

ABSTRACT

Television plays an important role in the democratization process. It is a mass media channel that routinely purveys information to its diverse viewers. But these pieces of information carry the power to influence and determine behaviour. This study shows television to be an important avenue that public office contestants walk through to reach millions of voters simultaneously. Contestants believe that their appearances on the luminous screens improve their chances of successfully sweeping the polls. This objective of this study is to compare the influence of television broadcasts on voters in the rural, suburban or urban areas. Did television broadcasts influence who they actually voted for or made them to change their minds from who they initially wanted to vote for in the 2007 Nigerian presidential election? This study found out that indeed television influenced their behaviour to various degrees. However, this influence was most pronounced among the voters from the urban areas. The voters from the rural areas were least influenced while those from the suburban areas occupied the middle position. They were neither here nor there.

KEY WORDS: Television, Influence, Urban, Suburban, Rural, Presidential Election, Voting.