

Political Campaign Communication in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Cameroonian Experience in a Global Perspective

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Abstract

Within the last two decades, countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been experiencing significant political; socio-economic; cultural and technological changes. Among others, these changes have resulted in major political struggles to entrench liberal democracy and significant alterations in the communications landscape of these countries. In such transitional contexts, how do political parties communicate to and with their electorate during campaigns? How and why has political campaign communication changed in sub-Saharan Africa within the last two decades and how similar or different are these processes compared to the experiences of Western democracies?

These are the key questions addressed in this dissertation with a focus on post-1990 Cameroon. Drawing largely from interviews with Cameroonian politicians; political party officials; traditional rulers and more than three decades of press cuttings, this dissertation provides a novel theoretical framework to examine political campaign communication and its changes as well as detailed empirical responses to the questions above in ways that enrich and advance comparative understandings of the similarities and differences in political campaign communication processes in transitional and established democracies.