

DIFFERENCE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL MARKETING MIX IN TERMS OF AGE

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Received: Jan 12, 2024 Accepted: Apr 01, 2025 Published: June 01, 2025

Abstract:

The political marketing mix creates significant effects on the preferences of voters, who are considered as consumers in the literature. The aim of this study is to reveal the differentiation created by the political marketing mix in terms of age variable. In this study, a survey containing 34 statements from the political marketing scale was applied to 464 voters before the 2023 general elections. The results were analyzed using the ANOVA method and difference analysis. As a result of the study, significant differences were reached when the participants were examined in terms of age variable. It was determined that the voters differed in the entire scale of political marketing mix and in the dimensions of political distribution, political promotion, people and physical evidences according to their age status.

Keywords:

Political Marketing Mix, Citizen Consumer, Difference Analysis, Age

Note: This article is derived from the doctoral dissertation titled; "The Impact of the Political Marketing Mix on Voter Behavior Through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs".

JEL Classification:

M31

1. Introduction

Over time, different scientific fields have also benefited from the tools of marketing science, the marketing mix, the sustainable customer relations approach and the understanding of value creation. We can say politics, economics, sociology, psychology and anthropology among these branches of science. The intersection of political science with marketing has led to the birth of the concept of political marketing. This union, which Lees-Marshment (2001, p. 692) defines as the "marriage of politics and marketing", includes elements from both disciplines. Political parties and leaders have been looking for different ways to gain the attention and votes of voters in a period when party loyalty has decreased. Over time, these searches have led politicians to benefit from the principles and tools of marketing science. The first marketing tools used by political parties include advertising, promotion, survey research, focus groups, telemarketing, direct mail, sales and promotion (Caywood and Laczniak, 1989). With this trend, citizens who fulfill their duty as voters have also begun to be seen as consumers. As the definitions of consumer and citizen begin to converge, consumers who take on the duty of citizenship have started to see this as a responsibility. The concept of "consumer-citizen" has emerged as the relationship between consumption and politics has become a voluntary act based on rights (Odabaşı, 2008, p.4). When we look at the concepts of consumer-citizen or consumervoter, we can say that they are essentially the same person and perceive the messages they receive in the same way (Peng and Hackley, 2009). However, there are some fundamental differences between the roles of consumers and voters in political marketing and service marketing processes. Among these, we can list the fact that voters make all their choices on the same day, the difference in the price dimension when voting, the certainty of the decision they make, and the complexity of the product (Lock and Harris, 1996).

In this context, this study firstly conducted a literature review on the product, price, place, promotion, people and physical evidences sub-dimensions of the political marketing mix, and then analyzed the differences created in the dimensions of the political marketing mix in terms of age variable. This study started 64 days after the earthquake centered in Kahramanmaraş on the night of February 6, 2023, 34 days before the 2023 general elections, and was conducted in a critical period until the election day. In this context, what makes the study unique is that it measured the approaches of voters to political marketing practices after a disaster. A survey consisting of 34 statements on the political marketing mix scale was conducted face-to-face and online with 464 voters, the results were examined with ANOVA analysis, and it was analyzed whether there were significant differences in their preferences.

2. Conceptual Framework

Although the term political marketing emerged in Stanley Kelley's (1956) study of the United States election process, its conceptualization was possible with Kotler and Levy's (1969) article titled "Broadening The Concept of Marketing". This groundbreaking article in marketing approaches discussed the need for marketing experts in non-profit organizations as well as in for-profit organizations and the use of marketing tools. In the 1970s, Avraham Shama (1975; 1976) and Philip Kotler continued their theoretical studies on political marketing and made valuable contributions to the literature (Wring, 1997). According to Kotler (1972), political candidates need to find different ways to satisfy the "market" consisting of voters, political parties, stakeholders and interest groups. Kotler (1972: 1) said, "The very essence of a candidate's interface with the voters is a marketing one". In this context, the adaptation of marketing practices to politics is of great importance today.

2.1. Political Marketing Mix

Borden's (1964) article "The Concept of The Marketing Mix", which first gathered the marketing mix elements under twelve headings as product planning, pricing, branding, distribution channels, personal sales, advertising, promotion, packaging, display, service, physical distribution, data collection and analysis, was followed by McCarthy's (1964) 4P approach, which was conceptualized with the sub-dimensions of product, price, place and promotion, advanced with Booms and Bitner's (1982) addition of people, physical evidences and process, developed with Kotler's (1986) study adding politics and public relations, and gained a different perspective with Lovelock and Wright's (2001) inclusion of people, productivity and quality, physical evidences and process dimensions. The study that constitutes the core of all these studies was McCarthy's (1964) 4P approach. The marketing mix components, product, price, promotion, place and the people and evidences used in this research, have been adapted to political marketing in the literature as detailed below.

2.1.1. Political Product

The adaptation of marketing concepts to political marketing was examined in Shama's (1976: 765) study titled "The Marketing of Political Candidates", the product dimension was seen as "candidate" and accordingly adapted as product mix-candidate mix, product image-candidate image, product development-candidate development, product positioning-candidate positioning, product promotion-candidate promotion, product life circle-candidate life circle, product manager-candidate manager. Wring (1997: 655) based the product on three foundations: party image, leader image and political promises. Newman (1994) defines the components of the product as the candidate's election program, his/her views on important issues, the candidate's image, and the candidate's political history with those who support him.

2.1.2. Political Price

The price dimension in the marketing mix can be seen as the most ambiguous dimension when adapted to political marketing. Some researchers such as Farrell (1986) have argued that the price sub-dimension should be ignored because it makes little contribution to the campaign. Nevertheless, one of the most basic approaches to price in the literature is Reid's (1988) determination that every election is a "psychological purchase". Niffenegger (1989) defined the price dimension as voters' concerns or sense of confidence about the impact the candidate will have in the national, economic and psychological fields.

Similarly, Sanghvi (2016: 102) defines price as the trust felt towards the candidate. This also means the cost paid. Hansel and Jensen (2007) evaluated the vote given to parties that can be seen as a service provider as a "cost", that is, price.

2.1.3. Political Promotion

Since the beginning of democracy and political elections, there has been a need for political promotion activities. In the early days when multi-party democratic elections began, political promotion practices were carried out through one-to-one communication, print and display advertisements. In the following years, with the developing technology, they began to reach voters through websites, e-mail and social media (Williams and Newman, 2013). According to Henneberg (2002), promotion is all communication tools such as advertisements, promotions and media news used by political parties and candidates to reinforce their ultimate goal of increasing votes. On the other hand, negative advertising is also frequently used in the political arena. Although negative advertising is condemned as unethical by all stakeholders in society, research shows that negative advertisements work when they address real problems (Roddy and Garramone, 1988; Kaid et al., 2000; Geer, 2006).

2.1.4. Political Place (Distribution)

According to Niffenegger (1989), the place dimension includes candidates' election campaigns, organizing rallies, and meeting with the public through dinners and visits. According to Cwalina et al. (2011), it is the candidate's ability to personally convey the message they want to give to the public. Since the candidate is part of a political party, the party organization and volunteers can also support these efforts. Lees-Marshment (2009) evaluates place as the candidate fulfilling his/her promises if elected. Torlak (2002) also defined public meetings, reaching voters via e-mail and letters, and all programs the candidate has the opportunity to reach directly by going door to door or one-on-one meetings, as well as indirect distribution via telephone, e-mail, letters, and brochures (Islamoğlu, 2002). According to Tan (1998), distribution channels are the paths followed by candidates, which we can call political products, to convey their views, political stances, projects, and promises to the voters. The candidate can benefit from intermediary institutions for a fee in the distribution process of the message he/she wants to give, or he/she can reach the political party voters directly (Tan, 1998).

2.1.5. Political People and Physical Evidences

The people and physical evidences sub-dimension was first added to the 4P marketing mix as two separate dimensions "people-process and physical evidences" with the study of Booms and Bitner (1982). The political marketing mix sub-dimensions have continued in the literature on the 4P basic axis. In their article titled "Multidimensional Political Marketing Mix Model for Developing Countries: An Empirical Investigation" in 2019, Chowdhury and Naheed defined the political marketing mix model they developed in election campaigns as the use of celebrities by candidates for advertising or promotion, the use of national heroes and leaders with national value as a tool, the positive news about the candidate, the physical appearance and performance of the candidate, and the candidate's harmony with local administrators as the people and physical evidences dimension.

2.2. Citizen-Consumer

The duty of voting of a person who is exposed to the elements of the political marketing mix with the tools used by candidates and political parties arises from the responsibility of citizenship. The increasing convergence of the concepts of consumer and citizen in daily life has led to the emergence of the consumer-citizen combination. With the development of mass media and technology, consumers with increased awareness have become aware of their impacts in ethical, social, economic, environmental and political areas (Odabaşı, 2008). Although some researchers such as Campbell (2004) find the concept of consumer citizen an oxymoron, the political institution has adopted and used this new combination (Livingstone et al., 2007).

Downs (1957) argues that a significant portion of citizens are not sufficiently informed about issues related to elections. Moreover, while a consumer has the right to extensive research and return during the product-service

purchase period, voters who fulfill their civic duty cannot reverse their decisions and are obliged to be governed by the outcome in democracies. In addition, the obligation to make all their choices on the same day is another element that separates consumers from voters (Lock and Harris, 1996: 14-15). Quelch (2008) explains the reason for the decreasing participation and the loss of voters in the US elections by saying that commercial marketing is more effective than political marketing and that most consumers do not feel the loyalty they feel towards political parties as they do towards many brands they use in their daily consumption. Academicians and researchers such as Newman (1999), O'Shaughnessy (1990), Trent and Friedenberg (1995), Wheeler (1997) have examined the consumption of media messages by consumers. However, in light of all these discussions, few studies in the relatively new field of political marketing have investigated the voting-consumption analogy by focusing on a specific political marketing practice of a specific voter class (Peng and Hackley, 2009).

3. Methodology

3.1. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the sub-dimensions of the political marketing mix in terms of age variable to determine the differences they created in the results.

3.2. Research Question

The following research questions were tried to be answered in the study: Are there significant differences in the sub-dimensions of the political marketing mix scale in terms of age variable?

3.3. Data Collection Tool and Sample

Since the research was conducted on voters who will vote in the elections, voters over the age of 18 who are eligible to vote were selected. Female voters who bore the burden of the earthquake and environmental conditions were taken as the focus. 464 Female voters responded to the survey regarding the study. For the study, a 34-item survey consisting of the political marketing mix scale was administered to 161 people face-to-face with a psychologist and to 303 people online.

3.4. Measurement Tool

The Political Marketing Mix was measured with 34 items from the political marketing scale developed by Chowdhury and Naheed (2019). In addition, two statements from Kalender's (1998: 309) study were added to the scale, covering the effect of the candidate's popularity in public opinion polls and the effect of the candidate's personal visits. As a result, the marketing mix scale was measured in five dimensions: product, price, distribution, promotion, and people and evidences.

4. Findings

4.1. Factor Analysis

The analysis was started by conducting exploratory factor analysis of the political marketing mix scale in order to analyze the validity and reliability of the scale. According to Sürücü vd. (2023), the purpose of exploratory factor analysis is to summarize the data in order to explain and understand the relationships of the variables observed during the measurement. As a result of the factor analysis, it was determined that the factor loadings of some of the expressions resulting from the varianx rotation minus were cross-loaded. As a result, the cross-loaded expressions were removed from the study and the factor analysis was re-performed.

In the analysis results, attention was paid to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test value being greater than 0.6 and the Bartlett sphericity test value being p<0.05. The KMO value was determined as 0.848 in the study. The Bartlett sphericity test (X2=4264,822; df=210, p=0,000) yielded a significant result. In line with these results, it was seen that the sample size according to the KMO value and the relationship between the dimensions according to the Bartlett sphericity test were suitable for exploratory factor analysis (Sürücü vd., 2022). As a result of the factor analysis, a 5-factor structure was obtained as shown in the table below.

Items	Factor					
Items	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	
PRODUCT1: The candidate's political background and attitude affect my political preference.	0,776					
PRODUCT2: The candidate's leadership image affects my political preference.	0,749					
PRODUCT3: The candidate's image in the eyes of the community affects my political preference.	0,716					
PRODUCT4: The candidate's political party affects my political preference.	0,647					
PRODUCT5: The ideology of the party candidate affects my political preference.	0,694					
PRICE1: The economic cost (taxes, exchange rate, inflation, etc.) that will occur if the candidate is elected will affect my political preference.		0,799				
PRICE2: The psychological cost (insecurity, pressure, etc.) that will occur if the candidate is elected will affect my political preference.		0,810				
PRICE3: The candidate's perspective that discriminates between men and women will affect my political preference.		0,574				
PLACE1: The candidate's constant presence in the public will affect my political preference.			0,690			
PLACE2: The candidate's recognition in the region where he lives will affect my political preference.			0,805			

Table 1. Political Marketing Mix Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

PLACE3: The candidate's living in the region where he is a candidate will affect my political preference.	0,811
PLACE4:The candidate's accessibility in the region where I live throughout the year will affect my political preference.	0,710
PROMOTION1: Rallies held by the candidate affect my political preference.	0,605
PROMOTION2: Candidate reaching me by mail (letter, card) affects my political preference.	0,760
PROMOTION3: Candidate's use of social media affects my political preference.	0,501
PROMOTION4: Financial aid provided by the candidate affects my political preference.	0,774
PROMOTION5: Candidate appearing with family members in his/her campaign affects my political preference.	0,660
PEOPLE&P.EVIDENCES1: Use of historical figures (such as Ecevit, Erbakan, Türkeş, Demirel) in campaigns affects my opinion.	0,802
PEOPLE&P.EVIDENCES2: Use of celebrities in campaigns affects my political preference.	0,843
PEOPLE&P.EVIDENCES3: Use of national symbols in meetings affects my political preference.	0,699
PEOPLE&P.EVIDENCES4: Candidate's physical appearance and performance affect my political preference.	0,532

4.2. Reliability Analysis

The structural validity of the scale with its five-factor structure was confirmed and it was seen that these five factors explained 63.209% of the total variance. It was also observed that the factor loadings of each item were above 0.50. According to Sürücü et al. (2023), these results show that the statements explain the factor they are included in well. When the Cronbach alpha value and McDonald's Omega value of the scale are taken into consideration, it was

determined that the entire political marketing scale and each statement were greater than 0.6 and therefore the scale was reliable. The reliability analysis of the scale is as in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis						
Scolo	Cronbach alfa	McDonald's Omega				
State	(α)	ώ				
Political Marketing Mix	0,808	0,884				
Product	0,812	0,819				
Price	0,697	0,744				
Place	0,828	0,839				
Promotion	0,804	0,807				
Place and Physical Evidences	0,794	0,794				

The skewness and kurtosis values were examined to see if the data were normally distributed. According to Jondeau and Rockinger (2003), values between -3 and +3 indicate that the distribution is normal. As a result of examining the data, it was determined that the skewness value was between -1.392 and -0.216, and the kurtosis value was between -0.719 and 2.804, and that the distribution was normal.

4.3. Difference Analysis

Responses to questions about demographic variable of age were examined as frequency and percentage.

Of the 464 voters who participated in the survey, 76 (16.4%) were between the ages of 18-25, 119 (25.6%) were between the ages of 26-36, 113 (24.4%) were between the ages of 36-45, and 156 (33.6%) were 46 and older. The average age of the voters was 40.62, and the standard deviation was 1.090.

Table 3. Distribution of Voters by Age Group						
Age Group	Frequency	%				
18-25	76	16,4				
26-36	119	25,6				
36-45	113	24,4				
Over 46	156	33,6				
Total	464	100				

Evaluation statements for the five dimensions of the political marketing mix scale, namely product, price, distribution, promotion and people and physical evidences, were measured using a 5-point Likert scale as follows: "1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Undecided, 4- Agree and 5- Strongly Agree". It was observed that the political marketing mix scale received an overall score of $\bar{x} = 3,52\pm0,63$, with the lowest being 1.38 and the highest being 5.00. For the product sub-dimension, this value was observed as $\bar{x} = 4,10\pm0,78$ mean and standard deviation. For

price, the mean and standard deviation was measured as $\bar{x} = 4,28\pm0,75$ points. For distribution, this value was $\bar{x} = 3,68\pm0,95$ points. For the promotion sub-dimension, the mean and standard deviation values were observed as $\bar{x} = 3,07\pm0,99$. For the fifth dimension, people and physical evidences, the mean and standard deviation values were determined as $\bar{x} = 2,60\pm0,98$. Descriptive statistics are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics								
	Voriables		Min	Mov	Moon	Standard		
v al lables		IN	WIIII.	wiax.	Wiean	Deviation		
	Political Marketing Mix	464	1,38	5,00	3,52	0,63		
General	Product	464	1,00	5,00	4,10	0,78		
	Price	464	1,00	5,00	4,28	0,75		
	Place	464	1,00	5,00	3,68	0,95		
	Promotion	464	1,00	5,00	3,07	0,99		
	Place and Physical	464	1,00	5,00	2,60	0,98		
	Evidences							

The differentiation levels in the political marketing mix scale according to the age group of the participants in the study were measured with the ANOVA test, and the results are shared in Table 5.

Table 5. Difference Analysis According to Voters' Age Group								
Scale	Age Group	n	Mean	s	F	р	Difference	
	18-25	76	3,40	0,63	9,11	0,000	b>a	
Political Marketing	26-36	119	3,66	0,55			b>d	
Mix	36-45	113	3 68	0.65			c>a	
	50 15	115	5,00	0,05			c>d	
	Over 46	156	3,36	0,64				
Product	18-25	76	4,08	0,79	0,208	0,891		
	26-36	119	4,13	0,76				
	36-45	113	4,15	0,87				
	Over 46	156	4,08	0,74				
Price	18-25	76	4,39	0,67	2,04	0,107		

	26-36	119	4,27	0,78			
	36-45	113	4,37	0,66			
	Over 46	156	4,18	0,83			
	18-25	76	3,42	0,86	7,03	0,000	c>a
	26-36	119	3,76	0,89			c>d
Place	36-45	113	3,98	0,93			
	Over 46	156	3,54	1,01			
	18-25	76	2,87	1,04	15,05	0,000	b>a
	26-36	119	3,48	0,80			b>d c>d
Promotion	36-45	113	3,23	0,96			
	Over 46	156	2,76	1,00			
-	18-25	76	2,46	0,96	6,40	0,000	b>d
People and Physical Evidences	26-36	119	2,72	0,87			c>a c>d
	36-45	113	2,87	1,06			
	Over 46	156	2,40	0,97			

Difference Analysis of Political Marketing Mix in Terms of Age

p<0,05 (*a*: 18-25 age, *b*: 26-35 age, *c*: 36-45 age, *d*: 36-45 age)

According to the age distribution of the voters, there was a significant difference in the political marketing mix scale as a whole and in the political place, promotion, people and physical evidences sub-dimensions (p<0,05). In the entire scale, voters in the 26-35 age group significantly differed from voters in the 25 and below and 46 and above age groups. Similarly, voters in the 36-45 age group significantly differed from voters in the 25 and below and 46 and above age groups. In the place sub-dimension, it was observed that those in the 36-45 age group significantly differed from voters in the 26 and below and 46 and above age groups. In the place sub-dimension, it was observed that those in the 36-45 age group significantly differed from voters in the 25 and below and 46 and above age groups. In the promotion dimension, voters in the 26-35 age group significantly differed from voters in the 25 and below and 46 and above age groups. No difference in the 36-45 age group significantly differed from voters in the 25 and below, 46 and above age groups. No difference was found in the product and price sub-dimensions of the political marketing mix scale of the age demographic variable.

5. Conclusion

Political marketing plays a much more important role today with the advancement of technology, the increase in channels to reach voters, and the decisive effect of increasing channels on politics. The most important way for candidates who want to get more votes and be elected in politics to develop propaganda methods suitable for the

demographic structure, sociology and culture of society is to know well how much these variables affect the behavior of the voters or to work with people who know well.

In this context, a roadmap has been drawn up in this study with the variables of age in order to shed light on political parties and politicians. While this aim is being achieved on the one hand, it will also be supportive in terms of understanding well what the expectations of the people and the issues they care about are.

The study was conducted by evaluating a 34-item survey on 464 female voters after the earthquake disaster that occurred just before the 2023 General Elections. As a result of the research, it was determined that voters were affected by the political marketing mix scale as a whole and by the dimensions of political place, political promotion and people and physical evidences according to their age level. The fact that the middle age group (Generation Y) gave a significantly higher value to the entire political marketing scale may be associated with the fact that politics was not the priority of the younger and older groups after the earthquake. As a limitation of the research, the fact that transportation routes were closed during the disaster period and planes did not take off from airports caused difficulty in reaching more voters.

Politicians who have a high responsibility to work for the public interest need to establish an emotional bond with the voters and work on the reasons why the expectations from the political institution are so low such critical periods. Even though voting is a civic duty, doing this duty voluntarily and with pleasure will show the level of development of that country. Satisfying the voters depends on knowing and understanding them well. In this context, this study has revealed how the voters react during difficult times and has opened the door to other studies in the literature.

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