

Candidate 6 evidence

	Section 3
5(b)	<p>The Rational Choice model refers to the way in which voters act in elections.</p> <p>Unlike the Party Identification model, the Rational choice model believes that voters vote according to their views on current issues and policies, which can change their support from each election. Many factors influence voters views, the main ones being leadership, policies and campaigns.</p>
	<p>Issue voting describes the way in which voters act according to party policies. Voters support the party in which they believe could handle the current economic climate the most effectively. Also, according to a large majority of the electorate review party's main policies in each manifesto when deciding who to vote for. For example,</p>

in 2010 39% of voters thought Conservatives had the best policy on the economy, while Labour and the Liberal Democrats gained ~~23%~~^{23%} and ~~26%~~^{26%} respectively. This proves that many voters ~~stop~~ believe policies are the most important factor to consider when voting, which is reinforced by the Conservative party winning the most seats in the 2010 General Election.

Moreover, ~~the~~ the Rational Choice model also believes that leadership has an impact on voting behaviour. Over the recent years, leadership has grown in importance, with the 2010 Leaders Debates felling this further. An increasing number of voters judge political parties by their leaders, and personalise the elections by scrutinising their ability the

leader possesses to run the country. For example, in 2010 29% thought of David Cameron was ~~capable of~~ most capable to run the country, with Gordon Brown only gaining 12% of these voters. ~~Although leadership~~ Also, 2010 saw leadership and policies tying in importance to the public at 33%, previously having almost a 10% gap with policies leading. This proves that leadership is increasing in importance.

The use of Leaders' Debates has personalised the campaign system.

Finally, the Rational Choice model also states that campaigns have an influence of over the voting behaviour of the electorate.

The way in which political parties conduct themselves throughout the

campaign duration can either positively or negatively impact their popularity. Voters tend to support the party that they relate to and believe can help the public more. The Leaders' Debates have proved to be successful in forming opinions of ~~to~~ each party. Broadcasting these debates on television has enabled the public to weigh up the pros and cons of each party and form solid support from the electorate. Similarly, the techniques parties use ~~down~~ when campaigning can impact the result at the ballot box. Door to door campaigning is effective in gaining support because voters can engage in discussion and ask questions. Therefore it is clear that campaign strategies have an impact on voting behaviour.

Overall, the Rational Choice model is probably the most relevant in explaining voting behaviour, as the importance of social class and partisan ~~is~~ dealignment have decreased, leading to an increase in floating voters who are open to influence.