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Political Marketing Strategy and Party Organisational Structure

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- describe how the concepts of political market orientation and strategic political postures complement each other
- describe how the two concepts can be integrated and the nature of the four strategic profiles
- apply the four strategic profiles to parties in your own political system.

Introduction

Strategic political postures (SPP) and Political market orientation (PMO) are central concepts in the political marketing literature (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010). The two concepts deal with complementary aspects of political marketing, and as such it is useful to integrate the two concepts with the aim of understanding the way in which political actors link their place in the competitive environment with organisational structure and relationship management. This chapter first provides a recap of the concepts of SPP and PMO. Following this, the elements of the two concepts will be integrated to provide four static and dynamic models, forming four strategic profiles. The final section of this chapter will demonstrate the link between the four strategic profiles and political science models of party organisational structure, with a special focus on the network party type (Heidar and Saglie, 2003).

Static and dynamic PMO profiles

In commercial marketing, strategic postures are understood as those organisational positions which companies adopt in order to enable desired

perceptions amongst stakeholders in the various markets in which they operate (Aaker, 2001). The fundamental strategic marketing choice is whether to *lead the market* by identifying and fulfilling latent demands (Hellensen, 2003), to *follow the market* by conducting large amounts of research on customer preferences and then developing an offering to fulfil these (Davis and Manrodt, 1996) or to *integrate both strategic postures*, including elements of leading and following in the development of the organisation's strategy (Slater and Narver, 1999). In the political marketing context, a political actor that leads the market focuses on their own offering in the assumption that it is the most appropriate for the relevant legislative context. On the other hand, a political actor that follows the market concentrates on uncovering the needs and wants of the key stakeholder group – usually voters and to a lesser extent the media – and then developing policy to fulfil these needs and wants. As with the commercial conceptualisation of strategic postures, the actual decision is a matter of degree rather than a simple choice between postures (Henneberg, 2006).

The political actor can decide on the level of leading and the level of following that the organisation will adopt. This decision is based upon an evaluation of the effect on organisational performance of the position in the electoral cycle, the political system and the organisational structure. Whilst the political system and the structure of the political organisation are stable over a long time-period, the electoral cycle is dynamic and can result in changes in influence over legislation. As such, the level of leading and the level of following are also dynamic; they can be adapted to reflect changing environmental conditions (Henneberg, 2006).

The strategic choice that political organisations are faced with can be expressed in a two-by-two matrix, thus identifying four SPPs (Henneberg, 2006). The four SPPs are **The Political Lightweight**, **The Convinced Ideologist**, **The Tactical Populist** and **The Relationship Builder** (Henneberg, 2006). There is no theoretical reason why any of the ideal postures is by definition 'better' than any of the others, there is no natural evolution from one posture to another and all four postures can co-exist in any specific political system. Research by Ormrod et al. (2010) has shown that higher party performance is positively related to a higher 'fit' between the ideal and actual strategic profile, rather than with any specific profile, a result which reflects findings of similar investigations in the commercial marketing strategy literature.

The PMO model is developed from the interdependence approach to commercial market orientation (Gainer and Padanyi, 2005) and consists of ten core constructs, four that represent the formal and informal processes of information usage through the political organisation and six that represent the orientation of the political organisation towards key stakeholder groups in society (Ormrod, 2011). These form the basis of a static model that can be used to map the organisational structure. In addition to this, a dynamic model can be identified which maps the relationships between each of the six orientation constructs to the four information-based constructs. These relationships are dynamic, that is, the nature of the relationship can change over time, ranging from initiation to maintenance to termination.

Both SPPs and the PMO model can contribute to our understanding of political organisations. However, in order to gain the maximum benefit of the two conceptual frameworks we can integrate them into strategic political profiles – **PMO profiles** – to gain insights into the interplay between the competitive positioning of the political organisation and the organisation's internal structure. For each of the four SPPs there is a corresponding 'ideal profile' of PMO relationships. Without understanding the ideal PMO profile, the SPP type is meaningless, while *vice versa* focusing only on a specific PMO profile does not say anything about its appropriateness as derived from the profile's relationship with a strategically chosen political posture.

Therefore, each of the four alternative SPPs can be represented as a profile of an unique static organisational model with dynamic relationship patterns. The characteristics of each strategic profile can inform on whether we can expect a strong or weak organisational focus on each of the ten constructs and the expected level of importance of the relationships between each of the ten constructs. In the following we present descriptions of *ideal* PMO profiles for each of the four SPPs; in reality, parties will arrange themselves along the continua such that they are, for example, 'more or less' a tactical populist.

The political lightweight

Henneberg (2006) proposes a strategic type that neither leads nor follows the political market, labelled the political lightweight. The political lightweight is characterised by a lack of focus on both leading and following. There is

Table 11.1 Static and dynamic characteristics of the *political lightweight* SPP (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010a)

<i>The political lightweight</i>	
Organisational orientation (static model)	The opinions of the members of the political actor's organisation are not considered important when developing the <i>political lightweight's</i> offering. Neither are the opinions of stakeholders outside of the organisation. The organisational orientation towards the various stakeholder groups will therefore be without a real focus.
Organisational behaviour (static model)	Little emphasis is placed on including members of the <i>political lightweight's</i> organisation in the development of the offering. There are no organisational structures in place to generate information from the stakeholder groups and disseminate this information throughout the organisation. Members do not participate and thus the implementation of strategy is piecemeal and inconsistent.
Relationship profile (dynamic model)	All relationships between stakeholder orientation constructs and the four behavioural constructs will be weak and/or negative. This will also be a characteristic of the relationships between the four behavioural constructs.

only a weak focus on the organisation's own current offering, which is not generally considered to be the best solution. In addition to this, the organisation is unwilling or unable to uncover the needs and wants of stakeholders, both inside and outside of the organisation (see Table 11.1).

It is difficult to argue for a *successful* implementation of the political lightweight strategic posture, as it is precisely the lack of an orientation towards all stakeholder groups that is this posture's defining characteristic. In addition to this, members do not contribute to generating and disseminating information, nor do they take part in developing the party offering or its implementation, which is likely to be confused and without direction.

Ormrod and Henneberg (2010) argue that a party which does not stand for anything cannot be described as a party and so the political lightweight as a strategic posture is nonsensical as it implies that the party strategy is not to have a strategy. However, Kotzaivazoglou (2011) argues that it may be necessary to include the political lightweight posture in future work as the political lightweight strategic posture may be most appropriate in socio-economic situations that are characterised by instability, incomplete information and the need for immediate action that causes short-term austerity but that is in the society's long-term interest; an example of this is the effects on the economies of certain southern European states in the wake of the global financial crisis. A party may not be able to lead according to its own convictions due to environmental pressures; neither can it follow because these very environmental pressures make it impossible to give the population what they want.

The convinced ideologist SPP

The convinced ideologist SPP is characterised by an emphasis on leading the market. This is achieved through an organisational focus on the content of the organisation's own offering, which is then marketed to target stakeholders (see Table 11.2). As such, the primary stakeholders are the party members themselves, together with other stakeholders that have a special affinity with the party due to political sympathies, historical links or coinciding aims (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2009). There is a generally weak focus on other stakeholders such as voters, competing parties, the media and most non-party stakeholders. The internal focus of the party on its members leads to a culture of inclusion, where the organisational structure is such that members have the ability to be heard.

The relationships in the dynamic profile model of the convinced ideologist SPP demonstrate strong, positive relationships between the internal orientation construct and each of the behavioural constructs, as an acknowledgement of the importance of members and their opinions is related to an increased emphasis on listening to other members, passing this information on, participating in the development of the political offering and ensuring its consistent implementation.

Table 11.2 Static and dynamic characteristics of the *convinced ideologist* SPP (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010a)

<i>The convinced ideologist</i>	
Organisational orientation (static model)	The opinion of party members is central to the development of the <i>convinced ideologist's</i> political offering. Some stakeholders outside of the organisation and with an affinity to the political actor through, for example, a common history or similar aims will also be consulted. The organisational orientation will therefore be primarily towards an <i>internal orientation</i> , and to a lesser extent outside stakeholders and citizens.
Organisational behaviour (static model)	An emphasis is placed on including as many members of the <i>convinced ideologist's</i> organisation in the development of the offering, thus ensuring that the strategy is implemented in a consistent way and all party members feel some form of 'ownership' of the offering. Therefore, <i>all four behavioural constructs</i> will be important to a <i>convinced ideologist</i> .
Relationship profile (dynamic model)	All relationships between the <i>internal orientation</i> construct and the four behavioural constructs are considered to be important. This will also be a characteristic of the relationships with stakeholders that have some form of affinity with the party in question and citizens. These relationships will be strong and positive. On the other hand, the relationships between the <i>voter orientation</i> , <i>media orientation</i> and <i>competitor orientation</i> and the behavioural constructs will either be weak and/or negative.

To a certain extent this is also a characteristic of the paths from the construct representing the stakeholders in the wider society, although this is a result of the individual sympathies of citizens and the 'double membership' of the party and core interest and lobby groups rather than a focus on *all* of society (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2009). Finally, the relationships between the constructs representing the remaining stakeholders and the behavioural constructs will be weak. It is even possible for the relationships to be negatively related; for example, when the emphasis on voters is increased, the level of member participation in the development of the offering could decrease.

The tactical populist SPP

In contrast to the convinced ideologist, the tactical populist SPP is characterised by a focus on following the market, reflected in the relative importance of stakeholders in the static model. The political offering is developed by listening and responding to the stakeholders that will make a difference at the next election, primarily voters and the media. As such, this type of SPP has a short-term, goal-oriented approach to initiating,

Table 11.3 Static and dynamic characteristics of the *tactical populist* SPP (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010a)

<i>The tactical populist</i>	
Organisational orientation (static model)	The opinion of voters and the media are central to the development of the <i>tactical populist's</i> political offering. Cooperation with competitors is out of necessity rather than preference and the contribution of the party rank-and-file is minimised as there is a risk that this will shift the focus from fulfilling the explicit needs and wants of key external stakeholder groups. Therefore, the key organisational orientations for the <i>tactical populist</i> are a <i>voter orientation</i> and a <i>media orientation</i> .
Organisational behaviour (static model)	Whilst <i>information generation</i> from voters and the media is a central characteristic of <i>tactical populists</i> , the vast majority of members are passive receivers of the information that is generated, primarily using formal channels. <i>Member participation</i> is minimised, whereas a <i>consistent strategy implementation</i> is of paramount importance and achieved as a result of the few individuals involved in this activity.
Relationship profile (dynamic model)	The relationships between the <i>voter orientation</i> and <i>media orientation</i> constructs and the <i>information generation</i> and <i>consistent strategy implementation</i> constructs will be positive, but will be weak or negative with regard to the <i>information dissemination</i> and <i>member participation</i> constructs. The <i>internal orientation</i> construct will have little or no relationship with the behavioural constructs. Only the relationship between the <i>information generation</i> and <i>information dissemination</i> behavioural constructs will be strong and positive due to the importance of one-way, formal information flows.

maintaining and terminating relationships with stakeholder groups which represent and/or influence public opinion (see Table 11.3). Stakeholders that are not essential to achieving party goals are not afforded resources.

The tactical populist SPP assumes that generating information and disseminating this information throughout the party is essential for developing the party offering, although this is primarily carried out using formal methods such as focus groups, monitoring the mass media and via opinion polls, both publicly available and commissioned, rather than via social interaction at the individual level. The results of this research are presented to the mainly passive party rank-and-file on a need-to-know basis. The passive role of the rank-and-file membership is further underlined in that few individuals are involved in the development and management of the party offering, which enables a large degree of control over how the offering is implemented and perceived by the primary stakeholder groups.

The relationships between PMO constructs for the tactical populist SPP are fundamentally the opposite of those of the convinced ideologist; whilst in the former the party members are the core focus, a party that adopts a tactical

populist SPP will down-prioritise members and instead follow key external stakeholder groups. This translates into strong, positive relationships between the Voter Orientation and Media Orientation constructs and the behavioural constructs of Information Generation and Strategy Implementation. This is a result of the necessity of knowing the needs and wants of each of the external stakeholder groups and ensuring that the party line clearly demonstrates an intention to fulfil these.

However, the relationships between the Voter Orientation and Media Orientation constructs, and the Information Dissemination and Member Participation constructs are weak and/or negative; increasing the party-wide focus on any of the stakeholder groups will only affect a handful of members. For example, receiving information that has been gained from voters to the political organisation is central to the success of the tactical populist SPP, but voters themselves do not directly affect the extent to which the information is passed on throughout the political organisation to those who need it.

For a political organisation that adopts a tactical populist strategic political posture it is imperative to know what the important stakeholders want and to pass this on to those in the party who need this information. However, those who 'need to know' are those individuals at the top of the political organisation who formulate the political offering. On the other hand, the relationship between the Information Dissemination and Member Participation constructs will be weak because of the minor importance of rank-and-file member involvement. Furthermore, what little discussion there is between members will not have an impact on the implementation of the party's offering, as this is the responsibility of a small group of members rather than the political organisation as a whole.

The relationship builder SPP

The final SPP is the relationship builder (see Table 11.4). The relationship builder SPP scores highly on both the leading and following dimensions, and therefore parties adopting this strategic posture place an explicit emphasis on acknowledging both the importance and opinions of all stakeholder groups. This said, there will always be some form of trade-off with regard to the extent to which the opinions of each group affect the offering as it is rarely possible to implement 'Texan taxes with Scandinavian welfare benefits' (Henneberg and O'Shaughnessy, 2007: 20). Resources can be prioritised according to, for example, the stage on the electoral cycle, the party ideology or socio-economic forces.

The inclusive focus of the relationship builder is reflected in the activity of party members, who consider it their responsibility to generate and disseminate information. The general emphasis of the party is on wide member participation in the development of the party's offering. Whilst there is a 'party line', there is an acknowledgement that the personal opinions of individual

Table 11.4 Static and dynamic characteristics of the *relationship builder* SPP (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010a)

<i>The relationship builder</i>	
Organisational orientation (static model)	The <i>relationship builder</i> will underline the importance of acknowledging the existence and opinions of all stakeholder groups, although there will be a prioritisation due to the limited resources available to build and maintain relationships.
Organisational behaviour (static model)	Information will be generated from both formal and informal sources, with members feeling a responsibility to both disseminate this information to those who need it and to participate in the development of the party's offering. Whilst the 'party-line' will be known and implemented, members are free to have and express their own opinions.
Relationship profile (dynamic model)	All relationships between constructs will be strong and positive.

members may not exactly reflect the party offering, as parties are an aggregation of all member opinions; however, as long as the party line is known and implemented, members are free to express their own opinion.

Finally, building on the argument that leading and following are not mutually exclusive, the focus of the relationship builder is on managing relationships such that emphasis is placed on uncovering the opinions of central stakeholder groups, bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the scarcity of resources. This will have a positive impact on the generation of information and its dissemination throughout the organisation, which in turn informs the internal debate and enables the implementation of the agreed-upon strategy.

PMO profiles and party organisational structure

Whilst in theory none of the profiles is expected to perform better than any other (the exception being the political lightweight SPP), choosing a specific strategic profile implies choosing a configuration of the static model together with the relevant dynamic relationships (Olson et al., 2005). The implication is that political actors can optimise the use of scarce resources when developing and implementing strategies and offerings to help them achieve their aims. In practice, however, party system characteristics and organisational structures and capabilities limit the feasible strategic postures a party can aim to achieve. For example, in theory, political systems characterised by few parties (such as the UK and the US) favour the tactical populist and relationship builder strategic political postures as parties must uncover and aggregate the

diverse needs and wants of large numbers of voters into one political offering. On the other hand, a small party in a proportional electoral system with a political offering based firmly on a particular ideology may aim to influence policy via coalition-building rather than gain an overall majority. In this latter situation, the favoured SPP for a small party is the convinced ideologist.

When seen through the lens of a strategic profile, attention is drawn to the relationships that exist between parties, on the one hand, and stakeholders such as voters, competitors and the wider environment in which parties are situated, on the other, and how each of these stakeholders have differing interests and expectations of how these interests will be met. Moreover, strategic profiles highlight how this tension between interests is translated into party strategy (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010). For example, there is considerable debate as to what the key objectives of parties are; indeed, elements of the party offering may conflict and members on different 'wings' of large parties may disagree greatly on internal policy proposals. It is generally accepted that there is a tension between the desire to adhere to the traditional ideological position of the party and party cohesion versus legislative responsibility (Strøm and Müller, 1999). A common observation is that parties need to choose different strategies for different arenas and the choice of one strategy may well influence the outcome or the choice of another (Wolinetz, 2002).

Voters are a central component of political science research, as central as the customer is in the commercial marketing literature. It is widely recognised that political parties are no longer able to rely on traditional bases of support from specific voter segments. This can be a result of voters moving away from their party of traditional allegiance without replacing this with a new allegiance ('dealignment'; Sarivik and Crewe, 1983) or as a result of changes in more general voting patterns, both sudden and over a period of time ('realignment'; Heath et al., 1985). However, it is these traditional bases of voter support that have been assumed in much of the party organisation literature, with the main focus on the voter-party relationship. For example, Kirchheimer (1966) accepted that parties had to reach out to many different segments of the electorate; Panebianco (1988) noted the increasing volatility of an opinion electorate and the rise of careerist politicians; and Katz and Mair (1995) and Heidar and Saglie (2003) highlight structural and institutional factors which shape the party as an organisation for representing voter opinions.

Understanding the activities and offerings of competing parties in the political system may be necessary to achieve the party's own long-term aims (Ormrod, 2005). In political systems with a strong tradition for single-party government, this can consist of an 'arms-length' assessment of the strategic market positions adopted by competitors and then positioning the party accordingly (Butler and Collins, 1996), although limited cooperation may be necessary for long-term investments such as in infrastructure or defence systems. On the other hand, in party systems that are characterised by coalition

and/or minority governments it may be necessary for parties to collude (Detterbeck, 2005) and modify their pre-election rhetoric to allow for post-election cooperation (Bowler and Farrell, 1992). Compromises may also have to be made between local, federal and national political interests (Henneberg and O'Shaughnessy, 2009). With Katz and Mair's (1995) 'cartel party' type, the focus on the competitor is slightly different and draws attention to ideas of cooperation between parties and states to maintain the parliamentary *status quo* (Detterbeck, 2005), both in terms of the increase in the state funding of parties (outside of the UK and US) and an increasing campaign emphasis upon state-regulated electronic media.

Narver and Slater (1990) introduced the concept of interfunctional coordination in their conceptualisation of a market orientation. An organisation that is characterised by high levels of interfunctional coordination will ensure that different functional areas communicate when developing the organisation's offering. In the political context this reflects the extent to which party members recognise that their co-members can contribute to the success of the party, irrespective of their position in the party hierarchy or their activity level (Ormrod, 2005). Whilst the role of members in political parties is a common theme in the political science literature, this is not the case in the political marketing literature, with few articles dealing specifically with members (Lilleker, 2005). Here there are parallels with the network party which draws attention to the ways in which new ICTs can play a role in enabling members to participate in developing the party offering (Gibson and Ward, 2009), which in turn supports a consistent interpretation of the offering (Shapiro, 1988).

Whilst a focus on voters, competing parties and the internal membership has direct roots in the commercial market orientation literature, Ormrod (2005) argues that it is necessary to include an explicit focus on the societal context within which the political organisation exists. Whilst not well researched in the commercial market orientation literature (Kang and James, 2007), the inclusion of an explicit orientation towards various important groups in society makes it possible to understand the interplay of member orientations towards the media, citizens, and interest and lobby groups whilst retaining a wider focus. Citizens are conceptualised as distinct from voters because of the nature of the exchange relationships that exist between each of them and parties; for example, the interaction between voters and the party occurs simultaneously (on election day), whilst the interaction between citizens is ongoing throughout the electoral period (Henneberg and Ormrod, 2013).

So rather than an orientation towards society as a whole as originally proposed by Ormrod (2005), the PMO model considers a holistic interpretation of 'society' to be conceptually exogenous to the model, with the specific stakeholder groups forming the elements that are endogenous to the model (Ormrod, 2011). Society as an overarching construct can be described as 'transient and turbulent' (Heidar and Saglie, 2003: 222) which affects the

ability of party leaders to implement specific strategies that are necessary to achieve long-term aims. This results in a tension: party leaders have to make tough decisions on behalf of their organisations (Strøm and Müller, 1999: 1), yet the decisions made by party members – especially in the case of the convinced ideologist strategic type – may inhibit leaderships from pursuing their strategic aims.

Once the strategic profile has been identified, the party invests resources to develop the appropriate stakeholder relationships whilst reducing the resources that are used to maintain others; a good example of this is the removal of the block vote from the trade union members in the British Labour Party during the party's 'modernisation' process in the mid-1990s, a response to opinion poll data which revealed that Labour was widely perceived as being 'unelectable' (Gould, 1999). In addition to this, strategic profiles can provide information about the way in which information is used in the party; for example, Pedersen and Saglie (2005) found that inactive members did not use the party intranet for participation, indicating that other methods could be more efficient at including the rank and file in the offering development process.

The PMO profile can arguably be used to understand other party organisational typologies. For example, Panebianco's (1988) electoral/professional party type emphasises the role of the party top and the estrangement of the volunteer membership; in this case only the party top would exhibit high values of market orientation focused on the importance of voters and the media at the expense of the membership, with information being disseminated to volunteer party members on a need-to-know basis. In the following section we provide a specific link between the elements of the profiles and the political science literature concerning party organisational structure. We focus on the example of Heidar and Saglie's (2003) network party to demonstrate how PMO profiles can help us understand the orientation of parties towards stakeholders and the associated member behaviours.

The PMO profile of the network party

Heidar and Saglie's (2003) network party emphasises that parties are embedded within an environment characterised by dynamic relationships of different strength, duration and intensity, and where relationships with stakeholder groups outside of the party can directly impact upon internal offering development processes. It also provides a stark contrast to the more common perception of political marketing as being most appropriate for understanding the behaviour of parties that exhibit characteristics of Panebianco's (1988) electoral/professional party model, that is, a focus on those activities of party professionals and elected members that support the sole aim of winning elections. The conclusion of Heidar and Saglie

(2003) is that parties are increasingly embracing network organisational structures, but that the extent to which they do this will vary according to existing organisational structures and party goals (Gibson and Ward, 2009).

Heidar and Saglie (2003) develop Koole's (1994) 'modern cadre party' and to a lesser extent Duverger's (1954) 'mass party' by integrating the internal and external environments within a single 'network party' model, acknowledging that party tradition is as essential to a party's identity as its responsiveness to the technological and social dynamics of the political sphere. This permeability of the boundaries between the organisation and its environment reflects the 'double membership' of party and other organisations that is especially visible in the case of the convinced ideologist SPP. Heidar and Saglie's (2003) network party model has seven core characteristics that centre on the relationship between the party elite and wider membership, the way in which the party is organised and financed, and the party's relationships with internal and external stakeholders. When developing the party's offering, the network party is arranged around 'thematic network structures' that enable a greater inclusion of external stakeholders in internal discussions (Heidar and Saglie, 2003). The network organisational structure also enables members and non-members to be more selective in the issues to which they contribute, thus enabling interest and knowledge to drive participation in the thematic networks (Heidar and Saglie, 2003). In this sense the idea of stakeholders in the PMO is useful as here it is possible to isolate the sources of information which in turn are used to inform party strategies.

For a typical network party, specific stakeholder groups are prioritised together with an explicit emphasis on the importance of information in the offering development process via thematic networks (Heidar and Saglie, 2003). As a PMO is not an 'either-or' proposition, members can be market-oriented to a greater or lesser degree depending on, for example, their level of activity or position in the party hierarchy. Again, here there are parallels in the political science literature. Membership ballots as proposed by Heidar and Saglie (2003) and Katz and Mair (1995) are a mechanism through which party elites are able to bypass existing institutional party structures and have direct access to party members. What becomes clear is that the party literature and the PMO highlight two sides of the same coin and the ways in which party elites can seek both to include and exclude information gathered from the membership. Moreover, what is also highlighted here is the way in which the tensions between these competing interests may lead to privileging of one set of stakeholders over another; stakeholders themselves may have conflicts of interests. What the PMO facilitates is clear exposition of these competing interests and how these serve to shape party strategy.

For the members of a network party, the ICT-based organisation of the party facilitates the dissemination of generated information to those members who want to participate in developing the party offering (Gibson and Ward, 2009), which in turn supports a consistent interpretation of the offering (Shapiro, 1988). Integrating thematic networks into the organisational

structure of the party supports the internal orientation of party members. By extension this is also valid for other, sympathetic stakeholders in the political sphere (Heidar and Saglie, 2003); it is acknowledged that selected citizens, and interest and lobby groups, can also contribute with their knowledge and opinions on elements of the offering (Ormrod, 2011). At election time there is a change in the focal stakeholders that reflects the nature of political competition both before and after the election (Bowler and Farrell, 1992).

Conclusion

A PMO perspective does not simply proscribe particular tools from the realm of political marketing management, and neither does it limit its explanandum to the structural boundaries delineating the party offering or to a professional focus towards marketing this offering. Instead, understanding the nature and extent of the party's level of PMO towards each of the stakeholder groups and the effect this has on the behaviour of party members can be used to construct a strategic profile. The strategic profile can in turn be used to inform organisational decisions regarding the development of the party's offering, rather than being the reason for them (Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010). Thus an explicit awareness of strategic profiles draws attention to the way in which key stakeholders are identified as important to the organisation.

Strategic profiles are limited in that they cannot provide answers to normative questions regarding to what extent parties *should* strive towards being facilitators of stakeholder participation in the democratic process, or which party structure is the most appropriate to enable the desired level of participation. However, strategic profiles can provide a framework for understanding the development and management of the relationships that exist between members and important stakeholder groups, together with providing an analytic foundation for integrating the organisational structure with appropriate strategies and tactics with which to achieve party aims. In short, concepts developed from the commercial marketing literature can be integrated and used to help understand rather than replace existing political science models of party organisation.

Discussion questions

- Think about the political parties in your national system. Which of the four alternative postures do these parties adopt? Use the PMO profile to support your arguments.
- Is there an ideal PMO profile in your national party system?
- Is the PMO profile of the political lightweight possible to use in practice?

Key terms

Strategic political postures
Political market orientation
The Political Lightweight
The Convinced Ideologist

The Tactical Populist
The Relationship Builder
PMO profile

Further reading

Ormrod and Henneberg (2010): This article forms part of the backbone of this chapter (along with Ormrod and Savigny, 2012). Reading the original article will provide you with a more detailed understanding of the relationship between strategic political postures and political market orientation.

Ormrod and Savigny (2012): This article too forms part of the backbone of the chapter (along with Ormrod and Henneberg, 2010). Reading the original article will help you to understand the relationship between political market orientation and alternative party organisational types as discussed in the political science literature.

Henneberg (2006): This article provides an in-depth treatment of the four strategic postures.

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