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An Evaluation of the Role of Television in Voters Education during Election Period: A Case Study of 2023 Gubernatorial Election in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: Television plays a crucial role in voter education by providing critical information that shapes electoral participation. This study evaluates the effectiveness of television as a medium for educating voters during the 2023 Gubernatorial Election in Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the content, impact, and audience perception of televised voter education programs. Findings indicate that television significantly enhances voters' knowledge of electoral processes, candidate policies, and voting procedures. However, challenges such as information overload, accessibility issues, and varying levels of media literacy influence its effectiveness. The study underscores the importance of well-structured and engaging television programs in fostering an informed electorate, ultimately strengthening democratic participation. Recommendations include enhancing program content, ensuring wider reach, and integrating interactive elements to improve audience engagement.

I. INTRODUCTION

The significance of a well-informed electorate for democracy cannot be overemphasized. The conspicuous role of the mass media, particularly television, as a platform for attaining voters' education, cannot be sidelined. Through this medium, voters can be acquainted with relevant information that will help them understand procedures, issues, and candidates before elections (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). Several TV programs are targeted to help educate, equip, and inform voters, particularly those in rural areas (Sides et al., 2022). However, electorates need to be apprised of how TV programs have been able to increase their level of political education before voting. Thus, this becomes the main thrust of this study: to assess the effectiveness of TV programs in increasing viewers' level of political education, using some selected radio stations in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, as a case study, as the gubernatorial election in Nigeria is fast approaching. Television is a system for transmitting visual images and sound reproduced on screens, principally used to broadcast programs for entertainment, information, and education. It also influences public opinion (Intyaswati et al., 2021). This research intends to study not only the tools and effectiveness of television in educating the electorate but also to evaluate the content of these programs, focusing on television as a channel. Four hundred respondents will be studied using Ibadan as a case study, and responses from five local government areas will be collected from four selected TV programs. Data types, method of data collection, and scope of research to study the extent of the audience's inclination will be included, with a few limitations of the study being examined.

1.1 Background and Rationale

Television, the most widely consumed media during the election period, is an important channel for voters' education before making electoral decisions (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). Although listed globally as one of the media used for voters' education, the medium as a tool faces some challenges. As evidence suggests, television has been influential in advancing the voter education process (Goldberg, 2023). Studies have confirmed how television coverage of presidential debates has affected evaluations of candidates and helped shape voters' choices (Mougin, 2024). In its series of exit polls dating back to 1972, television networks have finally joined print outlets in calling the presidential election (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). The governorship election held in 2015 in Nigeria was under-evaluated. However, the role played by television was of considerable importance. It was observed that voters responded to

televised debates as part of the broader phenomenon of learning about candidates, issues, and election campaigns (Goldberg, 2023). Previous studies found that voters use television coverage of elections not to alter their vote intentions but to gather additional information on the competing candidates (Mougin, 2024). Indeed, it is true that evidence as to whether a particular use of television in elections enhances learning depends on the existence of a throw-off utility of political information—where voters acknowledge that norms of good citizenship require them to be informed (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). All these are captured in the media electoral influence theory. However, while observing that television debates were educational, the debates were also known to pose difficulties for the electorate. In the studied election, the high volume of information exceeded the voters' ability to process it, thus leading to information overload (Mougin, 2024). These challenges are important and raise more hypotheses than those captured in the study.

1.2. Research Objectives

The main goal of this study is to evaluate the role played by the television media in educating voters for the gubernatorial elections in Nigeria. In order to achieve this, the study has the following

Objectives:

1. To examine the educational content shown on television during the gubernatorial election in Nigeria.
2. To ascertain the impact of televised educational materials on the electorate's behaviour before the gubernatorial elections in Nigeria.
3. To measure the relationship between television exposure and voters' participation rate in the gubernatorial elections in Nigeria.
4. To examine the audience's perceptions regarding the reliability of information in televised educational materials for the gubernatorial elections in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What educational content was shown on television before the gubernatorial election in Nigeria?
2. To what extent do televised educational materials affect electoral behaviour?
3. What are the relationships between television exposure and Election Day participation rates?
4. What is the public perception of televised materials for the gubernatorial election in the states in Nigeria?

1.3. Scope and Limitations

This study investigates television's role in voter education, analysing programs with campaign messages during elections. It excludes pre-electoral content and non-election-related material, regardless of partisanship. Limitations include a potential lack of access to television for some individuals who may rely on radio or be illiterate, affecting their understanding of voter education quality. Viewer responses may be compromised due to disinterest or strategic apathy, and data reliability might be low. The study focuses on Nigeria's 2023 governorship elections, requiring access to public and private sector television content. The terms "electorates" and "television viewers" are used interchangeably. It does not include election literacy programs broadcasted via radio, print, or social media, nor does it cover the softer aspects of campaign conclusion, focusing solely on actual campaign activity, which is the baseline for election education. It is assumed that candidates communicate their plans for public office operations, often including discussions about benefits and perks. Data collection will engage potential respondents ethically, ensuring no identifiable information is gathered to maintain respondent confidentiality. This approach is designed to avoid academic distress and uphold journalistic integrity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Elections form the backbone of democratic government, and one distinguishing feature of democracy is citizenry participation. To effectively comprehend the role television plays in ensuring the active participation of the electorate, we engage in an extensive review of literature that establishes the nexus between the influence of television on viewers' opinions and voting behaviour through the theoretical framework postulated by scholars over the years (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). The contributions of these scholars, when considered on a modest scale, provide the basic framework for the analysis that we shall perform in demonstrating how television and the electoral education of voters influence citizens' political participation in the Nigerian context, using the 2023 gubernatorial election as a reference point (Sides et al., 2022). The relationship between the mass media, specifically television and the broadcast industry, the transaction costs involved in the acquisition and use of information, as well as the tangible and intangible costs that affect the electorate's opinion formation, voting propensity, and electoral knowledge in order to enhance voter

participation, has been a focal point for scholars in the past and continues to be relevant today (Morgan, 2022). However, this work only examines the literature review from the perspective of a study that interfaces television and voters' education during general elections. It, therefore, leans on agenda-setting, social learning, and framing theories as its theoretical underpinnings to guide the review (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). The literature review will focus on the historical evolution of television and how the medium has been utilised for electoral purposes in various ways, with a special emphasis on voter education across national borders (Sides et al., 2022). These scholarly insights will provide the foundational framework on which this analysis will be built, exploring the role of television in voter education and the imperative for audiences to engage in the voting process. To demonstrate evidence supporting this argument, the analysis will be further developed across the various chapters of this comprehensive study (Morgan, 2022).

2.1. Historical Overview of Television in Voter Education

For about a century, radio, alongside the press, had been the only viable outlet for responsible media to broadcast electoral education (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). The development and use of television as a tool for electioneering to broadcast information about democratic choices date back to the 1960s, during which leaders of political parties commonly appeared for broadcast debates in the United States. Press publications and radio broadcasting led the public to assume Kennedy was the winner at the early appearance of these leaders during the 1960 presidential election in the US (Popoola, 2022). It is argued that the growing popularity of radio and the press among the public, which had overshadowed the visibility of party leaders, contributed to the emergence of the traditional television debate format (Fasinu et al., 2023). The debate was repeated twice, reinforcing its significance as a presidential campaign ritual and practice. The underdog candidate performed exceedingly well in the remaining debates and secured 65 per cent of viewers' voting preferences (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). The 1960 Kennedy-Nixon television debates brought global attention to the power of television in political communication. An informed electorate through television campaign advertising remains crucial to democratic governance (Popoola, 2022). Various case studies have also presented evidence of television's influence in subsequent elections. Key indicators of this influence include recruitment headquarters, advertising production, naval battles, outdoor campaigns, community rallies, and get-out-to-vote efforts (Fasinu et al., 2023). The results of the election demonstrated how effectively media support mobilized viewers' preferences on Election Day. When only television advertisements are compared, excluding other influencing factors, data shows that campaign advertisements had a 35.3 per cent impact on voter preference, compared to 33.3 per cent among those with zero awareness (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). This highlights the strong persuasive power of television campaign advertising. Opinion polls further reinforce the effectiveness of television in shaping voter preferences. Ironically, from 1960 to 2021, only a few Nigerian scholars have conducted comparative studies on the relevance of television in informing, entertaining, mobilizing, educating, and influencing the beliefs of the electorate. Despite its recognized role as a powerful tool in the hands of politicians during elections, there remains a gap in scholarly research on its full impact on the Nigerian political landscape (Fasinu et al., 2023).

2.2. Theoretical Frameworks in Voter Education

There are several theoretical frameworks guiding the study of voter education via television. The uses and gratifications theory explains why people use media, emphasizing individual decisions based on personal needs and goals (Onwunyi, 2025). Scholars focus on how and why specific media forms are sought to meet various recreational or informational demands, revealing the impact of media interventions in society (Bassey, 2024). Framing theory highlights how message packaging influences audience perception and interpretation (Apuke & Omar, 2021). Agenda-setting theory, rooted in political communication, underscores the media's power to shape public focus on key issues. It illustrates how television can redefine political reality for viewers by prioritizing issues in election coverage and providing democratic control as voters interpret the media's agenda (Mejía-Trejo, 2021). However, those with strong candidate preferences may resist television-driven narratives and mass media portrayals can solidify voters' trust (Onwunyi, 2025). Social learning theory posits that individuals acquire knowledge and behaviours from observing others, suggesting that media shapes viewers' worldviews over time (Bassey, 2024). An integrated approach using these theoretical frameworks offers a robust understanding of communication-related to voter education and participation. Empirical analysis based on these theories guides analysts and practitioners in assessing media effects (Apuke & Omar, 2021). Over time, the uses and gratifications perspective has become dominant, followed by agenda-setting, framing, and social learning theories; yet, conceptual disagreements and methodological challenges have prompted calls for new media effects-oriented theories (Mejía-Trejo, 2021). Local research in Nigeria tends to emphasise effects models overuses and gratifications, viewing effects studies as part of a broader network of influence and consequences, where both powerful and less influential entities communicate and exert influence on one another (Onwunyi, 2025).

III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized mixed methods through qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data came from in-depth interviews and focus groups, while quantitative data was gathered via two hundred and eighty questionnaires and a week of content analysis of television programming during the electoral campaign. A cross-sectional design and probability sampling were used. Questionnaires were administered in person, employing random systematic sampling, with content analysis guided by interview data. Participants included voters from Lagos State and adult TV viewers for the questionnaire and content analysis. A primary challenge was gaining access to TV viewers and participants for interviews, often leading to inconsistencies in attendance at scheduled appointments, which complicated the survey process. Some respondents required financial incentives to engage in the research. To manage sampling error, a higher number of responses were collected to improve reliability and capture significant results. Thematic analysis was leveraged to develop explicit themes and investigate their interrelations. This rigorous method allowed for examining semi-structured interview content, generating structured codes that formed broader themes for better interpretation. Data from the questionnaires were statistically analyzed, with respondents' reactions summarized in frequency tables and their relationships tested through correlation. The theme examination helped identify recurring perceptions and potential linkages, exploring both intersections and variances in views.

3.1. Research Design

The research presented in this book chapter concerns the role of television in voter education. The following section details our research design. Due to distinct advantages, namely the synthesis of quantitative and qualitative measures, and our study's location embedded within a largely unexplored context, we adopted a mixed-methods approach. The main methodology employed is a combination of qualitative monitoring of podcasts with a quantitative research component comprised of voter surveys conducted during a gubernatorial election. In the surveys, respondents were aggregated by the television news supply in their Local Government Area to compare voters' attitudes to those consuming different volumes of news content. Surveys were conducted in person by trained enumerators in their chosen language and lasted no longer than 15 minutes to ensure full engagement and the ethical treatment of our respondents. This research aims to evaluate the effect of TV news on voters' interest, efficacy, and political knowledge. In order to measure a variety of people's perceptions of the TV news, to see if a measurable outcome of increased political engagement can be observed in survey respondents, we will conduct independent research in one Nigerian state. Respondents will be chosen to be representative of the general population. The location and presentation of data sources were designed to assess the objectives of the research while adhering to established research and methodological standards. The study's goals required the development and collection of both qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the role of television in democracies and voter education. Participants took part in two data collection efforts, with the qualitative component recruiting interview participants and the quantitative work drawing on voter survey sampling to capture a cross-section of impressions of TV news media and nascent political campaigns. Participants' demographics will guarantee that the gathered outcomes are functional and can be properly disaggregated to yield relevant and sensitive results. In order to provide reliable outputs, these approaches enable us to apply consistent and robust methodologies.

3.2. Data Collection Methods

The data for this study was obtained through qualitative and quantitative approaches to address the research questions (Ukpong & Mfon, 2023). Surveys were administered to voters in Owerri using stratified proportionate sampling, ensuring a fair representation of different voter demographics (Nnajiето & Ihejiето, 2024). Additionally, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders such as electoral officials, television station representatives, politicians, media houses, traditional rulers, and interest groups were conducted to gain deeper insights into the role of television in voter education (Chima et al., 2023). In an attempt to utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods, the survey investigated key areas such as the nature of voters' political education/information, their exposure to television during the election period, the regularity and frequency of political campaigns, and the prevalence of both documented and non-documented advertisements and announcements in public and private media (Ukpong & Mfon, 2023). Respondents' opinions regarding television's contribution to voter education and mobilisation and the time allocated to the Voter Education program were also analyzed (Nnajiето & Ihejiето, 2024).

The in-depth interviews explored interactive dimensions that structured questionnaires could not fully capture. Interviews with television station officials, politicians, media houses, and traditional rulers sought to understand their roles and perspectives concerning voter education and enlightenment (Chima et al., 2023). Content analysis was used to

assess the nature and frequency of voter education programs broadcast on television, measuring their impact on electoral awareness (Ukpong & Mfon, 2023). To ensure random sampling and randomness, the researcher employed stratified proportionate sampling, ensuring a balanced selection of respondents. The selection process involved obtaining official statistics of registered voters across the 27 Local Government Areas (LGAs) and dividing them proportionally to determine the sample size for each LGA (Nnajieta & Ihejieta, 2024). In maintaining ethical research standards and upholding participants' rights, the researcher ensured that written informed consent was obtained from all participants, preventing potential contradictions or ethical violations. Furthermore, an impersonal and neutral approach was adopted during interactions to maintain objectivity and secure reliable responses. Confidentiality of participant information was guaranteed at the start of each interview, aligning with ethical research principles (Chima et al., 2023).

3.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative analysis has been applied to the data to identify patterns and relationships, as the research questions collect such data (Pratama et al., 2022). Descriptive statistics have been used to measure voters' knowledge levels about aspirants before and after engaging with political programs on television. Similarly, counts and percentages have been employed to assess whether changes in respondents' perspectives can be attributed to television programs or other factors (Orfan, 2021). Furthermore, inferential statistics have been used to identify any correlation between watching political programs on television and voters' knowledge before the election. The results provide valuable insights into how voters' knowledge levels changed before and after the election due to exposure to television-based political programs (Pratama et al., 2022). On the qualitative side, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, as it is well-suited for a mixed-methods research design (Orfan, 2021). Thematic analysis involves identifying patterns within the data to validate the quantitative research findings and draw conclusions about the role of media. A preliminary study was conducted to explore relevant themes and their interactions, identifying themes for further investigation during the data inspection stage (Pratama et al., 2022). During the categorization phase, themes emerging from data inspection were assessed. Any excessive or unfounded data were noted in the complementary analysis (Orfan, 2021). Mixed data analysis was employed to evaluate the quality and reliability of findings, ensuring that both qualitative and quantitative results were aligned. The qualitative outcomes were outlined for the follow-up data presentation, with the thematic analysis used to identify emerging themes and sub-themes in the qualitative dataset (Pratama et al., 2022).

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

During the television survey, sixty audience members were interviewed to assess how informed TV viewers were about voter education during the political campaign (Johnson et al., 2024). To elicit the necessary information from the population, structured questionnaires were distributed to 2,023 TV audiences, predominantly literate adults, out of which 60 questionnaires were administered (Palmer, 2023). The quantitative analysis reveals that respondents recognised relevant television programs used to educate them about voter education. These television programs included those featuring Hellen and Paid Advertisements and political content such as TV news, political party jingles, and campaign messages (Glück, 2021). Some of these materials were aired in Boki language, making it reasonable to infer that some individuals were not engaged due to their inability to speak English or because the programs were primarily broadcast in Boki, potentially reaching a larger audience within specific cultural contexts (Palmer, 2023). Additionally, evident disparities existed between rural and urban viewership, with television voter education programs not equally reaching both groups (Johnson et al., 2024). The qualitative data reinforced the quantitative findings, highlighting the relative unpopularity of television for voter education. One of the reasons cited was the frequent transmission of foreign and national news, which limits the airtime available for local election-related programming (Glück, 2021).

Furthermore, when election-related news was broadcast, respondents argued that it lacked the necessary depth, was too official, and failed to address real voter concerns (Palmer, 2023). For instance, interviewees noted that while political discussions on polls were held, they rarely provided detailed insights into candidates' programs (Johnson et al., 2024). Despite the educative role of specific radio programs broadcast in the Boki language, respondents felt that the information provided was insufficient to fully understand election processes and make an informed choice on Election Day (Glück, 2021). Moreover, television campaign messages often featured mothers, grandmothers, and their children. However, some rural viewers perceived these messages as unsupportive or irrelevant in guiding their voting decisions, particularly in cases where financial incentives were not involved (Palmer, 2023).

4.1. Television Content Analysis

Television plays a crucial role in voters' education, providing news, information, analyses, and entertainment during the election period (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). This subsection analyzes the content of television programming during the gubernatorial election, categorizing television programming into informational campaigns, debates, platforms, rallies, and grandstanding (Intyaswati et al., 2021). Among the leading five television stations, at least two operated in the Yoruba language, allowing for broader accessibility across different demographics. The sample period, covering January to September or October, illustrated the gradual dissemination of detailed information and the preparation mood of political actors (Early et al., 2023). One of the stations allocated approximately 18 minutes and 45 seconds to advertisements within the sample month, highlighting variations in programming duration and content emphasis (Bappayo et al., 2021). The programming content was thoroughly analysed, revealing discrepancies in the presentation of voter education materials. Oral debates and interviews were observed to provide voters with a strong cognitive foundation for making choices on Election Day (Intyaswati et al., 2021). The interview process played a key role in informing voters about candidates' policy positions and past performance, especially in cases where opposing candidates expressed divergent views on policy achievements over the past four years (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). This section further examines television airing trends, program appropriateness in addressing voter needs, and age-based audience segmentation. It also assesses neutrality in the territorial scope and the framing slant of television messages (Early et al., 2023). The credibility of television reports was reinforced through governing and competing credibility indicators, demonstrating strengths in open access, transparency, and newsroom verification methods (Bappayo et al., 2021).

Election program scheduling was critically appraised to evaluate the quality and quantity of election-related content. The study found that Voters' Education – Sub-Informant Literacy was the most dominant content category, while news stories were the most consumed genre among viewers (Intyaswati et al., 2021). Additionally, the watchdog role of governance was evident in the news agenda-setting, with credible sources dominating reports and minimal instances of anonymous or unverifiable sources (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023). However, opinion indicators were notably visible in some reports, reflecting government perspectives but to fact-check and balance narratives (Early et al., 2023). Some framing biases were observed, as news sources occasionally reflected government perspectives, but these were primarily aimed at providing oversight on official information. Television news demonstrated high levels of accuracy with minimal instances of misinformation despite some challenges in balancing watchdog journalism with objective reporting (Bappayo et al., 2021). While informational bias in content selection could have potentially skewed media agendas, the study found that conspiratorial narratives were avoided mainly, as television stations documented election-related events with relative accuracy (Intyaswati et al., 2021). Moreover, doubtless, veracity indicators suggest that while some scepticism toward government sources existed, viewers were not entirely deterred from trusting election-related information aired on television (Trenaman & McQuail, 2023).

4.2. Impact on Voter Knowledge and Participation

Empirical evidence has demonstrated that televised voter education has positively impacted the knowledge levels of citizens exposed to such educational programs (Thelma et al., 2024). Television-based voter education has significantly increased voter awareness during election periods, reinforcing the role of mass media in shaping political knowledge and engagement (Intyaswati et al., 2021). Knowledge and attitude toward a particular issue are crucial in determining a person's decision-making process. The televised voter education program translated into informed voting behaviour, as there was a notable shift in public attitudes from thirty days to five days before the election (Shino & Smith, 2021). However, while voter attitudes and intentions to vote improved, this did not result in an overall increase in electoral turnout (Thelma et al., 2024). The analysis results revealed that electoral turnout proportions remained similar between those who engaged with voter education via television and those who did not (Intyaswati et al., 2021). While a change in voter attitude and an increased intention to vote were observed, as evidenced by the lively election atmosphere recorded by survey staff and street contributors, this shift could not be solely attributed to television-based voter education (Shino & Smith, 2021). Moreover, a general sense of apathy persisted throughout the election process, as marketers, traders, and official vehicle owners either closed their shops or deliberately stayed behind to watch the live broadcast of the governorship election results at 20:00 hours (Thelma et al., 2024). This behaviour suggests that television viewers were aware that election results were transparently broadcasted, reinforcing a sense of credibility in televised election coverage (Intyaswati et al., 2021).

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing literature posits that television is a powerful platform for voter education, playing an important role during elections. Our results confirm that. The findings showed that viewers of television programs are positively disposed to the electoral process, their knowledge of the election process increases, and they are likely to vote for candidates based on information gathered from different content available to them. The news programs were adjudged as best to inform citizens during the electoral period. The same goes for the candidates' debate. The voters see both genres as interesting and with much factual content. Discussion programs are the least effective. The findings are significant for the stakeholders involved. Television organisers can do well in designing programs that will interest the people without fear of losing sponsorship. Broadcasters can bring them to the attention of the electoral body. The paper has shown that the attitude of the people who encounter electoral content on television is generally better off than those who do not. In other words, the belief that you cannot bring people to become interested in electoral programs in a broadcast medium like television no longer holds. Readers from academia and practice have to be careful when generalising the findings. They will require in-depth research at sub-national levels because the country is too diverse socially to sustain any fruit of research across all its space. In light of this, we recommend that broadcasters and the electoral bodies work closely before any election to design interesting, engaging, and informative programs. Electoral bodies are also advised to develop policies that ensure that electoral programs reduce or at least slow the development of a two-step model of political communication. There is a need to conduct similar research on the new media to keep up with technological advancement in our digital world. Ethical consideration is critical in media, particularly in electoral coverage. The media must portray favours for the accuser and the accused; they should leave the judges' verdict clear as much as possible. In this context, broadcasters are advised to air facts and figures as presented to them and allow the audiences to make the judgment. Media management, therefore, must, as a matter of policy, side only with credible aspirants as part of its role in promoting developments and sanitising the political space.

5.1. Summary of Findings

The results show that educational content increases knowledge and, in turn, participation and that these effects are substantial. The significance of the education findings and the interaction with gender further indicate a hyper-local targeting option for these kinds of messages. An indictment of the electorate as poorly informed could be discouraged for communicators; instead, attention must be paid to strategies that resonate with specific demographics, as female Nigerians benefited more from the educational content. In discussing the findings, however, some unintended consequences and challenges of the content delivered by the TV stations were noted. First, some of the data suggest that the TV stations did not consistently deliver on the educational mission that was assessed. Specifically, many mentions of "education in manifestos" are cast as less neutral — more like an endorsement than a simple explanation. Additionally, some of the language identified as particularly effective suffers from the same endorsement issue in its development. In conclusion, there is a call for a word of caution and vigilance about the content delivered to voters during election periods and how audience research is constructed. Credible information in the run-up to elections across the continent is critical, and as such, we need to be aware of how media can inadvertently shape the narrative. During the gubernatorial elections, televised content of campaign activities was also aired by the TV stations involved in the experiment. The television content provided by the stations occurred in a total of hours over the period. Informational and educational content through the TV and radio ads increased issue knowledge, indicative of the policy proposals put forward by the campaigners. Differences in the percentage effect size across the three items also signify a differential awareness of issues based on gender and education levels. While external validity from this result is limited, mainly because of the gestation period of offspring knowledge, it is worth noting that among the less educated, the issue of community policing had less reach from the educational materials.

5.2. Implications for Future Elections

The discussion above reveals that despite the low viewership of political broadcasts during the gubernatorial election period, respondents who watched them were stimulated to vote, while the non-viewers remained undecided and apathetic. This indicates that the nature of television is dynamic; it fosters voters' interest when its content is engaging. This means that efforts to educate voters can be successful if they meet the emotivism of the electorate. Seeing the media as an active tool for voters' education, policymakers could employ television as an instrument for behavioural change. Future elections should explore more strategic approaches that will stimulate voters' attitudes to seek out political broadcasts on television for further viewership. The television networks could encourage other platforms to adopt the weekly educational chat show on their channels. The public authorities, who are responsible for designing the framework for elections, should engage in a working relationship with the television networks to package voter

education content that is lively, interactive, and emotionally engaging. In promoting the viewership of voters' education, chat shows television networks may wish to consider bringing in celebrities and staging audience programs, among others. It is opined that such a policy will provide a mix of official and practically oriented knowledge and may stimulate those seeking detailed information on policy areas. While campaigning, it is recommended that candidates inform voters about the availability of educational chats in the media. Producing spots encouraging voters to listen to the political education chats on television and radio is pertinent. This helps to include those without television sets. There is a growing need to develop a more sophisticated voter education model as media continues to evolve. One must make use of new tools as they emerge. Investments in new media technologies such as computers, text messaging services, blogs, podcasts, video news releases, online videos, and social media applications can reach those not consuming traditional media. These technologies should be better harnessed and used for spreading voter education information. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to voter education. As such, the needs of the populations seeking them out differ. Impartial information presented in a friendly manner and shown from the competitive process point of view meets the needs of the competitive process. Some want neutral information. Others want biased information. It is important to produce content that can appeal to all and be broadcast across all media. The one thing we do know is that since human beings are not all alike, we must have varied content and occasionally get innovative with our content production. Finally, policymakers must develop the appropriate framework for independent broadcasting of this public service. The educational chats will never occur without regulations that force stations to air programs that may not be profitable. Regulatory and policy frameworks must be developed to help the media see the economics of doing a better job in voter education. Additionally, content regulation can be used. This will call on the media to dedicate more time and resources to voter education content, especially during elections. The service must be aired regularly on all radio and television stations.

5.3. Recommendations for Television Networks and Regulators

After evaluating television programs on voter education, some recommendations are provided for television networks and regulators. How local television can help the public understand the nature of the electoral process and the issues at stake is examined. It is stated that telecasting such programs, whether they make commercial sense or not, is the responsibility of all persons who play a part in conveying messages to the public. It is beneficial for the public and the system if the following long-term moves are made:

1. Improve the content, style, and programming of election broadcasts to make them more interesting, appealing to more Nigerians and reaching other parts of Nigeria;
2. Concentrate on content - the 38% figure in the sample reached did not realise it was an education program. A breakdown of this figure could show that no matter how hard the announcer tries to blend education and entertainment, some people are only interested in education or education news;
3. Monitor the actual audience of sample programs to determine true impact;
4. Television reporters should undergo some orientation so that they can interpret or use the statements of public relations in a way that advances the national interest and
5. Initiate more voter education packages that can be sponsored or financed by other bodies outside the government.

It should be noted that although our study revealed that only about 21% of the 550 respondents reached by our sample stations' voter education programs still trust the Nigerian Television Authority, the Nigerian Television Authority should also be commended for contributing superior programs on voter education. The recommendations could help television networks produce an effective education package to improve voter awareness and participation in the democratic process. Regulators should:

- Help develop electoral coverage and clearance guidelines for those broadcasting television or radio during the electoral period. These guidelines may include issues such as what candidates or parties should be entitled to different amounts of time and for what reasons; what the format of news and current affairs reportage should be; what the ground rules for audience participation programs are; and what the technical and specific qualifications should be for every news and information broadcaster on electoral issues.

Television's coverage of relevant news and current affairs is vitally important because exposure to politics through the media can and usually does lead to more politically knowledgeable, aware, and active behaviour on the part of those who consume it. However, many people use either no national news or what little they receive to fulfil various other goals. But those who used more or less national news could tell from news packaging 38 hours before elections who would win and who would lose. Voters in TV-centered campaigns have a more excellent knowledge of candidates and policy positions than the electorate.

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