

ABSTRACT

Television broadcasts improve the voters' knowledge base; increase their level of political participation and possibly influence their choices of candidates and the parties they vote for. Voting is the core of political participation. Voters' behaviour indicate their reactions to the information that television gives to them on the presidential election. These reactions may either reinforce or crystallize their voting decisions. The *reinforcement effect* occurs when television broadcasts strengthen voters' decisions to vote for a particular candidate or party.

This study sought to find out if the *reinforcement effect* affected the decisions of partisans to vote simply for the political parties where they are members and those candidates that these same parties presented in the Nigerian 2007 presidential election. The survey method was used to study 1337 party members who were residents in Ado Odo/Ota local council of Ogun State, Nigeria.

This study found out that television broadcasts reinforced the opinion of registered party members to vote in their parties and the candidates that these parties presented. Their partisanship provided them a shortcut to determine who they voted for. However, the tie of partisanship is weakening and appears no longer to be very strong as the indices are low.

KEY TERMS: Television, influence, voting, behaviour, reinforcement effect, presidential election.