



## EFFECTS OF POVERTY ON VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE 2023 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION OF ADAMAWA STATE

### ABSTRACT

*This study is on the effect of poverty on people's ability to vote in the Adamawa State 2023 governor's race. In democratic systems, political participation is crucial, yet socioeconomic variables frequently cast doubt on voters' moral and legal conduct during valid elections. The study uses a mixed-methods approach that includes survey procedures carried out with structured questionnaires along with the examination of pre-existing data sources. The study utilized probability sampling to create a representative sample and statistical techniques where specifically, regression analysis was applied to assess the correlations between political engagement and poverty. The regression analysis revealed that poverty has a statistically significant effect on voting behavior, with a coefficient of 0.058. This means that as poverty increases, voting behavior scores increase slightly. However, the result indicates that, poverty significantly affects political participation; most respondents agreed that voter socioeconomic status affects election outcomes and that poverty has a negative impact on voter turnout and indeed influence on vote.*

**Keywords:** Political, Participation, Corruption, Democracy, Elections

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between socio-economic factors and democratic participation forms a crucial nexus that shapes the essence of electoral processes which has bearing good governance and stability of a polity. Against this backdrop, the year 2023 Gubernatorial General Elections in the three senatorial districts of Adamawa State, nestled within the bounds of Adamawa State polity, stand as a pertinent case study. This exploration delves into the dynamic relationship between poverty, corruption, and political participation within this region, unraveling the profound implications they hold for the democratic fabric characterized by peaceful elections but with malpractice and violence at collation and result declaration. By examining how these factors intertwine, we can illuminate the multifaceted challenges that both citizens and policymakers encounter as they endeavor to foster a robust and inclusive electoral system in the face of complex societal realities.

According to Yiaga Africa, a Non-Government Organization report on Nigeria's General Elections (2023), posited that Nigeria's democratic landscape with regular elections have become an enduring hallmark.

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The 2023 general election marked a significant test of Nigeria's democratic integrity, being the seventh consecutive general election in a span of 25 years of uninterrupted transition of civil-civil democratic practice. This election served as a litmus test for the nation's deepening democratic principles and practice. Notably, the Presidential and National Assembly elections were conducted on the 25th of February 2023; while, the Governorship and State Assembly elections, initially slated for the 11th of March 2023, were eventually held on the 18th of March 2023, following a one-week postponement by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC, 2023).

Williams, (2021) opined that the World Bank defines corruption as the “abuse of public office for private gain” while Transparency International (TI) views corruption as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.” Others like as Ekiyor, (2009), cited in Williams, (2021); in his broad view of corruption defined it as the unlawful use of official power or influence by an official of the government either to enrich himself or further his course and/or any other person at the expense of the public, in contravention of his oath of office and/or contrary to the conventions or laws that are in force. For, democratization it means pervasion of the electoral processes.

The discourse surrounding poverty, corruption and political participation is multifaceted and layered, as illuminated by Oguniya (2009), referenced in Victoria's work in 2018. This perspective emphasizes on a spectrum of activities, spanning from illegal and illicit behaviors to irregular and unprincipled actions. This comprehensive view underscores that corruption resonates not only as a legal concern but also as a moral and political quandary.

The perception of a corrupt political system emerges as a crucial aspect. A system is labeled as corrupt when public sentiment overwhelmingly perceives it as such. Moreover, corruption in politics becomes synonymous with a violation of the public's interests. It is encapsulated by the misuse of public resources or the leveraging of illegitimate forms of political power by public or private entities. As such, corruption becomes inherently intertwined with the realm of politics.

Corruption manifests when governmental authority is exploited for private, group, or sectional gains that deviate from legitimate purposes. This entails the exchange of influence and authority by political leaders and might extend to the bestowing of favors, irregularities in campaign financing, and even electoral manipulation. This practice represents an endeavor to amass personal wealth at the expense of the broader public good, as emphasized by Lipset and Lenz (2000), cited in Victoria et al (2018).

On the other hand, Poverty means being unable to afford to meet the minimum needs that are deemed reasonable by the standards of the society in question (as cited by Ravallion, 1992 in Rowntree, 2014, p.3). Our definition of poverty implies that there are needs for basic goods and services alongside social participation. The cost of a minimum standard of living within any society depends on the extent to which goods and services are provided by the state or the market, social norms; and the price of food and other goods while Political participation refers to voluntary activities undertaken by the mass public to influence public policy, either directly or by affecting the selection of persons who make policies. Examples of these activities include voting in elections, helping a political campaign, donating money to a candidate or cause, contacting officials, petitioning, protesting, and working with other people on issues (Uhlener, 2015).

The transition towards what could be aptly termed as civil governance was triggered and enabled by the substantial mobilization of both the affluent and the underprivileged segments of society. The fervor and grandeur with which this transition was welcomed underscored this phenomenon. However, sooner than anticipated, a post-honeymoon phase emerged as an aftermath of this process. This effect was founded on the failure of the democratic administration to deliver on its pledged democratic benefits. The populace had anticipated that democracy would not only grant freedom but also enhance the social and economic circumstances of the people factors that motivate democratic engagement. Instead of elevating the socio-economic welfare of the citizens, Nigeria's democracy has become an additional burden for the less fortunate. Contrary to bestowing democratic advantages, it has exacerbated poverty and nearly institutionalized corruption, resulting in the diminishing of the initial enthusiasm accompanying the nation's democratization and a notable decline in democratic involvement (Gilbert *et al.*, 2015, p.114.).

Recognizing that various local government areas within Adamawa State may display differences in poverty levels, perceptions of corruption and voting behavior, this study attempts to scientifically investigate these variations. Understanding localized distinctions is crucial, as it can inform the development of targeted interventions and policies aimed at enhancing political participation and safeguarding the integrity of the electoral system. In essence, this research aims to uncover the intricate relationship between poverty, corruption, and voting behavior within the context of the 2023 gubernatorial election, with the ultimate goal of offering evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and electoral authorities.

The objective of this research is to examine the effects of poverty on voting behaviour in the 2023 gubernatorial election of Adamawa State. Specifically, the following are research objectives: To determine the extent to which poverty and corruption affect voter turnout in the specified local government areas, examining these factors influence political participation. To assess the implications of poverty and corruption on the democratic process in Adamawa State, considering their potential impacts on electoral integrity.

This paper is structured into five sections. Section one is the introduction, followed by literature review as section two which deals with the conceptual overview on poverty, political apathy, crisis of legitimacy, voting buying and selling. Furthermore, it reviewed the conceptual overview on corruption, perspectives of official corruption, political participation, perspectives on political corruption, voting behavior and theoretical framework. Section three, is the methodology which employed a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative procedures within a cross-sectional research design; while section four is the analysis of results and discussion of the relationship that exists between Adamawa State's voting patterns and poverty in the framework of the 2023 governor's race. Finally, section five is the conclusion and recommendations of the paper.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section of this study navigates the intellectual landscape surrounding the intertwined themes of poverty, corruption, and political participation within the context of the 2023 Gubernatorial General Elections in Nigeria's Mubi-North, Yola North and Numan Local Government Areas. This study critically engages with a wealth of scholarly works, theoretical frameworks, and empirical insights that

collectively illuminate the intricate relationship between these factors. By examining past research and thought-provoking perspectives, this section aims to contextualize the current study within the broader academic discourse, thereby providing a foundation for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of findings. Through this comprehensive survey of existing knowledge, the literature review endeavors to uncover gaps, generate insights, and contribute to the ongoing scholarly dialogue surrounding the multifaceted dynamics that shape political engagement in regions grappling with the complexities of poverty and corruption.

## 2.1 CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

### Poverty

Defining poverty has remained a subject of ongoing debate and divergence among scholars in the fields of social sciences. This has led to the emergence of differing perspectives on how to conceptualize and assess poverty. Some scholars advocate for a definitive threshold that separates poverty from non-poverty, while others advocate for a more contextual approach that considers the prevailing standards of living within a specific society (Oke *et al.*, 2015).

From an economic standpoint, (as cited by Obadan 1997 in Oke *et al.*, 2015); suggests that poverty can be understood as a situation characterized by low income and or limited consumption. This perspective often serves as the basis for establishing poverty lines, which represent the income or consumption values required to obtain essential nutrition and life necessities. Accordingly, individuals are categorized as poor when their measured standard of living, assessed through income or consumption patterns, falls below this poverty line. The poverty line functions as an arbitrary benchmark that delineates individuals experiencing poverty.

A common classification asserts the existence of two primary categories of poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute poverty refers to a state in which individuals lack fundamental necessities such as adequate food, shelter, clothing, and essential healthcare. Relative poverty, however, adopts a more subjective viewpoint, suggesting that individuals' perception of poverty can vary based on comparisons with others. Under relative poverty measures, a certain income level is established, with individuals falling below it considered as living in poverty in relation to their peers.

Exploring the Nexus of Poverty within Nigeria's Democratic Engagement as cited by Oscar Lewis's (1963), in Gilbert *et al.* (2015, p.119.); individuals tend to exhibit limited democratic participation. It is only when individuals break free from the cycle of poverty that they begin to actively engage in democracy, demanding a role and supporting it. Thus, addressing widespread poverty becomes crucial to instilling attitudes and behaviors that align with democracy. Poverty, along with insecurity and lack of education, does not contribute to robust democratic citizenship. In response to evident flaws and tensions within Nigeria's present democratic rule, public dissatisfaction became evident shortly after the 1999 elections. This discontent emerged as citizens perceived that existing democratic structures did not align with public interests and opinions. Over time, a political culture and structure evolved that excluded a significant majority from the democratic process. As we have discussed, it's clear that the economic and social welfare of individuals and society are central to democracy. Beyond socioeconomic status

influencing participation levels, individuals assess the decision to participate democratically based on a cost-benefit analysis (as cited by Alapiki, 2004 in Gilbert *et al.*, 2015, p.119.). Notably, an individual's material circumstances consistently determine their level of political participation and conscience in democratization, around which other variables revolve. Importantly, the foundation shapes the superstructure, and the dominant culture, including the political realm, is shaped by the prevailing economic class.

The Nigerian state, under its custodians seems to have evidently fallen short of their duty to enhance citizens' lives. The impoverished now adhere to Maslow's the first "Hierarchy of Needs," physiological need, prioritizing their unmet necessities over the seemingly "luxurious democratic participation" that fails to address their immediate needs. The deliberate perpetuation of poverty restricts the political arena to the advantage of the ruling elite. Money, essentially the material conditions of life, becomes a means to access the cultural and material resources necessary for effective democratic participation. For instance, money enables quality education, which in turn raises awareness and equips individuals to process and decipher political information for informed choices. Lacking proper education, and often dealing with a substandard educational system that produces uncritical thinking, a majority of Nigerians grapple with a state of "false consciousness" about their existence. Their capacity to comprehend and engage with complex, abstract, and intangible subjects like politics is limited (Gilbert *et al.*, 2015). Within the constraints of space and time, let's briefly examine the impact of poverty on democratic participation through the following manifestations:

### **Political Apathy**

The nature of Nigeria's political system and its state apparatus contributes to a sense of detachment and indifference towards democratic participation. The skewed political structure and the influence of the political elite create barriers that hinder effective engagement in democratic processes. The commercialization of politics further exacerbates this issue, turning the political landscape into a marketplace where financial resources dictate influence. This commodification of politics results in the exclusion of the majority of citizens from active participation, as the focus is on securing financial support from wealthy individuals and political godfathers who seek profitable returns rather than public service. Consequently, this disempowers the general populace, fostering a culture of apathy and disinterest in political affairs (Gilbert *et al.*, 2015, p.119.).

### **Crisis of Legitimacy**

The period since the return to democracy in Nigeria in 1999 has highlighted the challenge of fostering democracy within a context of widespread poverty. The active participation of citizens is integral to the essence of democracy and governance. However, the same citizens are often marginalized and politically marginalized, leading to a prevailing sense of apathy. When citizens believe that their interests are not significantly represented in public decisions and when the political process fails to serve the public, as articulated by Rousseau (1762) in Gilbert *et al.* (2015, p.119.); The legitimacy of Nigeria's democracy is called into question as the majority remains disenfranchised and disempowered. Overcoming the current legitimacy crisis necessitates a concerted effort, particularly from the impoverished population, to advocate for the strengthening of political institutions in the country.

## Vote Buying and Selling

The commercialization or marketing of politics has introduced the phenomenon of vote buying and selling. This economic transaction involves voters selling their votes to the highest bidder in exchange for monetary or material gains. This behavior is often more pronounced during party primaries when delegates trade their votes for immediate rewards. Impoverished citizens are particularly vulnerable to vote selling, where promises of jobs, scholarships, or basic necessities influence their choices. This practice undermines the democratic process and renders constitutional guarantees of freedom, equality, and participation ineffective. Vote selling perpetuates a cycle of socio-economic inequality and leads to ill-informed electoral choices. Additionally, when votes can be easily purchased or manipulated, the fight against political corruption loses its credibility, fostering disaffection, apathy, and cynicism among the electorate (Gilbert *et al.*, 2015, p.114.).

## 2.2 CORRUPTION

The concept of corruption encompasses a broad spectrum of behaviors, a fact underscored by the ongoing and contentious debates surrounding its definition. Corruption simply means pervasion in the set norms and values of society, which with time find its space in the body of law. In public parlance, is commonly defined as the misuse of public authority for personal gain (as cited by Nye, 1967 in Morris, 2011), with most people associating corruption primarily with bribery. In bribery, individuals offer illicit payments to government officials in exchange for specific authoritative actions that yield discernible and targeted effects. These actions, officially sanctioned by the state, would not occur without the concealed payment (Johnston 2005, 18 as cited in Morris, 2011). Yet, the scope of corruption extends beyond bribery to encompass kickbacks, akin to bribes but involving unlawful payments after the service is rendered. These payments often originate from a portion of the government funds that have been allocated. Additionally, corruption encompasses extortion, where public officials employ their state power to coerce individuals into providing bribes. While these corrupt acts involve interactions between citizens and government representatives, corruption also encompasses graft and embezzlement. In graft, public officials independently misappropriate or divert public funds for personal use. Similarly, embezzlement involves the unilateral diversion of designated public funds. Closely related to graft is fraud, which encompasses a range of complex and imaginative schemes orchestrated by officials, sometimes in collaboration with non-officials, to misappropriate public funds. These schemes might involve fabricating fictitious companies, adding nonexistent employees to payrolls, inflating government contract charges, or manipulating financial records to obscure the disappearance of public funds.

## 2.3 PERSPECTIVES ON OFFICIAL CORRUPTION

There are two fundamental categories of corruption that are commonly distinguished based on their institutional context: "upper-level" corruption and "lower-level" corruption. The former refers to pervasions involving high-ranking officials such as presidents, ministers, legislators, governors, and individuals occupying significant positions. In contrast, the latter encompasses pervasions by the civil servants and individuals at lower administrative levels. This classification primarily arises from the distinctions in the distinct political roles of these public officials and the ethical principles that govern their behavior. As a result, the term "political corruption" generally indicates corruption occurring during the phase of policy

formulation, often referred to as the input stage of the political system. Conversely, "bureaucratic" or "administrative" corruption pertains to the execution of policies carried out by officials at lower levels, aligning with the output side of the equation (Scott 1972 cited in Morris, 2011).

Due to their distinct functions within the system, these two manifestations of corruption also transgress different norms. "Bureaucratic corruption" involves violations of first-order norms, which encompass the written rules and laws shaped through politicians' decision-making processes. In contrast, "Political corruption" committed by policymakers entails breaches of more implicit second-order norms. These unwritten guidelines dictate how politicians should make decisions and include concepts such as equity and fairness (Morris, 2011) as enshrined oaths of offices.

## 2.4 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Uhlener, (2015) sees Political participation encompasses a spectrum of activities carried out by the general public within the context of politics. These activities encompass various actions, such as participating in elections by casting votes, contributing to political campaigns, offering financial support to candidates or causes, engaging in written correspondence or direct communication with officials, signing petitions, initiating boycotts, taking part in demonstrations, and collaborating with others to address specific societal concerns. Throughout history, the concept of political participation has been a central topic in philosophical dialogues centered around democracy and representative governance. It functions as a conduit through which citizens can articulate and express their perspectives. The subject remains of significant normative interest, as evident in discussions within the realm of Democratic Theory.

Scholars hold diverse interpretations of political participation. The prevailing viewpoint confines participation to actions endowed with the capacity to influence others. This perspective is evident in definitions like: "Political participation refers to actions undertaken by private individuals with the aim of affecting government decision-making" (as cited by Huntington and Nelson 1976, p. 3 in Uhlener, 2015). Another perspective posits: "Political participation encompasses activities that either directly influence governmental actions, such as shaping or executing public policies, or indirectly impact the selection of individuals responsible for crafting those policies" (as cited by Verba *et al.* 1995, p. 38 in Uhlener, 2015).

## 2.5 PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

There are two major types of political participation: Conventional and Unconventional political participation.

**Conventional political participation:** This refers to traditional and constitutional guaranteed activities essential for the continuation of the democratic process. In a democracy, these forms of political participation include voting, running for office, joining political parties, holding a political position and donating to and participating in campaigns.

**Unconventional political participation:** This is often perceived as controversial, inappropriate or offensive because people typically take part in them to register their displeasure about issues.

## 2.6 VOTING BEHAVIOUR

According to Gordon (1998), casting a ballot in an election is one of the best methods for people living in a democracy to get involved in the political process whether by vote, lot or in an open or secret ballot. Voting is by far the most powerful political tool available to the public, allowing them to guarantee that their demands and concerns are met by the government and to hold it responsible. According to Isiaq *et al.* (2018), voting is the main way that people participate in political processes, and studying voting behavior is one of the most developed subdisciplines of political science. According to (Isiaq *et al.*, 2018), voting behavior is the sum of all the variables that affect how a certain set of people vote in elections for specific political parties or candidates. It can also include voting patterns that clarify the methods and rationale behind the choices made by public officials, as well as the procedure through which voters choose a candidate in an election. Godwin and Heath (2020) investigates how voting behavior is complex and multidimensional in the context of political science. The inquiry explores the motivations underlying the decisions made by people or groups of people when they engage in political processes. These variables can include a person's political affiliations and views, as well as their socioeconomic standing, demography, the qualities of the candidates, and the policy stances that appeal to voters. Voting decisions are also influenced by social media, local factors, media coverage, political campaigns, and social networks. By comprehending and examining voting patterns.

## 2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Political Economy Theory is a relevant theoretical framework for understanding the intricate relationship between poverty, corruption, and political participation in the context of the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria's Mubi-North, Yola-North and Numan, Local Government Areas, Adamawa State. The Political Economy Theory explores how economic factors, political structures, and institutions intersect to shape political behavior and outcomes on election. It recognizes that poverty and corruption are not isolated phenomena but rather interconnected dimensions of a society's political and economic landscape. This theory examines how these factors can influence political participation by affecting individuals' incentives, opportunities, and perceptions.

In the context of the 2023 General Elections, the Political Economy Theory can elucidate how poverty and corruption impact political participation state's power and 'public policy'. Poverty can limit individuals' ability to access education, information, and transportation, creating barriers to participation. Economic deprivation may lead to feelings of alienation and disempowerment, discouraging citizens from engaging in the political process and also the use of economic and political power to induce the franchise voters. Corruption within political institutions can exacerbate these challenges, eroding trust in the system and deterring citizens from participating in what they perceive as a compromised process.

Caporaso *et al.* (2005); The central to political economy theory. However, politically organized classes do not emerge spontaneously under capitalism. At first, individuals within the economy see themselves narrowly as isolated agents pursuing interests uniquely their own. Such interests may have nothing to do with the interests of others and may even set individuals in opposition one to another. Such interests are not, however, isolated and independent. Capitalist economy works in such a way as to set up a commonality of interest within certain classes of persons. The more individuals become aware of their



common condition and purpose, the more they see their narrow material interest in a broader light. This process marks a transition from individual to class interest and ultimately, from material-economic to political interest.

The Marxian interpretation of the relationship between economics and politics centers on the idea of economic interests and the part they play in defining political agendas. However, the distance covered between pure economic interest and political action is considerable. Before economic interests can play a role in politics directly, individuals must be aware of their shared interests, organize on the basis of them, and overcome collective action problems.

Furthermore, the theory recognizes that political institutions and policies can exacerbate or alleviate poverty and corruption. If governance structures prioritize policies that address socioeconomic disparities and reduce corruption, citizens may feel more empowered and motivated to participate. Conversely, if policies fail to address these issues, they can perpetuate a cycle of disengagement, exclusion, poverty, and corruption. By employing the Political Economy Theory, this study can provide a comprehensive understanding of how poverty and corruption intersect to shape the level and nature of political participation in one selected local government area in each of the three geo-political senatorial districts of the state. This theoretical lens enables an examination of the broader systemic factors that influence political behavior and outcomes for generalization on the entire state. Moreover, it offers insights into potential interventions that address both poverty and corruption as a means to foster a more inclusive and participatory democratic process, contributing to the overall development and strengthening of democratic institutions in the state.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative procedures within a cross-sectional research design. To investigate the effects of poverty on voting behavior in the 2023 Adamawa State Gubernatorial Election, the research's quantitative component includes a thorough examination of numerical data and statistical analysis, while its qualitative component frequently entails observations, descriptions, interpretations, and subjective judgments.

#### Sample Size

The research utilizes taro Yamane to determine an appropriate margin of error for the sample study by computing the total number of registered voters in Adamawa State, which was 2,196,566 people that constitute the entire population/the universe in the study according to INEC in 2023, and the gubernatorial election.

The formula is expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample size

N = Total population

1 = Statistical Constant

$e$  = The assume error of margin or level of significance which is taken as 0.05, i.e. 95% confidence level. Assuming you want a 95% confidence level, the precision ( $e$ ) would typically be set at 0.05. Substitute the values provided:

$$n = \frac{2,196,566}{1+2,196,566 \times (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2,196,566}{1+2,196,566 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{2,196,566}{1+5,491.41565}$$

$$n = \frac{2,196,566}{5,492.41565}$$

$$n = 399.73$$

The estimated sample size, derived using the Taro Yamane formula, is approximately 399.73. Rounding to the nearest full number is required since it is impossible to include a fraction of a person in a sample. As a result, 400 is used as the sample size. It is important to remember that this method works with the suppositions of a homogeneous population and a simple random sample. One might want to look at more complex sampling methods if you have a diverse population. Furthermore, a bigger sample size would be required if a higher confidence level of about 95% were used in the formula. Also important, is the use of Kobo Collect platform was employed which allows the research to create, mint and collect Non Fungible Tokens (NFT) data, thereby making a user-friendly experience in digital data generation that answers research questions on the subject matter on the- influence of poverty on voting behavior in the 2023 gubernatorial election in Adamawa state from the scenario of selected three senatorial districts of the state.

#### 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this analysis is to investigate the relationship that exists between Adamawa State's voting patterns and poverty in the framework of the 2023 governor's race. We want to clarify the ways in which poverty affects voter preferences, turnout percentages on electoral outcomes by examining variables like income levels and education, and views of the effectiveness of the government. We also study how political campaigns, messaging, and candidate programs may either unite or alienate voters from low-income backgrounds.

#### 4.1 ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS DEMOGRAPHY

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

Sex	Frequency.	Percent
Female	190	47.62
Male	209	52.38
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The above table displays the respondents' gender distribution. It shows that, of the 399 respondents questioned, 52.38% were men and 47.62% were women. Analyzing the relationship between gender and poverty levels and how it can affect voting habits would be one way to connect this to the topic of how poverty affects voting behavior. The information may be utilized, for instance, to look at whether men and women vote differently depending on how they have experienced poverty. Researchers could also look into if there are particular policy preferences and how poverty affects men and women differently when it comes to political engagement.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

Marital Status	Frequency.	Percent
Divorced	15	3.76
Married	149	37.34
Single	141	35.34
Widowed	94	23.56
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The above table displays the respondents' distribution according to marital status. 35.34% of the 399 respondents who were polled are single, 23.56% are widowed, 37.34% are married, and 3.76% are divorced. This dissection enables a detailed investigation of the relationship between poverty and marital status and how it affects voting behavior.

Knowing the respondents' distribution according to marital status allows for a more thorough examination of the ways in which poverty dynamics and demographic variables interact, adding to our knowledge of the political environment surrounding Adamawa State's gubernatorial election.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Background**

Educational Background:	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor Degree	47	11.78
Diploma	142	35.59
Junior Secondary Education	57	14.29
Master Degree	27	6.77
Non-formal Education	39	9.77
Postgraduate Diploma	30	7.52
Primary Education	23	5.76
Secondary Education	34	8.52

Total	399	100.00
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Source: Field work, 2024.

The table shows the distribution of respondents categorized by their educational backgrounds, the data reveals a diverse educational landscape: 11.78% possess a Bachelor's degree, 35.59% have completed a Diploma program, 14.29% finished Junior Secondary Education, 6.77% hold a Master's degree, 9.77% received education through Non-formal channels, 7.52% obtained a Postgraduate Diploma, 5.76% completed Primary Education, and 8.52% finished Secondary Education. This breakdown offers a clear lens to analyze how educational attainment intersects with poverty and influences voting behavior.

Base on the above result show that individuals with higher educational qualifications, such as Bachelor's or Master's degrees, may be less inclined to vote solely for monetary gains. These individuals likely have a better understanding of political issues, policies, and the importance of voting for long-term societal benefits rather than short-term financial incentives. Additionally, their higher level of education may correlate with better economic opportunities, reducing their reliance on immediate financial incentives for voting.

Equally, individuals with lower educational attainment, such as those who completed Primary or Junior Secondary Education, may be more susceptible to voting for money. This could be due to a lack of awareness about the broader implications of their vote, coupled with a greater need for immediate financial assistance due to lower socio-economic status. Moreover, those who received education through non-formal channels might have limited access to information about the political process and may be more easily swayed by monetary inducements.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status**

Employment Status:	Frequency.	Percent
Student	37	9.27
Employed full-time	84	21.05
Employed part-time	137	34.34
Full time Business Person	76	19.05
Unemployed	65	16.29
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The distribution of respondents by employment status paints a picture of how various occupational circumstances may influence voting behavior, particularly in relation to the inclination to vote for monetary incentives. Among the 400 respondents surveyed, the breakdown of employment statuses reveals a diverse range of occupational situations: 9.27% identify as students, 21.05% are employed full-time, 34.34% work part-time, 19.05% are engaged as full-time business persons, and 16.29% are currently unemployed. Those who are employed full-time or as full-time business persons may be less prone to voting solely for

monetary incentives, given their stable income sources, which may lead them to prioritize broader considerations such as policy alignment or candidate competence. Conversely, the unemployed or those working part-time, facing potentially precarious financial situations, may be more susceptible to voting for money, viewing it as a means to address immediate economic needs. Additionally, students, though not reliant on employment income, may still harbor financial pressures, making them receptive to monetary inducements, particularly if they perceive them as easing their financial burdens. Understanding this distribution of respondents by employment status provides valuable insights into how different occupational circumstances intersect with voting behavior, emphasizing the significance of socio-economic factors in analyzing the impact of poverty on voting behavior and susceptibility to external influences such as monetary incentives.

**Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Annual Income**

Annual Income:	Frequency.	Percent
N1, 500,000 - N2, 500,000	69	17.29
N100, 000- N200, 000	115	28.82
N300, 000 - N400, 000	162	40.60
N500, 000 - N1, 000,000	53	13.28
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The breakdown of respondents by annual income breakdown provides important insight into how different income levels may affect voting behavior, especially when it comes to the tendency to vote in favor of financial incentives. The distribution of the 399 respondents to the survey indicates that 17.29% make between N1,500,000 and N2,500,000 per year, 28.82% make between N100,000 and N200,000, and 40.60% make between N300,000 and N400,000. Furthermore, 13.28% report having an annual income ranging from N500,000 to N1,000,000. Higher earners those making between N1,500,000 and N2,500,000 annually might be less inclined to vote only for financial rewards since they can afford to think about more important things, such candidate qualifications or policy alignment.

On the other hand, people with lower yearly incomes, particularly those who make between N100,000 and N400,000 annually, may be more likely to vote with their money because they depend more on it for basic necessities. This study highlights how important socioeconomic issues are in determining voting behavior and how poverty may affect an individual's susceptibility to outside pressures like financial incentives.

**Table 4.6: Distribution of Respondents by Political Affiliation in the dominant political parties**

Political Affiliation:	Frequency.	Percent
NNPP	11	2.76
APC	115	28.82
PDP	273	68.42
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The above table respondent’s distribution by their political affiliation provides significant understanding of the current political climate and possible impacts on voting patterns among the 399 respondents polled. The distribution of political affiliations among these respondents indicates a notable prevalence of the PDP (Peoples Democratic Party), with 68.42% of them identifying as members of this political organization. On the other hand, just 2.76% of respondents support the NNPP (New Nigeria Peoples Party), whilst 28.82% of respondents support the APC (All Progressives Congress).

Based on historical ties, ideological alignment, or contentment with the party's performance, this distribution points to a high degree of support for the PDP among the surveyed population, the APC and NNPP's comparatively lower representation may indicate that respondents don't think highly of or support these parties as much. A more thorough examination of the ways in which voting behavior may be influenced by party loyalty or affiliation can be conducted on the basis of this knowledge about the respondents' political affiliation distribution. In the context of the Adamawa State gubernatorial election of 2023, it highlights the importance of party dynamics and the political environment in shaping electoral outcomes. It also highlights the possible influence of party affiliation on voting behavior.

#### 4.2 ANALYSIS OF PEOPLE’S VOTING BEHAVIOR

**Table 4.7: Respondents Opinion on Choice in the dominant Political Party**

Which political party did you vote for during the 2023 presidential election?	Frequency	Percent
PDP	334	83.71
APC	54	13.53
LP	11	2.76
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The analysis of respondents' views regarding the political party they will support in the 2023 presidential election provides important new information about the preferences of the 399 respondents. With 83.71% of respondents voting for the PDP (Peoples Democratic Party), the data clearly shows this party's supremacy. This resounding endorsement points to a high degree of voter identification or pleasure with the PDP'. By comparison, just 13.53% of respondents voted for the All-Progressives Congress (APC), while only 2.76% of respondents voted for the Labor Party (LP). The APC and LP have a lower percentage, which indicates that the polled populace supports or is less aware of these parties.

**Table 4.8: Respondents Opinion on Bribery**

Did you vote for the chosen political party because you were given some incentive	Frequency.	Percent
No	28	7.02
Yes	371	92.98
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The data on respondents' opinions regarding whether they voted for their chosen political party due to receiving incentives provides crucial insights into the potential impact of bribery on electoral behavior within the surveyed population of 399 individuals. Among the respondents, the breakdown of opinions reveals that 7.02% stated that they did not vote for their chosen political party because they were given incentives. In contrast, a significant majority of 92.98% indicated that they did vote for their chosen political party due to receiving incentives. This data suggests a concerning prevalence of bribery or the influence of monetary incentives on voting behavior within the surveyed electorate. The overwhelming majority of respondents acknowledging that they voted for their chosen political party because of incentives underscores the significance of monetary inducements in influencing electoral outcomes. It raises questions about the integrity of the electoral process and the extent to which financial incentives may compromise the democratic principles of free and fair elections. Understanding respondents' opinions on the influence of bribery in their voting decisions is essential for assessing the transparency and fairness of the electoral process. It highlights the need for measures to address corruption and ensure the integrity of elections, thereby safeguarding democratic values and promoting genuine representation of the electorate's will.

**Table 4.9: Respondents Opinion on Party Involved in Giving People Money among dominant pol. party**

Which political party can you say was extremely involved in giving people money	Frequency.	Percent
PDP	268	67.17
PDP LP	2	0.50
PDP Others	12	3.01
APC	58	14.54
APC PDP LP	31	7.77
APC PDP LP NNPP	17	4.26
LP	11	2.76
Total	399	100.00

Source: Field work, 2024.

The data on respondents' opinions regarding which political party they perceive as extensively involved in distributing money offers significant insights into the potential influence of financial incentives on electoral behavior within the surveyed population of 399 individuals. The breakdown of opinions reveals that 67.17% of respondents identified the PDP (Peoples Democratic Party) as the political party most heavily involved in giving people money, while 14.54% pointed to the APC (All Progressives Congress). Additionally, 2.76% mentioned the LP (Labour Party). Interestingly, there were combinations of parties mentioned by some respondents, including both PDP and LP (0.50%), both APC and PDP alongside LP (7.77%), and all four parties: APC, PDP, LP, and NNPP (New Nigeria Peoples Party) (4.26%).

This data indicates a widespread perception among the surveyed electorate that the PDP is heavily involved in distributing money, followed by the APC. The various combinations of parties mentioned suggest a nuanced understanding among respondents, recognizing that multiple parties may engage in this practice. Understanding respondents' opinions on which political party they believe is extensively involved in giving people money is essential for assessing the potential impact of financial incentives on electoral outcomes. It underscores the importance of transparency and accountability in campaign financing and highlights the need to address the role of money in politics to ensure the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

### 4.3 ANALYSIS OF POVERTY AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR

**Table 4.10: Analysis of Poverty and Voting Behaviour**

S/N	Variables	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev
1	Poverty rate reduced voter turnout in your area during the 2023 Adamawa Gubernatorial Election.	231(57.5%)	93(23.25%)	58(4.50%)	15(3.5%)	3(0.75%)	1.67	0.91
2	Measures to alleviate poverty would increase voter turnout in your area during the 2023 Gubernatorial Election	180(45.00%)	145(36.3%)	66(16.50%)	4(1.00%)	5(1.25%)	1.18	0.85
3	In your opinion, political parties in Adamawa State adequately address the concerns and interests of voter (s) across different income brackets	188(47.0%)	148(37.0%)	51(12.6%)	10(2.5%)	3(3.75%)	1.73	0.83
4	the socioeconomic status of voters, including household income, influences the overall election outcome in Adamawa State during the 2023 Gubernatorial	193(48.3%)	128(32.0%)	68(17.0%)	9(2.25%)	2(0.50%)	1.7	0.85
5	Poverty is a barrier to electoral participation in Adamawa State during the 2023 gubernatorial Elections.	173(43.3%)	111(27.8%)	91(22.8%)	18(4.5%)	7(1.8%)	1.82	0.89

**Source: Computed using Stata from field survey data 2024 Key: SA=Strongly agreed, A=Agreed, UD= Undecided, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly disagreed, Frequency (Percentage), Mean, Standard Deviation**



The majority of respondents (57.5%) strongly agreed that poverty rates had a negative impact on voter turnout during the election, according to the analysis from various respondents displayed in the table above. This agreement points to a general perception that poverty and other socioeconomic inequalities have a real impact on political engagement. The comparatively low standard deviation (0.91) suggests that respondents are somewhat in agreement about this matter.

With 45% strongly agreeing, policies aimed at reducing poverty could increase voter turnout. This emotion is indicative of a conviction in the ability of programs aimed at reducing poverty to increase democratic participation and engagement. When compared to the previous question, the lower standard deviation (0.85) indicates that respondents' opinions on this topic are more consistent.

There was greater variation in views on how well political parties addressed the issues of voters in different income levels. More people (47%) strongly agreed that political parties addressed these concerns, although the consensus on this subject was not as high as it was on the effect of poverty on voter turnout. Even while the mean score of 1.73 still tends toward agreement, the standard deviation of 0.83 suggests some disagreement.

In addition, a resounding majority of respondents (48.3%) concurred that voter socioeconomic position, particularly household income, affects Adamawa State election results. This result emphasizes how important socioeconomic considerations are thought to be in determining election dynamics and results. There appears to be some agreement among respondents about the impact of socioeconomic status on elections, as indicated by the comparatively low standard deviation (0.85). However, a significant portion of respondents 43.3% strongly agreed that Adamawa State's poverty inhibits people from casting ballots. This declaration highlights the recognition of poverty as a significant obstacle to political and democratic participation. While overall agreement on the topic is still impressive, the standard deviation of 0.89 indicates that respondent variability was slightly higher than for preceding questions.

## REGRESSION ANALYSIS

### Linear regression

People's voting behavior	Coef.	St. Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf Interval]	Sig
Effect Poverty on Voting Behaviour	.058	.026	2.20	.029	.006 .109	**
Constant	3.295	.097	33.88	0	3.104 3.486	***
Mean dependent var		3.481	SD dependent var			0.955
R-squared		0.012	Number of obs			399
F-test		4.832	Prob > F			0.029
Akaike crit. (AIC)		1093.693	Bayesian crit. (BIC)			1101.671

\*\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*  $p < .1$

The linear regression analysis reveals that poverty has a statistically significant effect on voting behavior, with a coefficient of 0.058. This means that as poverty increases, voting behavior scores increase slightly. The relationship is statistically significant at the 5% level, as indicated by a p-value of 0.029. However, the effect size is modest, and the low R-squared value of 0.012 suggests that poverty explains only 1.2% of the variance in voting behavior. This implies that while poverty does influence voting behavior, other factors also play substantial roles.

Therefore, in the Adamawa State 2023 governor's race, the results indicate that poverty marginally boosts voter turnout. Even though the influence is small, politicians and policymakers should nonetheless pay attention to it because of its significance. Reducing poverty may have an impact on voting habits and increase political engagement. However, considering the limited effect size, it is evident that other elements—like societal effects, political campaigns, and candidate appeal—also play a significant role in influencing voting behavior. Comprehending these variables can facilitate the development of all-encompassing tactics aimed at enhancing voter turnout and electoral engagement in Adamawa State.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the analysis of the effects of poverty on voting behavior in the 2023 gubernatorial election of Adamawa State reveals a statistically significant but modest relationship. The data indicates that increases in poverty slightly boost voter engagement, as reflected in the positive coefficient of 0.058. However, with an R-squared value of only 0.012, it is evident that poverty accounts for just a small fraction of the variance in voting behavior. This underscores the importance of other influential factors such as political campaigns, candidate appeal, education, and social influences.

For policymakers and political strategists in Adamawa State, these findings highlight the potential benefits of addressing poverty as part of a broader strategy to enhance electoral participation. By mitigating poverty, there could be a modest increase in voter turnout. However, it is equally crucial to recognize and address the other determinants of voting behavior to achieve a more significant impact on electoral engagement. Overall, while poverty is a factor in voting behavior, a multifaceted approach is necessary to effectively boost voter participation and influence election outcomes in Adamawa State.

Based on the conclusion that poverty has a statistically significant but modest impact on voting behavior, along with the recognition that other factors also play crucial roles, the following recommendations are made for policymakers and political strategists in Adamawa State.

Firstly, there need to implement programs aimed at economic empowerment, such as vocational training, small business grants, and microfinance initiatives. These can help reduce poverty and indirectly encourage higher voter participation. Strengthen social safety nets including food assistance, healthcare access, and housing support to address immediate poverty-related issues and foster a sense of stability that encourages civic participation.

Secondly, policymakers should develop and disseminate educational materials about the importance of voting and how it impacts governance and public services. Tailored campaigns can help bridge the knowledge gap and motivate informed voting. Engage community leaders and civil society organizations to promote civic responsibility and participation, particularly targeting impoverished communities.

Thirdly, encourage political candidates to focus their campaigns on local issues, particularly those affecting impoverished communities. Addressing specific concerns such as unemployment, infrastructure, and public services can resonate more with voters.

Fourthly, increase direct engagement with communities through town hall meetings, door-to-door campaigns, and local events. Personal interactions can build trust and mobilize voters. Ensure that polling stations are easily accessible, particularly in impoverished and rural areas, to reduce barriers to voting. Consider mobile voting units to reach remote areas, making it easier for people in poverty-stricken regions to cast their ballots.

Lastly, foster partnerships between government, non-profits, private sector, and international organizations to pool resources and expertise in addressing poverty and enhancing voter engagement. Involve community members in the planning and implementation of initiatives to ensure they are culturally relevant and address actual needs.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

*We wish to acknowledge the support provided by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) through the Institutional Based Research (IBR) grant, with the Grant Number: TEFT/DR&D/UNI/MUBI/RG/2023/VOL.1. Additionally, recognition is extended to the Adamawa State University and the Research and Innovation Directorate for their collaborative efforts and contributions towards facilitating and advancing research initiatives at the University.*

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