professionalization. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 13(4), 334-354.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2012.719485>
- Rudnicki, I. (2011). Zachowania nabywców jako przesłanka dla tworzenia strategii komunikacji przedsiębiorstwa z rynkiem. *Zeszyty Naukowe Małopolskiej Wyższej Szkoły Ekonomicznej w Tarnowie*, 17(1), 203-213.
<https://doi.org/10.25944/znmwse.2011.01.203213>
- Sarangapani, A. (2019). *Rural Consumer Behavior in India*. University Science Press.
- Scammell, M. (2013). Citizen Consumers: Towards a New Marketing of Politics? *London School of Economics*. <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/id/eprint/2643>
- Schiffman, K. (2007). *Consumer Behaviour*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Schiffman, L., & Kanuk, L. (2008). *Consumer Behaviour* (8 ed.). Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Schiffman, L. G., & Wisenblit, J. (2015). *Consumer Behaviour*. Pearson Education Limited.

- Schwartz, S. H. (2014). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), 2-19. <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116>.
- Sears D. O. and Funk, C. L. (2003). Evidence of the long-term persistence of adults' political predispositions. *The Journal of Politics*, 61, 1–28.
- Shove, E., & Walker, G. (2014). *Consumption values and market choices: theory and applications*. South-Western Publication.
- Singh, S. P. (2020). Politically unengaged, distrusting, and disaffected individuals drive the link between compulsory voting and invalid balloting. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 7(1), 107-123. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2017.11>
- Sirgy, M. J. (2012). Self-concept in consumer behavior: A critical review. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(3), 287-300. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208924>
- Smith, J., & Colgate, M. (2017). Customer value creation: a practical framework. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 15(1), 7-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679150101>
- Solomon, K. (2004). *Consumer Behaviour*. Pearson Education, Ltd.
- Taylor, C., Franke, G., & Bang, H. (2016). Use and Effectiveness of Billboards, Perspectives from Selective-Perception Theory and Retail-Gravity Models. *Journal of Advertising*, 35(4), 33-67. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367350402>
- Trehan, M. (2019). *Advertising and Sales Management*. V. K. India Enterprises.
- Tupes, E. C., & Christal, R. E. (2012). Recurrent personality factors based on trait ratings. *Journal Personality*, 60, 225-251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1992.tb00973.x>
- Tweneboah-Koduah, E. Y., Akotia, M., Akotia, C. S., & Hinson, R. E. (2015). Political Party Brand and Consumer Choice in Ghana. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 11, 79-88.
- Wahba, M., & Bridwell, L. (2017). Maslow Reconsidered: A Review of Research on the Need Hierarchy Theory. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 15(2), 212-240. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90038-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90038-6)
- Walters, C. G. (1974). *Consumer Behaviour: Theory and Practice*. Richard Irwin Publication.
- Yoo, K., & Gretzel, U. (2011). Influence of personality on travel-related consumer-generated media creation. *Computational Human Behaviour*, 27, 609-621. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.05.002>
- Yorke, D. A., & Meehan, S. (2017). ACORN in the political marketplace. *European Journal of Marketing*, 20(8), 63-76. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000004663>