

Effects of Party Brand Image on Voter Choice: Empirical Evidence from Ghana

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Abstract

The study sets out to examine the effect of party brand image on voter choice when other determinants are held constant drawing empirical evidence from Ghana. The study builds on earlier works on determinants of electoral behaviour such as social cleavage voting (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944), party identification voting (Campbell et al., 1960), and issue ownership voting (Down, 1957). The study departs from these traditional schools and seeks to validate the claim that party brand image has a significant influence on voter choice as an alternative. The paper employed Bosch et al. (2006a) party brand image framework to deconstruct political party brand image insights in democracies. To estimate this, a multiple logistic regression analysis was performed. The results of the analysis established that there is no sufficient evidence to conceptually support the model when the party brand image was assigned to both the NDC and NPP in a cross-sectional survey. The results show only three statistically significant predictors (experience, expectation, and uniqueness) of the model. Also, when the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents (cleavage voting), party identification, and

issue voting variables were introduced into the model to control for the effect of party brand image on voter choice, the results do not strongly support the hypothesis. This is because the coefficients of the variables in the model practically remain unchanged. The key conclusion is that there is not enough evidence to conceptually support the model, and empirically validate the null hypothesis stated for the study. While party brand image may not be the dominant factor in voter choice in Ghana, parties can still leverage experience, expectation, and uniqueness to enhance their appeal. However, the socioeconomic cleavages, strengthening party identification, and focusing on issue ownership should remain critical strategies for electoral success in Ghana.

Keywords: Democracy, Political Party, Party Branding, Politics, Elections, Voting, Ghana

1. Introduction

The rapture of good governance in the late 1980s and the early 1990s hurled the world into an epochal shift to democracy and elections captured in the term ‘New World Order’ (Fukuyama, 1992; Ayee, 1999; Pierre & Petters, 2000; Hayness, 2001). In Africa, the clamor for democracy and good governance coincided with political fallouts from economic and political governance challenges in the 1970s and the early 1980s. These challenges are said to be associated with military regimes and autocratic political systems in immediate post-independence Africa (Salim, 2001; Gyimah-Boadi, 2001a; Bukari, 2022).

Moreover, the dramatic fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, and the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) on December 26, 1991, which ended the ‘Cold War,’ also opened the floodgate for the proliferation of democracies. Thus, the end of the Cold War ushered in a Unipolar World with constitutional democratic governance (Pierre & Petters, 2000). The new governance paradigm compels governments to expand public consultation and the implementation of democratic practices at the national and local levels through the encouragement of popular participation (Linz & Stepan 1997; Bratton & Van de Walle 1997; Gyimah-Boadi, 1998; Ayee 1999; Pierre & Petters, 2000; Salim, 2001; Bukari, 2023; Bukari, Eliasu, & Adam, 2024).

Conversely, scholars have argued that the rebirth of democracy and elections in Africa coincided with the ‘Third Wave’ of democratisation (Huntington, 1991; Gyimah-Boadi, 1998; Ayee, 1999; Salim, 2001). Accordingly, some scholars have asserted that competitive and participatory elections are the core institutions in a democracy, whereby the right of citizens to self-government can be exercised in modern liberal democracy (Linz & Stepan, 1997; Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997; Gyimah-Boadi, 1998; Ayee, 1999; Salim, 2001; Lindberg, 2006). Others have also argued that democratic institutions, such as political parties, provide platforms for multiparty electoral competition (Duverger, 1954; Mainwaring & Scully, 1995; Randal & Svasand, 2002; Gyimah-Boadi, 1998).

In addition, because elections are the core of democratic politics, political parties are traditionally viewed as appropriate vehicles for political power to steer the affairs of a democratic state (Duverger, 1954; Mainwaring & Scully, 1995; Salim, 2001; Randal & Svasand, 2002). However, Dix (1992) proclaimed that the degree of democracy and elections in Africa would largely depend on the institutionalization of political parties. Similarly, Ware (1996) pointed out that in the neoliberal political regime, it would be difficult for competitive democratic elections to be organized without active political parties in Africa. This notion gave birth to the proliferation of political parties in Africa. Thus, the reintroduction of democracy and elections in the 1990s ostensibly established multi-party systems and electoral competition in many African countries.

The proliferation of political parties in Africa’s ‘Third Wave’ of democratisation (Huntington, 1991) has triggered scholars to explore the determinants of voter choice during elections in new democracies. However, earlier scholarly works on electoral behaviour have focused on variables such as cleavage voting, School of Columbia (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Berelson et al., 1954; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967), party identification voting, Michigan School (Campbell et al.,

1960), and issue ownership voting, School of Rochester (Down, 1957). However, recent studies have suggested that these variables have a decreasing impact on electoral behaviour (Clarke & Stewart, 1998; Berglund et al., 2005). In fact, “as partisanship in the electorate has weakened, it stands to reason that voters would have to substitute other factors in their decision-making process” (Dalton et al., 2000, p. 49). Of course, the economy matters but seemingly does not increase its relevance to the way we think by filling the gap (Aardal & Van Wijnen, 2005; Smith, 2005; Anaman & Bukari, 2019a).

Although these traditional electoral behaviour variables are still relevant in determining voter choice, political branding has become an alternative variable in contemporary electoral politics and voter choice. Moreover, political party-branding dynamics have ostensibly become a variable of interest in the electoral marketplace. It has upturned traditional electoral game rules and the determinants of electoral behavior. In politics, political party branding crystalizes how votes are won and how citizens interact with politicians in the electoral market (Tweneboah-Koduah et al., 2010; Mensah, 2017; Nartey et al., 2017).

Arguably, there is no explicit link between electoral and party branding in Africa, although some studies in the Western democratic context have suggested that political branding has a considerable influence on voter choice (Needham, 2005; Smith & French, 2009; Phipps et al., 2010; Mensah, 2017). Political party brands are often used to identify and differentiate political parties by voting public during elections (Scammell, 2007; Smith & French, 2009; Mensah, 2016). Other scholars have also suggested that political party branding signifies party identity and party image and, more importantly, is used to conventionally show party loyalty (Needham, 2005; Smith, 2009; Phipps et al., 2010; Mensah, 2016). In electoral politics, the voting population or voters retrospectively and prospectively consider political parties in an election by evaluating their identity, image, candidates, and policies (Tweneboah-Koduah et al., 2010; Mensah 2015, p.122; Nartey et al., 2017).

Given this background, how does political party brand image become a new electoral marketplace for votes? This conceptual question is mirrored by a complementary major empirical inquiry that asks the conventional question: Does political party image influence voter choice when several other relevant explanatory variables of electoral behaviour are held constant? Some African scholars have attempted to answer these conceptual and empirical questions. Available scholarly works such as Mensah (2009), Tweneboah-Koduah et al. (2010), Mensah (2017), and Nartey et al. (2017) have focused on explaining how political party branding influences voter choice in general. Although many lessons can be drawn from these useful studies, they tend to focus more on political party brand identity with relatively little information on the mediating effect of political party brand image on voters' preferences. There is a limited scholarly discussion on how party brand image influences voter choice when other explanatory variables of electoral behaviour are held constant. This underpins both the conceptual and empirical relevance of the paper and thus forms the investigative context. The study therefore interrogates whether party brand image influences voter choice, holding other factors constant, drawing empirical evidence from Ghana in a cross-sectional survey.

2. Theory and Hypothesis

Various models are available in political branding literature and are used to explain political party branding and voter choice. These models are economic, relational, community, voter-centric, and cultural perspectives (Nielsen, 2015, pp. 9-16). For the operationalization of political brand image in an election, this study adopts a political brand image framework (Bosch et al., 2006a). The existing models of political branding place a premium on internal political party brand identity, and for this reason, political brand image is poorly operationalized. Therefore, adopting Bosch et al. (2006a) party brand image framework could help deconstruct political brand image. The model has six variables: strength, uniqueness, expectations, perceptions and associations, experiences, and evaluations (Bosch et al., 2006a).

However, only two of the six variables in the model were applied in the original study (Bosch et al., 2006a). This means that none of the six variables of the model has been tested (Bosch et al., 2006b). The model requires further clarity and understanding through the use of all six variables to operationalize the external brand image of a political party. Therefore, this model was adopted in this study. Therefore, building on political party branding and voting literature using the brand image model (Bosch et al., 2006a), the study makes the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: The level of attachment to a political party's brand image will manifest in significant support and propensity to vote for the same party when holding other factors constant.

H₂: The level of attachment to a political party's brand image will not manifest in significant support and propensity to vote for the same party holding other factors constant.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Context

Ghana is an English-speaking West African state and was returned to multi-party democracy on 7 1993 for the fourth time after 27 years of political instability following successful and unsuccessful military coups between February 24, 1966, and January 6, 1993. The country returned to constitutional democracy following the promulgation of the 1992 Constitution on April 28, 1992, adopting a multi-party democracy. Consequently, multi-party democratic presidential and parliamentary elections were conducted on November 3 and December 28, respectively. However, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), one of the main parties in the presidential election, was removed from the parliamentary election (Bukari, 2017).

Ghana is a relevant case for this study for three reasons: first, the country adopted a multi-party system in 1992; second, two political parties have since won elections and formed government; and third, Ghana is a good case to study branded politics since other political parties are not considered electoral market-oriented towards voters. The study focused on the main parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which were the

only two parties that won and formed the government between 1992 and 2020 under the Fourth Republic of Ghana. These parties won four elections, beginning in 1992. That is, while the NDC won (1992, 1996, 2008, and 2012 elections), the NPP also won the (2000, 2004, 2016, and 2020 elections) under the Fourth Republic of Ghana beginning in 1992 (Bukari, 2023; Bukari, Mbowura, & Arah, 2022a, 2022b; Bukari, Eliasu, & Adam, 2024).

The NDC was formed based on social democratic party principles. The party is a center-left, social democratic party that seeks civil liberty, social justice, equal rights, and opportunities for all Ghanaians before the law, irrespective of their social, cultural, educational, political, religious, and economic status (NDC Constitution). The NPP was formed on capitalist ideological principles and proclaimed to be center-right in Ghanaian political space. The ideological leanings of the parties have been denigrated into ethnic, rich, poor, religious, elitist, major group, minor group, public and private ownership, property ownership party, and policy orientation among other variables of identification in Ghanaian politics since 1992. A key thought-provoking debate on Ghana's body polity is that a two-party system has been instrumentalized in Ghana's Fourth Republic (Alidu & Bukari, 2020, Bukari, Aduah, & Alhassan, 2023; Bukari, 2023; Bukari, Eliasu, & Adam, 2024). Eventually, Ghanaian electoral politics continued to be dominated by the NPP (center-right) and the NDC (center-left), but some political analysts have, however, described the NPP and the NDC as Center-left parties (Anaman, 2016a; Bukari, 2017; Anaman & Bukari, 2019a, 2019b, 2021; Bukari, 2023). Generally, political party brands are conceptualized at the levels of ideology, party, candidate, and policies. The difference between NDC and NPP in terms of party branding is illustrated in the tables below (cf: Alidu, 2022; Bukari, 2023; Bukari, 2023; Bukari, Eliasu, & Adam, 2024).

3.2 Study Design and Methods of Data Collection

This study was designed to collect only primary data using a cross-sectional survey, with the help of a standard survey instrument. The sample frame for the survey included all adults aged 18 years and above in Ghana who were registered voters in the constituencies. The sample size for the study was obtained by employing Yamane's (1967, p. 886) formula, where the total voter population of the four constituencies was used. A closed-ended questionnaire was designed and randomly administered to the respondents. The "probability theory indicates a formula for estimating how closely the sample statistics are clustered around the true population value (Anaman, 2014, p. 47, Bukari, 2017). The minimum statistically acceptable sample size for the study was determined by employing a "simplified formula to calculate sample sizes" (Yamane, 1967, p. 886). The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N(\alpha^2))} \quad (1)$$

Where:

n = Sample Size; N = sample frame or total registered voters aged 18 years and above

recorded in four selected study districts; α = confidence interval or level of precision; and 1 = constant. In this study, a confidence level of 95%, with a margin of error of 5% (0.05), was assumed. Thus, by substitution, where n = sample size, N = sampling frame (27,0987), α = confidence interval (0.05), 1 = constant; therefore, $n = 399.41 =$ approximately 400 respondents. Therefore, n a value of four hundred (400) was adopted as the statistical significance for the survey. The sample was increased to 600 to include those who might not be willing to respond to the study questionnaire (see Bukari, 2017).

3.3 Theoretical Model and Measures I: Party Brand Image

The Statistical analysis was performed using logistic regression. Statistical Product and Service Solution (formerly known as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)) was used to generate descriptive statistical information and regression analysis. The probability that a party brand image affects voter choice is related to its characteristics or variables (Bukari, 2017; Bukari, Aduah, & Alhassan, 2023). This probability (P_i) is a "hidden" or latent variable that is not directly observed. However, what is observed is the voter's decision to vote for either party (A) or party (B) based on its brand image. This observation is represented by a dummy variable (Y_i) that has a value of (1) if the party brand image affects voter choice, and zero (0) if the party brand image does not (Bukari, 2017). This relationship is indicated in the following theoretical model:

$$P_i = B_0 + B_1 X_1 + \dots + B_n X_n + U_i \quad (2)$$

Where;

B_0 is constant,

$B_1 \dots B_n$ are the coefficients of the parameters of the party brand image variables;

$X_1 \dots X_n$ are the variables of the party brand image,

U_i is the error term.

To estimate the probability of an event, a logistic regression procedure was used to model the log odds as a linear function of the explanatory variable. The logistic regression equation for the estimation is shown in Equation 3.

$$\{\log (P_i / (1 - P_i))\} = B_0 + B_1 X_1 + \dots + B_n X_n + U_i \quad (3)$$

Where;

P_i is the probability that a party's brand image influences voter choice.

$1 - p$ is the probability that a party brand image does not influence voter choice,

Therefore, by inserting the variables, the equation for the analysis is shown in the empirical

model below:

$$\text{Party Brand Image (Log (p/1-p))} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Strength} + \beta_2 \text{ Uniqueness} + \beta_3 \text{ Expectation} + \beta_4 \text{ Perceptions and Associations} + \beta_5 \text{ Experiences} + \beta_6 \text{ Evaluations} + U_i \quad (4)$$

Where;

In Equation 4, the left-hand side is the log odds ratio, indicating the linear function of the explanatory variables. The log odds ratio describes the odds of favouring the dependent variable (party brand image) access to improved water and sanitation facilities). The right-hand side of the equation is the variable or attribute of the party brand image hypothesized to influence the party's choice in an election. These are all continuous variables indicating (1) a respondent voting for a party based on its brand image at the time of the survey (Bukari, 2017).

Party Brand Image_i is defined as emotions and cognitive attachment to a political party with the value of (1) if the party image will influence respondent *i* to vote for the party and (0) if the party brand image will not influence his or her vote choice.

Strength denotes the organization of the party with a value of (1) if it will influence respondent *i* to vote for the party or (0) if it will influence the party's vote,

Uniqueness_i is denoted exclusive attributes of a political party with a value of (1) if the uniqueness of the party will influence respondent *i*, to vote for the party, and (0) if it will not influence his or vote for the party,

Expectation_i is used to denote how the voting public expects the political party to do with a value of (1) if expectation influences respondent *i* to vote, and (0) if voter expectation towards the party will not influence his or her vote,

Perceptions and Associations_i also denote how the voting public perception and association with a value of (1) influence them to vote for the party, and (0) if people's perception and association with the party will not influence their vote for the party.

Experience_i refers to personal feelings of contact and the information available concerning the party brand with a value of (1) if this will influence respondent *i*, to vote for the party, and (0) if the voter's personal feelings about the party will not influence his or her vote for the party.

Evaluation_i denotes retrospective and prospective assessment of the political by voting public with a value of (1) if this will influence their choice of vote for the party and (0) if it will not.

U_i is the regression equation error term assumed to be normally distributed with zero mean and constant variance.

3.4 Empirical Model and Measures II: Control Variables

This study included control variables to predict the effect of brand image if they were held constant. Social cleavages were defined as the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents. Party identification is also operationalized as the closeness between political parties (NDC and NPP) and voters in an election. The issue owner is also operationalized as to whether the NDC or NPP would be the preferred choice for economic development

(Bukari, 2017). In the multiple logistic regression equation, with 10 independent variables assumed to influence the dependent variable, the party brand image of both the NDC and NPP is denoted by the equation (Bukari, 2017) below:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{NDC Party Brand Image}_i = & \mathbf{B}_0 + \mathbf{B}_1 \text{Sex}_i + \mathbf{B}_2 \text{Ethnic Group}_i + \mathbf{B}_3 \text{Age}_i + \mathbf{B}_4 \text{Education} \\ & \text{Level}_i + \mathbf{B}_5 \text{Religion}_i + \mathbf{B}_6 \text{Marital Status}_i + \mathbf{B}_7 \text{Employment Status}_i + \mathbf{B}_8 \text{Income}_i + \mathbf{B}_9 \\ & \text{Social Status}_i + \mathbf{B}_{10} \text{Economy}_i + \mathbf{B}_{11} \text{Party Identification}_i + \mathbf{U}_i \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

Where;

NDC Party Brand Image_i is the dependent variable defined as a dummy variable with the value of (1) if the NDC party image will influence respondent *i* to vote for the party, and (0) if the party brand image will not influence his or her vote choice in an election,

SEX_i is a dummy variable for the sex of respondent *i*, with (1) indicating male respondents and (0) for female respondents.

Ethnic Group_i is a dummy variable with (1) if respondent *i* is an Akan and (0) if he or she is not an Akan.

Age_i is a continuous variable indicating the biological age of respondent *i* in years, as at the time of the survey.

Education Level_i is a continuous variable, defined as the level of formal education acquired by respondent *i* at the time of the survey.

Religion_i is a dummy variable (1) if respondent *i* is a Christian and (0) if he/she is not a Christian.

Marital Status_i is a dummy variable with a value of (1) if respondent *i* was married at the time of the survey and (0) if he or she was not married.

Employment Status_i is a dummy variable with a value of (1) if respondent *i* was employed at the time of the survey and (0) if the respondent was not employed.

Income_i is the reported personnel income in Ghana cedis indicated by respondent *i*.

Social Status is a dummy variable with a value of (1) if the respondent belongs to the dominant group and (0) if the respondent belongs to the minority group.

Economy_i is a continuous variable defined as whether the NDC party prefers to improve the living or economic conditions of the respondents at the time of the survey.

Party Identification is a continuous variable defined as the closeness between the NDC party and the respondents at the time of the survey.

U_i is the regression equation error term, initially assumed to be normally distributed with zero mean and constant variance.

4. Results and Discussions

Table 1 shows the socioeconomic characteristics of the sampled study respondents. The study collected information on the respondents' demographic variables. The socioeconomic characteristics or variables examined in this study were the gender of the respondents, their ethnic background, age of the respondent, level of education, religious background, marital status, income, social status, and employment of the respondents at the time of the survey (Bukari, 2017; Alidu & Bukari, 2020; Bukari, Adua, & Alhassan, 2023; Bukari, Eliasu, & Adam, 2024). The essence of the socio-economic information collected from the respondents is to help obtain divergent views of the respondents from the perspective of party branding and voting. Sociodemographic information also provides insights into how the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents correlate with political branding and voting.

Table 1. Socio-Economic Information of the Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Number
Sex	Male	269	44.8	600
	Female	331	55.2	
Ethnic group	Akan	115	19.1	600
	Others	485	80.3	
Age	18–20	37	6.1	600
	21–30	145	24.1	
	31–40	107	17.8	
	41–50	146	24.3	
	51–60	98	16.3	
	60+	67	9.5	
Education	None	87	14.5	600
	Basic	111	18.5	
	Secondary	178	29.6	
	Tertiary	174	29.0	
	Others	50	8.33	
Religion	Christian	159	26.5	600
	Moslem	404	67.3	
	Others	37	6.1	
Marital status	Married	247	41.1	600
	Not Married	353	58.8	
Income	0–500gh	198	33.0	600
	500–1000gh	138	23.0	
	1000Gh–1500gh	137	22.8	
	1500gh–2000gh	85	14.1	
	200gh plus	42	7.00	
Social class	Elite class	351	58.5	600
	Mass class	249	41.5	
Employment	Formal worker	264	44.0	600
	Informal worker/unemployed	336	56.0	

Source: Filed Data, 2022.

The first model attempts to estimate the probability of the level of attachment of a political party's brand image manifesting in significant support and propensity to vote for the same party. To estimate this, a multiple logistic regression analysis was conducted. The probability of party brand image attachment was estimated using cross-sectional survey data, with a randomly sampled size of 600 respondents from three purposively selected constituencies. Before the analysis of the results, testing the stated hypothesis did not indicate any violations.

The party brand image was first assigned to the NDC in the model. Based on the test results, the omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant: χ^2 (df = 6,

$N = 600$) = 82.956, $p < 0.000$; Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.130$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.291$. The results show that the predictive power of the model was correctly classified at 91.6 percent, which is very high. This means that the model was accurate in its prediction of the probability of attachment of the respondent to a political party image, influencing him or her to vote for the party. The coefficients of the model predictors are reported in Table 2a.

Table 2a. Results of The Logistic Regression Analysis of The Influence of NDC Brand Image and Voter Choice from The Perspective of Respondents

VARIABLE	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I for Exp(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Strength	-032.881	3609.216	0.000	1	0.993	0.000	0.000	
Uniqueness	17.2888	2461.778	0.000	1	0.994	32227754.280	0.000	
Perception& Association	-020.410	2461.778	0.000	1	0.993	0.000	0.000	
Experience	3.745	1.271	8.679	1	0.003**	42.294	3.502	510.775
Evaluation	0.529	0.780	0.461	1	0.497	1.698	0.368	7.827
Expectation	-2.128	0.612	12.088	1	0.001**	0.119	0.036	0.395
Constant	35.184	3609.216	0.000	1	0.992	19063917800		

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Note. **Statistically significant at 5% level, Log Likelihood is 270.024, Valid Sample size is 596 (and missing cases were 4).

The analysis seeks to determine whether brand image affects vote choice if it is assigned to a political party. As demonstrated in Table 2a, only two of the six variables of the Bosch et al. (2006a) model are statistically significant, with the probability of influencing the respondents' voting for NDC if elections were to be held in Ghana at the time of the study, based on its brand image. The odds ratio linked to the respondent's EXPERIENCE shows that if a respondent's experience increases by one unit, there is a predicted increase in the probability of the respondent voting for the NDC. In addition, the results linked to the respondent's EXPECTATION of the NDC indicate that if the respondent's expectation increases by one unit, there will be a predicted reduction in the probability of the respondent voting for the party. The other four variables as shown in the model are not statistically significant in influencing the dependent variable (NDC brand image) if elections were to be held. Consequently, the results linked to experience are similar to those established in other countries (see for example works by Pich & Armannsdottir, 2015). Accordingly, the results confirmed the assertion that personal feelings coupled with a retrospective and prospective evaluation of party performance in governance or what the party seeks to do if political power largely informs voters' choices in an election (Key, 1966; Fiorina, 1981). The conclusion, as can be seen from the results, is that the party brand image assigned to the NDC is not significantly correlated with voter choice. This is because only two predictors of the model were statistically significant; thus, the results moderately support this hypothesis.

Second, when the party brand image was assigned to the NPP party in the model, the effect remained practically unchanged. Based on the results, omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant, omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant, χ^2 (df = 7, N = 600) = 22.432, $p < 0.002$, Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.037$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.308$. The predictive power of the model was very high, and it was correctly classified at 98.8 percent. This means that the probability that the NPP party's brand image will influence respondents to vote for the party is very high. The results of the analysis of NPP brand image and voting intention, if elections were to be held in Ghana at the time of the survey, are reported in the table below: The magnitudes of the coefficients of all the independent variables in the model are listed in Table 2b.

Table 2b. Results of The Logistic Regression Analysis of The Influence of NDC Brand Image and Voter Choice

VARIABLE	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I for Exp(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Strength	-15.063	3061.562	0.000	1	0.996	0.000	0.000	
Uniqueness	1.698	3777.510	0.000	1	0.000***	5.465	0.000	
Perception& Association	-15.979	3115.737	0.000	1	0.996	0.000	0.000	
Experience	16.601	3287.050	0.000	1	0.996	16202803.691	0.000	
Evaluation	-15.927	3287.049	0.000	1	0.996	0.000	0.000	
Expectation	-16.005	26393.401	7.311	1	0.026**	0.000	0.000	
Constant	49.705	26614.345	0.000	1	0.999	3.862E+21		

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Note. ***Statistically significant at 1% level, **Statistically significant at 5% level, Log Likelihood is 53.706, Valid Sample size 596 (and missing cases were 4).

As reported in Table 2b, the results show that the UNIQUENESS of the NPP party as a brand and the respondents' EXPECTATION of NPP policies to deliver social and economic goods are statically significant variables that have the probability to influence the respondents to vote for the party if elections were to be held in Ghana at the time of this survey. However, the uniqueness of the party is not statistically significant at 5 percent (5%) used in this study. The odds ratio of UNIQUENESS indicates that if the respondent's attachment to the uniqueness of an NPP increases by one unit, there is a probability that the respondent voting for an NPP will increase. In addition, the odds ratio linked to EXPECTATION shows that if the respondent's expectation increases by one unit, there is a predicted reduction in the probability of the respondent voting for an NPP. The other four variables were not significant, as reported in Table 2b. Based on these results, it can be concluded that brand image has no substantial effect on choosing NPP in elections. Therefore, the results do not strongly support the hypothesis that the level of attachment to the NPP party's brand image will manifest in significant support and propensity to vote for the same party when holding other factors

constant.

The second model also seeks to establish the effect of party brand image on voter choice when other factors, such as socio-economic factors, party identification, and issue ownership (economy and development issues), are held constant. Table 3a shows the results of logistic regression analysis explaining the influence of party brand image in an election, controlling for socio-economic characteristics and party identification. Based on the results, the omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant, χ^2 (df = 11, N = 600) = 125.229, $p < 0.000$, Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.284$, and Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.653$. The predictive power of the model was very high, and it was correctly classified at 96.5 percent. The magnitudes of the coefficients of all the independent variables in the model are reported in Table 3.

Table 3a. Results of the Logistic Regression Analysis of the Influence of Party Brand Image and Voter Choice with Control Variable I

VARIABLE	B	SE.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I for Exp(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Sex	-0.256	0.652	0.154	1	0.695	0.774	0.215	2.780
Ethnic Group	0.898	0.845	1.129	1	0.288	2.455	0.468	12.871
Age	-23.408	14987.663	0.000	1	0.999	0.000	0.000	
Education	-30.113	4078.096	0.000	1	0.994	0.000	0.000	
Religion	16.262	2803.816	0.000	1	0.995	11549786.367	0.000	
Marital Status	-15.942	2803.815	0.000	1	0.995	0.000	0.000	
Income	0.373	1.083	0.119	1	0.730	1.452	0.174	12.140
Social Class	-0.452	0.893	0.256	1	0.613	0.637	0.111	3.663
Employment	-1.396	1.876	36.256	1	0.000***	0.248	0.006	
Party Identification	1.103	0.657	2.819	1	0.093*	3.014	0.831	10.926
Constant	29.106	4078.096	0.000	1	0.994	437013900094 4.153		

Source: Field Data, 2022

Note. ***Statistically significant at 1% level, * Statistically significant at 10%, Log Likelihood is 88.697, Valid Sample size was 375 (and missing cases were 225).

Based on the results, as shown in Table 3a, EMPLOYMENT and PARTY IDENTIFICATION significantly influenced the likelihood of voting based on their employment status affiliation to the party if elections were to be held in Ghana at the time of this survey. The odds ratio linked to EMPLOYMENT indicates an inverse relationship between party-brand image and employment. In addition, the odds ratio linked to PARTY IDENTIFICATION shows a direct relationship with party brand image in an election. It should be noted that the variables are not statistically significant at 5 percent (5%) used in this study. The other variables in the

model were not statistically significant, as reported in Table 3a. The results show that the effect of party brand image on voting remains unchanged after controlling for the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents and party identification in the model. Thus, these results do not strongly support the alternative hypotheses of this study. Table 3b shows the results of the logistic regression of the influence of party brand image on voter choice after introducing the state of the Ghanaian economy in the model. The omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant, omnibus model for the logistic regression analysis was statistically significant, χ^2 (df =11, N = 600) = 188.048 $p < 0.000$, Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.277$ (27.7%), Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.637$ (63.7%). In addition, the model has a very high predictive power, and it is correctly classified at 96.2 percent. The magnitudes of the coefficients of all independent variables in the model are reported in Table 3b.

Table 3b. Results of the Logistic Regression Analysis of the Influence of Party Brand Image and Voter Choice with Control Variable II

VARIABLE	B	SE.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I for Exp(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Sex	-0.026	0.479	0.003	1	0.957	0.975	0.381	2.494
Ethnic Group	0.465	0.508	0.836	1	0.361	1.592	0.588	4.309
Age	-22.648	12930.605	0.000	1	0.999	0.000	0.000	
Education	-30.262	3391.711	0.000	1	0.993	0.000	0.000	
Religion	16.447	2333.718	0.000	1	0.994	13897906.550	0.000	
Marital Status	-16.546	2333.718	0.000	1	0.994	0.000	0.000	
Income	0.790	0.784	1.016	1	0.313	2.204	0.474	10.254
Social Class	-0.297	0.781	0.145	1	0.704	0.743	0.161	3.435
Employment	-1.972	1.730	59.715	1	0.000***	0.139	0.005	4.137
State of Ghana's Economy	2.251	1.275	3.115	1	0.078*	9.496	0.780	115.662
Constant	28.086	3391.711	0.000	1	0.993	157641566524 4.033		

Source: Field Data, 2022

Note. ***Statistically significant at 1% level, **Statistically significant at 10%, Log Likelihood is 142.908, Valid Sample size 579 (and missing cases were 21).

As reported in Table 3b, only **EMPLOYMENT** and the **STATE OF GHANAIAN ECONOMY** were statistically significant, influencing the likelihood of voting based on their employment status and general economic conditions affecting their lives in the country if elections were to be held at the time of this survey. The odds ratio linked to **EMPLOYMENT**, as reported in Tables 3 and 3b above, indicates an inverse relationship between party brand image and employment status at the time of this survey. In addition, the odds ratio linked to the **STATE OF GHANAIAN ECONOMY**, as reported in Table 3b above, shows a direct relationship between party brand image and the state of general

economic conditions if elections were to be held in Ghana at the time of this study. However, these variables were not statistically significant at 5 percent (5%) used in this study. In addition, the other variables in the model were not statistically significant, as shown in Table 3b. It can be concluded that the effect of brand image on voting was moderate after introducing Ghana's economy into the model. This is because the coefficients of the variables in the model remained practically unchanged. Therefore, the results moderately support the alternative hypotheses of this study.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In Ghanaian electoral politics, the hypothetical agreement is that political parties are what they are and that all political parties are the same. This assumption has been ascribed to the Ghanaian voting public's NDC and NPP. These two parties have been described as the same political parties in terms of what the parties say and do, both in government and opposition. This postulation has largely been created in the minds of Ghanaians and particularly resonated with the voting public.

To disentangle this supposition in the minds of the voting Ghanaian public, this study conceptually supported the model and empirically validated the claim that party brand influences voter choice in Ghana. The study employed Bosch et al. (2006a) party brand image framework to deconstruct political brand image insights and voting behavior. Essentially, political branding influences the electoral choices of hardcore independent voters in elections in all democracies. However, poor party branding diminishes the selling points of the party and ultimately affects its electoral fortune. Therefore, the effect of party brand image on voter choice was estimated using multiple logistic regression analysis. The probability that a political party brand image influences vote choice was estimated using cross-sectional survey data involving 600 randomly sampled respondents from three purposively selected constituencies from March 1, 2022, to April 30, 2022, in Ghana. The analysis introduced party brand image in the model (Bosch et al., 2006a) to demonstrate the distinct differences between political parties in an election, such as the NDC and the NPP in Ghana in the survey.

Based on the results, there is very little evidence to conceptually support the model in Ghana and empirically validate the claim that party brands have the propensity to influence voter choice from the perspective of study respondents. The results of the analysis established that when party brand image was assigned to both the NDC and NPP, it was not significantly correlated with voter choice. As demonstrated in the results, only three predictors (experience, expectations, and uniqueness) in the model were statistically significant. Thus, the results moderately support this hypothesis. In addition, when the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents (social cleavage voting), party identification, and issue ownership voting variables were introduced into the model to control for the effect of party brand image on voter choice, the results did not strongly support the study hypothesis. This is because the coefficients of the variables in the model remained practically unchanged. Based on the results, the key conclusion is that there is insufficient evidence to conceptually support the model and empirically validate the claim. The claim that brand image will significantly

influence voter choice is not strongly supported based on the results.

In a nutshell, while party brand image may not be the dominant factor in voter choice in Ghana, parties can still leverage experience, expectation, and uniqueness to enhance their appeal. Additionally, addressing socioeconomic cleavages, strengthening party identification, and focusing on issue ownership, however, remain critical strategies for electoral success in Ghana's Fourth Republican democracy.

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