
Brand Promise and Reputation Against the Campaign of a Political Party

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Abstract:

The term “exchange” represents the core concept of marketing. Exchange occurs not only in commercial markets but also in political markets, such as electoral and government markets. Political marketing research typically focuses on electoral markets; therefore, this research integrates exchanges in electoral and government markets, which together form the permanent campaign.

This model proposes that the realization of a promise affects the party’s brand reputation and permanent campaign, ultimately influencing the voter’s decision confidence and intent to support the political party. The brand promise indicator was developed from an exploratory factor analysis of Indonesian political party Twitter accounts. Tweets extracted from the 2014 electoral campaign were further analyzed using Provalis Research’s QDA Miner software.

The indicators for brand reputation, permanent campaign, decision confidence, and intent to support the political party were adapted from political marketing and commercial marketing indicators. A questionnaire was created and delivered to students of three universities in Jakarta, with a total of 150 participants. The findings show that the permanent campaign variable as the process of promise realization during the term after the election has a significant influence on the voter’s intent to support a political party.

The theoretical contribution of this research includes broadening the empirical results of social exchange theory studies on exchange in the government market, beyond existing research on the electoral market. The managerial implication of this research is the importance of the permanent campaign in increasing the intent to vote for a political party.

Keywords: Brand promise, brand reputation, permanent campaign, decision confidence, intent to support.

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1. Introduction

The concept of exchange in marketing refers to exchange that occurs in non-commercial arenas, such as in social and political fields. This statement is similar to the American Marketing Association's (AMA 2007) definition of marketing as "the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." This is consistent with the statement, "the extension of marketing namely the marketing explanandum," that first suggested that marketing does not only occur in commercial areas (Levy and Kotler, 1969; Hunt, 1983) but also in non-commercial organizations (non-business). Although the AMA definition supports the position of political marketing within the greater field of marketing, the interaction of exchange in politics continues to be debated (Lock and Harris, 1996; O'Shaughnessy, 2001; Henneberg, 2002; 2008).

The debate is well grounded because marketing is typically restricted to commercial areas during the theory development phase, so marketing theory may not be automatically adopted in non-commercial areas, such as politics (Lock and Harris, 1996; Henneberg and O'Shaughnessy, 2007). Even Carman (1973) stated that politics should be excluded from marketing because there is no exchange value. On the other hand, some researchers argued that exchange is part of political marketing (Kotler, 1972; Hunt, 1976). Newman (1994) provided commentary about the core concepts of marketing, namely market orientation, asserting that it is an element of modern political practice.

Debate and critique are also associated with the interaction of exchange in politics. The wide body of existing political marketing research generally focuses on political campaigns during the election period, examining the exchange between a political party and the voters (Newman and Seth, 1985; Guzmán and Sierra, 2009; Hoegg and Lewis, 2011); however, this body of research has not incorporated the influence of a political party's activity after the electoral period, or "the permanent campaign." The permanent campaign is one of three political exchanges, which are as follows: (1) the electoral market interactions between voters and political candidates, (2) the market interactions between parliament members and the government, and (3) the permanent campaign, the interactions between voters and the government after an election (Henneberg and Ormrod 2013). The permanent campaign requires fostering a good relationship with voters after the election and is a method for winning the next election by managing the promises made during the previous election (Butler, Collins, and Fellenz, 2007).

After the political party delivers on campaign promises, further realization of its policy issue will build the political party's reputation among voters. Voters will demand the realization of issues and policies after the election and rate the issue of realization in the span of time after the electoral campaign. If the voters are satisfied, this leads to improved reputation for the political party, which then

influences the voters to further support the political party. Reputation, therefore, is the enduring concept of a political party resulting from the interaction between political parties and voters. Reputation is the perception obtained from evaluating the different stakeholders in the political party's performance (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk, 1986; Davies and Mian, 2010).

The lack of research on the permanent campaign in political marketing is the primary motivation for the present study. This study investigates the process of delivering on promises made by a political party to its voters, as well as how the permanent campaign influences the voter's intent to support the political party during the next election. This research fills the theoretical gap using basic marketing theories, namely social exchange theory, on the two processes of political marketing: the exchange between voters and political parties in the electoral market, and the exchange between voters and the elected government.

This research will also explain the mechanism of the voter's decision-making process on whether or not to support the political party. Some researchers argued that decision confidence is a precondition influencing the intent to support; therefore, decision confidence may predict future support. In the present study, decision confidence is a part of the research model, as is the relationship between the voter's decision confidence and the political party's brand reputation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Political Marketing

The definition of political marketing divides the interaction of exchange into two categories: (1) political marketing communications to gain the confidence of voters during the electoral period and (2) political marketing that involves various parties, such as parliaments and governments, with the purpose of obtaining voters' trust over a longer span of time. Harrop (1990) discussed the first category, stating that political marketing not only refers to political ads, but also the entire process of positioning the political party within the electoral market. The second category was proposed by O'Shaughnessy (2001), who stressed that political marketing is an activity related to "the organizing principle around which policy was constructed." The implications are that political marketing not only requires short-term tactics to convince voters during the election period, but also a long-term strategy that ensures victory in the next election. The second category is the primary focus of the present research.

2.2 Social Exchange Theory

Emerson (1976) summarized Homans's (1958) proposal of the social exchange theory as follows: (1) The success proposition: Among all actions committed by a person, the more an act receives something in return, the more likely that person

will be to perform the action again; (2) the stimulus proposition: Considering that there are stimuli from the previous experience that resulted in a reward, if there are similar stimuli at any point in the future, the same or similar action will be repeated to get the reward; and (3) the deprivation-satiation proposition: The more often a person receives the same reward, the lower the value of the reward for that person. The success proposition can be further elaborated into the value proposition and the rational proposition, as follows: (4) The value proposition: The more valuable the results of a person's action, the more likely that person will be to perform the action again; and (5) the rationality proposition: A person will choose actions that provide the biggest rewards.

2.3 The Political Party's Brand Promise

From a marketing perspective, the brand promise is an option that is made available to the consumer and is therefore the basis of consumer choice during the decision-making process (Atilgan, Aksoy, and Akinici 2005). The brand promise refers to a group of associations that is developed by the brand manager, and it is a key factor in brand development (Burmam, Jost-Benz, and Riley 2009). Aaker (1996) stated that an organization will focus on its values and its brand association. In the context of political parties, the brand promise is the proposition delivered by the political party and the value offered to voters (Smith and French, 2009; O'Cass, 2009).

The relationship between economic policy and election results is inconclusive (Taniguchi, 2016). The relationship between economic policy and satisfaction is also inconclusive, as the various parameters used to measure economic growth, unemployment, and inflation generate an insignificant effect (Quaranta and Martini, 2016). The process of winning an election, however, requires improving the perception of the adherence to democratic principles and the performance of the economy.

This research investigates the political party's brand promise and the voter's intent to support the political party. A political party promises to deliver policies desired by voters, with the understanding that these policies will be carried out by the ruling political parties of the government (Hughes and Dann, 2009). The political party's brand promise is therefore associated with the permanent campaign; the higher the voters' expectations for the political party promises, the higher the expectations for the permanent campaign (Reher, 2014).

2.4 Brand Reputation

Reputation refers to the brand's perception among various stakeholders involved in the exchange process (Fombrun 1996; Fombrun and Van Riel 2004). Abimola and Kocak (2007) defined reputation as the assessment of an organization's quality, trust, and reliability over time. Sarstedt (2009) stated that an organization's

reputation is an indicator for market performance; a positive reputation signals reduced risk, increases investors' expectations, and can also affect the overall value for consumers (Sarstedt 2009).

Measuring the political party's brand reputation consists of dimensions that originate from the political candidate's characteristics, such as integrity, reliability, competence, charisma, and personality (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986). These dimensions are separated into two groups: competency and personality. Previous findings show that educated voters are most likely influenced by the competency dimensions during their decision-making process, while less educated voters are most likely influenced by the personality dimensions. Davies and Mian (2010) incorporated the dimension of reliability into the indicators for competence, security, and hard-work, and further research was conducted to assess the dimensions and indicators in a political organization's reputation (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986).

2.5 Decision Confidence

The decision-making process requires the belief that the value or the benefit of the exchange process meets the voters' expectations (He, Li, and Harris 2012). Laroche, Kim, and Zhou (1996) stated that consumer confidence in a product or service may predict the intent to purchase. They prove that confidence also gives a similar assertion, so belief has an important role to predict intention to buy (Bennett and Harrell, 1975). Laroche, Kim, and Zhou (1996) stated that belief is a confidence that the buyer could predict what he will receive from the particular brand acquisition. Solomon (2007) described belief as the confidence that what will happen in the future is as expected; therefore, confidence is a prerequisite for performing an action, belief describes the situation preceding the action, and confidence can be a parameter for predicting future behavior. This definition can also be interpreted as the overall confidence in the voter's own ability to evaluate the political party brand and other notions associated with decision-making risks (Bennett and Harrell, 1975). Decision confidence, therefore, refers to the voter's ability to make the right decision in choosing a political party or candidate who will perform at its best.

2.6 The Permanent Campaign

The concept of the permanent campaign is closely related to the concepts of government, democracy, and political parties. Downs (1957) defined the government as a stakeholder that has authority over other stakeholders within a community and is therefore the primary locus of power.

The characteristics of democracy and the axioms of the democratic government caused the emergence of the permanent campaign in democratic countries. The concept was first defined by Sidney Blumenthal (1980), who viewed the

governance transition from Pat Caddell to Jimmy Carter. The permanent campaign refers to government activities used to build and foster popular support. The President and Members of the House Representatives use the resources and opportunities that exist within their offices to accelerate or increase the prospect of re-election (Ornstein and Mann, 2000). In the present research, the permanent campaign is regarded as a positive signal to voters that the political parties of the government are working toward the realization of promises made during the electoral campaign.

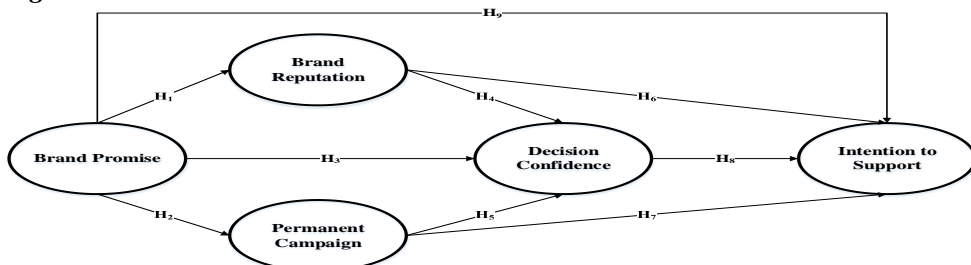
2.7 Intent to Support

The concept of intent to support is similar to the intent to vote. Intent to vote (voting) refers to the action of an individual that expresses support or preference for a particular option (i.e., a political party or a political candidate) (Colignatus, 2007). Voting is the only individual action carried out on election day, achieved by filling out a ballot; therefore, voting is not a routine activity, but a systematic process that is based on the regulations for governing body elections. This makes voting difficult to measure, but it is preceded by measurable intent. Intent to support is an indicator for the political party's brand performance (Wu and Dahmen 2010). The higher the political party's brand performance, the higher the intent to support. This relationship also applies to the commercial market; the higher the performance of the product or service, the higher the intent to buy.

3. Hypotheses

A conceptual model was developed based on the perspective that brand reputation, brand promise, and decision confidence in the political market are different from those in the commercial market. In the commercial market, the consumer is directly engaged with a company's business operations; in politics, the voter is indirectly engaged with the candidates or political parties through information provided by mass media and other channels of communication. The present research posits that the voter's decision-making process starts from the political party's brand promise, which influences brand reputation. Following an election, the permanent campaign influences the voter's decision confidence and intent to support the political party. This model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model



4. Methodology

The present research applied the exploratory and conclusive research design methods to explain the phenomenon related to voting. Exploratory research was conducted to gather insights on the brand promise indicator, while conclusive research was conducted to test the hypotheses. The exploratory research utilized secondary data, including public data gathered from political parties' tweets. The conclusive research utilized primary data from distributing questionnaire to respondents. This is a single, cross-sectional study, since data were collected one set at a time.

The exploratory research was conducted before the conclusive research. The first phase included the exploratory factor analysis of the political parties' Twitter accounts. This analysis explored the brand promise of each political party, which became the primary focus of this research. The tweets were collected from the period of the 2014 Indonesian electoral campaign, and the data collection periods and the number of tweets collected are provided in Table 1. This analysis was the first step in developing the brand promise indicator for the political party.

Table 1. *Political Parties' Twitter Accounts and Number of Tweets Extracted*

Account ID on Twitter	Period	Number of Tweets
Partai Demokrat (@Demokrat)	08/18/11-05/20/14	3,193
Partai Golkar (@Golkar5)	11/11/13-05/22/14	3,044
PKS (@PKSejahtera)	03/06/14-05/22/14	3,209
DPP PAN (@Official_PAN)	04/28/13-05/21/14	3,192
DPP PPP (@DPP_PPP)	12/02/13-05/21/14	3,227
DPP PKB (@PKB_News_Online)	07/07/11-05/22/14	2,974
PDI Perjuangan (@PDI_Perjuangan)	11/20/13-05/22/14	3,192
Partai Gerindra (@Gerindra)	03/28/14-05/22/14	2,352
Hanura.Official (@hanura_official)	05/06/12-05/09/14	1,255
Partai NasDem (@NasDem)	03/26/14-05/21/14	3,199
Partai Bulan Bintang (@DPPBulanBintang)	09/28/11-04/06/14	172
Sutiyoso (MCPKPI) (@sobatbangyos)	07/15/12-04/24/14	2,298

The tweets provided unstructured textual data, and therefore needed to be prepared before analysis (Silver and Lewins 2014). The data preparation consisted of four stages, including: inputting data descriptions, cleaning and transforming the data, stemming and lemmatization, and developing a dictionary.

Next, the tweets were analyzed for dimensions that may aid researchers in interpreting the exploratory factor analysis (Campbell *et al.*, 2011). Provalis Research's mixed-method research software, QDA Miner, was used in the present research because it offers exploratory techniques that show the relationship

between keywords and the co-occurrence matrix (Silver and Lewins 2014). The values used in this measurement are based on the degree of similarity; the higher the index of similarity, the narrower the distance between keywords within the text, and vice versa (Chung and Lee, 2001). The dendrogram offers visualization of an element in the unit of analysis. The Jaccard index was used to measure the coefficient value; values close to 1.0 indicate the close relationship of the elements in the unit of analysis (Lewis and Maas, 2007).

After completing the exploratory factor analysis, the conclusive research design method was developed. A total of 11 indicators measure the brand promise. The brand reputation variable utilizes 10 indicators from three dimensions: competence, reliability, and integrity (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986; Davies et al. 2004; Davies and Mian 2010). A total of 14 indicators measure the permanent campaign. There are four indicators for decision confidence, developed from studies by Worcester and Baines (2004); Phillips, Reynolds, and Reynolds (2010); and Winchester, Hall, and Binney (2014). The intent to support the political party was developed from studies by Ben-Ur and Newman (2010) and there are a total of four indicators measuring the intent to support.

The research sample includes students from Mercu Buana University, Bina Nusantara University, and the University of Indonesia. These universities represent typical public and private universities in Jakarta. To minimize sample bias, the inclusion criteria was restricted to students who already gained the right to vote in the 2014 election. A total of 166 students participated in the study, 150 of which completed the questionnaire offline.

The questionnaire was delivered to respondents in April 2016, consisting of four parts: (1) introduction and respondent profile questions, (2) five screening questions, (3) forty-three main questions, and (4) three demographical questions. The SEM PLS analysis software was used to test the model for linearity assumption, thereby gaining a meaningful interpretation of the regression coefficients (Darlington, 1990). Through the linear regression model, data can be tested for linearity assumption. The multiple linear regression method also measured the effect sizes of the direct and indirect effects (i.e., the total effect). Effect size, as measured in this study, refers to the measurement of the relationships between various predictors (X) and the results (Y). The effect size measures are as follows: partially component effect, Pearson's R^2 , and Cohen's f^2 . The SEM PLS also generated the bootstrap confidence intervals for the measurements (Stine, 1989; Bollen and Stine, 1993; Efron and Tibshirani, 1994). If the confidence intervals for the upper bound (ULCI) and lower bound (LLCI) do not consist of zeroes, then the confidence intervals for the indirect influences also do not consist of zeroes.

To test the reliability of this study, the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency estimate was measured. The reliability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, where a

reliability coefficient of 0.6 or less generally indicates a less than satisfactory reliability score. According to Hair et al. (2006), a variable is considered reliable if it has a reliability coefficient greater than 0.7.

5. Results and Discussion

The respondent profile reveals an age range of 19–24 years, with 4.8% in the range of 19–20 years and 95.2% in the range of 21–24 years. Regarding gender, 54.7% are female and 45.3% are male. Because respondents are students, 35.3% of the respondents' income ranges between Rp 900,001 to Rp 1,250,000.

The QDA Miner software extracted 11 brand promise indicators from the cluster analysis. After validating the results with the SPSS 19.0 software, three indicators were excluded: cleaning up the political parties (A1.7), supporting a judicial review of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia (A1.9), and protecting Indonesian labor abroad (A1.11). These were excluded to reduce the complexity of the data. The intercorrelations between variables were used to form the dimensions; therefore, the values for these three indicators are omitted.

A principal component analysis (PCA) was also conducted, the results of which formed two of the question dimensions. The first dimension is “promise of competitiveness,” which consists of questions about improving the competitiveness of Indonesia, and the second dimension is “promise of purchasing power,” which consists of questions about increasing the purchasing power of the community. These dimensions explain that political parties deliver the promise of the competitiveness and the promise of purchasing power for the public. This promise was delivered to the public so that the public knows and can interpret the pledge delivered by the political party. The principal component analysis and processes of testing the validity and reliability of the 10 indicators for brand reputation resulted in a grouping of only one dimension.

There are 14 indicators for the permanent campaign, but one was excluded: proactive in looking for community needs (A6.6). Two dimensions were generated. The first dimension is “justice campaign,” which refers to political campaigns that are related to the theme of justice, and the second dimension is “constitution campaign,” which refers to political campaigns related to constitutional compliance. The validation process for the four decision confidence indicators resulted in the exclusion of one question, A5.4. The process of factor analysis extraction using SPSS 19.0 for the four ‘intent to support’ indicators resulted in the exclusion of one indicator found to be invalid.

A simple analysis was conducted to test the direct effect of variable X on variable Y. The insignificant direct relationships are as follows: Brand Reputation → Decision Confidence; Decision Confidence → Intent to Support; and Brand Promise → Intent to Support (Table 2).

Table 2. Hypotheses Summary

No.	Hypotheses	Coefficients	T	Remarks
H ₁	Brand Promise → Brand Reputation	0.636	14.548	H ₁ Accepted
H ₂	Brand Promise → Permanent Campaign	0.473	9.019	H ₂ Accepted
H ₃	Brand Promise → Decision Confidence	0.275	2.601	H ₃ Accepted
H ₄	Brand Reputation → Decision Confidence	0.010	0.221	H ₄ Rejected
H ₅	Permanent Campaign → Decision Confidence	0.456	7.696	H ₅ Accepted
H ₆	Brand Reputation → Intent to Support	0.493	7.815	H ₆ Accepted
H ₇	Permanent Campaign → Intent to Support	0.864	15.880	H ₇ Accepted
H ₈	Decision Confidence → Intent to Support	-0.322	5.578	H ₈ Rejected
H ₉	Brand Promise → Intent to Support	-0.403	7.387	H ₉ Rejected

The results demonstrate that a political party’s campaign promises are congruent to voter intent to support the political party. The results also show a contrast between the permanent campaign and the intent to support. This indicates that the relationship between the political party’s brand promise and the voter’s decision confidence affects intent to support by reducing the power of the priority policy congruence toward the voters (Reher 2014).

The present research exposes the influence of the political party’s brand promise on the intent to support through relevant variables within the context of political marketing research. The results showed that while the brand promise variable may not perfectly explain its effect on intent to support, there are other variables that can. The process through which the brand promise affects the intent to support is developed in the research model, and consists of two branches.

The first branch includes the variables of brand promise (-0.401) and decision confidence (-0.342); both relationships with intent to support have negative coefficients. These results indicate that an increase in brand promise or decision confidence tends to affect the intent to support (before election), but the value of these coefficients is smaller than the coefficient values for the variables in the second branch.

The second branch is composed of the brand reputation (0.496) and the permanent campaign (0.859) variables; both variables influence intent to support and their coefficient values are greater than the values for brand promise and decision confidence. These results indicate a strong relationship between brand promise and intent to support via brand reputation and the permanent campaign.

Regarding individual variables, the relationship between brand promise and decision confidence (0.275) has the lowest coefficient value among relationships involving brand promise. The relationship between brand reputation and decision confidence is also insignificant (0.014). The largest coefficient involving decision confidence can be found in its relationship with the permanent campaign (0.456). The permanent campaign variable is the most significant variable between brand promise and intent to support. The results suggest that the permanent campaign influences both decision confidence (0.456) and intent to support (0.859).

Some hypotheses were found to be insignificant. While brand reputation is a necessary variable, H4 was rejected because brand reputation neither supports nor influences decision confidence. The other insignificant hypotheses are related to the intent to support variable. The findings reveal that brand promise and decision confidence are not the only variables that have an influence on the intent to support. This is contradictory to the findings from previous research, which state the higher the voter's decision confidence, the higher the intent to support the political party.

The findings of the present study show that applying the success proposition of the social exchange theory to brand promise and decision confidence does not sufficiently influence intent to support. The process should therefore apply the stimulus proposition of the social exchange theory, influencing the intent to support through brand reputation and the permanent campaign.

6. Conclusion

The findings support the social exchange theory, including the success proposition (the value proposition and the rationality proposition) and the stimulus proposition. The results also demonstrated the difference between the two branches of the process. The process via decision confidence is relatively weaker than the process via brand reputation and permanent campaign. The coefficient value of the second branch offers empirical evidence that the permanent campaign strengthens the interactions between voters and the political party. In the earlier stage of the process, the political party delivers on its promises to the voters after the election, reinforcing its position through the permanent campaign. The political party of the government also informs voters on its performance and progress toward realizing promises.

Finally, this research provides theoretical contributions, broadening the social exchange theory by producing empirical results for exchange in the government market, beyond that of the electoral market. The permanent campaign is a form of reinforcement that establishes and continues to encourage stability in the relationship between brand promise and intent to support.

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