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Vote Buying and Vote Selling in Contemporary Nigerian Elections: Implication for National Security

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Abstract: It is a known truth that elections are central feature of democracy. In order to express the will of the electorates, elections must be free, fair and credible, devoid of any form of inducement of voters. Regrettably, since the return of democracy in Nigeria, the endemic phenomenon of vote buying and selling has grown steadily in scale and brazenness in Nigerian electoral space. Most recently, vote buying and selling has taken a more dangerous turn, where like in a typical market place, politicians, political parties and their agents shared cash, food and other valuable items among the electorates to buy their votes and conscience. This is evident in recent elections in Edo, Osun, Ondo and Anambra during their gubernatorial elections that held separately. This paper therefore seeks to examine the causes of vote buying, its manifestations, and consequences and proffer solutions to curbing the ugly phenomenon. The paper posited that, offering money, food, and valuable items to induce voters to vote for a particular candidate compromises the voter's free will, throws up mediocrity and by implication limit the provision of public goods as the massive cash expended in buying votes will be recovered by the leadership. The paper was entirely based on secondary data and the method of analysis is content and descriptive. Market Model Theory of Charles Schaffer was employed as an explanatory device for a thorough analysis of the subject under discussion. The paper concluded that something urgent must be done by all lovers of Nigerian democracy and relevant authorities to tackle this ugly situation of vote buying and selling so as to save Nigeria's budding democracy from being put up for sale. Finally, the paper recommends the making of sound legislation that criminalizes vote buying and selling during elections with severe punishment for offenders. More so, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should form a strong partnership to monitor campaign and election financing by political parties and politicians so as to prosecute those that default the guidelines.

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1. Introduction

Election has become the most effective means of changing governance in constitution democracy. The fundamental tenet of democracy is that the people have the right to choose who governs them. But it is unfortunate that vote buying and selling by the political class in the enthronement of democracy has become a source of concern as these activities has jeopardized the basic tenets of democracy as a pivotal to good governance. Vying for political position in this circumstance has left contest for election in the hand of the wealthy. Despite that the electoral act regulates the finances in the electoral process

and activities by candidate and political activities there is the need to further strengthen the electoral act to effectively regulate the vote buying syndrome which if not checked can destroy the tenets of democracy. Vote buying is progressively becoming a regular reoccurrence and consistent phenomenon in the Nigeria electoral system that becomes a cancerous to elections in Nigeria. This electoral malpractice has been widely practiced either during political party primaries or general elections. Musa and Umar [1]. The above situation according to Ojo [2], further epitomized the importance of elections to both sustenance and consolidation of democracy in all climes and regions of the world. However, the major distinction between electoral democracy and electoral authoritarianism builds upon the common affirmation that democracy requires elections, but not just any kind of elections. In the common phrasing, elections must be 'free and fair' in order to pass as democratic.

Indisputably, one of the critical pillars supporting every democracy is elections. Election is an essential and fundamental factor in the stabilization and democratization of budding democracies like ours. According to Boafa-Arthur [3] cited in Baidoo, Dankwa & Eshun [4], elections are important to 21 nations construction and the electorates since it performs the role of a litmus test for democratic institutions. It ensures that democratic pillars including rule of law, ballot secrecy, separation of power, independence of the Judiciary and many more are strengthened [5][6].

Elections free from malpractice are therefore the springboard of democracy [7][8]. They serve as the conduit for peaceful change of government and boost and grant political legitimacy to the government [9]. Ideally, in a democracy, seeking electoral support is expected to be an open debate of reasoned arguments about why specific political candidates are most competent for elections to office [10][11]. Candidates are supposed to compete for popular support by presenting programmes of public goods to state out competitive positions by persuading the median voter at the center of the political spectrum [12]. Electorates then chose or elect the candidates whose campaign policies and programmes positively impinge on them.

Since the return of democracy in 1999, Nigerian electoral process has been bedeviled by the phenomenon of vote buying and selling and this reached its apogee in recent elections in Osun, Ekiti, Anambra, Edo and the just concluded general elections. Due to the luscious nature of Nigerian elective cum positions of political appointments, elections are competitive and politicians thus set out various measures to win including violence, intimidation, manipulation and rigging, the latest being the strategy of vote buying. Owing to the fact that the aforementioned strategies no longer yield the desired result, Nigerian political parties and politicians have turned their attention to buying the votes of the electorates. Indeed, vote buying in its different dimensions has been a common and recurring feature in the reports of observers on Nigeria's elections [13]. A number of empirical studies have also demonstrated the prevalence of vote buying in the Nigerian elections. For example, a 2007 survey conducted by the international foundation 'for electoral systems (IFES) and practical sampling international shows that more than seven out of ten Nigerians believe that vote buying happens either, 'all of the time' or most of the time in the Country's elections [14]. This ugly incident of vote buying and selling is taking place amidst the punishment spelt out against offenders in the electoral act 2010 as (amended).

According to the Electoral Act [15] as amended, Article 130, "A person who(a) Corruptly by himself or by any other person at any time after the date of an election has been announced, directly or indirectly gives or provides or pays money to or for any person for the purpose of corruptly influencing that person or any other person to vote or refrain from voting at such election, or on account of such person or any other person having voted or refrained from voting at such election, or (b) being a voter, corruptly accepts or takes money or any other inducement during any of the period stated in paragraph (a) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of ₦100,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both. In the same vein, the 2008 revised code of conduct for political parties in section VIII (e) provides that, "...all political parties and their agents shall not engage in the following practice; buying votes or offer any bribe,

gift, reward, gratification or any other monetary or unethical considerations or allurements to voters and electoral officials" [16].

But in spite of the commission's stance on vote buying, the act has gradually been turning into a regular phenomenon, as reported during the recently conducted state elections in Osun, Ekiti, Edo, Ondo, Anambra and the 2019 general elections. Clearly, a significant part of the problem with Nigeria's electoral process has been the prevailing incidence of vote buying (exchange of cash or gifts for votes), which has almost become a norm during elections [17][18]. The consequences of vote buying are far-reaching, affecting not only the electoral process but also the entire political system, and perpetuating a cycle of corruption and poor governance [19]. Therefore, addressing the problem of vote buying is crucial to building a more robust democracy in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The widespread practice of vote buying and selling poses a critical threat to the integrity and effectiveness of democratic governance, with significant, albeit often overlooked, implications for national security. This phenomenon transforms elections from a legitimate expression of public will into transactional events, thereby undermining the core tenets of democracy. The problem of study lies in understanding how this illicit exchange of political support for material gain systematically corrodes public trust, distorts policy-making, and creates an unstable political environment that can ultimately jeopardize a nation's stability and security. This study aims to delineate the multifaceted negative impacts of vote buying and selling on democratic institutions, public welfare, and national security.

The first key aspect of this problem is the fundamental undermining of democratic integrity. Vote buying fundamentally compromises the fairness and legitimacy of electoral processes, transforming them into transactions rather than genuine reflections of the popular will. Following this, the practice leads to a significant erosion of public trust. The pervasive perception that votes are bought and sold fosters deep cynicism among citizens, causing them to lose faith in political institutions and the democratic system itself. Furthermore, vote buying results in a critical distortion of policy-making. Politicians who engage in these illicit exchanges tend to prioritize short-term, clientelist benefits over the development and implementation of effective public policies that would genuinely serve the broader society. Finally, the cumulative effect of these issues constitutes a profound threat to national stability and security. A weakened, distrusted, and corrupted democratic system creates an environment ripe for social unrest and political instability, which can indirectly but significantly lead to national security vulnerabilities. By examining these interconnected issues, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which vote buying and selling undermine democratic governance and how these practices can cascade into broader national security challenges.

2. Materials and Method

This study utilizes the secondary method of data collection from pre-existing sources. Documents that have important information about the subject under study are examined descriptively as the foundation of the documentary technique. Journal articles, textbooks, literature on electoral practice, newspapers and online publications were consulted.

Review of literatures on vote buying and Vote Selling

Globally, election is considered a major mechanism for effecting changes in the governance of any nation. This is so because the process affords every citizen the opportunity to participate in choosing ' candidates for various positions whether at the national, state or local levels [20]. Elections are only acceptable institutionalized processes enabling some or all of the recognized members of a democratic society to choose office holders.

As defining characteristics of democracy therefore, elections enable citizens to choose a government empowered by them to make and enforce laws in a given political community and within a defined territory. Through elections, people choose the programmes the government will follow, as well as settle problems which divide the

government and the political parties. Elections lie at the heart of representative governance, giving meaning to the modern conception of democracy [21][22][23].

According to Baidoo, Dankwa & Eshun [24], elections allow citizens to take part in governance. Thus, elections give the citizens the opportunity to select their leaders. Electorates use elections to evaluate how leadership or governments have excelled in all facets of national life; such as education, economy, agriculture, corruption, standard of living and others. It gives legitimacy and political authority to every administration. Elections play dominant roles in a democracy and these are hugely circumscribed in terms of portraying the popular will, inculcating political changes and actualization of regime legitimacy [25]. Elections remain the basic platform upon which liberal democracy must be built. The conduct of elections is the cause of liberal democracy and liberal democracy is the effect of real elections [26].

In their article, "Oil Corrupts Elections: The Political economy of vote buying in Nigeria", Onapajo, Francis & Uzodike, [27] argued that the predominance of vote buying in Nigerian elections reflects the nature of politics and elections produced by its oil dependent economy. Nigerian politics constitutes a highly and fiercely contested process among the elites given the fact that the control of state power is clearly equivalent to direct access to the states oil riches. It is against this backdrop that elections are overly monetized as politicians heavily spend oil money on elections, especially on vote buying, in order to have (or continue to have a strong hold on power. Similarly, Tal & Sule [28] also argued that political parties have been found in the fourth Republic to have spent billions of naira during elections not specifically for campaign purposes but for outright bribery and vote buying. Political parties and politicians sometimes or most of the times seek to acquire power as their ultimate aim of venturing into politics and therefore they can employ all available financial materials and other logistics such as human resources and political strategy in order to achieve their set target [29].

According to Balogun [30], Ojo,[31], vote buying is absurd and must be stopped by any means possible. If not, it means that the choice of leadership will no longer be based on merit or popular choice, but by bidding for votes irrespective of a candidate's qualification. The phenomenon of vote buying is currently the most apparent and predominant electoral strategy those political parties and their candidates employ to prosecute elections in Nigeria [32]. In his piece, "Recurring problems of violence and litigation during elections" Adetayo said that, what has come to be known as vote-buying has also crept into the nation's electoral process, thereby posing another major threat to the nation's democracy. This is a process through which politicians offer money to voters with the sole aim of influencing their choice of candidates at the poll [33].

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

In this paper, we seek to examine the phenomenon of vote buying in Nigerian elections through the theoretical lens of Schaffer's Market Model Theory. The theory is rooted in economics and its central theme is the core notion of trading (buying and selling) of commodities in the conventional market place. It refers to a commercial transaction (the exchange of goods and services for money) or other forms of payment; a routine operation that competent inhabitants of the modern capitalist understand without difficulty [34].

The theory is suitable for this paper because, just like a typical market place, the politicians, political parties and party agents are the vote buyers while the prospective voters equipped with permanent voter's card (PVC's) are the vote sellers. The commodity for sale is the vote to be cast while the medium of exchange could be monetary or non-monetary items. Candidates therefore "buy" and citizens "sell" votes as they buy and sell apples, shoes or television sets. The market force that determines the value or price of a vote is the level of desperation of politicians to win in a locality. Though the 'Market model' has its limitations because vote buying and selling is an illicit business and as such does not take place within a 'normal' market place protected by social and legal norms, it has helped us understand the auction of votes by the electorates to the highest bidder during recent elections in Nigeria.

3. Result and Discussion

Assessing the Incidence of Vote Buying and Selling in Nigeria Elections

As noted by Omorogbe & Orobor, [35], Election is a process in which people in a democratic society vote to choose or elect a person or group of people to hold an official position. It is also defined as the process of choosing representatives in any political settings to hold position of authority. Ali, & Dalaram [36] defined election as the process people follow to elect or choose their representatives in federal, state and local government. It also refers to the process of picking candidates through voting (franchise) to represent the people in various offices as stipulated by the constitution in the 2019 and 2023 general elections, election were marred by vote buying and selling [37]. This was evident in the presidential primaries of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC) in 2023 were marked by controversy and allegations of vote buying. Although there's no direct evidence of vote buying in these specific primaries, the parties' history of delegate-based elections creates opportunities for such practices. In both parties' primaries, delegates elected from local governments or wards played a crucial role in determining the outcome, and this system can be vulnerable to vote buying, as delegates may be influenced by financial inducements. The PDP primaries saw Atiku Abubakar emerge as the party's flagbearer, while the APC primaries saw Bola Tinubu win the party's nomination. While the outcomes may have reflected the preferences of the delegates, the allegations of vote buying cast a shadow over the legitimacy of the process [38].

Similarly, in Ondo State, the 2020 gubernatorial election was marred by allegations of vote buying and electoral violence [39]. The opposition party, People's Democratic Party (PDP), rejected the outcome of the election, alleging that the ruling party, All Progressives Congress (APC), had used state resources to influence the outcome of the election [40].

In Osun State, the 2022 gubernatorial election was characterized by reports of vote buying and electoral malpractices [41]. The opposition party, All Progressives Congress (APC), rejected the outcome of the election, alleging that the ruling party, People's Democratic Party (PDP), had engaged in widespread electoral malpractices [42]. These elections highlight the challenges facing Nigeria's electoral process and the need for reforms to ensure free and fair elections. According to Omoregie [43], electoral reforms are necessary to address the issues of vote buying, electoral violence, and other forms of malpractices that have become common in Nigeria's elections.

There are widespread allegations of vote buying in the off-cycle governorship elections in Edo 2024, Ondo states in 2016, Anambra in 2017, Ekiti and Osun states in 2018. Observers reported cases of massive vote buying by the main political parties (the APC and PDP). In the aforementioned elections, the parties were accused of giving ₦3,000, ₦4,000, ₦5,000, ₦7,000 and ₦10,000 respectively for votes in several polling units. Reporting for the Punch Newspaper, Alagbe Jesusegun documented the case of a retiree who claimed that an APC agent offered him money to vote for the party. For example, the 2024 Edo State gubernatorial election was a highly contested with a lot of dramatic event that ultimately led to the emergence of Senator Monday Okpebholo as the governor. The election was marked by allegations of electoral irregularities, vote buying, and over-voting, which were raised by the opposition party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), and its candidate, Asue Ighodalo [44]. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared Okpebholo winner of the election, having polled 291,667 votes to defeat Ighodalo, who garnered 247,655 votes. The Labour Party's Olumide Akpeta came third with 22,763 votes. Okpebholo's victory was subsequently upheld by the Edo State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal and the Court of Appeal, despite the PDP's allegations of electoral malpractices (INEC, 2024). According to Okonta (2024), the election outcome was a reflection of the complex dynamics of Nigerian politics, where electoral outcomes are often influenced by a variety of factors, including money and party loyalty. [45]

The Corrosive Effect of Vote Buying and Selling on Democratic Governance and National Security

Vote buying and selling significantly erode the foundations of democratic governance by undermining the principle of one person, one vote, and distorting the electoral process. When votes are treated as commodities, elections cease to be about the legitimate representation of the people's will and instead become transactions. This practice breeds cynicism among citizens, diminishing their trust in political institutions and the integrity of the democratic system itself. Academic literature, such as that by Guerra and Justesen (2022), highlights that vote buying can attract votes from those offered money, but it also generates negative reactions from voters who reject or are excluded from such offers, leading to a decrease in overall voter confidence and participation in genuinely democratic processes.

Beyond electoral integrity, vote buying has detrimental effects on public policy and the quality of governance. Research indicates a negative correlation between pervasive vote buying and the provision of public goods and programmatic redistribution [46][47]. Instead of focusing on effective policies that benefit the broader populace, politicians engaged in vote buying prioritize short-term, clientelist exchanges. This shift in focus diverts resources and attention away from critical societal needs, perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality. It transforms politics into a transactional arena where public welfare takes a backseat to securing individual votes through illicit means.

The long-term consequences of entrenched vote buying can extend to national security, albeit indirectly. A weakened democratic system, characterized by widespread corruption and a lack of public trust, creates an environment ripe for instability. When citizens feel their voices are not heard and their votes are inconsequential, disillusionment can grow, potentially leading to social unrest or a breakdown of law and order. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, for example, has linked electoral corruption to national security concerns, arguing that corrupt regimes can undermine state stability by "sheltering infiltrators" or obstructing border security measures for electoral gains [48]. While this specific example relates to broader electoral malpractice, the underlying sentiment connects electoral integrity to national well-being. Ultimately, vote buying and selling represent a multifaceted threat that metastasizes through the body politic. It doesn't just corrupt individual elections but systematically weakens the mechanisms through which a society holds its leaders accountable. The erosion of trust, the distortion of public policy, and the potential for social and political instability all contribute to a less secure and less governable nation. Restoring faith in the electoral process requires comprehensive reforms, including state funding of elections and strengthening the independence of electoral bodies, as discussed in various calls for reform to curb undue influence and ensure that every vote genuinely counts.

These practices undermine the integrity of electoral processes, erode public trust in governmental institutions, and hinder the country's progress. In the context of democratic governance, the implications are far-reaching. When leaders are elected through unfair means, they tend to prioritize personal interests over public welfare, leading to poor governance and weakened accountability. This can result in a decline in citizens' faith in governmental institutions, making it challenging for elected officials to effectively govern. Furthermore, repeated instances of election rigging and vote buying can weaken the capacity of institutions like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to manage free and fair elections.

The impact on development is also a major aspect of this investigation. Electoral malpractices can deter foreign investment, as investors seek stable and transparent environments. Leaders elected through unfair means may prioritize personal enrichment over public welfare, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Additionally, electoral violence and intimidation can lead to social unrest, displacement, and humanitarian crises. In Nigeria, the 2024 Edo State gubernatorial election serves as a recent example of electoral malpractices. Allegations of vote buying, over-voting, and electoral irregularities marred the election, which saw Senator Monday Okpebholo emerge as the governor. The opposition party, PDP, rejected the outcome, citing widespread irregularities.

According to Bratton (2008), vote buying and violence are common features of Nigerian election campaigns, and these practices can have far-reaching implications for democratic governance. Ezeajughu (2023) notes that election rigging and vote buying are significant threats to Nigerian democracy, and urgent reforms are needed to ensure the integrity of electoral processes. Adetula (2008) highlights the role of money in Nigerian politics, and how it can influence electoral outcomes. Moreover, vote buying and selling undermines electoral malpractices pose a significant threat to democratic governance and national development. Urgent reforms are needed to ensure the integrity of electoral processes and promote democratic governance and development.

The Menace of Vote Buying in Nigeria and its Consequences

The consequences of vote buying are far-reaching, affecting not only the electoral process but also the entire political system. The prevalence of vote buying has also led to the election of leaders who are not accountable to the people, perpetuating poor governance and corruption. Furthermore, vote buying has eroded public trust in the electoral process, leading to widespread disillusionment with democracy.

Studies provide extensive data on factors that influences vote buying during the 2023 general elections. Scholars provide various factors which include, poverty, political corruption and voter apathy. These weaknesses could be used by politicians or political parties to buy votes, skewing the results to their advantage. According to literatures, the inability of candidates and political parties to provide a solid comprehensive manifestoes to the citizens has made vote buying and money politics a common practice in our electioneering process in Nigeria. Vote buying in modern Nigeria is attributed to a number of factors, including poor institutions, a lack of voter education, the political class's eagerness to hold onto power, and the general failure of the Nigerian state. Poverty, a lack of political education, and shoddy institutions are common in Nigerian society. The factors or causes are:

Poverty and economic instability: Nigerians live on less than \$1 a day on average, according to UN estimates of poverty in the country. The rate of poverty was on the high side prior to the 2023 general elections and the prevailing issue of new naira redesign increase the rate of vote voting, the politicians took advantage of the issue on ground to increase their chances to win at the poll by buying votes with cash and other gift items. Those who are extremely poor might find some relief from their suffering for a week if they receive material things and cash incentives on voting day due to the general voter's ignorance and poverty, Poverty, unemployment and illiteracy have been identified by scholars as the major causes of vote buying. In Nigeria, the vast majority of people live in abject poverty as a result of vote buying. Poverty and illiteracy contributed to the increasing rate of vote buying before and during elections. As a matter of fact, majority of the people citizens are ready to sell out their votes and mandates for personal gains and monetary values.

Inability of Political Parties and Candidates to Project Comprehensive Manifestoes: political parties and candidates do not sell out comprehensive and comprehensible manifestoes that will help them make rational political choice to the electorates. They do not have a clear-cut policy and programmes that will enhance the well-being of voters. Voters are rather interested in money politics and vote buying.

Political Corruption: Circle of corruption undermines electoral and democratic process in the 2023 general elections. Vote buying is an end product of political corruption that affect the credibility of the electoral process and democratic consolidation and thus brings about inefficient public service delivery, poor public services. political corruption: This plays a significant role in influencing vote buying in the 2023 general election in Nigeria. The country's history of electoral problems, including vote buying has been well-documented.

Lack of Electoral Integrity: Nigeria's electoral system lacks transparency and accountability, creating an environment conducive to vote buying. This includes inadequate voter registration, poor ballot security, and insufficient electoral officer training. Desperation of Politicians- In recent time, most politicians are desperate to win election at all cost, so they go extra miles to ensure they win elections even at primary

elections. They engage in all sort of malpractices including providing financial inducement and material needs like giving foodstuffs, cloth, jobs and money before and even on election day which is against the existing electoral laws.

In a perspective work, Davies cited in Ojo (2008), identifies seven predisposing factors responsible for vote buying in Nigeria. First, the inability of the political parties and the contestants to put in place comprehensive manifestoes for scrutiny by the voters is aiding vote buying, poverty, the political cynicism, self-seeking and incompetent amongst others. According to Ojo & Onuoha (2018), the recent technological innovations such as the introduction of handheld devices to read biometric voter identity cards and electronic tracking of electoral materials, which has vastly reduced traditional forms of rigging. Hence, politicians have come to realize that falsification of election results in order to emerge winners is becoming counter-productive.

4. Conclusion

According to Ojo & Onuoha, vote buying unduly raises the cost of elections thereby shutting out contestants with little finances and promoting political corruption. When victory is purchased rather than won fairly, it obviously leads to state capture. It equally compromises the credibility, legitimacy and integrity of elections. Vote buying undermines the integrity of elections as the winners are often the highest bidders and not necessarily the most popular or credible contestants. It therefore discourages conscientious people from participating in electoral politics and causes citizens to lose faith in state institutions. Vote trading equally has the tendency to perpetuate bad governance. It not only compromises the well-being of those who sold their votes for instant gratification, but also the future of those who did not sell their votes but are inevitably exposed to bad governance that result from such a fraudulent process. For every vote traded, there are many people who will suffer the unintended consequences when the traded votes make the difference between winning and losing in the election.

This paper attempted to x-rayed vote buying and selling in Nigeria's electoral process, its causes, manifestations and consequences. It is deducible from the findings of this paper that, if something urgent is not done to curb the ugly incidence of vote trading, Nigeria's fledgling democracy will forever be at the mercy of money bags. This portends great danger as vote buying has dire consequences on the economy and democracy. Rather than prepare to serve the masses selflessly through comprehensive party manifestoes, policies and programmes, politicians and political parties massively deploy all their financial resources in contravention of the extant laws of election financing to hijack Nigeria's democracy with a view to privatizing the common wealth. Popular electoral choices and the will of the masses are compromised as the political class and their close collaborators have taken undue advantage of the mass poverty at home in the Country.

In the words of Andreas Schedler, "if power and money determines electoral choices, constitutional guarantees of democratic freedom and equality turns into dead letters". According to Acemoglu & Robinson, the ability of political elites to use financial resources to undermine the one person, one vote principle of representative democracies-via clientelism or straight cash for votes – is widely considered to be an important cause of elite capture of public policy worldwide. Vote buying has brought about bad leadership and bad governance where politicians do not care about the well-being of the citizens and development in the country, they rather focus on personal gains. The aftermath of vote buying has resulted into poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment, fraudulent electoral practices and undermined democracy

Recommendation/Way Forward

Based on the findings of this paper, the following recommendations are proposed to address the issue of vote buying in Nigeria's electoral space:

To reduce the desperation and deployment of undemocratic means to attain power, this paper recommends eliminating excessive allowances, entitlements, and benefits accompanying elective and political positions. Making politics less lucrative could deter individuals from investing resources in elections. Additionally, lawmaking positions should be on a part-time basis to reduce the allure of these positions.

The Nigerian Government should prioritize poverty reduction initiatives to make citizens less susceptible to vote buying. By addressing extreme poverty, the government can reduce the vulnerability of citizens to monetary and non-monetary inducements during elections.

To effectively combat vote buying, the National Assembly should enact laws empowering INEC, EFCC, ICPC, and the Nigerian Police

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