

Academic praises voter publicity campaign

By Moira Holden

A GOVERNMENT publicity campaign to persuade people to vote in next month's municipal elections has won praise from a media expert.

Community politics expert Ernest Chui, of the University of Hong Kong's department of social work and social administration, said the campaign was more sophisticated than previous ones.

The television commercials were successful, he said, because they appealed to voters' "behavioural" instincts.

"The advertisement — which shows people picking up their registration card and identity card and going to the polling station after work — is convincing and leads people to simulate it," Mr Chui said.

The commercial, which fea-

tures the many services of the urban and regional councils, was also effective because it projected "a kind of blackmail", warning that facilities would disappear if voters did not exercise their right to vote, he added.

The government has earmarked \$9 million for the campaign to lure Hong Kong residents to cast their vote in the 5 March elections.

Mr Chui said: "Publicity this time is much better than it was for the District Board elections in September.

"This time the urban and regional councils are more political, so the government is trying to appeal to the adult constituents."

Last September, Mr Chui heavily criticised the District Board election publicity campaign targeting youth voters.