

INFLUENCE OF TELEVISED PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE ON THE ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES IN THE 2011 ELECTION IN LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of televised presidential debate on the electoral performance of candidates in 2011 presidential elections in Lagos state. Survey research method was adopted and the method of data collection was multi stage sampling. A total number of 199 copies of questionnaire were administered. The findings revealed that the March 2011 televised presidential debate influenced the voting pattern of Lagosians but that along with the media there other factors such as peer groups, religion, ethnicity, family influence and political parties, responsible for voters' behaviour. Findings also revealed that the media can confer status on individual through constant appearance on programmes or news. On the basis of the findings therefore, it was recommended that the media should pay equal attention to event, issues and individuals affection various political parties.

INTRODUCTION

Communication Scholars and media experts believe that televised presidential debates have substantial and important effects, in that they can shift votes more than any other single action of the final electoral campaign. Some scholars however remain unconvinced that the televised presidential debates have any significant impact on voting behaviour but added that other variables interplay in the final decision electorates take. Again, many political communication experts and other scholars have argued over the extent of the influence presidential debates can exert on electorates in changing their voting decision in certain directions, it therefore becomes imperative to ascertain whether television does have the power to influence audience perception, whether presidential debates have a role in the decision making process of the electorate or not; and if the fact that the debate was televised, influenced the direction of voting.

A presidential debate is a platform for the presidential aspirants to reach out to the electorate and sell their visions in their manifestos. It is also one obvious channel through which the electorates

get information about the candidates' programs if elected into office (Shawn and Roberts, 2000:259). Yet, there is still a strong resistance to the notion that televised presidential debate influences voting pattern. The reach of television as a broadcast media is long indeed; they have come to serve as a major source of political information and impressions during election periods. But despite the reach of television, there is a need to find out if the reach of the television actually matches its effect on the electorate. It is necessary to find out if it actually has the power to "mould men's minds like clay" (Salant, 1962:339) thereby, changing or influencing voting behaviour. Another reason for paying attention to the subject of this study is that, much attention have not been paid to this aspect of the influence of televised debate on voting pattern by the academia. Therefore, there is a need to investigate this topic for the benefit of the academia. There is a need to find out if the direction of influence matches the eventual outcome of the presidential elections. To this end, the study will not examine past debates but is limited to the March 18th and 29th 2011 televised presidential debates. It will also be limited to residents of Lagos metropolis who are 18 years and above, that is those who are qualified to vote under the Electoral Act 2010 (No.6: A113). The study would be of immense value to various sectors of the society such as, the academia, the media, politicians and civil society.

Also, the study aim at providing answers to such questions as, whether the March 2011 televised debate influenced the voting pattern of Lagosians, whether there are other factors responsible for voting behaviours, whether the influence reflected in the election result and whether there is any way the media helped in influencing the voting pattern. Meanwhile, the study formulated and tested the following hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between televised presidential debate and voting pattern of Lagosians.

H₁: There is significant relationship between televised presidential debate and voting pattern of Lagosians.

H₀: There are no other factors responsible for voter's behaviour.

H₁: There are other factors responsible for voter's behaviour.

H₀: The influence of televised presidential debate did not reflect in the election result.

H₁: The influence of televised presidential debate reflected in the election result.

H₀: The media has not helped in influencing voting pattern.

H₁: The media has helped in influencing voting pattern.

However, one major limitation to carrying out this research study is that the population of this study cannot be generalized to the whole country, and as a result the outcome can only be inferred to states controlled by opposition party. Thus, the result of this study cannot be used to assume that the debate had the same effect on the electorates in other states of the country other than the one controlled by opposition party.

THE PHENOMINOLOGY OF PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

The importance of elections in any democratic society cannot be overemphasized. At least in the Western world, Africa and other developing countries, elections constitute one of the most peaceful and recommendable means of exchanging political power (Isola, 2010:vii). Scholars have also argued that, holding free and fair elections is the hallmark of building a democratic society. This is because election process is believed to determine who stays in office, who should be voted out of office and who should replace those voted out of office. The election process talked about here consists of various activities which include: political campaigns, political talks, political rallies, political advertisements and televised debates. One strong argument the scholars such as Fein et al (2007), put forward in favor of electoral debates is that, these debates are believed to help members of the public make up their minds by allowing them cut through the superficial front the candidate

presents in the campaigns and rallies which would not afford the electorate the opportunity to question some of the issues raised in their campaign manifestos.

Consequent upon the above analysis, one may therefore assert that presidential debates constitute one of the crucial events in election process. The reason for this assertion according to Wald and Lupfer (1978:342), Chapman and Palda (1984:208), is that presidential debate is an attempt at persuasive communication, where the voter takes into account the availability of the persuasive information presented by the aspirants when he/she is taking voting decision. Though Fein et al (2007), says that presidential debates can affect private voting behavior on election day when people will be answering to no one but themselves, it should be noted that some electorate seek systematic explanations of the presidential debate outcomes in the media particularly on television. Shawn and Roberts (2000).

The systematic explanation here refers to those programmes on the television and even radio that discussed extensively, some crucial issues raised by the aspirants during the debate. This is because popular accounts suggest that television is the most powerful medium for persuasion and communication. To buttress this point, Isola (2010), states that television has a powerful influence on the electorate, adding that through television, opinions and attitudes can be influenced. If presidential debates are in themselves an attempt to persuade voters to change their minds in favour of the aspiring candidates, then the use of television to convey or transmit the debate may therefore become imperative in determining the amount of influence the debates will have on the voting decisions of the electorate, because of its double power to present both sights and sounds.

While commenting on the effect of television in communicating information Onabajo (1999:32), citing Akpan (1988) avers that “television influences our perception of politics, religion, governance, fashion and culture”. According to Onabajo (1999), television is not just a mere transmission device, but a medium which brings its massive audience into direct relationship, with particular sets of values and attitudes. While some scholars agree on the power and influence of television on decision making, other scholars however specify that there are other variables that interplay in voters decision besides the persuasive communication received on television during the debate. Salant (1962:340), states that television is likely to have the least effect in terms of persuasion and conversion in the areas of deeply held beliefs. Also, Wald and Lupfer (1978:343) are of the opinion that televised communication at best has a limited impact on political attitudes.

Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008:87), citing Klapper (1960), on the other hand, present two generalizations about the effects of the media particularly television. According to them, television does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediating factors and influences. They further state that these factors are such that typically render television a contributory agent but not the sole cause, in the process of reinforcing the existing conditions. These variables or mediating factors includes the selective processes, that is, (the selective perception, selective and retention), group processes, group norms and opinion leadership. It is in this regard that we embarked on this study to take an expansive look at how the March 2011 presidential debate as beamed through the television, influenced voting decision and/or if there are other variables that voters take into account when performing their civic duty on election day.

TELEVISED PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE IN NIGERIA

Presidential debate was born in the United States out of a well-publicized Illinois senatorial debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas in 1858. This debate, with no moderator or panel, was the result of Lincoln following Douglas on his campaign trail around the state. The pair eventually took the stage together for three hours to debate the moral and economic quandaries posed by slavery. The effect of this senatorial debate reportedly won the seat for Douglas in the election that followed (wikipedia.com, 2012). Fifteen election cycles passed without much public argument between candidates as the dialogues were separate, usually in campaign speeches and within parties. This was as a result of the equal time provision of the Communications Act of 1934,

which required that candidates in national elections must have equal exposure in the media (Clark, 2012, howsuffworks.com). Reports showed that, candidates used the equal time provision to their advantage during the 20th century so much so that by refusing to debate; any candidate could effectively cripple a proposed debate. There was however, a demand for a debate for the candidates by the public and the next debate that ensued in 1948 marked the beginning of broadcast transmission of presidential debates.

The 1948 presidential debates, which was a radio transmission of a debate between Republican primary contenders, Thomas Dewey and Harold Stassen in Oregon, had a record breaking turnout of listeners. Between 40 and 80 million listeners tuned in to the radio broadcast as the two candidates thrashed out issues affecting America particularly the outlawing of communism in the United States.

The first televised presidential debate was held in May 1952 and was more of an intra-party debate featuring all the potential candidates of the Republican Party. The debate was hosted by the League of Women Voters (LWV), an organization that played an enormous role in shaping presidential debates in the United States. The Democrats then followed in May 21, 1956, with a televised presidential primary debate between Estes Kefauver and Aldai Stevenson.

Four years after intra-party televised presidential debates, the Student Government Association Council of the University of Maryland, hungry for a debate between both parties, invited both presidential candidates for a debate at the University of Maryland. During the televised presidential debate between Vice President Nixon, the Democrat nominee and Senator John F. Kennedy, the Republican nominee in 1960, the Congress suspended the equal time provision of the Communications Act of 1934, to allow a two-man debate (cnn.com, 2012). This particular debate laid a solid foundation for televised presidential debate in America and all over the world.

The transmission of political broadcasts through the media particularly television in Nigeria, started when Nigeria adopted the presidential system of government in 1979. With two parties, National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in contention of the highest position in the country, the ground and environment was set for the Nigerian broadcast media to organize the debate that many still regard as one of the best incisive and informative debates in the history of the country's political debate. The debate among the candidates, Alhaji Moshood Abiola of the SDP and Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the NRC together with their running mates, Alhaji Baba Gana Kingibe (SDP) and Dr. Sylvester Ugoh (NRC) were organized into phases. The first phase of the debate was for the pair of Late Chief M.K.O Abiola of the SDP, a well known philanthropist across the country against Alhaji Bashir Tofa, who was regarded as the underdog, who until his aspiration to the office of President was unknown by many Nigerians. The second phase of the debate was for the two running mates Alhaji Baba Gana Kingibe (SDP) and Dr. Sylvester Ugoh (NRC) to slug it out.

However, with the return of Nigeria to democracy in 1999, there have been attempts to organize televised debates for presidential aspirants, at least to provide the platform for the candidates to sell their visions in their manifestoes to the electorate.

The March 2011 televised presidential debate is one of the major political occurrences in Nigeria's history. The debate was carried out twice: March 18th, on the Network News 24 (NN24) and March 29th, on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). The NN24 debate, which was organized in conjunction with 30 international stations, attracted a large audience that included diplomats and had as its moderator, Kadaria Ahmed a journalist with NEXT, a Lagos based newspaper, centered on a number of issues like power generation, corruption in governance, oil sector and Niger Delta, education and health as well as Jos crisis and the zoning system in the nation's polity. The organizers noted that the debate was issue-based and issue-driven aimed at setting public agenda which may form the basis of policy formulation and direction of government (thisdaylive.com – March 18, 2011).

The NN24 debate had in attendance, the following presidential contenders, Chief Dele Momodu of the National Conscience Party (NCP), Mr. Nuhu Ribadu of the Action Congress Party of Nigeria (ACN), Governor Ibrahim Shekarau of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Professor Pat Utomi and Gen. Mohammad Buhari Rtd. of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). President Goodluck Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was conspicuously absent (thisdaylive.com - March 18, 2011).

The second debate which took place on March 29, was tagged 'the 2011 Presidential Election Debate' and was organized by the Nigeria election debate group, a wholly indigenous organization. This group is a broad based national coalition of the media, civil society organizations, professional associations including the public and private broadcast stations across the country under the umbrella of the Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria (BON), Newspapers Proprietors Association (NPA), Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE), Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Civil Liberty Organizations (CLO), Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE), National Council for Women Society (NCWS), the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and the National Coalition of Youth Professionals (NCYP). The only participant of this debate was Dr. Goodluck Jonathan (GCFR) (Uwadi, 2011:famouspeoplenews.com). Although there were many speculations as to why Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan - who was the incumbent president after the demise of the elected president, Late Umaru Musa Yar'Adua - deliberately avoided the first debate organized by NN24. Many observers also condemned the second debate which they say cannot be regarded as a true debate as there was no one for Dr. Jonathan to thrash issues with.

Out of the 63 political parties registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in 2011, a total number of 18 candidates ran for the office of the president in the April 2011 general elections amongst them, those who participated in the March 2011 televised presidential debate include: Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) – Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) – Ibrahim Shekarau, Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) – Mohammed Buhari and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) – Goodluck Jonathan.

FACTORS AFFECTING VOTING PATTERN

Overtime, scholars have carried out researches to find out the degree of the effect of the media, particularly television, on the audience behaviour. After much research and criticisms, results show that the media has minimal effects on audience behaviour as Anaeto et al (2008:87) citing Klapper (1960) state that there are other factors that interplay in audience behaviour. Furthermore, according to Oates (2008:91) citing Berelson (2000), says survey shows that electorates are more likely to be influenced by discussions with friends and family than what they hear and see on television. Apart from the kind of influence friends and family have on voter's decisions, there are other binding factors which influence voting behaviour. As recorded by Oates (2008:91) citing Campbell et al (1960), these factors can be best described by the model of voting behaviour.

Oates (2008:91) citing Campbell et al (1960), named this model as the 'funnel of causality'. This model helps in establishing the factors affecting voting behaviour. According to the model, voters' choice is like a large funnel, starting at the wide end, the votes are filtered through a series of sections of the funnel beginning with the socio- economic status and partisanship. This includes; age, religion, gender, education, ethnicity and income. This factor influences the kind of candidate the electorate would vote for. The presidential candidates would have to appeal to all these sociological factors in order to get them to vote in their favour. These sociological factors would in turn affect partisanship.

Partisanship: This basically has to do with the electorate's identification with the political parties. The political socialization of the electorate goes a long way to determine what party the electorate would vote for. According to Oates (2008:91), political parties can best find votes by determining the range of public opinion. While the media permeates politics at all levels, it is clear through this model that their only significant impact can be in the final stage of the voting process. This is because a voter's choice is linked to a long held social factors and beliefs and the television stands a

little chance of changing voting decisions in a short time Oates (2008:92). This goes further to say that, the electorates are not passive but active.

THE EFFECTS OF MASS MEDIA ON HUMAN BEHAVIOUR: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

There is no argument that the media (television) affects human behaviour. The degree of the effect and direction of effect however has been a contentious issue among scholars. While some argued in favour of limited effect others argue in favour of powerful effect. The influence the media has on voting pattern in an election can be better understood within a number of theoretical frameworks which expound the importance of the media in governance. According to McQuail (2005: 458) citing Bauer and Bauer (1960), a number of stages in the history of the field indicate some degree of ordered progression.

In the first phase, which extends from the turn of the century until the 1930s, the media were credited with considerable power to shape opinion and belief, to change habits of life and to mould behaviour more or less according to the will of the controllers. It was believed then that messages from the media produced automatic effects on its audience. The theory was articulated as the Magic Bullet Theory (Isola 2010:9). This theory was propounded based on the perceived power of the media to change behaviours due to messages sent out by the media. This was because during the First World War, propagandists from dictatorial states appeared to confirm that people were inclined to believe that the media was all powerful and this was used to their advantage (McQuail, 2005:458).

In the second phase, the theory of the all- powerful media was put to test to see whether the media really had this acclaimed power. Several researches were embarked upon by different scholars and most of them were on the influence of films on young people and children. Amongst the reports that came back on this research was Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) and Berelson et al. (1954), both cited in McQuail (2005:458), where they conducted series of investigation on the effectiveness of democratic election campaigns. Furthermore, Isola (2010:9) lends his voice when he stated that the outcome of these studies assigned a modest role to the media in producing effect, and described the media as incapable of singularly causing any major planned or unintended effects on the audience. McQuail (2005:458) citing Klapper (1960) sums up the conclusion of the various researches at this phase by saying that; Mass communication (media) does not ordinarily serve as a necessary or significant cause of audience effects, but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors. This statement by Klapper did not mean that the media had not been found to be without effects or influence; rather it implied that the media could only act substantially in concert with other social, political, economic and educational factors in shaping opinions, attitudes and behaviour under study and also in shaping media choice, attention and response on the part of the audience (Isola, 2010:10) and (McQuail, 2005:459).

The third phase of the progressive change of the theories on media effect had to do with rediscovering the all-powerful media. Scholars like Lang and Lang, as recorded by McQuail (2005:459), challenged the position other scholars like Klapper took on media impotence. One major reason for the reluctance in accepting a 'minimal effect' of the media is the arrival of television in the 1950s and 1960s. This new medium had even more power of attraction than its predecessors (newspapers and radio). Several investigations were carried out in which correlations were sought between degree of exposure to media stimuli and measured changes of, or variations in, attitude, opinion, information or behaviour taking account of various intervening variables. The result of this investigation marked what Noelle-Neumann (1973) called the 'return to the concept of powerful mass media' (McQuail, 2005:460). The media effects theory is central to understanding how the media (television) may or may not influence voting behaviour. At this juncture, this study would look critically at the two theories that directly affect the subject matter. These theories are; Agenda setting theory and Status conferral theory.

Agenda-Setting Theory: The idea of this theory, according to Davis (1991:237) citing Bernard Cohen, lies in the fact that “the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling people how to think about it”. According to him, the press affects the way we prioritize public issues through its power to channel public debate and this power is sometimes wielded as the agenda-setting efforts of political factors such as presidential aspirants (Davis, 1991:242). Two early researchers, Robinson and Sheehan, according to (Davis, 1991:243), argued that: “The press is far more than a conduit for the concerns and issues, it re-works and re-translates them. In the process of deciding each day which items to report and which to ignore, the editors of the news media guide our attention and elements in the larger political arena”. Also, the media agenda is likely to be adopted for issues where the media are the primary source of information for that topic. In the context of this research work, the television is the only means of viewing the presidential debate therefore the media was able to successfully set the agenda for Lagosians.

Status Conferral Theory: The basic assumption of the theory is that the media confers status on individuals by regularly featuring them. This simply means that the media focuses on those that are regarded as important personalities. It assumes that if they are not important, the media would not give them prominence in their coverage (Anaeto et al, 2008:91). The status conferral theory is a concept under the umbrella of the agenda-setting theory. This theory was propounded by Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton in 1948 and it refers to the amount of attention given to specific individuals by the media. Status conferral involves a lot of things one of which include name recognition. Name recognition is crucial to electoral success and the media plays a significant role in increasing name recognition for presidential aspirants. Also, there is a strong correlation between inter awareness and voter choices. This is trying to say, the more the electorates know the candidate; there is a great chance that the electorate would vote for that candidate. This is because few voters choose presidential candidates whom they know nothing about and prefer candidates about whom they possess some information and much of this information, comes from the media, especially through television coverage. Louw (2005:181) citing Boorstin (1971) states that to get a successful image in the media enough for the electorate to know the presidential aspirant and want to vote for him; it requires that the aspirant builds a profile with the media. That is, he finds his way to the media and tries to remain there. Also, to maintain this image in the media, constant exposure is required. A good example of good public image during the 2011 presidential campaigns was the nation’s tour embarked upon by Goodluck Jonathan. He toured the 36 states for his campaign and he constantly spoke to the electorate in every state through television and radio, thereby maintaining a good working media image with his electorate.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research method of gathering data. This method was considered most appropriate to conduct the research because; it was very effective in gathering the opinions of Lagosians on the March 2011 televised presidential debate. This goes further to say that the survey method is an excellent vehicle for measuring attitudes and orientation in a large population. Using the survey method provides a relatively realistic environment which can be used to investigate the influence of the televised presidential debate on Lagosians. This is because, Lagosians’ view or opinions on the effect of the March 2011 televised presidential debate on their voting pattern would greatly depend on their physical and social environment and through the use of the survey research method, the data was duly gathered.

Since the population of study has been identified as residents of Lagos State who are of voting age, the Multi- stage sampling technique was used to select a representative sample that will take part in the study. The procedure in picking the sample was divided into various stages. The study was carried out in each of the three Senatorial Districts. Simple Random sampling was used in picking local governments used. Simple random sampling according to Babbie (1989:185) is the basic

sampling method assumed in the statistical computations of social research. This method gives equal opportunity to every subject or unit in the population to be selected. The next stage of this design was to find out the number of Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Lagos State, and from the data available, there are 20 LGAs in Lagos State which include:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Agege | 6. Badagry | 11. Ikeja | 16. Mushin |
| 2. Ajeromi-Ifelodun | 7. Epe | 12. Ikorodu | 17. Odi-Olowo |
| 3. Alimosho | 8. Eti-Osa | 13. Kosofe | 18. Ojo |
| 4. Amuwo- Odofin | 9. Ibeju-Leki | 14. Lagos Island | 19. Somolu |
| 5. Apapa | 10. Iju-Ifako | 15. Lagos Mainland | 20. Surulere |

In using the simple random sampling method to select the number of LGAs to use for the research, the researcher assigned a single number to each element on the sample frame above. The researcher then wrote the number representing each LGA on 20 pieces of paper, rolled them up and put them in a covered bowl, shook the bowl and picked number 10 first representing Iju Ifako LGA. Without replacement, the researcher shook the bowl again and picked number 20 representing Surulere LGA.

In Surulere LGA, there are 4 major areas and they are: Aguda, Itire, Ijesa-Tedo and Ikate. In Aguda there are 67 streets, Ikate 54 streets, Itire 76 streets and Ijesa-Tedo 101 streets making a total of 298 streets. Out of these streets 4 were chosen with simple random sampling and they are; Alawode street, Enitan street, Sanusi street and Onipede street. In Iju Ifako LGA, there are three major areas and they are; Iju, Iju Ishaga and Alagbado. In Iju there are 61 streets, Iju Ishaga 25 and Alagbado 53 streets making a total of 139 streets. Out of these streets, 4 streets were chosen with simple random sampling and they are; Jonathan Coker street, Bamidele street, Taju Bello street and Olaniyi street. Altogether from both LGAs, the researcher worked with 8 streets.

The final stage of selection involved the selection of the number of houses to administer questionnaires. Systematic sampling according to Babbie (1989:185) involves selecting every “Kth” element in the total list chosen for inclusion in the sample and this is done with a random start, in this case the odd numbered houses were selected. In all 200 copies of the questionnaire was administered to 36 houses (25 questionnaires on each street), however 199 were returned.

Data Analysis: This focuses on the analysis of data obtained from the respondents. The aim of this analysis was to find out the influence of the March 2011 televised presidential debate on the voting pattern of Lagosians. The data are presented in frequency tables and bar charts and a total of 200 copies of the questionnaire designed for this study, were administered to the residents of Lagos state metropolis and the researcher received 100% response rate. During the course of analyzing the questionnaires, 8 of them were counted twice for a particular question (No. 7) because the respondents picked two options and 94 were not counted for a particular question (No. 10) because the respondents did not pick any of the options. Our data will be analyzed using chi-square test. Chi-square has been chosen for the analysis of this study because our data are qualitative in nature and Chi-square has been adjudged as the best non-parametric test for this type of data. The statistical analysis package that will be used in our analysis is SPSS. Our decision rule is to Reject H_0 , if $\alpha=0.05$ is less than p-value, otherwise do not reject H_0 .

RQ1: Was the March 2011 televised presidential debate able to influence the voting pattern of Lagosians?

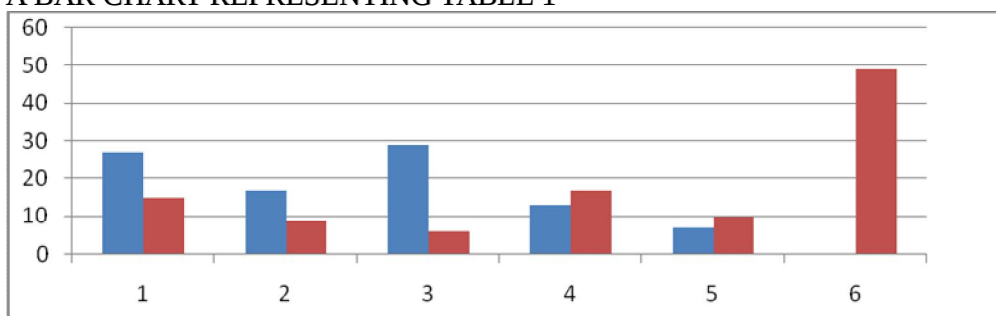
Table 1: respondents choice of party voted for

Party/ Responses	Yes	No	Total
PDP	27	15	42

CPC	17	9	26
ANPP	29	6	35
ACN	13	17	30
OTHERS	7	10	17
NO RESPONSE	0	49	49
Total	93	106	199

A cross tabulation table showing the effects of debates on respondents against party choice.

A BAR CHART REPRESENTING TABLE 1



From the above table, 93 respondents representing the electorates said the presidential debate influenced their voting pattern of party choice, while 106 respondents also representing the electorates said the presidential debate did not influence their voting pattern of party choice. It is therefore concluded that the March 2011 televised presidential debate did not influence the voting pattern of electorates judging from the responses of respondents based on their choice of party as a good number of respondents said the party they voted for was not as a result of the televised debated.

RQ2: ARE THERE OTHER FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR VOTING BEHAVIOUR?

Age	Peer group	Family influence	Ethnicity	Religion	Political Parties	Others	Total
18-30	29	17	5	4	30	29	144
31-50	11	10	9	5	14	22	71
51-70	1	0	1	3	3	4	12
70 above	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total	41	27	15	12	49	55	199

A BAR CHART REPRESENTING TABLE 2

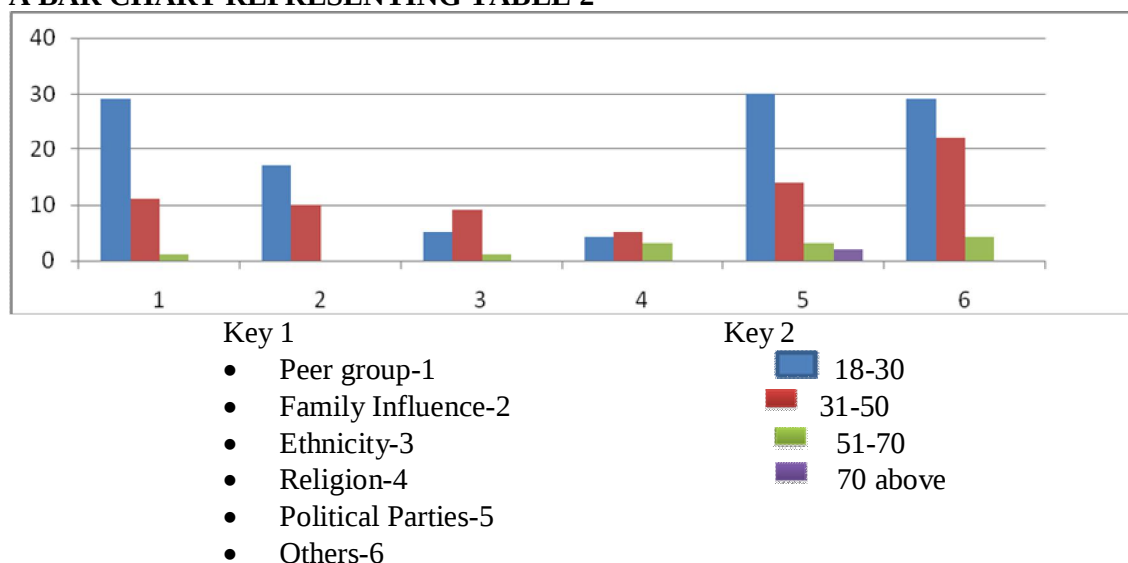


Table 3: Respondents' reason for the voted party of choice

LGAs	Reasons			Total
	Candidates reputation	Strength of the party	Sympathy for ethnicity	
Surulere	27% (n=53)	13% (n=26)	10% (n=21)	50% (n=100)
Iju Ifako	24% (n=48)	18% (n=36)	8% (n=15)	50% (n=99)
Total	50.8% (n=101)	31.2% (n=62)	18% (n=36)	100 % (N=199)

Source: field study 2014

From the analysis of table 2 above show that all the respondents agreed that there are other variables that interplay in audience decision. 144 respondents in the age range of 18- 30 said other factors such as peer group, family, ethnicity, religion; etc was responsible for voter's behavior. 71 respondents in the age range of 31-50 said there are other factors responsible for voter's behavior. Also, 12 respondents in the age range of 51-70 said there are other factors responsible for voter's behavior in the 2011 presidential elections, while 2 respondents in the age range of 70-above indicated that only political parties was responsible for voter's behavior in the elections. It is therefore concluded that there are other factors responsible for voters' behaviour as it is obvious from the responses of respondents in the data.

Also revealed in table three is that 1010, representing 50.7% of the respondents made their voting decision based on the political party candidate's reputation while 62 931% of the respondents based their voting decision based on the strength of the political party and 36% of the respondents attributed their decision to vote a particular party candidate. This clearly shows that though some voted on ethnic affiliation, majority voted on candidates' reputation which they say is vital to electing the right candidate into office.

The reputation the respondents referred to was based information from supplied by media coverage and records of the candidates' performances in offices held before or his/her reputation in the constituency of representation. The result shown in table three give credence to status conferral theory which states that the media confers status on individual by regularly featuring them (Ananeto, Onabajo and Osifeso, 2008:91).

Table 4: Party affiliations of respondents

LGAs	Political party					Total
	PDP	CPC	ANPP	ACN	others	

Surulere	18% (n=35)	3% (n=6)	4% (n=8)	20% (n=41)	5% (n=10)	50% (n=100)
Iju Ifako	14% (n=27)	4.5% (n=9)	4.5% (n=9)	20% (n=40)	7% (n=14)	50% (n=99)
Total	31% (n=62)	7.5% (n=15)	8.5% (n=17)	41% (n=81)	12% (n=24)	100% (n=199)

The data presented above revealed that 31% of the respondents belong to the political party (PDP) that eventually won the presidential election in Lagos state, 41% belong to ACN the ruling opposition party in Lagos, while 8.5% belong to ANPP, 7.5% belong to CPC while other political parties are categorized as others. But the voting pattern is shown in the table below.

Table 5: the political party respondents' voted

LGAs	Political parties					Total
	PDP	CPC	ANPP	ACN	Others	
Surulere	25% (n=49)	2% (n=5)	4% (n=8)	13% (n=26)	6% (n=12)	50% (n=100)
Iju Ifako	18% (n=36)	5% (n=10)	3% (n=6)	18% (n=35)	6% (n=12)	50% (n=99)
Total	43% (n=85)	7.5% (n=15)	7% (n=14)	31% (n=61)	12% (n=24)	100% (N=199)

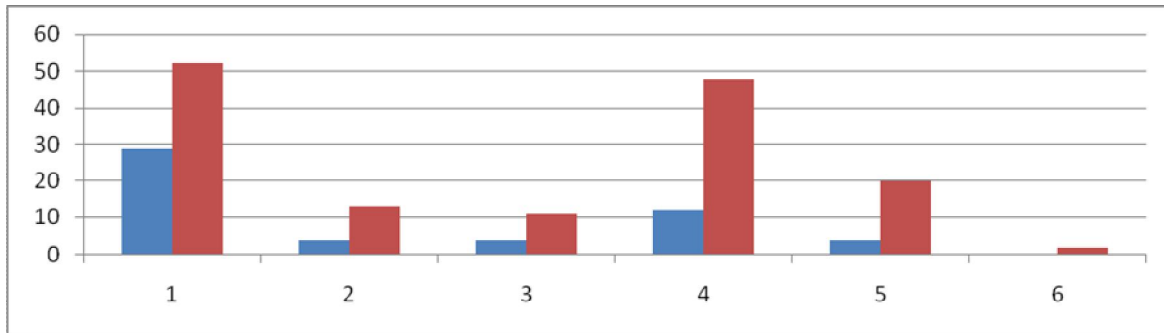
Data in table 5 above revealed that in both of the local government areas, respondents voted massively as 43 percent (85) of the respondents voted for PDP. ACN, which is the ruling party in the state, had 31percent of the total. These results correspond with the Independent National Election Commission released election result. The INEC showed PDP having 63.5percent of the total vote cast, ACN had 21.2 percent, CPC 9.4 percent, ANPP, 0.44 percent and other parties had 1.8 percent. By implication, ethnicity was not the reason the respondents voted the way they voted. Although they voted to some extent along party affiliations, but the overriding result showed that the respondents voted along what was revealed in table 3 which is perceived candidate's reputation.

RQ3: Did the influence of televised presidential debate reflect in the election result?

Table 6

Political parties	Yes	No	Total
PDP	52	29	81
CPC	13	4	17
ANPP	11	4	15
ACN	48	12	60
OTHERS	20	4	24
NO RESPONSE	2	0	2
TOTAL	146	53	199

A BAR CHART REPRESENTING TABLE 6



Key1:

PDP-1, CPC-2, ANPP-3, ACN-4, OTHERS-5, NO RESPONSE-6

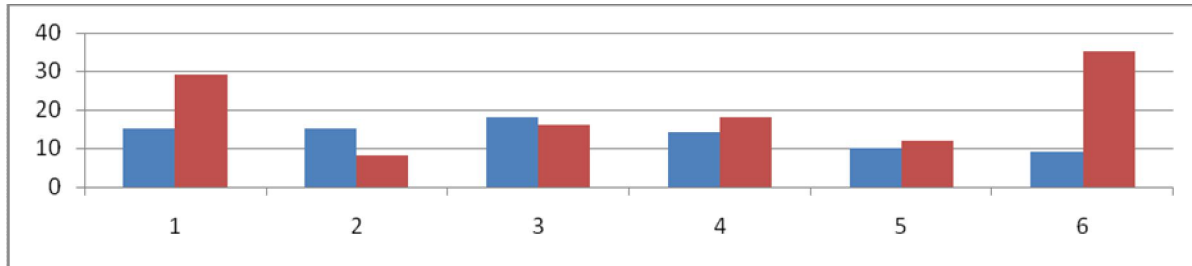
Key2: Yes ■ No ■

From the analysis of table 3,0 above, 146 respondents representing the political parties said the influence of the presidential debate reflected in the election results, while 53 respondents also representing the political parties said the influence of the presidential debate did not reflect in the election results. It is therefore concluded that the influence of the presidential debate reflected in the election results as it is obvious from the responses of respondents.

RQ4: In what ways has the media helped in influencing voting pattern?
Table 7: response to whether communication information need

Political parties	Yes	No	Total
PDP	15	29	44
CPC	15	8	23
ANPP	18	16	34
ACN	14	18	32
OTHERS	10	12	22
NO RESPONSE	9	35	44
TOTAL	81	118	199

A BAR CHART REPRESENTING TABLE 5



Key1:

PDP-1, CPC-2, ANPP-3, ACN-4, OTHERS-5, NO RESPONSE-6

Key2: Yes ■ No ■

From the analysis of table 4.0 above, 81 respondents representing the political parties (PDP, CPC, ANPP, CAN and other parties) said the media influenced the voting pattern of electorates while 118 respondents also representing the political parties said the media did not influence the voting pattern of electorates. It is therefore concluded that the media did not help in influencing voting pattern of electorates as it is obvious from the responses of respondents.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study centred on the influence of televised presidential debate on the electoral performance of candidates in the 2011 presidential elections in Lagos state. Findings revealed that the 2011 presidential debate did not influence the voting pattern of electorates. Findings also revealed that there are factors responsible for voters/electorates behaviour in the 2011 presidential elections. Findings further revealed that the influence of the presidential debate reflected in the election results and that the media did not in any way influence the voting pattern of the electorates in the elections.

Therefore, from the foregoing, it is obvious that this study has been able to showcase in various ways the influence of televised presidential debate on the electoral performance of candidates in the 2011 presidential elections in Lagos state. It is therefore, hoped that this study will be of immense assistance to political parties, electorates, media practitioners, stakeholders in government and researchers who may want to embark on a similar study in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since there are other factors that influence the voting pattern of the presidential debate, it is therefore advisable that: vv d dda d

- The media should uphold the dictates of objectivity and equal participation by giving all parties opportunity to defend or sell there programmes.
- Future debates would have credence if it is not organized by government or government media.
- Political media debate is not the same as media chat with the president as such future the debate should assume the concepts of debate – presenting all candidates irrespective of their incumbency in government.
- Televised debate should not be the only parameter for exposing media audience to political candidate competence, rather there should be other programmes on television such

as discussion, vox pop among others that would further explained issues identified in the debate to the audience.

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