
NIGERIA'S ELECTIONS: AN ENTERPRISE AND A FALLACY

¹Rasak Bamidele, ²Ogunlade Peter, ³Asamu Festus, ⁴Ake Modupe,
⁵Olowojolu Olakunle & ⁶Ake Susan

^{1, 2, 3} Department of Sociology, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State
E-mail: delerasak@gmail.com, rasak.bamidele@lmu.edu.ng
+2348034955615, +2347052087979

⁴ Department of Political Science, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State

⁵ Department of Political Science, Federal University, Oye, Ekiti State

⁶ Department of Mass Communication, Baze University, Abuja FCT.

ABSTRACT

The enormous sums of money involved in some political races make it impossible for those without access to large sums of money to compete on the same level as those who are completely subsidized. Nigeria's elections may allude to a fallacy based on the assumption that it has always been a huge business. Political parties spend a lot of money on exposure, coordination, and even vote-buying; favours and blessings are given, and political help is given in kind, making Nigeria's political decision a "cash and carry" issue. The elite political conduct determines the essence and destiny of national politics. This could be because politics in Nigeria is constructed as a 'winner takes all' game rather than nation-building. Ideology is an important feature of politics, not only because it provides a theoretical foundation for a general view of cultures, but also because it serves as an extraordinary tool for arbitration, self-identification, universal mobilization, and legitimacy. As a result, it may be correct to assert that a political party's ideological stance should be the first and most important instrument in an ideal situation. In Nigeria, ethnicity and faith have been divisive and largely unhelpful in the pursuit of democratic consolidation. As a result, the goal of this research is to look into Nigerian elections as both an enterprise and a fallacy. Through the use of secondary data collection techniques, this study answers the following questions: Is there a link between elections and political ideology? Is Nigeria's electoral process a success? This approach will be founded on a substantial body of elite theory-related literature and empirical applications that seek to characterize and explain power dynamics in contemporary society.

Keywords: Elections, Political elite, Political ideology, Political party, Democracy, Elitism, Political Finance, Money politics

Introduction

Elections are the unpredictability of events with various variables that interact and feed each other. It is commonly described as a 'formal' act of aggregate choice that occurs in the context of a chain of associated antecedents and subsequent actions (Okoye, 2003). It entails individuals' participation in the election of their representatives as well as their participation in governance. Elections are not inherently associated with Election Day, but they are an important component of it. It includes events that occurred before, during, and after the elections. It includes the legal and legislative framework for elections, as well as the registration of political parties, party campaigns, security operations, and administration in office. It necessitates the validity and authenticity of the voter registration list. It is about the independence, or lack thereof, of electoral agencies and bodies. It necessitates liberalism or, at the very least, the nation's political procedures and the independence of the electoral authorities.

In a democratic country, periodic elections of officials and legislators establish the key institutional device to ensure that the government obtains its powers from the administration's consent. Elections are critical to the current democracy's operation (Singh and Mishra 1991). Elections are the bedrock of a truly democratic system (Olowojolu, Rasak, Ake, Ogundele, and Afolayan, 2019). According to Osumah and Aghemelo (2010), political decision-making is a process in which individuals choose their representatives and express their plans and program preferences, thereby investing an administration with the authority to run the show.

The political race, according to Roberts and Edwards (1991), is a strategy for selecting people to fill such open workplaces through the decisions of the electorate; those who are eligible to vote under the laws and methods of the electoral system. Voting is the most basic form of civic participation and the most organized form of political participation; it is not a selective form of citizen participation in the political system. It is a widely accepted binding system within a democratic society in which citizens make a simple choice between alternatives in elections (Singh and Mishra 1991). Every voting framework's purpose is to evaluate the voter's intent and pass that intent on to the voting counter. The productivity of the voting technique and the accuracy of the voting counter are major determinants of the system's ability and capacity to reliably assess the elector's desires (Iwu, 2008).

Nigeria has a shaky democratic system that cannot guarantee any form of advanced democracy. The failure to hold credible elections in the country has been attributed to a variety of military norms, as well as poor democratic institutions and forms, and a variety of other historical factors, which have resulted in the formation of a political culture characterized by electoral violence, adapted politics, low political transparency, corruption, and personalization of intensity. Based on the aforementioned assumptions, which raise intellectual concerns and add to the body of literature on the subject, this investigation examines Nigerian elections as both an enterprise and a fallacy.

Problems

In several parts of Africa, elite power politics play a defining role in broad daylight and, to a large extent, in private affairs. The essence of elite political conduct determines the state of consciousness and the trajectory of national politics. Grassroots strategy, as far as Nigeria is concerned, is pretty much a fancy word for constructing and sustaining 'stomach' infrastructure. Getting a solid 'governmental system' is pretty much how this political patronage is reliably divided, how it hits the 'masses.' The bulk of Nigeria's electorate is

engrossed with simple survival problems, and this affects everything else. Democracy remains a popularity challenge, because as long as anyone over the age of 18 can vote, at that stage the interests of the majority must be taken into account to a great degree. On the off chance that individuals would like to be portrayed in a particular position in a certain way, at that stage that must be accommodated (Ake, Rasak, Olowojolu, Oye, and Ake, 2019).

Two scandalous positions have cast a pall over Nigeria's political situation. While some parties can only afford a secretariat, others have unrestricted access to funds that have the potential to undermine the democratic process. There have been numerous explanations for this situation, primarily because our electoral laws are insufficient to verify the politicians' reasons (Rasak and Garuba, 2017). Unfortunately, in Nigeria, elections have always been one of the most difficult aspects of the political process (Omotola, 2010). It has always been difficult to conduct free and fair elections, which continue to call into question the nation's very existence and the relevance of democracy (Agbu, 2016). Election-related issues have a direct impact on the success of democratic institutions (Wapmuk, 2016). There is, however, a lack of knowledge on the influence of finance, ideology, thuggery, and elitism on politics, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria, and this is the gap that this study seeks to fill by examining Nigeria's election as an enterprise and/or a fallacy.

This research is both exploratory and descriptive. To achieve the study's objectives, the paper employs a qualitative approach and a secondary data collection method. This article includes data collected from past literature available on elections, the democratic structure, party politics, and Nigerian general elections. Primary sources of data include evidence from published and unpublished sources, including journals, the Internet, Newspapers, etc. The review of relevant literature offered a wide variety of academic reflections and arguments on the subject of the paper. To this end, the paper is a concept paper representing scholarly perspectives on the exploration of Nigerian elections as an enterprise and/or a fallacy.

A brief review of the literature

The possibility that Nigeria's elections have always been a big enterprise is commonly held by the majority of the population, and numerous theories have been made to explain how the electoral system and money combine to build pressure, acrimony, and vendetta in the political air space.

Elections in Nigeria

Political elites in Nigeria consider elections to be a way of capturing the state apparatus and the properties it controls, and thus the electoral process is under severe threat (Ojukwu, Mazi, and Maduekwe, 2019). Nigeria does not appear to be making progress toward establishing a stable democratic electoral system. This is unfortunate given the country's size and financial clout in Africa. Violence, rigging, and official exploitation in favor of the ruling party were especially prevalent during general elections. Factors threatening Nigeria's leadership of free and fair elections are multifaceted and emerge at various stages of the democratic process. Malpractices on the political campaign day and post-political abuse of the electoral process, which were replicated in the elections of 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2019, including the introduction of card readers, were no less significant than previous experience (Ojukwu, Mazi and Maduekwe, 2019).

On February 23, 2019, general elections were held in Nigeria to elect the President, Vice President, the House of Representatives, and the Senate. Elections were originally

scheduled for February 16, but the Election Commission postponed the vote by 7 days at 3:00 p.m. on the original polling day, citing logistical challenges in delivering voting materials to polling stations on time. Due to electoral brutality in some areas, the vote was postponed until February 24, 2019. Polling in some areas was thus postponed until 9 March 2019, when elections were held concurrently with the elections for the Government and State Assembly.

Furthermore, the elections will be the most expensive in Nigerian history. The federal government officially subsidized the elections with a total of N242 billion, of which N189 billion went to INEC and the remaining N53 billion was shared by security agencies with the ultimate goal of political race security (INEC 2019, Independent National Electoral Commission). This is in addition to the large sums of money spent on the commission by the numerous foreign donors. Due to limitations, there were reports of systematic fraud immediately following the elections. Among the allegations were ballot box snatching, vote-trading, and impersonation.

Free and Fair elections

Elections, which can be defined as a generally and unanimously agreed-upon method by which individuals are directly and methodically chosen to speak to an entity or network within a larger element or government, are a key feature of today's democratic process. Article 21 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights guaranteed citizens the right to serve in their country's government (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR, 1948). The idea that the election should reflect the will of the people has never been a contentious one. Goodwin-Gill (2006) established ten broad parameters and activities as benchmarks for assessing free and fair elections.

These are as follows: (1) electoral law and system; (2) constituency delimitation; (3) election management; (4) the right to vote; (5) voter registration; (6) civic education and voter information; (7) candidates, political parties, and political organizations, including funding; (8) electoral campaigns, including protection and respect for fundamental human rights, political meetings, media access and coverage; and (10) complaints and dispute resolution. Free and fair elections are a necessary component of a stable democracy (Adibe, 2015).

Elections must be truly free and fair if they are to be truly free and fair. This requires not only open and all-encompassing controlled Election Day polling, but also a general public that supports full resident participation, free political parties, independent media, and a judicial system capable of exercising independent and impartial authority. The fact that the election is 'free and fair' is an important inference from Goodwin-(2006) Gill's taxonomy; it is not just a question of what happened on Election Day because the process can be set at any point. Its main disadvantage is the assumption that these indices are equally observable in divided social orders, such as Nigeria, in the same way that they can be calculated in the Western world or in nations with nation-based consensus. In any case, in polarized and unstable social orders like Nigeria, with deep fault lines of race, religion, and regionalism, electoral laws and structures will be subjected to the same networks and markers that the generality of residents use to periscope their social realities.

Elections and ideology in Nigerian Politics

There is little to be learned from the fact that philosophy is an underlying driver of a political party other than the fact that it provides direction to the party and, in some cases, serves as a virtual forum for the party to win the election. Hardy (2012) supports this claim

by stating that the importance of ideology to a political party, particularly in winning elections, can be gleaned from the fact that it allows political parties to develop transparent strategies. He points out that political parties use ideology to offer platforms containing views on topics or explicit plans to address such social issues, with the ultimate goal of winning elections.

Since no human association can function without an ideology, it follows that no political party can exist without an ideological orientation. Various studies have shown that ideology not only provides direction to a political party but also serves as its guiding principle, particularly when it comes to the proximity of an informed and educated population. The National Democratic Institute, NDI (2013) reinforces this axiom with the critical role of ideology on the part of a political party by stating that ideology is a political party's business as usual by providing structures for the party to evaluate societal needs, assess and prioritize any problems, create a vision for the future, and define the arrangements for action required. Scholars agree, once again, that any political party without an established ideology is detrimental to the practice of participatory and representative democracy.

Historical antecedence of Politics as a business enterprise in Nigeria

The issue of unrestricted use of money in politics did not arise today. There are precedents for the entire history of modern-day Nigeria, beginning with the nationalism politics of the 1950s, which are comparable to the rent-seeking activities of parties, politicians, and voters. In the First Republic of Nigeria, for example, a lack of serious legislation to control party financing has allowed politicians and political parties to engage in illegal party financing and defilement (Ademoyega, 1981; Anifowose, 1984). The electoral laws that were used to hold elections in the 1950s and 1960s were based on the terms of the British Representation of the People Act of 1948/9 and its regulations. Elections were held in 1959 in accordance with the Nigerian (Electoral Provisions) Order-in-Council, LN 117 of 1958, passed by the British Parliament.

There was no established legislative structure for party finance at the time, and political party financing was largely carried out by private parties because candidates were liable for election costs (Nnaa, 1985). The Foster Sutton Tribunal of Enquiry investigated allegations of unethical behavior by some National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) politicians who had business interests in the African Continental Bank in 1956. (ACB). Similarly, the Coker Commission of Inquiry was established in 1962 under the leadership of the Action Group to investigate the affairs of six Western Nigerian open companies accused of defilement (Kia, Ojie, and Tambari, 2016).

Throughout Nigeria's Second Republic (1979-1983), a combination of private and open funding was used. Political parties played an important role in Second Republic politics. The Federal Republic of Nigeria's Constitution of 1979 expressly stated that "no organization other than a political party has been permitted to vote for any candidate in any election or to contribute to the assets of any political party or the election costs of any candidate." Section 205 of the 1979 Constitution empowers the National Assembly to pass legislation "for an annual grant to the Federal Electoral Commission for payment to political parties on a reasonable and equal basis to assist them in the performance of their ability." Through help, the legislature provided financial assistance to political parties (Kia, Ojie, and Tambari, 2016). Section 205 of the 1979 Constitution also allowed for private funding, but only from within Nigeria. There was no limit to how much corporate entities and individuals could contribute to political parties.

Aside from the prohibition on political parties obtaining external properties, as set out in Section 205 of the 1979 Constitution, and the refusal of organizations other than political parties to contribute political party finance or elect any candidate at any election, as set out in Section 201 of the 1979 Constitution, there were no stricter constitutional or legislative restrictions on the use of political finance. As a result, illegal money was used to manipulate the dynamics of political parties and, more broadly, the political process (Gani, 2007).

Although the 1979 Constitution provided for some form of control, particularly in terms of external control of political parties, this was not achieved in the 1979-1983 elections. Provisions were exploited by unusual types of people who were financially and politically greedy and could use their money to rob political parties of their decisions. With unrestricted use of resources, political mobilization of those seeking elective positions received little attention. Politicians added a lot of value to the resources they used to buy electorate votes. One instance was in Lagos in 1982, when ten members of a political party contributed N5 million to boost the support feature. Political parties and politicians were able to use money from both legal and illegal sources to support their campaigns and the various activities associated with their election costs in the 1979 and 1983 elections (Nnaa, 1985).

During the Second Republic, the work and activities of 'contractors' in government and political parties became common, as did numerous instances of political 'patronage.' Reports from the numerous special tribunals that tried politicians and officeholders revealed widespread abuse of open office and a lack of competence in dealing with political parties. In a statement on the leadership of the PDP, ANPP, UNPP, and NDP primaries in January 2003, the Transition Monitoring Group – a coalition of common society organizations – argued that "delegates with sacks full of money were paying a great deal to manipulate their votes." In Nigeria, there is currently no record of the exact amount of money spent by candidates and political parties.

However, there are indications that private funding has been heavily relied on in all Nigerian elections since 1999, all the more so because virtually all parties lack the organizational capacity to generate their income through legitimate means. The electoral process has become so costly that only the wealthy or those who rely on the wealthy may run. It's also worth noting that "there's a troubling trend of 'questionable' business individuals funding candidates with gray capital." The growing presence of 'godfatherism' in contemporary Nigerian politics can be attributed to unregulated party financing, as seen in Anambra and Oyo States, where state governors were forced to negotiate and renegotiate peace with 'godfathers' and money bag politicians who claimed to have helped them win elections. Because there is no viable control over the amount of private funding that political parties can obtain from private sources, all forms of political mercantilism are appealing and conceivable.

Is Nigeria's elections enterprise?

According to the International Labour Organization (2004), money is critical to the activities of any political party. Inadequate funding would cripple and devalue the political party. Then, again, unrestricted access to finance would, in general, give the group an unfavourable advantage over the other parties, converting the entire procedure into an auction in which the highest bidder wins. According to the former United Nations Organization (UNO) Security General on the dominant role money plays in elections:

Throughout my career, I have witnessed the negative impact of money on politics and governance. There is mounting evidence that corruption and unregulated contributions confer disproportionate political power and jeopardize election legitimacy. Money from organized crime has entered politics in some countries, influencing elected officials and public institutions. These challenges to democratic politics help to explain why many people around the world are losing faith in politics and democratic processes (Kofi A. Annan-Chair, Global Commission on Elections, Democracy, and Security, see International IDEA, 2014).

Money's role in Nigerian legislative issues today has earned it a hegemonic position in the race to positions of specialists where they can decide who gets what, when, and how (Ovwasa, 2013). Money appears to have taken center stage in Nigerian legislative issues, and it is now playing an increasingly critical role, to the point where the derogatory term "cash legislative issues" has entered the country's political lexicon (Davies, 2006). The problem with this situation is that it constantly jeopardizes the majority rule plan, ensuring that decisions are not free and reasonable. Nothing implies that the use of money by political parties or any other individual or group of individuals involved in legislative issues is fundamentally corrupt.

Real money is required for organization and coordination assignments such as mobilizing for political campaigns and exhibits, printing banners and manifestos, making party seals and different pictures, and so on. In any case, the main issue is the obvious corrupting effect of money and its negative impact on Nigerian elections. While it is not entirely true that the more extravagant the political party, the more unsanitary the playing field and a proclivity to corrupt the procedure and the government. Since political parties play an imperative part in numerous decision campaigns around the world, as a result it is difficult to draw a straight line between party organization's campaign costs and their routine costs, party resources can be reasonably alluded to as "political finance" (Eme and Anyadike, 2014).

Political finance was defined by Ujo (2000), Walecki (2002), ILO (2004), Obiorah (2004), Pinto-Duschinsky (2004), and Emelonye (2004) as the utilize of money or other material resources for political purposes. It also speaks to the beginnings or strategies of funding for political activities within the commonwealth. Money spent on electioneering (campaign assets) and money spent on political party expenses is the two broad meanings of the term (party reserves). Political finance, according to Pinto-Duschinsky (2002), could be inclusive of both non-democratic and democratic frameworks; the utilization of elections and parties is as it were a side effect of a bigger issue. Lobbying, propaganda, and advocacy of interest-based meetings can all result in large sums of money being spent on politics (Eme and Anyadice, 2014).

The Electoral Acts (2002, 2006, and 2010) contain several laws about political parties and election financing. Section 84(1) of the Electoral Act (2002) defines election costs as "costs incurred by a political party during the period from the date of the Commission's notice to be given for direct elections to and including the Election Day in respect of the particular election." This definition is flawed since a past encounter in Nigeria has shown that the lion's

share of election costs is incurred on Decision Day. Individual political party commitments and campaign costs for both political parties and candidates were limited by the Electoral Act of 2006. Section 93 mandates that the election costs of each nominee did not exceed N500 million for presidential candidates, N100 million for governorship candidates, N20 million for the Senate, N10 million for the House of Representatives, N5 million for the State Assembly, N5 million for the chairman of the Local Government, and N500 000 for the Council (INEC, 2006). While some parties are barely able to fund their campaigns, others have unrestricted access to funds that have the potential to degrade the democratic process. There have been numerous explanations for this situation, the most common of which is that our electoral laws are insufficient to verify politicians' motivations.

Campaign financing

The budgetary requirements for transitioning to electoral competition are consistently higher, causing those who cannot afford the cost to avoid politics. In Nigeria, campaign finance has been a major issue. When it comes to election challenges, significant and unchecked campaign finance frequently results in a lopsided playing field. Large sums of money provide an unfair advantage to certain parties and/or candidates over others (Eme and Anyadice, 2014). Candidates who raise the most money have a better chance of winning elections or party nominations. Large disparities in party and candidate funding stifle political competition and disenfranchise challengers in general. The lopsided playing field is frequently caused by the fact that the ruling party or incumbent candidate dominates and exploits the electoral apparatus to the detriment of challengers (Beetseh and Akpoo, 2015).

Another issue was that elected officials were increasingly being held accountable to individuals who donated to their campaigns rather than to their constituents. Massive corporate or single benefactor funding for parties and candidates dominates policy choices, and political debasement is a national issue that jeopardizes Nigerian and financial growth, democracy, and national stability. Almost all major financial and debasement scandals since then have been linked to campaigning and political funding (International IDEA, 2014). The 2019 Nigerian election season will go down in history as the most expensive, with increasingly elective ballot papers and candidates spending significantly more to sway voters in their favour.

Campaign funds did not just stay at the top; they also trickled down to small vendors, who took advantage of the opportunity to sell their wares to thousands of people at any stage when the candidates held massive rallies. The majority of the money went toward transportation, operations, events, media advertising, and merchandise. Presidential candidates and their parties have used everything from helicopters to fixed-wing aircraft, as well as a plethora of branded cars, campaign materials, and advertising advertisements (Adeagbo and Omodunbi, 2019).

In Nigeria today, funding a political party or candidate is regarded as a viable business investment that must be repaid as soon as the candidate takes office. Nigeria's unusual financial situation, characterized by cravings and literacy, exposes voters and government agencies to manipulation by degenerate politicians who exploit insufficient electoral legislation, allowing unrestricted access to political finance sufficient to devastate the electoral process (Beetseh and Akpoo, 2015). The manner in which political parties finance their campaigns is crucial to the success of any democratic election. Candidates spend a sizable portion of their savings to run for public office. As a result, candidates will be considered who are self-sufficient and willing to invest large sums of money.

Money influences party candidate selection and, to a large extent, determines who wins elections. Due to a lack of understanding, electoral laws governing how parties can ensure and invest their funds are ineffective. As a result, implementing such regulations is difficult. Former President Obasanjo spoke at the INEC Civil Society Forum Seminar on November 27, 2003, about the dangers of unregulated money use during elections:

With so many tools available to win elective positions, it is easy to see the link between politics and the possibility of high-level corruption. The common people are the biggest losers, the voters, whose trust and investment in the system is hijacked and undermined because money, rather than their will, is made a deciding factor in elections. Can't we shift from money and materialism politics to ideas, problems, and development politics? Obasanjo (2005).

Campaign finance laws must include a strong regulatory framework to address these issues. According to researchers, for democracy to pursue political influence in fair elections and maintain the system, strong party organizations are required, and political parties and individual candidates must have the resources to run successful campaigns. Money and politics clearly have a strong relationship, which has democratic ramifications.

Vote buying and elections in Nigeria

Offering money instead of creative political proposals to persuade people to vote for a specific candidate is not unique to Africa (International IDEA, 2014). Overall, it is a major concern in Nigeria and is legitimately linked to clientele ties and severe levels of deprivation in most African nations. "Money has been made to turn into moms' political milk, which political gladiators must drink to stay in business" (Sohner (1973).

Money politics is a marvel in Nigeria's electoral process, in which candidates for elective positions use money or money in their name to sway their support, based not on persuading the electorate to vote according to their wishes and convictions, but on the power of money that has changed hands. There's also a vote-buying scheme going on. In its most literal sense, voting-purchasing is a basic financial transaction.

According to Fredric and Andreas (2005), "candidates buy" and "residents/electorates sell" in the same way that people buy and sell apples, shoes, or televisions. Voting-purchasing, according to this point of view, is a transaction, or perhaps an auction, in which voters sell their votes to the highest bidder. Parties and candidates buy votes by providing voters with specific material benefits. In general, candidates can use the market exchange concept to buy political support at the ballot box. It is important to note, for empirical reasons, that the commercial ambitions of vote purchasers can be hampered by two types of barriers: objective and inter-abstract barriers.

On the one hand, dealer enforcement is ambiguous because voting purchases are illegal and do not occur in a 'natural' market protected by social and legal norms. Empirical Accounts of Participant's Point of View have revealed that political activities such as 'Vote-Buying' can have varying outcomes in different cultural settings. This is because, historically and in comparison, buying a vote as a wonder is neither an explicit nor a time-bound framework (Ojo, 2006).

When an election is over, the use of money to buy votes does not end. In Nigeria, as in many other countries, various meetings of private interest and political action councils continue to use any and all means at their disposal, including money, to improve or broaden their influence on elected officials (Wright, 1985). The ease with which elected officials express their appreciation by supporting campaign contributors' legislative and organizational plans lends support to the theory that individual contributions to political parties and candidates are linked to legislative votes (Ovwasa, 2013).

Good governance is defined as all of a country's governmental and institutional arrangements that are run in strict accordance with democratic fundamentals and practices, which endures as a result of the wonders of money politics and vote-buying. All stakeholders must adhere to the principles of equal access to high-quality education, financial empowerment, a strong healthcare delivery system, the rule of law, and other critical social services. Similarly, money politics and voting-purchasing peaked in the 1999 elections that inaugurated a newly elected government, as well as 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019 civil-civil transition elections. According to one political researcher, "if the use of money in the 1999 elections was transparent and shameless, the use of money in the 2003 elections was scandalously obscene" (Suberu, 2001).

Money politics and vote-buying took on a terrifying and conclusive dimension in the 2019 elections. Because money was still being used to buy, it appeared that a small voice had been extended to the judiciary. Democracy's principles and practices underpin good governance. A legislature that recognizes the majority's trust and support must be constitutional. Legitimacy fosters trust and public support for government policies and reform agendas. Money politics, on the other hand, obliterate this fundamental feature of democratic governance.

This is because it is widely assumed that those who rule as such, based on widespread agreement, are free to communicate the tonic required for individuals to make material sacrifices that eventually involve a change in the agenda, whether social, political, or financial. Again, spending money beyond what is normally required to defray legitimate campaign costs by bribing voters is electoral malpractice, and the desired electoral results do not speak to the voters' true desires, such as their actual political preference minus the influence of money.

Milbrath (1965) is also mentioned: Honest people and those who truly want to represent the people but do not have the money to buy votes may lose in the electoral contest, whereas bad candidates with plenty of money or those with unethical tendencies may win (Milbrath, 1965).

When this happens, the unethical and heinous use of money to buy votes is extolled as a fair and viable tool in electoral battles by successful candidates. Money Politics and vote-buying have resulted in election results that were similar to nothing or had nothing to do with politicians acting in office. Because success is not a critical factor in the election outcome, motivation to perform is extremely low. And because voting-purchase is extremely convincing, the hotel's electoral victory will be strong. Choosing open officeholders who have spent large sums of money to ensure that the survey wins will typically have a greater proclivity to check out their private business and financial interests and, at times, those of

their corporate sponsors or tutors and financiers euphemistically referred to as 'political god-fathers' in Nigeria.

Open interest takes a back seat in this calculation, undermining elected officials' responsibilities to individuals. As a result, the Nigerian National Orientation Agency, an open illumination organization, endorsed a radio and television jingle during political campaigns and rallies that warned voters to be wary of politicians who wanted to buy their votes because, according to the jingle, anyone who uses "wuru-wuru" (wuru-wuru) to make a choice will undoubtedly provide "wuru-wuru" administration to the people. Choosing open officeholders who have spent large sums of money to ensure that the survey wins will typically have a greater proclivity to check out their private business and financial interests and, at times, those of their corporate sponsors or tutors and financiers euphemistically referred to as 'political god-fathers' in Nigeria.

In this calculation, open interest takes a back seat, undermining elected officials' responsibilities to individuals. As a result, the Nigerian National Orientation Agency, an open illumination organization, endorsed a radio and television jingle during political campaigns and rallies that warned voters to be wary of politicians who wanted to buy their votes because, according to the jingle, anyone who uses "wuru-wuru" (wuru-wuru) to make a choice will undoubtedly provide "wuru-wuru" administration to the people.

Another negative impact of monetary policy and vote-buying on good governance is that the election winner, if it includes an open office with access to an open shop, is becoming increasingly vulnerable to debasement. For example, if he is a politician, he may be more inclined to gain gratification to advance and improve the private interests of his supporters. Nigerian politicians currently regard a political challenge as a high-risk investment opportunity (Sunday Punch, 2005). The greater the risk, the greater the reward. This is also the viewpoint of the former President of the Nigerian Senate, who stated in an interview:

"... since votes are not free, politicians consider the election contest for seats in the National Assembly to be an investment and that many of them spend their fortunes, incurred debts and even sold their homes to contest and get elected" (Sunday Punch, 2005).

The unmistakable message conveyed by the former Senate President is that if large sums of money are spent to contest the election, the investor will almost certainly try to recover some or all of his money through other means. 'If a political investment investor wins and eventually gains control, it is very logical for people to believe that the return will come from public funds,' it follows logically (The Guardian Editorial, 2006).

This type of poor practice creates a genuine flaw in the open process and legislative procedure, adding the most extraordinary indignity to the democratic process. In any case, when this type of trade occurs, it involves not only the use of currency, but also the use and distribution of various materials such as food, clothing, electronic devices, recharging cards, motorcycles, and vehicles, among other things. The circumstances in this scenario are unique because most politicians never endowments to buy votes and the residents' still small voice. They (politicians) are vulnerable to the deception of alleviating need and improving the monetary turn of events and people's lives. In this vein, voting-purchase should not occur

under any legal contract to demonstrate that a specific product has been purchased or sold and, in exchange, that the dealer (residents) is obligated to do so.

According to Danjibo and Oladeji (2007), the lack of quality education in Nigeria continues to tilt the odds of good governance against the masses when it comes to electing leaders. Because they are illiterate, the people's group of voters either does not understand what to expect from a political candidate or simply does not care about the outcome of their decisions at the ballot box. As a result, unqualified and undeserving individuals have risen to positions of power, despite having little or nothing to offer.

Furthermore, the distribution of endowments to individuals during the election cycle becomes a company in which they have invested before and during the election cycle, which they see as the arrival of their initial investment when they come to power. It is argued that deprivation makes people poor and vulnerable to political coercion. Ojo (2008) expands on this point by stating that people who are poor and whose next meal is uncertain can easily sell their inner voice/voice by collecting donations from politicians as a by-product of their assistance.

The arrangement of goods and projects by candidates and political parties is always undertaken to demonstrate to the voter the contestant's prosperity and liberality, with the expectation that their vote will guarantee a future scale. This was described as 'non-transactional' voting-purchasing, and 'the candidate's ability to convey the goods was a priori decided by his/her ability to meet the never-ending need to participate in corruption.' One challenge in dealing with the problem of voting purchase is the constant and consistent graciousness of those eager to sell their votes.

According to Bratton's (2008) Nigerian investigation, while 90% of average Afro-Barometer respondents saw voting-purchasing as morally repugnant, only about half of them saw something wrong with voters selling their votes. As long as this tolerant attitude toward vote-buying persists, it is unlikely that electoral candidates will be able to resist the temptation to broaden their electoral support base through financial means. This can also be a continuing issue for female candidates because they are unable to raise as much money as male candidates to distribute to the electorate.

Theoretical Framework: Power Elite Perspective

The theoretical model used in this essay is the "Power Elite Perspective" (Mills, 1956). Mills (1956) conducted an explicit study of the power system to demonstrate that the democratic theory of separation and balance of power is, in fact, an ideal with no particular counterpart. Classical elitist scholars such as Pareto (1935) and Mosca (1939) argued that elites are typically defined as groups with extensive access to assets or capacities, which distinguishes them from other (non-elite) people. The interpretation of prevalence based on access to valuable assets contributes to the justification of elite dominance and social inequality. Not at all like class ideas that consider inequality to be an impression of wealth obligation, has the elite concept considered 'inequality as a result of power dispersion, which, in turn, rests on various properties, such as monetary and organizational assets' (Henry, 2011).

Political control, in this case, comes from the responsibility for properties, as well as from a range of assets that improve access to and preservation of state power (Henry, 2011). Applied to Nigeria, this means that the political class at the Core of National Official workplaces comprises individuals with varied backgrounds with daily interests. In Nigeria,

the usual social context is an important feature of the power and authority system, as large numbers of elite individuals share socio-cultural, industrial, military, and political backgrounds, as well as common interests (Henry, 2011). Because of the long rule of authoritarian theory, Nigerian elites have been socialized into a martial culture with its nausea and ethos.

One area where they reflect this militaristic culture is in their campaign conversations and advertisements, which are constantly presented in an intemperate language that makes politics seem warlike (Benjamin, 2013). It's not surprising, for example, that party leader's talk about their plans to conquer a particular prized state during election campaigns. Ex-government men have also dominated the new political regime, and democratization in this manner has a strong military flavour. The former chairman of one of the political parties, a resigned military official, once identified the controversial 'godfather' as 'the western garrison chief' and advised the state's then-governor to proceed with the resolution of the crack with the said 'godfather' (Benjamin, 2013).

With the militarization of elite minds comes the monetization and valorization of politics, as well as the emergence of many political hooligans and gangs ready to unleash violence on members of opposing camps or commit heinous wrongdoings all in the name of politics (Adekanye, 1999; Danjibo and Olajide, 2007; Omotola, 2007).

Conclusion

To summarize, it is critical, above all, to encourage all stakeholders in the Nigerian venture to make behavioural changes to make a positive political impression. This is because an officially approved legal instrument alone cannot guarantee the creation of a free and fair election (Alabi 2007). Such a signal would raise the stakes unnecessarily, forcing the candidates in the elections to see themselves as being close to the fight to end the affair, thus heating the nation.

Individuals should avoid such politicians showing ill-gotten wealth knowing full well that money has a position with them, although they are generally directed by lucky politicians. They should demonstrate self-confidence and keep their nobility high by ignoring and displaying a lack of respect for inept but wealthy officials. Political parties and the electoral body must establish progressive, open, and convincing screening techniques to ensure that candidates who are unmistakable or likely to degenerate the electoral process and electorate are barred from running. There is also a need for the electorate's political education to be much more discernible in their electoral decisions and to reduce the weight imposed on their elected officials for financial and material incentives for voting.

Political parties should avoid projecting wealthy candidates' financial profiles and party value. This is because such candidates are more likely to want to live up to their image by spending more money on their campaign than is morally permissible. Furthermore, party leaders should be educated on the most effective methods of conducting electioneering campaigns in which candidates have a clear understanding of their manifestos. In contrast to the second republic, when major political parties explicitly stated their cardinal policies, this is not the case in the fourth republic, where citizens and politicians are equally perplexed.

It is the responsibility of the media to inform voters about their primary responsibilities in choosing viable candidates. For example, as the media promotes oligarchs who use their wealth to undermine the democratic process and good governance, money politics and vote-buying will flourish in Nigeria's political arena. Nigeria's economy must be

improved to economically motivate individuals. This is because where destitution is reduced to the bare necessities, voters will make independent political choices by voting for sound candidates rather than being inept by wasting money on politicians.

The administration can guarantee physical discipline to hooligans and their supporters, irrespective of the affiliation of their political parties. This will discourage them from engaging in political violence and will promote inclusive democracy. As well as guaranteeing career prospects for teeming young people and hooligans. Successful projects should be introduced to train hooligans with the expertise and the requisite profitability knowledge to boost the national turn of events. Initiate persuasive initiatives, like awareness campaigns, that will turn and dissuade these hooligans psychologically from engaging in such savage conduct in the country.

Nigerians should, eventually, welcome and follow any solution that guarantees democratic sustainability. Political knowledge of the voting-purchase and treatment laws is needed. This obligation must be met by INEC, political parties, and the general public; INEC and other relevant agencies should be encouraged and given full autonomy in the handling and processing of voting cases, and anti-voting legislation should be written in a less complicated language and made available to the electorate.

References

- Adeagbo A. A. and Omodunbi O. O. (2019). Election Gifting and the Ordeal of Democracy in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal* Vol.15, No.5. pp. 119-131
- Adekanye, J.B. (1999). *The retired military as emergent power factor in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book.
- Ademoyega, A. (1981). *Why we struck*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publication.
- Adibe J. (2015). The 2015 Presidential Elections in Nigeria: the Issues and Challenges. *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2015*; 3–9.
- Agbu, O. (2016) “Introduction”, in Osita Agbu (ed) *Elections and Governance in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic*, CODESRIA National Working Group, pp.1-8.
- Ake, M., Rasak, B., Olowojolu, O., Oye, O. and Ake, S. (2019); Women and Political Marginalization in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Policy Review*. Vol. 11, No 1.
- Alabi, M.O. (2007). “The Electoral Act 2006 and the Conduct of 2007 Election in Nigeria” in H.A. Saliu et al. (editors) *Nigeria Beyond 2007: Issues, Perspectives and Challenges*: Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, University of Ilorin, Ilorin.
- Anifowose, R. (1984). Politics and Violence in Nigeria, access on <http://www.info.com>
- Beetseh, K. and Akpoo, T. (2015). Money Politics and Vote Buying In Nigeria: A Threat to Democratic Governance in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research (IJPAMR)*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 65-73.
- Benjamin, A. O. (2013). *Who Rules Papa’s Land?* C. Wright Mills and the Nigerian Power Elite. *SAGE Open*: 1 –11 sgo.sagepub.com
- Bratton, M. (2008). *Vote Buying and Violence in Nigerian Election Campaigns*, *Electoral Studies*; 27(4): 621–632.
- Danjibo, N.D. & Oladeji, A. (2007). Vote Buying in Nigeria: An assessment of the 2007 General Elections. *Journal of African Elections*. 6 (2), 180-200.
- Davies, A.E. (2006). “Money and Politics in the Nigeria Electoral Process”: A Memo of Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin-Ilorin.
- Eme, O. I. and Anyadike, N. (2014). Political Financing in Africa: A Comparative Study of Kenya and Nigeria: Proposal for Reform. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol 5 No 27, pp: 22-34
- Emelonye, U. (2004) “Political Finance in Nigeria: A Policy Agenda for Reform, in Ndubuisi Obiorah (ed) *Political Finance and Democracy in Nigeria: Prospects and Strategies for Reform*. Lagos: Center for Law and Social Action.
- Fredric C. S. and Andreas, S. (2005). *What is Vote Buying, The Limit of Market Model? Being a text of Paper delivered at the conference of ‘Poverty’ Democracy and Clientism: The Political Economy of Vote Buying’*. Department of Political Science, Stanford University, Bellagion Center, Rockefeller Foundation
- Gani, F. (2007). Party Politics and Electoral Reforms: How are the changes being effected in African? *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 6, No. 7.
- Goodwin-Gill, G. S. (2006). *Free and Fair Elections*. Geneva, Switzerland: Inter Parliamentary Union.
- Hardy, R. (2012). Paradoxes of Political Parties in American Constitutional Development. *Insights on Law and Society*, Vol.13 (1).
- Henry A. K. (2011). Political Elite Composition and Democracy in Nigeria. *The Open Area Studies Journal*, 4, 16-31.
- Ilo, U. (2004) “Political Finance Regulation in Nigeria: The Legal Framework”, in Ndubuisi Obiorah (ed) *Political Finance and Democracy in Nigeria: Prospects and Strategies for Reform*. Lagos: Center for Law and Social Action.

- INEC (2019). *Approved guidelines and regulations for the conduct of 2019 General Elections*. Abuja: Independent National Electoral Commission.
- Independent National Electoral Commission (2006). *Revised Guidelines for the Registration of Voters, Revision and Continuous Updating of the National Register of Voters 2006*. Abuja: Independent National Electoral Commission.
- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) (2014). *Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns a Handbook on Political Finance*.
- Iwu, M. (2008), 'Electronic Voting and the Future of the Electoral System in Nigeria'. *The Nigerian Electoral Journal*, Vol.2. No.1.
- Kia B., Ojie P. A. and Tambari S. N. (2016). The Political Ecology of Election in Nigeria and the Fragility of Democratic Sustainability. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*. Vol.4, No.3, pp.9-19.
- Kofi A. A. 2014). *Democracy and Security: Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns a Handbook on Political Finance*. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).
- Milbrath, L.W. (1965) *Political Participation*: Chicago, Rand McNally College Publishing Company
- Mills, C. W. (1956). *The power elite*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Mosca, G. (1939). *The Ruling Class*, New York, McGraw-Hill.
- National Democratic Institute, NDI. (2008) Final NDI Report on Nigeria's 2007 Elections, Washington DC.
- Nnaa, B. G. (1985). The Election and Incidence of Rigging. Undergraduate Seminar, University of Port Harcourt.
- Obasanjo, O. (2005). *Political Party Finance Handbook* Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) Abuja.
- Obiorah, N. (2004) "Preface", in Ndubuisi Obiorah (ed) *Political Finance and Democracy in Nigeria: Prospects and Strategies for Reform*. Lagos: Center for Law and Social Action.
- Ojo, E.O. (2006). 'Vote-Buying in Nigeria' *Money Politics and Corruption in Nigeria*: UK Department for International Development (DFID).
- Ojo, E. (2008). *Vote Buying in Nigeria*. In *Money and Politics in Nigeria*. Abuja: Petra Digital Press. Pp.109-122.
- Ojukwu, U. G., Mazi Mbah, C. C. and Maduekwe, V.C. (2019). Elections and Democratic Consolidation: A Study of General Elections in Nigeria. *Direct Res. Social Sci. Edu. Studies*: Vol. 6 (4), pp. 53-64.
- Okoye, F. (2003). 'Do the Votes Count?' Final Report of the 2003 General Elections of Nigeria.
- Olowojolu O., Rasak B., Ake M., Ogundele O. & Afolayan M. (2019). Trends in Electoral Violence in Nigeria: *Journal of Social Sciences and Public Policy*, Volume 11, Number 1, 37 -52
- Omotola, S. (2010). "Elections and Democratic Transition in Nigeria under the Fourth Republic", *African Affairs*, 109/437, pp.535-553, Oxford University Press.
- Osumah, O. and Aghemelo, T. (2010). Elections in Nigeria since the End of Military Rule. *AFRICANA*. Volume 4, No.2.
- Ovwasia O. L. (2013). Money Politics and Vote Buying In Nigeria: The Bane of Good Governance: *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 4.3 Quarter III
- Pareto, V. (1935). *The Mind and Society. A Treatise on General Sociology*, New York: Dover.
- Pinto-Duschinsky, M. (2002) 'Financing Politics: A Global View', *Journal of Democracy*, 13(4), pp. 69–86.

- Pinto-Duschinsky, M. (2004) “*Financing Politics: A Global View*” in Ndubuisi Obiorah (ed) *Political Finance and Democracy in Nigeria: Prospects and Strategies for Reform*. Lagos: Center for Law and Social Action.
- Rasak, B. & Garuba, R.O. (2017). Political Thuggery and Women Participation in Politics in Nigeria. *Political Science Review*. Vol. 8(1):63-76.
- Roberts & Edwards (1991) cited in Omotola, J.S. (2007). Godfathers and the 2007 Nigerian general elections. *Journal of African Elections*. 6(2), pp.134-154.
- Singh S., and Mishra, Suresh (1991). ‘Powers of Elections Commission: A Legal Perspective’, *The Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. xxxvii, No.3:361.
- Sohner, C.P. (1973). *The People’s Power American Government and Politics Today*, Illinois Scott Foresman and Company.
- Solanke, A. (2013). “Do Nigerian Political Parties Have Defined Ideologies”? In Sahara Reporters.
- Suberu, R.T. (2001). “Can Nigeria’s New Democracy Survive” *Current History*. The Sunday Punch June, 5, 2005
- The Electoral Act (2002) (as amended), The Federal Republic of Nigeria, Abuja: Government Printer.
- The Guardian Editorial, July 19, 2006
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights-UDHR, 1948
- Ujo, A.A. (2000). *Understanding Elections: A Guide for Students and Election Managers*, Kaduna: Joyce Printers
- Walecki, M. (2002). *Campaign Finance in Central and Eastern Europe*. Washington, D.C: International Foundation for Election System.
- Wapmuk, S. (2016). “An Overview of the State Houses of Assembly Elections”, in Osita Agbu (ed) *Elections and Governance in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic*, CODESRIA National Working Group, pp.81-98.
- Wright, J.R. (1985). Pacts Contribution and Roll Calls. An Organization Perspective. *The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 79.No. 2