

# Political Marketing Mix and Brand Personality: Implications for Voting Decisions in Legislative Elections

*Political Marketing  
Mix and Brand  
Personality*

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to analyze and explain the influence of political marketing mix and brand personality on brand image and their implications for voting decisions for legislative candidates from the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires and documentation. The study population consisted of 12,729 voters who selected legislative candidates from the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency, with a sample size of 75 respondents. The analysis tool used was SmartPLS. The results indicate that the political marketing mix significantly influences the brand image of the Golkar Party, and brand personality also affects the brand image of the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency. Additionally, the political marketing mix has a significant impact on voting decisions for legislative candidates from the Golkar Party, as does brand personality. Brand image itself also influences voting decisions for legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. Indirectly, the political marketing mix affects voting decisions through brand image. This study provides empirical evidence that an effective political marketing mix can enhance the brand image of candidates, thereby strengthening voters' decisions to choose legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. Furthermore, a strong brand personality positively impacts the improvement of the candidate's brand image, ultimately reinforcing voters' decisions in favor of the Golkar Party's legislative candidates.*

**Keywords:** *Brand Image, Brand Personality, Political Marketing Mix, Voting Decisions*

## **ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan menjelaskan pengaruh bauran pemasaran politik dan kepribadian merek terhadap citra merek dan implikasinya terhadap keputusan pemungutan suara bagi calon legislatif dari Partai Golkar di Kabupaten Wakatobi. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui kuesioner dan dokumentasi. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari 12.729 pemilih yang memilih calon legislatif dari Partai Golkar di Kabupaten Wakatobi, dengan ukuran sampel 75 responden. Alat analisis yang digunakan adalah SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bauran pemasaran politik secara signifikan mempengaruhi citra merek Partai Golkar, dan kepribadian merek juga mempengaruhi citra merek Partai Golkar di Kabupaten Wakatobi. Selain itu, bauran pemasaran politik memiliki dampak yang signifikan pada keputusan pemungutan suara untuk kandidat legislatif dari Partai Golkar, seperti halnya kepribadian merek. Citra merek sendiri juga mempengaruhi keputusan pemungutan suara untuk calon legislatif dari Partai Golkar. Secara tidak langsung, bauran pemasaran politik mempengaruhi keputusan pemungutan suara*

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*melalui citra merek. Studi ini memberikan bukti empiris bahwa bauran pemasaran politik yang efektif dapat meningkatkan citra merek kandidat, sehingga memperkuat keputusan pemilih untuk memilih calon legislatif dari Partai Golkar. Selain itu, kepribadian merek yang kuat berdampak positif pada peningkatan citra merek kandidat, yang pada akhirnya memperkuat keputusan pemilih yang mendukung kandidat legislatif Partai Golkar.*

**Kata kunci:** *Citra Merek, Kepribadian Merek, Bauran Pemasaran Politik, Keputusan Pemungutan Suara*

## INTRODUCTION

The implementation of regional autonomy and the end of the authoritarian and monopolitical era, Indonesia has entered a new chapter in its national governance. A more open political system has created space for a freer and more transparent democratic life. One of the key characteristics of a democratic country is the scheduled and periodic implementation of elections. High-quality elections are a crucial prerequisite for establishing a healthy democracy (Galuh Kartiko, 2009). According to the Ridhovan and Anggarani (2024), the success of elections depends on three main factors: the electoral process, legal framework, and law enforcement. The electoral process includes various aspects such as participants, phases, logistics, distribution, monitoring, and public participation. Meanwhile, the legal framework covers regulations, electoral systems, voting methods, candidate nomination, and winner determination. Law enforcement aims to ensure that all electoral regulations are applied consistently and fairly.

As a democratic country, elections serve as an arena where political contestants compete to gain public support. To attract votes, candidates employ public relations strategies to build a political image that enhances the reputation of the party or the candidate themselves (Rustandi, 2013). A positive image created through political marketing can increase a candidate's electability. However, an image focused solely on appearance without actual political quality may lead to disillusionment (Hasan, 2009:23). Therefore, political image must be accompanied by the candidate's competence and personal integrity.

The study on Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency reveals a major challenge—legislative candidates' limited understanding of the local political system and its unique characteristics. Campaigns often fail to align with the actual needs of the local community. Despite these challenges, Golkar Party secured 9 seats in the Wakatobi Regency Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) during the legislative election. This success highlights the critical role of political marketing strategies and candidate branding in fostering public trust. Political marketing and brand personality represent the application of marketing principles in the political sphere (Kaid, 2004). This process involves the analysis, development, execution, and management of strategic campaigns conducted by political candidates or parties. Brand personality reflects human-like traits designed to create an emotional connection between candidates and voters, thereby influencing voters' political preferences (Aaker, 1997).

However, in the context of elections, the impact is more complex. The decision to vote not only affects the individual but also contributes to a collective outcome determined by many people casting their votes. Elections produce outcomes that have far-reaching effects on government policies, which can significantly influence the lives of many in the long term. Even though an individual may feel that their vote does not make a difference, in reality, each vote combines with millions of others to collectively determine the direction of a nation. Therefore, political participation through voting should be viewed as more than just an individual right. It is an integral element in strengthening democracy, as every vote, no matter how small it may seem, contributes meaningfully to the development of better and more representative policies. Firmanzah (2012) explains that while the decision to vote is personal, the final outcome—relying on collective decisions—reflects the shared power in advocating for common values and interests. Thus, the

decision to vote in an election is not merely about choosing who will lead or what policies will be implemented; it is also an investment in the democratic system itself. In the business world, a person purchases a product to obtain direct benefits, whereas in elections, individuals vote to contribute to a larger process the realization of a government capable of fostering welfare and social justice for all.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Political Marketing Mix and Brand Image**

According to Dermody & Scullion (2001), political marketing positions voters as active subjects, emphasizing the importance of addressing voters' concerns to design work programs aligned with party ideology. While political marketing does not guarantee electoral victory, it plays a crucial role in building trust and maintaining relationships with voters (O'Shaughnessy, 2001). Kotler (1999) defines it as marketing activities aimed at supporting candidates or political parties through campaigns highlighting economic or social welfare programs. The elements of the political marketing mix product, price, place, and promotion—are adapted from traditional marketing concepts to shape an appealing political image (O'Shaughnessy, 2001). Firmanzah (2012) adds that political activities also involve formulating public issues and ensuring social control over power. Thus, political marketing is a strategic process that combines analysis, planning, and communication to effectively influence voter behavior.

In marketing, a brand encompasses elements like name, symbol, and design that distinguish a product, including brand image, attitude, and equity. A central aspect is brand personality human traits that foster emotional and rational consumer connections (Aaker, 1997). In politics, this extends to candidates or parties, shaping public perception through character and values (Smith & French, 2009). Political brand personality influences loyalty and public acceptance by reflecting ideologies and policies (Scammell, 2015). Aaker's (1997) five dimensions sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness are used to measure how voters relate to and trust political figures. Branding a candidate offers key benefits, including a clear image and differentiation from competitors, essential for building voter recognition and trust. A strong brand fosters emotional connections, loyalty, and a lasting competitive edge. In politics, brand image reflects public perceptions shaped by experiences and information (Smith, 2009). Consistent messaging and symbolism strengthen this image, helping simplify voter decisions (Needham, 2006). Aaker & Biel (1993) identify three brand image dimensions: Maker Image (perception of the organization behind the brand), User Image (perception of its supporters), and Product Image (attributes and benefits offered).

Voting decisions in elections resemble purchasing decisions in business, where individuals assess the pros and cons of each choice (Downs, 1957; Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Beyond rational analysis, voting is shaped by social factors like class, education, and religion, emotional ties to parties, and candidates' personal appeal (Cangara, 2009). This decision-making mirrors product selection, where people evaluate options to meet specific goals (Terry, 2003; Kotler, 2011). In this study, voting decisions are measured by candidate interest and satisfaction, alternative candidate availability, and media influence on perceptions (Nursal, 2004). The political marketing mix product, price, place, and promotion plays a vital role in shaping a political brand image that attracts voter attention. Applying traditional marketing strategies in politics helps candidates design relevant messages and promote programs effectively (O'Shaughnessy, 2001; Kotler, 1999). Public issue formulation and power accountability also shape voter perceptions (Firmanzah, 2012). A political brand image is built through public associations and voter experiences (Kotler & Keller, 2016). A strong image fosters emotional ties, loyalty, and support, offering a competitive edge (Smith, 2009). Genoveva & Berliana (2021) and Ayu confirm its influence on voter perception and decision-making.

H1. The political marketing mix has a significant influence on brand image.

### **Brand Personality and Brand Image**

Brand personality is a crucial element of brand identity that reflects human traits and has the potential to build both emotional and rational connections with consumers (Aaker, 1996). In the political context, this concept applies to the character and personality of candidates or political parties, which significantly influence public perception (Smith & French, 2009). Brand image, whether in commercial products or political entities, represents public perception shaped by associations and experiences (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Hossain, 2007; Howard, 2009). This notion is further supported by the studies of Medinna & Hasbi (2020) and Budi (2010).

H2. Brand personality has a significant effect on brand image.

### **Political Marketing Mix and Voting Decisions**

The political marketing mix refers to the application of marketing concepts (product, price, place, promotion) in the political context to build a positive image for candidates or political parties (O'Shaughnessy, 2001). According to Kotler (1999), the goal of political marketing is to attract voter support through effective campaigns. The decision to vote for a candidate is analogous to a purchasing decision, where voters weigh the benefits offered (Downs, 1957). O'Cass (1996) highlights the importance of well-planned strategies to foster a mutually beneficial relationship between political parties and voters. Previous studies (Ikhsan & Shihab, 2010; Riyanto & Yuniarti, 2018; Purnamasari, 2015) have demonstrated that effective management of the political marketing mix has a significant impact on voters' decisions.

H3. The political marketing mix has a significant effect on voting decisions.

### **Brand Personality and Voting Decisions**

Brand personality plays a crucial role in establishing an emotional bond between consumers and brands, which in turn fosters loyalty and ensures long-term relationships (Plummer, 1985; Farhat & Khan, 2011). In the political context, political brand personality refers to the characteristics, values, and ideologies of a candidate that are recognized and accepted by voters (Scammell, 2015; Needham, 2006). Consistency in building a political brand image helps cultivate trust among voters (Haroen, 2014). The decision to vote in elections can be likened to a purchasing decision in business, where voters act rationally by weighing the benefits and risks of each available option (Downs, 1957; Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Previous studies have indicated that the brand personality of a candidate or party has a significant influence on voting decisions (Kartika et al., 2018).

H4. Brand personality has a significant effect on voting decisions.

### **Brand Image and Voting Decisions**

Brand image plays a crucial role in shaping voting decisions, both in business and political contexts. In politics, brand image reflects public perceptions of a candidate's or political party's identity, which is formed through direct experiences and received information (Smith, 2009). This perception becomes a key factor in decision-making, similar to how consumers choose products based on brand images that they believe align with their personal needs or values (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Like product purchase decisions, voting decisions also involve evaluating the potential benefits and drawbacks of various options (Downs, 1957). Riyanto and Yuniarti (2018), Purnamasari (2015), Sanjiwani and Suasana (2019), and Prasetya et al. (2018) indicate that a positive brand image of a candidate or political party tends to increase the likelihood of voters' support.

H5. Brand image has a significant effect on voting decisions.

### Political Marketing Mix, Brand Personality and Brand Image

Political brand image refers to the public's perception of a candidate or political party, shaped by information, experiences, and political marketing strategies implemented (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Smith, 2009). In the political context, brand image acts as a bridge connecting political marketing mix and brand personality with voting decisions. Brand personality, which reflects the unique characteristics of a candidate or political party through their values and ideologies, strengthens the emotional bond with voters (Scammell, 2015; Plummer, 1985). The brand image formed by the influence of political marketing mix and brand personality plays a crucial role in driving voting decisions, where voters assess the candidate's image before making their choice. Purnamasari (2015), Riyanto and Yuniarti (2018), and Medinna and Hasbi (2020) have demonstrated that political brand image can mediate the relationship between political marketing strategies and brand personality with voting decisions, highlighting the importance of brand management in successful political campaigns. Based on this understanding.

H6: Brand image mediates the relationship between political marketing mix and voting decision.

H7: Brand image mediates the relationship between brand personality and voting decision.

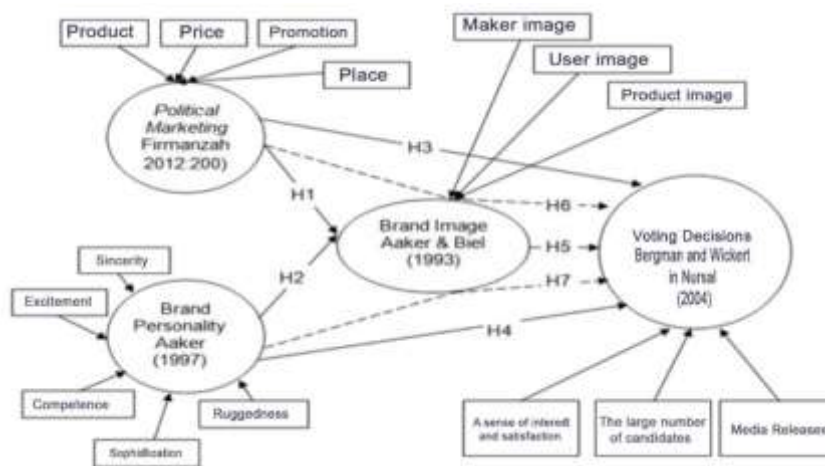


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### METHODS

This study employs a survey research design conducted on the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency. The objective is to explain the causal relationships among four research variables: two independent variables (X) and two dependent variables (Y), namely Political Marketing (X1), Brand Personality (X2), Brand Image (Y1), and Voting Decision (Y2). These relationships were tested through hypothesis testing based on the formulated research hypotheses. The primary goal of this research is to verify the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables. The research population comprises the total number of votes obtained by candidates for the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in Wakatobi Regency, amounting to 12,729 votes. From this population, a sample of 75 respondents was selected for the study. Data collection methods included questionnaires and documentation to gather relevant data and information. Data analysis was performed using two approaches: descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis. The data analysis process was carried out with the aid of the SmartPLS software.

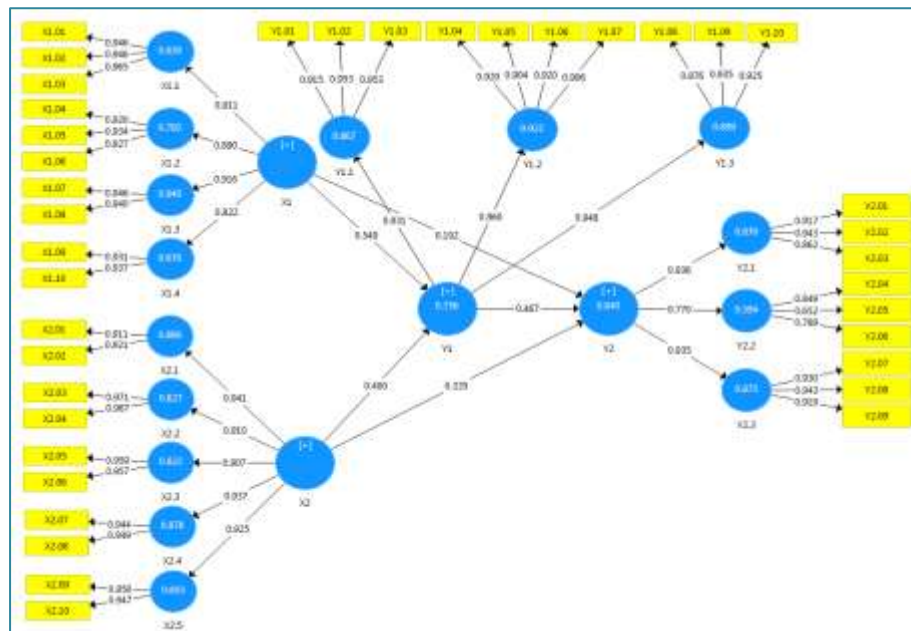
**RESULTS**

The respondents in this study were voters of the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency during the 2024 General Election. A total of 75 respondents participated in this research, with the following characteristics.

**Table 1.** Characteristics respondents

Respondent		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	53	70.7
	Female	22	29.3
Age (years)	20-30	12	16.0
	31-40	45	60.0
	41-50	17	22.7
	51 >	1	1.3
Education	Senior High School	16	21,3
	Diploma	7	9,3
	Bachelor	44	58,7
	Master	8	10,7

The measurement model represents the relationship between latent variables and manifest variables. In this study, there are 19 latent variables with a total of 39 manifest variables. The latent variable political marketing mix consists of 10 manifest variables, brand personality consists of 10 manifest variables, brand image consists of 10 manifest variables, and the decision to vote for legislative candidates consists of 9 manifest variables. The evaluation of the measurement model is conducted through convergent validity and discriminant validity. Based on the data analysis using SmartPLS 3.3, the following full model path diagram was obtained.



**Figure 2.** Standard Coefficient Model

The structural model represents the relationship between exogenous latent variables and endogenous latent variables, as well as the relationship among endogenous latent variables. Table 2 showed the structural model testing results.

**Table 2.** Structural Model Test Results

Model	Path	Coef.	T- statistics	p-value	R2	Hypothesis
Structure I	X1 ->Y1	0.549	5.450	0.000	0.750	Accepted
	X2 ->Y1	0.400	3.466	0.001		Accepted
Structure II	X1 -> Y2	0.192	2.123	0.035	0.833	Accepted
	X2 ->Y2	0.335	2.529	0.012		Accepted
	Y1 ->Y2	0.467	3.278	0.001		Accepted
Indirect	X1 ->Y1 -> Y2	0.256	3.213	0.001		Accepted
	X2 ->Y1 -> Y2	0.187	2.159	0.032		Accepted

Based on the R<sup>2</sup> value, it is evident that political marketing mix and brand personality have a combined influence of 75.0% on brand image. Furthermore, political marketing mix, brand personality, and brand image together explain 83.3% of the variance in voting decisions for legislative candidates. The hypotheses tested in this study demonstrate significant relationships among the variables. Hypothesis 1 confirms that political marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on brand image, with a coefficient of 0.549 and a significance level of 0.000. Hypothesis 2 shows that brand personality positively and significantly influences brand image, with a coefficient of 0.400 and a significance level of 0.001. Hypothesis 3 establishes that political marketing mix has a positive and significant impact on voting decisions for legislative candidates, with a coefficient of 0.192 and a significance level of 0.035. Hypothesis 4 indicates that brand personality has a positive and significant effect on voting decisions for legislative candidates, with a coefficient of 0.335 and a significance level of 0.012. Hypothesis 5 verifies that brand image positively and significantly affects voting decisions for legislative candidates, with a coefficient of 0.467 and a significance level of 0.001. Furthermore, Hypothesis 6 demonstrates that political marketing mix positively and significantly influences voting decisions through brand image, with a coefficient of 0.256 and a significance level of 0.001. Finally, Hypothesis 7 shows that brand personality positively and significantly affects voting decisions through brand image, with a coefficient of 0.187 and a significance level of 0.032. These results confirm the critical role of brand image in mediating the relationship between political marketing mix, brand personality, and voting decisions.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis results, it has been proven that the political marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on brand image. This study provides empirical evidence that an improved political marketing mix enhances brand image. The findings support the concept of the political marketing mix proposed by Kotler (1999), which defines political marketing as marketing efforts aimed at supporting candidates or political parties through various political activities, including campaigns focused on economic development programs or social concerns. Hegazi (2021), explains that political marketing is essentially a political campaign strategy designed to create a specific set of political meanings in the minds of voters. Therefore, the better the political marketing mix, the stronger the brand image. This study is consistent with the findings of Dedeh Maryani (2015), whose research demonstrated that a strong marketing mix significantly enhances the competitiveness of political parties by improving their image and reputation. Similarly, the study by Zulkifli et al. (2020) showed that elements such as product, promotion, people, and physical evidence significantly influence brand image.

Additionally, brand personality has a positive and significant effect on brand image. This study provides empirical evidence that a stronger brand personality leads to a better brand image. These findings confirm the concept of brand personality proposed by Aaker (1997), who defines brand personality as human-like characteristics associated with a brand, forming an emotional connection and enabling consumers to express themselves.

Kotler & Keller (2012:157) describe brand personality as a specific blend of human traits attributed to a particular brand. This study also validates the research conducted by Medinna & Hasbi (2020) and Budi (2010), which demonstrated that brand personality significantly influences brand image, meaning that the higher the level of brand personality, the better the brand image.

Based on the analysis results, it is proven that the political marketing mix has a positive and significant influence on voting decisions in legislative elections. An improvement in the political marketing mix will lead to a significant increase in voters' decisions to elect legislative candidates. This study provides empirical evidence that the better the political marketing mix, the higher the likelihood of voters choosing legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. These findings are consistent with the concept of the political marketing mix proposed by O'Cass (1996), who defines political marketing as the process of analyzing, planning, implementing, and controlling political programs and elections designed to create, build, and maintain mutually beneficial exchanges between political parties (political institutions) and voters to achieve political marketing objectives. Haroen (2014) states that political marketing involves applying marketing concepts and methods in politics, where marketing is necessary to deal with competition in capturing the market—in this context, voters. Cangara (2009) describes political marketing as the dissemination of information about candidates, parties, and programs by political actors (communicators) through specific communication channels aimed at certain target segments to change the insights, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of potential voters according to the goals of the information providers. This study supports the findings of Bastian et al. (2019), who assert that the political marketing mix influences voting decisions, mediated by perceived value. Similarly, Ramli et al. (2021) also found that political marketing has a positive and significant effect on voting decisions. However, these results contradict the findings of Zulkifli and Santoso (2018), who concluded that the "people" dimension in the political marketing mix does not influence voting decisions.

This study further demonstrates that brand personality has a positive and significant influence on voting decisions for legislative candidates. The findings provide empirical evidence that a stronger brand personality leads to higher voter preference for legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. In the effort to gain public votes, the brand personality of Golkar's candidates plays a crucial role. These results support Aaker's (1997) concept of brand personality, which suggests that brand personality represents human characteristics that form emotional connections and reflect how consumers express themselves. Additionally, Gelder (2005) states that brand personality is developed to enhance the brand's appeal to consumers, implying that a strong brand personality increases consumer attraction.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Kartika et al. (2018), which confirmed a positive relationship between brand personality and purchasing decisions. In this research, voting decisions are conceptually adapted from purchasing decisions. A better brand image increases the likelihood of the public choosing legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. Voting decisions are heavily influenced by the candidates' brand image, where a positive image leads to stronger voter support. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), brand image is the consumer's perception of a brand based on the associations that come to mind. In the political context, Needham (2006) argue that political brands represent specific political identities and help voters make informed decisions. These findings are in line with those of Purnamasari and Murwatiningsih (2015), who demonstrated that brand image directly affects purchasing decisions.

The study demonstrates that the political marketing mix has a positive and significant influence on voting decisions for legislative candidates through brand image. An effective political marketing mix enhances the candidate's brand image, thereby strengthening voters' decisions to support legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. The public's decision to vote for Golkar candidates is strongly influenced by the political marketing mix and brand image, as improvements in both factors positively impact voting decisions. According to Ridho and Muchsin (2010), voting decisions refer to an individual's action

in choosing a candidate, similar to purchasing decisions in the marketing domain, where the key distinction lies in the candidate's dominance. Alie (2013) suggests that voting decisions resemble purchasing decisions, where individuals find it easier to decide when they are familiar with or have information about the candidate. Kotler (2011) further explains that purchasing decisions are influenced by factors such as quality, price, and product awareness within society. This study aligns with findings by Purnamasari (2015) and Hadi et al. (2015), which confirm that political marketing affects voting decisions through brand image, highlighting the significant role of brand image in enhancing voting decisions.

Additionally, this study confirms that brand personality positively and significantly influences voting decisions through brand image. A strong brand personality improves the candidate's brand image, which in turn strengthens voters' decisions to support legislative candidates from the Golkar Party. The findings emphasize the critical importance of improving brand personality and brand image in securing voter support. Voting decisions represent a selection among various alternatives, influenced by candidates' capabilities and situational factors (Lupiyoadi, 2008; Cangara, 2009; Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). These results are consistent with studies by Ikhsan & Muchsin Shihab (2010), Purnamasari (2015), Medinna and Hasbi (2020), and Budi (2010), which also demonstrate that brand personality significantly influences voting decisions through brand image.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that political marketing mix and brand personality have a positive and significant influence on brand image and voting decisions for legislative candidates from the Golkar Party in Wakatobi Regency. An effective political marketing mix can enhance the party's brand image, which ultimately affects voting decisions. Similarly, a strong brand personality contributes to building a positive brand image, which directly and indirectly strengthens voters' decisions. These findings provide empirical evidence that brand image mediates the relationship between political marketing mix and brand personality in influencing voting decisions.

This research has practical implications for political parties, particularly the Golkar Party, in improving the effectiveness of their political campaigns. By refining their marketing mix strategy, especially the pricing aspect related to fulfilling community needs during the campaign without violating regulations, the party can strengthen its brand image and voter loyalty. Additionally, enhancing candidate characteristics in terms of sophistication and improving media management can help improve public perception of the party's brand personality and brand image, thereby increasing voting decisions.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the research instrument only used statements designed by the researcher, which may not have fully captured the respondents' actual opinions. Second, this study is purely verifiable and focuses only on a few variables, namely political marketing mix, brand personality, brand image, and voting decisions. Future research is encouraged to explore other variables, such as advertising as a mediating variable, and to expand the research scope to different regions to enrich the findings and ensure broader applicability.

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