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**Participatory Democracy and Communication of Development:
A Case Study of Political Campaign Advertisements in
Nigeria's 2003 Election**

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KEYWORDS Dividends; modernity; infrastructures; dominant; paradigm

ABSTRACT The improvement in the quality of life of the people is the centrepiece of development and proponents of the dominant paradigm in development communication identify a participant lifestyle as a prerequisite for modernity. With this background in mind, the paper examines attempts by Nigerian politicians particularly those seeking a second term in office, to influence voting behaviour in the run off to the 2003 elections. Fully conscious that the active participation of the electorate would determine their electoral fortunes, they resorted to "democracy dividends/continuity" advertisements where they chronicled their attempts to add value to the lives of the people in specific and graphic ways. This paper critically examines these adverts and charts a road map towards making participatory democracy a more effective harbinger of development.