

EFFECTS OF PUBLIC POLICY ON SUSTAINABLE POLITICAL PARTY MANIFESTOES IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY MARKETING

Vincent Okwudili Iweama

Abstract

This survey, examines concept of sustainability, public policy doctrine, political marketing and stakeholders engagement, manifestoes of five top political parties in Nigeria with reference to sustainability marketing among others. The study shows that sustainability issues do not feature prominently in political parties' manifestoes and that politicians do not use sustainability strategy in their campaigns. It recommends improved sustainability marketing orientation of politicians through workshops, seminars and conferences; Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) should monitor political parties' manifestoes and encourage them to include developmental policies such as sustainability marketing principles in their manifestoes among others.

The need to integrate sustainability orientation in the development agenda of nations, informed the inclusion of sustainability goal among the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since then, both Micro and Macro efforts are now heightening to actual sustainability goals in all the affairs of modern economy.

Interestingly, sustainability is pervasive and all encompassing that all the sectors have roles to play to actualize it. Marketing has since been recognized as a critical function that must be performed to determine the sustainability direction of any society. This could come by way of influencing production decision and consumption with the aftermath of post consumption behaviour. But marketing cannot perform these functions, if politicians seeking opportunity into governance do not demonstrate sufficient commitment to the sustainability goal. One of the ways these commitments may be measured is through political parties manifestoes. In this regard, it becomes pertinent to analyse political parties manifesto in a typical campaign setting to find out sustainability marketing intention of politicians. This approach is arguable since politicians to a large extent develop a frame work upon which marketing system operates. No such analysis has being done in the Nigerian case which necessitates the present work.

Concept of Sustainability Marketing

Ecological and social issues are very important in the twenty-first century, considering the projection that global population from 6 billion in 2000 to 9 billion by 2050, this trend is unlikely to decline. (Belz, 2005). Sustainability is an extraordinarily contested concept that is subject to multiple interpretations and meanings. Dolan (2002) reported that sustainability can be defined in terms of environmental stasis and system maintenance, as in ensuring that our actions do not impact on the earth or the biosphere in such a way that its long-term variability is threatened. More broadly,

sustainability can also be seen in terms of balancing economic, ecological and social goals and consequences (Eykington, 1998).

McCann-Erickson (2007) defined sustainability as a collective term for everything to do with responsibility for the work in which we do. It is an economic, social and environmental issue. It is about consuming differently and consuming efficiently. It also means sharing between the rich and the poor and protecting the global environment while not jeopardizing the needs of future generations. Accordingly, Schaefer and Crane (2005) posited that a more widely definition of sustainability tend to rely on the widely cited definition of sustainable development from the Brundtland commission (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). This stresses the necessity of meeting the needs of current generations without affecting the needs of future generations. Sustainable development is a continuous process whose eventual outcome will be sustainability with its three components: environmental, social and economic. Sustainable development deals with continuously balancing economic, environmental and social goals in a responsible way.

Sustainability marketing goes beyond conventional marketing thinking. If marketing is about satisfying customer needs and building profitable relationships with customers, sustainability marketing may be defined as building and maintaining sustainable relationships with customers, the social environment and the natural environment. By creating social and environmental value, sustainability marketing tries to deliver an increased customer value. Sustainability marketing aims at creating customer value, social value and environmental value, meeting the “triple bottom line” (Elkington, 1998). Belz (2005) opined that similar to modern marketing concept, sustainability marketing analyses customer needs and wants, develops sustainable products that provides superior value and prices, distributes and promotes them effectively to selected target groups. The whole process of sustainability marketing integrates social and ecological aspects.

Increased Sustainable Cost of Production in Developing Economies.

Traditional marketing thinking, in pursuit of economic growth, has led to the wanton exploitation of the environment. In the absence of sustainable development, there seems to be an inverse relationship between economic growth and environmental quality. That is, as economic growth or manmade capital rises, in the absence of sustainable development, environmental quality or environmental capital falls and vice versa (Pearce and Turner, 1990).

The classical marketers consider sustainable development as a basic pigouvian issue of internalising externalities and increase in cost of production. Although there has been a discernible shifting of positions (Goldin and Winters, 1995), they have in the past treated sustainable development policies as those that promoted economic growth, while environmental policies were seen as those that tried to restrict it. Economic growth is encouraged through ‘free market forces – that is, elimination of impediments to the use of the price mechanism. It would seem that the judgement of economists is based on the definition of cost, which excludes the environment because it is a free good. This means that an activity can be ‘economic’ although it harms the environment and a competing activity that protects and covers the environment at a cost is by definition, “uneconomic”. While economic theory provides simplistic solutions, the real economics of sustainable development

revolves around the economic costs of implementing sustainable development policies and the implications for global market competitiveness (Nwankwo, 2002).

For sustainable development to be a potential reality, the income growth is a prerequisite for sustainable poverty reduction which is a necessary condition for sustainable economic development. (Barbier and Markandya, 1989).

In developing countries, government should encourage sustainable organizations through reduced taxes and duties. Also, they should undertake rapid power supply and improved infrastructural facilities to ease production cost.

Public Policy Doctrine

Public policy can be generally defined as the course of action or inaction taken by governmental entities with regard to a particular issue or sets of issues. The American Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (2006) defined public policy as a system of courses of action, regulatory measures, laws and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a government entity or its representatives. Public policy is commonly embodied in constitutions, legislative acts, and judicial decisions.

In the United States, this concept refers not only to the end result of policies but more broadly to the decision making and analysis of governmental decisions.

Schuster (2008) reported that shaping public policy is a complex and multifaceted process that involves the interplay of numerous individuals and interest groups competing and collaborating to influence policymakers to act in a particular way. These individuals and groups use a variety of tactics and tools to advance their aims, including advocating their positions publicly, attempting to educate supporters and opponents, and mobilizing allies on a particular issue.

Wikipedia defined public policy as a body of principles that underpin the operation of legal systems in each state. This addresses the social, moral and economic values that tie a society together: values that vary in different cultures and changes over time.

Kilpatrick (2004) posited that advocacy can be defined as attempting to influence public policy through education, lobbying, or political pressure. Advocacy groups often attempt to educate the general public as well as public policy makers about the nature of problems, what legislation is needed to address problems and the funding required to provide service or conduct research. Although advocacy is viewed as unseemly by some in the professional and research community, it is clear that public policy priorities are influenced by advocacy. Sound research data can be used to educate the public as well as policy makers, thereby improving the public policy process.

Cappalli (1997) reported that law regulates behaviour either to reinforce existing social expectations or encourage constructive change, and laws are most likely to be effective when they are consistent with the most generally accepted social norms and reflect the collective morality of the society. Over time, policies evolve, becoming more clearly defined and more deeply embedded in the legal system.

Public Policy Analysis

American Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (2006) posited that public policy analysis is the flow of questions, answers and debate prior to making a decision which determines whether a policy or program is feasible and the priority which should be assigned to it. The basis of public policy analysis is to present all aspects of an issue so that politicians, the public, and the press can draw their own conclusions. Kilpatrick (2004) reported that the goal of a good policy analysis is not only to show all the sides, but to make clear how conclusions are arrived at.

With regards to how the actual decisions are made, that is up to the politicians not the policy analysts. They only read the executive summary, in most cases, and they know the basic conclusion they want before hand, and just look for research studies to back up their ideas. Public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do. This covers government action, in action, decisions and non-decisions as it implies a very deliberate choice between alternatives (Schuster, 2008).

Political Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement

Political marketing is a hybrid sub-discipline that draws on the parent disciplines of marketing and political science. Political marketing theory has developed and evolved in conjunction with advancement in political science and marketing. Marketing has been increasingly interested in developing marketing mechanisms which allows it satisfy the core customer groups while meeting the broader needs of the community and other stakeholders. Political marketing has the opportunity to build a marketing framework that focuses on delivering value to a core target market (Voters, Supporters) and addressing the needs of society at large.

In 2007, the American Marketing Association (AMA) issued a revised and updated version of the official definition of marketing in recognition of the diversity of marketing practice, and failure of the AMA (2004) definition to fully capture the nuances of contemporary business and non-business marketing activity. The new AMA (2007) definition of marketing is 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.

Keefe (2008) reported that the inclusion of “clients” specifically relates to the role of social, political and non-profit marketing in society, and the growing influence marketing has over the traditional commercial spheres of influence. Hughes and Dann (2009) defined political marketing as a set of activities, processes of political institutions used by political organizations, candidates and individuals to create, communicate, deliver and exchange promises of value with voter-consumers, political party stakeholders and society at large. The new definition of political marketing, groups the recipients of political marketing practice into clusters of marketers (Political parties, Candidates and individuals); voter-consumers (Customer/Client); political party stakeholders (Partners/Clients); and society at large. Minimizing stakeholders impact on political marketing activity has been an underemphasized aspect of the implementation of most political campaigns. Over-promising undeliverable products damages the political party brand and the overall reputation of the political product. Increased voter distrust of politicians increases the complexity of the task facing politicians.

Party, Leader and Policies: The Key Elements in Political Brand

The interaction between the leader, the party and its policies is considered as a means by which political brand image forms in consumer memory. This is followed by an analysis of the potential benefits proffered by political brands to voters. The benefits motivate consumers to learn about, interact with and eventually help decide upon a political brand. The cognitive psychology learning theory and in particular the associative network model of consumer memory accepts that, from a consumer perspective, brands are those associations about a particular object that are held in a persons memory. (Keller, 2003).

Political brands have three distinct elements namely a trinity with the party as the brand; the politician as its tangible characteristics; and policy as core service offerings (O'shaughnessy and Hennebery,2007). The more positive (negative) these associations are, the stronger (weaker) will be the political brand for a given voter. The party brand can produce customer signals that are simple, credible, salient and continuous over long periods of time (Smith and French 2009). The party policies are use for voters who, once they have learned them, do not have to relearn them over time. However, it also clear that the strength of the party brand is not inviolable because when a party becomes disunited or sends conflicting messages to voters, the perceived cohesion of the party brand breaks down, its credibility is lost. Voters are notoriously disinclined to support a disunited part. The Peoples Democratic Party of Nigeria experienced this in the Anambra State gubernatorial election held on February 6, 2010. Schneider (2004) posited that the leader will often have the strongest, clearest and impactful associative meaning, as his image is more easily identifiable and communicated. The images of political leaders, both favourable and unfavourable have been measured using Aaker's (2004) brand personality scale and voters have been found to have remarkably clear, strong and consistent views of their leaders personalities (Smith, 2005; Schneider, 2004). The relative importance in terms of the overall brand will vary depending on the competitive nature of the political market; the credibility, attractiveness and personality of its leaders and the party's perceived salience and credibility in fulfilling its promises.

Analysis of Manifestoes of Five Top Political Parties in Nigeria: Sustainability in Perspective

A manifesto is a public declaration of intentions as issued by a political party or government (wordnewt-web. Princeton. edu/perl /web retrieved on 10/3/2010).

Twenty five political parties registered for the Anambra February 6th, 2010 gubernatorial election (Odogwu, 2009). Five political party manifestoes were analysed based on their awareness to the people of Anambra State and the relevance of the political party to the nation. The party manifestoes were analysed together with the candidates proposed agenda with special reference to the areas of sustainability.

➤ **Action Congress**

Action congress manifesto has good developmental programmes but the area of sustainability was not adequately covered. Section 15 which was on Mining and Petro-Chemical Industry in the AC Manifesto, states the party's objective in number 4 of page 15 as follows: to contain environmental degradation arising from mining operations in the interest of neighbouring inhabitants. Furthermore section 17: on Niger Delta state that: the situation in Niger Delta is a sore on the nation's conscience which calls for special attention. The deteriorating condition and the declining standard of living of

our people, is a cause for serious concern. Our party (AC) shall tackle the Niger Delta question once and for all by constructively engaging the people in the Delta with a view to finding amicable and lasting solution to the problem. This engagement will cover, among others, the environment (Page 15-16).

The Action congress governorship candidate in the February 6th, 2010 election, in his manifesto book titled “34 months of Re-Engineering Anambra State” wherein he enumerated his achievements when he was in the saddle between 2003 – 2006. and his three point agenda when he assumes office as governor in 2010 – 2014. Gov Chris Ngige’s three point agenda is in the area of security, infrastructural development and agriculture. The area of sustainability was not adequately captured.

➤ **All Nigeria Peoples Party**

ANPP has good developmental programmes but the area of sustainability is inadequate. Ecology on page 25 of the ANPP manifesto state as follows:

Due to natural causes and by reason of economic activities as a result oil exploration and other mining activities, substantial ecological degradation has occurred in many parts of the Niger Delta states where such degradation has polluted rivers, destroyed habitats for aquatic and wild life and in the process compromised the natural means of livelihood of members of many communities. Erosion menace have also destroyed villages and devastated roads, farmlands and still threaten to wreck more havoc. Other industrial emissions have created an intolerable and presently uninhibited and dangerously high level of environmental pollution in Nigeria.

The ANPP views this level of environmental degradation as unacceptable and if in government, would combat the menace through the following strategies.

- a. Ensuring that oil explorers and prospectors abide by internationally accepted environmental protection rules and regulations to protect the neighbourhood in which they are operating.
- b. Ensuring that the communities who suffer environmental degradation are compensated promptly.
- c. Taking steps to prevent deliberately induced degradation and rendering such criminal acts.
- d. Confronting the erosion menace sites as priority projects wherever they exists in Nigeria.
- e. Adopting, international standards for controlling industrial emissions.
- f. Strengthening the Federal and State Environmental Agencies to make them more effective.

The governorship candidate of All Nigeria Peoples Party, Chief Micheal Ejezie did not have much personal agenda on sustainability for Anambra state except those in the ANPP national manifesto.

➤ **All Progressive Grand Alliance**

APGA has good developmental programmes but the area of sustainability is not properly covered. The incumbent and candidate of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) Governor Peter Obi is staying back to consolidate his much celebrated achievement in all sectors of the state. Anambra Integrated Development Strategy (ANDS) is a scheme whereby all sectors of the state are developed simultaneously. However, the area of sustainability is not adequately developed.

➤ **Peoples Democratic Party**

Although, the People Democratic Party has good developmental agenda in their manifesto, it is pertinent to note that the area of sustainability was not given adequate attention. Also, the governorship candidate of the peoples Democratic Party, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo did not have adequate agenda on sustainability for Anambra State. It will be difficult to transform Anambra into African- Dubai- Taiwan if proper sustainability measures are not in place.

➤ **Progressive People Alliance**

Housing and Environment section in pages 8 and 9 of the PPA manifesto states as follows: the party objective on housing and environment are grouped into three broad categories the first is on housing. We are concerned with the second which is improving the environment through programmes like environmental sanitation, annual tree planting, free supply of nursery plants, reclamation of land for building and the fight against erosion among others. Also, PPA is concerned about disposal of industrial waters in order to protect the lives of our people as well as plants and animals through controlled pollution of water and the atmosphere and vigilance against industrial waste policies of the advanced countries. A PPA government shall review possibility of increasing the percentage of the revenue allocated for the development of ecologically stricken parts of the country.

Conclusion

One of the great tragedies facing sustainability management especially in the developing countries is ignorance of the issues and problems of the environment. The sustainability marketing problems call for multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving before results can be achieved. A major way of handling sustainability problems is through encouraging politicians to always include sustainability policies in their manifestoes. However this can be achieved through workshops, seminars and conferences to make politicians well informed on sustainability orientation.

Recommendations

1. Sustainability marketing is not a priority in political parties manifestoes as shown in the mean responses of Table 6. The Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) should monitor political parties manifestoes and encourage them to include developmental policies such as the sustainability principles in their manifestoes.
2. Orientation of the politicians toward sustainability marketing should be highly encouraged. This is very important since they are to formulate policies and legislatures that will propagate sustainability principles. However, this can be achieved through sustainability workshops, seminars and conferences. These measures will help to increase the politicians awareness/orientation on sustainability issues.
3. Government, Mass Media and non-governmental organizations should help in the awareness campaign towards improved sustainability culture among Nigerians. This will help politicians to be more informed about sustainability principles and encourage them to include it in their manifestoes.
4. Effort should be made by government and other stakeholders to increase the literacy level of politicians towards sustainability principles.

References

- Aaker, D.A. (2004). Leveraging the corporate band. *California Management Review* 46 (3)
- Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), (2010) *Manifesto*.
- All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), (2006) *Manifesto*- Reviewed Edition.
- All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), *Manifesto*. Available at all progressive grand alliance Nigeria. Org/manifesto.
- American Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (2006). *Definition of public policy*, www.semp.us/publications/fisaster_dictionary.php.
- American Marketing Association (AMA) (2007). *Definition of marketing*, URL: www.marketingpower.com.
- American Marketing Association (AMA) (2004). *Definition, marketing news*, 15 September.
- Arowojobe, J. B. (2010), Anambra 2010, Candidates and manifestos, *Champion Newspaper*, January 11.
- Barbier, E.B. & Markandya, A (1989). *The conditions for achieving environmentally sustainable economic development*. LEEC Page 89.01, London Economics Centre, London.
- Belz, F (2005), *Sustainability Marketing: blueprint of a research agenda, market and management in the food industry*, discussion Paper No. 1.
- Cappalli, S.O. (1997). *Public policy, laws, plans and actions*. En.wiktionary.org/wiki/public_policy.
- Dolan, P. (2002), The sustainability of sustainable consumption, *Journal of Macro marketing* 22(2).
- Elkington, J. (1998). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st century business*, Oxford, UK.
- Goldin, I. & Winters, L. (1995). *The economics of sustainable development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hughes, A. & Dann, S. (2009), *Political marketing and stakeholder engagement, marketing theory?*
- Keefe, L.M. (2008), Marketing Defined, *Marketing News*, 15 January.
- Kilpatrick, D. (2004). *Public policy and law*. www.congresslink.org/print1pwhyneedocngress_vocab.htm.
- Manifesto, Available at: Word net web. Princeton.edu/perl/webwn

Effects of Public Policy on Sustainable Political Party Manifestoes in Nigeria: Implications for Sustainability Marketing

- McCann-Erickson (2007). *Can sustainability sell?* Available at: www.une.fr/pc/sustain/report/advertising/cansustainability-sell%20.pdf
- Ngige, C.N. *34 Months of Re-Engineering Anambra State. Achievements between 2003-2006*, his 3 point agenda when he assumes office as governor 2010-2014.
- Nwankwo S. (2002). *Multidisciplinary research and sustainable development*. Inaugural lecture delivered at the Ekwueme Centre for multidisciplinary Research, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
- Odogwu, E.O. (2009). *Nigeria: Anambra 2010: candidates and their promises*; All Africa.com
- O'shaughnessy, N. & Henneberg, S. (2007), The selling of the president 2004: A marketing perspective, *Journal of Public Affairs*, 7.
- Pearce, D. W. & Turner, R.K. (1990), *Economics of natural resources and environment, harvester wheat seat*, Brighton.
- Peoples Democratic Party of Nigeria (PDP), *Manifesto*, available at: peopledemocraticparty.org/ourmanifesto.
- Progressive Peoples Alliance of Nigeria (PPA) *Manifesto*, available at: <http://ppanigeria.com/index.php?option..>
- Schaefer, A. & Crane, A. (2005), Addressing sustainability and consumption, *Journal of Macro Marketing*, 25.
- Schneider, H. (2004). Branding in politics—manifestations, relevance and identity-oriented management. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 3 (3).
- Schuster, W. M. (2008). *For the greater good: The use of public policy considerations in confirming plans of reorganization?* Jech.bmj.com/content/55/9/622 full.
- Smith, G. (2005), Positioning political parties: The 2005 UK general election, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 21(9).
- Smith, G. & French, A. (2009). *The political brand: A consumer perspective*, *Marketing Theory* 2009, 9. Wikipedia.en.wiktionary.org/wiki/public_policy.
- World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987). *Our common future*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.