Applying branding theory to political marketing: a pilot study

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ABSTRACT

Recent developments in the research field of political marketing highlights the growing importance and application of branding to politics. However, despite recent advancements in the research field of customer-based brand equity, the methods used to evaluate brand image and performance remain simplistic and provide little insight into strengths and weaknesses of a political brand.

This study pilots Romaniuk's 'Mental Market Share' brand equity measure, as an alternative method to measuring political brand equity (2013). Specifically, the measure is used to analyse the data collected from primary research conducted on the brand image of New Zealand political parties, and secondary research published by CNN and ORC International on the 2016 presidential primary candidates for the Democratic and Republican parties. Participants of both studies indicated the parties or candidate that they perceive as performing well, or having strong policies, on a set list of political issues.

The results show a high correlation between the mental market share of a political brand and election results; this suggests that the more salient a political party or candidate is the more support or votes they will receive. However, in the context of the New Zealand and United States political systems, the method was unable to predict election outcomes. Therefore, mental market share predicts the popularity, or popular vote, of a political brand. Future research should develop the methodological design of mental market share to account for the unique structure of a country or electorate's political system.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research relevance and purpose

In response to the growing influence of consumerism on society, political parties and candidates are becoming increasingly sophisticated in the way that they compete for the attention and support of their electorates. This has resulted in politics adopting theory and practice from commercial marketing, and in particular branding. Despite debate surrounding the application of branding to politics, research published in the political branding field has highlighted the value of understanding political parties and candidates as brands, as it enables political actors to more effectively build relationships with, and meet the concerns of, voters. However, the methods operationalised by academics to determine the success or performance of political parties and candidates are simplistic, providing few feedback loops and lacking diagnostic features beyond voting intention and the count of votes from elections.

In contrast, research on customer-based brand equity measures have made considerable advancements, with Romaniuk's (2013) conceptualisation and operationalisation of the mental market share model, to evaluate the equity of a brand and forecast brand success. Further, Wright, Teagle, and Feetham (2014) have successfully tested the application of the mental market share model to a non-commercial market, specifically the field of science communication.

The research presented is an exploratory study that aims to pilot an alternative method to measuring political brand equity, to provide insights into how voters learn about and evaluate politicians and their political brand. Specifically, the result analysis replicates the concept evaluation methodologies operationalised by Wright, Teagle, and Feetham (2014) in the field of science communication. This research applies the mental market share measure to two studies, one of which investigates the brand image of political brands in the context of New Zealand politics, and the other American politics. Thereby, testing, and extending, the little research that has extended the application of the mental market share model beyond the commercial marketplace. If mental market share can be applied to another market, being politics, this research will further quantify the relationship Romaniuk (2013) identified between brand saliency and brand equity.

1.2 Organisation of this Thesis

This thesis begins with a literature review that consists of chapters' two and three. Chapter two provides a discussion of the research developments of political marketing, including the in-depth analysis of political branding as a key research theme of the political marketing field. The chapter concludes with a brief review of public opinion political polling research, to evaluate the practice of political marketers and researchers who utilise poll results to measure the performance and equity of political brands. The following chapter introduces the theory of customer-based brand equity and critically examines the methodological developments in customer-based brand equity measures, to outline the potential of customer-based brand equity measures to provide insights into consumer evaluations of non-traditional brands that belong to non-commercial markets.

Following the literature review, the research problem and objective are outlined in chapter four, and the methodological design of the research is described in chapter five. In chapter six, the findings of this research are presented, and finally a critical discussion of these findings, the limitations of this study and future areas of research are discussed in chapter seven.

2.0 POLITICAL MARKETING AND BRANDING, AND POLLING

2.1 Introduction

In the past three decades, politics has experienced great change in its competitive landscape, due to the increasing development and influence of new technologies, globalisation and consumerism (Needham, 2005; Scammell, 2007; Reeves, de Chernatony, & Carrigan, 2006). In response, political parties and candidates have become progressively sophisticated in the way that they compete for the attention and support of voters, by adopting theory and practice from the field of political marketing. Political marketing is a relatively new research discipline; however, the body of literature that discusses the dependence of political parties and politicians on traditional marketing techniques is growing (Baines, Harris, & Lewis, 2002; Lees-Marshment, 2003; Lees-Marshment, 2001; Lock & Harris, 1996). The research and practice of political marketing has led to the criticism of the field by political science practitioners and academics, who claim that it introduces a 'consumer-like' force that is observed in business management and commercial markets into politics (Lees-Marshment, 2003). This has led to the debate between the critics and political marketing academics and practitioners that has stifled the development of the research field, as the literature has been primarily concerned with proving the appropriateness and value of applying marketing to politics.

The chapter investigates the debate and its effect on the development of the research discipline by reviewing the literature published on how marketing and branding is applied to politics, to determine if the application is appropriate and provides value to politics rather than diminish its integrity. The chapter first reviews the political marketing literature, to show how the field has developed beyond the criticism of political scientists and to highlight recent themes that are the focus of the research and practice of political marketing. The research published on political branding, as a prominent research theme that has developed from political marketing, is then reviewed, to outline the value of conceptualising political parties and politicians and brands, and how developments in the field have attempted to measure the image and equity of political brands. The chapter then concludes with a review of literature published on political polling, as a prominent method, or supplementary evidence to methods, used to measure the performance and equity of political brands; despite the barrage of criticism political polls has received on the accuracy of its results.

2.2 Application of marketing to politics: The move to a more comprehensive approach

A simple definition of political marketing is that it is the practice of applying and adapting commercial marketing techniques and concepts to politics (Lees-Marshment, 2001a). Despite the well-established research of the two parent disciplines, marketing and political science, political marketing is a relatively new field of research and is underdeveloped (Baines, Harris, & Lewis, 2002). Although, the attention that political marketing is receiving from academics, politicians, journalists and the public is growing, and a number of studies published outline the increasing prominence of the application of marketing in politics (Andrews, 1996; Baines et al., 2002; Lees-Marshment, 2001a; Lees-Marshment, 2003; Lock & Harris, 1996). While the body of literature on political marketing is becoming more established, the attention the discipline has received has not all been positive. Political marketing, while popular amongst marketers, has not been widely accepted, and is heavily criticised by the political science field.

The criticism of political marketing is due to the misunderstanding amongst critics of how marketing can be applied to politics, and as a result critics have restricted the application of marketing to the practice of marketing communications in politics (Andrews, 1996; Lees-Marshment, 2001a; Lock & Harris, 1996; Wring, 1997). Historically, the application of marketing communication in politics has been equated to propaganda or a form of manipulation (Reeves, de Chernatony, & Carrigan, 2006). From this perspective, political scientists have argued that political marketing ignores the historic purpose of political organisations to empower people, and foster philosophy and ideology. Instead, political scientists see political marketing as a consumer-like force that is concerned with marketing political parties, politicians and policies to the voting public with the sole focus of winning an election (Lees-Marshment, 2003). This view suggests that political organisations disregard their history and responsibility of driving policy change and developments, to write policy based on the opinions of voters to win their votes and gain power at the risk of the long-term future of the electorate, or country. This perspective ignores the research undertaken from the early 21st century that shows the ability of consumer-focused activities and theories adopted from commercial marketing, like marketing intelligence, to develop a more responsive government that "meet[s] citizen demands rather than elite political rhetoric" (Lees-Marshment, 2003, p. 2).

The debate between political scientists and marketers, as well as the lack of consensus amongst political marketing researchers on the direction of the field, has stalled the development of political marketing research and practice (Lees-Marshment, 2003). While there is no agreement amongst political marketing academics on the direction of the field, there is agreement that for political marketing to reach its full potential, and aid democracy rather than diminish it, the field needs to change the direction it is following. As a solution, Lees-Marshment (2003) defines the need for a more comprehensive approach to be taken when applying marketing to politics, a sentiment reflected in the studies of a number of academics discussed in the following sections.

Lees-Marshment's official conceptualisation of a comprehensive approach to political marketing consists of five principles, of which, three of the principles became widely accepted and discussed (2003). The first principle is that marketing concepts, as well as marketing techniques, are incorporated into the research and practice of political marketing. Secondly, that the marketing concepts and techniques adopted from marketing are adapted to fit the nuances of the political context. Finally, marketing concepts and theories are applied to not only the communication activities of a political organisation, namely the campaign period, but the whole political organisation (Lees-Marshment, 2003). Lees-Marshment also noted that for this comprehensive approach to be successful it needs to be well communicated amongst practitioners and academics from political science, marketing, and political marketing, to reduce the resistance towards the discipline and ensure political marketing is being practiced and researched appropriately (Lees-Marshment, 2003).

Section 2.2.1 to section 2.2.4 reviews the key political marketing literature that illustrates the journey of the research from mere cloning of marketing practice to politics, to the efforts of academics to adapt marketing techniques and concepts to create bespoke models and frameworks for political marketing. The discussion begins with how the two academic fields, political science and marketing, were married together in the early development of the political marketing discipline. From the beginnings of political market research, in the early to mid-90s, the review of the literature follows the key research developments in the field. These developments include the investigation of the growing use and expanding application and adaption of marketing to politics, to the introduction of market orientated political parties who focus on understanding the needs, attitudes and behavior of voters. The review of the political marketing literature concludes with the analysis of the work of Butler and Harris (2009), and Harris, and Lock (2010), who too summarise the political marketing literature, as of the end of the first decade of the 21st century, and discuss the future direction of political marketing literature.

2.2.1 The marriage of politics and marketing

2.2.1.1 Butler and Collins (1994 and 1996)

Despite the widely discussed debate between political scientists and marketers, extending well into the 21st century, in 1996 Butler and Collins argued that political scientists accept the application of political marketing tools to politics during the campaign period, in particular around the practice of political communication. Whether this argument was true or overly optimistic, it encapsulates the habit of a proportion of political marketing academics to restrict the value and application of marketing to the formal campaign period. The intent of Butler and Collins (1996) was not only to argue that political marketing is accepted, but also to join the body of work that provides evidence in support of the application of marketing to politics. To do so, Butler and Collins (1996) applied a well-established strategic framework of competitive market analysis to political parties, to highlight the strategic role and value of political. The competitive market analysis framework consists of four competitive positions: market leader, challenger, follower and nicher.

To illustrate the applicability of the strategic framework, Butler and Collins (1996) took examples from a number of electoral contexts and countries. A varying range of examples were used, as a key concern with the literature in the mid-nineties was that it tended to focus on a single country and, in some cases, a single party or politician, for example the United Kingdom and politicians like Thatcher or Blair. To apply and test the framework to the political context, the research focused on the central democratic activities of elections and treated political parties as analogous to commercial companies and voters as consumers; thereby directly applying the framework in its original design. Butler and Collins (1996) outline market share as the basis for how the strategic position of political parties can be determined. Therefore, the political party with the greatest market, or vote, share is the leader. However, the authors note that the challenger is not always the party with the second greatest market share and, instead, the distinctive feature of the challenger is that it implements an active strategy to become leader. Therefore, there are limitations in categorising political parties by market share.

For each strategic position, the authors define the characteristics and potential strategic directions of competing political parties. A leader is characterised as having the highest market share, it is an orientation point for the political market, and is under continual attack. The leader has three potential strategic directions it can take: firstly, to focus on expanding the total market; secondly, to expand its share of the market; or thirdly, defend its market share. The challenger is characterised by its aim to remove the leader from power, and in some contexts, there may be more than one challenger. Similar to the leader there are three potential strategic directions for the challenger, or challengers: firstly, actively attack the leader; secondly, actively attack similar competitors; and thirdly, actively attack smaller competitors to increase their own market share. The follower is characterised by their purposeful imitation of other competitors’ offerings and focus on the long-term satisfaction of their voters through broad rather than niche participation, therefore the strategic directions for the follower are to imitate and adapt the political offerings of competitors. The nicher is characterised as being the leader of a narrowly defined, or niche, market of voters, and have a specialist focus. The nicher has three potential strategic directions it can take: firstly, to create a niche market; secondly, expand the niche market; or thirdly, defend the niche market.

Butler and Collins (1996) achieved the aim of illustrating the application of marketing, at a strategic level, to politics. The application of the framework of competitive market analysis developed a more descriptive way of understanding the position of a party or politician that extends beyond the traditional categorisation of a political party as left or right wing. This is a potential solution for differentiating political parties, and politicians, as they become more centre-aligned and create valence policies. However, the rigidness of the framework and strategic positions that are taken directly from marketing and applied in their original design, created a superficial discussion for each position that lacked illustration and explanation; with no indication of how these strategic directions were implemented or how it would result in election success. Like a number of studies, some of which are discussed later, Butler and Collins (1996) did not consider the operationalisation of their findings, and instead focused on proving that a marketing technique, concept, framework or model fit the political context and aligned with aspects of the political science field. The lack of operationalisation reflects the apparent belief of academics, at this stage of the research, that if political organisations could be categorised like commercial companies and marketing terms and theories applied to politics then the field of political marketing was justified and its value proven.

2.2.1.2 Lock and Harris (1996)

Analysing the work of academics like of Butler and Collins (1996), Lock and Harris (1996) build their work upon their critique of academics and marketers who directly apply commercial marketing concepts and techniques to the political arena, with little consideration for potential differences between the two markets. Lock and Harris (1996) contend that differences between commercial and political marketing should be accounted for.

Interestingly, Butler and Collins's (1996) mirrored application of a marketing framework to politics is in stark contrast to the approach of their study *'Political Marketing: Structure and Process'* (1994). The aim of this work was to present a model of political marketing that builds upon the model of Blois (1974), to define the structural and process characteristics of the model through the review of existing political marketing studies. To do so, Butler and Collins (1994) examined the similarities and differences between elections, and the campaigning period, to the buying situations of commercial marketplaces. By considering the similarities and differences, as well as how marketing is being applied to politics to date, Butler and Collins suggested that rather than constraining the field by forcing marketing labels on political dimensions, such as calling a candidate a product, the orientation or approach taken when applying marketing to politics should be the focus (1994). Therefore, the authors use the conceptual model proposed by Blois (1974) as a starting point to build their framework upon, by adapting marketing concepts and theories to fit the political context. Blois (1974) asserts that to understand the role and implications of marketing in a non-for-profit organisation, like a political party, the organisational features should be considered. Based on this assertion, and the conceptual model of Blois (1974), Butler and Collins (1994) develop a framework that consists of the structural and process characteristics of politics and political parties, to provide strategic direction for both political scientists and marketers.

Following is an outline of the structural and process characteristics with the individual elements of each characteristic listed in the parentheses. The structural characteristics of the framework includes the political product (person/party/ideology, loyalty and mutability), the organisation (amateurism, negative perception of marketing and dependence on volunteers) and the market (ideologically charged, social affirmation and the counter-consumer). The process characteristics of the framework are concerned with the procedures and systems that govern marketing activity; this includes style versus substance, advertising and communications standards, news and media attention, political polls, and tactical voting.

Similar to Butler and Collins (1994), Lock and Harris (1996) compare the two fields to identify seven key differences, based on British politics. Firstly, for the majority, voters make their choice, or purchase, on the same day; this is uncommon in traditional purchase situations. Secondly, unlike normal purchases, there is no price attached to voting. Thirdly, in politics majority rules and voters must live with the collective choice of the voting public, even if the winning party is not who they voted for. The fourth difference is that political parties win the purchase by popular voter, and being first past the post. The fifth difference is that political entities are complex and intangible ‘products’ that cannot be ‘unbundled’. The sixth difference is that the introduction of a new brand, or political party, is uncommon due to the difficulty to win support against the larger, longstanding parties. Lastly, in commercial markets brand leaders remain in front, while in British politics parties with successive election wins tend to fall behind in opinion polls between elections.

Based on the differences between the two markets, and the nature of electoral choice in comparison to commercial purchase decisions, Lock and Harris (1996) recommend a change in approach by academics and political marketers from the cloning of marketing theory to politics to the adaptation of concepts and techniques. It is suggested that frameworks, models, and adaptation of concepts and techniques need to be researched and developed, for the adoption of marketing to politics to be effective. While Lock and Harris (1996) propose some valuable areas for future research, the differences between the political and commercial markets is based on politics in Britain and the illustration of each difference is sparse. The authors give little indication of how each difference will affect the practice of political marketing, and the influence it may have on politics if it is not accounted for when developing marketing. Without a cause for action or an understanding of how to account for the differences, there is no direction for the efforts of academics and political marketers to develop and adapt marketing practice to politics. This highlights an important future area of study, as by researching and understanding how the differences between politics and marketing will affect the practice of political marketing it will assist the development of theory and models in the field. Whether all the differences identified by Lock and Harris (1996) are accurate or not, the article shows that the political and commercial markets are not identical and this should be considered and researched further; particularly if it is found that the differences do influence the practice of political marketing.

2.2.1.3 Wring (1997)

Taking a slightly different approach to that of other pro-political marketing research, Wring (1997) explores the relationship between the political science and marketing fields from a political science perspective, by tracing the theoretical development of political marketing and the use of concepts from marketing to analyse election campaigns. Firstly, Wring (1997) argues that the application of marketing to politics is appropriate, as, against popular debate, political marketing is not concerned with purely appealing to voters to win an election.

Rather, the author asserts that by utilising consumer focused marketing techniques and theory, political parties may balance the needs, or satisfaction, of voters with their organisational objects and ideology. Wring (1997) summarises this perspective in his definition of the practice of political marketing, described as “the party or candidate’s use of opinion research and environmental analysis to produce and promote a competitive offering which will help realise organisational aims and satisfy groups of electors in exchange for their votes.” (Wring, 1997, p.653).

Wring (1997) goes on to present a political marketing framework, with four key aspects: the organisation (party), environment (environmental analysis), market (supporters, floating voters, and opponents), and the marketing mix (product, promotion, place, and price). The remainder the author’s discussion focuses on the last aspect, the marketing mix, and defines the four ‘Ps’ within the context of politics. In contrast to the basis of the work of Butler and Collins (1994) and Lock and Harris (1996), the labels remain unchanged from marketing to politics. However, Wring (1997) does adapt the definition of the four ‘Ps’ to reflect some of the differences that Lock and Harris (1996) identified. For example, the product variable is defined as the policies, and the party and leader image, rather than a tangible product or personal services.

The focus placed on the four ‘Ps’ in this article is a concern, as academics like Blois the framework is considered outdated and flawed within the parent discipline of marketing (as cited in Wring, 1997). Furthermore, restricting the tools available to political marketing to the marketing mix, and adopting the labels of the four ‘Ps’, as they are in marketing, is a crude application of the field that neglects the subtleties of the political context, as well as how marketing theories and concepts can be used to improve thinking and understanding of these subtleties. For example, picking up on the 'opinion research' element of Wring's (1997) definition, the use of marketing research theories and concepts like market intelligence may develop understanding of voters, as in marketing it provides insights into consumer behavior and engagement. The literature reviewed in section 2.2.1, the marriage of politics and marketing, highlights the importance of adapting marketing theory and concepts when applying them to the political context, however, the adaption attempted by the researchers, like Wring (1997), were not without their limitiations. Perhaps, to best adapt theory from marketing, and develop new concepts, models and methods within political context, the research first needs to establish the extent to which political marketing is applied in politics, and, specifically, how political organisations utilise the practice. Section 2.2.2, from marketing campaigns to market oriented parties, outlines how the application of marketing in politics has extended, and become more central to the operations of political organisations, since the mid-nineties.

2.2.2 From marketing campaigns to market oriented parties

2.2.2.1 O'Cass (1996)

A common theme over the work of Butler and Collins (1994 and 1996) and Wring (1997) was the restricted application of marketing to the formal campaign period. O'Cass (1996) identified that a large proportion of existing studies examined the application of marketing techniques to the campaigns of political parties during elections, while research into the use of marketing fulltime, or throughout the election and governing term of the successful political party is minimal. In commercial marketing, businesses that undertakes marketing and are customer focused year round are categorised as being market oriented. A market oriented business designs its products in response to changing customer needs, to ensure customers are satisfied and business objectives are met (Lees-Marshment, 2001b). A core element of the marketing orientation is the marketing concept, this concept focuses on the creation, communication and delivery of superior customer value, beyond the efforts of competitors. O'Cass (1996) postulates that the degree to which a political party adopts the marketing concept will reflect the degree to which the political party is marketing oriented. To test this hypothesis a study was undertaken to examine an Australian political party and its party members' understanding of the marketing concept, their attitudes towards it, as well as how influential and applicable the marketing concept is to the party. This study reports on a case study of an Australian political party that uses both qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative research phase involved a mix of non-structured and structured in-depth interviews, with executive management party members (n=7). The quantitative research phase consisted of a mail survey, developed from the qualitative phase, that utilised a likert-type response format (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Within the party, there are four key decision-making roles that the sample (n=150) was drawn from: state executive, state candidates, state campaign director, and branch chairman.

In the qualitative phase, it was found that state executives had no understanding of the marketing concept, with six of the seven expressing no understanding and the other interviewee while expressing a minimal understanding incorrectly defined the term. For those six interviewees that expressed no understanding, a definition of the marketing concept was presented and they were asked to provide feedback on their attitudes towards it. Four interviewees had a negative attitude towards the concept, one a positive attitude, and two a mixed or neutral attitude. The main concern was that it would lead politics away from ideologies and philosophies, while some participants saw value in the adoption of the concept if it could win the party the election. The quantitative phase provided data for analysis of the dimensions and adequacy of the marketing concept, as well as the influence of the concept in the political party. The results found that participants agreed with the objectives of the marketing concept and perceived them as being aligned with the goals of the political party; such as that like business organisations political parties should devote their activities to determining voters' needs and wants, to satisfy them and obtain government. However, like the qualitative stage, concern was expressed about the potential conflict between voter needs and political ideologies. Unlike the qualitative stage, the mail survey found that the majority (67 percent) believed that the marketing concept would be useful to the party and 74 percent believed it would work if adopted. Over both phases of the research, there was agreement amongst the participants that the marketing concept has little to no influence within the party. Based on the research into the marketing concept, conclusions on the degree of market orientation of the party were drawn. The data collected to determine the degree to which the party was marketing orientated was based around three key behavioural acts that indicate voter focus and coordinated marketing: the generation of market intelligence, the dissemination of the intelligence party wide, and the responsiveness of the party to the market intelligence. The research found that the Australian political party had a low voter focus and placed little emphasis on market research; this finding aligns with the perspective of the party and its members that the influence of marketing concept is low.

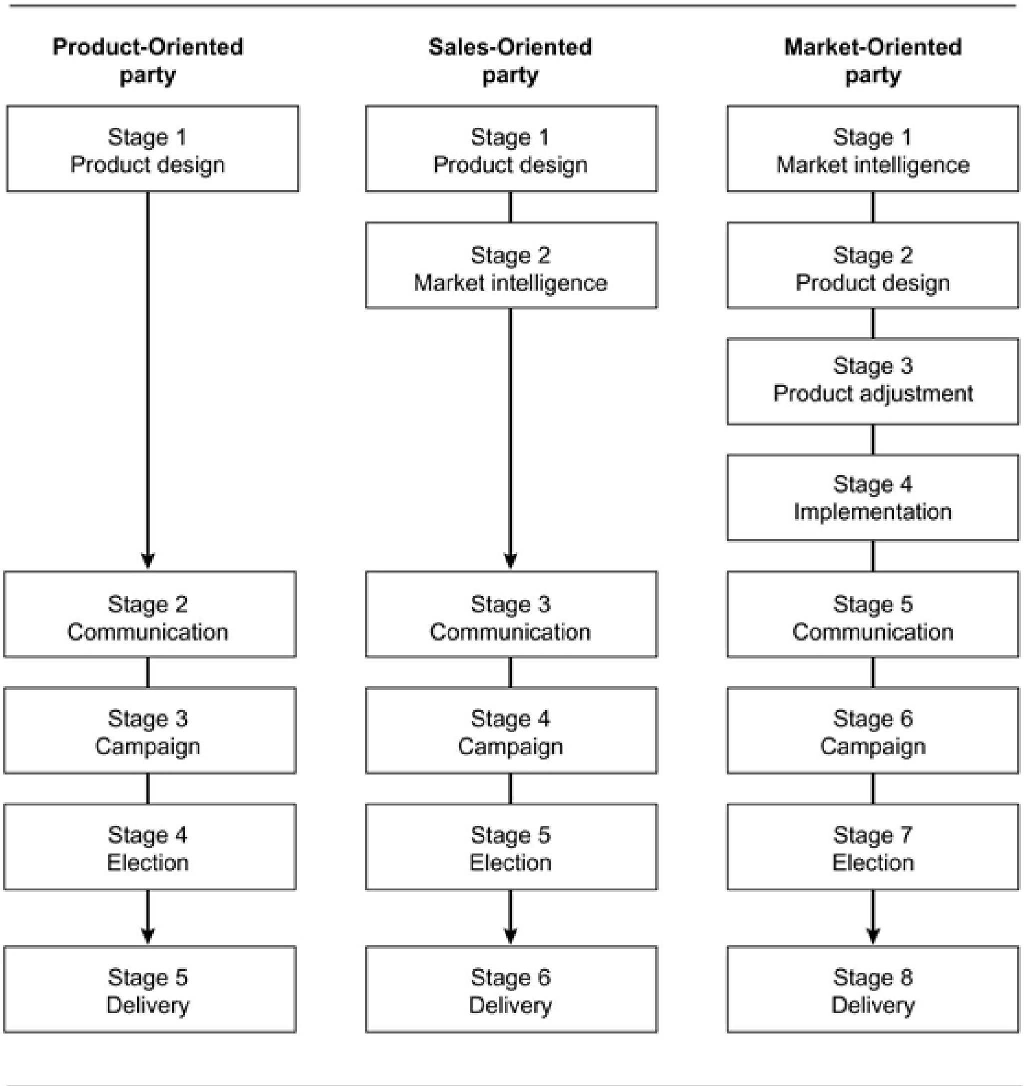
O'Cass (1996) provides a unique perspective of the perceptions and attitudes of a political party and its members, focusing specifically on how political parties operationalise marketing theory. The findings of this research show that the misunderstanding or lack of knowledge of the marketing concept is its greatest barrier to its adoption by political parties. Therefore, there needs to be more research into adapting marketing concepts, techniques, models, frameworks and methodologies to the political context, so then they are more approachable, relevant and easy to understand for political parties and their members. While the findings show a lack of understanding within this Australian political party of what the marketing concept, and market orientation, is, this does not mean that political organisations do not undertake marketing beyond the campaign period. Rather, it could be questioned whether the focus of practitioners and researchers on the campaign period has led to this gap in understanding. From this research, it is clear that there needed to be further research into this area and formalisation of what it means for a political party to be market oriented. Jennifer Lees-Marshment tackled this challenge in a body of work that defined the different orientations of political parties over the years, and identified the ways in which political parties have been market oriented; even if they did not know that it is what they were doing (2001a; 2001b; 2003). One of Lees-Marshment's articles on market orientation in politics is discussed in depth next.

2.2.2.2 Lees-Marshment (2001a)

Lees-Marshment (2001a) developed a theoretical framework that outlines the marketing process of three political party marketing orientations: product, sales, and market orientation. The framework is developed based on literature from both marketing and political science, and is paired with a qualitative illustration that focuses on the development of the British Labour party between 1983 and 1997. Following is a definition of each orientation, with a brief account of how the British Labour party has, over the years, practiced each orientation. For an overview and comparison of the marketing processes undertaken by the product, sales and market orientations, see figure one.

Lees-Marshment (2001a) describes political parties with a product orientation as those who develop policies aligned with the ideologies of their party, with no consideration of voter demands, and argue their stance, with the view that voters will 'see sense' and support the policies. The marketing process for the product orientation involves product design, communication, campaign, election, and delivery. In 1983, Labour altered existing policies to be distinctly left-wing that were unpopular with, and unreflective of, the voting public. In all communication, particularly during the campaign, Labour argued its point of view and maintained their stance in all advertising. Labour did not win the 1983 election and only obtained 28 percent of the overall vote. A sale orientated political party focuses on selling its argument to voters, by communicating and campaigning in a manner that is effective in reaching and persuading the voting public. Similar to the product orientation, the policies and party remains uninfluenced by the voting public, however, it is accepted that a portion of the public may not agree with the party or its policies and that the opinion of these voters need to be changed. Market intelligence is used to evaluate public response to the party and policies, from which effective communication and advertising are developed. The marketing process is near-identical to the product orientation but with the addition of market intelligence between product design and communication. In 1987, Labour developed an effective and well-executed campaign, based on research undertaken by MORI and Philip Gould. The research included the analysis of surveys, polls, and focus groups, to reveal product weaknesses that were accounted for in the design of the campaign. Unlike the 1983 campaign, Labour went beyond advertising to engage with the public at events. Despite the campaigning efforts of Labour, the party lost the election, although popular vote increased slightly to 32 percent. Political parties with a market orientation design their offerings based on the voting public. Market intelligence is used to identify the demands of voters and from this policy is designed, as, unlike the previous two orientations, the focus is not on changing the views of the public but rather fulfilling their needs. In saying that, the fulfilment of voter needs is balanced with the ethics and capability of parties to deliver. The marketing process for market orientated political parties involves: market intelligence, product design, product adjustment, implementation, communication, campaign, election, delivery. In comparison to the sales orientation, market intelligence now precedes product design and there are an additional two stages: product adjustment and implementation. Product adjustment involves ensuring and altering the design of the product to satisfy its electorate, with consideration of their competition, ability to deliver on their promises, and the internal party reaction and support to the product. The implementation stage of the process, is the operationalisation of the findings from the market intelligence gathering, product design and product adjustment phases. In the lead up to the 1997 election, Labour analysed previous elections and campaigns and paired this with market research, to develop policies that were pre-tested with a sample of voters and adjusted before being finalised for the 1997 election. Alongside policy changes, the Labour brand was refreshed and adopted the slogan 'New Labour, New Britain'. Similar to the sales orientation, research was undertaken to guide the campaign and communication with the public, the campaign strategy focused on communicating what was 'new' about the Labour party brand and building relationships with media. Labour won the 1997 election and obtained over 43 percent of popular vote.

Figure 1: The Marketing Process for Product, Sales and Market-Oriented Parties (Lees-Marshment, 2001a)



Beyond providing a comprehensive theoretical framework for each orientation, the analysis of British Labour party supports the acceptance and adoption of the market orientation within politics. Five years on from the work of O'Cass (1996), and in the context of British politics rather than Australian, it can be seen that political organisations are actively undertaking marketing, and specifically a market orientation, beyond the campaigning period. Lees-Marshment's (2001a) comparison of the 1983, 1987 and 1997 election results suggest that the market orientation is more likely to appeal to voters and, in turn, increase a party’s ability to win an election. However, without formal evaluation and research it cannot be said with certainty that it was the implementation of the market orientation that won Labour the 1997 election. Furthermore, while the theoretical frameworks of the orientations are thorough and well developed, they represent only the ideal marketing process of each orientation. The implementation of the marketing process may not be as easy in practice as it is in theory and, as can be seen with the British Labour party, changes in the orientation of a political party occur slowly over time.

2.2.2.3 O’Cass (2001)

O’Cass (2001) builds upon his 1996 study, to investigate again the role of market orientation in political marketing and political organisations. Specifically, the study explores the adoption of the marketing concept and market orientation, from commercial marketing, to political marketing. The purpose of testing the application, and acceptance, of the marketing concept and market orientation in the political context was to investigate the operationalisation of marketing in politics and how it is used to connect political parties with the electorate and society. To do so, the author undertook in-depth interviews and a disseminated a self-administered mail survey.

The in-depth interviews were held with upper level political party managers and executives, who were a mixture of marketing and non-marketing professionals. The structure of the interview was based on seven key questions. The questions investigated the campaign processes and activities of parties, their definition of market orientation and how this is implemented by a political party, with a focus on how it is fostered or discouraged within a party, the value it provides, and potential positive and negative consequences. Furthermore, the questions looked at the party managers and executives' definition of the marketing concept, explanation of how they believe it applies to politics, as well as their perception of the potential effect, positive or negative, of applying the concept. The analysis of the interviews identified 13 key areas of the relationship between political marketing and the marketing concept, market orientation and political party or politician performance. The 13 key areas consist of four constructs each for the marketing concept (the philosophy, application, conflict and value of the concept) and market orientation (customer focused intelligence generation, responsiveness to customers, dissemination of information and competitor responsiveness), as well as five miscellaneous constructs that include the management performance perceptions, voter focus on needs, competition orientation, market orientation organisational synergy, and party position. The mail survey was sent to party members who hold a managerial or decision making position within four major political parties in Australia (n=160). After pretesting the questionnaire, a list of 48 items were developed to measure the 13 key areas, or issues. After which, the 160 party members scored each measure on a five-point likert-scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The results focused on the responses of the four hierarchical levels of decision makers within Australian political parties, being the party executive managers, candidates, party brand chairman and electoral campaign directors. Splitting and comparing the responses of these four groups showed that all four positions have an understanding of the application of marketing theories, namely marketing concept and market orientation, to politics. Overall, the decision makers, regardless of their position, see significant value in adopting the marketing concept to politics and implementing market oriented approaches and processes.

O’Cass (2001) provides initial primary research that evidenced the relationship between marketing theory and its application in politics, with a focus on how well accepted the political marketing concept and political market orientation are by political party decision makers. Similar to Lees-Marshment (2001a), and in contrast to O’Cass’s own 1996 work, the research shows that the concept and orientation are being used by political parties, and its members or decision makers, and that there is perceived value in doing so. This finding suggests that the needs and satisfaction of voters play an important part in the decision making of the party executive managers, candidates, party brand chairman and electoral campaign directors for a given political party. However, whilst O’Cass (2001) defines the 13 areas, or constructs, of the relationship between political marketing and the marketing concept, market orientation and political party or politician performance, there is no indication of what the 48 items used to measure these constructs were. Furthermore, the evaluation of the application, and success of application, of the marketing concept and market orientation to a political party is self-reported by its party’s members. Therefore, the results may be skewed by the individual biases of the respondents. This study shows the need for a measurement tool to evaluate the performance of a political party, in regards to how well it adopts marketing concept and orientation, and the value, or lack of, it experiences in doing so. O’Cass (2001) identifies that parties feel that they are successfully applying marketing concepts and theories to their own political marketing, and that they perceive value in doing so, however, there is no empirical evidence of what this value is and how it links to electoral success.

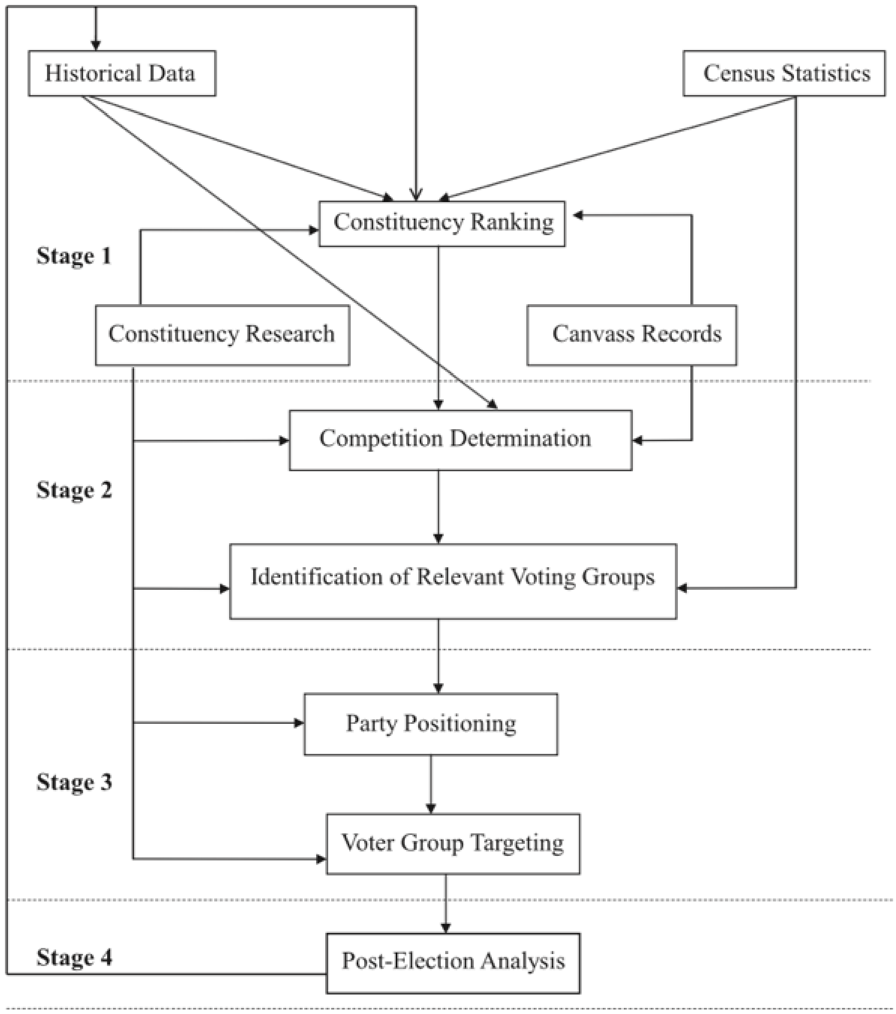
2.2.3 Market orientation: The road to understanding voters

2.2.3.1 Baines, Harris & Lewis (2002)

The literature from the previous section highlights the growing use and acceptance of marketing in politics, as well as illustrate the change in behavior of political parties to extend and utilise marketing beyond marketing communication and the campaign period. Fundamental to both the marketing concept and market orientation, adopted by political parties in the early 21st century, is the needs, attitude and behavior of the voter, and the emphasis placed on gathering intelligence to understand voter groups. However, the literature researching the market orientation in political organisations was not concerned with providing best practice of developing voter insights and understanding, instead focusing on whether, and how, political parties were attempting to do this already. Similar to the work of Lees-Marshment (2001a) and O'Cass (2001), Baines, Harris and Lewis (2002) also focused on the role of marketing in politics, as reported by political parties. The authors aimed to develop a marketing planning model for British political parties, based on research undertaken with members of parliament that focuses on their opinion of the role of marketing in politics. However, the research had the additional benefit of providing political organisations with usable insights into categorising and appealing to voters. This work contributes to the literature undertaken in political marketing to understand the customers, or voters, served and promoted to by political organisations. This body of research developed in conjunction with the need of the political marketing discipline to adapt and develop frameworks and models to fit the nuances of the political context (Lees-Marshment, 2001a; O'Cass, 2001).

Baines, Harris and Lewis (2002) undertook in-depth interviews with five members of parliament, a party agent from six marginal constituencies in Britain, and three senior campaign executives, to form the analysis used to determine the campaigning methods used by British political parties. A model was developed combining the findings of the interviews with five factors associated with marketing planning: market position analysis, objective setting, strategic alternative evaluation (segmenting and targeting), strategy implementation, and monitoring and control. Findings from the in-depth interviews stressed the importance of local candidates and campaigns, with the Liberal Democratic director of campaigning accounting the overall party election success with the volume of local party candidates who are in touch with their electoral community and their issues, as well as having a strong personal following. The Conservative director of campaigning expressed a similar sentiment, sharing that the allocation of resources for targeting seats is dependent on the local candidate and their standing within their electoral community. Based on the importance of local candidates and campaigns to British parties, the design of the model focuses on assisting political parties in segmenting and targeting local electorates and voter groups, including those who are at risk of switching party allegiance or not committed to a party. The developed political marketing planning model depicts four stages: information gathering and constituency identification; competition and voting group determination; party positioning and voter group; and, post-election analysis. Within each of the four stages there are a range of proposed activities; see figure two for the full list of activities. The activities included in the model were chosen based on the self-reporting of the British political parties involved in the research, with either a portion or all mentioning that these were activities that they undertake; as expressed by the party representatives interviewed. Therefore, whilst the model may include the most popular political marketing planning activities, the list is not exhaustive, nor may it reflect best practice or the process and behavior of political parties or politicians internationally.

Figure 2: Political Marketing Planning Model (Baines, Harris, and Lewis, 2002)



The research proposes a model built upon traditional marketing planning theory but specified to the political context, enabling political parties to compete for electoral support more efficiently and effectively, particularly at a local level. However, Baines, Harris and Lewis (2002) provide little guidance on the research methods that can be used when undertaking the activities of the model, like how to determine the actual and ideal position of a political party. The model is also developed on a limited perspective, with no little indication of the British political parties involved in the research, also, the authors admit that not all parties undertake each stage or activity included in the model; creating questions of relevancy and practicality of the model to political parties. Whilst this model is not perfect, it indicates a positive move in the right direction, to develop tailored solutions to political marketing that takes the most useful and applicable aspects of marketing and political science. Whilst the model and the findings discussed do not provide answers to the 'how', the authors do offer solutions for identifying the 'who', 'what', 'where' and 'why'. Specifically, the authors suggest that the model be used to segment and identify key voter and electorate groups, and target the areas in most need of resources, thus understanding their voter base at a local level to improve their image and messages within these strategic target areas. The next phase of the research would involve testing the applicability of the model over different countries and political systems, as well as researching and presenting methodologies of how to operationalise each stage and activity of the model; in turn developing a best practice.

2.2.3.2 O'Cass &Pecotich (2005)

Another well-known article that examines the preferences and attitudes of voters is the work of O'Cass and Pecotich (2005), who test the application of consumer behaviour principles to the political context, to explore the nature of, and explain, voter behaviour. Based on the research of this study, the authors develop and test a model that focuses on perceived risk, voter involvement and political opinion leadership and the connections of these concepts to the information search, knowledge and decision confidence, and satisfaction of voters, as well as the stability of their voting behaviour.

It was hypothesised and found by the researchers that the perceived risk of electoral decisions is reduced the more involved a voter is with the political process, and the greater risk perceived the more likely a voter is to seek more information and in turn be an opinion leader. Also, the more involved voters are the more likely they are to seek information, have greater subjective political knowledge, and be an opinion leader. The more information sought out the greater subjective political knowledge and confidence a voter will have, furthermore, the more subjective political knowledge a voter has will also positively influence their confidence and make them more likely to be an opinion leader. Finally, voter opinion leaders are more likely to exhibit stable voting behaviour and be more satisfied in their electoral decisions.

The findings of this research show that consumer behaviour concepts, when adapted, are applicable to the political context and explain voter behaviour. O'Cass and Pecotich (2005) not only produce a model that explains the dynamics of voter behaviour, they provide further evidence of the applicability of marketing, and specifically consumer behaviour, to the political context. This research provides political marketing practitioners with a method for segmenting voters based on their voting behavior and consumption of political information. The relationships found between the model concepts also provide guidance on how to target these segments, for example, opinion leaders should be targeted with high levels of information to reduce their perceived risk of making electoral decisions and increase their confidence and satisfaction. Although, the data of the research was collected through a self-administered questionnaire that captures how voters perceive their own knowledge and behavior, and may not reflect accurately their actual level of knowledge or behaviour. Caution also needs to be taken when applying the method to political contexts beyond Australia, as the sample was constrained to eligible voters during a Federal Australian by-election. Further research needs to test the applicability of the model over cultures and political contexts, before political organisations utilise the methods to understand their voters.

2.2.4 Summary of political market research

The political marketing field has seen a lot of development since the mid to late nineties, with the aim of research extending beyond proving that marketing can be applied to marketing, to evolve into empirical research that adapts marketing models and frameworks to the intricacies of the political context. The political marketing literature reviewed illustrates this development in research, however the work of Harris and Lock (2010) and Butler and Harris (2009) supplements the discussion with their succinct summary the evolution of research and strengthens the conclusions drawn from the literature. Firstly, the work of Harris and Lock (2010) is discussed.

2.2.4.1 Harris and Lock (2010)

Harris and Lock (2010) review the articles of the first political marketing special edition of the European Journal of Marketing published in 1996 and compares these with the studies of the 2001 and 2010 special issues. The review of the two past special editions highlight the advances of research in the area of political marketing and identifies the gaps in the field that require future study. The comparison between the two special editions, showed a move away from focusing on political marketing communication to a strategy focus that utilises consumer behaviour knowledge. Specifically, the research studies have found that political marketing has been used to inform policy development, as well as voter targeting and engagement. With the key themes of the articles published in the 2001 special edition consisting of: political market research, developing political image, market orientation of political parties, political marketing consumption, and applying marketing to politics. Unlike 1996, the 2001 research looked at smaller, and minority, groups based on gender and religion, and included studies undertaken over a number of countries and cultures. This strategic focus of political marketing research and application is in contrast to the first European Journal of Marketing special edition published in 1996. The focus of the research in the earlier edition was on the adoption of core marketing concepts to politics and defining subject boundaries, and the key research themes included: the history of political marketing, dimensions of political marketing, the political marketing debate, and application of marketing to politics. The 1996 special edition identified a difference between political marketing and commercial marketing that is accounted for in more recent studies, including the articles included the 2001 and 2010 special edition.

Two articles included in the 2010 special edition that consider the difference between commercial and political markets are French and Smith (2010), who investigate a consumer view of political brands, and Phipps, Brave-Govan and Jevons (2010), who look at the relationship between consumer behaviour and political branding (for a full discussion of these works see section 2.3.4 measuring and managing political brand image). Other notable work included in the special edition, which is not discussed in full in this review of literature, are Davies and Mian (2010), who research the impact of a leader's image on a party and identifies a potential succession issue, or opportunity, for political parties, in that the reputation of the party will change when leaders change. And also, Cwalina, Falkowski and Newman (2010), who develop a cross-cultural model of voter behavior, by comparing data from Poland and America, to identify and test three elements that influence voter choice of a candidate: media, cognitive domains and emotional feelings; finding similar results between countries (see section 2.3.4.3 for a full review of the research and results). The success of the research of these articles identifies the need for more cross-cultural studies, like Cwalina, Falkowski and Newman (2010), to test the applicability of concepts, theories, models and measures over cultural contexts. Furthermore, Harris and Lock (2010) argue that there needs to be more empirical research, to investigate further the concepts and constructs adopted from marketing, to provide a more formal explanation of how political marketing can be applied, and how it fits.

2.2.4.2 Butler and Harris (2009)

While Harris and Lock's (2010) discussion focuses clearly on the strides made in political marketing since 1996, a year prior to his 2010 work with Lock, Harris alongside Butler (2009) argued that the debate between political science and marketing had stalled the development of political marketing. The authors suggest that this is due to the focus of researchers, who are concerned with proving the applicability of marketing to politics by analysing the behavior of political parties rather than examining how marketing theory and models can be used to solve issues faced by politics. Upon reflection, of the political marketing articles reviewed in this chapter, it is noted that all discussed the debate between political science and marketing.

To illustrate the state of political marketing research Butler and Harris defined the position of the research discipline, by using Mullins 1973 model of disciplinary development (as cited in Butler & Harris, 2009). The model consists of four different stages that a body, or field, of research can be in that include normal, network, cluster, and specialty. The authors identify political marketing as being close to the third, or cluster, stage of the model, in which recognition from the parent disciplines, being political science and marketing, is recognised and relationships are formalised. However, political marketing is believed to still have an element of the second stage, as researchers are still trying to agree on a direction for the field.

The article debates that for political marketing to be successful it must take learnings from both its predecessor fields, and develop in parallel with the changes they experience.

For example, political marketing must take into account the changing landscape of voter loyalty and engagement in politic science, as well as look to developments made in the field of marketing that emphasises the co-creation of value and relationships between organisation and consumers. Similar to articles from the 2001 special edition of the European Journal of Marketing, Butler and Harris (2009) focused on the behavior of voters to understand how voters co-create the relationships they form with political parties. To do so the article theorises the practice of marketing strategy, with a focus on segmentation and positioning, as well as the implementation of marketing communication. Butler and Harris (2009) propose that the segmentation of voters should consider more than their demographic characteristics, to examine voter media habits and attitude to policy issues. Butler and Harris (2009) identify the opportunity to apply brand-type analysis to attitude, or emotional, based appeals, and explain how brand theory can be leveraged to inform political strategy on consumer engagement. In saying that, the discussion of branding in political marketing was brief, with no explanation of how branding can be applied. However, Butler and Harris (2009) continued their discussion of branding in political marketing in their theorisation of marketing communications, in which it was argued that marketing communication is concerned with communicating the brand position of a party and that elections are won on themes rather than policy. Furthermore, the authors examine the practice of negative advertising, and it is proposed that a strong brand can protect a party or politician from the effect of negative advertising. Between the review of the 2001 special edition of the European Journal of Marketing and Butler and Harris (2009), it is clear that the application of branding in political marketing became a prominent area of research in the first decade of the 21st century. The growing prominence of branding in both the research and practice of political marketing is important, as it signifies both another move forward in the field and yet another way in which commercial marketing theory can be applied to politics. The increasing interest in branding commercially questions whether it should be considered an element of marketing, or its own field. Therefore, the application of branding in politics offers the political marketing research field a new direction that reflects the research developments in commercial marketing. A review of the research developments in political branding are discussed in the following section.

2.3 Application of branding to politics: From the theoretical to the empirical

As mentioned in the prior section, Butler and Harris (2009) noted that political marketing needed to progress concurrently with its parent disciplines to stay up to date with current research developments, and political marketing is doing so by researching the application of branding in politics. The move of political marketing to investigate the brand images and positions of political organisations aligns with growth of branding research in the commercial marketing literature. In section 3.0 Customer Based Brand Equity, an in depth account of the focus of academic research into branding and its value to commercial organistions is presented.

The natural progression to apply branding to politics stems from the evolution in commercial marketing, where the application of branding has extended beyond products and services to nontraditional markets such as places, people and ideas. Alongside the developments of commercial marketing research and practice, politics experienced a great deal of change in the 1980s and 1990s. No longer were political parties and politicians competing with each other alone, they were also, and still are, competing against commercial entities, or brands, for the attention of the voting public. In a world where people's lives are increasingly being inundated with information, due to growing technologies being developed to communicate with them, people have become consumers in all aspects of their lives; including politics. Similar to other noncommercial fields, political marketing research found that their ‘customers’, the voters, make their voting decisions in the same way they make their commercial purchase decisions. Moreover, as branding continues to grow in commercial industries, so does its affect in politics and on the behaviour of voters. In 2002, Burkitt declared that “political parties are the ultimate brands” (as cited in Scammell, 2007, p.176). As a result of the growing prominence of branding across markets in the mid-nineties, research into, and the application of, branding in politics became at the forefront of the research agenda. In 2009, Smith and French redefined politics as a social market in which “political parties are *organisations* where politicians (*people*) seek to exchange *ideas* and promises for electoral support” (p. 210).

Similar to the political marketing literature, early studies exploring the application of branding to politics were primarily theoretical, and as the research has developed it has become increasingly built upon primary, empirical evidence. Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 examine the development of political branding research, from theoretical to empirical, showing the progression from justifying the application of branding to the conceptualisation of the political brand, and finally the measurement and management of political brand image.

2.3.1 To brand or not to brand

2.3.1.1 De Chernatony and White (2002)

Just like political marketing, the application of branding to politics has received criticism. For example, O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg (2007) contend that branding is not applicable to politics due to the differences between commercial markets and politics. Other academics argue that branding narrows the political agenda and furthers political disengagement amongst the public (Needham, 2005; Scammell, 1999; Smith & French, 2009). However, a number of academic studies defend and justify the application of branding to politics, including the 2002 article 'New Labour: A study of the creation, development and demise of a political brand', written by De Chernatony and White. De Chernatony and White (2002) evaluated the use of branding by political parties, through the examination of the British Labour Party's rebrand to 'New Labour' and found that political parties use branding to establish party values and win political support. The paper discusses Labour's journey from its first of four consecutive defeats in 1979 to success in 1997, after the move from party to brand in mid-1990s, as well as the brand's demise beginning in the mid-2000s. De Chernatony and White (2002) based their discussion of the performance of Labour's brand on the media coverage, as well as material written by architects, members and staff of New Labour during the campaign and governing periods.

The research found a link between the successful application of branding and election success, with the British Labour Party winning its first election in 14 years after rebranding itself as 'New Labour' and developing the founding principles to align with the values of voters. Thereby, proving, within the context of British politics and the secondary research analysed, the importance of branding in generating political support and informing election strategy. At the heart of the discussion of the article was the importance of the political brand representing functional values that align with the attitude voters, to generate political support. In the case of the British Labour party this included openness, modernity, economic orthodoxy and redistributory social policy. Furthermore, a finding of the research was the importance of maintaining the political brand by delivering on brand promises and values, as the purpose of brand promises are to reassure voters of a new, better government and when these promises are not kept it devalues the brand value. Despite the significance of the findings of the study, for political parties and politicians, there was little discussion on how political organisations can operationalise these findings, to build and maintain a successful brand. There is also no evidence provided to prove that the change in the Labour party's values resulted in their election success, rather the conclusions are drawn from coinciding events between the actions of the party to rebrand, voter behaviour, and uncontrollable events covered by the media.

2.3.1.2 Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan (2006)

Another prominent study that investigates the application of branding to politics, to justify its practice, is Reeves, de Chernatony, and Carrigan (2006). Interestingly, Reeves et al. (2006) base their discussion around the political marketing debate between political scientists and political marketers, to account for the concerns that critics have about political branding and address the issues raised by the debate directly. From a review of existing literature, the authors concluded that regardless of whether marketing and branding should be applied or not, they are increasingly being applied to politics due to the changing needs of voters, as well as the rise in consumerism. Furthermore, the discussion of the article suggests that it is the way political parties practice ideology that has resulted in the prominence of marketing and branding in politics. Specifically, Reeves et al. (2006) suggest that political parties have moved towards the centre of the ideological spectrum, and this has resulted in valence policies. Valence policies have made it difficult for voters to differentiate the political offerings of parties, resulting in voters looking elsewhere or using other mediums to form their voting decisions. Consumers form their 'purchase' decision based on a perceived point of differentiation, so, voters are relying on their experience with, or knowledge of, brands to differentiate political parties and identify the party that they believe provides additional value above that of their competitors. Therefore, with policies becoming more similar between political parties, branding has become an increasingly important tool used by political parties to create this point of differentiation.

With the increasing application of branding to politics, and in spite of their argument that the debate between political science and marketing is frivolous, the authors admit that caution should be taken from the concerns expressed by political scientists, who suggest that there should be a balance between ideology and marketing approaches. Specifically, they suggest that political parties, or political brands, should be both market driven and market drivers. To illustrate this point the authors refer to Giddens's 'third way' (as cited in Reeves et al., 2006). The 'third way' refers to a political party's balanced and pragmatic approach to designing policy that meets the needs of society but knows when to intervene, to ensure that policies are not designed to the detriment of society (Reeves et al., 2006). So, while political parties are utilising market research to develop brand strategy and policy, it cannot be purely formed based on the needs and wants reported by their voter base. Instead, it must balance voter concerns with the ideological, long-term prosperity of a country. It is argued that without the balance of the two fields, the application of marketing to politics will become abused if the sole focus is doing whatever it takes to win (Reeves et al., 2006).

Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan (2006) reviewed existing research, including the work of Himmelweit (1981), Newman and Sheth (1987), and O'Cass (2002), to examine the implementation of the market orientation by political parties to develop policies that will appeal to their voter base, based on market research findings undertaken with the voting public (as cited in Reeves et al., 2006). The reviewed studies found that voters use consumption variables, such as functional and emotional variables, to form their voting choices. However, the focus of Reeves, de Chernatony and Carrigan's research on the examination of these consumption variables in relation to policy design disregards the influence of other elements of the political brand, like the brand image associations of the party and leader, on voter decision making, and limits their conceptualisation to policy (2006). Interestingly, the focus on policy as central to voter decision making is in contrast to findings of Smith (2001) and Needham (2006), who, based on the results of a MORI poll undertaken prior to the 2001 British election, found that the brand image of a party and leader is a greater determinant of voting behaviour than policy. If Smith (2001) and Needham (2006) are correct this would suggest that the debate between ideology and marketing is more redundant than indicated by Reeves et al. (2006). See section 2.3.3, conceptualising the political brand: Party, Leader, and Policy, for a full discussion of the studies of Smith (2001) and Needham (2006).

2.3.2 The new permanent campaign

2.3.2.1 Needham (2005)

Before the conceptualisation of the political brand, previous research primarily focused on why branding should be applied to politics, to examine how branding can be utilised in politics and the role it can play within political organisations. In the field of political marketing research, the permanent campaign was presented, prior to the proposition of the market orientation, as a solution for narrowing of political marketing to the campaign period. The permanent campaign claims that the campaigning for political parties and candidates is 'nonstop', and that there is no distinct difference between the official campaigning period leading up to an election and the governing period. A number of academics saw limitations in the concept of the permanent campaign, thus leading to the adoption and adaption of the market orientation to politics. Needham (2005) summarises the issues with the permanent campaign succinctly, calling it ‘blunt’ and suggesting that the strategic environment changes once a challenger takes office, or for the incumbent government, and that the concept of the permanent campaign does not account for unique situation of a governing party. Branding, as a core element of the market orientation, is proposed by Needham as an appropriate alternative to the permanent campaign (2005).

To illustrate the value in applying branding to politics, Needham (2005) analyses the campaigns and governing terms of the Clinton and Blair administrations, based on six attributes that are believed to create or maintain a successful brand: simplicity, uniqueness, reassurance, aspiration, values, and credibility. The author compared their qualitative analysis of Clinton and Blair administrations messages, and communication efforts, with existing poll results, to analyse the brand image and performance of these two politicians. Needham (2005) reported that the two administrations were successful at remaining differentiated and aspirational when campaigning and governing. However, the simplicity, credibility and reassurance of their messages varied over their time in and out of office. In the case of the Clinton administration, he had campaigned as a social conservative but when in government was perceived as a social liberal, due to his “U-turns” on political issues like gays serving in the military. Clinton had to adjust his communication to fit the idiosyncrasies of the context within he was governing, by positioning himself on everyday issues that resonated with the average voter; like violence on television and young smokers.

Needham (2005) tackles the issue of the permanent campaign concept, which assumes the continuity of campaigning between office seeking and governing, and presents branding as a fluid alternative that can be used to model and understand the differing campaign and relationship marketing requirements of the party, or parties, holding office and those challenging. The work accepts, without question, the applicability of brands in politics, and extends the role of branding in politics to be more than descriptive; instead operationalising it to provide insights into measuring and driving relationship management. However, the study only utilises secondary research, undertaking a qualitative analysis of the messages, and communication of these, that the Clinton and Blair administrations presented to voters. In addition, as evidence of her argument, Needham (2005) relied on existing poll results. This method of brand analysis assumes that if the poll results reflect Needham's examination of the six brand attributes tested, then the findings and evaluation of the success of applying brand theory is proven. Whilst there is sense in Needham's argument that the marketing and branding of a political party or politician changes between campaigning and governing, the discussion does not clearly present the changes in the messages and communication of the Clinton and Blair administrations between the two contexts, or analyse how the change in position influenced their brand or communication strategy.

2.3.2.2 Scammell (2007)

Aligned with the work of Needham (2005), Scammell (2007) argues that branding is the hallmark of political marketing, and, in particular, is the new, superior alternative to the permanent campaign. To illustrate her argument, Scammell (2007) analyses the rebranding of Tony Blair, from 'Tough Tony' to 'Mature Tony'. Like Needham (2005), and a large proportion of political branding research in the mid-to-late 2000s, this study does not undertake original research. However, unlike previous studies, Scammell (2007) draw on market research findings of a commercial research company, to illustrate the strategic value of brand-focused research; in particular, how branding determines or influences voter response to a party.

Scammell (2007) began her analysis of the rebranding of Tony Blair by outlining the process undertaken by the Labour party to redefine the image of their party and leader. It is reported that in 2005, the British Labour party contracted commercial brand consultants, Promise, to conduct market research into the brand of leader, Tony Blair. Promise utilised focus groups, consisting of loyalists, former voters and undecided voters, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the brand and then develop a reconnection strategy. Participants completed a range of tasks, including numerical scaled questions on reputation and delivery, and expressive techniques that involved writing letters articulating their thoughts and feelings about the prime minister. During the focus groups, voters' underlying emotional experience with Tony Blair was identified, and it was found that voters felt abandoned and unimportant, whilst others felt that Blair was self-important and out of control. The research also identified the wishes of voters, particularly in relation to the way that they wanted Blair behave. Specifically, voters wanted to be put first and feel as though the leader was in touch with them, as well as have Blair reprioritise, get back to basics and reflect on each decision to ensure it is aligned with the man he said he was during the campaign. From these findings a reconnection strategy was developed, the strategy included increased television appearances with aggressive interviews that gave Blair the opportunity to show greater candor, humility and willingness to listen. Despite Tony Blair's decline in popularity after being reelected in 2001, the rebrand of 'Mature Tony' regained some support and in 2005 the Labour party was elected for its third consecutive term.

For Labour, the focus on brand research and strategy provided a conceptual framework to understand how voters engage with or evaluate a party, in particular, identifying what are the boundary conditions and differentiators. Boundary conditions include the economic and functional brand performance, while differentiators include the cultural, social and psychological associations of a brand (Scammell, 2007). The success of the rebrand also created awareness that the party, or brand, image cannot remain static; like the permanent campaign would suggest. Scammell (2007) provides an in-depth analysis of how the Labour party, with the guidance of Promise used, market research to rebrand Tony Blair. The author's discussion of how Tony went from 'Tough Tony' to 'Mature Tony', and how this effected his electoral success, illustrates the value of applying branding to politics. However, the discussion remains descriptive, focusing on a qualitative analysis of the value of branding and brand research in politics. The study does not provide a framework for how to build or evaluate a political brand, having used the market research of Promise to build the discussion, nor did it consider the effect of competitors and how brands between parties or leaders may be compared.

2.3.3 Conceptualising the political brand: Party, Leader, and Policy

2.3.3.1 Smith (2001)

Needham (2005) and Scammell (2007), provide evidence that people use, and perhaps even rely on, brands as they do in commercial markets to make purchase decisions. Brands are a fundamental aspect of modern society and its consumption culture, and the research shows that people want to create relationships with the brands they consume or have them act as a short cut that enables them to differentiate categorically similar products. Needham (2005) and Scammell (2007) also show that a political brand cannot remain static and that, like commercial brands, it is always under pressure to continuously develop with, and adapt to, the changes in society. However, as discussed prior, there was little guidance provided on how political organisations might build a successful brand or evaluate the performance of their brand, without employing a market research company. This gap in the field is influenced by the lack of research into the conceptualisation of the political brand, without consensus in the field as to what constitutes a political brand it is difficult for researchers to outline how political organisations can build a successful brand or evaluate the performance of their brand. In 2001, Smith aimed to analyse the impact of advertising, events and celebrity endorsements on the brand images of political parties, to evaluate how effectively political parties are utilising marketing tools and managing their brand images. In the process, Smith (2001) conceptualised the political brand based on three dimensions: the party, the leader, and the policies.

Smith (2001) first reviewed the results of a MORI poll on the 2001 British election, the only poll to consider brand image during the official campaign period, to establish whether the brand image of political parties and leaders were perceived as positive or negative. These results were compared with a public opinion political poll taken in the lead up to the 1997 British election and used to form the basis of the discussion on the effect of advertising, events and celebrity endorsements on brand image. Smith (2001) attributed the increase or decrease of the success of a political party or leader on the effect of controllable and uncontrollable events, specific positive or negative advertising, and the celebrity endorsements that a party or party leader received. A clear illustration of the effect of these elements was on the brand image of Tony Blair, and in turn the Labour party. In 1997, Tony Blair was considered a capable leader by 58% of the sample and 50% felt that he 'has a lot of personality'. However, in 2001 only 3% believed that he was a capable leader and he rated higher on negative dimensions like ‘talks down to people’ (plus 16% on 1997 results) and ‘out of touch with ordinary people’ (plus 30% on 1997 results). Similar results were observed for the Labour party as a whole, rating lower on positive dimensions and higher on negative dimensions. Smith (2001) outlined numerous sources of negative public attention that the Labour party and Tony Blair received in the year leading up to the election (from January 2000) that he argues led to the weakened brand image of both the party and leader. For example, periods in which the party experienced a significant decrease in public support in polls coincided with major public events, including the fuel protest of September 2000, that once resolved by a strong show of leadership by Tony Blair resulted in an improvement in the Labour party’s performance in the polls. Therefore, the party brand is tied to the success and performance of its party leader.

Smith (2001) provides a qualitative evaluation mechanism for tracking the performance of political party and leader brand images over time. Specifically, the research suggests how to evaluate the success of planned advertising, events and celebrity endorsements, as well as understand the effect of negative advertising, uncontrollable events and unplanned or negative celebrity endorsements. As a result, political brand managers may better understand how the brand images of parties and leaders are shaped, and how this can be controlled or managed. Smith (2001) also provides evidence for the importance of applying marketing tools to build brand image, to mitigate any uncontrollable negative publicity. However, there is no discussion of how the brand of political parties or leaders can be evaluated overall, instead the results are restricted to the comparison of the difference between competing political parties’ or leaders’ brand images; based on a list of brand image dimensions over time. The list of brand image dimensions included ‘capable leader’, ‘good in a crisis’, ‘patriotic’, ‘too inflexible’ and ‘rather narrow minded’. The results of the MORI poll compared the party leader images of Blair, Hague and Kennedy, and show that Blair had the highest average rating for positive (20%) and negative (23%) brand image dimensions. Despite the significant negative change in brand image from the 1997 poll (17% decrease in the average rating for positive brand image dimensions), Blair went on to win the election.

Despite identifying policy as a dimension of the political brand, Smith (2001) argues that brand image, being the party and leader, is a greater determinant of voting behavior than policies. This finding is based on the results of the MORI poll. Poll participants were asked to apportion ten marks between three pre-determined reasons for their voting choice: leaders, parties, and policies. To determine which element, or elements, have a greater influence on voter choice, the mean score of the leaders and parties were added to create an overall measure for political brand image (5.6) and compared with the mean of policies (4.2). This measurement both assumes the party and leader to be determinants of political brand image, and ignores the potential of policy to be a dimension of brand image (i.e. a political party or leader could be considered as having a strong image on environmental issues).

2.3.3.2 Needham (2006)

Needham (2006) further researches and illustrates the two key arguments from her 2005 work, *'Brand Leaders: Clinton, Blair and the Limitations of the Permanent Campaign'*. The first argument is that voters use brands in politics as they do in commercial markets, to simplify decision-making, and the second argument is that brands are core to relationship marketing for incumbent parties who are aiming to encourage repeat sales (votes). Needham (2006) also proposes that party leaders promote a personal brand through a set of key attributes; this aligns with the findings of Smith's 2001 research.

Needham (2006) begins her discussion by highlighting the limitation of previous studies, including her 2005 study, that are descriptive and take a 'storytelling' approach to analysing the brands of political parties and politicians, in particular Thatcher, Reagan, Clinton and Blair. Yet, the analysis of this study again reviews the existing literature, and Needham (2006) illustrates her argument with the findings of the widely cited MORI poll undertaken in the build up to the 2001 British election that investigated the interrelatedness of leader and party brands. Needham (2006) then reiterates why branding can be used to explore how incumbents manage voter relationships, and discusses the relationship between party and leader, before building upon the finding of Smith (2001) who reports that the brand image of a party and leader are interrelated. The finding of Needham (2006) is that it is the brand image of the party leader that is replicated to form the brand image of the party. The author goes on to argue that this may create a succession issue for a party, as when a leader leaves the party they take with them their brand image. This finding is based on Needham's review of literature that highlighted that successful political leaders build a brand image that differentiates themselves not only from the opposition but even their own party, as unlike a political party they are able to position themselves on dimensions of human persona, style of leadership and a set of values. Therefore, the successor must be able to form a relationship with the voting public and, in turn, their own brand image, to achieve electoral success.

Whilst Needham (2006) presents an in depth discussion on the power of the personal brand of a political party leader, the findings, like many political branding articles, are based on the review of existing literature and rely on commercial polls to provide evidence to back up their claims. It is an issue of this field of research that there are no methodologies developed and proposed that can be used by political brand managers to evaluate their brand and branding strategy; as like Smith (2001) this article utilised the 2001 poll published by

MORI. Furthermore, academics have tended to communicate the value of applying branding to politics based on qualitative analysis of secondary research, and as a result there are still unanswered questions relating to how to manage, evaluate and quantify these brands.

2.3.3.3 Smith and French (2009)

Unlike Smith (2001) and Needham (2006), Smith and French (2009) examine and propose methods for evaluating and measuring political brands, based on the review of existing theoretical research published on each method. Before doing so, the authors apply commercial branding theory to the politic context, to conceptualise the political brand. Based on the review of marketing and political marketing literature, the authors develop a theoretical explanation of parties as brands by using a consumer, or in the case of politics a voter, learning perspective, adopted from commercial branding to understand the relationship and interaction between leader, party and policies. Specifically, Smith and French (2009) applied the associative network model of consumer memory, from cognitive psychology learning theory. Within this theory, brands are described as the associations, or nodes, held about a brand in the mind of the consumer. These associations may be linked, and when an association is activated, it sets off a process of retrieval that may be interrupted by the brand knowledge of other brands. This provides a more formal explanation of the findings of Smith (2001) and Needham (2006), who propose that brand dimensions are fundamental to the brand image of a political party or politician but have no theoretical explanation of how these attributes function to grow or strengthen a brand. Smith and French (2009), as well as Smith (2001) and Needham (2006), argue that the party and politician brand dimensions are more important than policies, and a greater determinant of voting behaviour or choice. The belief that policies are less important than the party and leader is held because valence politics is becoming more apparent in society, and a as result there is a lack of differentiation between competing parties. Therefore, suggesting that because of a claimed lack of difference in policies between parties, the voting public is more reliant on 'softer' cultural, social or psychological aspects of a brand, to differentiate between the parties and inform their voting decision.

Smith and French (2009) also suggest potential measures of political brand image for the three dimensions of party, leader and policy. Smith and French (2009) discuss the potential of mental maps to evaluate the relationship between party, leader and policies, as well as the difference in associations between the three dimensions. The authors operationalise the mental maps method in politics in their 2010 study, '*Measuring political brand equity: a consumer oriented approach'*, discussed in full in section 2.3.4. Smith and French (2009) also propose Aaker's 1997 brand personality scale, to measure leader image (a full discussion of this method is presented in section 2.3.4). While qualitative analysis of party communication is suggested to evaluate the image of the party. There is no specific method proposed to measure consumers' perceptions of policy image, and the only evaluation discussed is the comparison of policies between opposition parties. Therefore, whilst valence policies might exist there is no evidence that they have no effect on a political brand, as Smith (2001), Needham (2006), and Smith and French (2009) suggest. A party may be perceived as performing better on a policy issue than its competitors based on how they have positioned themselves, like the New Zealand Green party who positions themselves at the forefront of environmental issues, and the past performance of the political party. Smith and French (2009) utilise commercial branding theory, specifically the associative network model of consumer memory theory, to provide a robust conceptualisation of the political brand and explanation of how it functions. By modelling political brands as an associative network model of consumer memory, it highlights future areas of research that investigate the type and nature of brand associations of the political brand network. However, the discussion of Smith and French (2009) and proposal of measurement methods do not consider future voting behaviour and election outcomes. So, only a descriptive analysis of the image of a party, politician or policy is obtained, with no way of translating the results into measure of voting intent. In saying that, it is still a move forward from the research of Smith (2001) and Needham (2006), who relied on the research of MORI to illustrate the brand images of political parties and politicians rather than investigate methods that can be undertaken directly by academic researchers or political organisations.

2.3.4 Measuring and managing political brand image

2.3.4.1 Smith (2009)

Political branding research up until the mid-to-late 2000s had focused primarily on defining the application of branding to politics and conceptualising the political brand, and had done so with considerable success. The next step in the political branding research discipline was to analyse and adapt commercial brand measurement methods to evaluate political brands, as the literature up until this point had only theoretically discussed measurement methods that could be used (French & Smith, 2009). Smith (2009) builds upon their work to operationalise the application of Aaker's 'Brand Personality Scale' in politics (1997). The aim of Smith (2009) was to progress the academic research into the application of brand personality in politics, by developing and operationalising a way to measure the construct. This study indicates a key development in prominent political branding research, as it moves the field from primarily theoretical accounts to an empirical research focus.

Before investigating the structure of brand personalities in British politics, Smith (2009) proposed a conceptualisation of brand personality in politics, with a particular focus on the sources of information that influence the personality of a political brand. Smith (2009) identified events, the actions of politicians or the party, advertising, and brand users and endorsers as the main sources that form the political brand personality that inform a person's voting intent; based on the voter's individual interpretation of these elements. Smith's (2009) conceptualisation of brand personality in politics considers partisanship as a moderator of the sources of political brand personality information, suggesting that the level of support a voter has for a party will effect their interpretation of the political brand personality information they consume.

After the conceptualisation of brand personality in politics, Smith (2009) undertook primary research that examines whether it is appropriate, or not, to adopt Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale, to measure the brand personality of politics. Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale includes 114 personality traits that are categorised over five main dimensions: sincerity; excitement; competence; sophistication; and ruggedness. To test initially if the measure was appropriate to apply in its original state, a questionnaire, that was later used in quantitative phase of the research, was pretested by two groups; the first being a group of expert academics (n=3), and the second a group of students (n=8). The participants identified the personality traits that they found to be confusing in the context of British politics, as the Aaker (1997) developed the model in the context of American commercial markets, and these traits were then removed. After the finalisation of the questionnaire, business studies students (n=183) used the amended Aaker's brand personality scale to measure their perceptions of the personality of the Labour and Conservative parties. Using factor analysis, Smith (2009) found that the dimensions of Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale only explained 53% of the variance, and, therefore, determined the measure as inappropriate to apply to politics in its original state. Smith (2009) then used the latent root criterion approach to adapt the measure, this analysis produced a six dimension structure that explained 62% of the total variance. The six dimensions consisted of honesty, spirited, image, leadership, toughness, and uniqueness, and over these dimensions were a total of 34 traits that could be used to test the Labour and Conservative parties' ratings on each dimension. The adaption of Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale shows that politics is unique from commercial markets, in particular, the structure of brand personality within the field, depicted by the addition of a sixth dimension and the replacement or renaming of the five other dimensions to fit the British political context.

Smith (2009) used the adapted structure of brand personality to analyse the personality of the Labour and Conservative parties. Within the questionnaire, participants were asked to report their level of partisanship to the party of their preference. This allowed Smith (2009) to split the results of participants into partisan and low partisanship voters per party, to analyse whether the level of support of voters influences their perception of the brand personality of a party. The comparison revealed that for the Labour party the majority of supporters, regardless of their level of support, have a similar perception of their brand personality. Whilst the Conservative party had marked differences in the perceptions reported between partisanship supporters and low partisanship supporters, it was found that those with a higher level of support perceived the party personality more positively. Smith (2009) shows that commercial brand evaluation methods are applicable to the political context but require adaption to fit the nuances of the field. Furthermore, the author provided evidence that the level of support that a voter holds for a party will influence their perception of its brand personality. In saying that, the findings have limited application, as the six dimension structure developed has been developed on a small sample of English undergraduate students, therefore, the dimensions and traits included may not be applicable over countries or even the British voting public. Therefore, there is the opportunity for future research to test if both Smith's (2009) conceptualisation of brand personalities in politics and his adaption of brand personality scale is appropriate over countries, voter groups and political systems, and covers the main sources of information that influence political brand personality.

2.3.4.2 French and Smith (2010)

In 2010, French and Smith undertook another study together into the evaluation of political brands, to operationalise the second measurement method proposed in their 2009 study, the Brand Concept Maps method. This paper aimed to develop the understanding of voter perception of political brands by utilising the Brand Concept Maps evaluation methodology, to explain the nature and influence of brand associations held in the memory of voters. The analysis of these mental maps were used to evaluate the strength of political brands and political brand equity, by distinguishing the strength of the links between associations per political brand based on the aggregation of the brand concept maps developed by respondents.

The study took a consumer oriented approach, with French and Smith (2010) basing their work on the associative network memory model of consumer memory to form the Brand Concept Maps. The first stage involved an elicitation process, whereby unprompted associations were gathered for either the English Labour or Conservative party. The respondents were assigned a party based on their own personal affinity to either Labour (n=60) or Conservative (n=72), or through random allocation if they were 'uncommited'. Following the elicitation stage, a new respondent group were shown an example of a brand map, then indicated the party they supported, or felt the most closest aligned to, after which they constructed their own map from the predetermined associations, obtained during the elicitation stage, and any new associations they thought of. On their personal map, each respondent indicated the associations that are linked and the strength of these links, as well as whether they perceived the associations to be positive, negative or neutral. Stage three, or the aggregation stage, collated each individual map into one single brand consensus map for each party. These final maps were then used to evaluate the equity of each brand, or party, based on the strength, favourability and uniqueness of each brand's associations.

The work of this study achieves the goals of the authors, to develop of a new consumer-oriented approach for mapping the political brand, as well as a measuring the equity of a political brand. However, there are limitations to the study that propose avenues for future work. Firstly, the sample of the study included two discrete groups of undergraduate students at an English university, who do not represent the entire electorate. Furthermore, based on the level of education of the respondents they are likely to include a small number of low involvement voters, who offer many valuable insights into the heuristics and emotional learning used to make purchase, or voting, decisions. Additionally, the respondents in each stage of the Brand Concept Map process were made to choose a party based on their affinity to it, and by having respondents evaluate the party they felt closest to allows for personal bias; the paper notes that this did result in particularly positive mental maps. Although, during the elicitation process there were a group of 'uncommited' respondents who were randomly assigned a party, and whose responses are less sensitive to personal political preferences. Perhaps, these 'uncommited' respondents could be considered the most ‘valuable’, due the assumed unbias nature of these non-partisan voters. Furthermore, for political parties the undecided voters would be the voter group to appeal to, as a means to swing these voters and have them commit to their party to increase party support. This paper evaluates brand equity based on the strength, favourability and uniqueness of each party’s associations, but does not consider the degree of importance of each association. For example, the importance of the gender of the leader is not distinguished from the importance that the party promotes traditional values. So, although Labour had fewer associations than the Conservatives, their associations may be perceived as more important thus making their brand more favourable; given that the brand associations of the Labour party were both positive and unique. Finally, this study, like others, focuses their evaluation of the political brands on the party or leader, and does not consider specific political issues; and the potential effect it may have on political brands.

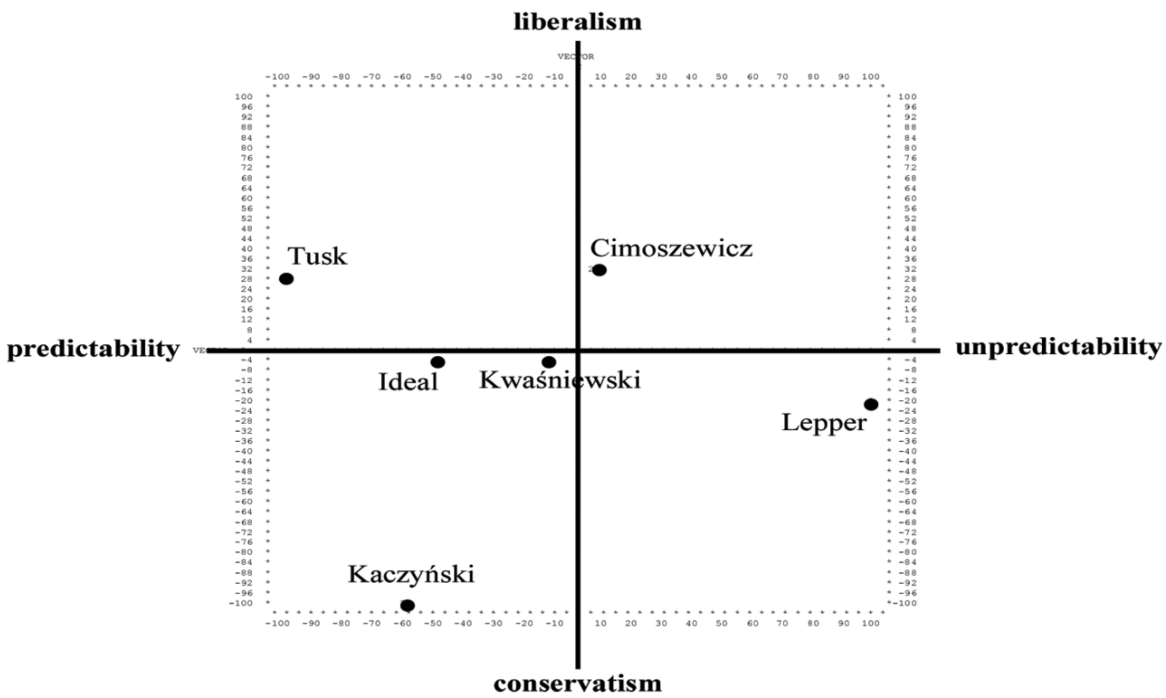
2.3.4.3 Cwalina and Falkowski (2015)

Cwalina and Falkowski (2015), like the work of French and Smith(2010), undertake primary research to operationalise another proposed method to measure and conceptualise the political brand. Similar to French and Smith (2010), the proposed method, Inter-Object Associative Affinity Index, looks at associations held in the memory of voters about a political brand; however, the authors extend on this by using their findings to determine the brand position of the candidates as well as the ‘ideal’ brand image of candidate. The focus of the study on the brand position of political candidates is built on traditional marketing, and political marketing, theory that posits that a group of consumers, or voters, should be segmented into smaller, like-minded groups and then targeted based on the characteristics of their specific group. To target these segmented groups, brands must adapt and define their position within each group, while maintaining relative homogeneity. In regards to the context of politics, the position of a political party or politician may differ in the medium and style that they communicate with the group, as well as the issues that engage with the group on. The strategical aim of building these positions within different voting segments is for the political party or candidate to create the 'optimal' location or position for their brand in voters' minds, and in turn gain their support.

Cwalina and Falkowski (2015) examine the positions of political candidates based on the comparison of the shared associations that form the nodes of the brand associative networks held in the minds of voters. The authors undertook primary research that focused on the Polish presidential election in 2005, specifically the evaluation of the brand positions of the candidates running for President, the data was collected two years after the election was held. To represent the relationships between political brands, associations, and the evaluators of the two former dimensions, multidimensional scaling techniques are used to create perceptual maps that position candidates on spectral dimensions in relation to one another.

The respondents of the research (n=70) were asked to generate as many associations as they could in a minute, for each of six political candidates studied, including a hypothetical 'ideal candidate'. After which, dominance scores were assigned to each association based on the order in which the respondents listed them. The list of associations, and accompanying dominance scores, produced by each respondent were aggregated to create a single list of associations for each candidate. Cwalina and Falkowski (2015) calculated inter-object associative affinity indexes from the aggregated association lists of each candidate, to sum the common response dominance scores observed between the candidates studied. Put simply, these indexes calculate how many times the same association is mentioned for two brands, or, in the case of this study, candidates. The sums, or indexes, form perceptual maps that position the candidates in relation to one another, based on where they are positioned on the spectrum of the x and y axis dimensions. Figure three, obtained from Cwalina and Falkowski (2015), shows the position of the Polish presidential candidates on the spectral dimensions of liberalism-conservatism and pragmatism-populism (based on the respondents of participants with a higher level of education). From this perceptual map, it is observed that the ideal candidate is perceived as being quite predictable and sits in the middle of being liberal and conservative. Based on the spatial configuration of the map, Kwasniewski is the candidate most closely aligned with this position, while Lepper differs the greatest on the spectrum of predictability and Kaczynski on the spectrum of liberalism-conservatism.

Figure 3: Perceptual map of Polish presidential candidates of 2005 (Cwalina & Falkowski, 2015)



Therefore, the authors argue that this method can be used to identify the associations that candidates, or political parties, are dissimilar to the ideal candidate on, and that this can be used to inform branding strategy and more closely align the candidate or party with the 'ideal' brand position. There are two limitations to this thinking, firstly, the study assumes that associations must be shared with rival candidates, and secondly, it is proposed that all candidates should align their brand position to that of the ideal candidate. Both of these limitations neglect to consider the points of differentiation between candidates, and the competitive advantage this differentiation may provide. If all political parties or candidates were to redesign their position to be a replica of the ideal brand position, of their electorate, there would be no distinctive features for voters to differentiate between political offerings or base their voting decisions on.

2.3.4.4 Phipps, Brace-Govan and Jevons (2010)

Finally, Phipps, Brace-Govan and Jevons (2010) take a different approach to the previous studies reviewed in this section of the literature review that present political brand measurement methodologies, by focusing on the role consumers play in developing political brands. The study looks particularly at how high involvement voters help to build the brand of a party, or politician, within their community. To do so, the authors investigated the relationship between the corporate brand image of a political party and the brand image of politicians within the communities they run in. Drawn from the work of other researchers, Phipps, Brace-Govan and Jevons (2010) highlight the value of highly involved political consumers, who communicate the brand messages of local politicians amongst their community and community groups through word-of mouth. Based on this finding, the study aimed to further examine the influence, and potential value, of highly involved political consumers. To do so, the authors adapted Aaker's 1996 'Brand Equity Ten' model to consider eight elements, or measures, of political brand equity, to provide a conceptual framework for the comparison of two case studies on local Australian political representatives (see section 3.3.1 for a full discussion of Aaker's 'Brand Equity Ten'). The eight measures (listed in the following parentheses) are categorised under four dimensions: brand loyalty (price premium and customer satisfaction); perceived quality (perceived quality and leadership); brand associations (value, brand personality, and organisation associations); and awareness measures (brand awareness). The two dimensions of the 'Brand Equity Ten' that were removed are the market share and price/distribution indices. The two dimensions were removed as Phipps, Brace-Govan, and Jevons (2010) felt that the measures are focused on market behaviour rather than consumers and, therefore, did not fit the scope of their research objective. The adapted 'Brand Equity Ten' model was used as the basis of the structure of the interviews and focus groups, undertaken in the collection of the data of the study.

A qualitative case study was undertaken for two local Australian political representatives, one of which is a representative of the Labour party and the other a Liberal party representative. The first stage of research involved selecting two political candidates to investigate, afterwards the community groups that the researchers would hold the focus groups and observations with were identified. The process of identifying community groups involved interviewing the selected politicians, who suggested three community groups that should be included in the study, the researchers then independently identified another three community groups per politician. As a result, six focus groups were held per politician, with 12 focus groups over the two case studies. As mentioned prior, the structure of the interviews and focus groups were based on the adapted brand equity eight.

The discussion of Phipps, Brace-Govan and Jevons (2010) reported that Jennings, the candidate for the Liberal party in Hilltown, who had been the MP in that electorate for nine years, and despite the electorate being historically a Liberal constituency, had lost a lot of the support in a recent election and was only just reelected. The primary research of the authors showed that Jennings during the campaigning period focused on interacting with the largest community groups in the electorate, and accepted that this meant she would experience low support in other areas of the community. Out of the six community groups studied in Hilltown, the three that were suggested by Jennings held a positive view of the candidate, while the remaining three, being the independently selected, groups did not perceive her positively and, in fact, only one of the groups had experienced any interaction with her. In contrast, Thompson, a Labour representative in a typically Liberal voting electorate, won the Fernsborough state election and the following election. The authors claim that this is because Thompson built a strong personal brand through his 'hands-on' approach to communicating and engaging with community groups. Unlike Jennings, Thompson had interacted with a number of community groups that varied in size, from small to large. For the Liberal state electorate of Fernsborough, the personal brand of Thompson outweighed the "negative" image of the Labour party; the party he represented.

The research found that the personal brand image of a politician can enhance the corporate party brand. This is aligned with the findings of Needham (2006), who found that the image of politicians tend to be replicated to the party. However, the politician's personal image can also compete with the brand of the party. Thompson, who despite being a Labour representative in a Liberal electorate won the election, due to his strong personal brand, illustrates how the personal image of a politician can compete with the party image. Some respondents even made a comment that the only way Thompson could be better is if he became an Independent and no longer represented Labour. The research also found that community groups with a good relationship with a politician is willing to contribute to the campaign of the politician, in return for the support of the politician, by actively being involved in building the politicians image by disseminating brand message information to the parts of the community they touch. Phipps, Brace-Govan and Jevons (2010) provide further evidence for the application of the consumer-oriented approach to politics. The research presents a framework, the ‘Brand Equity Eight’, that provides insights into the everyday experiences that voters, in particular high-involvement voters, have with political brands. Despite the focus on the brand equity eight, it was not discussed how these dimensions built the analysis of the brand images of the politicians. The only discussion of the eight measures was that it was the basis of the structure for the interviews with the politicians and the focus groups. The images of each politician were determined as either being positive or negative based on feedback of community groups and the election results. However, there is no discussion of what the specific brand image is for Jennings or Thompson, in regards to their personality, and brand messages.

The articles reviewed in section 2.3.4, Measuring and managing political brand image, provide a range of measurement tools to evaluate the performance and strength of a political brand. However, while researchers like French and Smith (2010), Cwalina and Falkowski (2015) and Phipps et al. (2010) have proposed and operationalised political brand evaluation measures, the majority of the measurement methods proposed are more descriptive. These descriptive methods focus on the elements of the brand and comparing the nature of these elements with poll results or election outcomes, to determine the strength, success and performance of the brand. As polls are such an integral aspect of the discussion of the measurement methods examined in a number of the articles reviewed, the remainder of this chapter discusses the history, critique and development of public opinion political polls.

2.4 Political polls and voter intention

The review of the literature thus far has shown that the evaluation of the performance of a political party or politician, as well as the efforts to market and brand them, is a key concern of academics and practitioners. For academics, testing the relationship between brand image and electoral success provides them with the opportunity to defend the practice of applying commercial marketing and brand theories to politics, as well as further understand the behaviour and decision making of voters. While practitioners aim to evaluate the strength of political parties or politicians, and their brand images, to inform strategic decision making around activities such as the allocation of resources, saturation of the market place and brand building.

A common theme between the political branding literature focused on conceptualising, measuring and managing political brands, see section 2.3.3 and 2.3.4, was the use of existing public opinion political polls to illustrate the success of political brands, in relation to their discussion of the brand strategy implemented by political parties and politicians. Rather than develop, or adapt existing, methods to evaluate brand performance for the political context, like French and Smith (2010), Cwalina and Falkowski (2015), and Phipps et al. (2010), the majority of researchers undertook qualitative case studies and supplemented their findings with poll results as a source of truth.

A similar reliance on public opinion political polls is observed in the political market place. Political polls are utilised by a range of politically interested organisations, from political parties and politicians, key governmental stakeholders, the media, to small groups with an internet platform (Hillygus, 2011). The attitude is held that the political party or politician performance represented by the voting intention expressed in political polls is a predictor, and key indicator, of brand strength or weakness. Society has become increasingly engrossed in the results and reports of public opinion political polls. In the days prior to the American Presidential Election, the number of polls collected and published by research companies and news media outlets exceeded well over 100 polls (RealClear Holdings, 2018).

The prominent application of public opinion political polls in the practice and research of political marketing and branding raises some concerns, as there is disagreement amongst the political polling literature on the reliability and accuracy of political polls (Erikson, Panagopoulos & Wlezien, 2004; Hillygus, 2011; Smith, 1990). The remainder of this chapter is a short review of the key literature on political polling, to examine the appropriateness of using political polls, or voting intention, as a key indicator of political brand success.

2.4.1 The history of public opinion political polls

The earliest form of political polling dates back to the early 19th century, when straw polls were utilised during the 1824 American presidential election to indicate who was likely to win (Smith, 1990). Straw polls are defined as an unofficial ballot of public political opinion that are characterised as small and informal. The straw polls were typically undertaken at rallies or other organised political meetings, on an adhoc basis. Straw polls emerged from the impromptu desire of political stakeholders and enthusiasts to know the opinion, or political preference, of the public, as well as have the opportunity to express their own opinion. Smith (1990) discusses the development and use of straw polls, and highlights that similar to public opinion political polls, these early polls faced a great deal of criticism and controversy. The key concerns identified included the accuracy of the results, honesty of reporting by those stakeholders and enthusiasts who held the straw poll, and the representativeness of the sample. The varied responses, and arguments, of the accuracy of public opinion political polls is discussed in the following section.

2.4.2 The critique and defense of public opinion political polls

2.4.2.1 Erikson, Panagopoulos and Wlezien (2004)

While Smith (1990) highlighted a number of issues associated to the traditional polling of political public opinion and straw polls, Erikson, Panagopoulos and Wlezien (2004) focus specifically on the sampling issues of polling likely voters. The intent of the study is to investigate the issue and volatility of screening for likely voters, particularly the further out from the election the poll is collected, rather than to attack the credibility or accuracy of public opinion political polls.

A key consideration of political pollsters when designing their data collection and analysis methods is the treatment of the intent or likelihood of the respondents to vote in the upcoming election. Erikson et al. (2004) argue that a large proportion of the respondents of a poll will not actually vote, so there is a risk that the candidate preferences expressed by non-voter respondents may differ from actual voters. The existing likely voter screening method, designed to account for voter turnout, typically distinguishes likely voters by separating those respondents that are registered voters and weighting their intent to vote based on a series of questions; that focus on the respondent's previous election activity, awareness of the location of polling booths in their community and their political interest. If the probability score, or weight, assigned to each participant exceeds a predetermined threshold they are considered a likely voter and their response is included in the analysis, if not the respondents are labelled an unlikely voter and their response is removed. The critique of the likely voter screening method is that it is sensitive to respondent enthusiasm, as when there are shifts in voter enthusiasm this influences the composition of likely and unlikely voter responses collected.

To analyse the sensitivity of the likely voter screening method, the authors review the performance of CNN/USA Today/Gallup's (Gallup) 2000 polls that tracked the United States presidential election and reconstruct the polls' pools of registered voters to include both the likely and unlikely voter groups. The 2000 Gallup polls were analysed as they received a lot of attention and critique, due to its selective likely voter reporting methods and the volatility and fluctuations of the results, particularly the further out the polls were collected from Election Day.

Erikson's et al. (2004) reconstruction of the pool of registered voters for the polls allowed for the comparison of variance in voter preference expressed between likely voters, unlikely voters, and registered voters. It was found that there was far greater volatility and variance in the voter preference reported by the likely and unlikely voter groups, than the larger pool of registered voters. The authors also note that the volatility in likely and unlikely voter group political preferences decreases the closer the poll is collected to the Election Day. Erikson et al. (2004) conclude that it is the shift in respondent classification, as a likely or unlikely voter, that accounts for more observed change in voter preference, expressed in polls, than the actual change in respondents' voter preference. The significance of the findings of this study is that it suggests that the likelihood that a respondent will vote should be determined, rather than measuring their enthusiasm.

2.4.2.2 Hoek and Gendall (1993)

Similar to Erikson et al. (2004), Hoek and Gendall (1993) also investigate the issue of voter turnout, and its influence on polling accuracy, but go on to propose an alternative polling method to measure voter preference and account for the likelihood that a respondent will vote, without the need to screen for likely voters. The authors acknowledge the limitation of traditional polls to predict voter turnout, and argue that the ways in which these polls are designed to account for undecided voters, or respondents, is complex and, in some cases unreliable. Specifically, traditional polls are believed to reallocate undecided respondents in the same proportions to that of decided respondents, or by using an allocation model that is based on voter turnout or 'learning' projections, resulting in varied accuracy of the results of polls. To illustrate this, the article highlights the inability of public opinion political polls to forecast the 1992 British General Election. The political polls consistently predicted that either the Labour party would win or there would be a 'hung' parliament, however, the Conservatives won the election, albeit by a small majority. The discrepancy between the results of the polls and the election outcome instigated an enquiry into the inaccuracy of the polls by the Market Research Association (Hoek & Gendall, 1993). It is the belief of the authors that the varied success of polling, as of 1993, is due to the influence of undecided respondents who are reported to account for 20 to 45 percent of the sample for a poll.

Hoek and Gendall (1993) propose a solution to the issue of weighting the responses of undecided participants, by presenting an alternative method to project voter turnout, and in turn election outcomes, that is more simplistic and accurate than existing methods. Specifically, the prominent probability scale 'the Juster Scale', from commercial marketing, is applied. In commercial marketing, the Juster Scale is found to produce more accurate estimates of consumer behaviour than purchase intention scales. Unlike purchase intention scales or traditional voting intention polls, the Juster Scale method has respondents express their support for a brand, or political party or candidate, in numbers rather than an absolute choice. So, rather than expressing definitively the party or candidate they will vote for, respondents report the likelihood in numbers that they will vote for each of the parties or candidates running in the election. It is hypothesised by Hoek and Gendall (1993) that the values expressed by The Juster Scale method will better reflect the opinion of the uncertain, as they are not forced to select a single party, and they are more able to express an opinion that may otherwise see them choose 'none' or 'undecided' in a traditional poll.

Hoek and Gendall (1993) collected the data analysed in this study by conducting a random face-to-face survey with voters (n=438), in the New Zealand electorate of Palmerston North, in the lead up to the 1990 New Zealand General Election. The respondents either answered the survey using a traditional voting poll question, or they used the Juster Scale to express the likelihood that they will vote for each of the parties that are represented in the Palmerston North electorate. The responses of the undecided participants who answered the traditional polling question were allocated proportionally to other categories, in line with the existing likely voter screening methods that are used. All respondents were required to indicate the probability that they would vote in the upcoming election. The analysis compared the predicted election outcomes of the traditional polling question responses and the Juster Scale responses to the actual election outcomes, to determine if the Juster Scale produces more accurate results than traditional polls. Both the traditional polling estimates and the Juster Scale probability of voting were weighted by the overall probability of voting (this review does not discuss the results of the mean probability of voting analysis). The analysis found that the Juster Scale results more closely reflected the actual election outcomes, for the Palmerston North electorate, than the traditional poll results. Specifically, a difference of

9.3% was observed between the prediction of vote share for the Labour party by the Juster Scale (32.5%) results and the actual election results (41.8%), while there was a difference of 1.8% for the National party (41.8% versus the actual 40.0%). In comparison, there was a difference of 14.3% between the traditional poll estimate (27.5%) for Labour and the election results, and an 8.3% difference observed for the National party (48.3% versus the actual 40.0%). While this finding does suggest that the Juster Scale is more accurate than traditional polls that allocate the proportion of undecided respondents, and indicates the latter method may bias the accuracy of results, neither method predicted the election outcome. However, the research up until this article, and even after, has made little progress in effectively accounting for undecided respondents. Within the context of New Zealand politics, this research presents an alternative method that provides more accurate results. While the method needs to be tested over different countries and political systems, to determine if the findings of the study are consistent and in turn significant, it represents ingenuity and alternative thinking within the political polling research field to adopt measurement methods from commercial marketing; to improve the political polling methods that have been used for decades.

2.4.2.3 Jacobs and Shapiro (2005)

Both Erikson et al. (2004) and Hoek and Gendall (1993) have acknowledged that there is truth to some of the criticism of political polling, and investigated how the issue of the representation of voter turnout can be accounted for to improve polling methods. In contrast, Jacobs and Shapiro in their article *'Polling Politics, Media, and Election Campaigns'*, published in the 2005 special issue of the Public Opinion Quarterly, take a particularly positive view of the accuracy of polls and instead argue that it is media and underperforming political parties and candidates who have created the poor public image of polling. Jacobs and Shapiro (2005) summarise the issues expressed by academic research, political organisations and other groups, identifying low response rates, the influence of technological developments and lack of representative samples as the three key issues of inaccurate poll results raised by critics. The authors contend that this view neglects the number of public opinion political polls that have accurately predicted election outcomes. Including the 2004 American presidential election, in which a number of polls utilised developed or more readily available new technologies, such as automated polls and internet surveys. The authors report that the preelection polls were 'overwhelmingly' accurate in predicting Bush as the winner, and even closely estimated margin of vote share that he won by; although they do not report data to illustrate their claims.

Instead, the authors blame negative media coverage and the agenda of underperforming political parties and candidates, for the criticism and poor public image of political polls. The work presents the arguments of pro-political polling researchers, pollsters and the media professionals, as illustration of their argument. These professionals and academics, suggest that it is the way in which political polls are reported on that changed during the 2004 presidential election, rather than the polling methods used by pollsters, and that it is the hyped interpretation of the media that is diminishing the quality of the polls results. It is even posited that competing political parties or candidates sway, or attempt to sway, how media outlets report on both them and their competition. The second main critic of political polls identified by Jacobs and Shapiro (2005), are political parties or candidates who are predicted by polls as losing or not performing as well as might be expected. It is suggested that these underperforming parties and candidates attack the accuracy of the poll, to explain why they are not polling well; although the authors do not present an example of a political party or politician who has done this. The authors address the critique of this group by questioning the increasing use of political polls by political parties and candidates to inform their strategic decisions. The authors suggest that if the traditional polling methods, based on voting intention, and their subsequent results are as flawed as political parties or candidates claim them to be, then responsible leadership would not rely on, or utilise, the public opinion or preference expressed in the polls. Instead, political actors and election campaigns are seen to increasingly capitalise on polls to gain insights into the concerns of target voter groups that they then address in their policy design; as a means of increasing voter support. Regardless of whether Jacobs and Shapiro (2005) are right, or not, to blame the press, and their claimed biased media coverage, as well as low-polling political parties and candidates for the poor public image of polling, the authors highlight an important point that political actors are increasingly using polls to inform their election campaign and policy design. Therefore, if there are issues with the methods of political polling, as Erikson et al. (2004) and Hoek and Gendall (1993) would suggest, these should be investigated, to develop best practice for collecting and analysing polling data.

2.4.2.4 Wright, Farrar and Russell (2014)

Jacobs and Shapiro (2005) vigorously defended the accuracy of public opinion polls, in their qualitative discussion of the accuracy of the 2004 American presidential election polls and a the role of the press and underperforming political actors who have hyperbolised the inaccuracy of polls to the public. However, there was no quantitative evidence nor clear example that their claims were correct. Wright, Farrar and Russell (2014) also defend the accuracy of political polls but the authors take a different approach and do not discuss qualitatively the criticism of political polls, instead focusing their work on the quantitative testing of the accuracy of polls in a multiparty mixed member proportional political system. Wright et al. (2014) focus on a proportional representation political system, as unlike the application of polls in other political systems, in which smaller parties are not a viable voting choice, the ability of polls to forecast election outcomes for a multiparty election becomes complicated by the likelihood that minor parties will gain representation or not.

To test if public opinion political polls are still able to predict accurately the election outcomes of a multiparty election, the authors apply the Mosteller accuracy measures. Specifically, two of the eight measures are applied, being the third and fifth measure. The authors identify the Mosteller measure three as equivalent to the average absolute error that is "the unweighted combination of the magnitude of errors for all parties, including third or minor parties" (Wright et al., 2014, p.114). Wright et al. define the Mosteller measure five as assessing "the accuracy of the predicted margin between the two major parties" (2014, p.114). The study supplements these two measures with the ln odds ratio measure, 'A', proposed by Martin, Traugott and Kennedy (2005). This measure, in the context of a two-horse race, "calculates the odds that voters prefer one party to another", by dividing the poll odds by the election odds to form an odds ratio (Wright et al., 2014, p.114). The authors adapt this measure to calculate and compare the variance between polls for a multiparty election, 'A'', based on sums of error and bias.

Wright et al. (2014) study the accuracy of political polls within the context of New Zealand general elections. The data analysed in this study is obtained from Curia Market Research Limited, the specific polls analysed include the final pre-election polls collected by major pollsters prior to the 2005, 2008 and 2011 elections. The polls were analysed both individually and as an aggregated 'poll of polls', using the three outlined measures of accuracy, with the accuracy of the polls being determined by the reflection of the actual vote percent achieved by each party. The New Zealand political parties included in the study included National, Labour, Green Party, New Zealand First, ACT, Maori Party, and United Future.

The results of the research found that political polling is accurate, and performs well, for multiparty elections in New Zealand. The averages of the Mosteller Measure three and five were also compared with similar averages published for presidential elections in the United States and general elections in Italy and Portugal. The comparison shows that the New Zealand results had the lowest average absolute error. However, the presidential election polls for the United States performed better on measure five and measure 'A', but the results of the New Zealand polls remained comparable, or in some cases superior, to the other polls analysed. The significance tests of the adapted measure A', indicate little significance in results with the only differences being the overestimation of support for the Greens in the 2005 and 2008 elections, and the underestimation of support for New Zealand First in the 2008 election and for United Future in the 2011 election. Further, the measure does not provide insights into whether or not a minor party will achieve the five percent threshold required for proportional representation. To measure this, the authors developed a measure of the odds of a party crossing the five percent threshold, labelled O(5%). The measure involves calculating a *z*-score from polls that is first converted into a single-tailed *p*-value and then into a measure of odds. The O(5%) measure predicted the vote threshold outcomes for minor parties in 14 of the 15 polls of polls analysed in the study, thereby indicating that New Zealand general election political polls accurately predict the likelihood that minor parties will gain representation, or not.

2.4.2.5 Hillygus (2011)

Despite being written prior to Wright et al. (2014), Hillygus (2011) provides a well-developed summary of the political polling literature reviewed and of the field itself. The author begins by outlining the three functions of polls that include forecasting election outcomes, understanding voter behaviour, and planning campaign strategy. These three functions are used to frame the structure of the article, but for the purpose of this review the focus is on the ability of polls to forecast election outcomes and the remaining two functions are only touched on in relation to the first function.

Hillygus (2011) reports that there has been an 'explosion' of political polls conducted in the United States, with polls for the next presidential election being undertaken the day after the last election. The author predicts that the number of polls will only continue to grow, as new technologies become more readily available, despite the significant amount of criticism polling has faced since the incorrect *Literary Digest* poll predictions of the 1936 American presidential election. It is reported that the failed attempt by the *Literary Digest* to predict the 1936 election outcome is what lead to its 'death', even though it had successfully predicted the outcomes for five elections between 1916 to 1932. This rise and fall in reputation was also observed for John Zogby, who was crowned the 'prince of pollsters' after accurately predicting the 1996 election outcome but later deemed 'the worst pollster in the world' after consecutive incorrect election predictions. Hillygus (2011) acknowledges the fluctuations in polling accuracy, but notes that despite having a truth benchmark, being the actual election results, there is little consensus on how the accuracy of polls should be determined. Specifically, is a poll accurate if it correctly predicts the winner? Or, should it only be deemed accurate if correctly predicts the vote share or margin of victory? Hillygus (2011) illustrates their point by comparing the poll predictions of CBS News (taken in 1996) and

Gallup (taken in 2000) for the presidential elections in America. In 1996, the CBS News poll correctly predicted Clinton as the winner of the election but overestimated his margin of victory by 10% (predicting 18% rather than the actual 8%). While in 2000, Gallup incorrectly predicted the winner but only had a 2% difference in the vote margin.

The author briefly acknowledges the work of social scientists, like Frederick Mosteller, one of the creators of the Mosteller Measures, to develop a collection of methods that test the accuracy of polls. However, the focus of Hillygus (2011) remains on the inconsistent performance of political polls, and the potential cause of error. A range of potential poll design decisions that may bias the results are identified, and include the time the data is collected, the mode used to collect the data, the questions and question structure, as well as sampling method and weighting. Discussed in depth is the issue of sampling, specifically the identification and treatment of likely and undecided voters. The article reiterates the Hoek and Gendall's (1993) point that polls do not know, and are unable to predict, who will vote come Election Day. Hillygus (2011), also reports the same finding that current methods used to screen for likely or undecided voters, to define the unknown group of actual voters, are resulting in varied forecasts in the polls. In 1993, Hoek and Gendall proposed the Juster Scale as an alternative to traditional voting intention polls; however, Hillygus discusses how pollsters have primarily attempted to reduce error and bias, and in turn improve the accuracy of their poll predictions, by aggregating polls or polling by state rather than nationally (2011). Although, the author suggests that traditional polls are increasingly being replaced, or supplemented, by alternative or experimental measures, like the Juster Scale, to improve predictions and understand voter behaviour beyond the role and influence of party identification, their response to campaign information and the impact of the media on their decision making. Specifically, Hillygus (2011) refers to the use of macroeconomic models and prediction markets as alternative methods of predicting election outcomes. Macroeconomic models are statistical models that take a range of measures, including government and economic performance, job growth, inflation rate, and perceptions of personal finances, amongst other variables. It is the assumption of this approach that voters will reelect incumbent governments if the country is experience prosperity, and vote them out of government if times are not as prosperous. While prediction markets are betting markets, composed of a group of society that are actively engaged with politics to the point that they will put money on their election prediction. This method is based on the public opinion of who they believe will win, rather than who they intend to vote for, and is therefore believed to not be influenced by social desirability bias. However, prediction markets only consider the opinion of those who are highly engaged with, and financially invested in, the election, and as a result do not represent the voting public. Further, Hillygus (2011) suggest that these methods are only capable of quantifying predictions of the election outcomes, and, if accurate, are unable to explain why a particular political party or candidate was successful. Whereas, the author claims that polls and surveys may provide real value in this area. Hillygus (2011) concludes that the proliferation of polls in the political sphere has resulted in greater methodological variance, and in turn greater fluctuations in the quality of data, and proposes that an alternative measure to traditional polls should be developed with a focus on voter attitude and behaviour rather than intent.

2.5 Summary of political marketing, branding and polling literature

This chapter has highlighted the prominence of the application of marketing, specifically branding, to politics, despite the criticism political marketing has received from political science academics and practitioners. Therefore, regardless of whether the critique of the discipline by political science academics and practitioners is warranted, the application of marketing to politics needs to be analysed and developed to establish best practice within the field.

In response to the debate, Lees-Marshment (2001a, 2003) proposed a more comprehensive approach to political marketing that acknowledges that the adoption and adaption of marketing theories and concepts has the potential to extend beyond the campaign period of an election. Further, it is suggested that political marketing should be understood as an organisational wide approach to how a political party or candidates engages with, and appeals to, voters. Lees-Marshment (2001a) defines this organisational wide approach as 'market orientation', in which a political party or candidate designs their offerings based on the concerns of voters and balances this with its ethical responsibilities and capability to deliver on its promises. To meet the demands of citizens, market oriented political organisations have adopted the practice of branding from marketing, as it is observed that the voting decision making process reflects the way consumers make commercial brand choices (Reeves, de Chernatony, & Carrigan, 2006). The political branding literatures showcases the value of conceptualising political parties and candidates as brands; specifically, branding in politics is claimed to enable political organisations to more effectively build relationships with, and meet the concerns of, voters. However, the methods used to evaluate the brand image and performance of political parties and candidates remain simplistic, with the majority of the political brand evaluation methodologies relying on public opinion polls and election results to measure the performance and equity of political brands, or supplement the findings of the political branding research that operationalise commercial brand evaluation methods.

The prominence of political polls and election results in the measurement of political brand equity is a concern for two reasons. Firstly, these measures provide few feedback loops and lack diagnostic features beyond voting intention and the count of votes from elections. Specifically, traditional voting intention political polls allow only for interpretation of results between competing political brands, or previous poll and election results, with no analytical method to benchmark the theoretically expected performance of each brand. Secondly, the review of political polling literature indicated that the performance, or accuracy of the results, of public opinion political polls is volatile, and sensitive to a number of methodological design choices and social desirability bias (Hillygus, 2011).

Concurrent with the political marketing and branding literature, research into the field of customer-based brand equity, specifically brand equity measures, has developed significantly. The following chapter reviews the literature published in the field of customer-based brand equity, to highlight how these recent advancements have improved the evaluation of brand equity in both commercial and non-commercial markets, specifically the field of science communication.

3.0 CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

3.1 Introduction

It is accepted that brands are one of the most important assets of a firm, and that a strong brand can create greater financial value (French & Smith, 2013). A well-performing brand accounts for over one-third of shareholder value, while for some leading brands, such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds, the brand value is worth more than 50 percent of stock market value (Scammell, 2007). The power of a brand lies in its function as a short cut for consumers to differentiate offerings, and allows consumers "to cope with the increasingly complex and over-communicated world they live in… [and] to know where or where not to spend their money" (Smith & French, 2009, p.211). Therefore, brands influence or form the basis of consumer choice; so, the stronger the brand the more likely it will be chosen during the purchase decision-making process. To build a strong brand and increase financial success, brand managers improve marketing productivity and support strategic decision-making through measuring, and in turn managing, customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993). Measurement of customer-based brand equity enables companies to evaluate dimensions of customer-based brand equity, or brand knowledge, to track and benchmark brand performance and value, and, in some cases, predict future consumer behaviour.

However, since the official definition of branding in the 1980s, there has been little to no consensus, academically, on the conceptualisation of dimensions of customer-based brand equity nor a method to measure brand equity. Despite the lack of consensus, there is consistency over the research that conceptualises and measures customer-based brand equity, being the being the inclusion and consideration of brand associations as dimension of brand equity. Further, in recent advances in brand evaluation methodologies, the research has identified the number of brand associations as a measure of brand saliency, and in turn and indicator of market share and, in some cases, future buying behavior.

The chapter discusses these findings further, to outline the significance of the research findings and the potential of customer-based brand equity measures to provide insights into consumer evaluations of non-traditional brands that belong to non-commercial markets. The chapter begins by defining customer-based brand equity, and then identifies and compares the conceptualisations of the dimensions of customer-based brand equity proposed by academics over the past three decades. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the methodological developments in customer-based brand equity measures.

3.2 Defining customer-based brand equity

Academically, customer-based brand equity began to receive considerable attention in the late 1980s, but Kevin Keller did not coin the term until 1993. Keller's (1993) conceptualisation of customer-based brand equity is universally accepted and considered groundbreaking in the field, and, since publication, the article is cited over 14,000 times. Keller defines customer-based brand equity as the "differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (1993, p.8). In line with this definition, "a brand is said to have positive (negative) customer-based brand equity if consumers react more (less) favorably to the product, price, promotion, or distribution of the brand than they do to the same marketing mix element when it is attributed to a fictitiously named or unnamed version of the product or service" (Keller, 1993, p.8). Therefore, customer-based brand equity is observed through the impact of a brand on customer choice (Keller, 2001).

3.3 Conceptualising the dimensions of customer-based brand equity

Since the early 1990s, the definitions of customer-based brand equity have remained, yet there has been little consensus on the set of dimensions of customer-based brand equity. This section chronologically presents prominent studies and developments in the conceptualisation of the dimensions of customer-based brand equity.

3.3.1 David Aaker (1992 and 1996)

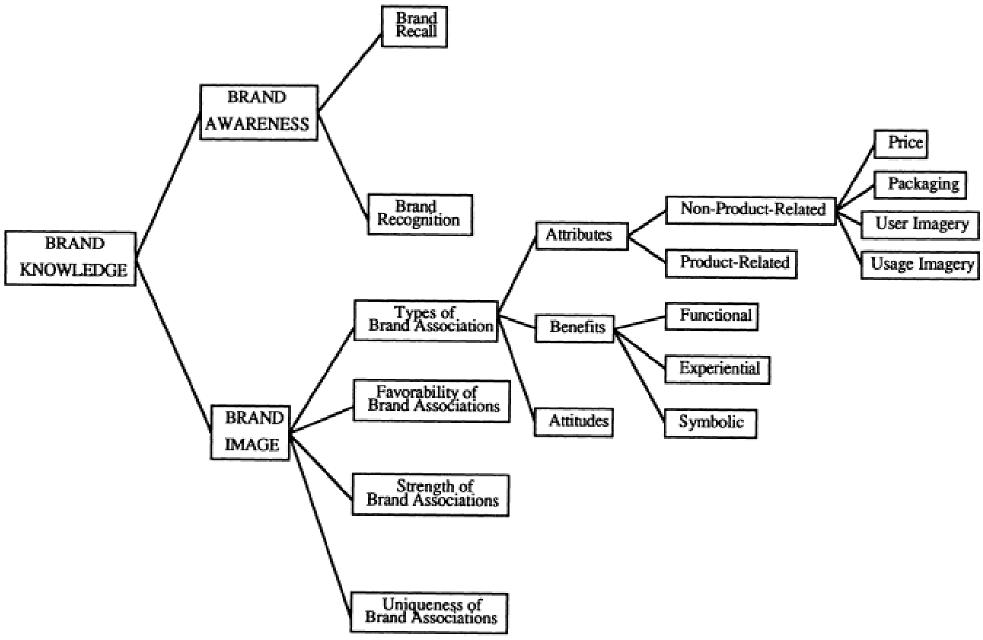
Similar to the development of the political marketing and branding studies reviewed in the previous chapter, early research into customer-based brand equity was primarily theoretical. Aaker, a prominent academic in the field of customer-based brand equity, published one the earliest studies that formally investigated the dimensions and conceptualisation of brand equity by reviewing previously published research. (1992). Aaker (1992) identifies five dimensions of brand equity that create value that include brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand associations, and proprietary brand assets. Aaker extends on the existing brand equity research by highlighting the value the assets of brand equity provides customers, as well as companies, being: the ease of interpretation and processing of brand knowledge; increased purchase confidence; and enhanced customer satisfaction (1992). Aaker adopts a consumer focus of brand equity by considering the value for customers, before Keller's official terming of 'customer-based brand equity' (1993).

Aaker builds upon this customer-based brand equity model, to develop the 'Brand Equity Ten'; a set of ten measures of brand equity. The 'Brand Equity Ten' is designed to be used to analyse the brand equity of a single brand, as well as brands in a category or a market. Aaker (1996) categorises these ten measures (noted in the following parentheses) into five categories: loyalty (price premium and satisfaction/loyalty); perceived quality/leadership measures (perceived quality and leadership); associations/differentiation measures (perceived value, brand personality, and organisational associations); awareness measures (brand awareness); and market behaviour measures (market share and price and distribution indices).

3.3.2 Kevin Keller (1993 and 2003)

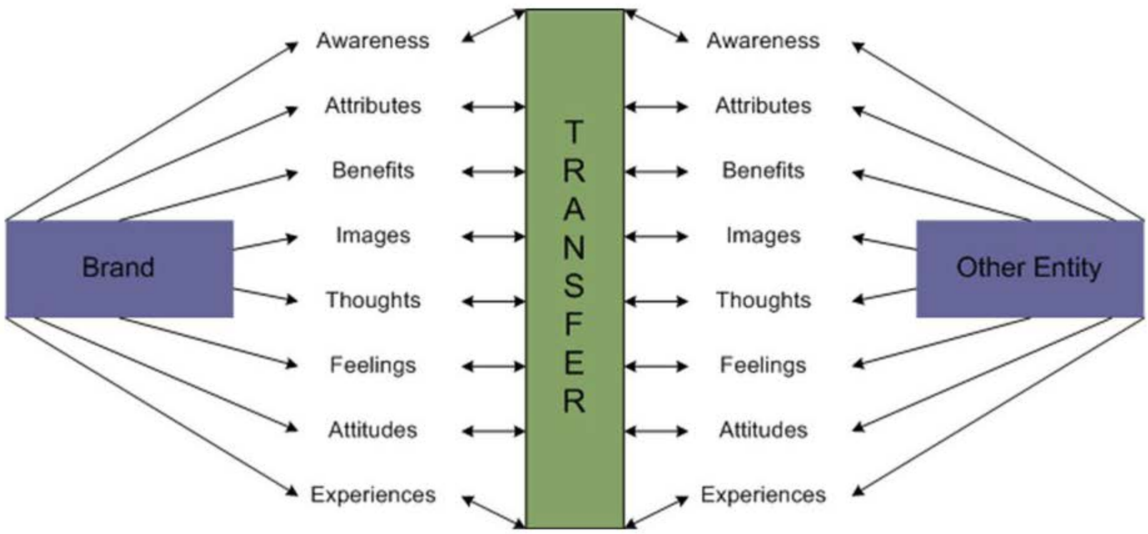
Based on the associative memory network model, Keller (1993) identifies brand knowledge as the underlying structure that determines the equity of a brand from a consumer perspective. Keller (1993) identifies brand awareness and brand image as the two core dimensions of brand knowledge. Brand awareness consists of brand recall and brand recognition, while brand image is composed of the type, favorability, strength and uniqueness of brand associations. Keller (1993) postulated that the equity of a brand is considered strong when it is easily recognised or recalled, and there are favorable, strong, and unique brand associations held in the minds of consumers for that brand. Strong customer-based brand equity is said to positively influence customer brand loyalty and response to product, price, promotion and distribution strategies (Keller, 1993).

Figure 4: Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 1993)



In 2003, Keller simplified and compressed the model of the dimensions of brand knowledge to develop a model that visually represents the transfer of brand knowledge in brand-leveraging processes, and in doing so identifies different dimensions of brand knowledge; awareness, attributes, benefits, images, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and experiences.

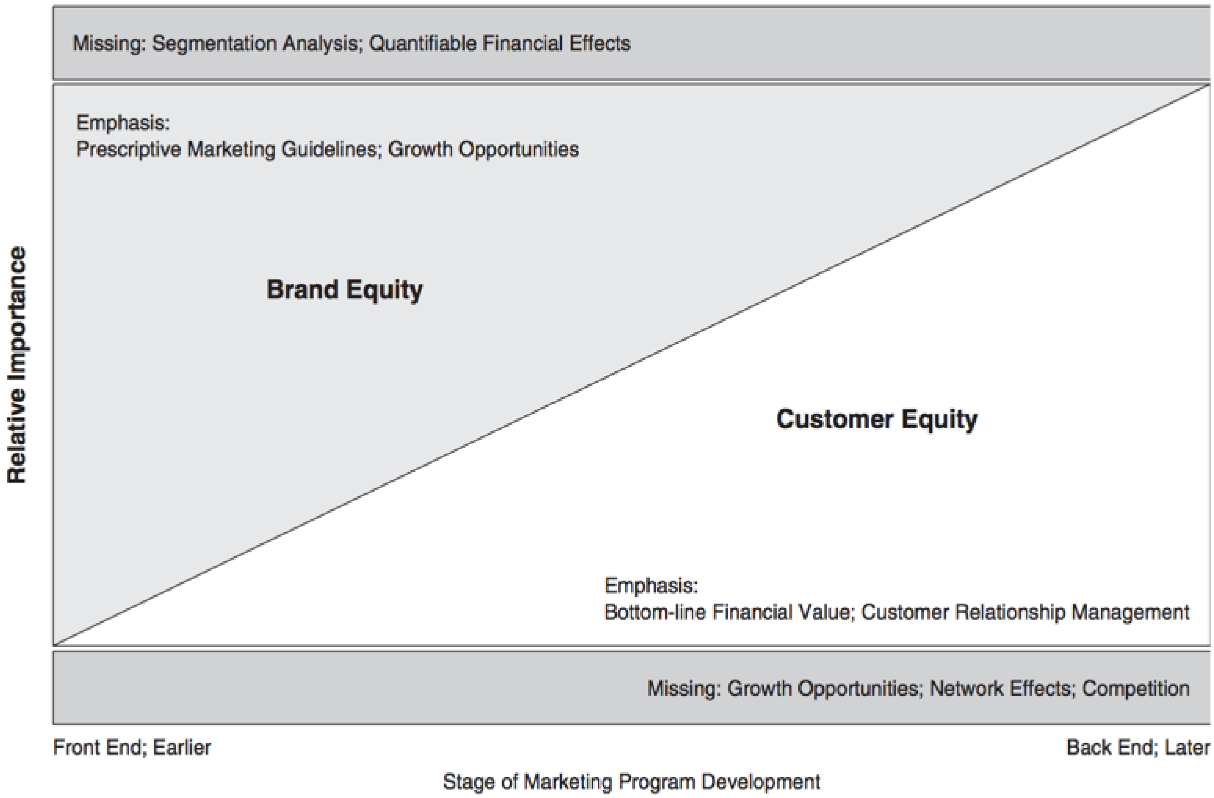
Figure 5: Understanding Transfer of Brand Knowledge (Keller, 2003)



3.3.3 Leone, Rao, Keller, Luo, McAlister and Srivastava (2006)

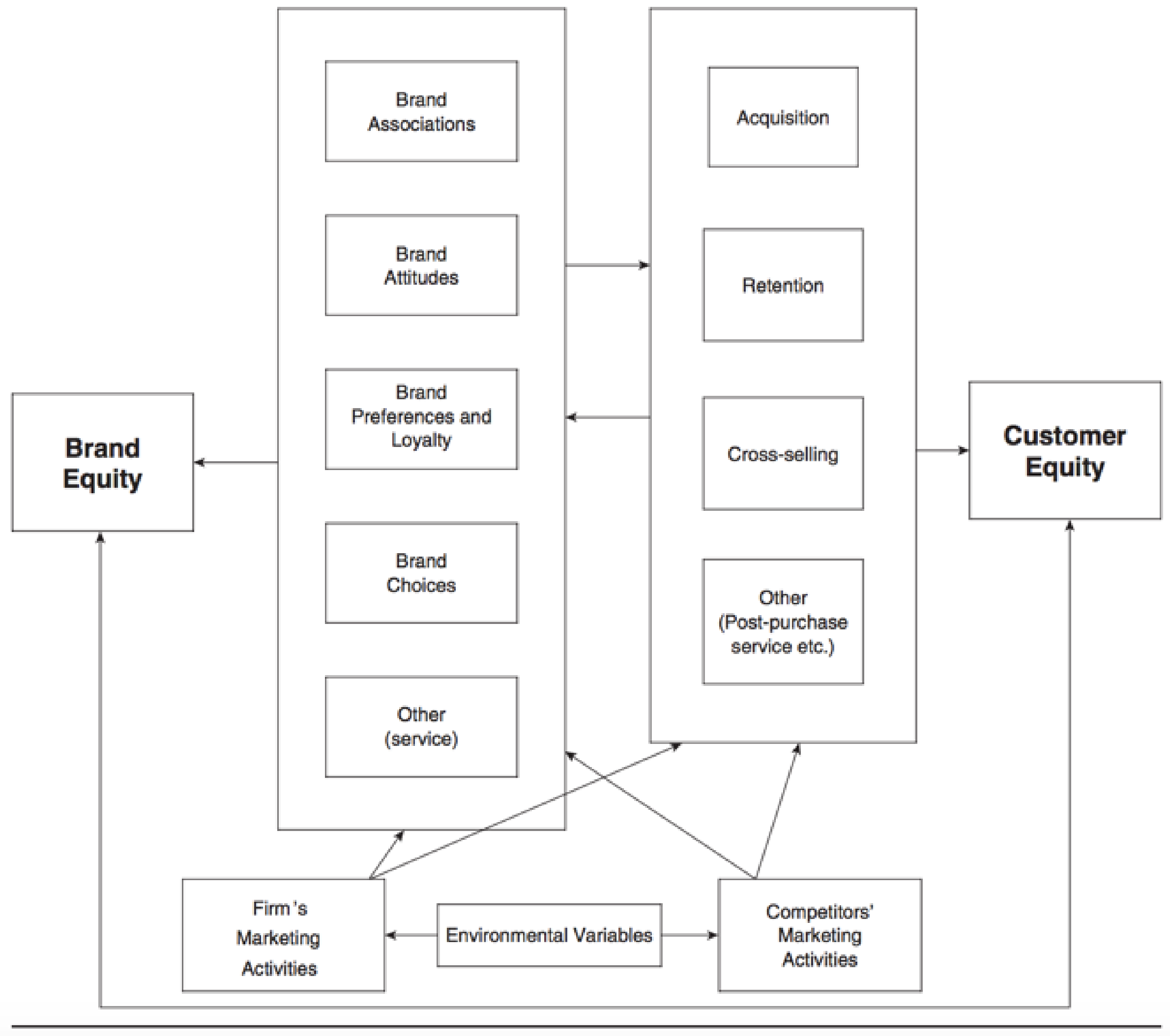
Leone, Rao, Keller, Luo, McAlister and Srivastava (2006) explore further the connection between brand equity and customer equity, to provide insights into how they are linked. From the existing literature, the authors developed a matrix (see figure six) that compares the relative importance of each concept by the stage of the marketing programme. It depicts that during the earlier stages of the marketing programme brand equity is of greater importance than customer equity, while customer equity is more important at the later stages of the marketing programme. Whilst the matrix identifies the differences between brand equity and customer equity, the authors highlight in their discussion that both emphasise customer brand loyalty.

Figure 6: Brand Equity versus Customer Equity Matrix (Leone, Rao, Keller, Luo, McAlister & Srivastava, 2006)



Building upon the matrix, Leone, et al. (2006) present a preliminary model for relating brand equity to customer equity. The model is used to explain the value of a brand to the manufacturer, in terms of the value of a customer to the manufacturer; as well as the value of a brand to the retailer, in terms of the value of a customer to the retailer. The preliminary model shows brand equity as influenced by five dimensions: brand associations, brand attitudes, brand preference and loyalty, brand choices, and other (services); and customer equity is seen to be influenced by the costs and/or profits of four dimensions: acquisition, retention, cross-selling, and other (for example post-purchase service).

Figure 7: A Preliminary Model for Relating Brand Equity to Customer Equity (Leone, Rao, Keller, Luo, McAlister & Srivastava, 2006)



3.3.4 Keller and Lehmann (2006)

Keller and Lehmann (2006) review existing branding literature to identify influential work in a range of topics in branding that include brand positioning, brand integration, brand-equity measurement, brand growth, and brand management. Of interest, is the authors' review of existing brand equity literature. From the literature, three key perspectives are identified: customer based, company based, and financial based. The focus of the discussion is on the customer-level perspective, and its relationship with brand equity. Keller and Lehmann (2006) develop a model to explain how brand equity operates from a customer level. The model consists of four main stages: firstly, the strategic and marketing actions of companies; secondly, what customers think and feel about the brand based on company actions; thirdly, how customers' thoughts and feelings influence what they do about a brand; and finally, the financial market impact of brand decisions. The second stage of the model conceptualises the dimensions of customer-level brand equity, based around five aspects of brand knowledge: awareness, associations, attitude, attachment, and activity.

3.3.5 Summary of the conceptualisation of the dimensions of customer-based brand equity

Today, there is still no universally accepted set of consumer-based-brand equity dimensions, or conceptualisation of brand knowledge, this has resulted in incrementally different approaches to modelling, and in turn measuring, customer-based brand equity. However, in most research articles published on customer-based brand equity, including those discussed, there are two dimensions that remain constant: brand awareness and brand associations. Beyond research on modelling customer-based brand equity, the consideration of brand awareness and brand associations remains focal in studies on measurement methodologies for customer-based brand equity. The review of the literature will now discuss, in detail, the brand equity measures that researchers use to apply and measure the elements presented in the conceptual frameworks examined in the literature review thus far.

3.4 Measurement of customer-based brand equity

Keller (1993) builds upon his conceptualisation of customer-based brand equity, to categorise existing brand equity measurement approaches into two classifications: direct approaches, and indirect approaches. Direct approaches to measuring customer-based brand equity, measure the direct effect of brand knowledge on the behavioural or attitudinal responses of consumers to the marketing for a given brand. The second approach, indirect, measures customer-based brand equity based on its dimensions, namely brand awareness and brand associations.

3.4.1 Direct approaches

Keller (1993) does not operationalise measures for either the direct or the indirect approach; however, theoretically measures for each approach are discussed. Direct approaches measure overall consumer-based brand equity through experimental research, in which the same marketing program is evaluated by one group of consumers with a specific brand attributed to it and another group of consumers with a fictitious brand or unnamed version attributed to it. A widely reported example of the direct approach is what has come to be known as the 'Pepsi Challenge'.

The 'Pepsi Challenge' is a blind taste test to determine if consumers can correctly identify the cola brands or if their actual cola brand preference is aligned with their theoretical, or attitudinal, brand preference. In 1949, the first cola blind taste test was undertaken by researchers at the University of Wichita, Kansas. The participants of the study tasted three brands of cola, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, or RC Cola, and then matched the brand with the drink. It was found that the participants were not significantly more accurate than chance, with 41 % correctly identifying Coco-Cola, 38% for Pepsi and 35% for RC Cola); meaning that there are little defining features between the product offerings. In 1975, the blind taste test got its name, ‘Pepsi Challenge’, as Pepsi undertook tests in American shopping centres and other public locations, as an ongoing marketing promotion. Participants chose from two non-descript cups which cola they preferred, Pepsi or Coca-Cola, with the results illustrating a preference for Pepsi despite the market dominance of Coca-Cola. The findings of the ‘Pepsi Challenge’ indicate that Coca-Cola have a greater brand equity than Pepsi, as Coca-Cola has retained its market dominance despite the taste preference for Pepsi. Therefore, from these results it is concluded that consumers purchase Coca-Cola for intangible reasons, beyond the product features; being the brand and what consumption of Coca-Cola represents.

This form of direct approach calculates, and evaluates, the overall customer-based brand equity of a brand, by determining the value of the brand name beyond the product offering. However, as outlined in section 2.3 Conceptualising the dimensions of customer-based brand equity, there are several potential dimensions, or brand equity drivers, to consider independently when measuring customer-based brand equity, including brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, brand image, and brand meaning.

3.4.2 Early operationalisations of indirect brand equity measurement systems based on the conceptualisation of customer-based brand equity

Whilst direct approaches, like conjoint analysis, allows researchers and brand managers to explore the effect of a brand name in relation marketing mix elements, being price, product/service features, promotion and channels, the direct approach does not isolate and identify key sources of brand equity or measure brand equity drivers independently. As a result, the concluding measurements of the direct approach have limited usefulness for brand managers, when identifying strengths and weaknesses of a brand to guide brand building decisions. In comparison, the indirect approaches calculate consumer-based brand equity by accumulating measures for each, or a selection, of the dimensions of consumer-based brand equity. However, there is no consensus on the dimensions that should be included in the measure. For example, Keller (1993) identifies brand awareness and brand associations as the two measures that comprise indirect approaches to measuring customer-based brand equity, while Aaker (1996) extends their analysis beyond these dimensions, to include market behaviour, customer loyalty and perceived quality (a full discussion of both studies follows this section). The review of the literature will now examine the different ways in which the conceptualisations of brand equity are operationalised by acamdeics, as measures of the performance of a brand.

3.4.2.1 Keller (1993)

Keller (1993) drove the categorisation of customer-based brand equity measurement approaches, and although not operationalising his discussion of the indirect approach to measuring customer-based brand equity, specific measures for calculating brand awareness and brand association metrics are outlined. Keller (1993) suggests using aided or unaided measures to test brand recognition and recall, and in turn measure brand awareness. While the discussion of brand association measures focuses on testing the type, favorability and strength, as well as the relationship between brand associations. Keller (1993) discusses how qualitative research techniques are utilised to determine the type of brand associations, through free association tasks and projective techniques, and suggests using scales that evaluate consumers' attitudes towards a brand's attributes to determine brand favorability and strength. Finally, Keller (1993) outlines congruence, competitive overlap, and leveraging as the three factors to consider when evaluating the relationship between brand associations. Congruence is concerned with the degree to which brand associations for a given brand are shared between consumers, competitive overlap tests the extent to which brand associations are, or are not, connected, or shared, with the product category, and leveraging assesses whether the brand associations linked to an association attributed to a brand becomes secondary associations for that brand. The indirect evaluation methodologies presented by Keller (1993) although commonly used in academic and commercial research are either outdated or oversimplified; with no tools or methods to produce benchmarks or quantify consumer perceptions of brand associations.

3.4.2.2 Aaker (1996)

Another prominent study in the conceptualisation of customer-based brand equity is Aaker's 1996 work on the 'Brand Equity Ten'; however, Aaker does not present the 'Brand Equity Ten' as simply a conceptualisation of customer-based brand equity. Instead, Aaker (1996) discusses, theoretically, how the ten measures of brand equity may be operationalised, to measure brand equity beyond an immediate product class or market of interest; to aid the management of portfolios of brands.

The ten measures are classified into five categories; the first category is loyalty and is calculated using two measures: price premium and customer satisfaction, or loyalty. To measure price premium, Aaker (1996) suggests dividing the market into loyalty types: brand loyals, brand switchers, and non-customers; and test each group using either dollar metrics or conjoint analysis. While customer satisfaction, or loyalty, should be measured based on the purchase intention of customers, or using net promoter score metrics. The second category is perceived quality/leadership, and is calculated using two measures: perceived quality and leadership. Aaker (1996) recommends using scales to measure both perceived quality and leadership, or popularity, by having consumers scale their attitudes of a set of competing brands. These attitude scales indicate the level of quality (high quality vs. average quality vs. inferior quality) and leadership (the leading brand vs. one of the leading brands vs. not a leading brand or more/less innovative) of each brand tested. The third category is associations, or differentiation, and is calculated using three measures: perceived value, brand personality, and organisational associations. To measure perceived value, Aaker (1996) suggests having consumers report on their attitudes, or perceptions, of whether a brand is good value for money, or if they have reasons to buy a given brand over competing brands. To measure both brand personality and organisational associations, the use of scales to determine consumer attitudes is recommended. Personality scales involve consumers indicating whether a brand, or brands, have personality, are interesting, or have a clear image of the type of people who buy and use the brand. While organisational association scales focus on whether the organisation, being the people, values and programs of a brand/company, are trusted, admired, and credible. Overall, Aaker (1996) suggests measuring brand associations, or differentiation, by having consumers indicate whether are brand is either different to other brands, or the same. The fourth category is awareness, and is calculated by measuring brand awareness. Aaker (1996) briefly outlines the number of approaches that can be undertaken to measure brand awareness that include: recognition, recall, top-of-mind, brand dominance, brand knowledge, and brand opinion. These metrics are a mixture of unaided and aided measures that require consumers to self-report on their level of brand knowledge and opinion. The fifth category is market behaviour, and is calculated using two measures: market share, and price and distribution metrics. According to Aaker (1996), calculating market share does not require brands to undertake primary research, as databases are available to brands, or brand organisations, that consist of market share information. To measure price, Aaker (1996) suggests a focus on calculating relative market price and measuring the value of distribution channels. Relative market price is calculated by dividing, over a given month, the average price of a brand by the average price of brands in a product class. While distribution channels are measured by calculating the percent of stores carrying a brand or the percent of people that have access to purchasing a brand.

Aaker (1996) aims to develop on the work of Keller (1993), and his own previous work (1992), by forming a comprehensive measurement tool for marketing practitioners to analyse the brand equity of a single brand, brands in a category or a market. However, the usability of what is proposed is flawed and overly complex. Firstly, whilst each measure is discussed there is no indication of how these measures work together, in terms of forming an overall analysis of the equity of a brand. Specifically, neither an overall benchmark mechanism nor benchmark mechanism per measure is presented; therefore, marketing practitioners, and academics, have no guidance in drawing conclusions of whether a brand is performing as expected, better or worse and how its performance can be fairly compared to competing brands. Secondly, it is noted by Aaker (1996) that the research instrument used for collecting data for each measure may not be identical over product categories and markets, yet there is no discussion as to how this can be accounted for when making comparisons between brands over product categories and markets. The comparability of markets, product categories and the brands within these needs investigation, before a brand equity measurement model or metric are formed. As well as, testing each of the ten measurements over markets and product categories to assess applicability and the degree of adaption required; to determine whether brands could still be compared when the research instrument is different between categories and markets. Finally, even if the former two points were not an issue, it is both complicated and costly to carry out market research for ten different brand equity measures.

3.4.3 Associative Network Diagrams (Brand Concept Map Method)

Since the early work of Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996), research has made advances in evaluating customer-based brand equity, and a popular methodology adopted to branding is associative network diagrams, commonly known in branding as the Brand Concept Map method. The aim of applying associative network diagrams to branding is to research the relationship between brands and consumer memory, an approach that originates broadly from cognitive psychology learning theory and specifically, within this theory, the associative network model of consumer memory. From this perspective, brands are described as the associations held about an offering in the memory of a consumer; it is these associations that make up brand knowledge. The associative network model terms these associations as nodes, which are linked together in the memory to form a complex associative network; of brand knowledge. The associations, or nodes, can vary in type, from emotive-based associations to physical composition or trait associations. When a node is stimulated, often by an environmental cue, it will activate other nodes, or pieces of information, stored in the memory of a consumer; dependent on the strength of the link between the two.

Consensus brand maps depict the brand associations that are core to the image of a brand and show the brand associations that are linked directly or indirectly to the brand, as well as the associations that are grouped together. Earlier techniques used to produce consensus brand maps can be categorised into two key approaches: consumer mapping and analytical mapping. Consumer mapping elicits brand associations from consumers that are used to construct brand association network maps. While analytical mapping methodologies elicit brand associations from consumers, but use analytical methods to form the brand association network map. The discussion of the associative network diagram methodology begins with an example research study for each approach, before examining the methodological developments of the brand concept map method.

3.4.3.1 Zaltman and Coulter (1995)

Zaltman and Coulter (1995) illustrate the first category of consensus brand map techniques, being consumer mapping. Zaltman and Coulter (1995), proposes the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET), to surface the mental models that drive consumer behaviour and perceptions. The ZMET involves three key stages: elicitation, mapping, and aggregation.

The elicitation stage extracts consumer information using multisensory channels to avoid incomplete communication, as existing survey design often doesn't consider that most communication is non-verbal and thoughts occur as images. Firstly, 20 to 25 participants are recruited and instructed to either take or collect a minimum of 12 pictures on the topic, or brand, of the study. Seven to ten days after receiving the initial instruction, participants partake in a two-hour depth interview to elicit brand associations using the pictures collected. The ZMET utilises multiple qualitative, elicitation research methods in the interview, such as Kelly's Repertory Grid, laddering exercises and other image based activities. The mapping stage involves the interviewer reviewing the brand associations elicited with the participants, to determine if the participant believes that the constructs are representative of the topic and to identify if any associations are missing. Participants are then asked to create a brand association network or map, showing the connections between the brand associations. The final stage, aggregative, has researchers create a consensus map, of key brand associations and relationships between these, by identifying key themes through the analysis of interview transcripts, recordings, notes, and the images collected and created. Once key themes are identified, or coded, the researchers decide on the key constructs and construct relationships that should be presented in the final consensus brand association network or map.

The ZMET involves thorough elicitation research methods that enables interviewers to extract the brand associations that underlie the subconscious associative network constructs of consumers. Also, multiple methods from a range of schools of thought, including cognitive neuroscience and psycholinguistics, increases the reliability and validity of the brand association networks or maps reported by each participant. However, in these advantages also lies the limitations of the technique. The ZMET is both difficult and timely to administer, as it is labor-intensive for both interviewers and participants due to the timeframe and number of activities involved. Furthermore, it requires specialty expertise and training for interviewers to administer the variety of research methods that marketing managers or researchers are unlikely to have.

3.4.3.2 Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder (1998)

Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder (1998) illustrate the second category of consensus brand map techniques: analytical mapping; by applying network analysis, specifically network algorithms, to derive the structure of the brand associations elicited from the participants.

The associative network diagrams were generated from data collected through depth interviews, using the Kelly's repertory grid method. Participants (n=46) recalled seven sport car brands, before comparing three brands at a time. For each threesome, participants selected a brand that was different to the other two brands and explained the distinction. The distinctions formed the five attributes featured in the full associative network diagram. The full associative network diagram comprised of two separate networks, or disjointed cliques, to depict the two distinct images for two groups of car brands (i.e. low price versus classy). Individual participant networks were developed using pairwise sports car data, outlining the car brands that each participant perceived as similar or different. Preceding the associative network diagrams the data was presented in a matrix, to show the relationship or association between a brand and attribute in a table format. If an attribute was associated with a brand it was marked with a "1", and "0" if there was no mention.

The methodologies used by Henderson et al. (1998) develops a basis to analyse brand image and the structure of a market, particularly the comparability of brands. However, the strength of each association is unknown, as an association, if made, is depicted by a '1' instead of being expressed by the total count data per attribute for each brand. Therefore, all attributes, if made, are assumed to have an equal association with a given brand, and multiple brands with shared associations are assumed to have an equal association to those that they share.

3.4.3.3 John, Loken, Kim, and Monga (2006)

Until the mid-2000s consumer brand mapping techniques were in their infancy. Most techniques were labor-intensive and required specialised expertise, or training, beyond the capability of most marketing managers or researchers. In 2006, John, Loken, Kim, and Monga developed the brand concept map methodology, to create a method that is usable for marketing managers and researchers. The brand concept map methodology is seen to be easier to administer, incorporates more straightforward and accurate aggregation procedures, provides greater flexibility, and produces brand maps that are reliable and valid.

John et al. (2006) identify the aggregation stage as a key issue in earlier brand consensus map research, so the brand concept map method was designed based on the aggregation stage. The elicitation stage utilises existing consumer research, or involves undertaking a survey, irrespective of what approach is used, the research must fulfil four criteria. Firstly, the research must be based on the same consumer population that will be used in the mapping stage; secondly, use open-ended questions; thirdly, include only the frequently mentioned brand associations in the final set of associations used in the mapping stage, and finally retain the wording of consumers. In the mapping stage, participants are asked to think about what they associate with the brand, to aid the process the associations from first stage are then presented to respondents on cards. Respondents then choose the cards that reflect their thoughts and feelings towards the brand, and add any extra associations that are not included in the initial set, if necessary. An example of a brand concept map is shown to participants and instructions on constructing a map are given, after which participants connect the association cards they selected using single, double and triple lines; to indicate the strength of the relationship or connection between the associations. The aggregation involves the researchers following a set of rules, based on frequencies, to combine the individual brand maps into a final, consensus map.

Two concerns with the brand concept map method are aggregation bias, and the ability to extract brand associations at the subconscious level in the elicitation and mapping stages. However, despite these two potential limitations the brand concept map is a popular and widely utilised method in brand equity research, as it is easier and more time-efficient than earlier brand consensus map methods to administer.

3.4.3.4 French and Smith (2013)

French and Smith (2013) combine the brand concept map method with their own network analysis measures to produce a novel customer-based brand equity metric for brand association strength.

The research generated a single associative network diagram for McDonald's, by first having participants (n=85) form individual brand concept maps from a list of 30 associations; elicited prior to the mapping process from a separate sample (n=101). The individual maps were aggregated into two consensus maps, one depicting positive attitudes and the other negative attitudes. Each association was weighted as first, second or third order associations, dependent on the strength, or proximity, of the attribute to the McDonald's brand. To measure brand association strength, French and Smith (2013) adapted a traditional density measure to consider not only the number of links in a map but also the structure of the map and strength of links between associations (i.e. first, second or third order). This measure provides structural density scores; the negative attitude brand concept map had a higher structural density score (0.410) than the positive attitude brand concept map (0.350).

French and Smith (2013) postulate that to measure the strength of a brand concept map the total number of associations must be considered. To do so, the structural density scores are multiplied by total association counts to get an overall brand association strength score. Despite the negative attitude brand concept map achieving proportionally more of their maximum brand association strength score (6.553 out of 16), in absolute terms, the positive attitude brand concept map has a greater brand association strength score (8.405 out of 24).

The adaptation of traditional density measures, and inclusion of total association count, is an innovative approach to determining and measuring the brand association strength within customer-based brand equity. However, the subtleties of brand association retrieval and activation are overlooked. Stability in the retrieval and activation process is assumed, despite the irregularity and breadth of contexts and cues that may activate an association causing retrieval of brand. Furthermore, without the inclusion of competing brands, the activation and retrieval probabilities between competing brands with shared associations is not accounted for in the evaluation of brand association strength (i.e. can an association be considered strong when it is linked equally, or more, with a competing brand).

3.4.4 Brand Association Strength

The issue of measuring brand association strength in a way that is simplistic, yet still accounts for the complexities of a retrieval, or buying, situation, was tackled by academics from the early 2000s; led by Romaniuk and her colleagues. Yet, the advances made by this stream of research are primarily ignored in the development of other brand equity measurement methodologies, such as associative network diagrams.

Romaniuk first investigated brand associations, and specifically the quantity of these, as an indicator or measure of brand equity with Sharp, in their 2003 article 'Measuring brand perceptions: Testing quantity and quality'. This study leads the discussion of the section, and is followed by an examination of its connection to the work of Hoek, Dunnett, Wright and Gendall (2000), on the relationship between consumer behaviour and descriptive and evaluative attributes. The developments made on Romaniuk and Sharp (2003) are then explored in the review of a recent study published by Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013).

3.4.4.1 Romaniuk and Sharp (2003)

Romaniuk and Sharp (2003) tested the relationship between brand perceptions and loyalty, to see if given attributes or brand images influence loyalty levels, i.e. if association to an attribute or brand image is more likely to create loyalty amongst consumers or not.

This study investigated a subscription market, as within these markets brand loyalty is the norm and when customers purchase another brand it is considered brand defection. Three hypotheses are tested, with two concerned with the quality of perceptions, and the last with quantity. Three brands are used for the study, as together they account for 95% of the market. The sample consisted of business consumers that are involved in the selection of service provide, and the sample sizes varied depending on the size of the brand in the marketplace; brand 1 (n=4000), brand 2 (n= 1,900), brand 3 (n=350). Participants undertook telephone interviews that involved free choice, pick-any format questions on each attribute tested. For each attribute, a participant was asked which of the three brands are associated with it. The ad agency and market research department of the first brand chose the attributes included; the attributes selected were relevant to each of the brands tested. Finally, brand loyalty was measured for each brand using an 11-point probabilistic measure of brand switching, with each respondent giving a score 0 to 10 to represent their likelihood of staying, or not (0=not staying, 10=staying).

Hypothesis one tests the relationship between brand loyalty and specific brand attributes. The analysis involved splitting respondents into two groups, for each brand per attribute, of those participants who associated a brand with an attribute and those that did not. An ANOVA test used to test significance of differences in loyalty means between the two groups. Greater difference was found between the means of attributes than for brands; however, all differences were minimal. Some attributes were found to have a greater relationship with loyalty but these could not be identified per brand and the difference was, as said, little.

Hypothesis two tests eight combinations of attributes or positions: service based (3 attributes); expertise based (3 attributes); information/solution based (3 attributes); relationship based (3 attributes), pricing based (2 attributes); and three combinations (4 attributes each). For each brand, per position or combination, those participants who perceived brands to be associated with all the relevant attributes in a combination were compared with those who did not associate the brand with any of the attributes in the combination. The difference in loyalty measures ranged from 0.7 to 2.1, however, for most it was 1.5. While there is a combination or position for each brand that had the highest brand loyalty score, the difference between positions is minimal and over the brands there is no clear 'ideal' position for the service category.

Hypothesis three tests the relationship between the number of attributes a brand is associated with and brand loyalty. For each brand, the brand saliency, being the number of times a brand was mentioned across attributes by respondents, was calculated. The mean loyalty at each level of saliency showed a positive relationship was found between higher attribute counts and loyalty levels. Therefore, the greater share of mind a brand possesses in the memory of consumers the more loyal consumers will be.

3.4.4.2 Hoek, Dunnett, Wright and Gendall (2000)

Romaniuk and Sharp (2003) provide evidence for the argument that the sum of attributes is more important than a specific perception, suggesting that it is the strength, or quantity, of an attitude that is related to future behaviour. This reflects the earlier work of Hoek, Dunnett, Wright and Gendall (2000) that investigates the relationship between descriptive and, or, evaluative attributes and behaviour, or experience. The purpose of the study was to develop an a priori classification of brand attributes, as well as test the findings of Barwise and Ehrenberg (1985) that suggest the descriptive or evaluative attributes associated with a brand is a consequence of behaviour, or experience. However, a by-product of the investigation was the finding that attribute association rates are highly and positively correlated with usage. Specifically, it was found that the number of attributes associated with a brand increased, as usage levels increased (i.e. the more a respondent had used a brand the more attributes that would associate with it). This finding can be explained by the double jeopardy theory that postulates that the more well known a brand is (the higher usage of a brand) the more well regarded it will be (the more attribute associations will be generated). Therefore, this suggests that rate of attribute association indicates the size of a brand, or its market share, rather than being a prediction of behaviour.

3.4.4.3 Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013)

In 2013, Romaniuk, alongside Nenycz-Thiel, extended her research, with Sharp (2003), into the relationship between brand loyalty and brand associations, to investigate the relationship between a consumer's past behaviour loyalty and their current propensity to give brand associations; to determine if there is a relationship between brand associations and future buying behaviour.

Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013) tested for the effect of two behavioural brand loyalty measurements: buying frequency, and share of category. The research found that consumers with either a higher buying frequency or share of category requirements are more likely to have a greater brand attribute response. Furthermore, share of category requirements is a greater driver of brand association response than buying frequency. Therefore, consumers with greater experience with a brand are likely to have more brand associations linked to it, increasing the likelihood that it will be a part of the consideration set during the decision-making process.

This research provides robust, empirical evidence for a few existing theories, such as theories linking to brand usage reinforcement of brand memory and brand association interference caused by competitor links. In addition, whilst a relationship between associations and past buying behaviour is proven, there is no indication as to how to interpret the results of brands; particularly in regards to competing brands. It is suggested that if consumers provide more associations for a brand, than its competitors, then usage will be higher for that brand and, therefore, it has greater brand equity. However, like the other work of Romaniuk and her peers, as well as the associative network diagram studies and earlier theoretical work of Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996), no benchmarking tool is provided to assess whether the number of associations obtained for each brand is what would be theoretically expected. Therefore, it is unknown as to whether brands are preforming better, worse than or as well as expected.

3.4.5 Modelling Mental Market Share

The customer based brand equity measurement methods discussed under section 3.4.4, brand association strength, found a relationship between the propensity of a participant to give brand associations and their purchase behaviour, i.e. the greater the number of associations attributed by a consumer to a brand the greater their loyalty or usage. However, no benchmarking tool is built into the analysis methods presented that outlines the theoretically expected performance of each brand, meaning that the only point of comparison for these methods are the competition and eventually, once the brands had been tested multiple times using this methodology, past results. In 2013, Romaiuk rectified this issue by introducing the concept of modeling mental market share. Mental market share refers to the size and structure of a brand's associative network in the minds of consumers, and it is modelled by comparing observed results to theoretical benchmarks.

This section begins with a discussion of the work of Romaniuk (2013), who proposes a method based on the NBD-Dirichlet model to model mental market share, and is followed by the examination of a study that extends the methodology to the field of science communication.

3.4.5.1 Romaniuk (2013)

Romaniuk (2013) studied two markets, carbonated drinks and financial services, to test the appropriateness of the NBD-Dirichlet model to provide benchmarks for the size and underlying structure of a brand's associative network. Data was obtained from professional market research interviews and brand tracking surveys, in which the included associations were determined, in part or whole, by marketers within the industry. At the point of analysis Romaniuk had influence over which attributes were included, or not. Romaniuk identified and removed attributes that were repetitive, or an evaluative or construction attribute. Ten attributes for each market were analysed.

The NBD-Dirichlet model was used to calculate benchmarks for the four metrics of brand associative network (adapted from the original buying behaviour metrics of the NBD-Dirichlet model): mental market share (sales market share); associative penetration (penetration); association rate (buy rate); and share of mind (share of category requirements). For both markets, the benchmarks were found to be highly correlated (0.88 and higher, $p<0.01$) with the observed data, and analysis showed low mean absolute deviations. The results illustrate the ability of the NBD-Dirichlet model to predict the mental market share of brands. Deviations between the observed data and benchmarks were identified but not analysed or discussed in-depth. Deviations may provide rich insights about the image of a brand; the exploration of deviations could be the basis of future research.

Overall, this work provides industry and researchers with an uncomplicated, yet appropriate, tool for measuring the brand associative network element of customer-based brand equity. Specifically, Romaniuk (2013) offers an approach to model mental market share that addresses the subtleties of the associative network, by not assuming, and relying on, stability of association retrieval and activation.

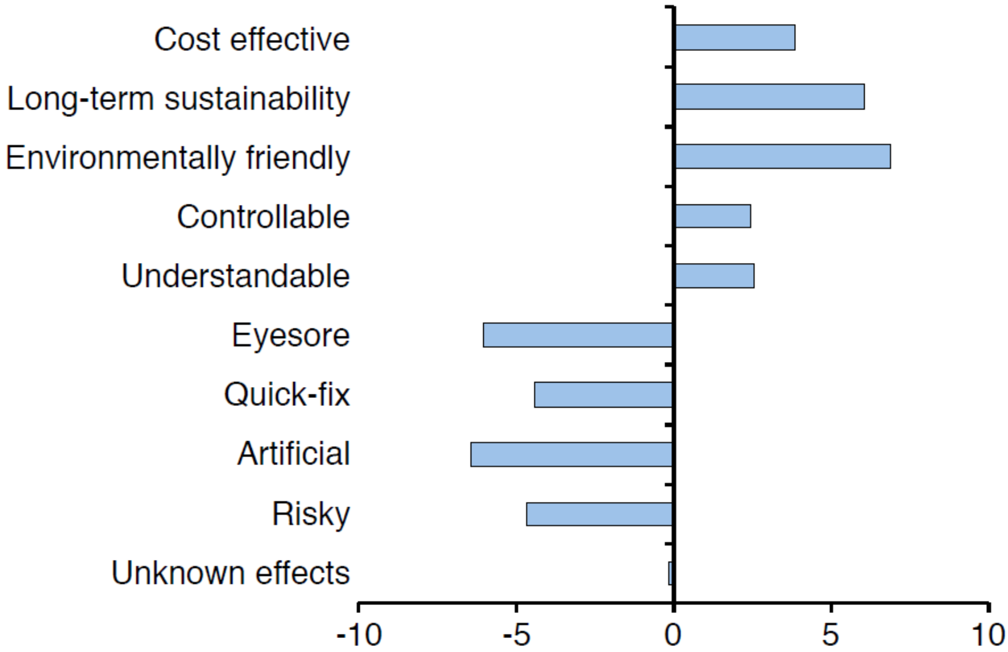
3.4.5.2 Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014)

Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) extend Romaniuk's (2013) work on brand image measurement to the science communication field and develops the application of brand knowledge measures to visual concept boards, to enable a quantitative evaluation of public reactions of Climate Engineering.

Both qualitative and quantitative research was conducted. In the qualitative stage, in-depth interview participants (n=30) examined four climate engineering techniques; presented on concept boards. Half of the participants used a list of pre-determined attributes to describe each technique, the remaining sample were interviewed using Kelly's repertory grid. The qualitative data elicited ten attributes then used for the quantitative stage. The online survey sample, from Australia (n=1,006) and New Zealand (n= 1,022), were presented an on-screen visual and description for each of six concepts before selecting relevant attributes from a list of ten.

Wright et al. (2014) adopted the analysis methods of Romaniuk (2013), based on the NBD-Dirichlet model, to calculate the share of associations and net positive association scores. The share of total association counts revealed the overall, negative, attitude towards climate engineering, whilst the net positive association scores highlighted the concepts that were more, or less, favourable. Developing upon Romaniuk's (2013) methods, a chi-square test was performed to benchmark expected cell counts and form concept image maps for each climate engineering concept. For each technique, the Chi-square test produced distinct concept images that illustrated the degree to which a concept deviated from the expected association count for each attribute (i.e. over or under performed in relation to an attribute). Figure eight shows an example of the brand image map for the Biochar concept (developed from the findings of New Zealand participants). The brand image map depicts that the deviations for Biochar are skewed towards the positive attributes (such as cost effective, long-term sustainability, and understandable), and are skewed away from the negative attributes (such as eyesore, quick-fix, and risky). Therefore, it can be determined that the public opinion for the Biochar concept is positive, and it has a strong brand equity, as it has overperformed on positive attributes (received more associations than expected) and negative attributes (received less associations than expected).

Figure 8: Brand Image Map for Biochar Concept from New Zealand Participant Results (Wright, Teagle & Feetham, 2014)



Benchmarking and deviation examination allows for individual concept performance, or image, analysis, rather than evaluating concepts by comparing total association counts of ‘competing’ concepts. Wright et al. (2014) illustrate the potential of brand evaluation methodologies to be applied to non-traditional markets, such as science communications. The breadth of markets to which these methodologies can be applied will need further research.

3.4.6 Summary of customer based brand equity measurement methods

Despite the widespread agreement amongst branding academics and industry professionals of the value of measuring customer-based brand equity, there is still no consensus on the conceptualization of dimensions of customer-based brand equity; with the lack of consensus reflected in the varying methods developed over the years to measure it. While the nature of the brand equity measures differ, commonalities exist between some and, as a result, methods are classified as either a direct approach or indirect approach to measuring customer-based brand equity. While the direct approach assesses a consumer's overall behavioural, or attitudinal, response to the marketing of a brand, it does not isolate and identify key sources of brand equity or measure the drivers of brand equity independently. As a result, the concluding measurements of the direct approach have limited usefulness for brand managers, as the strengths and weaknesses of a brand are unable to be identified and used to guide brand-building decisions. In contrast, indirect measures are capable of capturing these insights, as they measure one or more dimensions of customer-based brand equity to evaluate the performance of brand. Although, as discussed, there is still no consensus on the dimensions that conceptualise customer-based brand equity and this has been in detriment to a number of proposed measures that have tried to do too much or too little. While there has been no formal consensus on the dimensions of customer-based brand equity, the discussion of this chapter on academics' conceptualisations and proposed measures show that brand associations is a constant dimension.

The discussion of existing customer-based brand equity measurements began with the work of Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996). Both researchers build on, and illustrate, their conceptualisations of customer-based brand equity, however, the presentation of the methods are theoretical discussions of the measures rather than an empirical test. These two academics were instrumental in driving research into customer-based brand equity, and despite limitations with their measurement tools, and presentation of them, it created a starting point for future research.

A prominent branch of research into the measurement of customer-based brand equity that has developed from the initial discussions of Keller (1993) and Aaker (1996) is associative network diagrams, also known as the Brand Concept Map method. The Brand Concept Map method focuses further on the role of associations in brand equity, by mapping the associations held about an offering in the memory of a consumer; to investigate the relationship between brands and consumer memory. A number of academics have investigated the Brand Concept Map method and developed their own measurement tool to create associative network diagrams. While brand concept maps provide a visual representation of the associative network of brands in the minds of consumers, proposed methods tend to be either overly complex or too simple. Complex methods, like Zaltman and Coulter (1995), require a high level of expertise and time to administer. While simplistic methods assume that all associations made are of equal strength (Henderson, Iacobucci & Calder, 1998) or that brand association retrieval and activation are stable over purchase situations (French & Smith, 2013; John, Loken, Kim, & Monga, 2006).

Developed concurrently with the Brand Concept Method, is another stream of research into the measurement of customer-based brand equity that also focuses on brand associations but aims to quantify the strength of brand associations in the minds of consumers. Romaniuk and Sharp (2003), Hoek, Dunnett, Wright and Gendall (2000), and Romaniuk and Nenycz-Thiel (2013) each present their own methods of customer-based brand equity measurement that provides evidence for the argument that the greater share of mind a brand possesses in the memory of consumers the more loyal consumers will be. The findings suggested that future behavior is linked to the propensity of a consumer to give associations, therefore, the more associations a consumer links to a brand the more likely they are to purchase it in the future as the brand has a higher chance of being activated. Despite the insights the research provides, none of the studies indicate how brand managers should interpret the results of the brands tested, in regards to competing brands, or how to benchmark the results to determine if a brand is performing as expected.

Romaniuk (2013) rectifies these issues of result interpretation by developing a benchmarking tool, based on the NBD-Dirichlet model, to predict the mental market share of brands. Unlike previous measurements of brand association strength, this method addresses the subtleties of the associative network, by not assuming, and relying on, stability of association retrieval and activation. Romaniuk (2013) uses the benchmarking method to track the changes, or lack of, in customer-based brand equity that a brand might experience. Specifically, by comparing the observed percent of participants that made one association to a brand and the average number of associations given by those who at least one brand association, to the theoretical results expected based on the benchmark calculations. This method provides an opportunity for researchers, and brand managers, to analyse deviations for the sum of associations, as well as per association that a brand, or brands, are tested on. However, Romaniuk does not either. Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) not only provide evidence for the application of Romaniuk's method to non-commercial industries, they also present a method to form visual concept boards based on the deviations developed from the benchmarks for each association, showing the rich insights about the image of a brand that can be analysed.

A key development taken from the research into brand association strength, and modelling mental market share, is the prominence of brand saliency over brand awareness. The research of Romaniuk and her colleagues, as well as Wright and his colleagues, clearly indicates that the frequency, or the sum, of brand associations is a key indicator of brand strength and, in turn, customer-based brand equity (2014). This finding aligns with the concept of brand salience, as the more associations attributed to a brand the more likely it is to be salient, or thought of, in a purchase situation, or other situations in which there are no traditional product category cues. This in contrast to brand awareness measures that rely on product category cues, and, therefore, do not reflect the subtleties of brand activation and retrieval.

The finding that brand association strength, and brand salience, is a key indicator or customer-based brand equity is reflected in the study of Stocchi, Wright and Driesener (2016), who investigate two competing theories of brand retrieval, strength-based theories and dual-process theories of memory, to determine which theory best explains brand retrieval. Specifically, within the dual-process theory of memory, the Source of Activation Confusion (SAC) model is tested. The findings of the study showed that respondents who gave the most associations to the brand tended to be those who knew relatively less about the category. In addition, when a consumer knows more about a category they are more likely to experience confusion in the retrieval process, as they have potentially larger consideration sets that create greater interference in the brand activation process. Therefore, a brand that receives a greater number of brand associations, and above what is theoretically expected, is said to have strong brand equity. This is because the consumer holds greater knowledge about that brand rather than the category as a whole, and is likely to have a smaller consideration set meaning that the brand will be more salient when the consumer is making a purchase decision.

4.0 RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVE AND QUESTIONS

This section summarises the research problem, or gap, established from the review and analysis of the literature on political marketing and brand, and customer-based brand equity. After defining the research problem, the objective of the study and resulting research questions are outlined.

4.1 Research Problem

Recent developments in political marketing shows the growing importance of branding, however, the tools available to determine the success or performance of political brands, whether it be a candidate, party or policy, are flawed or have limited usefulness. The two main methods used to measure the performance of political brands, include election results and public opinion political polls. Whilst election results are a reliable source of data, they provide few feedback loops with no indication of whether the performance of a brand is as expected, or why it has been successful or not. A clear limitation of using election results to evaluate political brands is that they do not measure the specific brand image of a politician or political party, or provide insights on the strengths or weaknesses of a political brand. Furthermore, election results are obtained after the fact, and, most commonly, years before the next election is held. Public opinion political polls are the most prominent method used to evaluate the performance of political brands and forecast election outcomes during the campaigning period, however, like the use of election results, political polls are not without limitations. The review of the literature on political polls highlighted the disagreement amongst researchers, and their accounts, on the reliability and accuracy of forecasting election outcomes from public opinion political polls. The likes of Jacob and Shapiro (2005) and Wright, Farrar and Russell (2014) report findings that support the utilisation of political polls to forecast election outcomes, while Erikson et al. (2004), Hoek and Gendall (1993), and Hillygus (2011) assert that the accuracy of polls is volatile and inconsistent over time, as well as lacking diagnostic features to further understand voter preference. Traditionally, public opinion political polls focus on the voting intent, or preference, of respondents, and are therefore unable to diagnose or quantify the reasons why political parties are successful, or not, or account for significant changes in poll results. From a political branding perspective, both election results and public opinion political polls provide little guidance or insights into whether political brands are performing as expected.

In commercial and non-traditional markets, academics have made advances in the development of methods to evaluate the equity of a brand and forecast brand success. Romaniuk (2013) proposes a method in the commercial field to model market share that predicts future consumer behaviour. Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) extend and adapt the method to the field of science communication, to find that it is applicable to non-commercial disciplines and markets. The basis of Romaniuk's (2013) methodology is the theory of brand saliency, it argues that the strength of brand associations, specifically the quantity of the brand associations attributed to a brand, are a key indicator of the performance of a brand and their future success. This measurement presents a unique opportunity to the political marketing field to utilise advances in commercial brand evaluation measurement, to develop an alternative political brand evaluation method to political polls. If the method successfully adopted to the political context, it would provide political brand managers with a robust evaluation tool that offers greater insights into the brand equity and brand performance of a political party or politician. Specifically, it provides an alternative method to assessing voting intention that may be less subject to volatility and, in turn, produce benchmarks that forecast election outcomes more accurately than traditional political polls. Furthermore, the method has the potential to form an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of a political brand, from a predetermined list of brand image attributes or political policies. However, both uses of the method is yet to be tested.

4.2 Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of the research is to pilot an alternative method that evaluates political brands, to determine if commercial brand evaluation methodologies are applicable to the political context and can provide unique insights into brand evaluations and voting behaviour of the public. The research proposes Romaniuk's (2013) modelling mental market share method as an alternative method, and investigates its applicability to politics, after its successful application in the science communication field.

To determine if the modelling mental market share method is applicable in the political context and provides value beyond traditional polling methods, this research aims to answer the following questions:

RQ 1: Does mental market share broadly correlate with voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

RQ 2: Is mental market share more closely associated with past, current or future levels of voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

RQ 3: Do political brand image maps offer useful qualitative insights into the performance of political brands?

To answer these questions, data is gathered on voter perceptions of the brand and policy attributes associated to political parties and candidates. Individual scores per predetermined brand attribute or political policy issue builds the basis of the data analysed, and form two sets of analysis. Firstly, sums of the individual scores per political party are calculated and used to rank the likely success of party based on their saliency, after which the researcher compares the results to those of past, present and future political polls and election results to evaluate the predictive ability of the modelling mental market share method. Secondly, for each brand attribute or political policy issue tested, benchmarks are calculated using the observed scores and the difference between the two are then determined, to form deviations that are used to illustrate the brand of each party on a diametrically opposed brand image map. See section 5.0 for a full discussion of the methodology undertaken to collect and analyse the data.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters outline the primacy of brand evaluation methodologies used in political marketing, such as self-reported voting intention obtained from pre-election polls and final election vote count. The simplicity and volatility of traditional political polling methods highlights the importance in finding an alternative brand evaluation method that provides a more in-depth analysis of the brand-based performance of political parties and politicians, and greater feedback loops to inform political brand strategy. Recent developments in brand image measurement provide new tools that elicit brand image maps that describe in-detail the strengths and weaknesses of a brand, or, in the context of politics, political parties and politicians. This research replicates the analysis methodology of Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) to politics, to determine if brand image measurement methods can be used to predict election outcomes, as well as measure and evaluate the brand image of political parties and politicians (for a detailed account of Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) see section 3.4.5).

The analysis methodology is tested in two studies, firstly, a study undertaken by the researcher that explores the brand images of New Zealand political parties, and secondly, a study undertaken by CNN and ORC International that tracks the progress of the candidates in the United States presidential primaries. The purpose of analysing the data from studies from two countries was to provide a point of comparison and, in turn, a more robust testing of the methods. New Zealand and the United States provide a good point of comparison, as both countries are Western democracies but have differing political systems; New Zealand use multiparty Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) representation, and the United States use the

Electoral College system. Furthermore, the United States have a primaries election procedure that proceeds the general election and involves candidates for each party campaigning to win the nomination for their party's leader and presidential candidate. The differences in the political systems of each country allows the research to draw conclusions on either the reasons why the methods may only work for a given situation or system, or the robustness of the methods to be applied across countries and political systems.

This chapter first discusses the data collection methods and sample obtained for the New Zealand study and the American study, with an evaluation of the research design for each study. After which, the two-phase analytical procedure used for both studies is outlined, and the theoretical foundations of the analysis methods used to predict election outcomes and develop brand image maps are discussed.

5.2 Study One: New Zealand Political Parties

The researcher undertook primary research, in the form of an online survey, with the aim of evaluating the brand images of prominent political parties within New Zealand. The data collection methods, the questionnaire subject and content, as well as the survey sample are discussed below.

5.2.2 Data Collection

Between the 13th and 20th of November, 2015, a nationwide survey was distributed, as a part of the quantitative phase of this study (see appendix A for the full survey, the brand image questions analysed in this study can be found on pages 171 to 174). The focus of the survey was to have participants evaluate the brand image of the five prominent New Zealand political parties: National Party, Labour Party, Green Party, New Zealand First Party, and the Maori Party. The collection of participant evaluations of the brand images of the five parties was based on seven political, or policy, issues that participants selected the political parties who they believed to have strong policies for each issue.

This study was a part of a broader survey that investigated New Zealand voters' evaluation and perception of New Zealand political parties and politicians, as well as how these reflect how consumers evaluate and develop perceptions of commercial brands. The survey began with a maximum of five warm-up questions, and a minimum of three questions, that asked participants to report on their voting eligibility and history, their awareness levels of New Zealand political parties, and how they gather information on politics and political parties. The main body of the survey includes three sections of questions: brand attribute questions, policy strength questions, and double jeopardy theory questions. As discussed prior, the second section of questions, on policy strength, is analysed in this study. The questions that explored the application of the double jeopardy theory to New Zealand politicians formed the analysis for a research report and the journal research note 'Double jeopardy benchmarks for political polls' (Kooyman & Wright, 2016).

In total, there was a maximum of 28 questions in the survey, excluding demographic questions, and on average, the survey took 13 minutes and 36 seconds for participants to complete. A design focus of the survey was that it take less than the recommend maximum duration of a survey, 15 minutes, to avoid participant fatigue. The use of multiple-choice questions further avoids participant fatigue, as multiple-choice questions are easy for participants to answer, due to there being a predetermined list of possible answers (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). A potential limitation of multiple-choice questions is that the possible answers are predetermined and may result in forced option bias (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). However, this study counteracts the possibility of forced option bias list as the a 'none apply' option was included for the three main questionnaire sections. Furthermore, multiple choice questions are suited to mobile devices, and, in 2015, 70% of New Zealand adults owned a smartphone, and 59% prefer using a smartphone over other devices; including laptops and notebooks (Research New Zealand, 2015). Therefore, by making the survey mobile compatible it is more accessible to a wider audience and, in turn, a more representative of the New Zealand voting population.

5.2.3 Policy Strength Questionnaire Section

The seven political, or policy, issues used to evaluate the political parties includes social welfare, economic development, healthcare, environment and conservation, education, foreign trade, and ethnic group and immigration. Participants evaluated each issue individually by selecting the political parties that they believe have strong policies for that issue, with the question wording as follows: "Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong X policies? Please select as many as apply." A random presentation of political issue and political parties aims to reduce the likelihood of order effects.

At the end the questionnaire section on brand attributes, participants reported the likelihood that they will vote in the next general election, using a Likert-type scale, and, from a list of eight New Zealand political parties, the party that they are most likely to vote for, or none if they would not vote for in the list provided. Participants answered questions relating to their voting intention in the next general election, to weight the significance of their response and correlate with the brand evaluations of the political parties. In addition, these are traditional voting intention poll questions that are consider primitive, by including these questions in the survey it provides a between the traditional polling methods and the proposed alternative method.

5.2.4 Survey Sample

The survey sample included New Zealand citizens aged 18 years and older (the eligible voting age). As only eligible voters are included in the sample, the results are more likely to be a true reflection of the New Zealand voting population. Furthermore, gender quotas were set, based on census data and voting share data from the last general election.

A contracted online panel provider, Research Now, supplied the survey sample. The survey had a response rate of 93%, and 703 survey completes. However, once the data was cleaned, there was 621 usable completes. There are two primary concerns of online commercial panels; firstly, that the panel participants are reward driven, and secondly, that commercial panels are vulnerable to recruitment and coverage biases. However, research has found that the response quality and outcome of a survey is not affected by incentivised survey participation (Göritz, 2004). Furthermore, Research Now offsets recruitment biases, as there are over 75,000 members in the commercial panel; and the likelihood of coverage bias is minimal, with 90% of the New Zealand population having internet access (Gibson, Miller, Smith, Bell & Crothers, 2013).

To ensure the sample was representative of the overall New Zealand population, the panel provider applied a gender quota and targeted Maori panellists in an additional recruitment email of the survey. The final section of the survey included seven additional demographic questions that report on the electorate and electorate type that participants belongs to, as well as the age, ethnicity, qualification/s, occupation, and income of each participant. The included demographic questions reflects the publicly available data published by the Electoral Commission of New Zealand (n.d.) after each general election, so the data can be compared with demographic results of the survey and the sample evaluated on whether it is representative of the New Zealand voting population. The demographic section, in conjunction with the gender-screening question at the start of the survey, allows for the evaluation of whether the sample is representative of the overall New Zealand population.

The sample reflects New Zealand 2013 census data (Stats NZ, n.d.) and Electoral Commission New Zealand data, within ± 10 percent, therefore, the results observe no significant recruitment bias that the use of a commercial panel can cause. The gender split of the sample is near even, with 49% female participants and 51% male participants. There is also a uniform age spread, with a maximum percent deviation of ± 3 for three age brackets. In line with ethnicity statistics, the majority of the sample is European (79%), this includes New Zealand Europeans, and New Zealand Maoris account for 7% of the participants (4% less than census data). In addition, the majority of the sample belongs to the general electorate (95%), with 5% of the sample registered to the Maori electorate. See Appendix B for the supplementary table with the demographic breakdown of the sample, with New Zealand 2013 census data and Electoral Commission New Zealand data comparisons for gender, age and ethnicity.

5.3 Study Two: American Primary Candidates for the Democratic and Republican Parties

The data set analysed in this study is a part of an online poll published by CNN and ORC International (2016). It was one in a series of polls commissioned by the news media outlet to track progress in the United States presidential primaries. The responses for this particular poll utilised telephone interviews, completed between the 24th and 27th of February, and released on Tuesday 1st of March 2016. The sample consisted of 920 adult Americans, who were either registered voters (n=910) or planned to register to vote (n=10). CNN and ORC International identified a sampling error of plus or minus 3%.

The poll investigated participants' opinion and evaluation of political candidates for the presidential primaries for both the Democratic and Republican parties. The candidates included Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders for the Democratic Party, and Donald Trump, John Kasich, Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and Ben Carson from the Republican Party. Participants evaluated the abilities of these politicians on seven core issues: economy, terrorism, healthcare, immigration, race relations, foreign policy, and gun policy. The question for each attribute, or issue, was a single forced choice, with the wording as follows: "Thinking about all the major candidates still running for the presidency, regardless of whom you support, which one do you think would do the best job handling ..." Presentation of attributes and politicians were randomised to reduce the likelihood of order effects.

Little information on the methodological design is disclaimed in the poll report or online where it is available for download. However, the large sample size (n=920) increases the likelihood that the results are robust and reflective of the American voting population. A potential concern that can be expressed from the information provided on the data collection, is that the use of telephone interviews, as the data collection method, that requires a researcher, or interview, to administer the questionnaire. The involvement of a researcher increases the risk of social desirability bias, as participants may alter the political opinions they report in fear of judgment, and interviewer bias (Grimm, 2010; Research LifeLine, 2012).

5.4 Analytical Procedure

This study investigates the application of commercial brand analysis methods to New Zealand and American politics. There are two phases to the analysis procedure: total association count, and brand image benchmarking and maps.

5.4.1 Phase One: Total Association Count

Total association count, as a brand evaluation measurement, is the sum of attributes associated by respondents to a brand. Academics posit that the greater the sum of attributes that are associated with a brand, or political party, the greater support they will receive. The premise of this analysis method is the theory of brand saliency. Brand saliency is the propensity of a brand to come to mind in buying situations, and is concerned with the retrieval and activation process of brands undertaken by consumers. Based on the findings of several academic researchers, frequency or sum of brand associations is a key indicator of the strength of a brand, as the more attributes associated to a brand the more likely it is to be thought of in a purchase situation, or a situation in which there may not be a product category cue.

Following the methods of Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014), the procedure for measuring total association count involves obtaining count data for the number of times an attribute was associated per concept, or political party. The next step adds, per political party or candidate, the association counts for each attribute, to create a sum of associations for each political party or candidate. By arranging the political parties based on their respective total count of associations, and in order of largest to smallest, the political party with the greatest brand equity can be determined. Unlike traditional political polls, this analysis of political brand equity is not subject to social desirability bias, as participants do not self-report their likelihood to buy. The use of a survey as the mode of data collection further reduces the likelihood of social desirability on a sensitive topic like political opinion, as surveys do not require a researcher to administer it and are anonymous that in turn reduce their fear of social judgment (Grimm, 2010).

5.4.2 Phase Two: Brand Image Benchmarking and Maps

The second phase of the data analysis builds upon the primary outcome measures of count of associations, to develop benchmarks for these sums to analyse the brand image of each political party or candidate. The purpose of doing so is to determine how well the brand image of a political party or candidate is performing, in an objective way, and from the attributes that a political party or candidate performs strongly, or weakly, on describe the perception or brand image held by the voting public.

The process for firstly developing association count benchmarks and then developing brand image maps, follows the formula:

(Total Attribute Association Count (Over All Concepts) x Total Concept Association Count (Over All Attributes)) / Total Count of All Associations

The definition of the formula in the context of the political study is:

(Total Attribute Association Count (Over All Political Parties) x Total Political Party Association Count (Over All Attributes)) / Total Count of All Associations

The calculation of the formula for each attribute per political party or candidate forms a group of theoretical benchmarks. The theoretical benchmarks expected for each attribute per political party or candidate when compared with the observed association counts reported in the first phase of analysis yields a distribution of actual and expected attribute counts that produce a table and brand image map of attribute skews, showing strengths and weaknesses. The attribute skews map a graph that visually represents the performance of a political party or candidate. For each attribute per political party or candidate, the comparison between observed and expected data can identify the observed data as either being greater, the same as, or less than the expected. These comparisons translate to a political party or candidate over performing, performing as expected, or underperforming on a given attribute (see section 3.4.5 for an example of a brand image map that features the attribute skews).

6.0 RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This section presents the findings of the New Zealand political brand image study, undertaken by the researcher, and the data analysed from the CNN and ORC International presidential primaries poll. There are two phases to the analysis procedure: total association count, and brand image benchmarking and maps. The discussion of results begins with the analysis of the total association count data and is followed by the benchmarking and mapping of individual brand image maps, to enable the qualitative analysis of the brand image skews of the political parties and candidates.

6.2 Total Association Count Results

This section addresses the following research questions:

RQ 1: Does mental market share broadly correlate with voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

RQ 2: Is mental market share more closely associated with past, current or future levels of voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

To compare results with public opinion political polls and election outcomes, the original percents or count of votes or intended votes, of the polls and election results, were weighted to reflect the results of only the political parties and candidates included in the New Zealand and American studies.

6.2.1 Mental Market Share Prediction of New Zealand Political Party Support

From associative network memory theory, it is expected that the higher a candidate's count of positive associations the more easily they will come to mind and the more public support they will receive. Table one presents the results of each political party, ranked by the total count of attribute associations for each party. Based on the associative network memory theory, and the results, it is predicted that the National Party will win the greatest share of votes, followed by Labour, Green Party, and New Zealand First, with the Maori Party receiving the least amount of voter support.

Table 1: Observed association counts for New Zealand Political Parties

	National	**Labour**	**Green**	**NZ First**	**Maori**	**None of These**
Social Welfare	185	417	200	127	174	70
Ethnic Group and Immigration	191	178	120	240	203	115
Healthcare	231	336	142	111	71	137
Education	278	325	126	94	61	135
Environment and Conservation	119	143	552	59	119	25
Economic Development	405	200	88	100	18	95
Foreign Trade	447	186	51	96	13	87
Count of associations	1856	1785	1279	827	659	664

6.2.1.1 The correlation between mental market share and voter behaviour for political parties

To compare this prediction to actual election outcomes, the results of the 2017 general election (Electoral Commission New Zealand, 2017), the first general election after the collection of the data, is analysed. It is observed that the total association count data was able to correctly predict the voter support or popularity for the National, Labour and Maori party; however, it did not predict that New Zealand First would receive more support than the Green party. Table two presents the share of associations, or mental market share, per political party and the 2014 and 2017 general election vote share, as well as the share of intended votes of four polls taken between December 2015 and September 2017. In the 2017 election, New Zealand First (7.5% of vote share) narrowly won more support than the Green party (6.5% of vote share), with a difference of 1% in vote share, while the mental market share method predicted a 7.1% margin in favour of the Green party (see table two for the share of votes and mental market share). Therefore, either the New Zealand First, Green party, or both parties are the outlier. If they are an outlier that would mean that the Green party underperformed or New Zealand First over-performed, in relation to their position to each other. A more in-depth analysis of the data that looks at the brand images of the New Zealand First and the Green party is presented in section 6.3.1; this analysis investigates the identification of the outlier further.

Table 2: Collated results from the New Zealand General Elections, the share of associations from the New Zealand study, and public opinion political polls

	National	Labour	Green	NZ First	Maori
2017 Election					
Vote Share (%)	46.3	38.4	6.5	7.5	1.2
Colmar Brunton 2017 (Second September Poll)					
Intended Vote Share (%)	47.4	38.1	8.2	5.2	1.0
Colmar Brunton 2017 (First September Poll)					
Intended Vote Share (%)	40.9	44.9	7.2	6.1	0.9
Colmar Brunton 2016					
Intended Vote Share (%)	50.0	28.0	11.0	10.0	1.0
Herald Digi Poll					
Intended Vote Share (%)	52.1	31.6	8.3	5.8	2.1
New Zealand Study					
Mental Market Share (%)	29.0	27.9	20.0	12.9	10.3
2014 Election					
Vote Share (%)	50.7	27.1	11.5	9.3	1.4

Before comparing the results, or predictions, of the mental market share method to past election results and polls taken prior to the 2017 general election, it is important to note that while this method did correctly predict National as receiving the greatest level of voter support in the 2017 election the party did not win the right to govern. In New Zealand, there is a multiparty MMP political system, in which minority vote share parties are able to form a coalition to, in turn, form a government, if the majority vote share party is unable to form their own majority seat coalition or have not independently won the majority seats (a total of 61 seats).

The results of the 2017 general election saw National win 56 seats, Labour 46 seats, New Zealand First nine seats, Green party eight seats and ACT one seat, and together the Labour, New Zealand First and Green parties formed a coalition to win the right to govern with Jacinda Ardern, the Labour leader, as Prime Minister.

The total association count data is now compared with past election results, as well as voting intention results of four polls taken between December 2015 and September 2017. The results are compared with the past election results, of the 2014 general election, to investigate whether they are more broadly correlated with past voting behaviour than future (the 2017 general election results). It is found, based on total association count and vote count, that the mental market share method results are more predictive of the 2014 general election results than the 2017 general election results. The rank order of the five political parties are exactly the same between the 2014 general election (Electoral Commission New Zealand, 2014) and mental market share results, with National winning 60 government seats and forming a minority government with United Future, ACT and the Maori party. However, when the percent share of total associations and election vote share are compared it shows that mental market share is more correlated with the 2017 election results (r=0.93) than the 2014 election results (r=0.89). Although, the results indicate a high correlation for both. Therefore, this finding suggests that mental market share is highly correlated to both past and future voter behaviour, but more so future voter behaviour.

A selection of four polls are analysed in relation to the mental market share predictions, to investigate the correlation between the results of this method and current and future behaviour. The four polls included in this analysis include the Herald Digi poll collected from the 4th to 14th of December 2015 and three One News Colmar Brunton (Colmar Brunton) polls, collected between the 12th and 23rd of November 2016, 9th to 13th September 2017 and 15th to 19th September 2017 (New Zealand Herald, 2015; Colmar Brunton, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). Based on total association count and the count of intended votes, the results of three of the four polls are the same as the mental market share results; in that the rank order of political parties are the same. The poll collected from the 9th to 13th of September 2017 differed from the other polls and total association count data, as it predicted Labour as the political party with the greatest number or share of votes. Again, these findings were compared and contrasted to correlations of the share of total associations and intended vote share. Despite the first September Colmar Brunton poll predicting Labour as the winner of popular vote, it is still highly correlated with the mental market share results; with an equal correlation to that observed for the 2017 election vote share (r=0.93). High correlations were also observed for the Herald Digi poll (r=0.90), the 2016 Colmar Brunton poll (r=0.89), and the second 2017 September Colmar Brunton poll (r=0.94). Combining the correlations of the three Colmar Brunton polls and the 2017 election results, as representations future voter behaviour, an average correlation of 0.92 is calculated. Compared to the correlations of past (0.89) and current (0.90) voter behaviour, it is found that mental market share is most correlated, or closely associated, to future voter behaviour. The results also highlight that the potential of the rank order of total association count data to determine the relationship of mental market share to past, current and future voter behaviour is limited to being a broad indicator, rather than a detailed and accurate measure.

6.2.2 Mental Market Share Prediction of the United States Presidential Primaries Candidate Support

To analyse the data from the United States presidential primaries poll it was first converted from the percentages reported by CNN/ORC International to count data, by multiplying each percentage by the sample size. Table three presents the results ranked by total the attribute associations for each politician.

Table 3: Inferred association counts for United States Democratic and Republican presidential candidate nominees

	Clinton	Trump	Sanders	Cruz	Rubio	Carson	Kasich
Terrorism	276	304	101	92	55	28	37
The economy	230	350	156	46	46	28	37
Foreign policy	340	193	110	101	74	37	37
Gun policy	239	258	166	110	46	28	18
Immigration	230	285	147	64	101	28	28
Race relations	267	147	202	55	101	83	28
Health care	276	184	193	55	46	92	18
Count of associations	1858	1720	1076	524	469	322	202

6.2.2.1 The correlation between mental market share and voter behaviour for candidates

The ability of the data collected to predict voter behaviour can be analysed by its correlation with, or association to, the results of both the United States presidential primaries, and the presidential election. As the candidates included in the study differ greatly from those who ran in the 2012 primaries and presidential election, only the 2016 primaries and presidential election results could be analysed. Therefore, it is unable to be determined, within the context of the United States study, whether mental market share correlates with past voting behaviour. The analysis of this section begins with the investigation of the correlation between the share of associations and the election and poll results specific to the Republican presidential primaries and then for all presidential primaries candidates (i.e. both Republican and Democratic candidates). The correlation of mental market share to the election and poll results specific to the Democratic Party cannot be calculated, as it has only two data points. Finally, the presidential election results are compared with the total association count data, as correlation coefficients cannot be calculated for this data as there are also only two data points.

As of the end of the 2016 state-by-state primary selections (New York Time, 2016), Clinton and Trump were the presumptive nominees of their respective parties. This is reflected by the results of the mental market share method that ranks Clinton as the leading candidate, with the most associations, and Trump as the candidate with the second most associations. Further, the ranking of the remaining candidates (Sanders, Cruz, Rubio and Carson, Kasich) almost exactly reflects the order in which they suspended their campaigns. The outlier in this instance is John Kasich, who received the least amount of associations and, therefore, would be expected to be the first Republican candidate to suspend his campaign. However, despite receiving significantly less support than Cruz, Kasich (161 delegates) did not suspend his campaign till after Cruz (559 delegates) had suspended his own (see table four for the share of delegate per candidate).

Another measure of the face validity and utility of this result is to compare it to delegate counts achieved by each candidate. These must be considered by party due to the differing numbers of delegates selected by the Republican and Democratic parties. Consistent with the rankings in Table three, for the Democratic party, Clinton (2220 delegate excluding super delegates) outperformed Sanders (1831 delegates excluding super delegates) and as noted became the presumptive nominee. For the Republican party, Trump with 1542 delegates became the presumptive nominee, while the ranking of the other Republican candidates closely reflects their final delegate counts with Cruz at 559, Rubio at 165, Carson at 7, and Kasich at 161. In this case, Carson is the outlier, having received significantly less support than predicted. In attempt to explain Carson as an outlier, his brand image is analysed, in relation to Kasich's, in section 6.3.2. A correlation coefficient calculated the Republican Party, showed that there is a close association between the share of total associations observed and the share of delegates (r=0.97). The figures calculated were based on the share of total associations that were split and weighted.

Table 4: *Collated results from the United States Presidential Primaries Election, the share of associations from the American study, and public opinion political polls*

	Clinton	Trump	Sanders	Cruz	Rubio	Carson	Kasich
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES							
Democratic Presidential Primaries Outcome							
Delegate Share (%)	59.8		40.2				
American Study							
Mental Market Share (%)	63.3		36.7				
NBC News Poll							
Intended Vote Share (%)	55.9		44.1				
Fox News Poll (February)							
Intended Vote Share (%)	48.4		51.6				
REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES							
Republican Presidential Primaries Outcome							
Delegate Share (%)		63.4		23.0	6.8	0.3	6.6
American Study							
Mental Market Share (%)		53.1		16.2	14.5	9.9	6.2
NBC News Poll							
Intended Vote Share (%)		41.1		20.0	22.1	8.4	8.4
Fox News Poll (February)							
Intended Vote Share (%)		41.4		21.8	17.2	10.3	9.2
ALL CANDIDATES							
American Study							
Mental Market Share (%)	30.1	27.9	17.4	8.5	7.6	5.2	3.3
Fox News Poll (February)							
Intended Vote Share (%)	34.1	30.5	20.7	7.3	4.9	1.2	1.2

To investigate the correlation between mental market share and public opinion political poll results for the presidential primaries, as well as the correlation of the results to current behaviour, two polls that were conducted at a similar time as the CNN/ORC poll are analysed. The Fox News poll was collected between the 15th and 17th of February 2016, while the NBC News poll was collected from the 24th to 25th of February 2016 (Fox News, 2016; NBC News, 2016). Again, the correlations were calculated based on the share of total associations that were split and weighted per political party.

The Fox News poll asked three questions that investigated the voting intention of respondents, with each respondent answering two of the three questions. The first question evaluated the voting intention for all of the primary candidates, while the second and third questions split the sample into Democrats and Republicans and had them evaluate the candidates for the party that they support. For the analysis of all the candidates, the results between the polls and ranker order of total association count data were closely correlated with only one differing prediction, being that Carson and Kasich would receive an equal count of votes or support. Despite this difference in prediction, the share of total associations was found to be highly correlated with the results of the first question of the Fox News poll (r=1.00). In contrast, the Democratic Party question of the Fox News poll predicted Sanders as the winner of the nomination (with a 3% margin of vote share), and therefore did not reflect the results of the mental market share method that predicted Clinton as the presumptive Democratic nominee. To compare, the Democratic Party prediction of the NBC News poll mirrored the total association count rank order of the mental market share method. Also unlike the Democratic Party question, the Republican Party question of the Fox News poll reflected the exact order of total association counts per candidate, and is closely associated with mental market share (r=0.98). While the NBC poll question on the Republican Party was also highly correlated with the share of total associations (r=0.95), there were greater points of divergence between the delegate predictions and the rank order of total association counts. Specifically, the poll predicted that Rubio (409 'votes') would receive greater support than Cruz (370 'votes') and that Carson and Kasich would have equal success with 156 'votes' each. When the results of the polls, as indicators of current behaviour, are combined, there is an average correlation of 0.99 that is similar to the association observed for primary results (r=0.98), as representative of future behaviour

Finally, the results of the mental market share, or total count of associations, is compared with the presidential election results (David Leip, 2016). The total association count data correctly predicted the popular vote count of the presidential election, with Clinton winning an additional 2,864,974 votes than Trump. However, Trump obtained a greater count or share of the electoral votes (304 of 538) than Clinton (227 of 538), and in turn won the election and the right to govern as President of the United States. This highlights an issue with the design or operationalisation of the methodology to account for the Electoral College political system, a similar issue was identified in section 6.2.1 for the New Zealand 2017 election; in which parties with minority vote share were able to form a coalition and in turn the government.

6.3 Brand Image Map Results

This section addresses the following research question:

RQ 3: Do political brand image maps offer useful qualitative insights into the performance of political brands?

To test if there were significant differences in attribute allocations by political party, for the New Zealand study, and by candidate, for the American study, a chi-square test is used. To calculate the chi-square value the differences between the observed and expected scores, which are squared and divided by the expected values, are summed. If the chi-square value is significant, indicating a pattern in the results, it will be equal to or greater than the calculated critical value. The critical value is calculated by comparing the degrees of freedom by the probability, using a chi-square table. The New Zealand study had a chi-square value of 2101.56 and a critical value of 75.02 (at two decimal places), tested at 30 degrees of freedom and at a p-value of <0.00001. While the American study had a chi-square value of 485.52 and a critical value of 101.69 (at two decimal places), tested at 48 degrees of freedom and at a p-value of <0.00001. For both studies, the chi-square value is greater than the critical value, indicating that the results are significant at $p < 0.01$. The results show that attribute associations vary between political parties and candidates.

As the results indicate a difference in attribute allocations by political party or candidate, the next phase of the analysis investigates further the distinctiveness of the individual brand images of New Zealand political parties and American primary and presidential candidates. The political brand image maps for the New Zealand study are discussed first, followed by the results of the American study.

6.3.1 New Zealand Political Party Brand Image Analysis

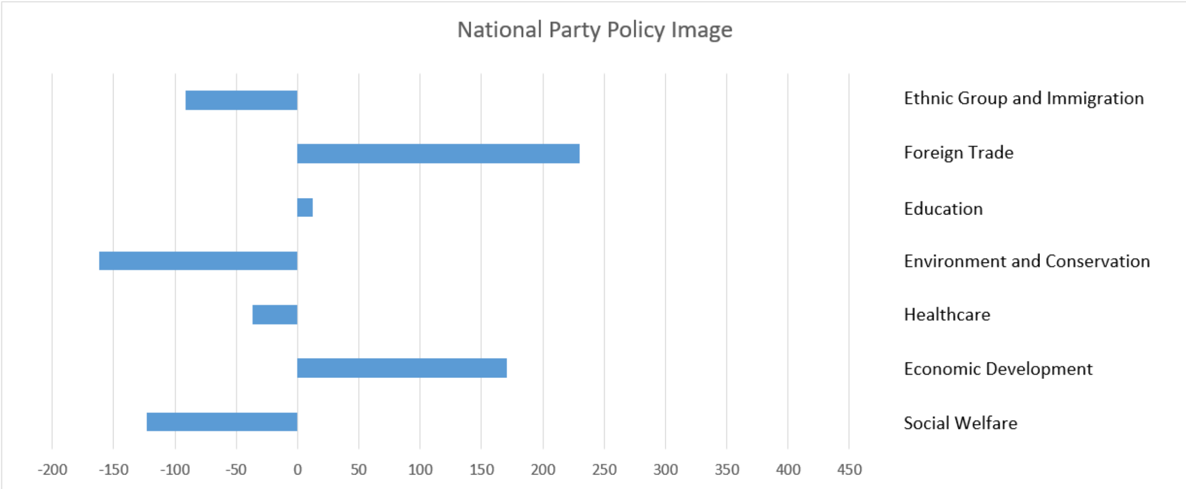
Table five shows the difference in counts between the expected values and actual values on which the chi-square calculation is based. The differences between the expected and actual values can be used to form skews from the expected results that reveal the brand image of the individual political parties. The variation in skews show that the political parties investigated in the study have distinct brands images, while the analysis of these deviations allows political parties to identify the policy issues that they under or over perform on.

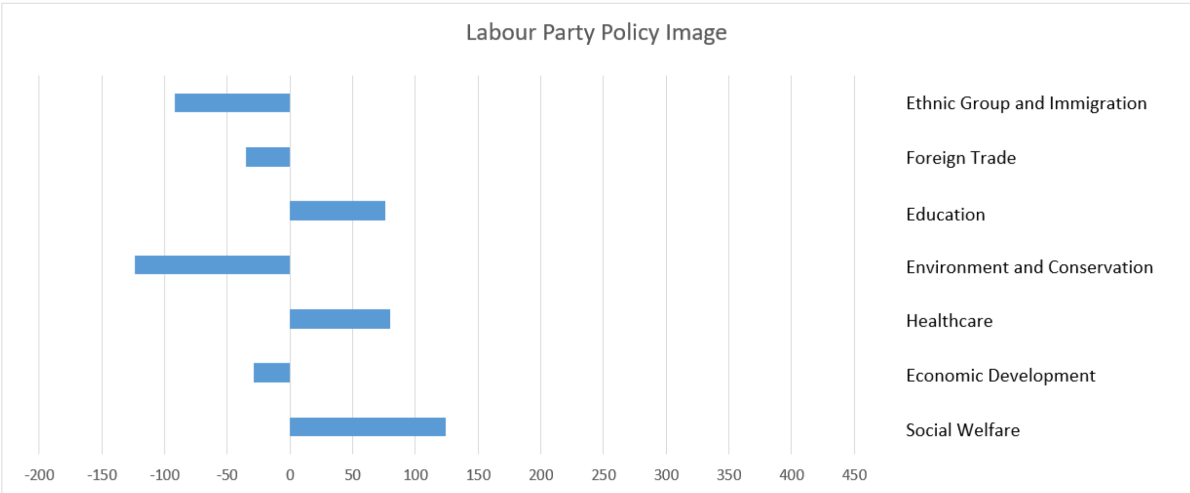
Table 5: Difference between observed and theoretically expected association counts for New Zealand Political Party policy strength

	National	**Labour**	**Green**	**NZ First**	**Maori**	**None of These**
Social Welfare	-123	121	-12	-10	65	-40
Ethnic Group and Immigration	-84	-86	-69	118	105	17
Healthcare	-39	76	-44	-9	-25	40
Education	10	68	-58	-25	-34	39
Environment and Conservation	-148	-114	368	-60	24	-71
Economic Development	167	-29	-76	-6	-66	10
Foreign Trade	216	-36	-108	-7	-69	4

For example, the National Party exceeds the theoretical value expected for foreign trade, economic development, but received less associations than expected for healthcare and social welfare. In contrast, Labour experiences positive skews for healthcare and social welfare, but is less strong in other areas including foreign trade and economic development. For both political parties there are positive skews for education and negative skews for ethnic group and immigration, and environment and conservation. Figure nine presents the attribute skews as graphical political image maps for the National and Labour party. Brand image maps for all of the political parties are given in the Appendix C.

Figure 9: Political Image Maps for the National and Labour Parties

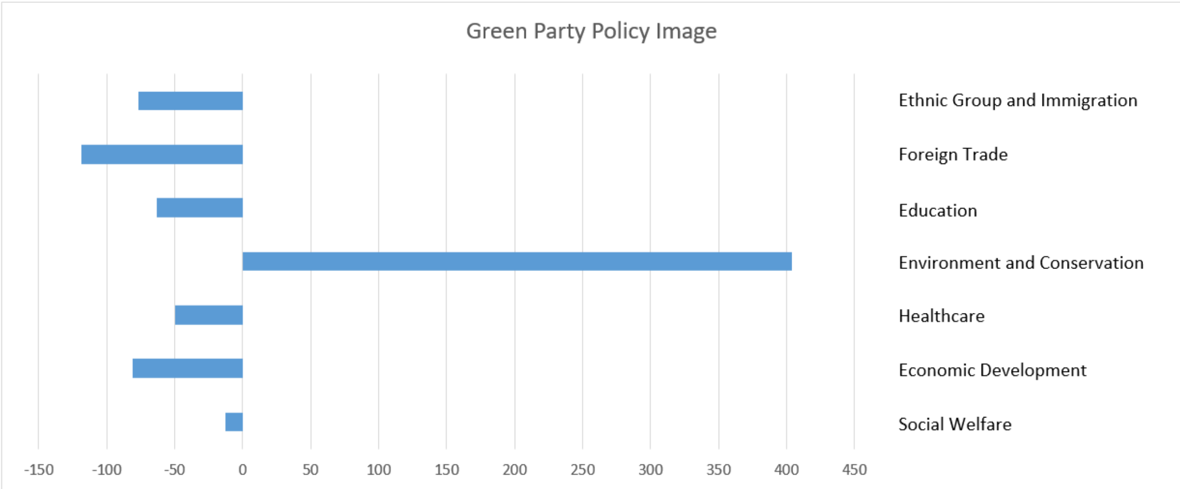


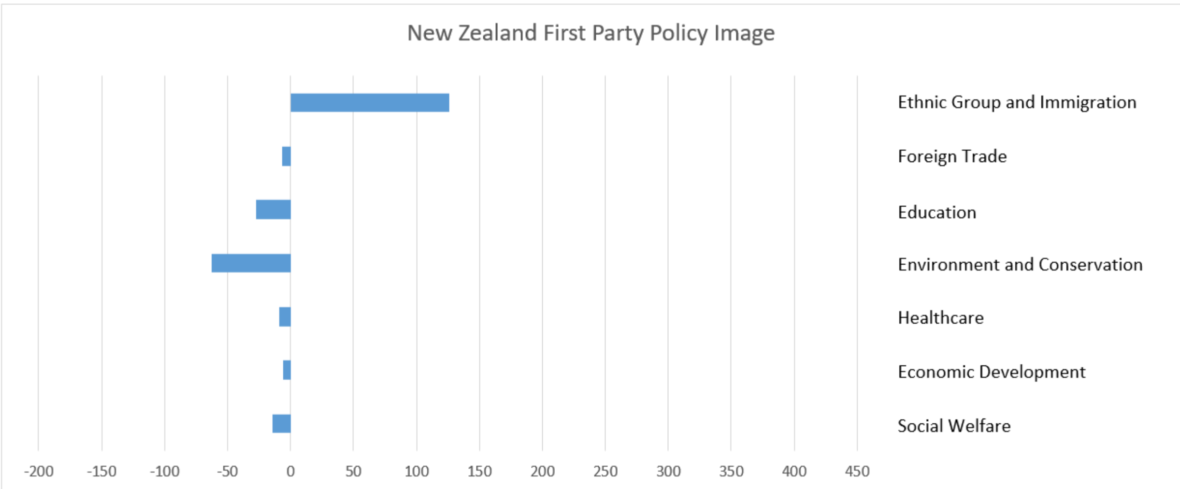


Interpretation of the skews observed the National Party, suggests that they perform, and are positioned, well on policies related to the economy of the country, but are not perceived as well on 'softer', more people focused policy issues that include the likes of healthcare and immigration. While the Labour Party, is positioned well on 'softer' issues, including education, healthcare and social welfare. The findings for both National and Labour align with the traditional brand images and history of their respective party. For example, the Labour Party is traditionally perceived as being concerned with the wellbeing of the working man and lower socio-economic groups, while the National Party is historically labelled a ‘conservative’ party and is believed to support a limited welfare state to encourage innovation that will produce more job opportunities and greater economic growth.

The mental market share findings presented in section 6.2.1 did not predict that the New Zealand First Party would obtain more votes than the Green Party, it is possible that the analysis of brand image maps of these political parties could supplement this finding and explain the potential reason why one party is more popular than the other is. Comparing the brand images of New Zealand First and the Green Party, we see that there is only one positive skew for each political party. Figure ten presents the attribute skews as brand image maps for the New Zealand First and Green parties. New Zealand First received more associations than theoretically expected for ethnic group and immigration, and the Green party exceeds the theoretical value expected for environment and conservation. In fact, the Green party significantly exceeded the theoretically expected score for environment and conservation by 404 associations. This finding is consistent with the ‘green’ platform that the political party positions themselves on, and indicates that they have successfully branded themselves as being environmentally conscious and focused. While there are six negative skews for each party, the negative skews observed for New Zealand First were less than that of the Green Party. The negative skews of New Zealand First varies from six associations less than expected to 63 associations less than expected, while the Green party varies from 13 associations less than expected to -119 associations less than expected. Despite the differences in degree of negative skews, both parties have similar negative brand images, a finding that is reflected by New Zealand First only receiving 1% more of the vote share than the Green party. Therefore, it is concluded that the Green Party is the outlier, based on the over 400 point difference in observed and theoretical association counts for the environment and conservation policy; indicating that it is the party that deviates the most from the expected association counts.

Figure 10: Political Image Maps for the New Zealand First and Green Parties





6.3.2 The United States Presidential Primaries and Presidential Election Candidate Brand Image Analysis

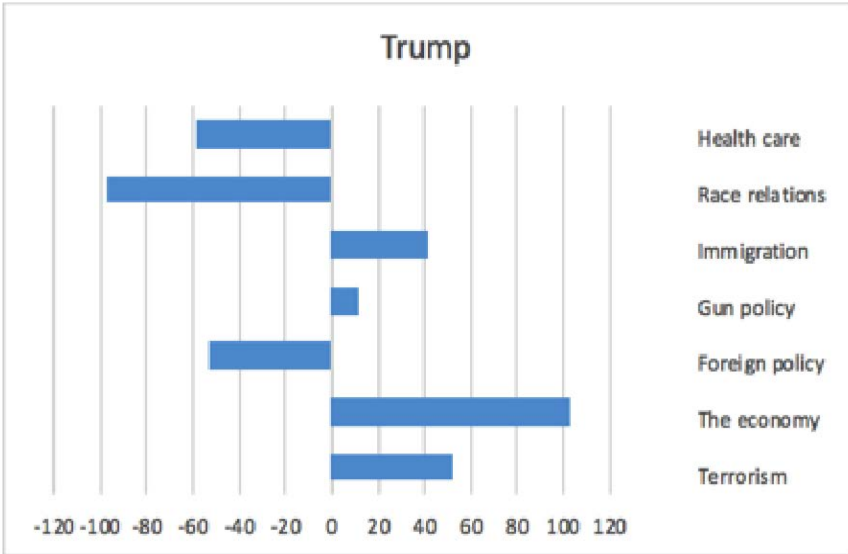
The differences or skews between the expected and actual values of counts of policy associations, presented in table six, shows that the brand images of American Democratic, Republican and Presidential candidates are distinct.

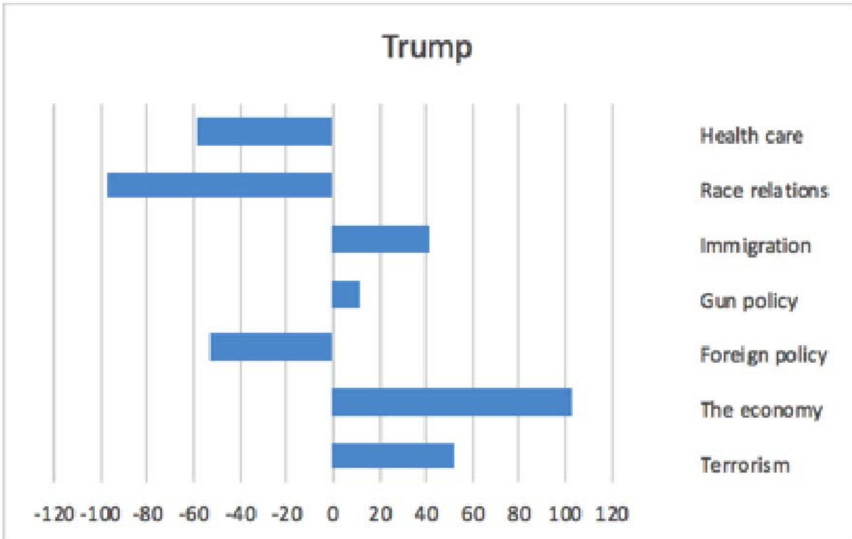
Table 6: Difference between observed and theoretically expected association counts for US Democratic and Republican presidential candidate nominee

	Clinton	Trump	Sanders	Cruz	Rubio	Carson	Kasich
Terrorism	4	52	-56	15	-13	-19	7
The economy	-36	103	2	-29	-21	-19	8
Foreign policy	74	-53	-44	26	6	-9	8
Gun policy	-27	11	11	35	-21	-19	-11
Immigration	-34	41	-5	-10	35	-18	-1
Race relations	3	-97	50	-19	35	37	-1
Health care	15	-58	42	-18	-20	47	-10

For example, looking specifically at Donald Trump, there are positive skews on the issues of the economy, immigration and terrorism; however, Trump received less associations than theoretically expected for race relations and foreign policy. Clinton exceeds the theoretical score expected for foreign policy, by 74 points, but experiences negative skews in other areas, including the economy, gun policy and immigration. Figure 11 presents the attribute skews as graphical political image maps for the two presidential candidates. Maps for all primary candidates in the poll are given in the Appendix D.

Figure 11: Political Image Maps for the Democratic and Republican Presidential Nominees





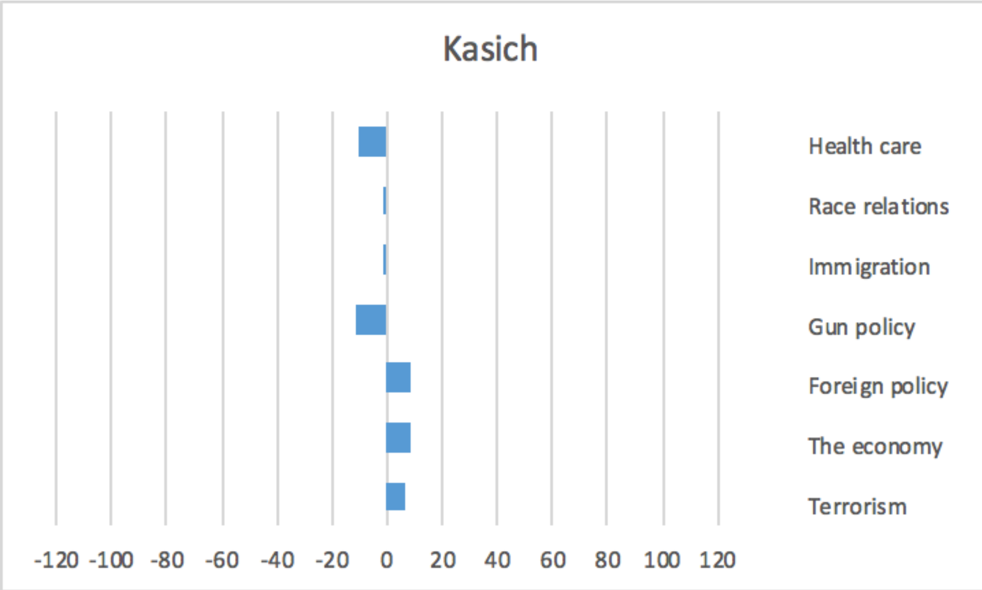
Interpretation of the skews observed for the brand image maps show that Trump performed well on immigration, gun policy and terrorism, and in turn has a strong brand image on these policy issues. This finding is interesting as Trump actively positioned himself on these issues during the presidential primaries and presidential election race, speaking often and candidly about his stance on these issues. In fact, the candidate often took to

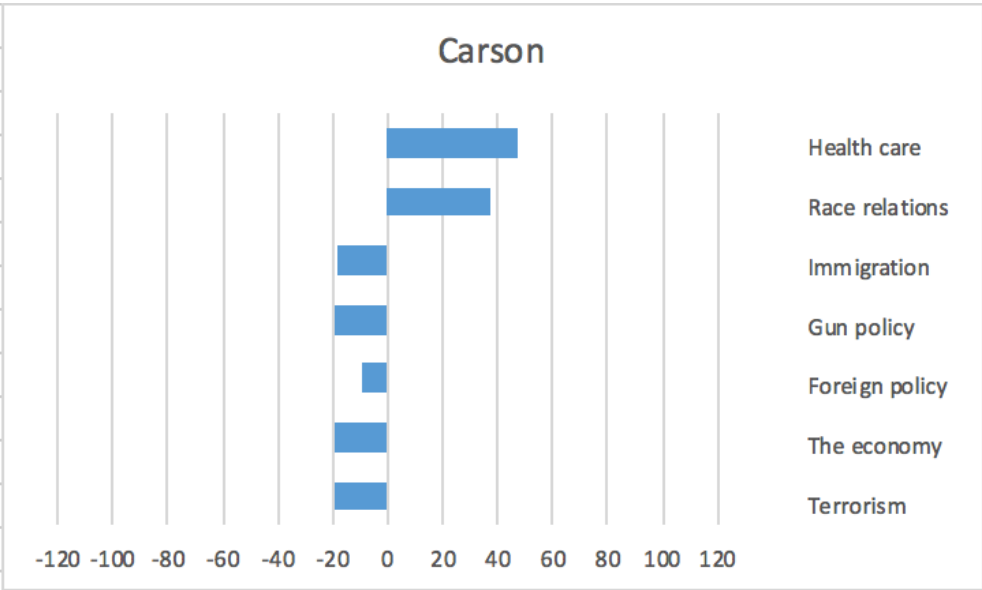
Twitter, a platform where he has over 49 million followers, to promote his opinions and policy promises on these political issues (Twitter, 2018a). For example, on the 12th February 2016 Donald Trump tweeted this comment about his solution to build a wall between America and Mexico to combat America's immigration issue:

"I will end illegal immigration and protect our borders! We need to MAKE AMERICA SAFE & GREAT AGAIN! #Trump2016" (Twitter, 2018b)

Similar to the New Zealand study the total association count, or mental market share, was not able to predict exactly the electoral success of all the Republican primary candidates, specifically Carson and Kasich. Section 6.2.2 identifies the outlier candidate per the two sources of reference points of the election outcome: the order in which the candidates suspended their campaigns and the delegate count or support they received. Kasich is identified as the outlier in regards to when he suspended his campaign, having remained in the race longer than Cruz who had received far greater delegate support, while Carson is the outlier when considering delegate count, having received a far smaller count of delegates than predicted by the total association count data. Whilst the brand image map, or skews, cannot provide an explanation for why Kasich remained in the presidential primaries for as long as he did, it may provide insights as to why Carson received less support than theoretically expected, specifically in comparison to Kasich. Figure 12 presents the attribute skews as graphical political image maps for Carson and Kasich.

Figure 12: Political Image Maps for John Kasich and Ben Carson





Based on the brand image maps it is observed that Carson exceeds the theoretical value expected for healthcare and race relations, but received less associations than expected for foreign policy, the economy and terrorism. In contrast, Kasich experiences positive skews for foreign policy, the economy and terrorism, but received less associations than expected for healthcare and race relations. For both political parties there are negative skews for immigration and gun policy. In total, Carson received less associations than expected for five political issues, while Kasich underperformed on four issues. When comparing the degree to which the association skews from what is theoretically expected, Kasich varies from one association less than expected to 11 associations less than expected, while Carson varies from nine associations less than expected to 19 associations less than expected. Therefore, there is little difference between the negativity or positivity of the brand images of Carson and Kasich. Further, the comparison of the brand images between the two parties are unable to explain why Carson did not perform as theoretically expected.

Based on chi-square significance tests and the identified skews between observed and theoretical association counts per political issue, it is concluded that the brand images of both New Zealand political parties and American presidential, and presidential primaries, candidates are distinct. The calculation of skews not only illustrate the varying association between political actors on a set of policy issues, it also enables the analysis of brand performance on these issues, as well as an overall indication to be drawn on the image or position of a political brand.

7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary of research

Recent developments in the political marketing literature shows that application of branding in politics is increasingly being utilised by political actors and organisations (Needham, 2005; Scammell, 2007; Smith, 2001). The brand of a political party or candidate is now at the core of its value proposition (Scammell, 2007). Despite the importance placed on the political brand, the methods available to measure the equity or performance of political brands provide few feedback loops and lack diagnostic features, beyond voting intention and the count of votes from elections.

Concurrent with the political marketing and branding literature, research into the field of customer-based brand equity, specifically brand equity measures, has developed significantly. Romaniuk (2013) has made great advances in brand equity measures, with her conceptualisation and operationalisation of the mental market share model, to evaluate the equity of a brand and forecast brand success. The theoretical foundation of the mental market share model is the theory of brand saliency that argues that the quantity of brand associations attributed to a brand indicates the degree to which it is salient, and in turn the strength and performance of a brand, as well as its future success (Romaniuk, 2013). Following the model's inception, Wright, Teagle and Feetham (2014) have extended the application of the method to non-commercial markets, specifically the field of science communication, with considerable success. Further, the authors extended the analytical potential of the model, to benchmark the individual scores from the overall concept popularity and each attribute's overall frequency, to yield a distribution of the actual and expected attribute counts that can be used to produce a table of attribute skews and in turn a brand image map for each concept.

The objective of the research is to pilot an alternative method to measuring political brand equity, specifically the concept evaluation methodologies deployed by Wright, Teagle, and Feetham (2014), adapted from the mental market share model developed by Romaniuk (2013). Specifically, the study applies the model, or measure, to the analysis of data collected from primary research conducted on the brand image of New Zealand political parties, and secondary research published by CNN and ORC International on the 2016 presidential primary candidates for the Democratic and Republican parties.

The findings show that mental market share is correlated, or closely associated, to past, current and future voting behaviour, as expressed in public opinion political polls and election results. Further, it is found that the brand images for both the New Zealand political parties and the 2016 American Democratic and Republican presidential primaries candidates are distinct, and the qualitative interpretation of the skews allow for the strengths and weaknesses of a political brand to be identified. It is concluded that this study provides proof of concept of the application of Wright, Teagle and Feetham's (2014) adapted mental market share method to political marketing, as an alternative solution to measuring political brand equity beyond voting intent and election vote counts. The successful application of the mental market share model to another market, or research discipline, further quantifies the relationship Romaniuk (2013) identified between brand saliency and brand equity, and adds to the little research that has extended the use of the method beyond the commercial marketplace. Further, whilst the debate between political marketers and political scientists is not the focus of the research, the successful application of the mental market share model to politics provides more supporting evidence for the application of marketing and branding to the political field. The implications of these conclusions, as well as, the specific findings that the conclusions are drawn from, are discussed in the next section.

7.2 Discussion of findings

To determine if the mental market share model is both applicable to the political context and provides value beyond traditional polling methods, the research aimed to answer the following questions:

RQ 1: Does mental market share broadly correlate with voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

RQ 2: Is mental market share more closely associated with past, current or future levels of voting behaviour, as expressed in opinion polls and election results?

RQ 3: Do political brand image maps offer useful qualitative insights into the performance of political brands?

This section will discuss the findings of the research questions and their implications, after which the limitations of the study is addressed and future areas of research are proposed. First to be discussed is the findings of research questions one and two, as both questions were focused on the analysis of the relationship between the total association count data of mental market share measure and the results of elections and polls.

7.2.1 The correlation of mental market share to voting behaviour

The comparison of the rank order of the total association counts observed, or inferred, for the two data sets with the respective election and poll vote counts discovered that mental market share does broadly correlate with voting behaviour, as expressed in public opinion political polls and election results. Bar minor deviations, the rank order of political parties or candidates by total association count reflects the order of vote share for the same political actors in opinion polls and election results. For the American study, this included the analysis of both the presidential primaries for the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as the presidential election.

A more in-depth analysis of the relationship between the research results and the election and poll results, enables conclusions to be drawn on whether mental market share is more closely associated with past, current and future voting behaviour. To do so, correlation coefficients are calculated for each of the polls and election results for each study, bar the presidential election and Democratic presidential primary results of the American study as there were only two data points for each. The findings show a high correlation between the mental market share results and past, current and future voting behaviour. Specifically, the results for the New Zealand study indicate that mental market share is more closely associated with future voting behaviour. While the results of the American study show that mental market share is closely associated with both current and future voting behaviour for all the presidential primaries candidates, and results specific to the Republican presidential primaries.

Despite the close correlation of mental market share to voting behaviour, in particular future voter behaviour, the results or total association counts were unable to correctly predict the election outcomes for the 2017 New Zealand general election and the 2016 United States Presidential election. This is due to the structures of the political systems of both countries. New Zealand follows a multiparty mixed member proportional political system that enables minority vote share parties to form a coalition, and in turn, form the government, if the majority vote share party is unable to form their own majority seat coalition or have not independently won the majority seats (a total of 61 seats). Whilst in America the President is elected by way of the Electoral College system, in which party officials, chosen by their political party, in each state cast their vote for President and the candidate who obtains at least 270 of the Electoral College votes wins. Although the party representatives, or electors, are not required to vote as their state did, this is typically what occurs.

The incorrect prediction of the election outcome for both the 2017 New Zealand general election and the 2016 United States Presidential election highlights an issue with the design, or operationalisation, of the methodology within the context of the political systems of these countries. Therefore, in its current design, the mental market share model is restricted to predicting the popular vote for political brands (see section 7.3 for a discussion on how the mental market share model may be developed to account for the unique structure of a country's political system in future research). The finding that mental market share is able to predict popular vote, is still significant, as it provides further proof of Romaniuk's (2013) theory of the relationship between brand saliency and brand equity. Specifically, it shows that political parties and candidates that have a greater overall associtation count, or saliency, are more likely and readily to come to mind in a positive fashion and experience greater support. This finding has practical implications for political parties and brands, as it highlights the importance of building positive brand associations in the minds of their electorate. Therefore, this finding should inform the brand strategy of political brands, who should focus on increasing the number of associations linked to their brand for the voters they reach, as well as increase the reach of their brand message to widen the pool of voters who hold associations about that political party or candidate in their mind.

7.2.2 Qualitative insights from political brand image maps

The findings show that brand image maps, produced by benchmarking the observed total association counts per attribute for each political brand and comparing this to the original counts, does offer useful qualitative insights into not only the performance but also the nature of political brands. Firstly, the calculated chi-square significance tests and the identified skews indicate that the brand images for both the New Zealand political parties and American presidential and presidential primaries candidates investigated are distinct. Therefore, voters do perceive the image or position of parties to be different based on political issues, or policies. This finding contradicts a portion of the political marketing and branding literature that claims that as the policies of political parties have converged towards the middle of political ideology, policy has become increasingly less influential in voters' decision making process (Reeves, de Chernatony, Carrigan, 2006). While this research does not claim that policy is the basis of the decisions and behaviour of voters, it does suggest that it is a dimension of the political brand. Therefore, it remains crucial that policy discussions remain at the forefront of the campaigns of political parties and candidates, rather than solely personality marketing.

Beyond proving that the images of political brands are distinct, the skews also enable an in-depth analysis of the performance of political brands, per policy issue. Specifically, the skews illustrate the issues that the competing political actors vary on, as well as identify the issues that the party or candidate are strong or weak on, and develop an overall understanding of the image or position of a political brand from a voter perspective. The brand image maps discussed in the results section included those for the New Zealand National, Labour, Green, and New Zealand First parties, as well as the brand image of Clinton, Trump, Kasich and Carson from the American study. Particularly interesting results were found for the Green and New Zealand First parties, and Donald Trump. First, the qualitative insights of the Green and New Zealand First parties are discussed.

For both New Zealand political parties, the brand image maps highlighted that they only performed strongly on one policy issue each, for the Green Party it is the issue of the environment and conservation and for New Zealand First it is ethnic group and immigration. This finding shows that despite the claims, or efforts, of these political parties to be positioned on a range of political issues, and belief that they have strong policies in these other areas, the voting public perceives them as single issue parties. For example, the New Zealand First Party has attempted to develop a centrist position on economic development issues through their policy promises that have included taxing high income earners, increasing the minimum wage, and restricting foreign owenership of infrastructure assets (New Zealand Herald, 2017). Despite this effort, and policy design, the brand image map skews identify economic development as a political issue that they do not perform as well on as they are theoretically expected to. However, New Zealand First is renowned for its strong stance, and restrictive immigration policies and this has converted well into the association count or saliency observed for the party on this issue (New Zealand Herald, 2017). This suggests that the efforts of New Zealand First to position themselves on immigration is successful, and it may indicate that their policy is reflective of the concerns or opinion of the public on the political issue.

This finding is also observed for Trump, as discussed in the result section, the candidate performed well on political issues that he has actively positioned himself on and were the focus of his campaign platform; specifically the immigration political issue is discussed. Based on the theory of brand saliency, this is the result that would be expected. Brand saliency explains the observed association counts in this instance, as the more a consumer or voter is exposed to a message the more this becomes associated to the brand. Therefore, as Trump often spoke, tweeted and engaged with voters on the political issue of immigration he became increasingly associated to it. This suggests that the reach and frequency of brand image or position messages is important in growing the saliency, and in turn equity, of a brand.

As discussed, the brand image skews on particular attributes indicate the concepts that each political party or candidate has an unusually strong or weak affinity to in the minds of the respondents. These results have significant practical implications for political parties and candidates, as they proceed to grow their brand and appeal to voters, as the skews provide guidance on brand strategy for political parties and candidates. Specifically, the skews identify the particular attributes or political issues that each campaign should emphasise or focus on. By building the campaign or platform of a political brand on the political issues that they perform well on, it will continue to grow their brand, and specifically the saliency of it, on attributes that they are positively associated with. Thereby, increasing the likelihood that voters will think positively of them. Further, the identification of political issues that a political party or candidate do not perform as well on as they are theoretically expected to, provides insights into areas that they can improve on to develop policy, or a position, that is more aligned with the concerns of voters. If balanced with the ideological values of the party, and what they believe will result in the greatest prosperity for the country or electorate, this operationalisation of the mental market share findings may result in democratic value where voters are more involved with the future of their electorate.

7.3 Limitations and future research

Whilst this research contributes important findings to the study of brand equity measurement, particularly in the field of political branding, there are many avenues for future research. First, as discussed prior in section 7.2, the operationalisation of the mental market share method in its current design, is not likely to be able to predict the election outcome for countries that do not have a political system in which a political party or candidate wins the election if it obtains the majority share of the popular vote. Therefore, future research could focus on the development and adaption of the method design to provide more accurate predictions of election results of political systems like New Zealand's multiparty mixed member proportional system and America's Electoral College system. For example, future research into the presidential primaries and presidential elections in America could identify the responses per state and analyse them accordingly, to produce total associations counts for each state that is then weighted based on the number of Electoral College votes per state.

Secondly, this study only investigates the application of mental market share within the context of a general election in New Zealand, and the presidential primaries and presidential election of the United States. To determine if the application of a commercial branding equity measure, the mental market share model, to politics is appropriate, the study should be replicated in other countries and differing political races, for example specific electorate representative elections or local government elections. Further, the study could conducted again within the context of a general election in New Zealand, and the presidential primaries and presidential election of the United States, and results compared to the findings of this study. By replicating the research, the comparison of the brand image maps and political issue skews will highlight any significant changes in the images or position of the political brands, or indicate if the brand image of a political party or candidate is relatively stable.

Finally, future research could compare the predictive ability of the mental market share method and public opinion political polls, to determine which method is the most accurate in predicting election outcomes. The findings would provide insights into whether the mental market share model is a superior, alternative method to measuring the performance and equity of a political brand, to the traditional voting intention measure of public opinion political polls. However, mental market share provides feedback loops and diagnostic features that traditional voting intention and count methods are unable to. Therefore, unless the predictive ability of public opinion political polls is significantly greater than mental market share there is more value in the collection and analysis of data under the mental market share method. This is because the mental market share method allows for a more in-depth analysis of the brand image and performance of a political brand; that is in relation to itself rather than its relative position to competitors.

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9.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: New Zealand Political Brand Image Survey

Quota

Before you begin, please indicate which **gender** applies to you.

Male

Female

Default Question Block

Dear Panelist,

Thank you for clicking through to our survey. It should take you 5-10 minutes to complete.

The survey is being conducted by Caitlin Kooyman a masters students from Massey University, under the supervision of Professor Malcolm Wright, to develop a better understanding of voter perceptions of a selection of New Zealand political parties.

Your participation is voluntary and your anonymity is protected, as no identifying information will be collected. The surv findings only report summarized results and will not identify specific individuals or organisations.

If you have any queries you are welcome to contact Caitlin Kooyman or Malcolm Wright, who are responsible for the conduct of this research (email: caitlin.kooyman@gmail.com, M.J.Wright@massey.ac.nz)

To proceed to the survey please click on the 'Next >>' button at the bottom right of the page.

Once you click the 'Next >>' button you cannot go back and change your answers. If you lose your connection to the

Internet at any point, please go back to the original email to click the link again. It will restart the survey at the point yo off.

General Voting

Were you eligible to vote in the last general election?

Yes

No

And did you vote in the last general election?

Yes

No

Roughly, how many general elections have you voted in?

When you think about political parties in New Zealand, which political parties first come to mind?

Please list up to 3 political parties in the order they come to mind.

1st political party

2nd political party

3rd political party

Which of the sources below do you use to gather information on politics and political parties from?

Parliament Television

Television News Programmes

Online

Community Group Meetings

Family & Peers

Newspaper

Description

We would like to know what you think about New Zealand political parties, rather than party leaders or candidates. In the following pages we will present a selection of five political parties and ask you some questions about each one. There are no right or wrong answers in this survey. Rather we are interested in your opinion.

National Party

National

Which of the descriptions in the list below do you think applies to the **National Party**? Please select as many as apply.

Trustworthy	Visible
Long-term focus	Conservative
Self-serving	Works co-operatively
Tiresome	Preserves national identity
Culturally Sensitive	Promotes equality
Impractical policies	Empathetic
Alternative thinking	Nanny State
Delivers results	None of these

On a scale from 0-10, how likely is it that you would recommend voting for the **National Party** to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely									Extremely likely	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Labour Party

Which of the descriptions in the list below do you think applies to the **Labour Party**?
Please select as many as apply.

Self-serving
Alternative thinking
Long-term focus
Empathetic
Impractical policies
Preserves national identity
Tiresome
Culturally sensitive

Works co-operatively

Trustworthy

Delivers results

Nanny State

Visible

Promotes equality

Conservative

None of these

On a scale from 0-10, how likely is it that you would recommend voting for the **Labour Party** to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely									Extremely likely	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Green Party

Green

Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand

Which of the descriptions in the list below do you think applies to the **Green Party**?
Please select as many as apply.

Delivers results

Visible

Long-term focus	Empathetic
Promotes equality	Nanny State
Culturally Sensitive	Self-serving
Preserves national identity	Conservative
Tiresome	Alternative thinking
Trustworthy	Impractical policies
Works co-operatively	None of these

On a scale from 0-10, how likely is it that you would recommend voting for the **Green Party** to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely									Extremely likely	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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NZ First Party

New Zealand First

Which of the descriptions in the list below do you think applies to the **New Zealand First Party**?
Please select as many as apply.

Conservative
Visible
Promotes equality
Alternative thinking
Works co-operatively
Culturally sensitive
Empathetic
Impractical policies
Long-term focus
Delivers results
Nanny State
Preserves national identity
Tiresome
Trustworthy
Self-serving
None of these

On a scale from 0-10, how likely is it that you would recommend voting for the **New Zealand First Party** to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely | Extremely likely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Maori Party

Which of the descriptions in the list below do you think applies to the **Māori Party**?
Please select as many as apply.

Alternative thinking
Tiresome
Works co-operatively
Promotes equality
Conservative
Nanny State
Long-term focus
Empathetic
Self-serving
Preserves national identity
Visible
Impractical policies
Culturally Sensitive
Delivers results
Trustworthy
None of these

On a scale from 0-10, how likely is it that you would recommend voting for the **Māori Party** to a friend or colleague?

Not at all likely										Extremely likely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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Policy Q - Welfare

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **social welfare** policies? Please select as many as apply.

Green Party	National Party
Māori Party	Labour Party
New Zealand First Party	None of these

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Policy Q - Economic

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **economic development** policies? Please select as many as apply.

National Party	Māori Party
New Zealand First Party	Labour Party

Green Party

None of these

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Policy Q - Healthcare

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **healthcare** policies? Please select as many as apply.

National Party
Labour Party
Green Party
Māori Party
New Zealand First Party
None of these

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Policy Q - Environment

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **environment and conservation** policies? Please select as many as apply.

New Zealand First Party
Green Party
National Party
Māori Party
Labour Party
None of these

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Policy Q - Education

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **education** policies? Please select as many as apply.

New Zealand First Party
Green Party
National Party
Labour Party
Māori Party
None of these

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Policy Q - Trade

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **foreign trade** policies? Please select as many as apply.

Labour Party
New Zealand First Party
National Party
Green Party
Māori Party
None of these

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Policy Q - Ethnic

Which of the political parties in the list below do you think have strong **ethnic group and immigration** policies? Please select as many as apply.

Green Party	Māori Party
Labour Party	National Party
New Zealand First Party	None of these

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Voting

Taking everything into account, what are the chances that you will vote in the next general election?

10 Certain, practically certain (99 in 100)
9 Almost sure (9 in 10)
8 Very probable (8 in 10)
7 Probable (7 in 10)
6 Good possibility (6 in 10)
5 Fairly good possibility (5 in 10)

4 Fair possibility (4 in 10)

3 Some possibility (3 in 10)

2 Slight possibility (2 in 10)

1 Very slight possibility (1 in 10)

0 No chance, almost no chance (1 in 100)

And which party are you most likely to give your party vote to?

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National/Labour Politicians

Now we would like to ask you some questions about New Zealand politicians.

Here is a list of some of the members of the **National Party**, which, if any, of them have you heard of?

John Key

Bill English

Gerry Brownlee

Steven Joyce

Paula Bennett

Jonathan Coleman

Amy Adams

Christopher Finlayson

Simon Bridges

Hekia Parata
None of these

And which, if any, would you say are assets to the **National Party**?

John Key
Bill English
Gerry Brownlee
Steven Joyce
Paula Bennett
Jonathan Coleman
Amy Adams
Christopher Finlayson
Simon Bridges
Hekia Parata
None of these

Here is a list of some of the members of the **Labour Party**, which, if any, of them have you heard of?

Andrew Little
Annette King
Grant Robertson
Nanaia Mahuta
Phil Twyford
Chris Hipkins
Carmel Sepuloni
Kelvin Davis
Jacinda Ardern
David Clark
None of these

And which, if any, would you say are assets to the **Labour Party**?

Andrew Little
Annette King
Grant Robertson
Nanaia Mahuta
Phil Twyford
Chris Hipkins
Carmel Sepuloni
Kelvin Davis
Jacinda Ardern
David Clark
None of these

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Preferred PM

Here is a list of some **New Zealand politicians**, which, if any, of them have you heard of?

John Key
Andrew Little
Winston Peters
Jacinda Ardern
Phil Goff
James Shaw
Helen Clark
Annette King

Grant Robertson
Metiria Turei
None of these

And which, if any, of these politicians would you say are, or were, assets to their respective parties?

John Key
Andrew Little
Winston Peters
Jacinda Ardern
Phil Goff
James Shaw
Helen Clark
Annette King
Grant Robertson
Metiria Turei
None of these

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Demographics

Finally, some questions about you.

What **type of electorate** do you belong to?

General electorate

Māori electorate

And which **general electorate** do you belong to?

And which **Māori electorate** do you belong to?

What **year** were you born?

Which **ethnic group** do you mainly identify with?

NZ European
Other European
NZ Māori
Samoan
Cook Island Māori
Niuean
Fijian
Other Pacific Islander
Chinese
Indian
Other Asian
Middle Eastern
Latin American
African
Other, please specify:

Which of these best describers your **highest formal qualification**?

No formal qualification

School qualifications (Proficiency, School C, UE, Bursary)

Trade qualifications (apprenticeship)
Certificate or Diploma below Bachelor's level
Bachelor's Degree
Post-graduate or higher qualification

What is your **occupation**?

Sales worker	Community and personal service worker
Clerical and administrative worker	Technician and trades worker
Manager	Student
Retired	Professional
Labourer	Machinery operator and driver

Which of the following categories best describes your **personal yearly income** from all sources before tax?

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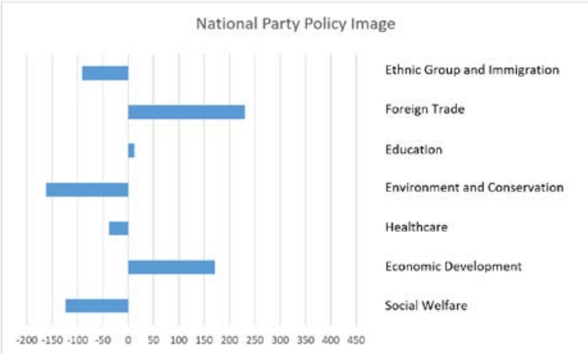
Appendix B: Supplementary table of the demographic breakdown of the quantitative sample for the New Zealand study

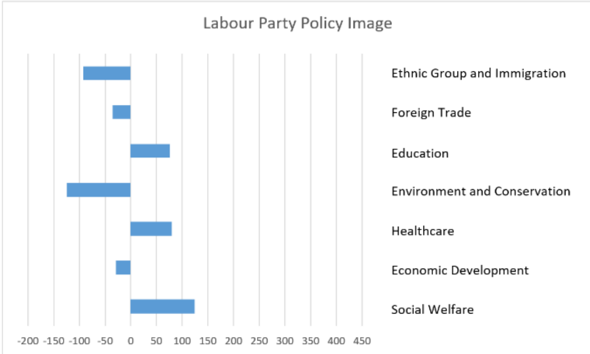
Supplementary Table | Demographic breakdown of the Quantitative Sample for the New Zealand study.

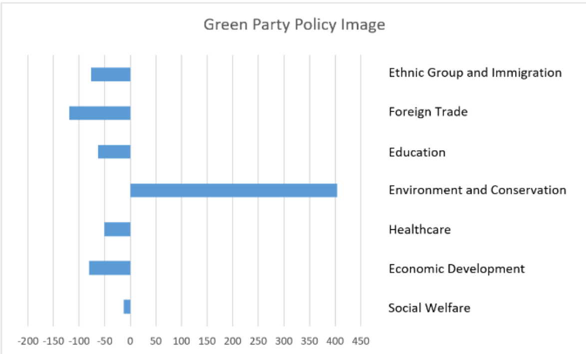
	Survey Respondents (n=621)	New Zealand Census/Voting Data
Gender	%	%
Female	49	52
Male	51	48
Age		
18-24	10	10
25-34	16	16
35-44	17	17
45-54	16	19
55-64	20	17
65-80	21	22
Ethnicity		
European	79	70
Maori	7	11
Pacific Peoples	2	5
Asian	8	11
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	1	1
Other (specified)	3	2
Education		
No Formal Qualification	7	
School Qualifications	26	
Trade Qualifications	9	
Certificate or Diploma	22	
Bachelor's Degree	22	
Post-graduate or Higher Qualification	14	
Occupation		
Manager	8	
Professionals	27	
Technician and Trades Worker	5	
Community and Personal Service Worker	8	
Clerical and Administrative Worker	12	
Sales Worker	3	
Machinery Operator and Driver	2	

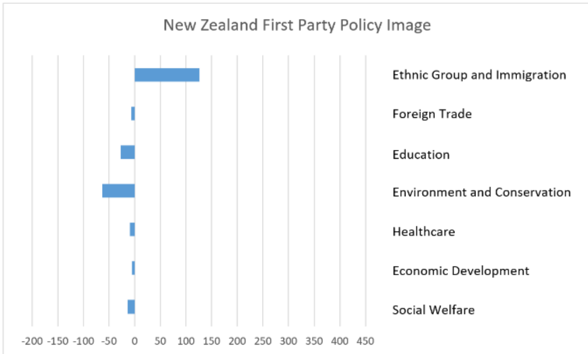
Labourer	3
Student	9
Retired	23
Personal Yearly Income (NZD)	
Less than $10,000	10
$10,001 - $20,000	13
$20,001 - $40,000	27
$40,001 - $60,000	23
$60,001 - $80,000	13
$80,001 - $100,000	6
$100,001 - $120,000	3
$120,001 - $140,000	2
Over $140,000	3

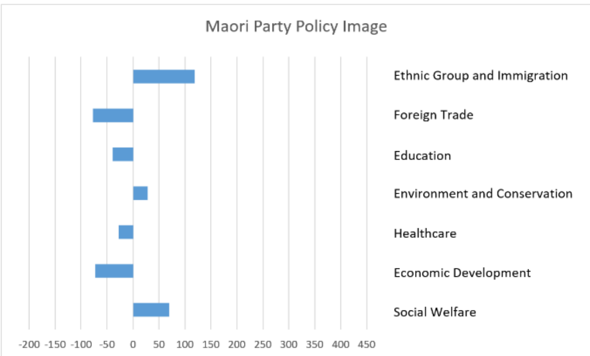
Appendix C: Political Image Maps for New Zealand Political Parties











Appendix D: *Political Image Maps for the American Democratic and Republican Primary Candidates*