

Poverty And The Prevalence Of Vote Buying In Nigeria

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Abstract: *Vote buying is a widespread phenomenon in the Sub-Saharan Africa. This act has taken the centre stage in the economic and political process of most countries in the region. Poverty in these nations and Nigeria precisely kept reawaking despite several reforms and policies in the country. Poverty to a larger extent had impacted negatively on the growth of the incidence of vote buying in the country. A lot of voters have indulged into the act and this is due to the continual spread of poverty in the country. Vote pricing, buying and selling in Nigerian often takes place in two forms. These are elite's compensation and the practice of spreading during campaign and electioneering period. Monetary worth and materials such as the use of money, food additive, grains, shoes, attires, salt, maggi, sugar, wrappers, exercise books and many others are mostly used as the bait to entice the desperately awaiting voters. The study generated data from array of both published and unpublished materials such as text books, journal papers, newspapers, magazines, white paper of reports of panel of investigation and commission of inquiry, internet materials, seminar and conference papers among many others. The main instrument used to generate data was interview. In interpreting our data, the relationship between poverty and vote buying was established at both theoretical and empirical level. Empirically, we used a qualitative and historical method that was critical and analytical in providing descriptive and historical details. This was further complemented by descriptive analysis. It was established that poverty had negatively impacted on the spread and commonness of vote buying in Nigeria. Recommendations such as: establishment of practicable law to curb the act, agrarian reforms, introduction of economic and developmental programmes, functional voters education and many others were proffered.*

Keywords: Poverty, Vote buying, Election and Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty in Nigeria is a menace that has continued to defy solutions irrespective of various reforms which were introduced to control its spread. There were several efforts by government in the past and at present to find a lasting solution to the hydra-headed monster known as poverty but all to the contrary (Ahmed, 2015). What seem to cause a lot of concern is that the country is flourished with abundant resources, vast land and other endowment that are necessary for any functional society (Ajane, 2016). Poverty for long has poses a big problem to Africa. The poverty in the continent and Nigeria in particular cannot even be attributed to the country's culture. The continent and Nigeria in particular has had a rich culture that is conducive to economic growth and development. The rich kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and many others across the continent were known for their enterprising spirit and unparallel accomplishment even in a hostile environment (Bello, 2016).

Africans and Nigerians in particular are very energetic, ambitious and resourceful and posses the initiative required for material and intellectual achievement in the society but still living poor.

The Nigerian scene portrays the situation very adequately. Despite her abundant natural resources and rich environment, the country is still backward. This hydra-headed monster has further opened way for acts such as vote buying in the society (Cinjel, 2015). This act is characteristically common during the electioneering period where politicians uses worth such as money and other material things such as clothes, shoes, magi, salt, food and additives, grain and many others to entice the impoverish and voters who are desperate and ever willing and ready to exchange their votes with such articles (Gbuile, 2014). Despite campaign and enlightenment on the need to avoid such practice, the incidence is spreading and widening its tentacle in most nook and cranny of the society.

The existence of poverty in most of the areas in the country has continued to lure most voters into the act of vote buying. This act has become part and parcel of the Nigerian politics (Ita, 2015). This is because it has not only been seen as a norm but a tradition that is morally justified, politically correct and legitimate. Those that are already in government venture into vices such as looting and siphoning of public fund for such act and others that are in the process of creating political capital outsource from their wealth, loans and borrowing from friends, relations and associates (Stephenson, 2016). This development for long has been creating catastrophic effect on the progress of the society. Wealth of the nations which are meant to be shared on capital project and welfare service are wrongly exploited and as well used in dubious ways (Stephenson, 2016). This development is a setback to the country and its developmental processes.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

One of the basic problems which prompted the study is the poor standard of living (SOL) of the citizenry in Nigeria which often manifested in the form of insufficient food, under employment and the inability to cater for end meet and how it has continued to lure the voters into act such as vote pricing, vote buying and selling. The voters or the electorates have come to see electioneering period as time to make money or get material things such as magi, shoes, clothes, salt, grains sugar and many others from the political gladiators (Cinjel, 2016). This menace has deprived the society from progressing and as well opened rooms for the spread of the vicious act.

Another problem which also warranted the study is the case of witlessness which often showcases in the form of illiteracy, low level of exposure, weak and decline in societal values and insufficient voter's education on the ills of voters buying. Apart from poverty associated with material things, a lot of people in the society are in the dark on the ills associated with voter's buying (Ajane, 2016). Most people in the society have failed to create a kind of line separation from the intent of the act and as well its prevalence at such time and how the credibility's of contesters are often ignored. This for long has been a serious problem to the process of development in the society.

It is against to this backdrop that the following research questions were posited to guide the study:

- a. How does poor standard of living in Nigeria stimulate electorate into act of indulging in vote buying?
- b. What is the nexus between poverty and voters level of literacy in Nigeria?

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of poverty on vote buying. The specific objectives include are:

- a. To assess the relationship between poor standard of living and vote buying in Nigeria

- b. To examine the connection between poverty and voters literacy in Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research approach to this study is the documentary research design. It mainly entails the study of documentary materials. The research relied on secondary data drawn from an array of published and unpublished materials relevant to the study such as books, journals, magazines, conferences and seminar papers and newspapers. Other sources of secondary data were reports, white papers of investigation panels and other quantitative publications related to the problem of the study were all systematically analyzed.

The method by which data were generated for this study was the secondary source. There were qualitative soft publication and entries in recognized and official websites. Others included online version of international dailies, books, journals, reports, seminar and conferences paper, national newspapers etc. Interview was the major primary instrument used in the study. Both structured and unstructured outlay was adopted for precision, diversity, and for in-depth discussion of the phenomenon under study.

Being a non-experimental research, the use of qualitative descriptive analysis is employed for the analysis of the generated data. Thus, under the findings and discussions, each discourse is based on some background assumption presented in the form of assumption of the study.

In interpreting our data, the relationship between money politics and development was established at both theoretical and empirical levels. Empirically, we used a qualitative and historical method that was critical and analytical in providing descriptive and historical details. This was also complemented by descriptive quantitative analysis. The qualitative and historical method provided us with clear perspective into our research problem by giving us the opportunity to understand the historical details and accurate account of the past and to use the past to discuss the present.

4. CONCEPTUAL ELUCIDATION

(a) Vote Buying

The word is a nascent concept and coined from the Latin word *votum* and old English word *buy*. Vote denote to choose, elect, support and to back. The concept also entails the formal indication of somebody's choice. Buying on the other hand denote purchase, acquisition, bargain and or a deal. It also entails the process of acquiring something by payment. The word vote buying has no universally accepted definition. A lot of scholars tend to defines it in different directions. Bello (2017) defined vote buying as the act of enticing voters with money or monetary worth in change of their vote. In the same direction, Uwamahoro (2018) sees it as an isolated action which perpetuates corruption throughout the entire political system. Saleh (2017) sees vote

buying as a purely economic exchange in which the voters sell his or her vote to the highest bidder. In vote buying, the buyer which is the political actor chooses to pay for support, rather than competing fairly for vote. It affects democratic tools such as legitimacy, credibility and presentation. The concept is synonymic with money politics. Money politics is broader in scope; it is the pipe and the later is the fluid passing through it. Money politics is the starting grid while the later is the action line

(b)The Concept of Poverty

The Oxford Advance Learner Dictionary of Current English stressed that the word poverty was a coinage of a French word ‘poverté’ which denotes the state of being poor, the state of lacking in quality or amount. The term suffers from a lot of misconception, Poverty as a concept is multi-dimensional. It connotes inadequacy such as lack of money under social usage. It shows the inequality of persons in a given society, the relationship between those who “have” and they have not. It is a state of lack in which a person is unable to meet the basic minimum requirement for food, health, shelter, education and clothing. According to Akande (2003), it is a material and non – material deprivation, which is mainly characterized by food insecurity, lack of access to health services, poor and adequate education, lack of basic needs, physical, psychological experience of violence and insecurity. In the work of Taylor (1990), poverty means different things at different places. However, in a general term, he sees poverty as a state when a person in unable, for whatever reasons, to provide the basic essentials of life – food, clothing and shelter. Taylor goes ahead to emphasize that poverty can be brought about by any of one or combination of the following factors : *old age, sickness, infirmity* and total depression leading to *unemployment, Laziness, low wages or high prices* ,family circumstance such as choice/ separation.

Oyemosi (2004) advocates that poverty is a state where an individual is unable to provide adequately for his/ her needs of food, clothing and shelter i.e. the inability to meet social and economic obligations, lack of gainful employment, skills, assets, self – esteem and limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as education, health, portable water, sanitation and consequently, has limited chance of advancing in the welfare to the limit of his/ her capabilities. Poverty can either be in absolute or relative terms. Absolute poverty is a condition where a person or group of persons are unable to satisfy their human survival needs in terms of food, clothing, shelter, health, transport, education and recreation. Relative poverty is a complete state of lack and deprivation among individuals or groups. This tends to tandem with the view of Babashola a resident representative of United Nation Development Programme as cited in Stephenson (2010) defined poverty as a condition of life characterized by malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, low life expectancy and high infant mortality beneath any national explanation of human decency.

5. TRENDS OF POVERTY IN NIGERIA

Nigeria is a country with enormous wealth owing to the fact that the country is blessed with both human and material resources but in the midst of this huge wealth lie the issue of poverty which has remained a recurring decimal. The irony of the whole thing is that citizens are very hungry, poor and as such, cannot meet up with the acceptable standard of living in spite of the abundant resources. The UNDP has classified 141 countries as poorest nations on Human Development Index and in its report; Nigeria is ranked the 20th poorest country in the world with 70% of the population classified as poor and 54.4% living in absolute poverty (UNDP-HDI, 2006; Duyile, 2006:12). It is evident that the dangerous nightmare confronting Nigeria right from the time of independence has been poverty.

Regrettably, instead of Nigeria to progress, the country has lately retrogressed to become one of the poorest countries in the world. This is evident in the fact that more people are becoming poorer day by day. In 1960s, the poverty level in the country was about 15% and by 1980 it reached to 28.1%. In 1985, the poverty level was 46.3 but dropped to 42.7% in 1992. May be, the drop could be as a result of the upcoming elections slated to hold in 1993. Meanwhile, with, the termination of the civil rule by the military government, the poverty level in Nigeria rose to 43.6% in 1995(Hodgkin, 2006). A year after, about 65% of the population was living below poverty line which accounts for about 67.1 million Nigerians. In the 1999 and 2000, UN Development Reports, Nigeria had degenerated further as 87% of the population was living below poverty line and rated 154 on the world’s marginal poverty index out of 172 countries (Ekpu, 2017).

Table: Basic needs & Deprivation in Nigeria

	Basic Need and Provision	Ratio
1	Survival deprivation	33.8
2	Life expectancy	52.1
3	Health care services Delivery	49.3
4	Education Deprivation	44.3
5	Adult literacy	33.7

Source: Olusanya & Pursel, 2019.

According to Samuel, Ugot & Wilfred (2018) poverty in Nigeria has geographical perspective. While the Nigeria’s Draft Report on Millennium Development Goals, the Northern part of the country accounted for the higher incidence of poverty which largely predominated in the rural areas. Specifically, the report showed that the rate of poverty was as high as 84% in states like Zamfara, Sokoto, Gombe and Bauchi during the period 1980-2004. In the southern part, poverty had increased between 1980 and1996 but dropped in 2004, apart from the south-south zone that dropped in 1992, in fact, all states except Bayelsa had more than half of their population in poverty circle(Akintunde & Amaefule, 2016)). Comparatively, While poverty showed as high as 72.2% in the North-East, it has the lowest in the south –East with 26.7%. this confirmed the findings by the world bank study in Nigeria which showed that there were

differences between the North and the south with more concentration of the poor in the Northern Zone(National Bureau of Statistics,2017)

During the period between 1980 and 2004, the incidence of urban poverty also has been on the increase, an indication that poverty is not only seen in the urban areas but also co-existed in urban cities of the country. In 1980, poverty rose from 28.3 to 51.4% in 1985 but declined to 46.0% before it rose again to 69.3% in 2004 (Tomori 2016). Thus, the inflation rate which stood at 15% in 1960 had risen to 28% in 1980. In 1985, the figure was put at 1996. The federal government claimed to hack down the fleeting inflation rate from its aware some 54.4% in 2004 to 50%. It attributed the reduction in the trend to the institution of democracy and touted benefits of the economic reforms of the time (Duru, 2018:3). As Soludo pointed out, the Nigeria’s per capita income had always been in the deficit since independence. However, between 1999 and 2005, it had risen to over 3%

He further stated that the Gross Domestic Product had grown at 10.2% in 2003 as against an average of 2.9% in the immediate past decade while the nation’s external reserves stock had raised from us\$ 7.68 billion to over \$20 billion as at January 2005 (Punch, 2005:9). Comparatively, there is improvement, yet Nigeria has failed to live up to nationhood aspirations at independence. A few African countries belonged to those that were poorer than Nigeria at independence. With the much vaunted status parity in 2004, Nigeria’s GDP Per capita stood at paltry \$1000 as against south Africa’s \$11000, Kenya’s\$1100, Angola’s \$2100 and Cuba’s\$3000 (Idowu, 2017) presently, Nigeria is a shadow of its promise, in 1960 when it ranked higher than a number of today’s leading nations in all major development indices. A situation attributed to the social, political and economic environment in the country (Samuel, ugo & Wilfred, 2018)

Table: Nigeria’s Population in Poverty

Year	Poverty’s ratio
1980	17.1
1885	34.7
1992	39.2
1996	67.1
2004	68.7
2010	112.47
2014	115.1
2018	119.8
2019	-

Source: National Bureau of Statistic, 2019

The issue of unplanned increases in human numbers has led to an escalated growth and expansion in the population of Nigeria, a problem which has negatively entrenched into the socio-economic and political fabrics of the country, the over-population numbers and available economic resources for maintaining and sustaining this growing population. This unrestrained population growth has tended to militate, very negatively, socio-economic

developments in all ramifications in the country. The circumstance of solving and over-coming over population can be gleaned from her different National Development Plan instituted since her independence in 1960. These developments plans have always been centered and hinged on the improvement of the conditions of the Nigerian population through the use and employment of the resources, both human and material, which abound in the country (Fasuyi, 2007). The growth rate of Nigeria’s population which stands at about 3.5% has culminated into severe economic pressures vis-à-vis the ailing and dwindling economy of the problems as: the growing foreign indebtedness; unmanaged rate of urbanization; widespread unemployment syndrome; economic disparities between her various populations; severe food shortages and a prevalence of substandard living conditions for most people in the country.

Certain social vices which largely emanate from Nigeria’s over-population menace include: unhealthy political rivalry amongst her peoples, hired-assassination syndrome; armed robbery and serious threats of political instability. Nigeria’s per capita income stands at about 260 United States dollars, this is rated one of the lowest in the world. This scenario has negatively aggravated the whole development problems of this country and has equally crippled most of her development efforts (Ikeagu, 1997).

Table: Census Conducted in Nigeria

s/n	year	Population
1	1989	88.8 million
2	1991	120 million
3	2006	150 million

Source: National Population Commission, 2006

Nigeria’s over-population problem has severely handicapped and militated against her efforts in putting in place a better and improved quality of life for her teeming populace. In her present predicament, her population is dominated by children and youths. It is estimated that 46% of Nigeria’s population is made up of young people who are generally less than 15 years of age. This development constitutes a burden to the working population as it creates a circumstance which puts the dependency ratio in the country at 940:1000. In fact this dependency ratio is aggravated to 1007:1000 if Nigeria’s old age population (65 years) which constitutes about 2% of her population is featured. Thus Bolarinwa (2017) is convinced that the present economic resources that are at disposal of Nigeria’s may not bring about a better and improve quality of life for Nigeria’s population which stands at over 120,000,000.

The enormity of the issues and problems of over-population in Nigeria dawned on policy-makers only in the early 1980s. This time marked the period when the United Nations Organizations (UNO) began to sensitize the world about the imminent danger likely to engulf many countries including Nigeria, if the alarming growth-rate of the world’s population was not check. Ajaegbu (2015) revealed that

before this period, there were general display of lack of meaningful progress in any attempt at solving Nigeria’s over population problems as well as order population related issues and predicaments. He further disclose that there were manifestation of ignorance and paucity of knowledge and awareness on the part of policy-makers, and the citizens at large (community members, teachers, workers, public-opinion leader leaders, members of decision marking organs of the various agencies of governments and most professionals) regarding the dangerous consequences of unplanned increases in the growth of human numbers in the country.

Table: Estimated and Projected Population in Nigeria, 1963-210

S/N	Population	%
1963	43.9 million	91.2
1988	95.8 Million	77.0
1998	134.4 million	75.0
2010	190 million	68.0

Source: Olusanya and Pursel, 2018

By the mid-1980s, many Nigerian demographers, educationists and policy makers were becoming aware and knowledgeable about the negative consequences of over-population particularly in respect to a social economic and political growth and development of the country. By this time, according to Yisa (2018), there grew a recognition in this country that any mindful programmed design for socio-economic development must be necessarily take into account population and population – related issue and matters however, it has to be stated that the Bucharest conferences in 1974 was largely instrumental for awakening and re-awakening in the minds of many Nigerian policies-makers to the need that population and population issues be taking as an integral factor in the developmental programme of countries in order to avoid the deprivation of people and to ensure a better standard of living for all .

6. VOTE BUYING AND INTRICACIES OF DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

The activities of political parties and political actors started right from the colonial period. Regional politics was common and politics was practiced by the few blacks who were enlighten and exposed to western education (Duryile, 2017). The eligibility criterion for voting and contesting election was so stiff to the point that only few persons participate. At the tail end of colonialism, the franchise was broadened and politics became attractive.

At the elapse of colonialism, the first republic politicians were more inclined to regional loyalty than the practice of spreading money to win vote of the people1(Gbuile, 2014). The history of money politics surfaced in lamb light at the later part of the fourth republic. This was because politics was seen as a do or die affair and every politician want to win by whatsoever means. The poverty incidence in the country further amplify the issue and people resorted to depending on what politician give out

to them during election period (Hodgkin, 2006). There is a linkage between primordial nature of country and wide spread of money politics and vote buying among political actors and voters. Most of the electorate in Nigeria are literate and not in the knowing of the ill of such practices on development in the society. They mostly see it as the time to accumulate material things from politicians. Sule (2010) blamed the Independent National Electorate Commission of Nigeria (INEC) who has the mandate of sensitization but have failed to sensitize the society on the bad side of such practices. He went further and stressed:

INEC should solely be blamed for practice of vote buying and money politics in Nigeria. It has not for once campaigned and preaches against such act. It has not set any law to band and sanctioned its practices. It rather gives out money to political parties for campaigning. It does not encourage the usage of strategic and political tools such as debate, the content of manifesto, ideological lining and a lot of others.

Vote buying continued to gain popularity while societal development suffers serious neglect. The act is carried out in different forms. The political tenure of an elected officer in Nigeria is four years. Whenever a leader or a particular political party had stayed for two years in office, the third year is the year for the practicing of the act. Those that are already in power would hijacked money and hide it for such act (Joseph, 2015). Those that have less or do not have were left with no other option than to outsource in the form of loan from individuals, banks, sales of their asset or pledge in form of repay in the form of contract or appointive position.

Table1: Outlook of Vote buying in Nigeria

S/N	Benefactors	Periods
1.	Delegates	Before election
2.	Congress	Before election
3.	Godfather	All the time
4.	Stakeholders	All the time
5.	The society	Before the election

Source: Adapted from News papers, Magazine and News Report & Compiled by the Arthurs (2019)

The third year of the political tenureship in Nigeria is usually pale and often comes with a lot of amoral things in the body of the politics (Pandem, 2000). It is this very period that callous politician who were opportune to be in office siphoned public fund to aid them have capital to purchase the

voting strength of delegates and or parties members when part’s primaries will be by congress. The fourth year which is the last year which a leader will concludes his tenure; it is the time for bonanza and spree (Cinjel, 2015). It is the time that money is been wasted to buy the consciences of the voters while capital project suffer serious neglect.

Table 2: Campaign strategies in Developed and Developing societies

S/N	DEVELOPED SOCIETIES	PRIMORDIAL SOCIETIES
1.	Legitimacy	Money
2.	Demagogue	Money worth
3.	Presentation	god fatherism
4.	Debate	Usage of hired crowd
5.	Manifesto	Use of elite and stakeholders
6.	Ideology	Manipulation
7.	Rotation	Nepotism
8.	Zoning	Ethnicity
9.	Referendum	Religion

Source: Adapted from News papers, Magazine and News report & Compiled by the Arthurs (2019)

Vote buying is also carried or practiced after the election period. This is when a leader had already been chosen and he is in office. Those he called his god father must be compensated, elites in the society must be sorted and money must also be spent to sustain parties’ structures. Vote buying is practiced in different form in Nigeria (Clark, 2008). There are delegates who are chosen to elect or nominate the representative of the party among other candidate in the primaries. The person who paid higher bidder usually emerged as the winner. There is also the method in which the politicians will visits individuals in the community; house to house and canvasses for their audience and after which money will be given to them to win their support (Duryile, 2007). There is also the existence of the form in which monetary worth such as Maggi, wrapper, salt, fertilizer, sugar, shirt, caps, bicycles, motor cycles, oils and a lot of others would be shared to people in the visited community

6. THEORITICAL UNDERPINNING

Development and corruption model was adopted as the theoretical underpinning of the study. It was propounded by Stevenson and Peters in 2001. The nitty-gritty of the theory is that development and corruptible practices are incompatible and do not co-exist in the same place. Wherever there is one, the other does not exist. The two does not flow and will not growth together. The proponent when further to stress that where there is corruption, the society will experience backwardness in the form of underdevelopment and where three is development, corruption will not exist (Sabo, 2014).

Another variance of the theory is that societies which are already developed are those who have mature democracy, society with rule of law, fear of God, have moral justification, patriotic, industrialized and have diversified economy. They equally see underdeveloped societies as kind of nations who have suffered from dictatorial governance such as prolonged military rule, immature democracy, mono-economy, nepotism, ethnic inclined, prone to violence, primitive and non-industrialize, weak political structure and a lot of others.

The tenets of the theory are:

- a. Corruption affects development
- b. Corruptible practices are feature of under development
- c. Development repress corruption
- d. Political functions in a developed society are by precept.
- e. Election malpractices are features of developing society.

The theory is applicable to the study in the sense that vote buying which mostly takes place during and even after election in most third world countries in the form of sharing or distribution of money and monetary worth’s such as fertilizer, salt, Maggi, wrappers, rice, Beverage, oil and a lot of others are corruptible factors and elements that contributes in retarding democratic governance and also affecting development in the society.

A lot of money and monetary worth are wasted on buying the interest of delegates, the voters, congress, godfathers, stakeholders, elites and other groups in order to influences the voters choice and decision of candidature during electioneering period and for future aspiration. The act in itself involves a machination and intrigues which are mostly amoral and this is not in tune with conventional practices (Ahmed, 2015). There is more to the challenges of development than the amoralities associated with the act.

Table 3: Articles used in Vote Buying

S/N	Monetary Worth	Categories of Receivers
1`	Fertilizer	Men/women
2	Sugar	Women
3	Salt	Women
4	Maggi	Women
5	Wrappers	Women
6	Shirt	Men/Women/Youth
7	Rice	Women
8	Slippers	Men/Women

9	Biro	Students
10	Money Cash	All the group
11	Motorcycles	Men
12	Bicycles	Men
13	Car	All the group

Source: Adapted from News papers, Magazine and News Reports & Compiled by the Arthurs (2019)

This is based on the reason that morality is relative but underdevelopment and societal backwardness is purely absolute. The corruptible act of money politics and vote buying for long has stimulate acts such as siphoning of public fund, embezzlement, looting, diversion, misappropriation and a lot of others that are strong debasement to development. Funds which were meant for public utilization in the form of infrastructural development, socio-economic transformation and a lot of others are mostly diverted for such act and the aftermath is backwardness which mostly manifested in form of poverty, bad roads, and poor states of hospitals, job actions, conflicts, nepotism and a lot of others to the society in anticipation of vote (Idang, 2012).

The media and the electoral commission (INEC) have failed woefully in sensitizing the society on the amoral justification of the act. This makes most of the voters and people in the society with less or no knowledge of the consequences of such actions. This development is a serious blow to developmental functions in the society. Samaila (2013) enthused:

It is only in Nigeria that politicians are generous during election time. They often carry out such specious charitable and generous act while developmental functions suffer serious neglect. Money is issued out to the people in the form of real cash or monetary worth such as salt, fertilizer, rice, wrappers, shirt, shoes, handset, motor cycles and a lot of others while workers are owing them backlog of salaries, our roads are dilapidated and full of port holes, hospitals are without drugs, our students are at home because of strike action, a lot of persons are sick with only few medical personnel at their watch, a lot are dying as a result of bad water and a lot of others.

In the same direction, Moses (2013) pointed out the effects of the practices of vote buying in this direction: retarded growth of democratic governance, wide spread of corruption because politician must look for money by what

so ever means to win, and the voters are accustomed to it; they see it as a normal thing and mostly waited for such time in order to amass what they are anxiously anticipated. It is now a custom and any politicians who abscond from it would be greeted with failure. Voters collected money and monetary worth from all direction. The person with higher bidder or give out much mostly emerged as the choice of the voters.

Vote buying is a serious problem in Nigeria and has paved way to the spread and growth of corruptible practices in the country. It is an appalling act and has no moral justification in conventional practices. The giver and the taker are involves in corruptible practices. What is the giver giving for and what also is the receiver receiving for? Why is the appreciation or charitable act not done before and after the election, when what ought to have be done is undone? Why is the charitable practice being carried out by the politicians and why also in anticipation of vote? What should be noted that appreciation or show of thank should be done after and it should not have any effect as it is always at the expense of the citizen or society (Joseph, 2015). It is a situation where funds that are meant for capital project are embezzled to finance such acts. Some politician in their crafty ways equated the act to terms such as motivation and refused to see anything wrong in it practices. The big question is, if the money and monetary worth are act of motivation, then what are the motivating the voters for? The answers will still remain to buy their vote and that has turned to bribe (Ajane, 2016).

The dirtiest part of such act is the situation in which all the aspirants give out or splurge out the so called money or monetary worth to the society and the voters received such things from the politicians and each person only has once vote to vote for (Wood, 2001). A voter who collected or received money to vote from different politicians can only vote for one person during the election time. What should be seen is, how the other person who he or she had received their money or monetary worth would be settled. This brings us back to the issue of bidder. The person with the higher bidder or pay higher easily emerged as the best choice and thus, the increase and wide spread of corruptible practice such as siphoning, looting, embezzlement, misappropriation and a lot of others while infrastructural development suffers serious neglect (Wood, 2001).

7. MAJOR FINDINGS

- (a) In the course of the study, it was discovered that vote buying is associated with the increasing level of poverty and unemployment in the society occasioned by social dislocation and economic crisis. The elements associated with poverty incidence are ingrained from series of factors which among them include: weak agricultural practices, low industrialization and corruption. This assertion is in line with the work of scholars such as Egwu (2005), Best (2007), Nghuvugher (2008), and a lot of others who attempted to create a semblance between poverty and the commonness of

vote buying in Nigeria. These acts continue to exist and thus, forced the citizen of the country to be lured into act of vote buying. The consequence is underdevelopment because money which is meant for capital projects are embezzled for such ugly act.

- (b) It was also found out that vote buying has become a custom in Nigeria and a lot of people failed to create a line separation between the act and its moral justification. It is a welcome development from both religious and traditional people, young and old people, learned and unlearned people, men and women. A lot of voters in the country see it as an avenue for enrichment and refused to see it as an intrigue that is unhealthy for societal progression.
- (c) In the course of the study, it was found out that there is a relationship between vote buying and challenges of development in Nigeria. There are high case of project abandonment in the country and lack of infrastructural facilities such as good road, lack of drugs in the hospital, poor drinking water and a lot of others. These acts are serious threat to socio-economic development in the country. This submission is in line with the view of Saleh (2015) who also faulted vote buying as one of the hydra-headed monster that for long has been a thorn in the flesh of development in the country.
- (d) In the course of the study, it was revealed that there is a significant linkage between vote buying and the wide spread of corruption in the country. Corruption had penetrated deep inside the fabric of politics of Nigeria. Politicians and political actors are fond of act such as embezzlement, siphoning, diversion, misappropriation, looting and a lot of others with fund which were meant for public use. The idea and stimulant toward such act is vote buying. This is because winning political post at any level are mostly determine by what the candidates give out to the public, godfather, delegate, stakeholder, youth groups and a lot of others. Hence, continues spread of the act in the country.
- (e) A cross sectional survey among leaders of the coalition parties in three state (Plateau, Benue, and Nasarawa) shows that almost all the political parties in the country are into vote buying. A lot of interviewees testify of how money (cash) and monetary worth are mostly given out during and after election to party's delegates, voters, godfathers, stakeholders, elites (Religious and ethnic) and a lot of others. The study also confirmed that most of the things issue out to influence the decision of the voters include items such as monetary cash, salt, maggi, soap, rice, maize, bean, fertilizer, slippers, bicycles, motor cycle, cars, and a lot of others. These are serious threat and distraction to the political actors in carrying out his or her expected task.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following sets of recommendations were proffered:

- (a) The national independent electoral commission should sensitize both the electorate and the political actors on

the ills of vote buying and money politics. They should be educated on how to inculcate moral standard in politics as it is practiced in developed societies. Premium should be tailored toward avenues such as debate, presentation, charismatic, legitimacy, manifesto and ideological leaning.

- (b) The federal government in conjunction with the independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) should set in motion practical laws to curtail and control advocacy of vote buying and money politics in the country. The law just like it is practiced in other developed countries such as France, U.S.A, Germany, Britain and a lot of other places should be able to spelt out penalties associated with the practices.
- (c) Addressing the economic and governance questions can be done through strengthening of democratic governance by promoting participation, accountability and transparency. The various institutions of political participation like political parties, civil society and electoral process need strengthening to give room for genuine participation by the citizens. The people should be placed at the fore of governance. Democracy cannot be strengthened without popular participation and empowerment
- (d) Related to this is the need to promote economic policies that can stimulate the productive and creative energies of the people as opposed to market-centric, neo-liberal economic policies of the government. The over two decades of IMF/World Bank-inspired economic reforms have not only dislocated the economy, but also, created poverty and misery on the people with serious implications for inter-communal harmony. There is, therefore, the need to reform current economic policies of the government to promote a developmental State

9. CONCLUSION

Money politics and vote buying have become a physique of the Nigerian politics and this hydra-headed monster has gave rise to a number of anomalies such as the increasing cases of project abandonment, fail project, non-sustenance of policy and inadequacy of infrastructural facilities (poor roads, poor drinking water, job action, poor health and educational system). Election period is normally seen as a period where voters enrich themselves from the money and monetary worth which political actors diverted from public treasury. Items such as cash, cheques, rice, salt, maggi, slippers, wrapper, shirt and a lot of others are used as bait to entice voters in exchange of their vote. The candidate with higher bidder and who can lavish much cash on godfathers, delegate and other stake holders mostly appeared as the winner.

This development has not only lead to poverty in the state but has encourages the growth of corruptible practices because the political actors must have to divert public fund in order to satisfied the awaited crowd, voters, godfathers, stakeholders, delegate and a lot of others who

anxiously see it as a yardstick for determining the legitimacy and credibility of a candidate seeking a political office.

The issue of using political tools such as debates, candidate charisma, presentability, ideological lining, manifesto, track record of the political actor and a lot of others are relegated to the background. The society also has not created an amoral justification for the practice and thus been seen as a culture and the actors must bound to it before they will be elected or re-elected in a political office.

Vote buying and money politics in the country have resulted to a lot of cases of retarded development. Public funds which are meant for infrastructural development are mostly embezzled, siphoned and diverted to please the amoral course and thus the society retrogress instead of advancing like its counterparts in matured and developed societies.

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