

Politics Unusual: Rethinking Nigeria Political Terrain through Political Marketing Strategies

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Abstract

Political marketing has been variously adapted in furtherance of party politics and marketing of government and its policies, programmes, etc. In this article political marketing is utilized as a vehicle to achieve some behaviour change among key political actors in the Nigeria political landscape. Over the years, Nigeria political terrain has been characterized by some ills such as electoral malpractice, violence, intimidations, and other forms of dark art of Machiavellian political chancery. These anomalies constitute the new political lexicon, 'politics as usual' which must give way for a new political order known as 'politics unusual'. To enthrone this new political order, political marketing strategies and principles must be employed; first to educate key political stakeholders about the dangers of playing dirty politics and perpetuating the old order of 'politics as usual', secondly to use political marketing as instrument for behaviour change.; and thirdly to x-ray the benefits of adopting the market-oriented party model by political parties in Nigeria and market-oriented government framework as strategies that will sustain the call for enthronement of 'politics unusual' and de-marketing features of 'politics as usual' in the Nigeria political terrain.

Keywords: Political marketing, behaviour change, communication, market-orientation

1. Introduction

In 1998, the last Military Administration in Nigeria rolled out a transition programme/ timetable that heralded transfer of political power to civilians in May 29, 1999. This gesture received global plaudit given its timeliness, genuine desire of the Military to jettison its hold on governance, and douse tension that pervaded the then political atmosphere in the country. Within the country, Nigerians were jubilant as they watched the transition programme unfold. With this jubilant mood, political associations and parties were formed and registered thus kick-starting the transition process.

Unfortunately, this situation ushered in all manner of people and dim-witted politicians into the mainstream partisan politics thereby enthroning disorderliness in the way politics is conducted or played. Today, the way politics is played in Nigeria is giving concerned Nigerians and stakeholders sleepless nights. There is utter enthronement of impunity and all forms of Machiavellian political chicanery (i.e. doing anything negative possible to dislodge political opponent, etc) all in attempt to clinch, solidify and sustain power (Achor, and Moguluwa, 2012; Moguluwa and Achor, 2013). Some politician play dirty by engaging in election malpractice (election rigging/fixing), violence, intimidation, thuggery, character and political assassinations. Social contract and rule of law are thrown to the winds; the electorate are short-changed, deceived to mortgaged their conscience by selling their vote (power); they are now left to the whims and caprices of the dim-witted politicians.

'Money politics' is been emphasized rather than pursuing political ideologies that ensure electorate-focused programmes and ethical presentation of facts that could make voters to willingly participate in political process. All these and more are what this article is preaching against but craves for a paradigm shifts from 'politics as usual' to politics unusual' through effective adoption of political marketing. The '*politics unusual*' is the new desired political order which can be enthroned in the Nigeria body politics by ingraining political marketing strategies, tactics, principles and philosophy in all facets of politics (party politics, governance/government, voter enlightenment and education, and electioneering campaign).

Marketing when used in the popular parlance does not give an all-encompassing description of the concept as used in the contemporary politics of advanced democracies (Achor, 2011). The domain of political marketing is eclectic and draws extensively from different disciplines such as political science, communication, Marketing, public relations advertising, etc (Achor and Moguluwa 2012; Gazie, Anuforo and Achor, 2016; Anyanwu 2012; Lees-Marshment 2001). The concept of political marketing has been widely explained or defined by scholars and practitioners alike. The common denominator in all these descriptions/ definitions anchor on the premise that political marketing aims at influencing attitude and behaviour of the politicians, and the electorate to do the right thing and to willingly participate in political process (Achor 2011; Gazie, Anuforo and Achor, 2016). It can be used to drum support against bad governance, or in favour of government policies, programmes, actions and inactions.

Critics may ask if there have not been elements of political marketing in Nigeria's past political outings. The answer is in the affirmative given few studies in that direction (Mone and Bazini, 2013, Gazie, Anuforo and

Achor,2016) but those efforts were narrowly confined to a facet—winning elections. Marketing politics is much more than crafting alluring words, symbols and arguments in an attempt to move public opinion to support self interest and policies. However, the broad purpose of this article is to establish the influence political marketing can bear on various aspects of politics as a way to demarket the old political order of '*politics- as -usual*' and enthrone a new era of '*politics- unusual*' in the Nigeria political landscape, while specific objective is to x-ray various aspects of political marketing strategies, principles and philosophy that major stakeholders (political parties and government,) can use during, pre, and post elections to be able to enthrone market-oriented politics devoid of features of '*politics- as- usual*'.

For coherent presentation and ideas the article is divided into five sections. The first section is a review of literature on political marketing; the second section highlights the theoretical foundation upon which the article rest. The third section discusses the research methodology adopted in the study, which gives a brief architecture of the paper; the fourth section discusses key aspect of political marketing (market-orientation) and how it's utilized in actualizing the objectives of the article. Some of the issues raised in the discussion were used as platform to advice the All Progressive Congress (APC), the ruling party at the federal level in Nigeria and other parties in the opposition on how to adapt market-oriented party model in delivering on their mandate or manifestos. The fifth section which draws the curtain gives a concise discussion / conclusion on the issues raised in the article.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The crux of this article hinged on a paradigm shift from 'politics as usual' to 'politics unusual'. This has become imperative given the failings of the past and present crop of the political class and political parties in the country to enthrone orderliness in the body polity, adopt consumer-oriented approach in their behaviour/conduct and adopt international best practices in their politicking. In recent times, some politicians/ leaders thought that all it takes to win elections or remain relevant in the mainstream politics is by employing all forms of malpractice (e.g. rigging of election, election fixing, thuggery, intimidation, campaign of calumny or character assassination, etc), or by employing the dark arts of Machiavellian political chicanery and manipulations (Achor and Moguluwa, 2012; Moguluwa and Achor, 2013). These anomalies characterized the '*politics as usual*' and must give way for a new political order through re-orientation of both the political class, and electorate (citizenry), and other stakeholders in the political scene, including the political parties (Achor and Moguluwa,2012; Iwu, 2006). Against this backdrop, political marketing is seen as a catalyst that will propel behaviour and attitudinal change among political stakeholders for a better ethically-oriented politics and effective participation in the political process or mobilization campaigns. The utilization of political marketing-orientation and strategies in politics has yielded positive results particularly in advanced democracies (Lees-Marshment, 2009; Anyanwu, 2012). However, various aspects of political marketing rooted in persuasion can also help to achieve the right behavioural and attitudinal change among politicians, voters and other stakeholders. Such expected behavioural and attitudinal changes are not pursued through physical force or compulsion but through some level of thought process on the part of the citizenry/ electorate.

Discussions on political marketing are domiciled in the mainstream social marketing literature. Its eclectic approach makes it possible to interface with and draws extensively from a combination of related disciplines such as communication, public relations, advertising and political science, etc. Hence, it is through the adoption and application of marketing and other interdisciplinary strategies, principles into political issues, mobilization that will advance the cause of politics and achieve desired attitudinal and behavioural change (Gazie, Anuforo, and Achor, 2016).

Figure 2.1 indicates the interface of various aspects of political marketing and their effect on the anomalies that characterized the old political order. Through persuasive political advertising, political public relations, behaviour change communication, marketing orientation tips, politicians and other mainstream political stakeholders are exposed to the dangers of playing dirty politics and at the same time, gullible voter is taught the virtue of making informed political decisions including the inherent dangers associated with selling ones vote and participating in election violence.

It is assumed that as shown by the arrows pointing at the new political order that after being exposed to key messages of attitudinal and behavioural change communication, politicians, electorate and other stakeholders will embrace a new political order that is devoid of the old order of '*politics as usual*'. The irony of the model is that various branches or aspects of political marketing are constantly used to sustain and advocate compliance to the proposed paradigm – '*politics unusual*'. These are illustrated in the figure 2.1 by the dotted/broken lines linking all the branches of political marketing and terminating at the box housing the new political order

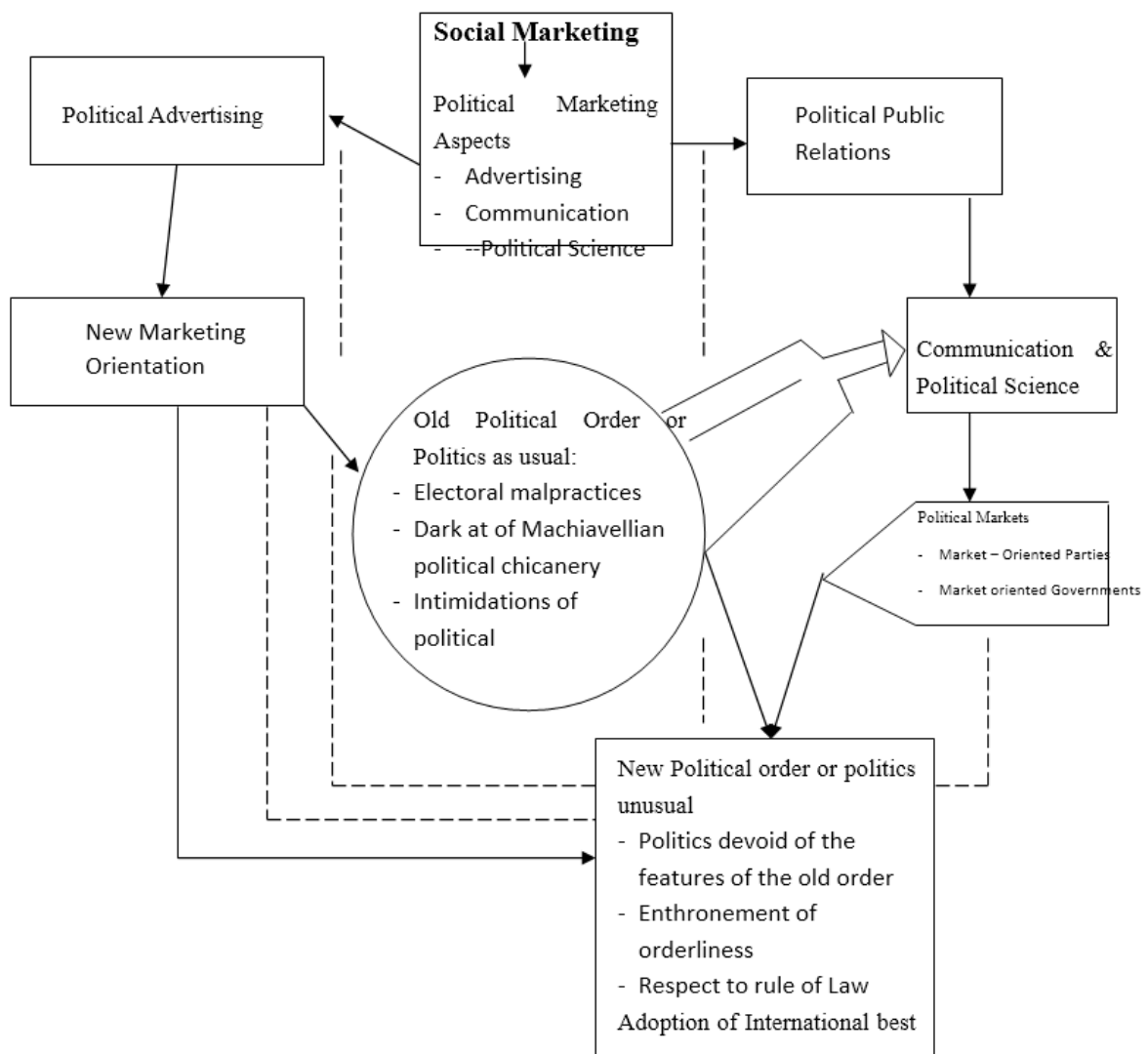


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model of Political Marketing Effect on Old Political order (Politics as usual) and enthronement of New Political order (Politics unusual).

Source: Researchers, conceptualization from literature reviewed.

2.2 Concept of Political Marketing

Political marketing takes its root and draws from social marketing, which is a branch of the orthodox marketing. The concept of political marketing has been widely defined by scholars; each of the scholars seems to agree with each other in their descriptions of the concept. Scholars like Lees-Marshement(2001,2009); Nwosu(2003); Achor and Moguluwa(2012); Anyanwu(2012) underpin their conceptualizations on orthodox marketing perspective and the marketing concept. Nwosu (2003), Nkamnebe(2003), Nwosu and Nkamnebe(2006) postulate that concepts of marketing politics and political marketing mean the same thing and can be used interchangeably. Based on this interchangeable stance, marketing politics or political marketing is seen as the utilization and application of marketing principles, strategies and ideologies in conducting the affairs of government, political parties/organizations/associations, groups and individual politician’s programmes (Nwosu, 2003). It involves the application of new marketing concept in trying to project or promote a political party, its manifesto and electoral candidates to the electorate. Lees-Marshement (2009), a leading researcher/scholar on political marketing defines it as the utilization and adaptation of marketing by political parties.

Anyanwu(2012) defines political marketing as the application of marketing tenets to the implementation of the political process. The marketing tenets (doctrines) hold that the customer (citizen) is the king or simply put is the “focus of all consideration to ensure that he/she is satisfied”. Political marketing is consumer-oriented i.e. voter-oriented. It can also be viewed as a multi-layered, inter-disciplinary organized marketing campaign effort aimed at identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats of a subject(candidate, political leaders, etc) or object for the purpose of securing support during mass mobilization

events or campaigns (e.g. election, political rallies, advocacy meetings). Harrop(1990) and Henneberg(2007) conceptualization of political marketing tightly summarized its frontiers . A synthesis of Harrop and Henneberg separate conceptualizations view political marketing as a broad activity that goes beyond political advertising, electoral speeches, and elections but covers the whole gamut of political positioning in the electoral marketing, the conduct of government and democracy for the benefit of the citizenry.

The preceding descriptions of political marketing are interdisciplinary, but it is apposite to cite a definition of the concept that anchor on two key principles of the orthodox marketing – exchange process and marketing orientation. Stromback and Spiro(2010) view political marketing as ‘‘an exchange process by which political organization choose to build their actions and their products upon the needs and wants among chosen target groups and stakeholders in a manner seeking to balance the strategic goals on several different arenas or markets’’ They further assert that ‘‘the products of political parties consist of policy commitments, party image, and a mindset of voters centeredness while target groups include- party members; key constituencies, interest groups, donors and the media’. There are other conceptions of political marketing but the ones cited here is enough to direct our mindset to understanding the bearing of the article.

2.2.1 Taxonomy of Political Marketing

As a new academic discipline, political marketing is a marriage of political science and management science disciplines. This notion aptly determines its taxonomy that embraces various branches and offshoots of political science, social marketing, etc. The components or elements of political marketing include marketing, political public relations, political advertising, behaviour change communication, and political science, etc. Each of the aspects draws extensively from one another yet plays specific roles in engendering the ‘politics unusual’. Few classifications are discussed in relations to the thrust of the article.

2.2.1.1 Political Public Relations

This is a key public relations function that is employed in managing and evaluating political issues, relationships between the political actors and stakeholders (voters or the citizenry) and designing proactive strategies to create sustainable and harmonious relations. Political public relations helps to drive political marketing programmes and actualize political marketing objectives (Achor and Okoye, 2015). In advanced democracies of the world, public relations has been identified as a strong link between a better informed/enlightened society and those who hold or aspire to hold power in trust for the masses(Achor, 2007; Achor and Moguluwa,2012). In a modern democratic system particularly in the developed world, public relations practitioners have been found to be extremely useful to election candidates (Moguluwa and Achor, 2013). The trend is that public relations practitioners are hired as consultants and their key functions is to direct the political campaigns, conduct public opinion polls, produce television commercials, organize direct mail campaign, and develop the issues and persuasive messages the candidate will use to mobilize support.

As a specialized area of public relations, political public relations(PPR) is concerned with result-oriented management of images, reputations, attitudes ,crises that impinge upon the enthronement, existence, preservation, sustenance, development or growth of government, constituted political principles, democratic orders and rule of law(Achor and Moguluwa,2012, Odigbo,2007). The core function of PPR is to build credibility in the political system, build bridges of mutual understanding between a government, political party/ politician and the voter. Though, the elements of PPR were widely used in some of the past and present political outings and processes, yet more coordinated approach is needed in the mobilization of electorate before elections and after elections or explaining government view point, policies , etc, to the masses. PPR is also employed in party politics both at internal party politics and inter/intra party politics.

The essence is to create and sustain mutual understanding among party faithful, stalwart and stakeholders, and between party faithful in one party and the other. PPR involves complete openness and strives to achieve understanding. These elements dissociate it from pernicious propaganda which manipulates peoples’ mind through lies and half truth. Propaganda strives to promote the act of following whether or not the people understand the point at issues or the contentious issues. PPR has a crucial role to play in educating and informing members of the political class and the citizenry on the need to begin to shift from the old ways of playing and participating in political/ electoral process. Key public relations strategies that can be employed in that direction include advocacies, lobbying, issues advertising, seminars, workshop and colloquium on the dangers of continual engaging in acts of political malpractice, etc. Civil Society Organizations and other concerned political groups can lead the campaign by using some of these public relation tactics and strategies to champion this cause.

2.2.1.2 Political Advertising

Political advertising draws much impetus from the broad marketing politics or political marketing. So political advertising anchor on political marketing campaign and used to pursue in part or overall marketing objective. It takes its roots or draws from the orthodox advertising, which any communication is paid for, directed at a target audience, through the various mass media with the main aim of creating awareness about goods and services and also selling a candidate. Political advertising has been described in several ways by scholars (Achor and Moguluwa, 2012). yet the common denominator that can be distilled from those descriptions, is that , political

advertising operates beyond canvassing votes for a political candidate or selling a candidate to the prospective voters, but extend to employing various forms of advertising techniques and strategies to market governments decisions that impact the entire citizenry (Gazie, Anuforo, and Achor, 2016). It has been widely used to mobilize support for a particular government; it has been used to effect attitudinal and behavioural changes amongst people who are apathetic about government genuine concern for community development, etc (Achor, 2002; Achor and Okoye, 2015; Achor and Moguluwa, 2012).

Within the ambit of this article, it is necessary to describe political advertising further as a form of advertising with the sole aim of creating attitudinal change from negative politicking, selling of votes, being apathetic to embracing attitudes and behaviours that promote orderliness in the body polity, voting wisely and shunning acts capable of fanning the embers of anarchy or promoting politics of calumny and name calling. Based on this perspective, political marketers are expected to craft ad messages in such a way that move recipients to action by analysing the information provided thereby make the right or informed political decisions such as voting a candidate in elections or refusing to be negatively influenced to mortgage their conscience. More importantly pedagogical approaches are utilized to educate both political class and the electorate on the dangers inherent in win-at-all-cost style of elective politics or participating in electoral violence.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and civil societies have roles to play in educating the masses and advocating peace as a panacea to the sustenance of democracy. In doing this, pure and clean advert strategies should be adopted; clean words or pure language/statements are used to effect core attitudinal and behavioural change. Another strategy which can be effective in de-marketing dirty politics in the minds of dim-witted politicians is issue advert (Anyanwu, 2012; Anuforo, 2016). Issues advert draws the attention of target audience on merits and demerits of an issue thereby providing information to people that will either make them support such an issue or vote against it. Issue advertising helps to expose dangers inherent in some government policies or call attention of the voters/people on issues of national importance; it also helps to draw attention on the need to lend support to certain causes in the society/environment. For example, Senator Ben Bruce have consistently used this strategy to make known his stand on deregulation of oil and gas downstream subsector, reduction in gas emission/flaring, poverty, hunger and deprivation in the oil rich Niger Delta of Nigeria, through his common sense philosophy (Sliver Bird TV, 2016).

2.2.1.3 Marketing

Besides being a new academic discipline that draws from various disciplines, political marketing has its tenets rooted and fostered in the new marketing concept (Nwosu and Nkamnebe, 2006; Anyanwu, 2012, Newman, 2001). The new marketing concept emphasizes the identification and satisfaction of the needs of the customers or consumers through the production of the right products or services. This notion indicates that as political marketers our efforts should begin and end with the consumers (voters); the political party, government should strive to identify the needs and expectation of the voters and satisfy them. A typical marketing effort under the new marketing concept is guided by the consumerism or consumer right principles which states that the customer or voter has the following rights: rights of choice, rights of safety, rights of information/education, etc. (Nwosu, 2001, Kotler, 2012).

The consumers of political products have rights of choice. For example, the voter has a choice to vote a candidate of its choice without being forced to do that; the voter chooses among alternatives based on the information provided by electoral competitors. Therefore, political parties through their campaign consultants should engage in voter-based surveys in order to identify what the majority of voting public want or expect from government and tailor their offering in line with such demands or expectations. The survey will help campaign planners; government policy implementers craft the right persuasive message that will make majority of the citizen support the political part or government policy. The essence of a voter-based persuasion can be summarized in the words of the Roman Orator and statesman, Cicero, "If you wish to persuade me, you must think my thought, feel my feelings, and speak my words". One of the ways to think like the voter is to try to see things from his or her point of view (Achor and Moguluwa, 2012).

2.2.1.4 Communication component

The communication component of political marketing is an all-encompassing function that permeates the political actors (government, political parties, party faithful and politicians) and the citizens (Mone and Bazin, 2013; Harris, 2001). Communication function in political marketing deals with communicating the internal (party members) as well as external (voters) stakeholders about the offer and its availability (Mone and Bazini, 2013). Its aim is to inform, remind and persuade and even educate various participants in the political market (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001; Achor and Moguluwa, 2012). However, the importance of communication is likened to the heart in the human body; and for a political party it deals with interpretation of complex political jargons, spreading of political ideas, contents of political campaign, future programmes and simplification of political messages. It interacts with campaign delivery aspects of distribution function, prescribes dialogue and provides a medium for exchange partners (Mone Bazini, 2013, Achor, 2007). Further, it is the communication component that is the precursor of all the functional components already discussed in the preceding subsections

and provides information concerning the management of attitudinal and behavioural constraints of major players in the political landscape.

Every effort towards de-marketing the ills of ‘politics as usual’ revolves around communication. Communication efforts here include interpersonal communication, word-of-mouth, public relations communication and advertising strategies aimed at educating the citizenry on how to take informed political decision and dissociate themselves from acts capable of engendering anarchy and unnecessary tension in the polity.

3 Theoretical Foundation

As alluded in the conceptual framework, political marketing as applied in this study aims at influencing attitude, behaviour of various stakeholders and political actors in the political process of a country. For this reason two theoretical constructs underpin the study: theories of Reasoned Action and personal behaviour, and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) theory. The Theory of Reasoned Action and personal behaviour was developed by Fishbein and Hzen(1980). The theory introduced the concept of behaviour intent as a critical factor in determining whether individuals will actually perform a desired behaviour. According to the theory, behaviour is determined by:

- i personal attributes such as beliefs, attitudes and expected outcome.
- ii Perceived social pressure, norms and beliefs which individuals have about the opinion of their significant others’ or reference groups hold related to a desired behaviour, combined with the extent to which they feel that they are motivated by or should go along with the opinions of others; and
- iii The perceived behaviour control, such as beliefs individuals have about the availability of resource and obstacles to performing a behaviour combined with perception of the impact of these, can either facilitate or inhibit desired behaviour.

In Nigeria political landscape, these three related definitional paradigms of behaviour shape actions of very many politicians and voters. The ‘old political order’ of impunity- politics as usual’ which is characterized by political malpractices and dark art of Machiavellian political chicanery is influenced by personal attributes of politicians. These crops of dim-witted politicians believe that as far as chaos and manipulations is infused in the political system and electoral process, the end justifies their political ambition. Unfortunately, since there has not been concerted effort by concerned civil society organizations and agencies to dislodge the embers of political malpractice, some stakeholders see playing dirty as part of party politics and struggle for power (Kukar, 2016). The negative aspect of God Fatherism seems to fan the embers of dark art of Machiavellian political chicanery. The God Fathers are seen as significant others and strong voice in politics therefore their Godsons and mentees tend to hold on to the belief and opinion passed on to them as the right beliefs. Political godsons are motivated by and go along with the opinion of their God fathers.

The theory of Reasoned and personal behaviour can be adopted in this context of changing the perception, beliefs and behaviour of politicians who think that playing dirty is the proper way to achieve success in politics. Key individuals who had succeeded in politics without playing dirty are models to be used to campaign against ‘politics as usual’ or preach the message of ‘politics unusual’. Civil society organizations and other agencies are to champion/ drive the campaign. Politician like Ben Murray Bruce fits to the description of models that can help to champion the key messages of ‘politics unusual’ because of his clean approach to politics and for always being at the forefront of advocating civilized methods and best practices to be adopted by the political class(Bruce,2016).

Another theoretical construct that underpin the study is the behaviour change communication (BCC) theory. The essence of behaviour change communication is premised on using ethically-oriented communication strategies, principles and philosophies to dissuade politicians, party stakeholders and indeed electorate to change from the old ways of participating in the political process and embrace better ways. Theory assumes that behaviour is as a result of a three-way, reciprocal intention between personal factors (i.e. feelings, reactions) and environmental influences.

Behaviour change communication within the confines of this study anchor on character reformation, transformation and moulding. The authors of this article believe it can be achieved through adoption of effective political marketing strategies, principles and ideologies. Since behaviour change communication is domiciled in the communication component of political marketing, marketing communicators must craft ad message, and public relations messages/copies in such a way that de-market the ills of the ‘old political order’. Through the use of information communication education (IEC) platforms, message of hope and restoration can be preached. These platforms should also emphasize on the political rights and other rights of voters, political stakeholders in the process. When the electorate begin to demand for these rights and insist to vote according to their conscience, politicians who used to buy the vote of some gullible voters will now realize that their game is over.

4. Methodology

Exploratory cum desk research design was adopted in the study. Several related literature on political marketing and related disciplines was consulted and documented evidence of political marketing experts reviewed and balanced with opinions of key stakeholders in the Nigeria political process interviewed by the authors of this article. These methods were adopted because of the illustrative nature of the article. The beauty of adopting exploratory research for this article is that it provides a foundation and theoretical direction for describing a phenomenon where little or no direct studies have been conducted (Ikeagwu, 2000). The terms ‘politics as usual’ and ‘politics unusual’ are new political lexicons coined by Achor and Moguluwa(2012) to describe peculiar features in Nigeria political landscape and as a way to foster a paradigm shift from such peculiarities to a better civilized approach of playing politics. Therefore the adoption of exploratory research was suitable for a better understanding of the thrust of the article.

5.0. Application of Market-orientation to Politics and Government

5.1 Aligning Political Parties in Nigeria with Market-oriented Parties’ Philosophy: A way of Enthroning Politics-Unusual

Since the return to civilian rule in Nigeria, there has been increase in the formation and registration of political parties. Perhaps what seems to be lacking in some of the parties are well thought-out ideology driven by market orientation. As documented in several studies political parties in Nigeria adopt communication aspects of marketing during electioneering campaigns as a way to drum support to their cause. At that level, political marketing strategies were tangentially employed to suit an aspect of political party agenda – that is winning elections. However, recent scholarship has broadened the scope of the utilization of political marketing research for effective party service delivery and positioning. One area that has gained significant attention is the extent to which parties adopt a market-orientation (Lees-Shement, 2009; Achor and Moguluwa, 2012). As observed by Lees-Shment(2009), ‘‘although political marketing can be used to help parties sell themselves, political marketing literature argues that parties who wish to gain control of government need to change what they offer – or the political product – to suit market demands’’.

In contemporary market research, parties are driven by the demands of the consumers (voters) while offering (political products) that are tailored to the expectations and /or demands of the consumers (voters) rather than wishes of few strong stakeholders or party chieftains. Scholars like Lees-Shement(2001); Newman (1999), and Ormrod(2005) have defined and modeled a market orientation in politics. The common denominator of their views is that a market orientation involves the politician or party being in touch with and responsive to ordinary voter concerns. As expressed in the mainstream political marketing literature, the merits of market-oriented parties have been utilized in advance democracies like Canada and United Kingdom (Marland 2005; Pare and Berger, 2008).

The question that perhaps keeps agitating concerned mind: is to what extent have political parties in Nigeria adopted market-oriented principles in the conduct of their affairs? Even when signs of adoption of political marketing manifest in their activities, their conduct seems to an extent lack market-oriented principles. What then is Market-Oriented Party (MOP)? A market-oriented party uses views and political judgement to design its behaviour to respond to and satisfy voters’ demands in a way that meets their needs and wants, supported and implemented by the internal organization, and deliverables in government (Lees-Marshment, 2008). If we should totally adopt Lee-Marshment description of MOP, it then means that there has been a somewhat deviation from what was expected of some political parties that occupied seat of government at the Federal and State levels in Nigeria. As alleged by APC government, the Peoples Democratic Party that ruled for sixteen years was not able to meet the needs and aspirations of the Nigerian/ voting public in terms of service delivery (dividends of democracy) For this reason there existed service gap and this the APC government has come to bridge (Lai Mohammde, Minister of Communication and National Orientation, 2016). Our concern in this article is not to investigate or debate the truthfulness of such claim but to use such assertion as a leeway to explaining the application and implications of introducing market-oriented principles to party politics in Nigeria.

Based on this alleged service delivery gap and lack of core market-oriented driven political parties of the past, it is proposed here that for APC- led Government of President Buhari to continue to enjoy the support of the masses, it must acknowledge the expectations of the citizens. The old era of lording it over the masses should give way for a people-oriented, electorate-focused expectations and programmes. A market research will help to ascertain from time to time the expectations of the citizens or voters so that political parties align their policies and manifestos with the findings of the market survey for effective service delivery. As a way to change the old order of party politics in the country and embrace the new proposed order, political parties should align their behaviour towards model of market-oriented party. Such alignment or paradigm shift will make them responsive to the plights and needs of the majority of the masses or voters. Ideology is what drives a political party and it is expected that political parties in Nigeria should be driven by such in order to create effective solution to public demands (Lee-Marshment, 2008) and respond to market demand rather than the demand of

internal forces of the party stakeholders.

Market intelligence should be used to inform the political product design in line with demand of the (voters) market. With the market-oriented party, identifying voters' needs and wants comes before a party determines its behaviour. If Nigeria must refrain from politics as usual and adopt a responsive party politics, the multitude of political parties in existence should put the voter first in all their conduct or behaviour. It is the (voter) market demand that shape the behaviour of parties.

5.2 Application of a Market-Oriented Government

Our proposal of 'politics unusual' in this article is holistic (i.e. meant for all aspects of politics), including the way government run its affairs in Nigeria. The APC-led government in Nigeria crafted and anchored its unique selling proposition on the 'change mantra' or 'change agenda'; it is our view that such change mantra be driven by market-oriented government framework. Market-oriented government framework demands that government listen to the people, positively react to public opinion and give the people deserved opportunity to participate in decisions that impact on the citizenry. A Market-oriented Government(MOG) aims to maintain a responsive relationship with the public, continuing to consult a range of markets, to reflect and review delivery progress, offer appropriate leadership, and engage in strategic product development in the context of government realities to provide satisfaction(Lees-Marshment,2009) over the long term. According to Marshment(2008) market-oriented governments can engage in different marketing activities in a similar way to parties.

'Unlike the more chronological or linear MOP process, governing involves a range of activities, many of which need to be carried out concurrently throughout government''. Based on this assertion, Lees-Marshment(2009) identifies five main areas within the market-oriented government framework:

- Delivery management and communication
- Continual market consultation
- Demonstrate government is offering something new in policy and/or leadership (e.g. War against Corruption being pursued by APC-led Buhari Government)
- Identify and target the competition, showing a concern to increase market share
- Maintain relationships with traditional voters, through evocation of party history and myth as well as acknowledgement of shared characters, themes, and stories, images or words of care for core supporters.

Government has a lot to offer by tackling political corruptions and other anomalies prevalent in the body polity. It can enlist the support of Nigerians in the fight against corruption as part of strategic way to sustain the war and dislodge embers that ignite negative political tendencies in the polity.

5.3 Political Marketing and Relationship between Citizen and State.

Mutual relationship between relevant sections of the society and government is key to enthrone the desired political order that will help to turn around for the better(Achor,2011). This perhaps may depend on the level of adoption of market-oriented government framework by the state .Moreover market-oriented behaviour by government suggests that the public should be treated like consumers. Driven by this notion, the potential effect of consumerism on politics means that 'voters may want a more tangible rather than a rhetorical product, want more evident and instant delivery and prefer achievement over aspirations''. However, marketing brings a number of benefits to government if properly utilized. It enables governments to understand public concern more effectively not just at election and re-connect government with the governed (Savigny, 2008).

Marketing can provide a means for government to listen to the public, which in turn can improve policy-making and implementation''. Scholars like Scullion (2008), Culver and Howe(2004) have emphasized the power of the (voter) consumer in today's government For Scullion(2008) consumer sovereignty gives the public power, which meets rather than erodes democratic ideals. He argued that marketing populism is anti-elitist and can encourage greater participation in politics as people are asked to call government or other organizations to account (Achor, 2011).Citizenship as postulated by Scullion (2008) 'can exist within a consumer culture, and consumerism in politics can create avenues for the public to take on civic qualities, including accepting responsibility to shape their own lives''

As observed in literature, 'consumerism may encourage voters to demand that parties and politicians ensure they have governing capability and that political promise be cost-effective and realistic''. Laying credence to the above notion, Lees-Marshment(2009) opines that this can be good for government and ensure that politics is about what is delivered and changed not just what is promised in an election campaign''. These statements could guide the APC-led Government in delivering on its manifesto or election promise. Such statements ought to make the opposition party to demand delivering of electorate-focused projects and policies from the ruling party. The parties in opposition too must adopt consumerism as a way to rekindle hope of the citizens in the political system.

6. Discussions and Conclusion

The key thesis of this exploratory study anchored on utilization of basic marketing tools, particularly market-oriented strategies in changing and repositioning the political landscape in Nigeria. This article has discussed various aspects of political marketing and how market-oriented politics can be used to achieve a new political order – ‘politics unusual’. As documented in various scholarly works, political marketing eclectic approach to issues provides enough evidence that it can help to achieve behavioural and attitudinal changes in the political arena. Emphasis is laid on the concepts of market-oriented parties and market-oriented government as drivers of campaign for a new political order devoid of features of dark art of Machiavellian political chicanery and other persistent anomalies.

The basic principles of market-oriented government are that the government and its leaders will remain in touch with ordinary voter concerns, interested in public views, responsive to what the public are concerned about, and that they will demonstrate this in the way they behave not just how they sell themselves (Lees-Marshment, 2009). Market-oriented governments are expected to maintain a responsive relationship with the public, continue to consult, reflect, review, and develop their products alongside appropriate leadership in the context of government realities to provide satisfaction over the long term. All these are advocated for adoption by the APC-led government at the centre as a way to drive the change mantra beyond mere rhetoric.

It is the submission of this article that problems associated with party behaviour, party manifestos, state-citizen relationships can be addressed through political marketing and that key to enthroning new political order in Nigeria political landscape is through adoption of market-oriented party model and market-oriented government framework.

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