
Author(s): WORLU, R.E.K.


Abstract: The institutional context of electoral process in Nigeria is essentially different from the situation in the United States and other European countries. As a result, observers of Nigerian democratic system have argued that given the abject poverty in the country, it would amount to asking for too much, if the electorate is expected to resist monetary inducement. Candidates see nothing wrong in offering the electorate money for their vote and the temptation is always there for voters to take the money offered as an immediate reward for whatever effort is required to go out and vote. This explains why Achumba and Dixon – Ogbechi (2004) concluded that political party campaigns in Nigeria are party centred, non-issue centred, capital intensive, money driven and labour intensive. The situation makes marketing planning imperative. Political marketing planning (in the specific context of an election campaign) attempts to identify how to increase a party or candidate’s share of the vote and what needs to be done in order to realize the vote – share increase. It is in this connection that this paper advocates the adoption of marketing planning framework by Nigerian political parties in co-coordinating the election campaigns in order to maximize the allocation of their relatively scarce resources. This, of course, is based on a marketing planning framework developed by Baines et al (1999) in the light of changing political environment; together with the development and implementation of marketing models in a wider sphere of economic and social situations. In addition, the framework model has been developed using a hypothetic-deductive approach that takes into account, not only the recent development in American and British campaign management, but also uses depth interview with political strategists to make the model more realistic, and tailored specifically for marketing scenarios (and in this specific context, election) in Nigeria. The paper suggests that Nigerian political parties need to co-ordinate their constituency campaigns in such a way as to de-emphasize ‘money politics’ which is attempting to institutionalize the hydra headed problem of “political God-fatherism” in our nascent democracy. This co-ordination should begin with a research to determine who the main opposition is, which voters need to be targeted, how to position the party, and what promotional programme will suit the political product. This means that
political campaigns in Nigeria can be made cost-effective through constituency research and relationship marketing as well as post-election exercises to determine what wrong and how in certain constituencies.