

Factors Affecting Political Marketing in Rural and Urban Bangladesh: A Multi-Dimensional Approach

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Abstract

This study argues that applying political marketing models of developed countries on developing nations is not realistic, and thus its main purpose is to offer separate multidimensional political marketing mix models for rural and urban Bangladesh in order to find differences in voters' priorities. We use the Structural Equation Modeling approach to develop and validate the models, based on 1284 and 1372 primary data observations collected from rural and urban electoral, respectively. This paper offers one 39-item eight-dimensional political mix model and another 39-item eleven-dimensional political mix model for rural and urban areas, respectively, presenting 24 common and 30 uncommon variables between the models. Both groups show importance towards using celebrities, national icons, and national leaders in campaigns as well as modesty and articulation power of the candidates. As the proposed model development method is highly significant and valid, the applicability of the instrument can be tested in other developing countries. This study recommends nominating local candidates with strong political background and candidates with a better social image, using party leaders (preferably party chair), utilizing posters, postal mails, and billboards to showcase achievements, and building up a sophisticated voter information system to identify the requirements of the electorates.

Keywords: political marketing; marketing mix; multi-dimensional model; developing countries; Bangladesh

JEL classification: M31; M38; M39

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1. Introduction

This study reasonably argues that expectations of the electorates from political parties and candidates vary in developed and developing countries as well as between rural and urban areas within a country. As a result, applying a political marketing framework of Western nations on developing countries is not realistic. To find the differences in voters' priorities among various regions and based on the opinions of the electorates, we offer separate multidimensional political marketing mix models for rural and urban areas of a developing country.

There is much evidence to suggest that political parties and candidates use conventional marketing tools and strategies to win national and local elections (Kotler and Kotler, 1999; Niffenegger, 1988; Shama, 1976). In the course of time, political marketers have expanded their operations from promotion-only to establishing a long-lasting relationship with the electorates (Grossman, 2006). They also realized that the political success of a party or candidate depends on many indicators (voter requirements), and that a single component (such as campaigning or advertising) does not dominate the election results (O'Shaughnessy and Henneberg, 2009). However, an extensive literature review suggests that existing studies on political marketing have mostly emphasized individual marketing-mix components (especially promotion-based) such as impacts of word-of-mouth in local elections (Argan and Argan, 2012), the effects of advertisement and advertising allocation in elections (Gordon and Hartmann, 2011), the impact of advertising on voter turn-out rates (Gerber et al., 2011), the effects of positive and negative messages in elections (Lovett and Shachar, 2011), the impacts of candidate appearance and advertising on election results (Hoegg and Lewis, 2011), the impacts of grass-root campaigning (Shachar, 2009), and the effects of threats and compensation to voters on elections (Stokes, 2005). There are also qualitative studies available based on the results of previous national elections (see, for instance, Ormrod, 2009; Lees-Marshment, 2001; Niffenegger, 1988; Shama, 1976). However, there is a lack of empirical studies offering a comprehensive model that explores voters' requirements while judging a political candidate. Lock and Harris (1996) argued that political marketing has to develop its own prescriptive and predictive models if it is to inform and influence political actions. This study intends to address that gap in the literature.

In political marketing terminology, parties are synonymous to businesses whereas candidates are similar to other commercial goods (as mentioned in Kaskeala, 2010; Kotler and Keller, 2006; Niffenegger, 1998). Thus, it is significant to empirically identify important political marketing mix indicators as perceived by the voters. According to the rational choice theory, voters make decisions based upon a set of individual preferences to maximize gains. Therefore, to win an office, parties and candidates need to fulfill the diverse needs of the electoral masses. However, as mentioned above, this important aspect of quantitative research in political marketing has largely been ignored. Most existing studies that offered political mix variables are qualitative in nature and lack statistical significance (see,

for instance, Soberman, 2010; Osuagwu, 2008; Wring, 1997; Shama, 1976). Quantitative studies as mentioned before, on the other hand, covered only a few pre-determined political mix variables without offering any comprehensive, valid model.

Another significant gap in the existing political marketing literature is the lack of studies on developing nations (the exceptions are Babeiya, 2011; Menon, 2008; Gbadeyan, 2011; Osuagwu, 2008), whereas many studies have been conducted on developed countries (Ghiuță, 2013). Existing studies on emerging nations have a common drawback of applying the marketing mix offered for developed and purely democratic countries without considering the democratic standing of their own target. Moreover, there is an absence of studies exploring disparities in requirements between rural and urban voters in developing nations on political marketing mix indicators. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCLS, 2014) argued that urban areas have a more migratory set of voters, whereas rural jurisdictions have more settled voters. Technology such as online voter registration and electronic voting can be used in most urban areas, but is less applicable in rural settings. The report therefore concluded that the needs and conditions of voters in different areas should be addressed properly. In developing countries like Bangladesh, rural areas usually lag behind regarding literacy rate, skills, and level of empowerment. There are also variations in voters' demography, socio-economic conditions, psychographic, nature of the profession, incidence of poverty, and unemployment rate between the two regions. The choice of preferences by voters of two different areas may differ in terms of voting behavior. Hence, this paper explores the mix of political variables important to voters in the countryside and to those in urban areas. The results herein can benefit the parties and candidates in designing their campaigns according to voters' customized requirements in different regions.

Considering the identified gaps and taking Bangladesh as a case study, this study is designed to accomplish the following.

- a. Propose a statistically valid multi-dimensional political marketing mix model development process to address the first research question: What are the influential indicators of political marketing in rural and urban Bangladesh?
- b. Explore the differences in priorities between rural and urban voters in Bangladesh on the mix of political indicators to address the second research question: Are there differences between rural and urban voters with respect to their priorities towards political marketing indicators?

2. Why Bangladesh

There are several reasons to choose Bangladesh as the sample country for this study. First, existing studies on political marketing in developing nations mostly targeted African countries, with a lack of studies on the South Asian region. Even though a few studies were conducted on India (Kumar, 2014; Pathak and Patra, 2015) and Pakistan (Nazar and Latif, 2015), most are qualitative in nature and the results lack statistical significance. Second, Bangladesh has the highest voter turnout

rate (currently 85.26%) compared to other South Asian countries (IDEA, 2016), which is a distinctive feature of voters' involvement in the country's politics. Finally, after its independence in 1971, Bangladesh experienced diverse political structures, like one-party socialism, military rule, caretaker government, presidential parliament, and democratic parliament. It can be argued that only a few developing countries have encountered such a broad spectrum of political systems within a short span of time – another unique feature of the country's politics.

3. Literature Review of the Indicators of Political Marketing and Existing Gaps

Theoretical Foundation

The American Marketing Association (AMA, 2007) stated that parties should identify the requirements of the voters for effective use of political marketing in order to deliver their services in the best possible ways. As a continuation of that theme, the association also suggested that McCarthy's (1960) 4 P's model could be utilized with necessary refinements. With this model extended to 7 P's, it was argued that researchers should identify the varied mix of politics by considering the intangible nature of the subject and by incorporating voters' opinions (Girma, 2016). Therefore, as a theoretical foundation, our study applied the generic marketing mix offered by Booms and Bitner (1981) and did an extensive literature review to accumulate as many political mix variables as possible. Accumulated variables were then customized according to Bangladeshi voters living in urban and rural areas.

Qualitative Studies on Developed Nations

According to Shama (1976), campaign quality, road rallies, media use in creating campaign appeal, television advertisements, use of printed media, careful speech-making, and door-to-door promotion are vital issues in politics. For U.S. elections, Newman (1994) added indicators like party policy, candidate positioning, a candidate's image in society, extensive campaigning, and economic cost of the candidate. Wring's (1997) study on the UK put more emphasis on opinion research, policy commitments, election manifesto, use of direct mail and public relations, consideration of national interest, and meeting with grass-root voters. Henneberg (2004) suggested indicators such as building networks with voters, use of technology, celebrity endorsement, and relationship maintenance with volunteers for UK politics. McDonnell and Taylor (2014) identified that economic and societal aspects of politics should be addressed while preparing the campaigns (similar to argument of Takashima, 2007). Aquirre and Hyman's (2015) study on political advertisements found that carefully crafted slogans, language used in the campaigns, and TV commercials are influential in politics.

Gibson and Römmele (2009) in their study on Germany mentioned telemarketing, direct mail, Internet communications, establishing more outside offices, opinion polling, and opposition research as influential indicators. Savigny and Temple (2010) added items such as a candidate's image as a leader, campaign depth, persuasion, party of the candidate, policy contents, and participation at the

grass-root level. Deželan and Maksuti (2012) worked on the effectiveness of election posters and suggested to be careful about their colors, messages, using local language, attractive fonts, and use of leaders' photos. Fishwick et al. (2014) found that campaign strategies using careful communication with the stakeholders are most important in political marketing. For Turkey, Ustaahmetoglu (2014) suggested use of mass media, door-to-door campaigning, use of national icons, and use of posters.

Quantitative Works on Developed Countries

Che et al. (2007) looked at the U.S. and suggested negative advertising as influential determinants in voting. Gerber et al. (2011) argued that advertisements on television, radio, and billboards, using direct mail, and phone calls are crucial in there. However, the study did not offer any comparative analysis among different media with respect to reach or effectiveness. Professionalism, honesty, conservativeness, educated, introvert/extrovert, having local knowledge, and experience of politics are found to be important attributes of a candidate in the study of Cwalina and Falkowski (2015). Argan and Argan (2012) said that personality, honesty, societal bonding, daily family experience of the candidate, occupation, power of the candidate's home party, and political background are crucial for a candidate in Turkey. Hoegg and Lewis (2011) argued that candidates should have attributes such as acumen, bold, appealing, dependable, good judgment, and popular. Maryani (2015) revealed that party ideology and reputation of the party among the voters are crucial for political success (also mentioned in Grossman, 2006). Dabula (2016) revealed that the use of social media can be influential in communicating and building trust with voters through word-of-mouth. Girma (2016) argued that using party leaders in campaigns, exposing a candidate's good attributes, communicating the ideology of the party, and the use of voter research can be vital.

Noticeable Works on Developing Countries

As mentioned beforehand, there is a lack of studies on political marketing in developing nations and particularly in the South Asia region. Mensah's (2007) study on Ghana targeted the brand image of the candidate, the party and its ideology, control quality, status, and helpfulness of the candidate, and economic cost if the party wins. Agomor and Adams (2014) added character, scholastic background, political position, and social relation of the candidate as well as job creation ability of the party as being important in Ghana. Osuagwu (2008) argued that advertising, propaganda, one-to-one marketing, polling, and pushing through local elites are vital in Nigeria. Gbadeyan (2011) found that a party's election manifesto, use of money and muscle power, and candidates' attributes are also important in Nigeria. Babeiya's (2011) study on Tanzania tested the relation between dishonesty and use of money vis-a-vis election results. Ndavula and Mueni (2014) suggested using social media especially Facebook and Twitter, crafting appealing messages, political imprinting, and careful use of speech tone. Pathak and Patra (2015) proposed that using social media and mass media, outdoor advertising, and volunteer support are effective in India. Nazar and Latif (2015) emphasized public relations, fund supervision, corresponding campaigning, and social cost as important determinants

in Pakistan.

4. Research Gap and Hypotheses

While reviewing the existing literature on political marketing, we observe that most studies are: (a) based on a developed country context, (b) qualitative in nature, and (c) on scant pre-determined items (such as only on promotion or on advertisement) without offering any proper justification for them. Two other significant lacuna in the literature are unavailability of a comprehensive political mix model and a lack of studies exploring regional differences in political mix indicators according to voters' requirements. Therefore, the plan of the paper is that first we shall accumulate as many political mix indicators as possible irrespective of the region of study and then purify and customize the list of indicators according to the regional (rural and urban) requirements of Bangladeshi voters.

By considering the research gaps pointed above and taking Bangladesh as a case, the current study tests the following hypotheses.

H₀₁: There are no differences between rural and urban voters with respect to their choice regarding indicators and dimensions of political marketing.

H₀₂: There are no significant differences in priorities between rural and urban voters with respect to political marketing determinants.

5. Methodology

5.1 Variable List Purification

Considering the variables mentioned in the literature review section and based on a few more cross-country studies on political marketing, at the initial stage we identified 69 political mix criteria. In sorting them out, we used: (1) relevant published studies between 1980 and 2017, (2) Google scholar search engine, and (3) key words such as political marketing, politics in developing nations, communications in politics, etc. A five-member academic expert panel with a long experience at teaching strategic courses helped refine (as suggested by Shimp and Sharma, 1987) the original 69 items. Any item receiving three out five votes in favor were kept for further study. Based on these criteria, the experts suggested dropping one item, rephrasing five variables, and adding two criteria ("candidate's thoughts on religious issues" and "candidate's stand against corruption"). For example, the panel argued that "any negative issue of the candidate" is already covered by image-relevant questions (such as image as a community person, candidate's honesty as known in society, and stand against social problems). The panel proposed to use a 5-point Likert scale to capture the quantitative responses of the respondents. With all the suggestions, we came up with 70 items in the refined list.

In the second stage, we conferred the refined 70 items with a political scientist. The expert proposed rephrasing two items and adding three items in the list (such as

“visit by the candidate at the grass-root level” and “candidate’s connection with local elites/religious leaders”). The expert said that local religious leaders can serve as references during national elections in developing nations. After the necessary adjustments, we prepared the questionnaire with the purified 73 items. The initial questionnaire was primarily developed in English and then translated into *Bengali* (local language). A translator ensured the two sets contained identical information.

Finally, a pilot study among 30 urban voters was conducted to pre-test the contents of the questionnaire. A few of them suggested re-phrasing two items, because of a better understanding of the contents of those questions.

5.2 Questionnaire

The first section of the questionnaire included the refined 73 item-relevant questions, and the second section asked about demographic questions (such as gender, educational qualifications, age, and occupation). A 5-point Likert-like scale was used to record the opinions of the voters regarding the extent to which an item is important for a candidate to win the election, where 1 = *not at all important*, and 5 = *most important* (as this type of scale, suggested by Patwa et al., 2018, is the most reliable for data collection).

Table 1. Respondent Profile of the Study

Demographic feature	Urban areas		Rural areas	
	Total number	Percentage	Total number	Percentage
Gender				
Female	548	39.9	498	38.7
Male	824	60.1	786	61.3
Educational qualification				
Less than primary	145	10.5	164	12.7
Primary passed	121	8.9	170	13.2
SSC passed	141	10.2	289	22.3
HSC passed	280	20.4	311	24.2
Honor’s passed	387	28.3	201	16.2
Master’s passed	211	15.4	98	7.6
Above master’s degree	87	6.3	51	3.8
Total number of respondents	1372		1284	

5.3 Respondents

To develop the multidimensional models based on the perceptions of the general voters (anyone above 18 years), data were collected from the electorate of both urban (covering six divisional headquarters in Bangladesh) and rural areas (eight districts of the country). For rural model development, the first set of data was collected from 789 male voters. To confirm the findings from the first set of data, a second dataset was collected (as suggested by Malhotra and Dash, 2016) from 680 female voters in rural areas. For urban model development, 1372 data observations

were collected from male and female voters. Table 1 summarizes the sample profile of the study.

5.4 Statistical Method

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique has been used, because of its philosophical similarity to the analysis of multidimensional modeling and because of its greater statistical strength in comparison with other multivariate approaches (Kumar et al., 2014), like regression. Furthermore, SEM is preferable when the measuring factor (or dimension) is not directly measurable through a single item, but rather through a group of measurement variables (indicators) in order to adequately measure the dimension.

6. Results: Offering Multi-Dimensional Political Marketing Mix Models

In this section, we first elaborate upon a statistically significant multi-dimensional political mix model development process. By using the proposed method, two separate models will be developed for rural and urban Bangladesh. Following that, we discuss a comparison between the priorities of voters in rural and urban areas on the indicators of the two developed models. For ease of discussion, we will describe the rural political mix model development process only. However, findings of the urban model will also be presented.

6.1 Rural Political Marketing Mix Model

Stage 1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

To facilitate EFA, we utilize the data collected from male voters ($n = 786$). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value that confirms data adequacy is 0.95 ($sig. = 0.00$), and thus the data are extremely satisfactory for factor analysis. Furthermore, we confirm an adequate data ratio, which is ten responses per variable (we have 73 variables and 786 responses) as suggested by Byrne (2010).

The results of the first-stage EFA report that the 73 items are grouped under 14 dimensions (or factors) with total variance explaining 69.17%. As our primary purpose is to track the items to more relevant ones, we follow strict decision rules to remove items with factor loadings less than 0.50, those that cross-loaded, those with a low critical ratio ($CR < 1.96$), and those with extraction values less than 0.50 (as suggested by Shimp and Sharma, 1987). By using the stated decisions, 16 items drop out (five items have loading less than 0.50 and 11 are cross-loaded items) from further study. For example, one dropped item is 'using volunteers for campaigning.' Many of our respondents argued that the culture of using volunteers is never found in Bangladeshi politics; rather, candidates use their political activists for the stated purpose.

We re-run EFA (second stage) with the remaining 57 items that are found to be grouped under 12 dimensions, accounting for 70.26% of total variance. This time, two variables (candidate well-known as honest and door-to-door visit) have loading

less than 0.50, and five other items (such as occupation of the candidate, voice of candidate, election slogan, etc.) are found to be cross-loaded. We drop those seven variables. Our item refinement process continues until all remaining items fulfill the decision criteria stated earlier. Finally, after conducting the fifth stage of EFA and by dropping seven more items, we retain a total of 43 items that are grouped under eight dimensions.

Stage 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To run CFA, 498 new data observations (as suggested by Malhotra and Dash, 2016) were collected from female voters in rural areas (1:10 rule maintained). For CFA, we keep items if they have loadings greater than 0.50. Fit values are considered acceptable with Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) < 0.04, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) > 0.90, Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI) > 0.90, Normed Fit Index (NFI) > 0.85, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) < 0.05, (Pclose) > 0.05, Hoelter's Critical N (CN) > 200, and low Modification Indices (MI), as suggested by Hair et al. (2010).

After running CFA for the retained eight factors and their corresponding 43 items, we find all variables other than three (candidate's level of education, gender viewpoint, and image of the people working in the campaign) are statistically significant with a loading greater than 0.50. For instance, the initial values for RMR, GFI, CFI, NFI, RMSEA, Pclose, and Hoelter's CN are 0.08, 0.81, 0.83, 0.71, 0.41, 0.00, and 69/91, respectively, for the fifth dimension and its five items, which imply a moderate fit only. After dropping the item 'candidate's level of education' from that pair of items, RMR, GFI, CFI, NFI, RMSEA, Pclose, and Hoelter's CN for the fifth dimension are 0.03, 0.94, 0.91, 0.92, 0.03, 0.90, and 281/328, respectively, which is satisfactory. Many of our voters said that whether a candidate works for them or not is more important to them, and thus academic standing is of less concern (also found by Asia Foundation, 2012). The stated three items are thus dropped from further study. The CFA results show that the remaining eight dimensions and their underlying 40 items have satisfactory fit values when considered independently.

Stage 3. Constructing the political marketing mix model for rural Bangladesh

We test the remaining 40 variables and eight dimensions in a structural model (refer to Figure 1). This time one item, 'economic cost, if the candidate wins,' is found to have a loading of 0.28. During the field survey, many respondents mentioned that extortion has become inseparable to Bangladesh politics and every candidate does the same after winning. Thus, this item even though important has become less relevant. We thus remove the item and re-run the model. After running the refined model, all variables have loadings greater than 0.50, with RMR, GFI, CFI, NFI, RMSEA, Pclose, and Hoelter's CN values of 0.048, 0.93, 0.95, 0.91, 0.04, 0.91, and 362/411, respectively. We then combine two datasets ($n = 1284$) and re-run the model, finding that all items fulfill the acceptance criteria with highly satisfactory goodness-of-fit index values. Cronbach's Alpha, which measures the reliability and internal consistency of the model, is 0.94 (with $F = 288.21$ and

$sig. = 0.00$). A high coefficient alpha value indicates a higher reliability of the developed model. Convergent and discriminant validities are tested, too, and the model finds them to be significantly valid. Dimension correlation (the square root of AVE) as shown in Table 2 (see the right diagonal values) proves that each construct is highly correlated to the items of its own than to the items of other constructs. Table A1 in the appendix, which lists the cross-loading values, confirms that item loadings within the construct are higher than the loading of the items in other dimension. This proves discriminant validity of the model. The final 39-item, eight-dimensional “Rural Political Marketing Mix Model” as perceived by general voters is shown in Figure 1 and reported in Table 3 (column 2). These findings address the first research question mentioned in section 4.

Table 2. Confirmation of Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Validities		Inter-correlation of the latent variables								
CR	AVE	Dimension	Party	Persu.	Publi.	Price	Place	Prod.	Poll.	Promo
0.75	0.53	Party	0.72							
0.76	0.58	Persuasion	0.58	0.76						
0.73	0.54	Publicity	0.35	0.22	0.73					
0.70	0.53	Price	0.18	0.41	0.41	0.72				
0.75	0.50	Place	0.17	0.29	0.39	0.38	0.74			
0.83	0.59	Product	0.28	0.38	0.42	0.32	0.22	0.76		
0.81	0.62	Polling	0.33	0.21	0.21	0.22	0.19	0.28	0.78	
0.94	0.64	Promotion	0.35	0.39	0.19	0.27	0.36	0.17	0.35	0.82

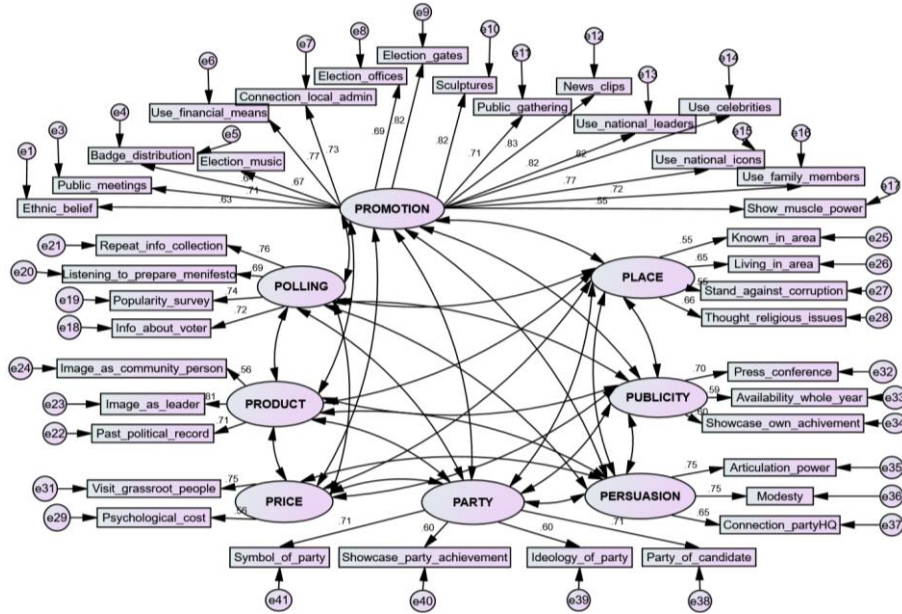
Voters see indicators such as past political records, candidate’s image as a leader, and reputation of the candidate in the community as major features, and thus this dimension is named “Product.” Psychological cost and lack of connection at the grass roots are the prices voters pay if a candidate wins. This dimension is defined as “Price.” Again, indicators such as party of the candidate, ideology, symbol of the party, and showing achievements of the party represent the party as a whole. We name this dimension as “Party.” Using the same procedure, we call the other dimensions as “Persuasion,” “Publicity,” “Place,” “Promotion with WOM,” and “Polling” (see Figure 1).

6.2 Political Marketing Mix Model for Urban Bangladesh

For EFA in urban model development, we utilize 824 data observations collected from male voters and find the KMO value of 0.88 ($sig. = 0.00$). At the first stage, 73 items are grouped under 17 dimensions and account for 69.72% of total variance. At this stage, we find six items (such as education qualification of the candidate, whether the national image will be harmed if the candidate wins, showing the achievement of the party, etc.) with loadings less than 0.50 and three more items that are cross-loaded. We thus drop these nine variables and re-run EFA. After completing eight stages of EFA, we find all items fulfill our desired decision criteria (as stated in rural model development). Our final stage EFA results retain 51 items

grouped under 12 factors.

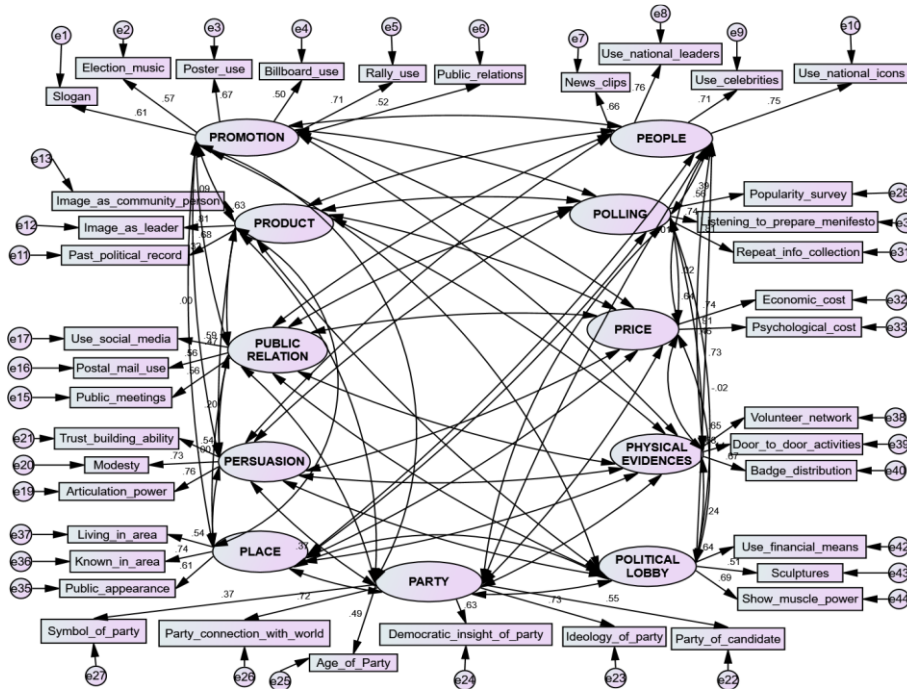
Figure 1. Multi-Factor Rural Political Marketing Mix Model



For CFA, we look at a new set of data from 548 female voters. We use the same decision criteria (loading > 0.50 and satisfactory GOF values) of accepting items and dimensions as mentioned in rural model development stages. By considering the decision rules, for the entire CFA we drop seven items (for instance, promises made by the candidate, professional background of the candidate, participation in debate by candidate, etc.) and one whole dimension. The remaining 44 items are found to be aligned under 11 factors.

By running the first structural model, five items (candidate’s stand against corruption, financial charity made, collecting information about voters, gender view of the candidate, and using volunteers for registering voters) have loadings less than 0.50 and thus are removed from the list. Remaining items have loadings greater than 0.50, with RMR, GFI, CFI, NFI, RMSEA, Pclose, and Hoelter’s CN values of 0.041, 0.96, 0.92, 0.90, 0.03, 0.82 and 356/401, respectively. We re-run this model with the combined data ($n = 1372$), finding that the items and the mode as a whole fulfill the acceptance criteria with highly satisfactory goodness-of-fit index values. Cronbach’s Alpha of the model is 0.91 ($sig. = 0.00$). We present the final 39-item eleven-dimensional urban political mix model in Figure 2, which addresses the first research question, and indicate the loading values of items in Table 3 (column 4).

Figure 2. Multi-Factor Urban Political Marketing Mix Model



By considering the underlying indicators, the dimensions of the urban model are named as “Product,” “Price,” “Place,” “Promotion,” “People,” “Physical Evidences,” “Party,” “Persuasion,” “Political Lobby,” and “Polling” (refer to the parabolas in Figure 2). Due to the evidence of differences in the indicators and the dimensions of rural and urban political mix models (refer to Figures 1 and 2 and Table 3), we note that H_{01} is rejected.

6.3 Discussions on Findings: Differences in Priorities Between Rural and Urban Voters

Even though both models have the same number of indicators (39), Table 3 shows significant differences in the items and their rankings in the two, thus addressing the second research question in section 4. Hotelling’s T-square value, which justifies differences in preferences in case of independent samples (in our case rural and urban voters), is $T^2 = 2934.81$, with $F = 87.28$ and $p = 0.00 (< 0.05)$, which approves that rural and urban voters have variations in priorities on political mix indicators, thus also rejecting H_{02} .

Table 3. Differences in Priorities Between Rural and Urban Voters on Political Mix Items

Indicator	Rural model		Urban model	
	Loading	Rank	Loading	Rank
Common indicators				
News clipping in favor of the candidate	0.83	1	0.67	18
Large sculptures with election symbol	0.82	3	0.60	25
Using celebrities in the campaign	0.81	4	0.76	6
Use of national leaders (such as party chair)	0.81	5	0.78	4
Image of candidate as a leader	0.81	6	0.82	2
Using national icons in campaigns	0.77	7	0.78	3
Use of financial means before election	0.76	8	0.61	23
Collecting information repeatedly to detect change in popularity	0.76	9	0.74	10
Candidate's articulation power	0.75	11	0.75	8
Modesty of the candidate	0.74	12	0.75	9
Popularity survey before nomination	0.74	13	0.60	24
Party of the candidate	0.71	17	0.60	26
Public meetings with personal appearance	0.71	19	0.58	31
Election symbol of the party	0.70	20	0.43	33
Past political record of the candidate	0.70	21	0.57	32
Listening to voters before preparing manifesto	0.69	24	0.75	7
Election music of the candidate	0.67	25	0.58	30
Candidate living in the area	0.65	28	0.58	29
Badge distribution to voters by volunteers	0.64	29	0.69	17
Ideology of the party	0.60	31	0.70	15
Psychological cost if the candidate wins	0.55	35	0.92	1
Image of the candidate as a community person	0.55	36	0.65	19
Candidate is known in the area	0.55	37	0.70	14
Showing off muscle power by the candidate	0.55	39	0.72	11
Dissimilar indicators				
Election gates	0.82	2		
Candidate's visit to grass-root people	0.75	10		
Candidate's connection to local administration	0.73	14		
Collecting information about voters	0.72	15		
Using family members in the campaign	0.72	16		
Public gathering	0.71	18		
Press conference by the candidate	0.70	22		
Election offices of the candidate	0.69	23		
Candidate's thoughts about religious issues	0.65	26		
Candidate's connection to party HQ	0.65	27		
Ethnic belief of the candidate	0.63	30		
Showcasing own achievements	0.60	32		
Showcasing party achievements	0.59	33		
Availability of the candidate throughout the year	0.59	34		
Candidate's stance against corruption	0.55	38		
Economic cost if the candidate wins			0.76	5
Use of rallies			0.72	12
Door-to-door activities by the candidate			0.72	13
Use of posters			0.69	16
Election slogan of the candidate			0.64	20
Use of postal mail			0.63	21
Using volunteer network			0.62	22
Use of social media			0.59	27
Use of billboards			0.58	28
Democratic insight of the party			0.57	33
Frequent public appearance of the candidate			0.55	34

Table 3. (cont'd)

Indicator	Rural model		Urban model	
	Loading	Rank	Loading	Rank
Dissimilar indicators				
Party connection with the outside world			0.54	35
Age of the party			0.52	36
Public relations by the candidate			0.52	37
Trust building ability of the candidate			0.51	38

Our results (Table 3) reveal that ‘news clipping of the candidate’ is the top priority (loading 0.83) among rural voters, whereas this item ranks 18th by their urban counterparts (loading 0.67). Rural voters trust more on what they watch on local and national television channels, and thus news about a candidate can influence them significantly. On the other hand, many urban respondents argued that political elites own most TV channels in Bangladesh and may fabricate the news for political gains. This fact lowers the trustworthiness of news clips in favor of a candidate. ‘Psychological cost in voting’ is found to be the dominant indicator (0.92) in urban Bangladesh followed by ‘image of the candidate as leader’ (0.82). Urban voters, when recalling their experiences, mentioned that they were harassed and psychologically tortured when their opposition candidates won the election. Despite the fact that post-election violence is common in Bangladesh (as noted in Democracywatch, 2009), rural voters said that harassment and psychological insecurity are less evident in the countryside (this item ranks 35th). ‘Image of the candidate as a leader’ is influential among both urban (ranked 2nd) and rural voters (ranked 6th with a loading of 0.81). This is an important message to the political parties that voters do not like to see businesspeople without any political records getting nominations only due to the healthy relationship with the party elites. For example, in the national election of 2008, 63% of total candidates were businesspeople having zero or little political background and eventually lost their seats. It is important to note that we find ‘past political record of the candidate’ (ranked 21st and 32nd) is a common requirement among rural and urban voters.

Large decorated ‘election gates’ (0.82 and ranked 2nd) and ‘sculptures’ (0.82 and ranked 3rd) are found to be effective promotional tools in rural Bangladesh. Many respondents argued that such physical evidence works as a reminder to the voters. Rural citizens like festivities, and thus gates and sculptures appear as motivating factors to them. Rural voters also like to see ‘election offices’ (0.69) throughout the constituency. Many respondents mentioned that election offices not only work as a reminder, but also show the degree of dominance of the candidate in the constituency. Activists usually stay in those offices, play election songs and speeches, and help the voters during a campaign. Interestingly, election gate and offices are absent in the urban model, and sculptures with election symbols are ranked 25th by the urban voters. This finding is perhaps physical evidence creating massive traffic congestion in metropolitan areas, and thus it is less preferred.

Our results reveal that ‘using national icons (ranked 3rd and 7th), national leaders such as party chair (ranked 4th and 5th), and celebrities (ranked 4th and 6th) in the election campaigns are prioritized by both rural and urban voters. This is an

important message for the political parties. Using the party chair has always been a useful tool in election campaigns in Bangladesh. There is evidence to support that a less known candidate has won a seat, only because the party chair visited the constituency physically and promoted the candidate. However, using national icons and celebrities can be potentially new and effective promotional tools in Bangladesh. The use of celebrities is rare in Bangladesh, but a frequently used tool in developed nations. As our respondents prioritized this item significantly, it can be a new useful tool for political parties during their election campaigns.

Results further reveal that 'economic cost if the candidate wins' is a different criterion prioritized (ranked 5th with a loading of 0.76) by urban voters. Two issues can be noted on this finding. First, urban voters said that whether a candidate and his/her activists might conduct massive extortion after winning is a severe concern. Second, urban citizens significantly considered if a candidate would increase city corporation and other household taxes if s/he wins. This finding is linked to another result where urban voters (ranked 7th) in comparison to rural respondents (24th) put more emphasis on 'listening to voters before preparing election manifesto.' Both urban (ranked 10th) and rural voters (9th) also prioritized the indicator of 'collecting information repeatedly to detect the change in popularity' (loadings are 0.74 and 0.76, respectively). We argue that as voters in the developing countries are becoming more conscious about their political and democratic rights, they are more likely to be heard by the candidates who create empowerment and political-inclusion effects. Our results also find that conducting a 'popularity survey before nomination' (ranked 13th and 24th by rural and urban voters, respectively) is another vital requirement of the electorate. By considering the stated findings, we suggest political parties to follow market orientation, by fulfilling the diverse demands of the voters by designing the appropriate party behavior (Lees-Marshment, 2008). We also recommend parties to build a sophisticated voter information system to explore the requirements of the electorate that in turn will help them to track the popularity of their candidate pool and prepare a more voter-focused election manifesto.

We further observe that two personal traits, 'candidate's articulation power (ranked 11th and 8th by rural and urban voters)' and 'modesty of the candidate (ranked 12th and 9th, respectively)', are important indicators in political marketing in Bangladesh. During the survey, many of our respondents said that they would like to see respect and honor among the candidates. There is clear evidence to support that Bangladeshi voters refused arrogant and over-confident candidates in the national election. To judge the articulation power, we recommend candidates to participate in election debates, which are more common in developed nations.

Even though there are few standard promotional tools ('using national icons, leaders and celebrities') preferred by both rural and urban respondents, our results reveal few significantly different strategies as suggested by those groups. On one hand, the rural electorate recommended promotional tools such as 'candidate's visit to grass-root people (ranked 10th with a loading of 0.75)', 'using family members in campaign (16th/0.72)', 'public gathering (18th/0.71)', and 'press conference by the candidate (22nd/0.70)'; on the other hand, urban voters prioritized 'use of rallies

(12th/0.72)', 'door-to-door activities by the candidate (13th/0.72)', 'use of posters (16th/0.69)', 'use of postal mail (21st/0.63)', and 'use of billboards (28th/0.58)'. Rural respondents said that when a candidate visits grass-root voters, it creates empowerment and belongingness among them. They also stated that, due to religious and social norms, male candidates cannot meet with rural female voters during the campaign. In such circumstances, using female family members of the candidate can bridge this gap. Many rural voters opined that the size of a public gathering is a dominating factor as it influences the decision of the floating electorate. Urban respondents mentioned that door-to-door visits by candidates and getting customized postal mails with election manifesto are rewarding to them. We recommend that candidates should aggressively use posters and billboards by showcasing their own and their party's achievements in strategic urban locations, preferably near shopping malls, roundabouts, fly-overs, universities, and bus/train stands. Showing the destructive and brutal activities of the opposition can be effective as well. 'Use of social media (ranked 27th with a loading of 0.59)' is another different new strategy proposed by urban voters. This finding is due to the major proliferation of the Internet in urban areas. Different promotional strategies suggested in our study can be helpful to the parties and candidates when dealing with varying voter segments.

Our results reveal significant differences in opinion between rural and urban voters on party-relevant indicators. Among the common indicators, 'party of the candidate (ranked 17th and 26th by rural and urban voters, respectively)' and 'election symbol of the party (20th and 33rd, respectively)' are more important to rural voters, whereas 'ideology of the party (31st and 15th, respectively)' is more influential to the urban electorate. We believe that the above findings are due to differences in literacy rates between rural and urban areas. As urban voters are more educated, they do not prefer a candidate by considering the party or election symbol only. This argument is further justified from different indicators of the urban model, where respondents favored a few more party-relevant items such as 'democratic insight of the party (loading is 0.57)' and 'party connection to the outer world (0.54)'. Our results, as noted above, are contradictory to the common myth that party and election symbols (both are moderately ranked in rural and urban settings) are the most dominating factors in the political market in developing countries. These are important notes to the political parties, in which just party affiliation is not enough for a candidate to win; rather, ideology and democratic practices of the party are more important.

Our study reveals a few alarming yet pertinent results. First, 'use of financial means before the election' is a highly ranked (8th with a loading of 0.76) indicator in rural areas. However, it has less influence (ranked 23rd) among urban voters. Our finding is consistent with the results of The Asia Foundation (2012) report that concluded that many rural voters sell their votes due to illiteracy, low income, and sometimes due to fear of political violence. Second, 'showing off muscle power' is observed to be a determining factor in Bangladesh (as suggested by TIB, 2014) and especially in urban areas (ranked 11th). However, as the literacy rate and political

consciousness are increasing in Bangladesh, in the near future this item may become a negative factor in politics, thus becoming another note to the political parties. Third, 'candidate's connection to the local administration' is an uncommon yet influential (ranked 14th) indicator in the rural model. In rural Bangladesh, government officials are considered as powerful and respected. Thus, a candidate with a better connection to them seems to have an advantage in local politics.

A dimension-wise comparison finds that rural respondents prefer political mix indicators that are grouped under "Promotion," "Polling," and "Persuasion" dimensions. Urban voters, on the other side, prioritized items that belong to "Price," "People," and "Persuasion" dimensions of the model. Based on the stated findings, it can be argued that even though promotional activities are necessary in political marketing, a heavy reliance on orthodox promotion may not be very fruitful in Bangladesh. This study instead suggests more focused strategies for rural and urban settings. For instance, in addition to endorsements through party chairs, celebrities, and national icons, collecting information about voters and including them while preparing election manifesto can be more rewarding to the rural electorate. For urban voters, more concentration should be given to price relevant items. Finally, for both areas, being polite and convincing to the electorate during the campaign can be more efficient.

7. Conclusion and Future Research Potentials

Using 1372 and 1284 primary data observations collected from rural and urban voters, respectively, this paper offers two separate statistically reliable multi-dimensional political marketing mix models for these two areas of Bangladesh. Even though both models have 39 indicators, our results reveal 24 common and 30 uncommon (15 in each model) variables between them. Among similar ones, rural voters prioritized items such as news clipping in favor of the candidate, giant sculpture with election symbol, popularity survey before nomination, repeat information collection about voters, and party of the candidate. On the other hand, urban voters put more emphasis on psychological cost if the candidate wins, listening to voters while preparing a manifesto, the ideology of the party, and nominating obvious candidates. Both groups have placed importance towards using celebrities, national icons, and national leaders in the campaign, as well as modesty and articulation power of the candidate. Among dissimilar items, rural respondents highly ranked use of election gates, visit grass-root people, using family members in the campaign, arranging public gatherings, and availability of the candidate throughout the year. Urban voters suggested using rallies, door-to-door activities, posters, billboards, and social media and considering the economic cost if the candidate wins.

By taking into account the findings of this study, the following recommendations seem effective for the parties and political marketing consultants.

- Nominate local candidates who have connections to grass-root people with a

- strong political background.
- The use of celebrities, national icons, and party leaders (preferably party chairs) can be effective in both rural and urban settings.
 - Nominate candidates who have better articulation power, social image, and are known for their modesty in the communities.
 - Candidates should use posters, postal mail, and billboards to showcase their own and their party's achievements. Showcasing the destructive works of the opposition can be effective as well.
 - Parties must build a sophisticated voter information system to identify the requirements of the electorate.

As the proposed model development method is highly significant and valid, the applicability of this instrument can be tested in other developing countries. The method can also be used to establish an empirical political mix model for developed nations. A comparative study on the perceptions of voters in developing and developed countries regarding the indicators of political mix could be of high interest to readers. Finally, a comparative study on political mix requirements among different demographic groups such as male and female voters and educated and less literate voters can be useful when developing customized election campaigns.

Appendix

Table A1. Cross-Loading Table to Confirm Discriminant Validity

	Party	Persu.	Publi.	Price	Place	Product	Polling	Promo
Symbol	0.71	0.39	0.30	0.41	0.25	0.42	0.23	0.44
Showcase	0.60	0.32	0.34	0.46	0.47	0.35	0.46	0.34
Ideology_party	0.60	0.33	0.41	0.47	0.48	0.36	0.46	0.44
Party	0.72	0.39	0.30	0.23	0.37	0.43	0.33	0.46
Connection_HQ	0.35	0.65	0.39	0.30	0.42	0.36	0.38	0.29
Modesty	0.41	0.75	0.45	0.34	0.49	0.41	0.43	0.33
Articulation	0.41	0.75	0.45	0.34	0.49	0.42	0.43	0.33
Achivement	0.30	0.36	0.60	0.44	0.40	0.30	0.47	0.44
Availability	0.32	0.35	0.59	0.43	0.39	0.30	0.46	0.44
Press_confere	0.42	0.42	0.70	0.31	0.47	0.35	0.45	0.33
Visit_grassroot	0.39	0.34	0.33	0.75	0.36	0.38	0.33	0.22
Psychological_cost	0.43	0.26	0.41	0.56	0.27	0.28	0.41	0.44
Thought_religious	0.41	0.43	0.44	0.31	0.66	0.40	0.42	0.41
Against_corruption	0.44	0.36	0.37	0.26	0.55	0.34	0.35	0.34

Table A1. (cont'd)

	Party	Persu.	Publi.	Price	Place	Product	Polling	Promo
Living_in_area	0.33	0.42	0.43	0.31	0.65	0.40	0.42	0.40
Known_in_area	0.44	0.36	0.37	0.26	0.55	0.34	0.35	0.34
Community_person	0.33	0.31	0.28	0.28	0.34	0.56	0.28	0.25
Image_as_leader	0.41	0.45	0.41	0.41	0.20	0.81	0.41	0.36
Political_record	0.42	0.39	0.35	0.36	0.43	0.71	0.35	0.31
Repeat_info_collect	0.32	0.44	0.39	0.25	0.49	0.38	0.76	0.53
Listening_to_voter	0.42	0.40	0.34	0.22	0.44	0.35	0.69	0.49
Popularity_survey	0.28	0.43	0.38	0.29	0.47	0.37	0.74	0.21
Info_about_voter	0.44	0.42	0.37	0.37	0.46	0.36	0.72	0.27
Use_family_member	0.32	0.32	0.23	0.42	0.45	0.32	0.21	0.72
Use_national_icons	0.39	0.34	0.42	0.33	0.48	0.34	0.23	0.78
Use_celebrities	0.29	0.36	0.40	0.35	0.21	0.36	0.32	0.82
Use_national_leaders	0.42	0.36	0.32	0.40	0.33	0.36	0.34	0.82
News_clips	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.33	0.23	0.36	0.40	0.83
Public_gathering	0.33	0.31	0.34	0.32	0.44	0.31	0.37	0.71
Sculptures	0.33	0.36	0.41	0.23	0.23	0.36	0.32	0.82
Election_gates	0.29	0.36	0.40	0.29	0.43	0.36	0.28	0.82
Election_offices	0.41	0.31	0.33	0.45	0.43	0.31	0.49	0.69
Connection_local	0.47	0.32	0.34	0.44	0.46	0.32	0.31	0.73
Use_financial	0.39	0.34	0.37	0.33	0.48	0.34	0.22	0.77
Election_music	0.30	0.30	0.39	0.34	0.42	0.30	0.47	0.67
Badge_distribution	0.37	0.29	0.47	0.24	0.40	0.28	0.45	0.64

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