


Chapter 2

Crystallization Effect of Television Broadcasts on Nigerian Voters During a Presidential Election

Stella Amara Aririguzoh

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7309-1519>
Covenant University, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Television is popularly used to offer information to viewers during elections. There will always be citizens who register to participate in an election and then refuse to take further steps, like casting their votes. This study sought to find out if television broadcasts made citizens like these experience the crystallization effect. This effect causes uninterested citizens to make crystal clear choices on particular contestants. This study sought to find out about the crystallization effect on voters in Ado Odo/Ota communities in Ogun State of Nigeria during the 2007 Nigerian presidential election. The survey method was used to get required data from 782 respondents who were not members of any political party, had no candidate preference, and were yet to decide on who to vote for in this election. It seems plain from this study that television broadcasts sharpened these citizens' decisions to make specific choices. These undecided, indifferent, or neutral voters had their ideas crystallized or decisively formed to vote for specific candidates after exposure to television broadcasts.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-4820-2.ch002

INTRODUCTION

The quality of a person's decision depends on the information available to him at the time. All things being equal, a rational person will make a better decision if he has access to quality information. Thus, an utterly disinterested person might be turned into a zealot if given the correct information. Television is an information channel routinely used by politicians, political parties, and sympathizers to reach voters. Apathetic citizens can make crystal clear decisions on who to vote for or against in any election if they have the correct information. The *crystallization effect* refers to most indifferent peoples' ability to make the right decisions free from any form of confusion or ambiguities based on the information they have. Television broadcasts can give different types of information that rouse and trigger the thoughts of, and then influence citizens' decisions who have registered to vote but have taken no further steps to participate in the elections. Indeed, Aririguzoh (2014) confirms that television broadcasts can influence voters in a presidential election.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some citizens may avoid participating in electoral campaigns and the processes of electing candidates into public offices because of their political ignorance, hostility, or plain indifference. This class of unconcerned voters often are not active members of any political parties, have no special attachments to candidates, and are disinterested in their campaigns. They are apolitical. They are not bothered that their voting can make a difference in electoral results. Mateus (2020) says they are silent: disengaged and disempowered until they arise to use same for power negotiations. Apathetic voters may cause major electoral result shifts if they decide to vote for a particular candidate at the proverbial last minute due to the information available to them.

Television broadcasts provide strategic pieces of information to these voters that can help them to form clear thoughts and make subsequent decisions on who to vote for. Esser and Pfetsch (2020) explain that political communication involves creating, shaping, disseminating, and processing information among politicians, the media, and citizens. The central premise is to encourage citizen participation. Television provides information about candidates and their political parties to voters. Its strength lies in its capability to reach millions of people simultaneously with electoral and campaign information. Some voters may not have direct access to the election contestants or even know the facts about them. Television gives them the privileges of identifying the candidates' faces, names, viability, and electability. However, Ely, Alexander, and Emir (2015) observe that viewers may see these as entertainment throughout a campaign.

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/crystallization-effect-of-television-broadcasts-on-nigerian-voters-during-a-presidential-election/275015

Related Content

Becoming Who You Are Through Authentic Organizational Communication
Ross Jackson (2021). *Effective Strategies for Communicating Insights in Business* (pp. 207-222).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/becoming-who-you-are-through-authentic-organizational-communication/278429

Past, Non-Story Narrative Film, and Nostalgia

Akihito Kanai (2019). *Post-Narratology Through Computational and Cognitive Approaches* (pp. 277-291).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/past-non-story-narrative-film-and-nostalgia/221856

Performing Arts Organizations' Communication Through Posters in Greece: A Semiotic Approach

Maria Kolokaand Eirini Papadaki (2023). *International Journal of Semiotics and Visual Rhetoric* (pp. 1-16).

www.irma-international.org/article/performing-arts-organizations-communication-through-posters-in-greece/319802

La Terra dei Fuochi: Cultural Labeling, Ecological Crimes, and Social (re)Action in Mediacratic Italy

Salvatore Giusto (2018). *International Journal of Semiotics and Visual Rhetoric* (pp. 15-28).

www.irma-international.org/article/la-terra-dei-fuochi/202473

Contemporary Populist Representation and Its Implications for Democracy: A Theoretical Assessment From a Realist Point of View

Renáta Ryoko Drávucz (2022). *Contemporary Politics, Communication, and the Impact on Democracy* (pp. 37-55).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/contemporary-populist-representation-and-its-implications-for-democracy/292680