

Demystifying Political Marketing and Performance of Political Parties in Kogi State, North-Central, Nigeria

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Abstract

Communication and the application of language is critical to conveying of political activities to electorates globally. This is critical to convincing the electorates towards gaining political support. The study on demystifying political marketing and performance of political parties in Kogi State North-Central, Nigeria is written to examine the extent to which effective use of political marketing tools influences the performance of political parties in Kogi State. The study adopts descriptive research survey design. The population of the study is the entire electorates who collected the permanent voter's card during the 2019 election. The total population is 1485828 and the Godden 2004 sample size technique was adopted in reaching 384 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis while the hypotheses tested using linear regression. The study revealed that a significant positive relationship exists between political marketing and performance of political parties in Kogi State, North-Central, Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that aggressive political marketing strategies and specifically political advertising and political publicity be strengthened to enable political parties convey their political ideologies, political views as well as effectively sell their candidates to the electorates.

Keywords: *Political, Marketing, Performance, advertising, publicity.*

Introduction

Political communication has been one of the viable tools of reaching out to electorates across political parties and citizens over the years globally. This is because through the instrumentality of effective communication political parties could convince the voting public about their party manifestoes as well as the credibility of their candidates (Ahamefila *et al.*, 2015). Thus, political marketing which is seen as the application of marketing techniques, methodologies and tools applied by political parties in political process to communicate their party manifestoes through advertisement and publicity becomes paramount.

This according to Hoegg and Lewis (2011) and Agba (2006) is aimed at ensuring that political activities and campaigns are carried out without passing crises prone comments that could lead to political crises. However, Agbase (2005) and El-rufai (2013) revealed that despite the conscious measures put in place to regulate political communication through marketing tools political activities are still dominated with comments capable of defamatory and offensive to the political architecture. More so, acceptance of defeat by political parties and candidates still remain an illusion as political activities seems to be largely occupied with religious, ethnic and regional inclination rather than national interest. Kogi State is in North-Central Nigeria and also called the middle-belt. The state like all other states in Nigeria apart from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has three senatorial districts-Kogi East, Kogi Central and Kogi West senatorial districts. These

senatorial districts are dominated by the three ethnic groups each with Igala of Kogi East, Ibira of Kogi Central and Okun of Kogi West. Kogi State has a total of one million, six hundred and forty-six thousand, three hundred and fifty (1,646,350) registered voters as at 2019 governorship election. The state governorship election normally takes place barely between 8-10 months after the general election and its gender distribution of voter are 49.9 % for female and 50.1% for male respectively. Specifically, the 2019 election has a total of one million, four hundred and eighty-five thousand, eight hundred and twenty-eight (1,485,828) permanent voters' card (PVC) 90.2 % collected.

Governorship election in Kogi State held in November, 2019 was successfully conducted with the independent National Electoral commission (INEC) declaring the results however, the campaign tools adopted by political parties during political campaign seem to be mostly driven along ethnic dimension especially with the major contenders coming from different senatorial districts even though, the election has come and gone, the political atmosphere in Kogi State has since then bewildered with sentiment affiliated to ethnic inclination and consequently litigations. Thus, the question of whether adequate political marketing tools were properly adopted is still begging for answer as party manifestoes which borders on political party performance anchored on good governance, infrastructural development, economic and social development are the focus, the political parties would have been more focus. Hence this research is set to examine how political marketing tools of advertisement and publicity influence performance of political parties using Kogi State 2019 governorship election as a focus.

Statement of the Problem

Marketing plays a significant role in the political activities across the globe as it can be applied to advance the chances of reaching electorates expressively. More so, these marketing tools such as political advertisement and publicity aid the conviction of public about party manifestoes as well as the credibility of the candidates. Thus, the application of marketing strategies into politics becomes imperative however, despite the application of these tools such as advertisement as well publicity there seems not to be adequate political orientation devoid of ethnic sentiments towards having a free, fair and credible elections towards having an egalitarian society in Kogi State.

Important literature supported this for example, Eze et al., (2016) and Tejumaiye et al (2018) revealed that marketing communication tools have not been effectively used towards advancing good governance and provision of dividends of democracy in Nigeria. This no doubt has affected elective performance of political parties in Nigeria particularly in Kogi State. Thus, this research is being carried out to examine the extent to which effective political marketing can be applied towards enhancing performance of political parties in Kogi State, North central Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between political advertisement and performance of political parties in Kogi State?
2. What is the relationship between political publicity and performance of political parties in Kogi State?

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is examining the effect of political marketing on the performance of political parties in Kogi State. However, the research is set to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between political advertisement and performance of political parties in Kogi State.
2. To determine the relationship between political publicity and performance of political parties in Kogi State.

Statement of Hypotheses

The research formulates two hypothetical statements which are in their null forms:

H₁: There is no relationship between political advertisement and performance of political parties in Kogi State.

H₂: There is no relationship between political publicity and performance of political parties

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Marketing is defined as the cumulative system of interacting business activities designed to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products or services to present and potential customers (Ohida 2016). Marketing is also seen as human activities directed at satisfying needs and wants through exchange process (Kolter, 2000; Ihejirika & Omego, 2013) thus, it means that for marketing to be effective, it must involve satisfying the consuming public and in this situation the electorate political marketing (Ahamefila et al, 2015 & Ojekwe, 2016).

It is also seen as the application of marketing techniques, methods and tools for execution of political process. Political marketing is also seen as the application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by political parties, candidates, governments, lobbyists, government and its relevant agencies as well as all other interest groups to canvass for electorate support advance political ideologies mobilize legislations and win election (Newman, 2010 & Kolovos, Harris, 2005). Though, Udeze and Akpan (2013) and Olafemi and Ogunro (2013) revealed that political marketing is relatively a new concept in the Nigerian political landscape its application integrated marketing tools such as advertisement and publicity used to reach the voting public towards achieving their political objective. Political advertisement is seen as a form of campaign applied by political parties and candidates to reach and influence electorate towards winning election as well as promoting their political views (Alawode and Adesanya 2016).

Again, political advertisement is also seen as the application of media by political candidates to advance their political exposure to the public through the use of television, newspaper or any other advertorial (Olujide et al., 2010 & Sule et al, 2017). Therefore, Ekhareafu and Akoseogasimhe (2017) argued that political advertisement has become an integral political marketing tool in recent time which is aimed at promoting the parties' ideologies to their customers which in this case are the electorates. Publicity also called public relations according to Ohida (2016). Is an important promotional mix in marketing adopted to reach consumers in this case the electorate to promote their suitability of their candidates as well as the party manifestoes. Ohida (2016) and Tejumaiye

et al (2018) also revealed that public relation as a political marketing tool could be in form of press relations, public publicity, corporate communication, lobbying counseling. Therefore, the major tools adopted by political parties could be in form of speeches, events public service activities, written or audio-visual material used to aggressively convey their messages to the electorates. Performance of political is critical to the development of every society considering the fact that these performances are anchored on promoting the social, economic, infrastructural development and good governance (Olafemi & Ogunro, 2013). Thus, performance of political parties is embedded in the party manifestoes and such is communicated to the electorates as well as other interest groups so as to convince them towards gaining supports. The instrumentality of political marketing through the use of advertisement and publicity if effectively utilized creates development as elections are conducted under a peaceful and conducive atmosphere. Through this rate of electoral litigation are minimized if not avoided thus leading to political and social development.

Empirical Review

Olujide et al., (2010) conducted research on Nigerian electorate's perception of political advertising and election campaign. The research was carried out through the use of questionnaire and analysis was conducted using chi-square and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results showed that political advertising has significant effect on the development and other civic responsibilities. More so, Olafemi and Ogunro (2013) conducted a study on political marketing. An effective strategy for quality leadership and sustainable democracy in Nigeria. The research adopted a qualitative research technique and it revealed that political marketing research, internal democracy and relational politics lead to sustainable development in Nigeria.

Sulaiman conducted a study in 2014 titled clientele democracy political party finding a candidate selection in Nigeria. The research revealed how political party finding affects selection of candidates by political parties. The study critically exposed how good father have affected the institutionalization of political parties in Nigeria. In addition, Ahamefila et al (2015) conducted a study on political marketing as a tool for checkmating negative political views, political violence and promoting peaceful governance in Nigeria. The study sought to ascertain the level of relationship between negative comments and the incessant pre and post-election violence in Nigeria. The study adopted an opinion survey design in reaching respondents and result showed that there is significant correlation between negative comments and election crises in Nigeria. In addition, Basil and Basseyy conducted a study in 2016 on repositioning Nigeria: application of marketing communication tools by political parties in campaign programs. The research examined adoption of marketing communication tools by political parties in campaign programs. The study reached 200 respondents through a structured questionnaire and three hypotheses were tested using 5d° level of significance. The result revealed that marketing communication tools enhances political campaign programmes.

Eze et al conducted research on ethical political marketing and public relations communications for checkmating electoral violence in Nigeria in 2016 to ascertain the extent to which Nigerian politicians adopt ethical political marketing communication in their electioneering campaigns. The study adopts survey research design and the result revealed that most of the Nigerian politicians do not adopt ethical political marketing communication in their electioneering campaign. The study on effect of product and promotion on political parties marketing strategies on voters' behaviour in Nigeria was conducted by Ohida et al in 2016. The research was conducted to evaluate whether political parties' product/service has significant influence on voters' behaviour and to also examine

whether political parties' promotion has significant influence on voter behaviour in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design; the sample size of 937 respondents was used. The study analysed data using the ordinary least square regression with the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Result showed that brand image of party candidates, radio jingles, personal appearance programmes and campaign expenses has significant effects on voters' behaviour.

Okolo et al 2017 conducted a study on the effect of social media in the marketing of political candidates in Nigeria. The research was aimed at determining how the effect of social media in projecting image of political parties' candidates in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design and the population comprises of the electorates. Data were analysed using percentages and Pearson moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis at 5d° level of significance. Findings revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between usage of Facebook as an awareness social media tool and projection of a political candidate image in Nigeria. The study on political advertising in Nigeria's 2015 presidential election was conducted in 2018 to determine how political advertising influences voting decisions of electorates during the 2015 presidential election. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design and respondents numbering 392 were reached using a structured questionnaire. The study revealed that political advertising plays a significant role in the 2015 presidential election. The research was conducted by Tejumaiye et al., in 2018. Though, all these researchers were able to examine how political marketing influence voters' behaviours. None of the studies critically examined performance of political parties in terms of socio-economic development good governance and provision of infrastructural facilities. This is the thrust of the current research.

Theoretical Framework

Expectancy Violation Theory

The theory of expectancy violation theory (EVT) focuses on the connection between usage of language and how it affects the effective conviction of the audience (Okolo et al, 2017). The theory postulates that most organizations convey their messages based on their cultural orientation as it relates to their normative or non-normative patterns on the application of languages. This implies that most times expressions of languages are based on the perceived expected folklores, perception as well as expectations. Thus, the expectancy violation theory as noted by Surlin and Gordon 2007 could be positive or negative violations, thus, when political messages positively violate linguistic expectations, its positive influences on the electorates whereas, when political messages negatively violate the linguistic expectations of the electorates it creates an adverse effect on the electoral processes as well as the performance of political parties during elections. This theory is relevant to this research considering the fact that most Nigerian electorates particularly in Kogi State have high expectations from their political leaders. Most times, the electorates are disposed to giving their supports to political parties and candidates based on their perceived expectations from them. Therefore, the political marketing communication techniques as well as the way and manner political languages are used is critical to the decisions of electorates. This research is adopted considering its practical application to the current research.

Research Methodology

This section describes the research design; population of the study, sampling size, sampling techniques; method of data collection and method of data analysis. The method adopted for this

research is descriptive research survey design where primary data were collected from respondents. The population of the study is the entire voters in Kogi State who collected their permanent voters' card before the 2019 governorship election which according to the Independent National Population Electoral Commission one million, four hundred and eighty-five thousand, eight hundred and twenty-eight (1,485,828). However, reaching the entire population may be difficult if not impossible therefore the researcher adopted the Godden (2004) sample size statistical formula. Applying Godden (2004) statistical formula for determining sample size to the study population is based on a 95% confidence level, and a margin of error of 0.05, and a variability degree of 50% due to the unique and heterogeneous nature of the population.

Therefore, the Sample size was determined using the following formula.

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 (P) (1=P)}{C^2} \text{ equ (1)}$$

$$\text{New SS} = \frac{SS}{\text{Population}}$$

$$\frac{1+SS - I}{\text{Population}} \text{ equ (2)}$$

SS = sample Size

Z = Confidence level 95%

P = Percentage of population (50%)

C = Confidence interval = 5%

$$SS = \frac{1.96^2 (0.5) (1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2} \text{ equ (1)}$$

$$SS = \frac{3.8416 (0.5) (1 - 0.5)}{0.0025}$$

$$SS = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025}$$

$$SS = 384$$

$$\text{Population} = 1485828$$

$$\text{New SS} = \frac{384}{1 + (384-1)}$$

$$1485828$$

$$SS = \frac{384}{1.000258}$$

$$= 384$$

Hence, the sample size is 384. However, out of the total questionnaire 384 distributed, only 293 were duly completed and returned giving 76% retrieval rate. This retrieval rate according to

Clementina et al (2021) and Nzewi et al (2023) is valid to generalize the findings of the research outcome. In addition, a structured questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection from the respondents. The questionnaire administration was carried out by the researcher and two (2) field assistants trained prior to data collection process. Data generated in the course of this study were analyzed using the inferential statistics. Hence, the inferential statistics used is the regression to measure the relationship between the independent and dependent variables with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis and Results

The study tests two hypotheses using the linear regression statistical analysis with the aid of statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). Specifically, the hypotheses include inferential results using model summary and Analysis of variance (ANOVA). The decision is to accept alpha value > 0.05 otherwise the null hypothesis be rejected.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis I

H₁: There is no significant relationship between Political advertising and performance of political parties in Kogi State.

Table 1 Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	STD. error of the Estimate	Durbin watson
1	0.824	0.678	0.677	0.34662	0.025

Source: Research survey 2026

- a. Predictors: (Constant) Political advertising
- b. Dependent Variable: Performance of political parties

The model summary table shows the strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The result of R stood at 0.824 indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable social performance of political parties and the explanatory variable Political marketing.

The Coefficient of multiple determination. R^2 measures the percentage of the total change of the dependent variable that can be explained by the explanatory variable, the resent indicates a R Square of 0.678 showing that 68% of the variances on the Performance of political parties is explained by Political advertising while the remaining 32% (100 - 68) of the variations could be explained by other variables not considered. Again, R - Square compensates for the model complexity to provide a fairer comparison of model.

The result is supported by the value of the adjusted R which is 68% showing that if the entire population is used, the result will deviate by 14.6% (i.e 82.4 – 67.8). The error of the estimate is low at 0.34662 while the Durbin Watson test is 0.025 showing that there is no auto- correlation.

Table 2. ANOVA ^a

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	241.421	1	357.149	1042.184	0.000 ^b
1 Residual	135.216	382	.228		
Total	376.637	283			

Source: Research survey 2026

- a. Dependent variable: Performance of political parties
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Political advertising.

The ANOVA table confirms the result of the model summary, the analysis showed that $F = 1042.184$ which is significant at $(0.000) < (0.05)$. Hence, since the $P - \text{value} < 0.05$ (critical value), the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Political advertising and performance of political parties in Kogi State is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

H2: There is no significant relationship between Political publicity and performance of political parties in Kogi State.

Table 3 Model Summary ^b

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	0.884	0.781	0.780	0.42891	0.026

Source: Research survey 2026

- a. Predictors: (Constant) Political publicity
- b. Dependent variable: Performance of political parties.

The strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the result of R stood at 0.884 indicating a strong relationship between the dependent variable Performance of political parties and the explanatory variable Political publicity.

The coefficient of multiple determinations R^2 measures the percentage of the total change of the dependent variable that can be explained by the explanatory variable, the result indicates a R square of 0.781 showing that 78% of the variances on the Political publicity is explained by the political publicity while the remaining 22% (100 - 78) of the variations could be explained by other variables not considered in this model. The adjusted R-square compensates to provide a fairer comparison of model. The value of the adjusted R which is 78% showing that if the entire population is used, the result will deviate by 10.1% (i.e. 88.4 -78.1).

The error of the estimate is considered low at 0.42891 while the Durbin Watson test is 0.026 showing that these are no auto-correlation.

Table 4. ANOVA ^a

Model	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	246.331	1	235.302	154.316	.000 ^b
1 Residual	217.527	282	.316		
Total	463.858	283			

Source: Research survey 2026

- a. Dependent variable: Performance of political parties.
- b. Predictors: (Constant) Political publicity.

The ANOVA table confirms the result of the model summary, the analysis showed that $F = 154.316$ which is significance at $(0.000) < (0.05)$. Hence, since the $P - \text{value} < 0.05$ (critical value), the null

hypothesis there is no significant relationship between Political publicity and performance of political parties in Kogi State is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

From the data analysis of this study the research presents analysis to give a broader exploration of the findings. The study revealed that a significant positive relationship exists between political advertising and performance of political parties in Kogi State. This finding is similar to the finding of Olujide et al (2010), Again, the result conforms the findings of Olafemi and Ogunro (2013), Ohida et al (2016) and Okolo et al (2017) whose findings consistently revealed a positive relationship between political parties and performance of political parties in Nigeria. In addition, the study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between political publicity and performance of political marketing in Kogi State. These findings are consistent with the finding of Eze et al (2016) which revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between political marketing and performance of political marketing in Kogi State.

Conclusions

Based on the empirical results of the study, the research concludes that political marketing influences the performance of political parties in Kogi State. More so, anchored on the findings to the study it can be concluded that there is significant positive relationship between political marketing and specifically political advertising and political publicity with the performance of political parties in Kogi State. Thus, all the core political marketing activities greatly voting behavior of the electorates and voting pattern of political parties in Kogi State, North-Central Nigeria.

Recommendations

From the theoretical and empirical evidences gathered through this research, the study makes the following recommendations.

1. Based on the finding that there is a significant positive relationship between the political advertising and performance of political parties in Kogi State, the study recommends that aggressive political marketing strategies and specifically political advertising be strengthened to enable political parties convey their political ideologies, political view as well as effectively sell their candidates to the electorates. This will enable political convincingly make the electorates to support the parties towards winning elections.
2. Based on the finding that there is a significant positive relationship between political publicity and performance of political parties in Kogi State, the study recommends that an affective political publicity strategy be adopted and institutionalize. Through this the citizens particularly electorates would be able to comprehend the views of political parties and give them the needed support. Finally, considering the fact that judiciary Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is a critical stakeholder in the management of electoral process, the electoral umpire should ensure that political communication tools being used by political parties to convey their political views and marketing of their candidates are ethically and morally based devoid of abuse. This will create a conducive political atmosphere before, during and after elections.

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