

**THE ROLE OF POSITIONING STRATEGY IN POLITICAL PARTIES’
CAMPAIGNS IN GHANA
THE CASE STUDY OF SELECTED LEADING POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE
AMANSIE WEST CONSTITUENCY, ASHANTI REGION**

By

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Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Partial fulfilment of
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**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

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AUGUST, 2011

KNUST



DECLARATION

I, Kwakye-Adeefe Ben hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Master of Business and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the test.

Kwakye-Adeefe Ben
PG-3630509

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Signature

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Date

Certified by:

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Head of Dept. Name

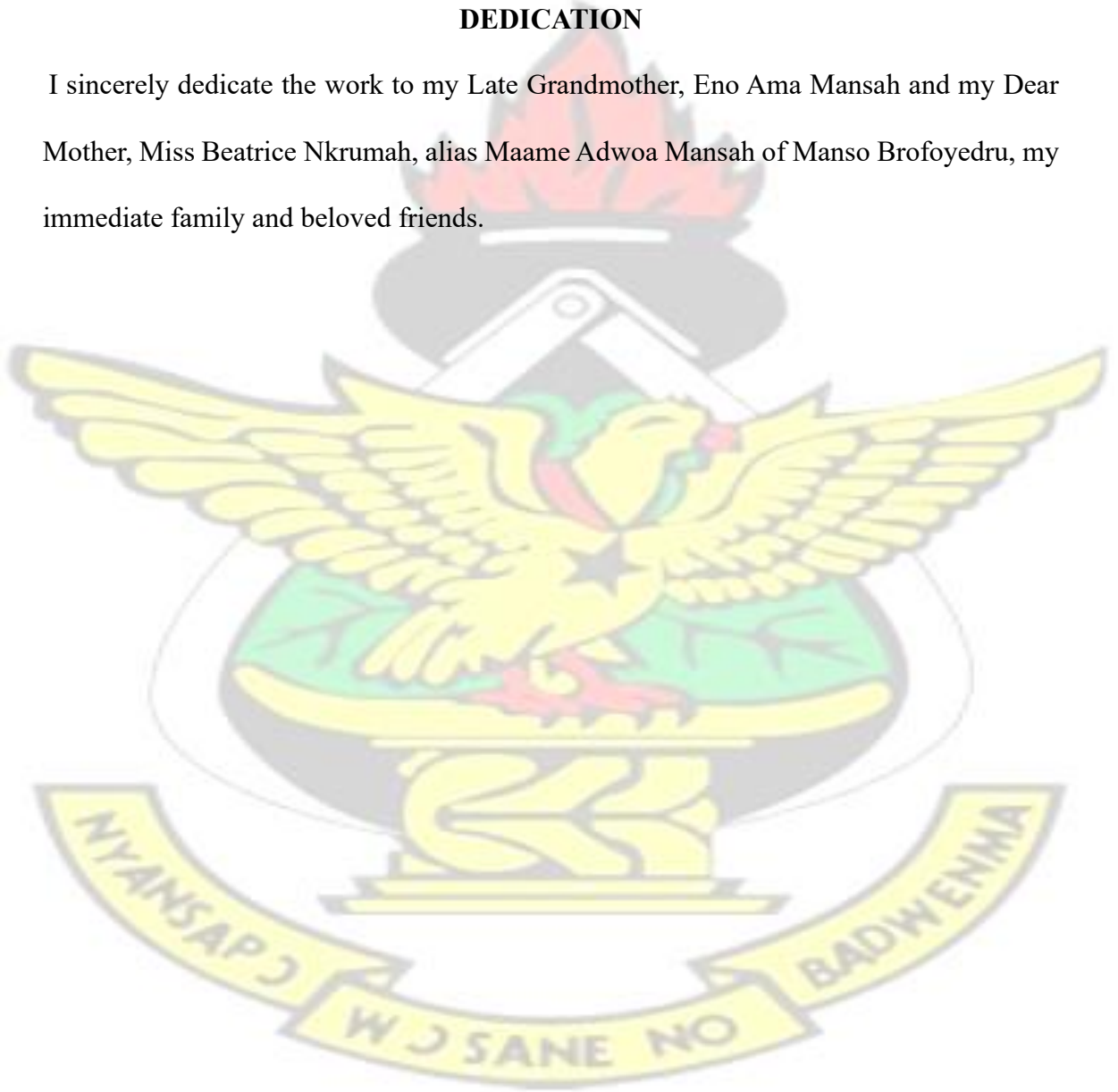
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DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate the work to my Late Grandmother, Eno Ama Mansah and my Dear Mother, Miss Beatrice Nkrumah, alias Maame Adwoa Mansah of Manso Brofoyedru, my immediate family and beloved friends.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people have been marvellously helpful in this research. I would like to acknowledge Mr. Ahmed Agyapong, my supervisor and lecturer at the School of Business Administration, KNUST, for his painstaking corrections and advice. In fact, I am extremely grateful to him as well, for his profound brotherly relationship and perfect understanding which helped me to complete the MBA programme.

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ABSTRACT

Political parties apply positioning strategies in electioneering campaigns to sell themselves, their ideologies, platforms and candidates. However, little is known in the academic literature about the application of the positioning strategies and their influence on voters. The main objective of the research was to assess the role of positioning strategies in the campaigns of political parties in the Amansie West Constituency. The research design was descriptive, using both qualitative and quantitative research method approaches. The research population was 60,000 registered voters including the executives of the four prominent political parties namely NPP, CPP, NDC and PNC. A sample size of 300 was taken because respondents had similar characteristics and therefore was representative (Malhotra, 2007). Respondents were selected with cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive technique was used to select constituency executives. Both primary and secondary data were collected, assembled, analysed and interpreted. Conclusion and recommendations were provided. The study showed that positioning strategies played important role to the party and the voters. There is a significant relationship between party positioning and presidential candidate positioning. All (100%) of the political parties applied them to market their political positioning elements: the party, ideology, platform and candidate using their specific attributes. The study revealed that all (100%) of the political parties positioned their presidential candidates more than the other political elements. The study showed that the positioning strategy helped most (45%) of the voters to consider the presidential candidate as the most important political element more than the political party (30%) and political platform (25%). Findings further showed that 76% of voters were influenced most by party's previous performance, future benefits and leadership ability to deliver than other attributes. It emerged that 84% of voters were influenced most by the personality and ability related attributes of the presidential candidate than the others.

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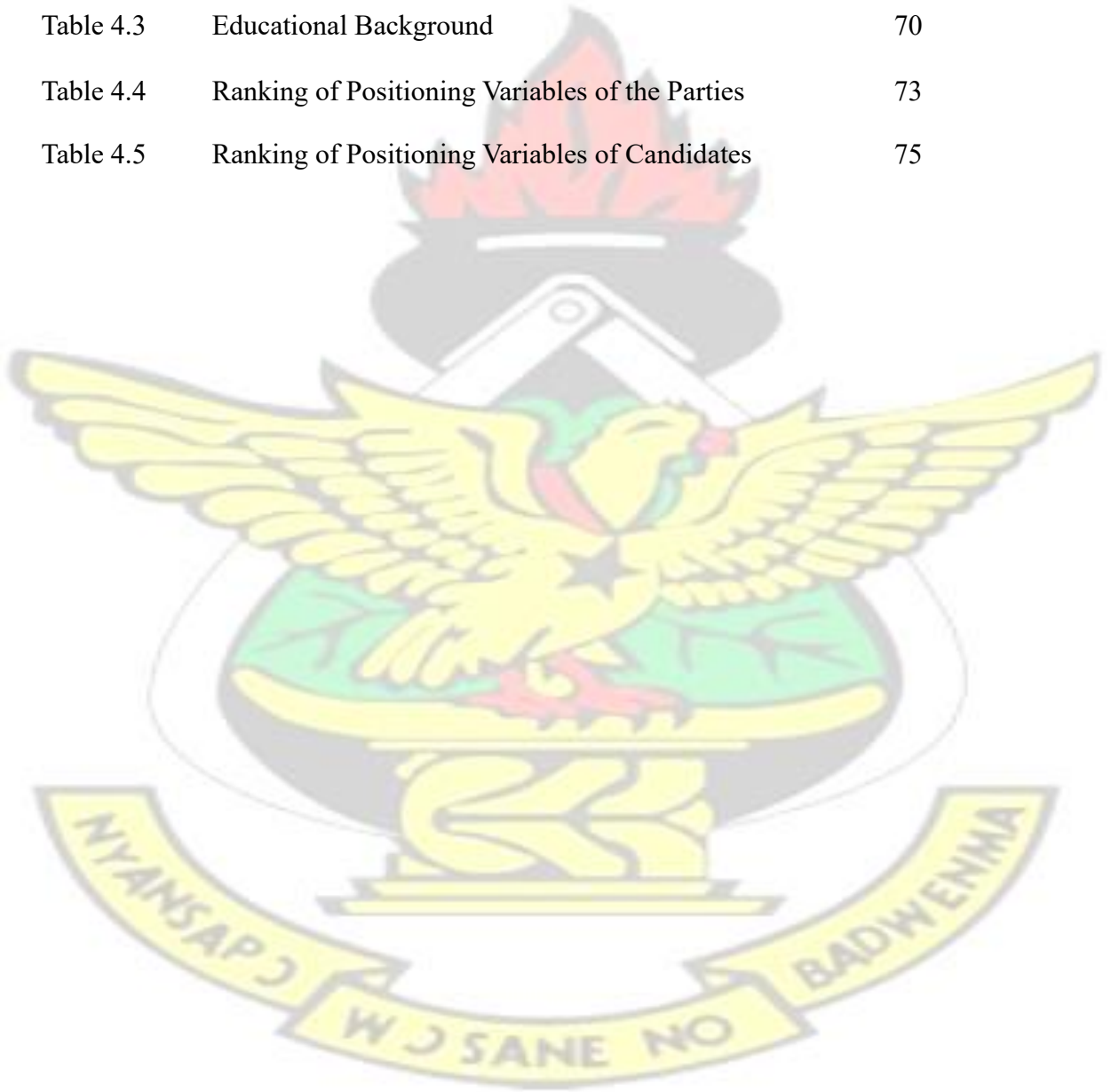
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



AWDA	Amansie West District Assembly
COB	Close of Business
CPP	Convention People's Party
DFP	Democratic Freedom Party
DHMT	District Health Management Team
DPP	Democratic People's Party
DWST	District Water and Sanitation Team
EC	Electoral Commission
JSS	Junior Secondary School
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental analysis
PNC	People's National Convention
REP	Reformed Patriotic Party
SSS	Senior Secondary School
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UK	The United Kingdom
USA	The United States of America

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APPENDIX 4

Map of Amansie West Constituency

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Most countries in the world (90%) practise democracy as a new form of governance. On the African continent for example, almost all (95%) of the states are democratic (Lilleker, 2008). This means that such democratic dispensation allows mass participation, rule of law, free speech, majority decision, and protection of fundamental human rights, change or maintenance of governments of different social, economic, ideological, structural and political persuasions.

In fact, the most important ingredient of democracy is the periodic and procedural change or maintenance of governments by the electorates of countries through peaceful, free, fair, and transparent elections. In Ghana for example, democracy is maturing (Kokutse, 2009), as it has conducted its fifth successive elections since 1992. In the same manner, certain party political functions, such as electioneering campaigning has taken different dimension to the extent that political parties, all over the world, in one way or the other apply vigorous commercial or traditional marketing tools, strategies and tactics to survive in the pressures of the political market and function as organs of a mature democracy (Butler and Collins, 1996). For instance political parties use the six Ps or tools of marketing; that is product, price, place, promotion, people and process in politics (Kotler and Kotler, 1999). These are adopted and implemented at all levels of party organisation and conveyed to the electorates (Lees Marshment, 2001). Thus, they are fitted into the political configuration to make them more practical.

Besides, the application of commercial marketing strategies and techniques to political electoral activities, notably campaigning, has become prominent in electoral campaigns in many parts of the world (Marland, 2003; Henneberg, 2004). These include research, segmentation, targeting, differentiation, branding, positioning, among others. The principal objective is to win elections.

For example in the UK, major British parties apply not just the techniques of marketing, but its concepts. They appear to be determining their policies to suit voters concerns using findings from survey research and focus groups rather than basing them on ideological consideration. In other words, they attempt to become what in business terms is called “market-oriented” and design their “products” (candidates, ideologies and policies) to suit consumer demand (Lees-Marshment, 2003). For instance, Thatcher and the Conservatives in 1979 used marketing to inform policy design, a model which Blair and Labour in 1997 followed but to a greater extent using results from intelligence to push for changes in the organisational structure in the party and finally won elections (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

During the 1984 election in India, the Congress Party campaigned using positioning strategy to stoke fear (politics of stokeism) in the electorate to win. Newspapers were littered with huge adverts that talked somberly of India being torn asunder if the party lost (Kapoor, 2009).

Again, in the 1960 USA elections, television (promotion) played a pivotal role to showcase John F. Kennedy's charismatic presence and skill on television which eventually saw him winning. In the 2008 elections, the main proposition offered by the Democratic Party was the Obama Brand and good governance based on change. Obama as well used the Internet for campaign contributions. This strategy has widely been acclaimed as one of his major strengths to date which resulted in a landslide victory (Britt, 2009).

In addition to the above instances, Ahmed, J. & Ahmed, Y. (2009), have expressed that the 12th Malaysia general elections witnessed the usage of several media channels to communicate ideas, beliefs and promises of the political parties during electioneering campaign. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan also led his party to victory by using the charisma of his personality and focusing on voters preferences.

In Ghana, political parties have one way or the other, applied certain marketing strategies in their campaigns. The Convention People's Party (CPP) under Dr. Kwame Nkrumah used the "self government now" slogan as a cohesive offering (i.e. product function) that initiated the struggle towards independence and subsequently winning elections. He branded himself as a strong leader as he was ready to lead the people to engage the powers that be; responsible leader; as he was prepared to be responsible for his actions and finally and most importantly, as a committed leader to the people who the struggle was, with and for them (Austin, 1961). Mr. John Agyekum Kuffuor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in 2000 was branded as "gentle giant". This attribute coupled with the "positive change" agenda and other campaign strategies like the party being "the

sole beholder of true democracy” won election for the party (Tweneboah-Koduah et al; 2009). Another electoral victory was won by the party in 2004 using the “positive change II” agenda as well as “so far so good” slogan which was well communicated to and accepted by the electorate. However, in the 2008 elections, the National Democratic Party (NDC) won with “change” as its major campaign technique supported by the “asomdweehene” (the peaceful leader) attribute of Prof. John Evans Atta Mills (Mensah, 2009).

1.2 Problem Statement

Elections are conducted to offer the electorate the opportunity to change or maintain governments in a particular country for example Ghana. This important democratic exercise is preceded by series of electioneering activities which include party organisation, political campaigning, among others.

Political campaign which is an effective communication tool is used by political parties to sell themselves, their ideologies, platforms, presidential and parliamentary candidates to the electorate for their mandate. It also offers the electorate to choose which political party or parties and candidates will be capable to form a government and manage the country. In view of this, and of course due to the growing sophistication of today’s electorate in many countries (Scammel, 1995, Wring, 1997), including Ghana, political parties have been compelled to adopt different marketing strategies as an alternative source to understand voters behaviours, and as well, convince them to vote their parties and candidates into power. Such strategies include segmentation, differentiation, targeting,

positioning and many others. Positioning strategy which is the most important is widely used in electioneering campaigns by political parties at national, regional and constituency levels. However, the positioning elements, techniques, the various variables and their influence on the electorate to vote for a particular party or parties have received little attention from academic literature and therefore need to be researched into.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Main Objective

The main objective is to assess the role of positioning strategy in the campaigns of political parties in Ghana.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

These are:

- a. To determine the political positioning strategies (variables) used by political parties in the Amansie West Constituency during electioneering campaigns.
- b. To ascertain whether voters are influenced by the positioning strategies in the Amansie West Constituency.
- c. To identify which of the positioning variables influence voters most in the Amansie West Constituency.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following research questions.

- a. To what extent do political parties in Ghana apply positioning strategies during electioneering campaigns?
- b. To what extent are voters in Ghana influenced by positioning strategies?
- c. Which of the positioning variables influence Ghanaian voters most?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study was conducted on the role of positioning strategy in political parties' campaigns of four major political parties in the Amansie West Constituency of Ashanti Region based on their physical presence, organisational and electoral activities in the Constituency. The parties are the New Patriotic Party (NPP), Convention People's Party (CPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC) and People's National Convention (PNC). Even though, political parties, political platform (party manifesto or policies), party ideology, presidential and parliamentary candidates are mostly positioned, the study concentrated on the positioning of political parties and presidential candidates only. It also concentrated on the 2008 electioneering campaigns of these parties in the constituency.

1.6 Relevance of the Study

The study was undertaken because of its significance, first to the researcher as an individual who gained a lot of insight into the study of positioning as an important marketing strategy and its practical application in the political arena.

It is also very relevant to Ghana as a country because it serves as a good material for political parties, political party executives and politicians in their electoral campaigns.

They can use it as a guide to focus on specific positioning variables to win elections.

Besides, it is an important literature for the academia. Thus lecturers, researchers, students

of political science and marketing can also use it for references and further research. Moreover, government executives who are interested in relating beneficially with their citizens and other relevant stakeholders will find it very useful. In addition, other individuals will also find it interesting material to read to broaden their knowledge on the dimension of the application of marketing strategies and tools in politics.

1.7 An Overview of the Research Methodology

The type of research design used was the descriptive method. Besides, the population size; sampling frame and technique were considered. Primary and secondary data were collected using appropriate instruments like questionnaires and interviews, which were analysed to have valid and reliable results.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study was constrained by apathy on the part of politicians (party executives) who thought the study was conducted to identify the strategies and tactics used in their electoral campaigns, and which can be divulged to their political opponents. It also faced apathy on the part of voters who were not prepared to tell anyone the reasons why they voted for a particular party. This is because they feared they would be identified and victimised by the winning party especially when they belong to the losing side. Transportation was another problem. Due to the bad nature of the roads, the research team sometimes found it very difficult getting a vehicle to visit a community at the right time. The geographical size of the constituency was another problem. Being the largest in Ghana, (Statistical Service

Report), communities are located several kilometres from each other, and therefore needed a lot of time and money to get to these areas.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study is structured into chapters, sections and sub-sections. Chapter one consists of introduction which highlights the background of the study; the problem statement; research objectives and questions; scope of the study; justification; overview of research methodology; limitations; organisation of the study and ethical considerations. The second chapter covers the literature review which is related to the topic and conceptual framework of the work. Chapter three presents the research methodology used for the study and the profile of the study area - Amansie West Constituency, whilst the fourth chapter deals with the results and analysis of the study. The fifth chapter covers the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations for application by the stakeholders involved.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher was mindful of the moral and responsible manner to conduct the study. Consequently, the topic was chosen without any sponsorship. Participants were informed of the study and their permission sought. Besides, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed; whilst the analysis was not skewed towards any personal hidden agenda. The questions were devoid of sensitive ones. This made the work methodologically sound; morally defensible and without bias.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Electoral System

It is the institutional arrangement by means of which an election is conducted, and the purposes of election fulfilled. Ohene-Darko (1978) defines it as a set of predetermined rules for conducting elections and determining their outcomes. The main attributes of electoral systems, and which vary from system to system, are the designation of qualified voters; the territorial, functional or other basis of constituencies; the distribution of voting strength among the qualified voters; where other than simple plurality, single member districts are allowed; and its calculation; the preliminary qualification of candidates; the administrative arrangements of election process itself including the rules concerning campaigning, the arrangements for receiving the results and for settling disputed results. The major systems used in countries like Ghana for elections to the legislature are either direct election on the basis of a simple majority (plurality) from single member constituencies possibly involving a second ballot or some form of proportional representation (Ohene-Darko, 1978).

2.2 Elections

2.2.1 Meaning, Aims and Conditions of Elections

According to Ohene-Darko (1978), election which is one of the electoral processes is a contest between competing groups, for example political parties for power. It is a process by which registered voters select their representatives. Thus, election is a contest for the highest stakes in national politics. In fact, election has become so competitive that it is gaining increasing public prominence in the electoral arena. The major aim of (political) election is for a party to win power and control government to deliver the promises (service) made to the electorate. Kotler and Levy (1969) are of the view that election is one of the new arenas of marketing interest. Political contest reminds us that candidates are marketed in the same way as “fried rice and chicken”. The problem of getting elected is essentially a marketed one. Political parties must determine the scope and the most effective way of communicating its benefits to a target audience (Reid, 1988). For elections to matter, several conditions need to be fulfilled. They need to be regular. In the Republic of Ghana for example, elections are held every four years to enable voters change persons who have not fulfilled their promises or maintain them if they have. Elections must be free and fair. This means that people are not forced to choose particular persons; and must do so without violence, intimidation or corruption (Ohene-Darko, 1978).

2.2.2 Types and Role of Elections

Elections are conducted in two ways; that is direct and indirect elections. In direct elections the people themselves vote for the candidates seeking empowerment. In indirect elections,

people elect representatives who make up a body called Electoral College. These representatives in turn choose the candidates contesting the election. Ghana for example conducts direct elections where people vote to choose a president and members of parliament from those contesting to represent their constituencies in parliament (Ohene-Darko, 1978). According to Ayerley (1995), elections perform varied functions in a political system. They provide means of choosing rulers and representatives into office; and of allowing voters direct participation in that choice.

Elections facilitate a peaceful transfer of political power from one person or party to another or maintain it. They also ensure accountability in the sense that they provide opportunity for people to hold their leaders responsible for their actions by asking questions and demanding answers to important issues. Elections also give authority to those elected to rule as true representatives who can act on behalf of the people from whom they received their consent. Besides, election periods provide the opportunity for the electorate to learn about issues, policies and events in the country.

2.2.3 Organisation of Elections

Elections in Ghana for example are organised by the Electoral Commission (Article 45, 1992 Ghana Constitution). The Electoral Commissioner and his officers in Accra are responsible for organising elections and they appoint other people to help them. In particular, a person is appointed in each constituency to be in charge of the elections in that constituency. These are the Returning Officers who work under the District Electoral Officers. The Returning Officers select other people in the constituency to help them. Members of the Electoral Commission, Returning Officers and all other people working

in organising elections have to be independent. They cannot actively support any political party or candidate. There are a lot of things that need to be done by the Electoral Commission and the Returning Officers before election takes place. Some of the things they have to do are to make an accurate list of all citizens entitled to vote to tell them about the election; to tell them which polling stations to go on polling day; to make lists of candidates; to print ballot papers and to make sure that all the equipment for polling stations is organised and sent to the right place. Voting happens on the same day in polling stations throughout Ghana. Presiding Officers are in charge of each polling station on Election Day with other people to help them. The Presiding Officer has to make sure that everything is ready at the polling stations by 7.00 am when voting starts. Voters are checked using their names, ID cards before voting and their thumbs marked with ink to avoid multiple voting. Afterward, votes cast are counted in the presence of candidate's representatives and the winner declared. (EC; 2008 Elections Manual).

2.2.4 Voting During Elections

Voting which is an important aspect of the electoral process is the act of making a choice in an election or at a meeting where decisions are taken (Ohene-Darko, 1978). In an election for example, a particular person (candidate) is chosen from a political party to show one's support for him. This is also known as exercising one's franchise. Thus in politics, the electorate vote for a party to give it the power of implementing the policies it announces. But there are other motives for voting which can explain some features of extremism in politics – why a voter may support a party whose positions he opposes, and

why he may be more willing to support another party he expects will lose (Glazer et al; 1998).

Voting is a peculiar activity since any one vote is highly, likely to change the outcome of the election. Kuran (1995); and Brennan & Hamlin (1998) argue that people may therefore vote not to change outcomes, but for expressive reasons, showing their anger or emotions. They may therefore vote for an opposing party even though they hope it will not win office. Thus, people vote to give power to their own party to win. Others vote against their own party because they do not like its policies but will vote for the opposition party because they accept its policies and not the party. Yet others vote against their own party because of anger but not a dislike for the party or its policies (Brennan & Hamlin, 1998). This is an example of what some voters did to the NPP in the 2008 general elections. Taxi drivers and market women in particular who were supporters of the party voted against because they were angered by the alleged high prices of fuel and other utilities some few weeks to elections and not because of their dislike for the party.

2.2.5 Requirements for Voting

There are certain requirements that a person in a country must have before he can vote. These differ from one country to another. Some of these are wealth, education, religion, politics, race, sex, residence, citizenship, age, et cetera. In Ghana for example, every citizen of eighteen years of age or above and of sound mind has the right to vote and is entitled to be registered as a voter for the purposes of public elections and referenda (Article 42, 1992 Ghana Constitution).

2.2.6 Types of Voting

The type of voting depends on the period and circumstances prevailing in a particular country at a particular time. The most popular ones are open voting which is used at the lowest tier of government; at the village level where election may be held in an informal manner and secret voting which may be voluntary where one is given the freedom to choose whether to exercise the right to vote; or not or compulsory where voting is made a duty for everyone to participate to overcome apathy and indifference (Ohene-Darko, 1978). In Ghana, at any public election or referendum, voting is by secret ballot and is voluntary.

2.3 Historical Development of Political Parties in Ghana

Political parties became prominent as instruments in Ghana's democratic practice as early as the 1950s when the country was in transition from colonial rule to an independent sovereign nation-state. As many as 8 political parties emerged between 1954 and 1957 to participate in the struggle for self-determination against British colonial rule. Between 1969 and 1972, up to 12 political parties were formed to join hands in the agitation to restore democratic rule in the country. A total of 11 parties mushroomed in 1979 when the country was placed on a democratic basis. By 1981 the scramble to form political parties had simmered down, reducing the number to 6. These struggles resurged in 1996-1992 culminating in January 1993 when Ghana was ushered into constitutional rule with a democratic system of government (Tweneboah-Koduah et al, 2009). The 1992 Ghana Constitution guarantees various political and civil rights, including the right to form political associations, choose who to govern the country, and the right to participate in the

government of the country in other forms (Article 55). It should be noted that the country's history of military dictatorship and abuse of human rights were compelling reasons for insisting on the freedom to form political parties. The language of the social movements that struggled against the PNDC affirmed the belief of the Ghanaian political class in these democratic principles which ultimately formed the core of their demands for democracy.

Between May 1992, when the ban on political parties was lifted, and November of the same year, 13 political parties were registered; New Patriotic Party (NPP); Democratic People's Party (DPP); New Generation Party (NGP); Ghana Democratic Republican Party (GDRP), National Independence Party (NIP); Peoples Heritage Party (PHP); National Convention Party (NCP); Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party (EGLE),

People's National Convention (PNC); National Democratic Congress (NDC); People's Party for Democracy and Development (PPDD); National Justice Party (NJP), and National Salvation Party (NSP) (EC, 1992 Election Reports). Some of the political parties, for example NPP, had emerged from old political tradition dating back to the 1950s and subscribing to conservative liberalism. Others like the NDC were entirely new political entities which had no roots in Ghana politics and did not pronounce any explicit political ideology (Tweneboa-Kodua et al, 2009). A number of them did not survive the competitive as well as organisational and financial demands of electoral politics. The NDC won both the presidential and parliamentary elections held in November – December, 1992. Four years into constitutional rule, 8 of the political parties namely NPP, PNC, PCP, GCPP, DPP, NDC EGLE, and NCP had survived to contest the 1996 elections which the NDC won again. At December, 2000, 7 political parties; NPP, PNC, CPP, GCPP, NRP, UGM

and NDC contested the election and NPP won with Mr. John Agyekum Kuffuor as the President. The NPP won again in

December 2004 elections (EC; 2000 and 2004 Election Results). However, in the December 2008 general elections, NDC won with Professor John Evans Atta-Mills as the President. Looking at the historical background, NPP, CPP, PNC and NDC have been the dominant parties since 1992 (Alabi & Alabi, 2007) and as such the study focused on these four major political parties in the constituency.

2.4 Campaign

2.4.1 Meaning and History of Campaign

Campaign is a set of activities planned to achieve a positive social or political change. This means that both social and purely political institutions and organisations use campaign as a means to achieve a specific objective during election of leaders. In the political spectrum, the purpose is to communicate the values and ideas of a particular political group to the electorate. Thus, campaign is a subset of political communication (Kavanga, 1995). A political campaign therefore is an organised effort (usually by people seeking office or power) which seeks to influence the decision-making process within a specific group. In democracies, political campaigns are often referred to as electoral campaigns, wherein representatives are chosen or referendums are decided. Political campaigns also include organised efforts to alter policy within any institution or organisations. In short, it is a race

between candidates for elective office. It is interesting to note that political campaigns have existed as long as there have been informed citizens to campaign amongst.

The phenomenon of political campaign is tightly tied to lobby groups and political parties. The first modern campaign is thought to be that of William Gladstone's campaign in the 1880s, although there may be earlier recognisably modern examples from the 19th century. Democratic societies have regular election campaigns, but political campaigns can occur on particular issues even in non-democracies so long as freedom of expression is allowed. American election campaigns in the 19th century created the first mass-base political parties and invented many of the techniques of mass campaigning (Dinkin, 1989). Currently, most countries in Europe and African conduct professional campaigns during elections.

2.4.2 Campaign and Propaganda

At this juncture, it is import to differentiate between propaganda and campaign. Though the two are communication tools, propaganda is an aspect of campaigning with negative connotations; and at the same time one-way. Prior to the Second World War, political organisers regularly referred to the business of political communication work as propaganda. The term now somewhat antiquated in electoral terms, usually described as one-directional communication process in which passive audiences found themselves subjected to the sometimes manipulative appeals of political elites. As an agency of persuasion, propaganda can be compared with the production oriented stage in the

development of conventional marketing, both approaches being primarily concerned with accommodating their own organisational needs rather than those of their publics.

According to Shama (1976), this lack of concern with voters' wants, manifest itself in an electoral strategy based on a simple principle; that is increased awareness would increase voter preference. In the early 60s, Kwame Nkrumah used film propaganda where a fleet of mobile cinema vans were procured and films showed to thousands of people of his achievements and programmes for Ghana (Monfils, 1977). The NPP government did the same between 2006-2008. However, the inputs to the promotion campaign to achieve increased awareness are designed on the basis of guess and intuition.

2.4.3 Types and Channels of Campaigns

Running a successful political campaign is tough but rewarding work. Political campaign for that matter is of different types (Abizadeh, 2005). The first is informational campaign. This is a political campaign designed to raise awareness and support for the positions of a candidate (or his party). An informational campaign typically focuses on low-cost outreach such as news releases, getting interviewed in the paper, making brochure for door to door distribution, organising poll workers et cetera (Abizadeh, 2005). It is more intense than the second type which is paper campaign. This type consists of little more than filing necessary documents to get on the ballot. There is also the third type called competitive campaign, which according to Maarek (1995), aims to actually win election to office. It is also known as election campaign. It is formal and permanent because of its continuous and comprehensive nature usually undertaken by political parties (O'shanghnessey, 2001).

In doing so, parties engage in marketing related activities to influence voters. It is normally used to present the candidate to the voters. This type is well run with those at all levels in the campaign organisation to present the candidate in an attractive manner. Most often, professionals are used to assist activists at the local level; but with a clear chain of command from the top to the bottom (Shapiro, 1973). Another type is image making campaign for party and candidates in presidential and parliamentary elections. This type is used when the party or its candidate is losing popularity as a result of negative campaigning, to disorganise an opponent. Negative campaign is a type of electioneering most commonly associated with American politics (though practised in Ghana). It involves attempts by party or candidate's organisation to frighten voters with robust and often startling denunciations and castigation of opponents (Dinkin, 1989). A popular feature in negative campaign, such as strategies, taps into often deep seated and unspoken prejudices about a given party's or politician's lack of ability, judgement and trustworthiness. In addition to the above types is solidarity campaign normally undertaken by parties that has the tendencies to enter into coalition with another party due to its resources and competence to win election (Thurber, 2004).

Campaign delivery channels are the means of conveying political messages to voters; availability of candidates in the communities to interact with the electorates and the use of simple and common language identifiable and understandable to them (Palmer, 2002; Henneberg, 2003). Political and non-political (non-governmental) institutions all over the world use different channels to campaign. Initially, political parties and their leaders used series of meetings to communicate to their audience (voters). For instance, in the 50s,

Kwame Nkrumah used a lot of formal and informal meetings to identify himself to the people as a strong, responsible and committed leader of the CPP (Austin, 1961). In Britain and currently in African states like Ghana, campaigning has largely consisted of canvassing and leafleting as important channels. These two are seen as primary channels of campaigning (distribution) and are normally undertaken at the political grass roots that provide local electioneering support (Wring 1997). Again, advertising in the print and electronic media, has also gained popularity as political parties use it to inform, educate and influence voters. Another key and modern channel for campaigning is internet and social media. The then Senator Barack Obama and presidential candidate for the Democrats in the US; launched his campaign on the internet. In fact the ability to use the internet for campaign contributions is widely seen as one of the major strengths of the Obama campaign to date and his subsequent victory in the 2008 elections (Britt, 2009). Besides, political parties campaign through speaking events like rallies, talk shows on television, et cetera (Henneberg, 2003). The former enables the political leaders (candidates) engage and interact with electorates, and use simple and common language that everyone can understand and make sense out of it. This channel (rallies), according to Henneberg (2004), is the most effective of all the channels used in campaigning because the leader is seen, known, felt, heard and understood. Yet, some political parties (leaders) campaign by promising jobs to supporters, emphasizing its competence and honesty, and so on. Moreover, most parties campaign by offering bribes (Hennesberg, 2004), to win elections.

2.4.4 Process of Campaigning

Dinkin (1989) argues that campaigns start anywhere from several months to several years before Election Day. The first part of any campaign for a candidate is deciding to run. Prospective candidates will often speak with family, friends, professional associates, elected officials, community leaders, and the leaders of political parties before deciding to run. Candidates are often recruited by political parties and lobby groups interested in elected like-minded politicians. During this period, people considering running for office will assess their ability to put together the money, organization, and public image needed to get elected. Many campaigns for major office do not progress past this point as people often do not feel confident in their ability to win. However, some candidates lacking the resources needed for a competitive campaign proceed with an inexpensive paper campaign or informational campaign to raise public awareness and support for their positions (Abizadeh, 2005).

Once a person decides to run, public announcement is made consisting of anything from a simple press release to concerned media outlets to a major media event, followed by a speaking tour. Thus, a candidate will run prior to an announcement being made. According to Thurber (2004), campaigns will usually be announced and then only officially started months after active campaigning have begun. Being coy about whether a candidacy is planned is normally a deliberate strategy by a prospective candidate, either to “test the water” or to keep the media’s attention. One of the most important aspects of the major political campaign in American for instance is the ability to raise large sums of money, especially early on the race (Thurber, 2004). This is not the same in Ghana. Potential insiders and donors often judge candidates based on their ability to raise money. Not

raising money early on, can lead to problems later, as donors are not willing to give funds to candidates perceived to be losing, a perception based on their poor fundraising performance.

Also, during this period, candidates travel around the area they are running in, and meet with voters, speaking to them in large crowds, small groups, and even one-on-one. This allows voters to get a better picture of who the candidate is than that which they read about in the paper or see on television. A candidate's popularity in the constituency under normal circumstance, should have been more strategic than just being known (Abizadeh, 2005). But, this is not the case in modern Ghanaian politics. Campaigns sometimes launch expensive media campaigns during this time to introduce the candidate to voters, although most wait until closer to Election Day (Dinkin 1989). Campaigns normally dispatch volunteers into local communities to meet with voters and persuade people to support the candidate. The volunteers are also responsible for indentifying supporters, recruiting them as volunteers or registering them to vote if they are not already registered. The identification of supporters will be useful later as campaigns remind voters to cast their votes (Dinkin, 1989). Late in the campaign, the party will launch expensive television, radio, and direct mail campaigns aimed at persuading voters to support the candidate. Campaigns will also intensify their grassroots activities, coordinating their volunteers in a full court effort to win votes. Campaigns for minor office may be relatively simple and inexpensive; talking to local newspapers, giving out campaign signs, and greeting people in their local meeting places (Paquette, 2006).

2.4.5 Campaign Theme (Message)

The campaign theme is the central message that will be communicated in the campaign activities. The message of the campaign according to Thurber (2004), is what ideas that the party wants to share with the voters. The message often consists of several talking points about policy issues. The points summarise the main ideas of the campaign and are repeated frequently in order to create a lasting impression with the voters. In many elections, the opposition party will try to get the candidate “off message” by bringing up policy or personal questions that are not related to the talking points. Most campaigns prefer to keep the message broad in order to attract the most potential voters. A message that is too narrow can alienate voters or slow the candidate down with explaining details. For example, in the US election of 2008, Britt (2009) reveals that, John McCain originally used a message that focused on his patriotism and political experience: “Country First”. Later, the message was changed to shift attention to his vote as “The Original Maverick” within the political establishment. Barack Obama, ran on a consistent, simple message of “Change”. In the 2008 elections in Ghana, Nana Akufo Addo used a message that concentrated on his patriotism and continuity “I believe in Ghana”; “We Are Moving Forward”. John Atta Mills also ran on a “Change”; something people criticised as political piracy that shows no originality (Mensah, 2009). If the message is crafted carefully, it will assure the candidate a victory at the polls. For winning candidate the message is refined and then becomes his political agenda in office (Mensah, 2009).

2.4.6 Campaign Finance

Political parties need a lot of money to run a successful campaign. The finance department coordinates the campaign's fundraising operation and ensures that the campaign always has the money it needs to operate effectively. The techniques employed vary based on the campaign's needs and size. Small campaigns such as the parliamentary often involve casual fundraising events and phone calls from the candidates to small donors asking for money. Larger campaigns like that of the presidential will include everything: high-priced sit-down dinners; sending direct e-mail messages to donors asking for money; meeting with philanthropies and courting interest groups who can end up spending millions on the race if it is significant to their interests

(Panabianco, 1988; Abizadeh, 2005).

2.4.7 Campaign Structure and Organisation

In a modern political campaign, the campaign organisation (or “machine”) will have a coherent structure of personnel in the same manner as any business of similar size (Katz & Mair, 1994).

a. Campaign Manager and Staff

According to Thurber (2004), successful campaigns usually require a campaign manager to coordinate the campaign's operations. Being the most visible personality (leader) apart from the candidate he makes sure that the rest of the staff and the campaign's consultants if any, are focused effectively on winning the election. Modern campaign managers may be concerned with executing strategy rather than setting it; particularly if the senior strategists are typically outside political consultants such as primarily pollsters and media consultants. Political consultants advise campaign managers on virtually all of their

activities; from research to field strategy. They conduct candidate research, voter research, and opposition research for the party and candidate (Dinkin, 1989). In some small local campaigns, the campaign manager will often be the only paid staff member and will be responsible for every aspect of the campaign that is not covered by the candidate or volunteers. In larger campaigns, such as presidential campaign, hundreds of staff members will cover the required tasks. While managers are the head strategists in local campaigns, in the U.S; larger campaigns hire consultants to serve as strategists and the campaign manager focuses mostly on coordinating the campaign staff (Thurber, 2004). Campaign managers will often have deputies who oversee various aspects of the campaign at a closer level.

Directly below the campaign manager on the organisation chart is the deputy campaign manager and directly below them are department directors who coordinate specific aspects of the campaigns. These staff members often have deputies as well. At the bottom of the totem pole are the activists (Dinkin, 1989) who have been locally named in Ghana by some political parties as “foot soldiers”. These activists are the volunteers and interns who perform the least glamorous tasks of the campaign. They are the “foot soldiers” loyal to the cause of the party; the true believers who will carry the run voluntarily. These volunteers and interns take part in activities such as addressing envelopes; entering data into databases; canvassing voters from door-to-door; and making phone calls; (Thurber, 2004); who are known in Ghana as “serial callers”, on behalf of the campaign.

b. Campaign Departments

There are several departments in the campaign organisation which perform very unique functions as may be assigned to them by the campaign manager. These include the field department which focuses on voter contact through canvassing, phone calls, and building local events. This will enable the campaign manager to construct and clean the campaign's voter file in order to help better target voter persuasion and identify which voters a campaign most wants to bring out on election day. The field workers are the organisers, volunteer coordinator, general field staff and "get out the vote" coordinator (Dinkin, 1989). Another is the communications department which oversees both the press relations and advertising involved in promoting the campaign in the media. The staffs are responsible for the campaign's message and image among the electorate. Press releases, advertisements, phone scripts, and other forms of communication must be approved by this department before they can be released to the public. The staffers within this office include the press secretary who monitors the media; coordinates the campaign's relations with the press and sets up interviews between the candidates and reporters; and the rapid response coordinator who makes sure the campaign responds quickly to attacks of the other campaigns (Thurber, 2004).

The next, in the view of Thurber (2004), is the policy department which is responsible for researching and developing a set of policies; and to provide information to the campaign on issues and the background of candidates in order to be aware of skeletons to the candidates' closets. There is also the finance department which focuses on coordinating the campaign's fundraising activities and making sure that the campaign has the money it needs to work effectively. The next is the compliance and legal department. This

department makes sure that the campaign is consistent with the law and also ensures that the campaign files the appropriate forms with government authorities. Jacobson (2000) argues that in the US, Britain and other commonwealth countries like Canada and Ghana, each campaign must have an official agent who is legally responsible for the campaign and is obliged to make sure the campaign follows all rules and regulations. It is also responsible for all financial tracking, including bank reconciliation, loans and backup for in-kind donations and are required to keep both paper and electronic files. Small campaigns will have one person responsible for financial disclosure while larger campaigns will have dozens of lawyers and treasurers making sure that the campaign's activities are legal. After the election, the compliance and legal department must still respond to audit request; and when required, debt retirement as well (Jacobson, 2000).

The campaign also has a technology department as well. This section designs and maintains campaign technology such as voter files and websites. While small campaigns might have a volunteer or two who know how to use computers, large campaigns will have armies of computer professionals spread across the country handling everything from websites to blogs to databases. Moreover, there is also the scheduling and advance department. The department makes sure that the candidate and campaign surrogates are effectively scheduled so as to maximize their impact on the voters. This department also oversees the advance people who arrive at events before the candidate to make sure everything is in order. Often, their department will be part of the field department. On small campaign, the schedule coordinator typically manages the candidate's personal and campaign schedule; field and advance team schedule and gathers important information

about all events the campaign and candidate will attend. Candidates and other members of the campaign must bear in mind that only one person should oversee the details of scheduling. Fluid scheduling is one of the many keys to making a profound impact on voters (Thurber, 2004).

2.4.8 Campaign Techniques

The campaign staff or team (which may be one inspired individual or resourced group of professionals) considers how to communicate the message of the campaign, recruit volunteers and raise money. Campaign advertising draws on techniques (tools) from commercial advertising and propaganda. The avenues available to political campaigns when distributing messages are limited by law, available resources, and the imagination of the campaigns' participant. These techniques are often combined into a formal strategy known as the campaign plan. The plan takes accounts of a campaign's goal, message, target audience, and resources available. The campaign will typically seek to identify supporters of the same time getting its message across through the following techniques prescribed by Kavanga (1995) and Dinkin, (2004).

a. Campaign Advertising

This involves the use of paid media (print and electronic) to influence the decisions made for and by groups. These adverts are designed by political consultants and the campaign's staff (Kavanga, 1980).

b. Media Management

The public and private media may be used by the candidates to get elected as well as informing the electorate their social, educational, political and occupational background among others. These are done as and when appropriate for example taking into consideration the time for, and importance of the adverts, funds available, et cetera (Dinkin, 1989).

c. Mass Meetings: Rallies and Protests

According to Dinkin (1989), holding protests, rallies and other similar public events (if enough people can be persuaded to attend) may be a very effective campaign tool. For example, holding mass meetings with speakers is powerful as it shows visually, through the number of people in attendance, the support that the campaign has.

d. Modern Technology and the Internet

The internet is now a core element of modern political campaigns. Communication technologies such as e-mail, websites, and podcasts are used for various forms of activism to enable faster communications by citizen groups to deliver a message to the large audience. These internet technologies are used for cause-related fundraising, lobbying, volunteering, community building, and organization. Individual political candidates are also using the internet to promote their election campaign. In 2008, the Barack Obama for president campaign relied heavily on social media and new media channels to engage voters, recruit campaign volunteers, and campaign funds (Britt, 2009).

e. Hustling

A hustling was originally a physical platform from which representatives presented their views or cast votes before a parliamentary or other election body. Currently, the term may refer to any event, such as debates or speeches, during an election campaign, where one or more of the representatives of candidates are present (Dinkin, 1989).

f. Other Techniques

Dinkin (1989), identifies other techniques (fair or foul) which political parties use but are not usually formal. These include distribution of leaflets or selling newspapers; using micro targeting that helps to identify and target small demographic slice of voters; organizing political house parties; remaining at home to make speeches to supporters who come to visit as part of a front porch campaign; using endorsements of other celebrated party members to boost support; sale of official campaign merchandise as a way of commuting a candidate's popularity into campaign donations, volunteer recruitment, and free advertising; as well as hampering the ability of political opponents to campaign, by such techniques as counter rallies, picketing of rival parties' meetings or overwhelming rival candidates' offices with mischievous phone calls (Dinkin, 1989) and party office "shit bombing" (Daily Guide, 2011).

2.4.9 Campaign Ethics and Campaign Time

Modern political campaigns according to Britt (2009), have set new standards for how successful campaigns are conducted day-to-day. The campaign is conducted in what would seem to the public like pseudo-military style, with a strict chain of command, zero tolerance for certain prohibited actions, and an extended daily schedule that starts early

and ends much later than most ordinary jobs. Prohibited actions may include, but not limited to lying about numbers generated; phone calls made without direct oversight; going outside the chain of command; talking to the press without permission; giving information which can interfere with message discipline; and being arrested or becoming a potential easy target for opponent smear campaign. The daily schedule of a political party campaign is hyper extended, and often has no definite beginning or end, only a series of task to be computed by certain benchmark times or most often, close of business (COB). The COB for political campaigns is generally defined as the time at night at which one's supervisor is required to report his numbers so that what is reported can be factored into the test (Thurber, 2004). For example, what the field organizer collected should be reported to the regional and then to the national filed director for necessary action. Political campaigns are generally about contacting voters and volunteers at the nut-and-bolts level; and so dependent on state law; local peculiarities and the preferences of campaign organizers and volunteers. Violation of these needs strong justification, or it should not happen (Thurber, 2004).

2.4.10 Importance of Political Campaign to Political Parties

According to Abizadeh (2005) political campaign is very important because through education and information, it helps political parties to maintain old party faithful (voters) and as well, win new (floating) members which in politics are very difficult to get because of the difficulty in determining the expectations of floating voters to satisfy them. It also helps parties to identify their strengths and weaknesses as the leaders and campaign staff interact with the electorate using the physical responses of those spoken to as indicators.

Again, political campaign enables political parties to assess their opponents' strengths and weaknesses. Besides, it affords political parties the opportunity to critically explore constituencies and review their strategies. In addition, it helps candidates to seek endorsements from social and political influences. Moreover, political parties get the opportunity to put their message across the length and breadth of the constituencies and canvass for votes (Abizadeh, 2005). On the part of voters, they have the opportunity to interact with politicians; assess parties and candidates based on their past performance, political platform and ability to deliver promises made to enable them make a choice. However, some unscrupulous voters use this opportunity to extort monies from candidates with the promise of voting for them.

2.5 Strategy

2.5.1 Meaning, Characteristics and Types of Strategy

The word strategy came from the Greek word “strategeia” which means the art of being a military general who leads his army to win wars and protect his cities from aggression and invasion. Thus, it is the pattern of actual actions designed to counteract against enemy attack, using any available possible means. Today, under the pressure to survive in the competitive market and to meet stakeholders' expectations, managers of businesses and other organisations adopt several different strategies that are much more difficult to match. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010) a strategy is a plan, pattern, ploy, perspective or position that brings an enterprise's objectives into a cohesive whole. Johnson et al (2010), define strategy as the direction and scope of an organisation over the long-term; which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration

of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations. In other words, it is a comprehensive plan that sets allocation of resources to achieve long-term objectives with sustainable competitive advantage. Thus, it is made up of competitive moves and business approaches to produce successful management “game plan” to run a business; strengthen a firm’s competitive position; satisfying customers and achieving performance targets (Johnson et al, 2010). Strategy is needed to proactively shape how a company’s business will be conducted and also to mould actions and decisions of managers and employees in a coordinated overall plan. Characteristically, a strategy (strategic decision) is concerned with the long-term direction of an organisation (where to go; how, with and for what); defining the organisation’s business boundaries with regard to product range or geographical coverage; achieving some advantage for the organisation and matching the activities of the organisation to the environment in which it operates. It is also about building an organisation resources and competences to opportunities and capitalise on them; major resources changes; as well as fulfilling the values and expectations of those who have power in and around the organisation; that is stakeholders. The type of strategy depends on the nature, objective or activity of an organisation. To this end, there are several types of strategies. These are business strategy which are mostly applied by profit-making organisations; political strategy which also involves both election and campaign strategies; military strategy; sports strategy; teaching strategy; building strategy; information technology strategy, among others.

2.5.2 Levels of Strategy

Strategies exist at several levels in any organisation ranging from the overall business through to individuals working in it. At least four levels are distinguished. These are

corporate level strategy, business level strategy, functional strategy and operational strategy (Johnson et al, 2010).



Figure 2.1 Strategy at Different Levels of a Business

Source: Johnson et al, 2010

a. Corporate-Level Strategy

This is concerned with the overall purpose and scope of the organisation and how value will be added to the different parts of the organisation to meet stakeholder expectations. It is formulated by the top management and corporate decisions which affect the whole organisation. These include issues on geographical coverage, diversity of product and business units and how resources are to be allocated among the different parts of the organisation. This is a crucial level since it is heavily influenced by investors in the business and acts to guide strategic decision-making throughout the business. Corporate strategy is often stated explicitly in the form of mission statement; for example growth and retrenchment strategies. It is important to note that corporate strategy may be of different types or classifications. These are stability growth strategy; growth strategy;

concentration strategy; merging and acquisitions strategy; harvesting strategy; defensive strategy; turnaround strategy; divestiture strategy; liquidation strategy; bankruptcy strategy, among others (Johnson et al, 2010)

b. Business-Level Strategy

This is about how the various businesses included in the corporate strategy should compete successfully in their particular markets. Thus, it is how the various units provide best value services to the public using appropriate pricing, innovation; or differentiation in the form of better quality or distinctive distribution channel. It involves strategic decisions about the choice of product; meeting needs of customers; gaining advantage over competitors; exploiting or creating new opportunities; et cetera. Business level strategies flow from the corporate strategies. For example competitive strategies are cost differentiation and focus strategies which are also known as generic strategies (Johnson et al, 2010).

c. Functional Strategy

This strategy is formulated at the functional level from the corporate or business strategy. The main functional strategies include marketing, financial, human resources, and production strategies for the implementation of corporate strategy.

d. Operational Strategy

According to Johnson et al (2010), it is at the operating end of the organisation which is concerned with how the component units are organised to deliver effectively the corporate and business level strategic direction in terms of resources, processes and people.

2.5.3 Benefits of Strategy

In general, there are several advantages an organisation enjoys in having strategies. It finds it easier to coordinate the divisions, subsidiaries and other component parts. The existence of a strategy thus provides a focal point towards which all the firm's energies are directed. Again, management is forced to think through the possible future actions of major competitors and hence, to prepare reactions to change in competitor behaviour. Besides, strategies provide the criteria against which to evaluate performance. In addition, the process of formulating a strategy forces the organisation to analyse its position and hence, identify and remedy internal weaknesses. Moreover, they help the organisation to identify the external threats and opportunities and deal with them. Finally, strategies help the company to decide in advance how it will respond to predictable changes in customer tastes and spending patterns (Johnson et al, 2010).

2.5.4 Strategic Management Process

The means by which a strategy is managed is termed as strategic management. In its broader sense, strategic management is about taking strategic decisions that answer questions on all level of the business. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), strategic management is the process through which organisations analyze and learn from their

internal and external environments, establish strategic direction, create strategies that are intended to help achieve established goals, and execute these strategies, all in an effort to satisfy key organisational stakeholders. Johnson and others (2010) also define strategic management as understanding the strategic position of an organisation, making strategic choices for the future and managing strategy in action. In short, it is the managerial process of formulating, implementing and evaluating strategic actions in order to achieve corporate objectives and competitive advantage. In practice, a thorough strategic management process has three main components or stages. These, according to Johnson et al (2010) are strategic analysis, strategic choice and strategy implementation.



Figure 2.2: Strategic Management Model.

Source: Johnson et al (2010).

a. Strategic Analysis

This is all about the assessment of the strength of an organisation's position and understanding the important external factors that may influence that position. The process of strategic analysis can be assisted by a number of tools including PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental); a technique for understanding

the environment in which an organisation operates and a competitor analysis which involves a wide range of techniques and analysis that seeks to summarise an organisation's overall competitive position and scenario planning which is a tool that builds various plausible views of possible futures for an organisation (Johnson et al, 2010). The others are the five forces analysis which is a technique for identifying the forces which affect the level of competition in an industry; market segmentation which is concerned with identifying similarities and differences between groups of customers and users; and directional policy mix which is a technique which summarises the competitive strength of an organisation's operations in specific market. The rest are SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats); a useful summary technique for summarising the key assessment of an organisation's internal and external environmental influences; and critical success factor analysis which is a tool used to identify those areas in which an organisation must outperform the competition in order to succeed (Johnson et al, 2010).

b. Strategic Choice

This process involves understanding the nature of stakeholders expectations, that is the ground rules; identifying strategic options, and then evaluating and selecting strategic options (Johnson et al, 2010).

c. Strategic Implementation

This process is often the hardest (Johnson et al, 2010). It is concerned with both planning on how the choice strategy can be put into effect, and managing the changes required in

the course of making the strategy a reality. Thus, when a strategy has been analysed and selected, the task is then to translate it into organisational action (Johnson et al, 2010).

2.5.5 Importance of Strategic Management

Despite the fact that people doubt the relevance of strategic management due to continuous changing of the world, strategic management in the view of Johnson et al (2010), has been seen to be very important to business executives, presidents and managers of many profit and non-profit organisations. Principally, strategic management helps organisations to make better strategies through the use of a more systematic, logical and rational approach to strategic choices.

To this end, strategic management offers a lot of benefits to organisations. These include opportunities identification; prioritisation and exploitation; provision of objective view of management problems; and representing the framework for improved coordination and control of activities. It also minimises the effects of adversely conditions and changes; as well as providing a cooperative integrated and enthusiastic approach to tackling problems and opportunities. The others are allowing more effective allocation of time and resources to identified opportunities. The rest are creating a framework for internal communication among personnel; provision of a basis for the clarification of individual responsibilities; encouraging a favourable attitude towards change; giving a degree of discipline and formality to the management of a business; and allowing fewer resources and less time to be devoted to correcting erroneous or adhoc decisions; among others (Johnson et al, 2010).

2.5.6 Strategic Capabilities

Strategic capabilities can be defined as the adequacy and suitability of resources and competences of an organisation for it to survive and prosper (Johnson et al, 2010). Competitive advantage is achieved by organisations that are able to develop strategic capabilities, more appreciated by customers and in ways that competitors find it difficult to imitate. According to Johnson et al (2010), resources are inputs into a firm's production process such as capital equipment, the skills of individuals employees' patents, finance, and talented managers. Resources can be tangible and intangible. Tangible resources are the physical assets of an organisation such as plants, labour, and finance. In contrast, intangible resources are non-physical assets such as information, reputation and knowledge. Organisation's resources can be considered in terms of physical resources, financial resources, human resources and intellectual capital which is an important aspect of the intangible resources of an organisation. This includes patents, brands, and customer database. Such resources are certainly important; but what the organisation does; how it employs and deploys its resources is equally important (Johnson et al 2010). Competence involves the activities and processes through which an organisation deploys its resources effectively in a way that others cannot imitate. Thus, the core competences of an organisation are the activities and processes through which resources are used in such a way as to achieve competitive advantage in ways that competitors cannot imitate or obtain. Some of these competences include unique innovativeness in developing new products; superior system for delivering customers orders accurately and swiftly; unique sales force; better merchandising and product

display; superb formula for selecting retail location; better after sales service capability; supervisor skills in producing high capacity; et cetera (Johnson et al, 2010).

2.6 Positioning Strategy

It is the process of arranging for a product to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competing products in the minds of target consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011). Thus, a product's position is the place the product occupies relative to competitors' products in consumers' minds. If a product is perceived to be exactly like others on the market, consumers would have no reason to buy it. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), positioning is why a shopper will pay a little more for a brand. Thus, marketers plan positions that distinguish their products from competition brands and give the greatest advantage in their target markets. A product's position is the complex set of perceptions, impressions, and feelings that consumers have for the product compared with competing products. In positioning a product, the firm must first identify possible customer value differences that provide competitive advantages upon which to build the position. The firm can offer greater customer value either by charging lower prices than competitors, or by offering more benefits to justify higher prices. But if the firm promises greater value, it must then deliver that value (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Thus, effective positioning begins with differentiation. Once a firm has chosen a desired position, it must take strong steps to deliver and communicate that position to target consumers. For instance, Subway's "eat fresh"; BMW's "economy" and Toyota's "fuel efficient" slogans must be truly experienced. Positioning cannot be built on empty promises.

In choosing the right competitive strategy a firm must decide on the number of differences to promote; and which of them to promote based on the criteria of importance, distinctiveness, superiority, communicability; preemptiveness, affordability affordable and profitability. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010)

2.6.1 Selecting an Overall Positioning Strategy

The full positioning of a product (brand) is called brand's value proposition which is the full mix of benefits upon which the brand is differentiated and positioned (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). It answers the question on the reason why a customer should buy a particular brand. For instance, Volvo's value proposition hinges on safety but also includes reliability, roominess, and styling, all for a price that is higher than average but seems fair for this mix of benefits. Some of the value propositions upon which a company might position its products are more-for-more which involves producing quality product and charging higher price to cover the higher costs; more for the same which is used to attack more-for-more position by offering comparable quality at a lower price and, same for less positioning with deep discounts based on lower cost operations. The rest are less for much less positioning which involves meeting consumers quality requirements at a much lower price; and more for less which is mostly used by new business (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). It is very difficult to sustain the positioning due to cost of offering.

2.6.2 Factors for Successful Positioning

For a successful positioning, five important factors must be adhered to (Bannon, 2003). First, is the clarity of the positioning idea in terms of what competitive advantage is, and

clarity of understanding of this position in the minds of customers. Second, the consistency of positioning is important for customers to know where they stand with a company; that is a consistent and sustained approach is required long term. The third is the credibility of positioning. If a company claims to offer high quality products, then the customer must agree that the quality of the products is indeed high. What the customer perceived is absolute. Alternatively, if the customers think medium quality goods are high quality, then they will value them as high quality. The fourth is competitiveness. Products must, if they are to achieve a competitive advantage, actually offer value that competing products do not. The fifth factor is that the positioning must be communicable. Thus, the message about the position must be able to be communicated to the target audience. As such, the message should be simple, attractive and easily encoded and decoded. In elections, the impact of political leaflets for example is questionable particularly in the heat of a campaign when many of the electorates are engulfed by papers (Bannon, 2003). In Ghana, for instance, a typical example of good simple communication was the NDC's "Change" in the 2008 elections (NDC Campaign Message, 2008).

2.7 Positioning as a Political Electoral Marketing Strategy

Positioning as a business marketing strategy can also be used in politics as an electoral marketing strategy by political parties (Lees – Marshment 2001). Political parties use the positioning strategy to position parties, candidates (presidential and parliamentary) and platform during electoral processes. The main reasons are to create awareness and affection so that people will vote for a particular political party to win elections. Politics, according to Butler and Collins (1996), is the business of manoeuvring for strategic

national position which wins votes at national or local level of governance. Ultimately, the thrust of the argument is that political parties sell ideas or solutions to national or local issues and require to position such ideas or solutions in a manner that appeals to the voters (Kotler & Kotler, 1999). In the same way businesses position themselves so that they can win in a competitive situation, so do political parties. Political parties are brands (products) and the positioning of the brands (parties) must be right in order to win elections (Lock and Harris, 1996). To this end, Yeshin (2004), points out that positioning is the creation of an image for the product (candidate, policy/programme) in order that consumers (voters) can clearly understand what the company (party) provides relative to its competitors (other parties); but the single-minded requirement is to identify a long-term proposition which positions the brand (party) in the minds of consumers. In view of the above, Lees-Marshment (2001), suggested eight prompts for positioning: feature driven positioning; problem driven positioning; competitive driven positioning, emotional or psychological positioning; benefit driven positioning; inspirational positioning and value positioning. It is clear from the different approaches to positioning that there is a variety of options for positioning a good, service or a political party so as to win and consolidate power. Thus, it is essential to target the kind of electoral group (voters) that would have a real influence on the election results and position the party's products in the minds of voters for each target segment, using their positioning variables or elements (Lees-Marshment, 2001).

2.8 Political Electoral Positioning Elements and Variables

2.8.1 Positioning Elements

The major positioning elements of the political electoral process in Ghana for example are the parties such as the NPP, PNC, NDC and CPP; the candidate which can be presidential (leader of the party) or parliamentary candidate; and a specific programme or platform of the party, all of which may be referred to as products or brands that are to be presented (sold) to the market (electorate) in exchange for a price (votes) (Wring, 1997; Lees-Marshment, 2001)

2.8.2 Positioning Variables

The positioning variables are those characteristics or attributes that will be used to position these elements (products) in the minds of the electorates so that in the words of Wring (1997) they become aware; have affection for them, relative to other opposition (contesting) parties; and as a result vote for them to win power and form government.

a. Political Party Attributes

Attributes of a party are the unique features or qualities that it has which are used as positioning variables by the party leaders to make it more appealing and acceptable to the electorate to win more votes. They may be tangible for instance physical items of the party; or intangible like accolades (Henneberg, 2004). Some of these are:

i. Party Ideology

The ideology or philosophy of a political party is what the party stands for in terms of its nature and governance. Thus, whether the party practises capitalist democracy and therefore positions itself as a driver for economic growth; or socialist democracy and prides itself as a promoter of social equality and a friend of the poor (Henneberg, 2004). The decision of some people to vote for a particular party depends on how they are influenced by the ideology of that party which is spread by party members as a positioning technique to make it more attractive. For instance, the NPP believes in liberal or capitalist democracy whilst the NDC believes in socialist democracy (Parties Manifestoes, 2008).

ii. Past Performance

Previous successful performance of a political party and the experience gained is another attribute that can be used to position a party during electioneering period. The physical evidence of the fulfilment of old promises coupled with the new promises (immediate benefits) to be provided when in power again, serves as a good positioning tool to have competitive edge over other contesting parties. This is because the voters see the party as one which delivers on its promises (Henneberg, 2004). For instance, the NPP was retained in government in 2004 due to its past successes (Alabi & Alabi, 2007).

iii. Manifesto

The party manifesto is a written document in which a political party outlines its aims and objectives for the perusal of and acceptance by the electorate. In other words, it is the

policy platform of the party which brings to the fore what it intends to do when elected. The manifesto as a political party attribute is a very important positioning tool since it determines how serious and credible the party is, and will be when given the mandate to form a government. The message that goes to convince the voters during the campaign exercise should be an essential aspect of the manifesto. For example in the 2008 elections manifesto of the NPP, the school feeding programme and free basic education were very good messages that helped to position it well (Party Manifesto, 2008) whilst the NDC dwelt on its general achievements between 1999 and 2000 (Party Manifesto, 2008). There cannot be a campaign and for that matter election without a manifesto (Henneberg, 2004).

iv. Party Leadership

Political party leadership is also an important feature that can help position a party during electioneering campaigns. Indeed, the party leader is a crucial aspect of the party product, even in a non-presidential system. Leaders are the most visible indication of what the party stands for and what it is likely to deliver should voters elect it to government (Foley, 2002). Political marketing theory argues that parties need to become market-oriented to win elections, and part of this is the leader. The leader needs to be popular, in terms of leadership style, party leadership style, characteristics, speaking, speaking style et cetera. As Foley (2002), argued, there is a leadership market, and leaders are public commodities that are continually probed, tested and evaluated for their leadership qualities.

Furthermore, the leader according to Lees-Marshment (2001), plays a crucial role in leading the quest to become market-oriented; that is leading the party through all the stages and behaviour necessary to create a product that the electorate will want. This confirms the position of Shapiro (1973) that communication alone cannot carry a poor product; the product will have little appeal or little benefit to the individuals (voters). The ability of leaders to change their party; and therefore their party management skills, are also crucial in this. This is because if a leader cannot run his party, how can he run a government. In the words Foley (2002) “leaders have to market their parties by marketing themselves and their ability to provide personal leadership and effective governance.” In view of the above, the selection of leaders of a party (executives, presidential and parliamentary candidates) should be properly executed so that those chosen are appealing to the electorate; have good knowledge in politics and the ability to win the hearts of voters; and have little or no bad records to be picked on by political opponents. As Shaw (1994) contended “Not only the nature of the leader, but the behaviour and rights of a party’s members could be influential in attracting or repelling voters”. Some people vote for a leader because he is handsome, calm, gentle, radical, or very persuasive. In the 1992 elections it is said that some people voted for Mr. Rawlings of NDC because he was “handsome” and “oratorical”. In 2000, some people voted for Mr. John Kuffuor of NPP because he is “very gentle”, “respectful” and a “unifier”; whilst in 2008 Professor Mills of NDC won the hearts of many because of his perceived humility (Mensah, 2009).

v. *Perceived Party Identity/Image*

The perceived party identity or image of a political party involves how the electorate form individual opinions about the party. It is how they recognise the party to be; whether it is a peaceful, violent, discriminatory, democratic, or dictatorial party. Where the perception is positive, it serves a better positioning attribute to place the party in the minds of the electorate relative to other parties with negative connotations (Yalea, 2006). For example the NPP is perceived as elitist, property owning (Alabi and alibi, 2007), democratic, peaceful and upholding the rule of law as well as preaching stability in the nation; whilst the NDC is perceived by many as violent, non-elitist, pro-poor (Alabi & Alabi, 2007), dictatorial, coup plotters, atrocious and lacks internal democracy (Tweneboah-Koduah et al, 2009).

vi. *Particularistic Benefits*

This is where the party identifies itself as a provider of specific programmes (benefits) to be enjoyed by the electorate when the party is voted into power. This is also an effective positioning tool that helps a party to win elections. An example of this is the free meals and free education for children in the basic schools in Ghana under the education policy of the NPP which benefited the electorate when the party won and formed government (Achievements of NPP Handbook, 2001-2008).

vii. *Party Paraphernalia*

These are the belongings or pieces of equipment of the party that are used for its general activities and promotions. They are the properties which are associated with the party and can be used for branding and positioning (Henneberg, 2004). These include party cards, flags, handkerchiefs, scarfs, calendars et cetera which are designed in party colours.

viii. *Ability to Deliver Promises*

The party's ability to deliver promised service is an important attribute for party positioning. It is concerned about how the party will be able to provide to the electorate what it promised to do in its manifesto (Lees-Marshment, 2001). The capacity to deliver and the track record on delivery of promises is critical to voters and the party must assure the electorate that it can ensure the delivery of outcomes. Sanders (1998), argues that voters are better educated, informed, more critical and thus make their voting decisions more on the basis of what parties are like or will deliver in government than on attachment to ideology. In fact the party should promise deliverables. For instance in the 2000 elections NPP promised to implement the health insurance scheme to ensure free health care system which it did and was returned to power in 2004 (NPP Policy Document, 2000). The NDC in 2008 promised to put money in people's pocket; make Accra clean, create millions of jobs within a year, among others (NDC Manifesto, 2008) and therefore, won the elections. The party's ability to deliver within the stipulated time will position it better in subsequent elections.

ix. *Party Slogan*

It is made up of words or a statement by a political party to drum home its message and to market its candidates. Slogan is made through sound which is one aspect of the semiotics (the study of human communication) aside signs and symbols (Mensah, 2009). For example in the 2000 elections the NPP used "Osono nie Kuffuor nie" to position the party's logo and the candidate whilst the NDC used "eye zu, eye za". The NPP also used the "asee

ho” slogan to inject an incredible amount of excitement amongst the supporters that, truly the party was alive and had a winning mentality (Mensah, 2009), giving the viral effect, as in viral marketing. In 2008, the NPP adopted the “yere ko yenim” which means “we are moving forward” with the hopping Kangaroo dance indicating continuity in development; whilst the two main opposition parties, NDC and CPP used the “yere sesame” slogan with the finger wriggling act which sought to change the NPP government.

x. *Party Logo and Symbols*

The party’s logo (emblem) and other symbols are attributes which are used to position a party. The logo of a party can be diffused (also in a subliminal way), during events characterised by a strong emotional component; concerts, games, cinema, theatres, convention, et cetera. The (olfactory) memory of the voters will associate the perfume of the emotion that has accompanied the event, and the next time they do smell it, on the wake of a person who wears it; from a vehicle that perfumes the city; close to a perfumed electoral poster; the memory of the passed emotion will awaken and will be associated to the name of the party (Lees-Marshment, 2001). For instance the traditional logo (symbol) of the NPP, the elephant signifies a supposed dominance in Ghanaian politics (Mensah, 2009) and therefore sends emotions to the voter that there is no other party which can overcome it in any political contest. Aside the logo, symbols such as cards, badges and flags (in party colours) also have important positioning role. They help voters to recognise a particular party they want to vote for. Symbols can be very important when the overall electorate is illiterate (Smith, 2007).

xii. Party Colours

Generally speaking, over the world, political parties associate themselves with colours, primarily for identification, especially for voter recognition during elections (Gunther & Diamond; 2001). Colours have meanings and according to Smith (2007), Yellow is often used for libertarianism; Red signifies communism; Green for Islamist parties; Orange for nationalism; White for nationalism and royalty; Blue for conservatism; and Black for fascism. Colour associations are useful for mnemonics when voter illiteracy is significant (Smith, 2007).

xii. Party Structure and Membership

The way the party is structured or organised as well as the nature of its membership can be used as a positioning tool for the party to attract more votes. It is important the party has a hierarchy of positions with members either elected or appointed to manage the affairs of the party. For instance, the party must have the chairman, vice, secretary et cetera at the national, regional and constituency levels (Parties' Constitutions). The electorate will have confidence in a party that has qualified and vibrant staff who are responsible for the party's secretariat, fund raising, campaigning, legal issues, operations, communications, among others so that party activities are well coordinated and effectively performed to outsmart its opponents. Beside most voters will also look up to the calibre of party members and associate that to what the party is. It is therefore important for a party to ensure that the party is well structured and its members conduct themselves decently to attract more votes.

According to Shaw (1994), the behaviour and rights of a party's members could be influential in attracting or repelling voters.

xiii. Choice of Running Mate

The party's choice of a running mate (prospective vice president) which is normally done by the presidential candidate, in consultation with the party hierarchy (Parties' Constitutions), is very important to position the party, especially when the choice aims to balance geographical and ethnic dimensions, as a national party (Alabi & Alabi 2007). This strategic choice by the presidential candidate sometimes creates misunderstandings within the party; since it might not necessarily consider the person's competence to deliver, and commitment to the party but perhaps how the person has helped behind the scene; or the desire of the candidate to work with someone he can cope up with; or perhaps just to strategically use him to win election because of his popularity. For instance, the choice of late Nkessen Arkaah by Jerry Rawlings in 1992 as running mate, and subsequently as vice president was for coalition reasons and how to win more votes from the Central Region and the CPP and not based on how he was committed to the ideals of the NDC (NDC Strategic Document, 1992). Nana Akuffo-Addo chose Dr. Bawumia in 2008 for his competence and to ensure ethnic balance; but his long-standing association with the party was questioned by some party members (Chronicle, 2008). Mr. Rawlings has regretted bringing Atta-Mills into the political limelight to become president 2008, through his choice as running mate, and later vice president between 1996 and 2000, as he apologised to party members at a rally in Kumasi on June 4, 2011 (Daily Guide, 2011). This presupposes that his choice as running mate was just strategic;

to balance ethnicity to win votes. In fact, his choice at Sweduro (Sweduro Declaration) did not go down well with many NDC party gurus. No wonder Chris Dugan, an NDC member in Brong Ahafo has described Atta-Mills as a “tenant” to the NDC party and not a bonafide member of the NDC. (Daily Guide, June 23, 2011).

xiv. Ethnicity

Ethnicity can be said to be a positioning variable for a political party if campaign appeals are based on ethnic considerations. Ethnicity has been described as individuals who identify themselves with a collective of people with whom they share patterns of normative behaviour and feel solidarity with (Hauer, 2004). Thus it is a collective of people who share some patterns of normative behaviour and form part of a larger population that are interacting with people from other collective (Cohen, 1993). Though, the effects of ethnicity and its role in current partisan politics in Ghana is under debate, it is perceived by some to be pivotal and still very salient in electoral politics (Alabi & Alabi, 2007). There are suggestions that there are currently marked variations on the propensity of major ethnic groups toward communal voting and the basis for the support of major parties. The assertion is confirmed by Aryee (2005) that ethnicity has been depicted to be one of the most potent factors affecting political behaviour in Ghana and it is believed by some to virtually dominate political discourse in Ghana today. Thus, political alignments in Ghana can be said to have followed ethnic (and religious) interests rather than any other concerns (Yalea, 2006). For instance, the NPP is highly considered as Akan party; the NDC heavily considered as Ewe party, whilst the CPP and the PNC are considered as Northern Parties (Yalea, 2006). Though very dangerous to nation building, in the course

of campaigning, political parties use ethnicity to position themselves in certain parts of the country, to win more votes.

xv. *Political Stokeism*

This is the use of fear factor as a positioning strategy by political parties during campaigning to lure voters to “buy” their political parties (Kapoor, 2009). It involves how political parties stoke fear into the electorate with threats to win elections (Wu et al, 2004, Kadembo, 2009). For instance in the 2000 elections the electorates were made to believe that if the NDC was not voted for, there would be war in Ghana (Daily Guide, 2000). This was made manifest through stories and huge adverts in the newspapers that talked sombrely (Kapoor, 2009) of Ghana being torn asunder. Numerous helicopters that hovered over some communities some days before and during the voting day portraying the violent nature of the party (Alabi et al, 2007; Tweneboah-Koduah et al, 2009), put fear in some people who, for fear of their lives, decided to vote for the NDC so that there would be no war and burning of Ghana. Besides this, political parties master the art of deceptive jargons that end up packaging their core message as positive panacea (Kapoor, 2009).

xvi. *Incumbency*

Politically, it is when a party in government or a person (candidate) holding a political office contests with others to retain that position. In other words it is a situation where a particular political party in government contests with other political parties to maintain the status quo; or sitting president contests as a candidate of that party to continue with his

good governance; or a sitting parliamentarian of that party or another contests to retain his seat (Newman, 2008). For instance, the NPP contested the 2004 elections as incumbent with its sitting President and won. It did so again in the 2008 elections but without an incumbent President as candidate, but lost to the NDC. Most often, it is used to position a party and its candidate(s), using previous performance in governance (Henneberg, 2004; Alabi & Alabi 2007). For example in the 2008 electioneering, the NPP positioned itself as a party that is trustworthy and delivers on its promises (LeesMarshment, 2001) using the implementation of the School Feeding Programme, National Health Insurance Scheme, Free Basic Education, Mass Cocoa Spraying and Fertilisation Exercises, Free Maternal Health Care and many more (NPP Manifesto, 2008). It therefore sought for re-election to expand existing policies and to come out with new ones like Free Secondary School Education, among others by drumming home its past successes and experiences for the past eight years. The NDC government will seek for re-election in 2012 using its incumbency; which can be likened to an existing product versus a new entrant (Neuman, 2008).

xvii. Party Constitution

A political party's constitution generally consists of the aims and objectives it intends to achieve; the ideals that it stands for as a social organisation; the rules and regulations that govern its members and its relationship with other local political groups and international organisations; membership; structure and organisation; formation of local and international associations; selection and election of presidential and parliamentary candidates among others (Party Constitutions). The contents of a party's constitution can be used to position itself in the electoral market especially when it can potentially meet

the expectations of the electorate (Lees-Marshment, 2001). It should be noted that the contents of a political party's constitution form the basis for its manifesto which is subsequently developed to formulate national policies when it wins elections and forms government.

xviii. Position of Party on the Ballot Paper

The position of a party on the ballot paper may be used as a positioning factor to influence the behaviour of voters using various interpretations (Mensah, 2009). For instance, in the 2008 general elections, the NPP occupied the first position on the ballot paper which was considered a sign of emerging a winner.

xix. Political Bribery

According to Kirshner (2003), money is power; money is politics. This explains why monetary phenomena have a formative influence on the nature of contemporary politics. To him, monetary phenomena are always and everywhere political. Even though no party will agree with this assertion of monetary incentive to influence voters; neither the latter accepting it, the perception still exists that some political parties use money to influence voters to win elections during campaigning (Abizadeh, 2005; Neuman-Shula, 2008).

b. Candidate Attributes

These are the characteristics of a candidate, most importantly the presidential candidate, of a political party which are used as positioning strategies (Shama, 1975; Newman,

1994). In 2008 the presidential candidates for the NPP and NDC were Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo and John Evans Atta-Mills respectively. The presidential candidate of a political party assumes the leadership position after the party's national delegate's conference.

Leadership (presidential candidature), is an important component of the electoral (political) products, aside political programme and ideology; the three of which determine the political marketing outcomes or fortunes of a political party (LeesMarshment, 2001). The political product which is the party, needs to have a leader who is an epitome of what the voters expect. He must possess certain attributes that the party can use to position itself very well in the minds of the electorate to influence their voting pattern. In fact the electoral success of a political party depends on the nature of its programme; the acceptability of its ideology and most importantly, the quality of its leader who physically represents the party as an entity (Foley, 2002). Some of the attributes are;

i. Personality of leadership

The personality of a person involves his whole character and nature. This includes how he can accommodate issues and people; reason logically; analyse situations and provide solutions; let go the misgivings of people especially political opponents, though painful they may be, in order to promote unity; use language that can increase creditability of the party and gain social influence (Shama, 1976), among others. These should be manifested

not only at the national level, but within the party to win the hearts of party members for absolute support. For instance in describing Ex-President Kuffuor, Kwaku

Tsen (Graphic, 2011) said “the personality and influence of former President John Agyekum Kuffuor towers and looms largely on the contemporary history of the NPP” and Ghana as a whole.

ii. Ability to Deliver

In the course of campaigning, the presidential candidate makes promises on his behalf and the party to inform the electorate what they will benefit in case the party wins and forms government. These promises are seen to be excerpts of the party’s manifesto and that the electorate expect that they are delivered on schedule (Lees-Marshment, 2001). Once these promises (services) are fulfilled, the candidate becomes well positioned in the minds of the electorate which will become an important factor to win subsequent elections. For instance, in 2004 the NPP won based on the President’s ability to deliver the promises made in 2000 elections. However, this was not repeated in 2008 due to other factors.

iii. Established Personal Image

The brand image or identity of a candidate is what he has carved for himself and stands for (Kavanga, 1995, Smith & Hirst, 2001; Foley 2002). For instance, former President Kuffuor is branded as a life time civil rights activist (Mensah, 2009) and also earned for himself accolades such as “gentle giant” signifying his imposing physical structure and how calmly he deals with issues which is an unusual contrast. Nana Akuffo-Addo has also

been known as an advocator of the rule of law, and an “action man” whilst President Atta-Mills enjoys the accolades of “asomdweehene”, to wit man of peace (Mensah, 2009).

iv. Political Pedigree and Maturity

This is a very essential variable for unique positioning. The political background of the leader or candidate concerns the extent to which he has consistently involved himself in politics both of the party and national levels so that he becomes well exposed to the intrigues and organisation in party politics and also has deeper insight into the dynamics regulating the various social and economic sectors of the society (Kwaku Tsen, 2011). Thus, the candidate must have served the country in various capacities as means of gaining experience in how to manage people and the country as a whole.

v. Conduct of Candidate

The general behaviour of the candidate is another attribute that can be used as a positioning variable. The political party candidate should be someone whose personal strengths in society outweigh his weaknesses (Shama, 1976). Thus, he should be respectful, friendly, patient, caring, forgiving, among others, than to be otherwise. These will make him to be liked, favoured and admired than just to be known by the electorate; and winning election becomes easier (Kavangah, 1995).

vi. Age of Candidate

The youthful age of the candidate in modern politics plays an important role in getting him elected especially when the country has younger population (electorate) who have

developed a taste for populist conceptions of democracy (Mensah, 2007). The youthful age of the candidate signifies how energetic he is and his ability to handle the affairs of the country dutifully, perhaps healthily, if he is given the mandate. Perhaps, the Americans might have voted for Obama due to his youthful exuberance. They saw the need for a generational change (Kwaku Tsen, 2011).

vii. *Ethnic Consideration*

Though, very divisive and dangerous, the ethnic background of the candidate can be used subtly as a positioning variable in certain selected consistencies where the candidate's ethnic group dominates. Numerous authors have debated the role of ethnicity in determining election fortunes of a presidential candidate in electoral and democratic politics in Ghana (Aryee, 2005; EC; 2005). Further to this, Alabi and Alabi (2007), have confirmed that political parties and for that matter presidential candidates with very strong ethnic support bases are those that stood the test of time no matter what marketing tools or approaches are employed, though political marketing gains, to a large extent, depend on the features of the political product; the political product benefit; and the political marketing support services (Lees-Marshment, 2001). In the 2008 elections, President Mills, then NDC presidential candidate used the "Adzepa wo fie a, woye" ("it is good to have me as president") slogan to perhaps defeat other presidential candidates in the Central Region as the results portrayed (EC Regional Results, 2008).

viii. Association with Celebrities

Candidates association with, and endorsement by celebrities is another positioning strategy to win elections. In the 2008 elections the NPP presidential candidate Nana Akuffo-Addo associated himself with lots of celebrities in the music, soccer and movie industries as a positioning strategy to canvas for the votes of their admirers. (NPP Rally, Kumasi, Dec; 2008)

ix. Position of Candidate on the ballot paper

The position of the candidate on the ballot paper has some influence on voting. (Mensah, 2009) For instance, the first position signifies a straight win for the candidate whilst a third position may be interpreted to mean religious. Yet some may also use it semiotically to drum home their message (Mensah, 2009). For example in the 2000 elections, the NPP used the last position it occupied to form a message “Asee ho” to inform the electorate where they should thumbprint.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

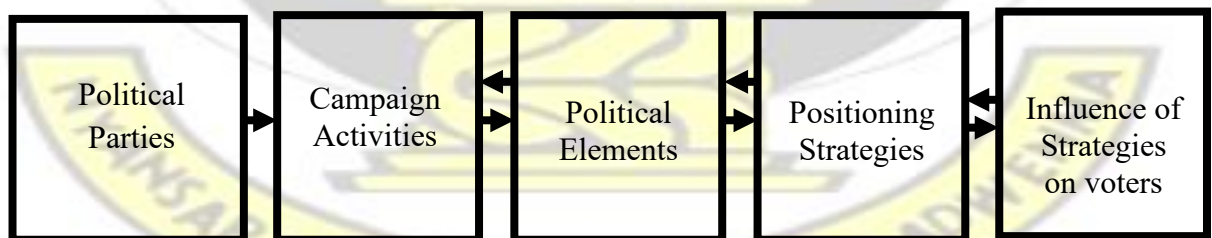


Figure. 2.3 Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's own Construct, 2011

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROFILE OF STUDY AREA

The research methodology includes the design, population size, sampling; sources of data and techniques used that enabled the researcher to provide answers to whether political parties position parties or candidates; the positioning strategies used; the influence they had on the voters and which of the variables influenced them most.

3.1 Research Design

The study type was descriptive based on non-experimental cross-sectional study design. On study methods, both qualitative and quantities research method approaches were employed. The former was used to collect data from political parties and voters using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews which served as a medium of communication between the researcher and the respondents for deep and rich explanations. This was used because there was little knowledge on the subject in the academia (Malhotra, 2007). Quantitative method was used to quantify data obtained from the questionnaire, using statistical analysis.

3.2 Research Population

The study population consisted of 60,000 persons of voting age (18 years and above with sound mind) who registered as voters in the constituency. This included the executives of the 4 prominent political parties namely; NPP, CPP, NDC and PNC.

3.3 Sampling

3.3.1 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of 300 respondents made up of 288 eligible voters and 12 key constituency executive members of the 4 political parties from 6 electoral areas out of the 12 in the constituency were interviewed irrespective of sex. The sample size of 300 was taken because respondents had similar characteristics and therefore was representative (Malhotra, 2007).

The voter respondents were selected using cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques whilst purposive sampling technique was used to select the constituency executives.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Techniques

The data for the research included both primary and secondary data on the application and role of positioning strategies in political parties' campaigns in the Amansie West District. The primary data consisted basically of information collected from respondents using self-administered, questionnaires which were pre-tested; and in-depth interviews. The secondary data was obtained from any literature related to the research topic in the form of text books, reports, speeches, journals, magazines, internet and news papers.

3.5 Data Management and Analysis

The information were assembled, analysed and interpreted. Conclusions were therefore drawn and recommendations made. Data for each objective were treated specifically where the information was obtained; means used and how they will be managed.

The data were analysed with the aid of computer software. Tables, histograms, and pie charts were also used to make the data simple and more understandable. All data that could not be quantified were described.

3.6 Dissemination of Results

Following the completion of the research and the analysis of data obtained, the results of the study were conveyed to all participants; the offices of the various political parties in the study; politicians; Business School Library and economic and political marketing journals for publication.

3.7 PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

3.7.1 Location, Size and Population

The Amansie West Constituency is one of the 33 constituencies in the Ashanti Region. It is located within latitude 6.05° West; 6.35° North; 1.40° South and 2.05° East and therefore lies within the fertile tropical rainforest belt.

It shares boundaries with several constituencies in Ashanti region, with a regional boundary separating it from Western Region. The constituency covers an area of about

1,364 square kilometres forming about 5.4% of the total land area of Ashanti Region, with Manso Nkwanta as its capital. It has a population of about 108,273 (2000 Population Census) living on over 300 settlements (District Planning Unit Report, 2010).

3.7.2 Administrative System

The constituency is the only one in the Amansie West District with 12 area councils and 189 polling stations. It has most of the decentralised departments. It has one paramount chief at Manso Nkwanta and 12 Aberempon.

3.7.3 Drainage, Climate and Vegetation

The topography of the area is undulating with an elevation of about 210 feet above sea level. It has two major rivers; Offin and Oda and several tributaries. The area has a mean monthly temperature of about 26⁰C with an annual rainfall ranging between 160mm and 180mm. The vegetation is of rainforest type making the land fertile and arable for agricultural investments in food and cash crops. There are a lot of gold deposits in the soil. (Minerals Commission, 2010).

3.7.4 Health and Education

The health system of the constituency revolves around 22 health facilities made up of 1 hospital, 14 health centres, 3 clinics and four maternity homes. Major diseases endemic in the area are malaria, anaemia, worm infestation, diarrhoea, gynaecological disorders, genital and urinal diseases, buruli ulcer among others. (DHMT Report, 2010). The constituency has 3 senior high schools, 52 junior high schools, 100 primary schools, 65

Nursery centres and a tertiary institution (Anglican University College of Technology) which has just started (District Education Directorate Report, 2010).

3.7.5 Water, Sanitation and Occupation

The major sources of water supply are rivers, streams, hand dug wells, bore holes and pipe borne water. In terms of access to portable water, 300 bore holes with pumps have been constructed for accessible settlements. About 75% of the communities rely on boreholes for water supply; 25% on streams and 5% on pipe borne water. Access to portable water is therefore encouraging (DWST Report, 2010). Sanitation in the constituency is yet to meet the required standard. Facilities for the disposal of solid and liquid waste are inadequate vis-à-vis the population increase. Most communities (60%) use the local pit-latrines. Refuse dumps are located close to settlements, making the environment extremely unhygienic. (DWST Report, 2010).

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the area in terms of employment and income. About 70% of the people are engaged in subsistence agriculture. Others are also engaged in small scale mining with few as civil and public servants (2000 Population Census).

3.7.6 Infrastructure

a. Housing and Road Network

Generally, the constituency lags behind the rate of housing delivery as compared to population growth. Maintenance of existing houses is low resulting in constant

deterioration. The major materials used for construction are landcretes for the super structure and raffia, bamboo or iron sheets for the roofing (District Planning Unit, 2010).

The general road network is very poor. About 30 kilometres of the highway is tarred. Intra community transport system is inadequate, delivery system and other economic activities.

b. Telecommunication and Electrification

The constituency enjoys the telecommunication services of Tigo, Vodafone, MTN and Airtel as well as GTV, TV3, Metro TV and TV Africa. Internet services are not adequate. There are a lot of private communication centres as few mobile phone operators in some bigger communities. (District Statistical Service Report, 2010). Currently, about 100 communities have been connected to the national grid and thus enjoy electricity. This affects efforts to promote small-scale industries to improve the socio-economic life of the rural dwellers (District Planning Unit, 2010).

3.7.7 Political Landscape

The constituency is the only one in the Amansie West District and therefore has only one Member of Parliament. It has 189 polling stations. The people in the constituency are very politically active especially those between 20 and 45 years confirming the findings of Alabi and Alabi, (2007). Out of the estimated population of 102,273 (2000 Population Census), about 60,000 registered as eligible voters to exercise their franchise in the 2008 general elections of which 56,000 voted; with 4,678 votes being rejected (EC; 2008). The constituency has the supporters of all the political parties in Ghana with the NPP, CPP,

NDC and PNC being the most prominent ones based on their physical presence, organisational and electoral activities in the constituency.

2008 Presidential Election

Table 3.1 Amansie West Constituency Results Summary (2008)

Name of Candidate	Party Affiliation	Votes Obtained	%
Nana Akuffo-Addo	NPP	43,433	84.04
J. E. Atta-Mills	NDC	6,994	14.53
Papa Kwesi Nduom	CPP	329	0.45
Edward Mahama	PNC	148	0.31
Kwesi Amofo-Yeboah	Independent	138	0.29
Emmanuel Ansah-Antwi	DFP	108	0.22
Kwabena Adjei	RPD	36	0.08
Thomas Ward-Brew	DPP	36	0.08
Total	8	51222	100%

Source: EC; Amansie West, 2008.

KNUST

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings or data in accordance with the specific objectives. They are analysed using tables, graphs and pie charts.

4.1 Study Population and Size

In all, 300 eligible voters including 12 key constituency executive members of 4 prominent political parties (NPP, CPP, NDC, PNC) from 6 of the 12 electoral areas in the constituency were interviewed. Of this number, 160 (53%) were females and 140 (47%) were males.

4.2 Electoral Areas Selected for the Study

Table 4.1 Selected Electoral Areas

No.	Electoral Areas	No of respondents (N=300)
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1	Adubia	50
2	Antoakrom	50
3	Datano	50
4	Esaase	50
5	Keniago	50
6	Nkwanta	50
Total	6	300

Source: Researcher's Construct Using Study Data

4.3 Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 4.2 Age Distribution

Age	Number of Respondents (N=300)	Percentage
18-28	54	18
29-39	68	23
40-50	78	26
51-61	45	15
62-72	34	11
73-83	15	5
84-94	6	2
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Construct Using Study Data

From Table 4.2 those between 18 and 50 years constitute 200 (67%) of the total sample. Of this, 78 (26%) respondents were aged between 40 and 50 years. Another 79 (26%) were aged between 51 and 72 years, whilst 21 (7%) were between 73 and 94 years.

4.4 Educational Background of Respondents

Table 4.3 Educational Background

Age	Number of Respondents (N=300)	Percentage
Primary	50	17
Middle	69	23
JSS	96	32
SSS	54	18
Tertiary	31	10
Total	300	100%

Source: Researcher's Construct Using Study Data.

Majority 215 (72%) of those interviewed have had basic education; 55 (18%) secondary education, whilst 31 (10%) had tertiary education.

4.5 Period, Types and Nature of Campaigning

All the 4 (100%) political parties maintained that campaigning was conducted before, during and after elections, but vigorous campaigning started from 2 years to elections. Political parties adopted all the types of campaigning: competitive, informational, image-making; and paper campaigning. Competitive and image-making types were ranked the highest by political parties especially in the last 2 years to elections. Informational and paper campaigns were used 4 to 3 years to elections. Majority, (70%) of the respondents were of the view that the 2008 elections were very competitive, whilst 20% said the elections were fairly competitive. Of the number, 10% said the elections were not competitive.

4.6 Campaign Channels

All the 4 (100%) political parties used speaking events, advertising, meetings, canvassing and promising, more than leafleting and internet as channels to campaign. None of them mentioned bribing to win elections as a campaign channel, though it is said that money is power; money is politics; monetary phenomenon are always and everywhere political.

4.7 Campaign Theme

All the parties had messages. The NPP's message was "We are Moving Forward" accompanied by Kangaroo dance. The CPP had a message of "Change" with wriggling

fists whilst that of the NDC was “Change’ with finger wriggling. The PNC had a message of “Hope” with a finger pointing gesture.

4.8 Campaign Techniques

All the 4 (100%) political parties used campaign techniques such as advertising; media management; mass meetings; modern technology and internet; and hustings. However, much emphasis was laid on advertising, media management, mass meetings and hustings. The internet was least used according to the research.

4.9 Positioning Political Elements

4.9.1 Positioning Political Elements by Political Parties

With regard to positioning political elements as a strategy during campaigning, all the 4 (100%) political parties stated they positioned all the elements, namely the presidential candidate, the party and the political platform in the political market to win more votes. However, they revealed that the presidential candidate (1) was positioned most followed by the party (2) and then the political platform (3) according to their ranking.

4.9.2 Voters Consideration of Positioning Political Elements before Voting

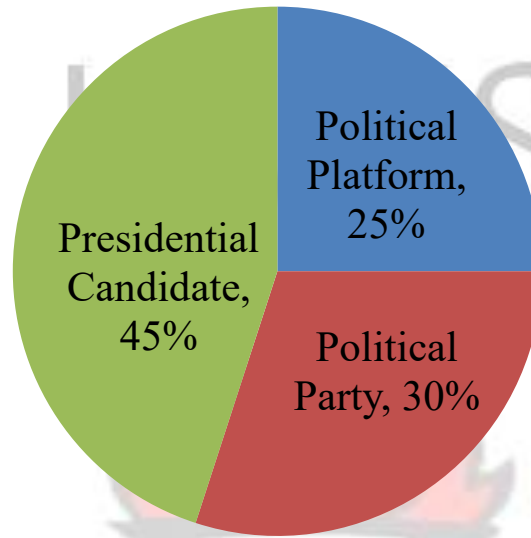


Figure 4.1 A pie chart showing voters consideration of positioning Elements

Source: Researcher's Construct using Study Data

From Figure 4.1, majority, 135 (45%) voted after considering the presidential candidate. Another 90 (30%) voters considered the political party before voting. The rest 75 (25%) voted due to the party's platform.

4.10 Positioning the Political Parties

4.10.1 Using Positioning Variables by the Parties

Table 4.4 Ranking of Positioning Variables of the Parties

Variables (Attributes)	Ranking
------------------------	---------

Party leadership	1
Past performance	2
Party manifesto	3
Ability to deliver	4
Particularistic benefits	5
Party image	6
Political skokeism	7
Semiotics	8
Positioning of party on ballot	9
Incumbency	10
Party ideology	11
Party structure and membership	12
Party constitution	13
Choice of running mate	14
Ethnicity	15

Source: Researcher's Construct using Study Data

From table 4.4, the parties were positioned most in the political market using leadership, past performance, manifestoes, ability to deliver, particularistic benefits and party image to influence voters. The rest were political stokeism, semiotics, position on the ballot and incumbency. The remaining attributes were not effectively used as presented in the ranking.

4.10.2 Influence of Party Positioning Variables (Strategies) on voters

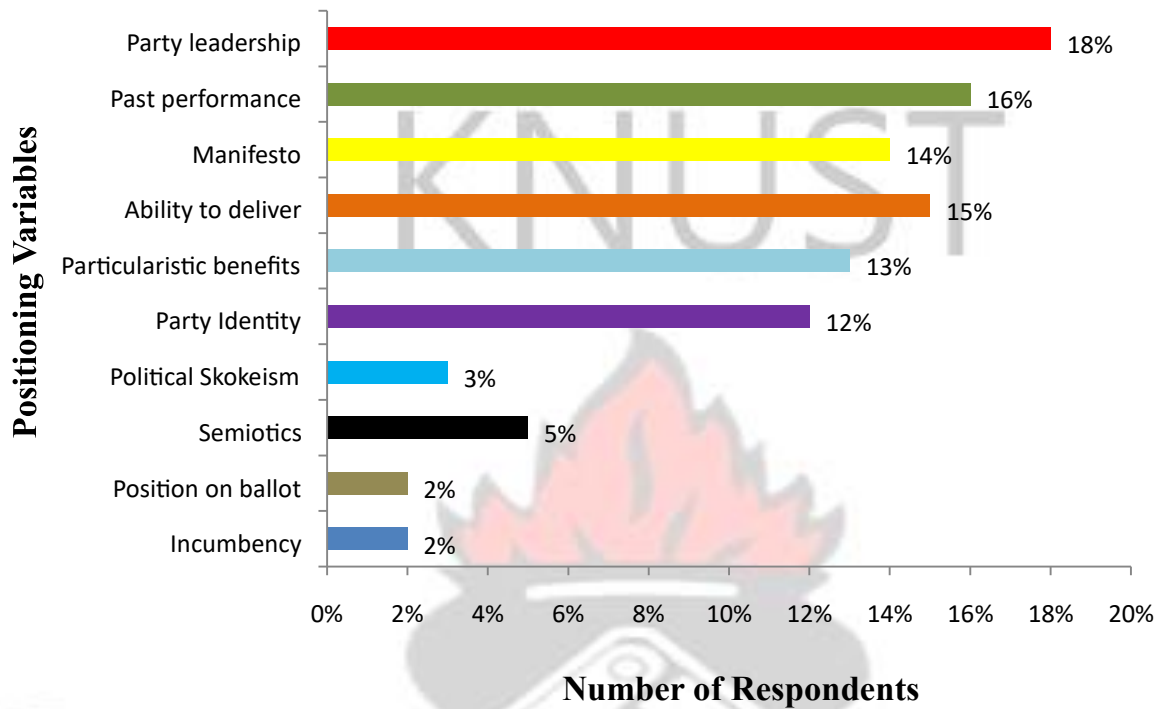


Figure 4.2 Influence of Party Variables on Voters

Source: Researcher's Construct

Majority, 129 (43%) respondents indicated that they were influenced by the party's past performance, manifesto and particularistic benefits, whilst 45 (15%) were influenced by the party's ability to deliver the promises. Another 54 (18%) respondents were influenced by the leadership of the Party; 36 (12%) by party identity of image and 9 (3%) by political stokeism. Another 15 (5%) of respondents were influenced by semiotics; 6 (2%) by position of party on the ballot paper; whilst 6 (2%) were influenced by incumbency before voting. None of the respondents indicated the influence of ethnicity, party structure, party constitution; ideology and choice of running mate.

4.11 Positioning the Presidential Candidates

4.11.1 Positioning Variables of Candidates Used by Parties

Table 4.5 Ranking of Positioning Variables of Candidates

Variables	Ranking
Conduct	1
Personality of leadership	2
Ability to deliver	3
Established personal image	4
Political pedigree and maturity	5
Ethnicity	6
Age	7
Position on the ballot paper	8
Association with celebrities	9

Source: Researcher's Own Construct

Table 4.5 showed that candidates were positioned by the parties using their conduct, personality, personal image, political pedigree and maturity, ability to deliver, age of candidate, position on ballot and association with celebrities. The association with celebrities received the least ranking.

4.11.2 Influence of Presidential Candidate's Attributes on Voters

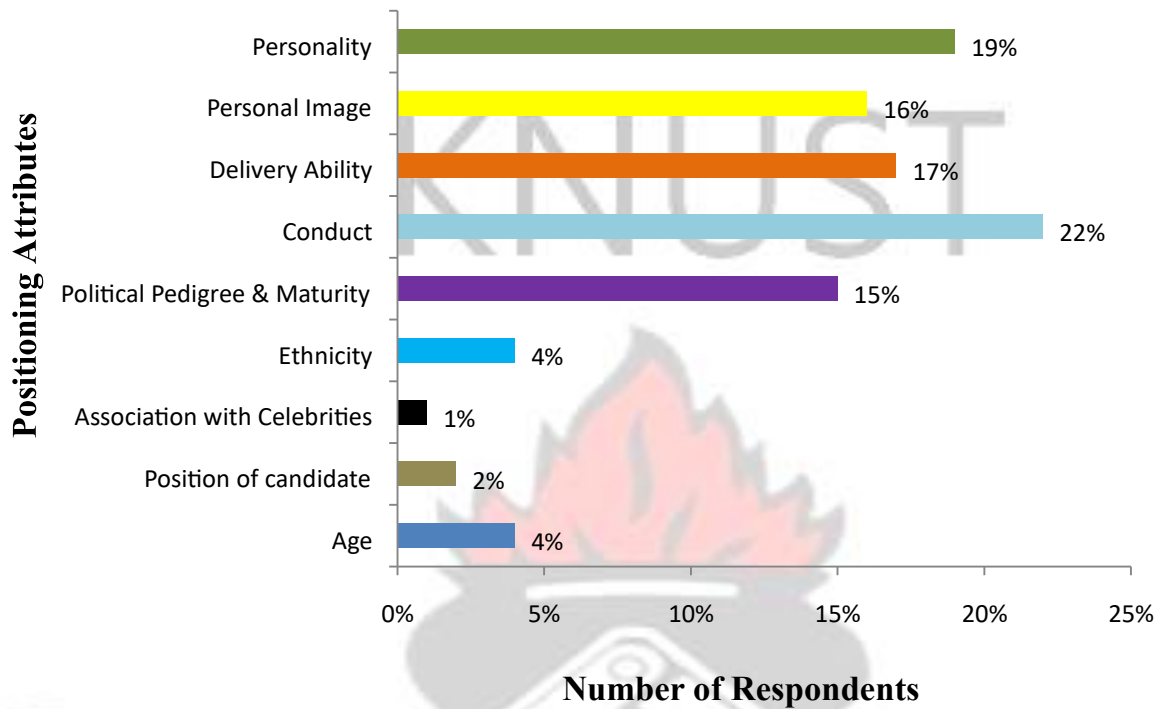


Figure 4.3 Influence of Attributes of Presidential Candidate on Voters

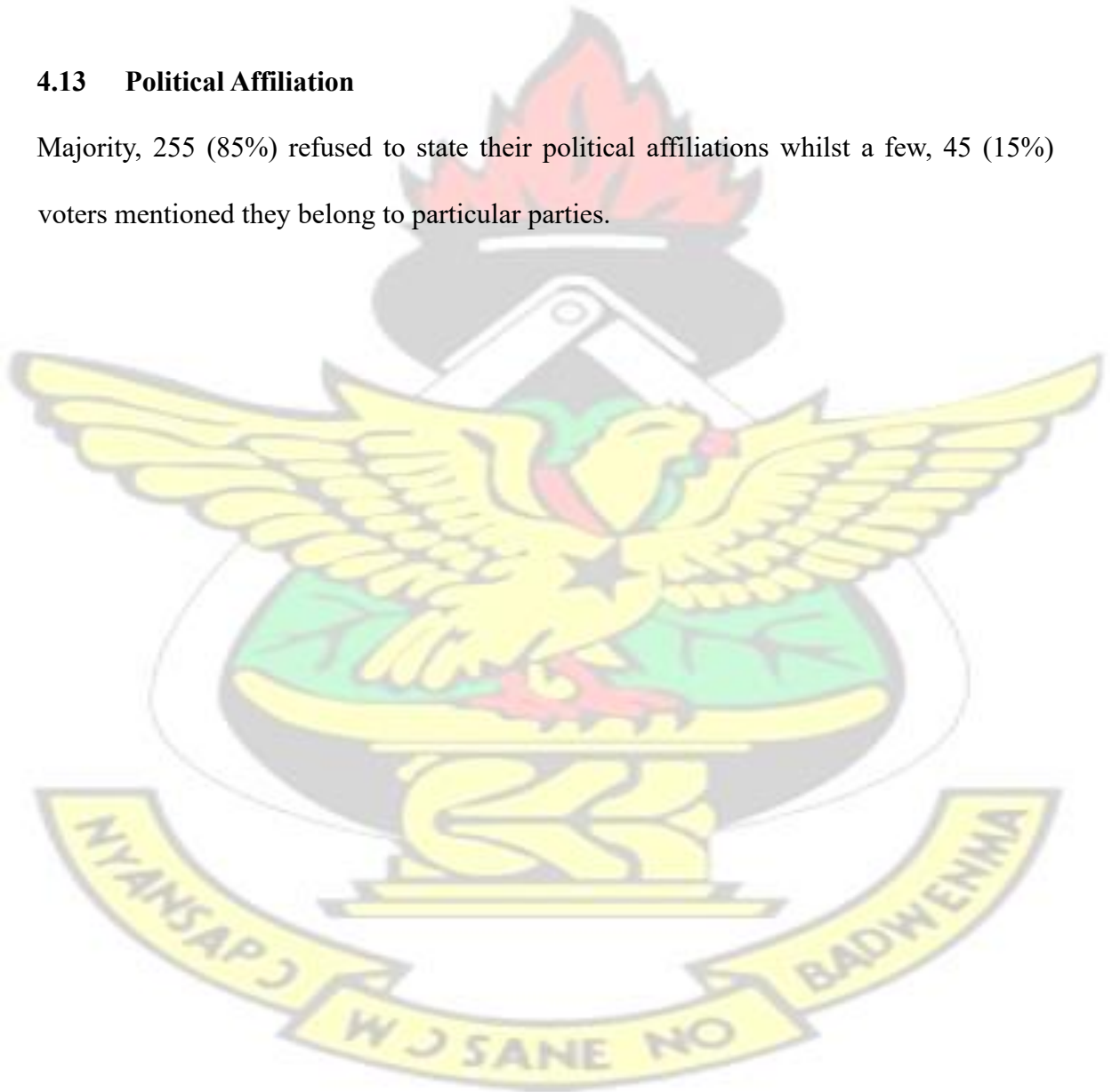
Out of the 300 (100%) voters interviewed, majority, 66 (22%) were influenced by the conduct of the presidential candidate, used as a positioning strategy by the parties, whilst 57 (19%) were most influenced by personality of leadership. Another 51 (17%) were influenced by ability to deliver; 48 (16%) by established personal image; 45 (15%) by political pedigree and maturity, whilst 12 (4%) by candidate's age and ethnic consideration respectively. Very few 3 (1%) voted because of candidate's association with celebrities whilst a few, 6 (2%) position on the ballot paper.

4.12 Voters' Satisfaction with Election Results

Majority, 270 (90%) respondents stated they were very satisfied with the election results as the positioning strategies helped to market the parties and candidates. A few, 30 (10%) said they were not satisfied since the positioning strategies used were not effective.

4.13 Political Affiliation

Majority, 255 (85%) refused to state their political affiliations whilst a few, 45 (15%) voters mentioned they belong to particular parties.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study aimed at determining the political positioning strategies used by political parties; their influence on voters; and the positioning variables or strategies that influence voters most. As a result the following findings were obtained and conclusions and recommendations made.

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.1 *Political Positioning Strategies by Parties*

The study revealed that all (100%) of the political parties applied political positioning strategies during the electioneering campaigns in the 2008 general elections in the Amansie West Constituency. This agrees with an earlier study that positioning as a business marketing strategy can be used in politics as an electoral marketing strategy by political parties (Lees-Marshment, 2001). It emerged from the study that all (100%) of the political parties used more focused positioning strategies whereby specific features or attributes of the parties' and presidential candidates were positioned to communicate their places in the political market; as well as positioning one candidate and ideas (products) against those of other political parties (Wind, 1982). The principal aims were to strengthen their current positioning in the minds of voters (consumers) and maintain them; and secondly to search for new voters (Henneberg, 2004)). The study further revealed that all

(100%) of the political parties strategically positioned all the political positioning elements; namely, the party, presidential candidate and the party platform.

However, the presidential candidates were the most highly positioned elements more than the party and political platform. The finding agrees with that of Lees-Marshment (2001), that political parties use the positioning strategies to position parties, candidates and platform during electoral processes and campaigning. The major reasons were to create awareness and affection so that voters will vote for a particular party or candidate to win elections.

a. Positioning Political Parties

The findings showed that in positioning the political party, all the parties (100%) strategically used the attributes or variables of the party in the following ranking order; party leadership, past performance, party manifesto, ability to deliver, particularistic benefits, party image; political stoicism, semiotics (sound, signs and symbols) and incumbency. The positioning of party leadership was the most important which agrees with the view of Foley (2002), that leaders are the most visible indication of what the party stands for and what it is likely to do if voters elect it to form government. The positioning of the party's past performance as second most important was also in agreement with the findings of Henneberg (2004), that physical evidence of the fulfilment of old promises serves as a good positioning strategy to have competitive edge over other contesting parties. The rest which were least used by the political parties in positioning the parties were party ideology, constitution, structure and membership, choice of running mate; and ethnicity which disagrees with earlier findings that ethnicity is still very salient in electoral

politics (Alabi and Alabi, 2007). The answer to the reason why party ideology was least used was in support of the findings of Sanders (1998), that voters are better educated, informed, more critical and thus make their voting decisions more on the basis of what the parties are like, or will deliver in government than on attachment to ideology.

b. Positioning Presidential Candidates

It was observed from the study that in positioning presidential candidates, all (100%) of the political parties used the features (variables) of the presidential candidates in the following ranking order; conduct, personality, ability to deliver, established personal image; and political pedigree and maturity of the candidate. The general behaviour of the candidate was most positioned so that he could increase credibility of the party and gain social influence (Shama, 1976); become more popular than just to be known (Kavangah, 1995); carve a brand image for the party (Smith & Hirst, 2001); bring his political experience to bear; and be seen as the person to deliver the promises of the party

c. Period and Approaches of Using Positioning Strategies

It emerged from the study that all (100%) of the political parties campaigned using positioning strategies before, during and after elections. However, vigorous positioning strategies started 2 years to elections applying the competitiveness and image-making approaches. This revelation is in consonance with the findings of Butler and Collins (1996), that political parties apply vigorous commercial marketing strategies to survive in the pressures of political market during the election year.

5.2.2 Influence of Positioning Strategies on Voters

a. Voters Consideration of Political Positioning Elements

The study revealed that 45% of respondents considered the presidential candidates as the most important positioning element more than political parties 30%; and political platform (25%) before voting. The reasons assigned were that they are the most important element (product) and the most visible indication of what the parties stand for and what they can do when in government (Foley, 2002). This means that it is what the parties presented to the voters that they would in turn buy. This assertion is in line with the earlier findings by Henneberg (2003), that in political marketing practices, there should be an exchange between political parties and the electorate in the electoral market. Thus, what the political parties had to offer to sell in the market were what the voters also bought. Hence, according to Menon (2008), the entire marketing process should be designed to market that product. The political platform (party promises) was the least considered (25%) out of the 3 elements by the voters who said that, though important, such promises would be fulfilled by the competent presidential candidates when in government. This agrees with an earlier findings by Lees-Marshment (2001) that the electorates are concerned with what the candidate will be able to deliver what he promised to do in the manifesto when he gains power.

b. Influence of Party Positioning Strategies (Variables) on Voters

The study revealed that most, 43% of the voters was influenced by past successful performance, promises (manifesto) and particularistic benefits; whilst 15% were

influenced by the parties' ability to deliver. This agrees with the findings by Henneberg (2004), which indicated that the physical evidence of the fulfilment of old promises, coupled with the new promises to be provided when in power again, serves as a good positioning strategy to have competitive advantage over other contesting parties. This is because the voters see the party as one which delivers on its promises. The study further revealed that 30% of the voters were influenced by party image and party leadership which included the candidates and prominent party members. This is in consonance with the findings of Shaw (1994), the nature of the leader and image of the party, could be influential in attracting or repelling voters. It emerged from the study that 5% of voters were influenced by incumbency and political stokeism. It is interesting to note that even though putting fear in the voters might have been well used, for instance, "if you vote for party B, projects and programmes would be abandoned" or "if you maintain party A, there will be war", they had little influence on the voters. This agrees with the earlier findings of Sanders (1998), that voters are better educated, informed, more critical and thus make their voting decisions more on the basis of what parties will offer in government than to vote based on threats.

Findings showed that semiotics and position of parties on the ballot papers influenced 7% of the voters. With 72% of voters having formal education lower than secondary level, it would have been expected that signs, sounds and symbols would influence the voters. However, this was not the case. The result disagrees with the findings of Smith (2007), that semiotics are useful when voter illiteracy is significant but confirms the growing sophistication of today's electorate (Scammel, 1995; Wring, 1997).

c. Influence of Presidential Candidates Positioning Strategies (Attributes) on Voters

It was observed from the study that more than 2/3 (74%) of the voters were influenced by the personality traits of the presidential candidate used as a positioning strategies. Thus, his character and nature; general behaviour; brand identity and ability to fulfil promises were very influential on the voters. This agrees with the findings of Shama (1976) that candidates with these attributes use language that can increase the credibility of the party and gain social influence, among others. This is supported by Kavanga (1995) that a presidential candidate with good conduct is liked, favoured and admired by the electorate and can win election easily. He is always respected since his personal strengths in society outweigh his weaknesses (Shama, 1976). According to Kavanga (1995); and Smith (2001) the personal brand image carved by a candidate becomes an important positioning strategy. No wonder voters were influenced to that extent. The study further revealed that 19% of voters were influenced by the age, political background and public life experience of the candidate. This collaborates with the assertion of Kwaku Tsen (Daily Guide, 2011) that political pedigree and maturity of the candidate are essential attributes that position him in the electoral market because he has what it takes to manage people and the country as a whole. Not many (4%) voters were influenced by the age perhaps all the candidates were over 60 years and might not have seen the need for a generational change (Kwaku Tsen, 2011).

It emerged from the study that 7% of voters were influenced by the ethnic background of the candidate; his association with important personalities and positioning on the ballot paper. Of this number, few (4%) were influenced by ethnic consideration which disagrees with the positioning of Aryee (2005) that ethnicity determines election fortunes of presidential candidates. The reason might have been that the candidates of the two prominent parties (NDC, NPP) were all Akans and the Amanise West constituency which is predominantly Akans did not vote on ethnic basis. The results also disagree with the findings of Alabi and Alabi (2007) which indicated that presidential candidates with very strong ethnic support base are those that stood the test of time. Very few (1%) voted for a candidate because of his association with celebrities for example; singing and dancing with them during campaigning to canvass for votes. The influence was not significant perhaps due to the reason that most of the rural voters did not know much of these celebrities. Yet, another few (2%) of voters were influenced by the position the candidate on the ballot paper. The result disagrees with the findings of Mensah (2009) that the position of the candidate on the ballot paper has some influence on voters. Perhaps they voted based on the candidate's ability to deliver promised (LeesMarshment, 2001) and not using semiotics on mere positions on paper (Mensah, 2009).

5.2.3 Most Influential Positioning Variables on Voters

Findings of the research showed that when voting for a particular party, more than half (76%) of voters were influenced most by past and future performance and the leadership ability to deliver new promises. This is in consonance with the earlier findings of Henneberg (2004) that physical evidence of the fulfilment of old promises coupled with

the ability of the leader to provide new ones when in power again, serves as good positioning strategy to win over others. It was therefore not surprising that because of the fulfilment of promises by the NPP government in the Amansie West Constituency (NPP Achievements, 2001-2008), most (84%) voted for the NPP as against few (14%) for the NDC; 0.1% for the CPP and 0.3% for the PNC in the 2008 general elections (EC Results, 2008).

The study further revealed that when voting for a particular presidential candidate almost all (84%) of the respondents were influenced most by personality and ability related attributes which were strategically positioned in the electoral market during campaigning. This is in agreement with findings of a research conducted by LeesMarshment (2001) that the presidential candidate of a party, who is an epitome of what the voters expect, must possess certain important attributes that the party can use to position him and the party very well, in the minds of the electorate to influence their voting pattern. In fact, the electoral success of a political party depends on the quality of its presidential candidate who physically represents the party as an entity (Foley, 2002).

5.2 Conclusion

There is a significant relationship between party positioning and presidential candidate positioning. Political parties position both parties and presidential candidates which are the main political positioning elements using their specific attributes (variables) as positioning strategies. Political parties position the presidential candidates more than the

parties and their platforms since the former is the epitome of what the voters expect. Political positioning strategies are applied by parties consistently before, during and after campaigning and elections. However, it becomes vigorous two years to actual elections. Voters (45%) consider the presidential candidate as the most important political positioning elements than the party (30%) and political platform (25%) before voting because he is the most visible indication of what the party stands for and what it can do when in government. The positioning variables of a political party that influenced voters most were the party's past performance and its leadership ability to deliver new promises. It is not surprising 76% of voters were influenced by these party attributes. The positioning variables of a presidential candidate that influenced voters most were the personality related attributes and his ability to fulfil his promises. Those interviewed said the qualities are the most important. This therefore accounted for the reason why 84% of voters voted for a particular presidential candidate.

The above therefore goes to prove that to a greater extent, political parties apply political positioning strategies in electioneering campaigns; and that the positioning strategies applied have greater influence on voters.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the above, the following recommendations are made:

1. Political parties should position all the attributes of the political positioning elements so as to have equal influence on the voters. This should be done by the communications department.
2. Political parties should be circumspect in the selection of candidates with good conduct; have good knowledge in politics and the ability to deliver party promises since communications alone cannot carry a poor product with little or no appeal in the electoral market. The Search Committee of the party should be responsible for this work.
3. Polling station executives should elect selected candidates based on their political pedigree and maturity; and the ability to deliver instead of being influenced by monetary incentives. Constituency executives should be responsible during intraparty elections.
4. Party members and sympathisers should be educated to exhibit good behaviour towards the electorates for them to have good perception about, and get attracted to the party. This is because the nature of the candidate and the behaviour of party members could be influential in attracting or repelling voters. This exercise should be done by the party executives at the national, regional and constituency levels.
5. Political parties should educate voters to assess them and the candidates using their nature; past performance; new promises and the ability to deliver promises instead of using ethnicity, semiotics, association with celebrities and the mere position of the party or candidate on the ballot paper. This responsibility should be carried out by the party leadership and the communications department.