

**Thematic Narratives in Political Parties' Advertisements
and Voters' Decision in the 2015 Electioneering Campaigns
in Nigeria**

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Abstract

Several subliminal issues defined advertisements deployed during the 2015 electioneering campaigns by political parties and their agents. Relying on Riessman's typology of narrative analysis as well as Mead's Symbolic Interactionism theory and Schramm's model, the study narrates and analyzes inherent themes in the advertisements by political parties as viewed by voters. It evaluates voters' perception toward these themes. The focus group discussion and the survey designs were used to establish correlation between the themes and

voters' perception as well as voting patterns. It used the Pearson statistics and narrative analysis to deconstruct data drawn through a multistage design technique from 600 voters across Nigeria. The study confirmed high incidence ratio on the identified themes of shaping political agenda, polarization of ideologies and culture, anger and despair as well as alienation of the electorate as emerging thematic narratives. Other themes with high incidence are entrenching hatred, increasing civic literacy, declining voters trust in political communication and institutionalizing ethnic symbolism. The thematic narratives of economic uncertainty and paradigm reorientation recorded average-incidence ratio. It concluded that significant relationship exist between voters' perception of the identified themes and voting patterns during the campaigns.

Keywords: Themes, Narratives, Advertisements, Perception, Political parties, Electioneering campaigns