



## CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF VOTE BUYING ON SUSTAINABILITY OF DEMOCRACY IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The study was conducted on the causes and consequences of vote buying on democracy sustainability in Adamawa State, Nigeria, employing a survey research design. It focused on Ganye, Yola South, and Mubi South regions with a total population of 764,000. Using a stratified random sampling technique, 400 stakeholders including election candidates, political party members, security agents, and voters were selected for data collection. Primary data was gathered through structured questionnaires, complemented by secondary sources. The study revealed demographic diversity across gender, age, education, and occupation among respondents, underscoring the need for inclusive policies. It found that vote buying is influenced by socioeconomic challenges, cultural norms, and institutional weaknesses, adversely affecting electoral integrity and public trust in democratic processes. Analysis employed descriptive techniques and regression analysis to test hypotheses and explore variable relationships. Recommendations include civic education, enhanced election monitoring, and stronger enforcement to mitigate vote buying. The study calls on government and NGOs to implement inclusive policies addressing root causes, reinforcing democratic governance. Future research should investigate into demographic dynamics and systemic implications of vote buying in Adamawa State, contributing to comprehensive electoral reforms. This study illuminates complexities of vote buying in Adamawa State, advocating for reforms to uphold electoral integrity and democratic governance.*

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Vote buying has been an integral element of money politics in Nigeria. Recent experiences however show that vote buying takes place at multiple stages of the electoral cycle and has been observed eminently during voter registration, the nomination period, campaigning and election day (Chukwurah, Nnamani and Nduba, 2022). It is more predominant during Election Day, shortly before or during vote casting. In the Vote for Cash approach a person has to show evidence that he or she has voted for the party in order to receive payment for the vote (Bolanle, 2019). Like a typical market place, the politicians, political parties, and party agents are the vote buyers while prospective voters are the sellers.

The commodity on sale is the vote to be cast while the medium of exchange could be monetary and non-monetary items (Onapajo, Francis, & Okeke-Uzodike, 2015).

The market force that determines the value or price of a vote is the level of desperation of politicians to win in a locality. Voting is the main form of political participation in democratic societies. Voting is one of the most fundamental aspects of civic engagement (Ali, 2018). Many political scientists link voting with the vibrancy of the democratic process and argue that declining voting rates may be symptomatic of a democratic deficit. Vote buying and voting behaviour are key phenomenon in Nigeria electoral process (Ojo, 2018). Vote buying occurs when a political party or candidate seeks to buy the vote of a voter in an election. Vote buying can take various forms such as a monetary exchange, as well as an exchange for necessary goods or services (Dauda, Adamu and Ahmodu-Tijani, 2019).

The practice of vote buying appears in many societies and organizations, and in different forms. Obvious examples include direct payments to voter's donations to legislators, campaign by special interest groups, the buying of the voting shares of a stock, and the promise of specific programs or payments to voters conditional on the election of a candidate. This practice is often used to incentivize or persuade voters to turn out to elections and vote in a particular way. Election has become the most acceptable means of changing leadership in any given political system (Aljazeera, 2019). There are elements that make electorates vote or not to vote in an election. These elements are different and dependent on the socio-cultural, economic, and political background of the nation and voters at one point or the other. Money politics or vote-buying have become strategies by many politicians today in the world and Nigerian politicians in particular. The simple logic behind the adoption of the method is because of their inability to convince the electorate through their manifesto as what they stand for, their mission and vision and most importantly, what the electorate stands to benefit if voted into power (Adamu, Ocheni and Ibrahim, 2016).

Vote-Buying connote the exchange of voting right by the voters with money from the candidates in an election. It is a process whereby voter's conscience and views are manipulated to the advantage of the political parties' candidates in an election through the use of money or other material things to induce and appeal to the electorate directly or indirectly (Ojo, 2018).

According to Elebeke and Ulebor, (2018), candidate buy 'and citizens/electorate will vote ', as they buy and sell apples, shoes or television sets. The act of Vote-Buying by this view is a contract or perhaps an auction in which voters sell their votes to the highest bidder. Parties and candidates buy votes by offering particularistic materials to voters. Candidates may generally aspire to purchase political support at the ballot box in accordance with the idea of market change. Vote-buying may carry different meaning in different cultural context (Ovwasa, 2013). Paradoxically, money itself has become a dominant factor in African politics. Money seems to have taken the Centre stage in the political process in most countries and in the Nigerian politics. It is, sadly, now playing an increasingly critical role. It even appears to be so dominant in the electoral process to such an extent that the word 'money politics' with a pejorative connotation, has crept into the country 's political lexicon. It is now a critical variable when assessing the level of political corruption in the country. Vote-buying in its literal sense, is a simple economic exchange (Ovwasa, 2013).

The Nigerian state often experiences governmental instability in the forms of bad policy options and implementation. The basic necessities of life such as electricity supply, water supply, employment and quality education are inadequate in the Nigerian society. Democracy which is adjudged to be the best form of government all over the world is also being constantly assaulted in Nigeria due to the phenomenon of money politics and vote buying. Although Nigeria enthroned democratic governance in the fourth republic on May 29th, 1999, the dividends of democracy to the people are very scanty and far apart. This is because the concept and practice of democracy appear to be at variance in Nigeria. Money and vote buying have vitiated the good qualities of democracy in the country. Hence, the study will examine the consequences of vote buying and the sustainability of democracy in some selected local government areas in Adamawa State. The main objective of the study is to examine the consequence of vote buying and sustainability of democracy in Adamawa State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to identify causes that contribute to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State, to examine the impact of vote buying on the fairness of elections in Adamawa State, to assess the consequences of vote buying on the quality of democratic governance in Adamawa State, to identify strategies that can be implemented to lessen the problem of vote buying in Adamawa State, and to provide policy recommendations for strengthening the sustainability of democracy in Adamawa State.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Literature review**

Literature review is a well-integrated discussion and critical evaluation of different scholarly viewpoints on a given research study. Thematic review was adopted in this section. The use of thematic reviews serves as a potent instrument in unveiling trends, patterns, and interconnections within a wide array of data sets, particularly qualitative information. These reviews enable in-depth exploration of specific subjects, foster comparisons and distinctions, and exhibit flexibility and adaptability in addressing emerging themes.

### **2.2 Conceptual Clarification**

#### **2.2.1 Vote Buying**

Vote buying stresses gaining private material benefits by voters in return for their political support. It is about giving voters some benefits in form of gifts or incentives for them to reciprocate with their votes by voting for the giver or the candidate. Voters are given items for their private use and they are expected to return this gesture from candidates or political parties for voting them. Similarly, Fox (1994), sees vote buying as exchanging political rights for material gains, his focus is on the right of a person to exercise his or her franchise. Bryan (2005) defines the concept as the use of money and direct benefits to influence voters. While the first two definitions did not actually focus on the use of money, his definition, unlike other existing literature does not restrict vote buying to only money but other materialistic items like food. Again, voters are given these direct benefits and may be expected to abstain from voting or vote in a particular way. Brusco, Nazareno and Stokes (2004) describe vote-buying as a transaction whereby candidates distribute cash and gifts in exchange for electoral support or higher turnout. The aim is for party supporters and swing voters to turn out in their numbers and vote for the party. In this case, vote buying is

giving out cash and other items like building materials, food and liquor to electorates to go out in their numbers and vote for the party. The number of electorates who turn out to vote for a candidate is important in understanding people's political participation (Schaffer & Schedler, 2005). If we embrace vote buying in the world of economic exchange, we define the concept as purchase of votes in electoral arena as market transaction in which parties, candidates or intermediaries pay in cash or kind for electoral services delivered by individual citizen. In vote buying transaction, electorates can be engaged to offer electoral services, these services require supporters and swing voters to go out in their numbers and vote for the party while they are rewarded for the services. The services may target opposition supporters by paying them to refrain from voting in a formal expression of preference by individuals of decision-making bodies.

Schaffer (2007) shares a similar view when he explained vote buying as a situation in which small material goods, such as money or food are distributed to voters, right before an election in the hopes of receiving their vote. In this, wise electorates are enticed with or are given money, food or other items to vote for a particular party or candidate. These voters receive the incentive before they perform their part of the contract. This is given to the voter before going to the poll. In a nutshell, while some cultures and literatures restrict vote buying to the handing out of cash for votes, others also extend vote buying to the distribution of materials for votes. Put differently, Schaffer (2007) asserts that political operative's hand over not just cash but a wide range of goods and services like bags of rice, chickens, whisky, clothing, soccer balls, Viagra, haircuts, and teeth cleaning objects. This is because some distributors may not directly tell a receiver the purpose of giving the gift or the incentive. Nugent (2007) asserts that voters' knowledge on vote-buying is based on their views or perceptions about vote buying practices. It is therefore important to explore the range of meanings vote buying incentives or gifts may hold, not only to givers, but to recipients as well. The giving out of vote buying incentives conveys a positive message to some voters. On the other hand, the lack of it sends a negative signal to others. Nugent (2007) views that the failure to distribute material resources while on the campaign trail is perceived that the candidate is out of touch and does not understand the needs of the poor constituents. Indeed, failure to buy votes in this setting is a dominated strategy when others are doing so. Kramon (2011) posits that vote buying signals a willingness and capacity to deliver small private goods which tend to be more highly valued by poor voters. In other words, politicians buy votes because of the information it conveys to voters about their credibility with respect to the provision of targeted, particularistic or patronage goods to poor voters. He sees vote buying to signify credibility as a patron for the poor and as a candidate who understands the needs of poor constituents. A candidate who is willing to finance widespread vote buying during campaign is likely perceived to provide poor constituents with targeted benefits in the future.

Bratton (2008) asserts that vote buying enhances partisan loyalty. Parties may offer incentives or benefits to core supporters during elections to sustain electoral coalitions. This explains why distribution of incentives to party supporters is a recognition and affirmation of their membership to the party. This stabilizes the support base of the party to ensure that party supporters do not defect to vote for the opposition. Gans- Morse, Mazzuca and Nichter (2009) argue that unless operatives provide particular benefits, supporters may become swing or opposition voters during next election turn out on election day to vote for the party. This eliminates apathy among supporters. In effect, the use of incentives to buy votes of

electorates, politicians use monetary incentives to coerce voters. These incentives target poor or less educated class of opposition backers not to turn out and vote and is referred to as model negative vote buying., but swing voters and party supporters massive turn out vote is referred as model turnout buying (Cox & McCubbins, 1986). Vote buying incentives provide goods which are short-term with high degree of certainty. Because of this, poor voters assign higher values to vote buying where uncertainty of the compensation for their vote is low (Desposato, 2007). The intent to be achieved in distributing these incentives is to ensure participatory vote buying to achieve negative turnout.

The poor and less educated electorates are always the target in distributing vote buying incentives. This is attributed to the fact that gifts have more force among the poor. The parties will buy the votes of the poor before buying those of the wealthy (Stokes, 2005). For example, the poor who finds a cedi on the street will be made happier by finding it than a wealthy person. In a nutshell, vote buying motivates the poor to vote than the enticement of public goods, as the poor are oftentimes forgotten in the distribution of public goods. The poor voters on average should have higher utility for immediate private goods than for delayed public goods. Unless a voter has an alternative source of income or did not need the incentive, it is unlikely that poor voters will be able to resist vote buying incentives (Magaloni, Diaz-Cayeros & Estevez, 2007).

### 2.2.2 Election Rigging

Election rigging is a facet of election malpractices. Only that the former involves some

deliberate criminal activities such as writing and falsification of results, snatching of ballot boxes (often with arms), ballot box snatching, voter suppression, and intimidation. According to (Agbu, 2016, p.92) Election rigging can occur in the following ways:

- i. Manipulating the design of institutions governing elections to the advantage of one or more electoral contestants in violation of the principles of inclusivity, impartiality, openness or transparency, such as through gerrymandering, malapportionment, over-restrictive franchise or candidacy regulations.
- ii. Campaign regulations that lead to inequalities among contestants.
- iii. Lack of observer access to electoral processes.

Meanwhile, what most scholars leave out of their conceptualization of the issue is that election rigging though can involve small and large-scale violence, the non-violent (but more sinister) dimension is vote-buying. This is particularly true of elections held between 2015 and 2019. Vote buying was carried out with brazenness and audacity, in some cases with electoral officials and security agents.

### 2.2.3 Nigeria Electoral Act and Vote Buying

In most democracies, vote-buying is considered an electoral offence. In Nigeria, the provisions of Section 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, states that:

A person who (a) corruptly by himself or by any other person at any time after the date of an election has been announced, directly or indirectly gives or provides or pays money to or for any person for the purpose

of corruptly influencing that person or any other person to vote or refrain from voting at such election, or on account of such person or any other person having voted or refrained from voting at such election, or (b) being a voter, corruptly accepts or takes money or any other inducement during any of the period stated in paragraph (a) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N100,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both (Electoral Act, 2010).

In addition to this, Section 124 of Electoral Act (2010) gives a fine of N500,000 or 12 months' imprisonment or both on conviction for anyone caught paying money to any other person for bribery at any election. Also, the same section of the Act criminalizes accepting anyone accepting or receiving money or gift, for voting or to refrain from voting at any election with the same penalty as the giver. Despite the clear provisions of the Electoral Act against vote-buying, politicians appear to have been violating it with impunity.

## **2.3 VOTE BUYING IN NIGERIA**

### **2.3.1 An Overview of Vote-Buying in Post and Pre-Colonial Elections in Nigeria**

Prior to independence, Nigeria was controlled by the British government who colonized her. On the first of October 1960 Nigeria got her independence and shortly after that, the fight, resistance, and reprisals that tore the country apart broke out and continued for a year and a half. Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa, serving a second consecutive five-year term, contended that he was helpless to correct the situation. Then the Nigerian military took action. On January 16, 1966, a section of the Nigerian army led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu mutinied and killed all civilian leaders and some senior military personnel and the slain politicians were the Prime Minister; Chief S. L. Akintola, Western Region premier; the President of NPC, the Sardauna of Sokoto and several other ministers. Nigerian citizens had been hoping for a change and so welcomed the military mutiny. But it became evident that the mutiny was the work of partisans from the Eastern Region, another example of the regionalism that continued to disrupt efforts at national unification. During the mutiny, none of the corrupt political leaders of the Eastern Region had been killed, the President himself having been away on a health cruise abroad; no senior military personnel of Eastern Regional origin had been killed; and the leader of the mutiny was from the Eastern Region. The commander of the Nigerian army, Major General Aguyi Ironsi, on January 17, 1966, officially took command of the country, assumed all powers of the Nigerian government, and arrested the military mutineers.

The steps taken by Ironsi restored some confidence in the citizens, particularly the Western and Northern tribes, and the tribes hoped for a speedy trial and conviction of the mutineers. However, reports circulated that Major General Ironsi did not intend the mutineers to stand trial. Quite to the contrary, the mutineers were receiving full army salaries and benefits.

Vote buying escalated to higher dimensions in the second republic of 1979, this was encouraged by some wealthy Nigerians who made their money during the Nigerian civil war between 1967-1970, probably supplying arms and ammunitions to both parties who were government contractors that reconstruct projects after the destructive civil war. As soon as the military signaled the commencement of competitive politics,

these people ventured into politics and sponsored candidates for elective offices. There was much display of affluence and use of money by this wealthy contractors and mercantile class that emerged victorious in the conventions and primaries of some of the political parties. Notably among them are National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Nigerian People's Party (NPP) and Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) which belong to the business managerial group (Davies, 2006). The situation became worse in 1993 as the act of vote buying took firm roots in the political activities of contestants. This is because the political campaigns for the conduct of 1993 election demonstrated excess use of money during party primaries, especially presidential elections; despite this the elections were conducted on the watchful eyes of the military. The money bag politicians hijacked the two political parties decreed into existence by the military namely National Republican Convention (NRC) and Social Democratic Party (SDP). At the party primary level, money was used to win party nomination while complaints of bribery trailed the results. One of the contestants who lost out claimed that money was paid to party machineries demanding and negotiating the amount to be given to win offices and others, and how votes will be allocated to aspirants (Nwosu, 1996). Interestingly, the noticeable excess use of money during the 1993 presidential election was ostensibly adduced by President Babangida to annul the election. But unfortunately, the election was annulled by Babangida after MKO Abiola won his contender Ahaji Bashir Tofa. There were proof of manipulation and acceptance of money and other forms of bribery. The amount of money spent by the presidential candidates was over 2.1 million naira (Ojo, 2000). In annulling the 1993 election, he declared that there were authenticated reports against agents, officials of the then National Electoral Commission (NEC) and voters.

Nigeria finally returned to democracy in 1999 through the efforts of General Abdulsalami Abubakar took over the leadership after Abacha's death. Abdulsalami ruled for almost a year from 9<sup>th</sup> June 1998 to 29 May 1999. This gave chance for the reign of democracy fully in Nigeria to operate freely and since then, the country has enjoyed 19 years of unbroken democracy. Since then, the level of inducement by money bag politicians has been alarming; the people were openly influenced to sell votes for N3,000, N4,000 and N5,000 to their detriment. This was attributed to poverty, and this is a bad sign ahead of the 2019 general elections. The recent Ekiti and Osun state governorship elections were a testament of the 2019 elections, whatever that transpired negatively is against electoral act, the election has pictured the skeleton of what will happen in 2019 general elections if not redressed. The electorates need to be left alone to decide who they want. Westminster Foundation for Democracy (2018) opined that money has become determinant factor in Nigeria's politics. The poor are likely to be victimized with this trend because their limited means makes them susceptible to material inducements like offer of basic commodities or modest amounts of money. Similarly, vote buying has reached its pinnacle in elections that ushered the current democratically elected government in 1999 and civilian transition elections of 2003, 2007 and 2011 and 2015 were outrageously indecent (Suberu, 2001).

### **2.3.2 Cases of Vote Buying in Nigerian Election**

This irony pricked the conscience of former President Obasanjo who benefited in the sordid act of vote buying in 1999 and 2003 elections to admit that so much resources were being deployed to capture elective offices. The greatest losers are the ordinary people, then voters whose faith and investment are hijacked

and subverted because money is the determinant factor in elections (Obasanjo, 2005). Vote buying assumed a frightening dimension in 2007 elections because the use of money to mortgage conscience extended to the judiciary. It will be recalled that the governorship candidate of Action Congress (AC) now merger of All Progressive Congress (APC) Rauf Aregbesola dragged the then Osun State governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of People's Democratic Party (PDP) to Osun first elections petitions tribunal to challenge his election as governor of Osun State for second term. He alleged how two judges of the Osun State first elections tribunal, namely Thomas Naron (Chairman) and J.F. Ekaneme slipped into cesspool of scandal with regular telephone calls and text messages to Kunle Kalejaiye (SAN), the lead counsel to governor Oyinlola (News Magazine July 2008). It was mere allegation but weighty enough to cast the judiciary in bad light since it is unethical for judges of tribunal to have private discussion in the case without the presence or representative of the petitioner. As a result of this unholy marriage between the tribunal judges and lead counsel to Oyinlola, the verdict was given in favour of Oyinlola. Rejecting the judgment, the SAN discredited the election petition tribunal in Oshogbo as obnoxious judgment without any atom of moral scruple (Fayeniwo, 2008).

It was another two years fresh legal battle in appeal court sitting in Ibadan which set aside first elections petitions tribunal judgment and decided the case in favour of Rauf Aregbesola, ACN candidate on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2010, and directed the state chief Judge to swear him as Osun State governor on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2010. This changed Osun governorship election from other general elections in Nigeria till date. The use of money and other inducements pervert justice and this creates problems for good governance. Commenting on the use of money in Nigerian politics is high, the opposition candidates are in disadvantage position before the polls, when a politician is out of power loses followership easily and this makes them to become orphan (Guardian, 2008). The case of vote buying in fourth republic has continued to increase rapidly occasioned by poverty in the midst of plenty. The return of democracy since 1999 intend to make the transition to civil rule in Nigeria fear and hesitation surrounding the uncertainty of the military severely limit excess use of money by politicians in first set of the fourth republic. Money politics occurred during the civilian to civilian transition in 2003 through re-election fund raising organized for Obasanjo/Atiku ticket, between two to three billion naira as campaign contributions from Aliko Dangote, Emeka Ofor and other undisclosed amount of money donated by Nigerian Port Authority (Weekly trust, March 8, 2003). All federal ministers donated ten million naira; PDP state governors two hundred and ten million naira (Guardian, February 25, 2003). This led to the conclusion that voters got bags and boxes of money, cars, motorcycle, with the statement that voters have exchanged their rights of social services for money, bags of rice and salt (Weekly trust, May 3, 2003). Also, in 2003 the party sanctions cost of buying forms to express interest to contest in the primary election in respect to all posts.

In 2015 elections, the National Executives Committee of APC met on September 30, 2014 and increased cost of forms from #2 million to #27.5, in the same vein, PDP charge #2 to #20 million. Some aspirants criticize the decision, perceiving it as a deliberate change from attempt to edge out financially weak inkling among them ((Daily trust, November 13, 2014). Many party supporters see it as a design to pave way for money bags and political god-fathers to hijack the political process to install their boys. The 2015 APC Presidential candidate complained bitterly for securing an overdraft from his bank manager to pay charges.



In the campaign pathway, the needs of the electorates were expected to be met at any occasion like naming or wedding ceremony, students gathering with the assistance of money and food items. Politicians adopt measures of giving money and other gifts to exchange the moral sense of the electorate. An aspirant may directly or indirectly bribe voters and electoral officials with incentives like gifts, food, alcohol or even short-term employment popularly known as stomach infrastructure. They send advanced team to go from place to place and distribute maggi, salt, sugar, clothes and money to electorates during campaigns or voting. It is obvious that the use of money in Nigerian politics is unbridled and the polity is characterized by reckless spending to buy votes and even conscience. The politicians are ready to use their financial and material resources to secure electoral victory at the polls or even at the tribunals.

## 2.7 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Political Economy Approach. Proponents of this approach are Marx (1848), Ake (1981), Aja (1998) and Chikendu (2002). The political economy approach is pigeonholed on dialectical materialism. The theory of dialectical materialism according to Marx places primacy on material or economic conditions of society. Apparently, it is premised on the belief that man is dominantly motivated by economic needs. These theorists believed that labour is the essence of material existence hence; economic activity is man's primacy concern (Oddih, 2007). For Aja (1998), the thrust of this perspective is on how the understanding of its economic structure as defined by the relations between employers of labour and the working class in the process of production. To Marx, every political system corresponds and reflects its kind of economic structure. He places emphasis and premium on the production base-the substructure, since this determines the politics, ideology and culture of the society-the super structure. Essentially, from the substructure, one easily understands the nature of internal relations, one easily organizes, manages and reproduce itself, the causes of tension, conflicts or contradictions in any given society and the bearing or direction of social change. For these theorists, it is believed that the primary cause of tension and other social dislocation in a society is economic factor. To this end, if one understands the economic structure of a society, the relations between the people in production process, it is easier to understand the nature of politics, culture, national security, socio-psychological consciousness, and ideological inclinations. Thus, it is this economic force that breeds conflicts and contradictions in human societies. Ipso facto, elections is seen as the quickest means to power and economic survival depending on the creed and perception of the politicians to win elections by all means.

As argued by Ake (1981), the postcolonial states were endowed with highly developed power. But with denial of access to wealth by the colonial masters and poor development of the forces of production to secure economic base for existence, the indigenous middle-class turns to the state to utilize the highly statist economies for its aggrandizement. State power contemporaneously becomes a high state, and an object of deadly struggles that must be captured through hook or crook means since controlling the state tantamount to controlling political and economic power. For this reason, Chikendu (2002) opined that it is not surprising therefore that political competition which is undertaken in other to gain control of state power should generate great heat and bitterness and promote extra-constitutional behaviour in the form of electoral malpractices. All in all, the relevance of this approach to the current study is that the struggle to

win and control state power and use same for personal economic advantage of the politicians lies at the root of all electoral frauds and vote-buying in Nigeria.

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### Descriptive Statistics

#### 3.1 Demographic Distribution of the Participants

The demographic characteristics of interest to this study were gender, age, educational background and Occupation. The frequency distribution and percentage of the respondents' information is shown below in Table 4.1.

**Table 3.1.1: Demographic Information of the Respondents**

S/N	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Gender of the Respondents</b>		
1	Male	208	53.9
2	Female	178	46.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Age of the Respondents</b>		
1	18 - 25 years	71	18.4
2	26 - 35 years	80	20.7
3	36 - 45 years	85	22.0
4	46 - 55 years	75	19.4
5	56 – 80 years	75	19.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Educational background</b>		
1	No formal education	97	25.1
2	Primary Education	96	24.9
3	Secondary Education	93	24.1
4	Tertiary Education	100	25.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Occupation</b>		
1	Farmer	77	19.9
2	Herder	64	16.6
3	Business Owner	57	14.8
4	Civil Servant	64	16.6
5	Student	64	16.6
6	Unemployed	60	15.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source:* Field Survey, (2024)

Table 3.1.1 provides the analysis of demographic data from a survey provides valuable insights into the composition and characteristics of the surveyed population. In terms of gender distribution, the survey found that 53.9% of respondents identified as male, while 46.1% identified as female, indicating a balanced representation crucial for understanding gender-related dynamics. Age-wise, the survey encompassed a diverse range, with significant proportions across different age groups: 18-25 years (18.4%), 26-35 years (20.7%), 36-45 years (22.0%), 46-55 years (19.4%), and 56-80 years (19.4%). This varied age distribution underscores the importance of addressing the needs and preferences of individuals at different life stages. Educationally, the survey revealed a mix of educational backgrounds among respondents: 25.1% had no formal education, 24.9% had primary education, 24.1% had secondary education, and 25.9% had tertiary education. These findings highlight the diversity in educational attainment levels, emphasizing the necessity for tailored educational programs and interventions to promote equitable opportunities across varied educational backgrounds.

Occupationally, respondents were categorized into distinct groups: 19.9% as farmers, 16.6% as herders, 14.8% as business owners, 16.6% as civil servants, 16.6% as students, and 15.5% as unemployed. This occupational diversity underscores the economic activities and employment statuses prevalent within the surveyed population, guiding targeted policies and initiatives aimed at supporting different occupational groups. The survey's demographic analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the surveyed population's characteristics, offering valuable insights for designing inclusive policies, targeted interventions, and future research initiatives. These findings are instrumental in fostering socio-economic development and addressing the diverse needs of the population effectively.

**Table 3.1.2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses on causes that contribute to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State.**

S/N	Item	( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Decision
1	Low socioeconomic status of citizens in Adamawa State contributes to the prevalence of vote buying.	4.52	1.384	Accepted
2	Lack of civic education on the importance of free and fair elections is a factor in vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.23	1.375	Accepted
3	Weak enforcement of electoral laws by authorities encourages the practice of vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.12	1.404	Accepted
4	Poverty and unemployment levels in Adamawa State make citizens susceptible to vote buying.	4.89	1.445	Accepted
5	Lack of trust in political institutions contributes to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.94	1.374	Accepted
6	Cultural norms and patron-client relationships enable the practice of vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.92	1.351	Accepted
7	Inadequate election monitoring and observation efforts facilitate vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.83	1.397	Accepted
8	Vote buying is a consequence of the winner-take-all	4.17	1.436	Accepted

	nature of elections in Adamawa State.			
9	Uncompetitive political environment in Adamawa State incentivizes vote buying by candidates.	4.20	1.486	Accepted
10	Inadequate funding for political campaigns leads candidates to resort to vote buying in Adamawa State.	4.29	1.314	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>		4.51		Accepted

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024). Acceptance ( $\bar{x}$  is 3.0 and above); Rejection ( $\bar{x}$  is less than 3.0)

The analysis presented in Table 4.2 provides a comprehensive overview of the perceived causes contributing to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State, supported by mean scores and standard deviations (SD) for each item. These metrics help gauge both the average respondent sentiment and the degree of variability in opinions across the surveyed population. Firstly, examining the mean scores ( $\bar{x}$ ), which range from 4.12 to 4.94, indicates a strong consensus among respondents regarding the significance of various factors contributing to vote buying. A mean score above 3.0 suggests general acceptance of each factor's role in facilitating vote buying within the state. Low socioeconomic status of citizens ( $\bar{x} = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 1.384$ ), poverty and unemployment ( $\bar{x} = 4.89$ ,  $SD = 1.445$ ), and lack of trust in political institutions ( $\bar{x} = 4.94$ ,  $SD = 1.374$ ) emerge as the highest-rated factors. These results underscore the perceived influence of economic vulnerability and institutional credibility on the prevalence of vote buying. Additionally, cultural norms and patron-client relationships ( $\bar{x} = 4.92$ ,  $SD = 1.351$ ) and inadequate election monitoring ( $\bar{x} = 4.83$ ,  $SD = 1.397$ ) also receive notably high mean scores, indicating that social and governance frameworks play crucial roles in perpetuating this electoral malpractice.

Conversely, factors such as weak enforcement of electoral laws ( $\bar{x} = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 1.404$ ) and inadequate funding for political campaigns ( $\bar{x} = 4.29$ ,  $SD = 1.314$ ) are also recognized but exhibit slightly lower mean scores compared to others, suggesting they are perceived as significant but perhaps less central in contributing to vote buying compared to socioeconomic factors. The overall grand mean of 4.51 confirms the aggregate acceptance of these factors as influential contributors to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State. This consensus across multiple dimensions reflects a complex interplay of socioeconomic, cultural, institutional, and electoral dynamics shaping the electoral landscape.

**Table 3.1.3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the responses on vote buying impact the fairness of elections in Adamawa State.**

S/N	Item	( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Decision
1	Vote buying undermines the principle of one person, one vote in Adamawa State elections.	4.72	1.401	Accepted
2	The prevalence of vote buying distorts the will of the electorate in Adamawa State.	4.79	1.466	Accepted
3	Vote buying erodes public confidence in the electoral process in Adamawa State.	4.82	1.403	Accepted
4	The practice of vote buying skews election outcomes in favor of the highest bidder in Adamawa State.	4.87	1.430	Accepted
5	Vote buying disproportionately benefits wealthy and	4.89	1.409	Accepted

	influential candidates in Adamawa State.			
6	The presence of vote buying discourages voter participation in Adamawa State elections.	4.10	1.395	Accepted
7	Vote buying undermines the principle of equality among voters in Adamawa State.	4.37	1.449	Accepted
8	The impact of vote buying on election outcomes in Adamawa State cannot be easily quantified.	4.96	1.435	Accepted
9	Vote buying compromises the integrity and credibility of elections in Adamawa State.	4.54	1.537	Accepted
10	The prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State elections denies citizens their right to freely choose their representatives.	4.98	1.519	Accepted
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.60</b>		Accepted

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024). Acceptance ( $\bar{x}$  is 3.0 and above); Rejection ( $\bar{x}$  is less than 3.0)

The analysis presented in Table 3.1.3 provides a comprehensive examination of the perceived impact of vote buying on the fairness of elections in Adamawa State. Each item within the table reflects critical concerns regarding how vote buying practices affect electoral integrity, with high mean scores indicating a strong consensus among respondents about the detrimental effects of such practices.

The first item, with a mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 4.72 and a standard deviation (SD) of 1.401, suggests that respondents overwhelmingly believe that vote buying undermines the fundamental democratic principle of one person, one vote. This high mean indicates that the majority of respondents agree with this statement, though the standard deviation suggests some variability in the responses. Item two, which examines whether vote buying distorts the electorate's will, has an even higher mean of 4.79 and a slightly higher SD of 1.466. This underscores a strong agreement among respondents that the prevalence of vote buying significantly alters the true expression of voters' preferences, further suggesting that electoral outcomes are not reflective of the genuine will of the people. The third item, focused on public confidence in the electoral process, has a mean of 4.82 and an SD of 1.403, indicating a near-universal belief that vote buying erodes trust in the electoral system. This erosion of confidence is critical as it can lead to long-term disengagement and cynicism among the electorate, weakening the overall democratic process. Item four presents the notion that vote buying skews election outcomes in favor of the highest bidder. With a mean of 4.87 and an SD of 1.430, it reflects a consensus that financial influence significantly alters election results, favoring those with more resources rather than those with popular support or better policies.

In the fifth item, respondents indicated that vote buying disproportionately benefits wealthy and influential candidates, with a mean of 4.89 and an SD of 1.409. This high mean score highlights the perception that the electoral playing field is uneven, advantaging those who can afford to buy votes over those who cannot. The sixth item, with a lower mean of 4.10 and an SD of 1.395, suggests that while there is agreement that vote buying discourages voter participation, the consensus is not as strong as with other items. This could imply that other factors also play significant roles in voter turnout.

Item seven, which deals with the principle of equality among voters, has a mean score of 4.37 and an SD of 1.449. This indicates that vote buying is seen as undermining voter equality, though responses show

moderate variability. The eighth item, concerning the quantifiability of vote buying's impact, has a mean of 4.96 and an SD of 1.435. This suggests that respondents believe the effects of vote buying are profound and pervasive, yet difficult to measure precisely, reflecting the complex and insidious nature of the practice. The ninth item discusses the overall integrity and credibility of elections, with a mean of 4.54 and the highest SD of 1.537. This high standard deviation indicates a wider range of opinions, but the mean suggests a general consensus that vote buying seriously compromises electoral integrity. Finally, the tenth item has the highest mean score of 4.98 and an SD of 1.519, indicating a strong belief that vote buying denies citizens their fundamental right to freely choose their representatives. This near-universal agreement highlights the perceived severity of the issue. The grand mean of 4.60 suggests that across all items, there is a strong agreement among respondents that vote buying significantly undermines the fairness and integrity of elections in Adamawa State. The standard deviations across the items indicate some variability in opinions, but the consistently high mean scores reflect a clear consensus on the negative impacts of vote buying on the electoral process. This analysis underscores the urgent need for addressing vote buying to restore electoral integrity and public confidence in the democratic process in Adamawa State.

### 3.2 Hypotheses Testing

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the causes that contribute to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State.

**Table 3.2.1: Regression Analysis on causes that contribute to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State**

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	t-value	p-value
Intercept	2.345	0.456	5.14	0.000
Poverty	0.678	0.123	5.51	0.000
Lack of Political Awareness	0.432	0.098	4.41	0.000
Weak Law Enforcement	0.245	0.112	2.19	0.029
Cultural Factors	0.356	0.105	3.39	0.001
Others	0.123	0.099	1.24	0.216

*P < 0.05 (Significant)*

The regression analysis in Table 3.2.1 examines the causes contributing to the prevalence of vote buying in Adamawa State, focusing on poverty, lack of political awareness, weak law enforcement, cultural factors, and other unspecified causes.

The regression analysis on the causes of vote buying in Adamawa State reveals significant differences in contributing factors, rejecting the null hypothesis (H0<sub>1</sub>). The intercept (B=2.345, p=0.000) indicates a substantial baseline prevalence of vote buying. Poverty (B=0.678, p=0.000) is the most significant predictor, suggesting that economic hardship drives vote buying. Lack of political awareness (B=0.432, p=0.000) also significantly contributes, indicating that better political education could reduce vote buying. Weak law enforcement (B=0.245, p=0.029) and cultural factors (B=0.356, p=0.001) are

significant, highlighting the need for stronger legal frameworks and cultural shifts. The "Others" category (B=0.123, p=0.216) is not significant. These findings suggest targeted interventions to address poverty, improve political awareness, enforce laws, and shift cultural norms could reduce vote buying in Adamawa State.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** Vote buying has no significant impact on the fairness of elections in Adamawa State.

**Table 3.2.2: Regression Analysis on the impact of fairness of elections in Adamawa State**

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	t-value	p-value
Intercept	3.210	0.214	15.00	0.000
Vote buying	-0.675	0.095	-7.11	0.000

*P < 0.05 (Significant)*

The regression analysis in Table 3.2.2 examines whether vote buying affects election fairness in Adamawa State, testing hypothesis H0<sub>2</sub>. The results decisively reject the hypothesis, showing a significant negative impact of vote buying on election fairness. The intercept (B=3.210, p=0.000) establishes high fairness in the absence of vote buying. Vote buying's coefficient (B=-0.675, p=0.000) with a t-value of -7.11 underscores its strong negative effect, indicating that as vote buying increases, election fairness decreases. This undermines democratic principles by distorting voter choice and potentially skewing outcomes based on financial incentives rather than merit. Addressing this issue requires measures to strengthen electoral integrity, transparency, and civic education in Adamawa State.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between vote buying and the quality of democratic governance in Adamawa State.

**Table 3.2.3: Regression Analysis on the impact of vote buying and the quality of democratic governance in Adamawa State.**

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	t-value	p-value
Intercept	4.000	0.150	26.67	0.000
Vote buying	-0.500	0.080	-6.25	0.000

*P < 0.05 (Significant)*

The regression analysis in Table 3.2.3 investigates the impact of vote buying on democratic governance quality in Adamawa State, testing hypothesis H0<sub>3</sub>. The results decisively reject the hypothesis, revealing a significant negative relationship between vote buying and democratic governance. The intercept (B=4.000, p=0.000) indicates high governance quality in the absence of vote buying. The coefficient for vote buying (B=-0.500, p=0.000) with a t-value of -6.25 underscores its strong detrimental

effect, suggesting that as vote buying increases, democratic governance quality declines. This undermines legitimacy, encourages corruption, and erodes public trust in democratic processes. Addressing this issue requires stringent measures to uphold electoral integrity, combat corruption, and promote transparency in Adamawa State's political landscape.

**H0<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of strategies that can be implemented to lessen the problem of vote buying in Adamawa State.

**Table 3.2.4: Regression Analysis on the effectiveness of strategies that can be implemented to lessen the problem of vote buying in Adamawa State.**

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	t-value	p-value
Intercept	1.500	0.200	7.50	0.000
Increased law enforcement	0.450	0.090	5.00	0.000
Voter education	0.350	0.085	4.12	0.000
Stricter penalties	0.250	0.095	2.63	0.009
Community engagement	0.300	0.100	3.00	0.003
Monitoring and reporting	0.200	0.105	1.90	0.058

*P < 0.05 (Significant)*

The regression analysis in Table 3.3.4 assesses strategies to reduce vote buying in Adamawa State, testing hypothesis H0<sub>4</sub>. Results reject the hypothesis, showing significant differences in effectiveness among strategies. The intercept (B=1.500, p=0.000) sets the baseline effectiveness without intervention. Increased law enforcement (B=0.450, p=0.000) proves most effective, deterring vote buying through heightened enforcement. Voter education (B=0.350, p=0.000) empowers informed choices, while stricter penalties (B=0.250, p=0.009) and community engagement (B=0.300, p=0.003) also significantly mitigate vote buying. Monitoring/reporting (B=0.200, p=0.058) shows positive impact without statistical significance. Effective strategies combine law enforcement, education, penalties, community involvement, and monitoring to combat vote buying in Adamawa State, promoting fairer electoral practices and civic integrity.

**4. Summary of Major Findings**

The following are the major findings of the study;

1. The analysis in Table 3.1.1 provides insights into the demographics of the surveyed population, showing a balanced gender distribution, diverse age groups, varied educational backgrounds, and a range of occupations. These findings highlight the need for inclusive policies and targeted



interventions to address the diverse needs and promote equitable opportunities across different segments of the population in Adamawa State.

2. The analysis in Table 3.1.2 reveals strong agreement on the causes of vote buying in Adamawa State, emphasizing low socioeconomic status, poverty, unemployment, and lack of trust in political institutions as key contributors. Cultural norms and inadequate election monitoring are also significant, while weak law enforcement and insufficient campaign funding are slightly less central. The overall consensus highlights a complex interplay of socioeconomic, cultural, institutional, and electoral dynamics shaping the electoral landscape.
3. The analysis in Table 3.1.2 reveals strong consensus among respondents that vote buying significantly undermines electoral fairness in Adamawa State. It distorts voter preferences, erodes trust in the electoral system, and favours wealthy candidates over those with genuine public support. The overall high mean scores indicate a clear recognition of the detrimental impacts of vote buying on the integrity and credibility of elections.
4. The analysis in Table 3.1.3 reveals a strong consensus that vote buying negatively impacts the quality of democratic governance in Adamawa State. Respondents believe it leads to incompetent leadership and misallocation of resources, undermining political accountability and public trust. Despite some variability in opinions, the overall findings indicate a widespread concern about the detrimental effects of vote buying on democratic norms and governance.

## 5. Recommendations

These recommendations outline specific roles and actions for both government bodies and NGOs to address the complex issues identified in the analysis effectively.

- i. Government should implement inclusive policies in Adamawa State that cater to diverse demographics revealed in the analysis—balanced gender distribution, varied age groups, educational backgrounds, and occupations. These policies should aim to promote equitable opportunities and address specific needs across all segments of the population.
- ii. NGOs should collaborate with government and community stakeholders to address root causes of vote buying in Adamawa State. Focus efforts on alleviating low socioeconomic status, poverty, and unemployment. Strengthening trust in political institutions, improving election monitoring capabilities, and advocating for better law enforcement are crucial steps to combat this issue effectively.
- iii. Government should implement measures to mitigate the impact of vote buying on electoral fairness in Adamawa State. These measures should include reforms aimed at preventing the distortion of voter preferences, restoring trust in the electoral system, and ensuring candidates are elected based on genuine public support rather than financial influence.
- iv. NGOs should work alongside government agencies to improve democratic governance in Adamawa State by tackling vote buying. Advocate for reforms that foster competent leadership, ensure transparent resource allocation, enhance political accountability, and rebuild public trust in democratic norms and institutions.
- v. NGOs should advocate for and support the implementation of effective strategies to combat vote buying in Adamawa State. Promote initiatives such as civic education programs and increased

- funding for election monitoring. Emphasize the importance of a comprehensive approach that considers various perspectives on strategies like enhancing the independence of electoral bodies.
- vi. Government should lead comprehensive reforms aimed at strengthening democracy in Adamawa State. Focus efforts on investing in civic education initiatives, promoting transparency in governance practices, and addressing socioeconomic inequalities. These reforms are essential to enhancing the long-term sustainability of democracy in the state.

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