

Influence of Yiaga Africa Vote Buying Media Campaign on the Attitude of Voters in Enugu State

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijngoe.16/vol8n12750>

Published April 29, 2023

Citation: Agbo B.O., Ezinwa C.A., and Ewelu I.G. (2024) Influence of Yiaga Africa Vote Buying Media Campaign on the Attitude of Voters in Enugu State, *International Journal of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Essays*, Vol.8, No 1, pp. 27-50

ABSTRACT: *This study examines the Influence of Yiaga Africa vote buying media campaign on the attitude of voters in Enugu state. The objectives include; to ascertain the Enugu state level of awareness about Yiaga Africa vote buying media campaign; to determine the extent Yiaga Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state; to determine the extent Yiaga Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu state, and to evaluate the challenges militating against Yiaga's campaign against vote buying in Enugu state. The research design used for this study is the Descriptive survey method. The population of the study is 1450000, the sample size of 400 was determined using the Taro yamane formula while the sampling technique used is the Random Sampling Technique. Findings from the study reveals that Yiaga Africa votes buying media campaign influenced the attitude of voters in Enugu state and the campaign influenced the behavior of voters in Enugu state to a large extent it was also found that the challenges affecting the acceptance of Yiaga Africa campaigns against Vote buying is poverty and the attitude of politicians. The researchers recommended that there should be an introduction of electronic voting system which could potentially reduce the act of votes buying and selling in elections. It was also recommended that Nigerian government should create employment opportunities and reduce the level of poverty that makes people susceptible to criminal, financial and material inducement. More so, Yiaga Africa needs to intensify voter education and enlightenment campaigns on the negative implications of vote trading. In conclusion, Yiaga Africa should create awareness on the incidence of vote buying so that electoral fraud and manipulation of voters will reduce.*

KEYWORDS: Yiaga, Africa, vote buying, media campaign, attitude of voters, Enugu state

INTRODUCTION

The history of money politics and vote-buying could be traced to post independent Nigeria. Although their influence was very minimal in the first republic between the years 1960 to 1966 due to appeals to ethnic and religious sentiments which were the most important weapons the political leaders and tribal heroes deployed to ensure electoral victories. This was possible because the strength and popularity of the major political parties and their allies then were essentially enhanced by the primordial ties they had with the people in their regions (Akinyele, 2019).

However, vote buying has assumed a more glaring dimension in recent elections. In addition, the manipulation of ballots has gradually given way to material (often financial) inducement. One factor behind this shift is the increased effectiveness of the Independent National Electoral Commission. The use of digital technology has made it more difficult to manipulate election results. This has put electoral power back in the hands of voters, who may choose to use it as they wish. Agreeing to sell their vote – or refusing to do so – is one option.

Omowumi (2020) describes vote buying as the exchange of private material benefits for political support. Vote buying is seen as a contract, or perhaps an auction in which the voter sells his or her vote to the highest bidder. Vote buying is defined here as any form of financial, material or promissory inducement or reward by a candidate, political party, agent or supporter to influence a voter to cast his or her vote or even abstain from doing so in order to enhance the chances of a particular contestant to win an election. Thus, any practice of immediate or promised reward to a person for voting or refraining from voting in a particular way can be regarded as vote buying and this phenomenon has been frowned at by a civil society organization called Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA) Africa.

Yiaga Africa is a non-profit civic hub of change makers and election observers committed to the promotion of democratic governance, human rights and civic engagement. Yiaga Africa was launched as a student organization in 2007 at the University of Jos, Nigeria and has since established itself as a leading civil society organization in Africa. Since its inception, the organization has carved a niche for itself as one of Africa's frontline non-profit organization promoting participatory democracy, human rights and civic participation. With its operational base in Abuja, Nigeria, Yiaga Africa focuses on in-depth research, providing critical analysis on key democratic and governance issues, crafting practical solutions, training and empowering citizens to lead change in their community.

Yiaga Africa implements several innovative programs aimed at stimulating active citizenship, protecting human rights and deepening democratic governance. Oyewale (2020) posits that the organization invests in building networks and social movements to drive social change and

transformation. Yiaga Africa has leadership structures and members in all 36 states and 774 Local Government Areas (LGA) of Nigeria. Yiaga Africa is registered in Nigeria as an independent nonprofit organization. The nonprofit is the founder of a Nigerian movement to reduce the age of running for elective offices in Nigeria known as Not Too Young To Run, the movement have created global interest on youth political participation.

However, in most democracies, vote buying is considered an electoral offence. Vote buying is prohibited in Nigeria. Article 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, states that: A person who 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 being a voter, corruptly accepts or takes money or any other inducement during any of the period stated in paragraph of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N100,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both.

Vote buying is frowned upon in every democracy. It raises questions about the quality of democracy. Neeman and Orosel (2016) identify three types of arguments that are usually made against the practice. First, they argue that because vote buying gives wealthier individuals an unfair advantage, it violates the principle of equality. Second, they argue that votes belong to the community as a whole, and should therefore not be alienable by individual voters. Third, there is a concern that votes buying may promote inefficiency. This is because the interests of some voters are bought by parties before the election, and their needs or interests may therefore be ignored by political representatives after the election. Buying of votes is also frowned upon in most economies. This is because once a nation becomes user-friendly to vote buying and vote selling; it ceases to be in the best books of the international community and the country may likely suffer the consequences.

Election observer group, Yiaga Africa, has identified cases of vote buying, intimidation of voters and malfunctioning of BVAS in some polling units in recent elections in Nigeria. The two dominant political parties – the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) – along with other political parties have been fielding candidates for the elections and YIAGA Africa has reported that agents of the PDP, APC and some other political parties were seen inducing voters with cash. It is based on this background that this study will examine influence of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign on the attitude of voters in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

Vote buying is frowned upon in every democracy. It raises questions about the quality of democracy. Politicians occupying various positions obtain public funds while in power to maximize vote-buying during elections. They illegally convert public funds for personal gain at

the expense of the provision of adequate infrastructure. Existing research shows that a mix of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, old age, early-stage democratization, and a winner-take-all electoral system has contributed to vote-buying and also affected the attitude of voters. In the case of poverty, there is hunger and high rate of poverty in Nigeria that despite the campaign by YIAGA to sensitize the electorates and the general public, money can easily be used to induce voters as some of the electorates due to hunger may bulge in to the pressure of vote buying. It is true that the electorates might like to collect the money and on the election day vote for whoever they want to vote for but trust politicians they have a way of making sure that once the electorates collect money from them, you must vote for their candidate.

Another challenge facing YIAGA in its campaign against vote buying is that some Nigerians are illiterate and ignorant of the implications and both short/long time effect of collecting money from politicians and voting against their conscience. Furthermore, elections in Nigeria is like a do or die affair where politicians are ready to do anything to win elections even when they know that they are not credible and are not ready to deliver the dividends of democracy when elected. Moreover, there is a lack of available research on the vote buying phenomenon from YIAGA's perspectives. It is based on this lacuna that this study examines the influence of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign on the attitude of voters in Enugu State.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions are raised

1. What is the Enugu State voters level of awareness about YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign?
2. To what extent does YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influence the attitude of voters in Enugu state?
3. To what extent does YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu State.
4. What are the challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state?

Research Hypotheses

In line with the research questions, the following null and alternate hypotheses are formulated

Hypothesis One

H₀: YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign does not influence the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

H₁: YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

How vote buying influences voting behavior of electorate in Elections

There is a close relationship between poverty, election violence, and vote buying/ selling. For the politicians, this is gold. Poverty plays a crucial role in vote selling and post-election violence in Nigeria and the politicians are aware of this fact. They know that the poor standard of living has driven majority of the people into extreme poverty to the extent that the people are willing to sell their future for a paltry amount. According to the world data lab, an estimated 87 million people in Nigeria now live below the extreme poverty line of \$1.90 a day.

This number makes up about 44 percent of the country's population. Based on that data, nearly six Nigerians fall below the extreme poverty line every minute. Vote buying and selling originate from the fact that there is a failed system that makes it possible for the politicians and their agents to buy, and for the people to sell and make some quick money. Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be any campaigns that appeal to the politicians not to make such offers for vote buying. In Nigeria, vote buying and selling also involves obtaining people's permanent voters' cards (PVC). In this case, the voting card becomes the property of whoever paid for it and is used exclusively to vote for that aspirant. You might wonder how that is possible since only the rightful owner is able to use the PVC, as it carries the biometric data of the owner. During the 2019 elections, there were lots of irregularities that were overlooked by both local and international organizations. The most visible of them was the failure of voting tools to function in full capacity. While most of the card readers identified PVCs as original cards, registered in specific voting units, most frequently the biometric part of the card readers failed to make a match between the card and the thumbprint of the card owner. As a result, most of the election officers abandoned the biometric verification process because the thumbprint recognition part of the biometric equipment simply didn't work. The malfunction of the biometric verification machine opened the floodgates to multiple voting by any individual in possession of PVCs. One is therefore left to wonder if some aspirants and political parties had foreknowledge about the deficiency of the biometric verification part of the card readers and as a result stocked up on PVCs.

Agents of aspirants and political parties bought PVCs before and during elections for as low as N5, 000 (approximately \$34 then). In some cases, stealing and selling PVCs became a brisk business, while others willingly and intentionally sold theirs and saw it as —the only dividend of democracy they will ever enjoy. Some thought the money was better than standing under the hot scorching sun for an election that has already been decided by the powers that be. Recently, the governorship election in Ekiti, a south western Nigerian state, was characterized by a pervasive buying and selling of votes. There were reports of political party agents and affiliates openly buying votes on Election Day in voting units. Agents bought, people sold, and everything went back to being normal. In addressing part of the challenges that give room for vote buying and selling, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has to rectify the malfunction witnessed with the biometric verification of voters in 2015. Local and international organizations and groups must insist that only voters whose biometrics has been verified will be eligible to vote.

Factors that Determined the Voting Behavior of Nigerians in the Elections

Some of these major factors that determined a paradigm shift in voting behavior of Nigerians are as follows: fear, insecurity, expectations and political socialization.

1.Fear

Fear based on psychological literatures, especially in the works of Maddux and Rogers (1983), De Hoog, Stroebe and John (2005) is a persuasive message that attempts to arouse fear in order to divert behavior through the threat of impending danger or harm. Just as a natural impulse, it is aroused by an impending danger or harm. The danger here is what the Nigerians experienced in the previous government. The relationship between fear and voting behavior was intellectually provided by Ruiter and Abraham (2005) Walkters (2000) Peters, Ruiter and Kok (2014). Their argument is that, people change behaviorally as a result of risk and vulnerability against a particular action. If Nigerians were vulnerable for example, under the previous regime, their lives were then at risk and vulnerable. The inference of this relationship, was given by Witte and Allen, (2000), who believe that, fear presents a risk, presents the vulnerability to the risk, and then describes a suggested form of protective action.

The protective action here represents the shift or the change in voting behavior and pattern. This will also make us understand why the low voter turnout during the 2015 general elections unlike in the previous elections which witnessed massive turnout. This was due to the fear of post-election violence, as people with voter cards fled without voting. The fear of Nigerians not to go back to yesteryears of unemployment, armed robbery, kidnapping, economic difficulty and educational collapse, has made them to change in their voting behavior. The economic theory of democracy as explained in the theoretical framework above indicates that, voters and politicians are rational players. Each will maintain his interest based on the profit he is likely to maximize. For the voters, political utility in employment opportunities, economic growth and development, increase in per capita income, social welfare, and infrastructure are basic needs. Nigerians changed in their voting behavior because they wanted not to experience the same treatment obtained in the previous government.

Insecurity

The issue of security is a sensitive one in every socio-economic formation. People must be strengthened to have sense of belonging and feel strong to withstand certain security challenges. According to Erich Fromm (2000) the feeling of inferiority is an integral part of insecurity. Security has also been seen as a part of societal basic needs (Alfred, 1964). The insecurity situation in Northern Nigeria has caused about 10849 deaths, thousands injured and property of billions Naira lost (John, 2014; Mark, 2015) Nigerians have experienced what they never did under the previous administration in respect to insecurity. People were dying in Nigeria as in Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Libya, south Sudan or Palestine. People were not protected, no Nigerian was safe and the government refused to put in place a formidable mechanism to restore order and build confidence

in people. Nigerians therefore, were forced to make a shift in their voting behavior from the hitherto traditional voting behavior, to a more democratic one. People believed that from their campaigns, the opposition party stood a better chance to make a systemic transformation hence the voting behavior drastically changed.

Expectations

The bounded rationality model somehow deals with forecast of even less sophisticated scheme (Evans and Honkapohja, 2001) as expected by a people under a particular government. This model may see such people not to expect even more and higher deliveries from the government (Homes and Sorger, 1998) but little expectation as contained in the constitutional framework as the government should discharge its own duties according to the law. Even this was somehow lacking, hence-the behavioral change in voting process of Nigerians as the case may be. The principles of social contract that hold the society between government and the people is the ability of the government to discharge its functions as it relates to: protection of lives and property, education, defense against external aggression, water, roads, power, hospitals and generally speaking, social welfare. The citizenry's expectations from the government are not beyond as mentioned. The citizenry in turn, obey the government, respect the constitution, pay taxes and remain good citizens in the society. It was evident that all the expectations of the people of Nigeria were not met by the previous government and where it was met at all, with just at peripheral level. This has shifted the voting behavior of Nigerians from ethno-religious and regional voting behavior to a democratic one, which is built based on legitimacy by results.

Economic Situation

While adopting the structuralist position of economic crisis, failure and poverty, Rank and Herschl (2006) is of the view that, the government is at fault whenever there is unemployment, economic recession, poverty, low per capita income and other related issues. For example, when the Russian economy was crumbling, the Russians became very much concerned about the future of their federation. With the emergence of president Putin, who strengthened the economic structure of Russia, Putin was able to mobilize voters during elections (even though there were allegations of riggings). Putting continues to be a great political figure of Russia for his determination not to see Russia down. In Nigeria, accordingly, the economic situation has not been good for Nigerians. The number of unemployed has waxed and rising level of inflation with decreased exchange rate of naira with other currencies. If a government structurally fails to protect the economy and allow for economic recessions, such government may force the people change their voting behavior from one pattern to another. This may also make the electorates vote against the ruling party in favor of opposition. Political Socialization• Political socialization as a process of molding individual's character, attitude and conduct to make him become a proper member of the society, plays significant role in election periods. Socialization as defined, is a lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within their own society (Clause, 1968). It is therefore, "the means by

which social and cultural continuity are attained (Macioni, 2010). Socialization or re-socialization of the voting behavior of a people can be done by the family, per groups, religious institutions, schools, the mass media, political parties and other interest groups.

The position of family leaders can easily change the mindset of the family members on who to be voted for, what political party should we vote for. Peer groups also have influence over their peers on voting. Schools play prominent role in analyzing moralistic political party structure and the students should be able to determine which government is moralistic and ethical politically which one is not. The media and musicians have really participated in shifting the voting behavior of Nigerians during the 2015 general elections. Children of very young age were clamoring Sai Baba Buhari as mantras. When people are preconditioned, prepared or even taught how to vote, whom to vote and what symbol of political party should they go for, they adapt quickly to changes.

YIAGA AFRICA and Watching The Votes of the 2019 Presidential Election

YIAGA AFRICA is a strictly nonpartisan and independent civil society organization without affiliation to any political party, candidate or state agency. YIAGA AFRICA's Watching The Vote effort includes volunteers representing Nigeria's diversity: women and men, youth and the elderly, persons with disability, Muslims and Christians from the six geo-political zones.

YIAGA AFRICA's observers have all been carefully selected and extensively trained in accordance with strict criteria to ensure their independence and neutrality, are properly accredited with INEC and have signed a project Code of Conduct to uphold standards of impartiality, objectivity and professionalism. YIAGA AFRICA observes on behalf of all Nigerian people and speaks in their name on the basis of verified data. YIAGA AFRICA will deploy a parallel vote tabulation or PVT. Findings are from a statistical sample of polling units located in all 774 LGAs that is truly representative of the entire country and therefore provide unbiased information on the overall conduct of the presidential election and the accuracy of the results.

YIAGA AFRICA conducts comprehensive observation of elections. In the pre-election period, YIAGA AFRICA deployed 822 Long Term Observers (LTOs) in all 774 Local Government Areas (LGA) of Nigeria. These citizen observers monitored political developments and preparations for the general elections over a four months period. For the Presidential election, YIAGA AFRICA deployed a total of 3,906 observers throughout the country. This comprises 3,076 stationary PVT observers deployed to a random representative statistical sample of 1,515 polling units and 23 voting points; 822 roving observers; and 8 Working Group members who run real time election analysis.

YIAGA AFRICA also deployed observers to the State Collation Centres in every state. Our observers will observe the entire election day process from setup of the polling units through the announcement and posting of the official results and will send in periodic reports to the Watching

the Vote National Data Centre located in the Transcorp Hilton in Abuja where they will be processed and analyzed. This deployment enabled YIAGA AFRICA to provide the most timely and accurate information on the opening of polls; the conduct of accreditation and voting; and the counting, announcement and posting of results throughout the country. Based on reports from its observers in the sampled polling units YIAGA AFRICA will also provide an independent projection of voter turnout and will be able to project the vote shares that each party should receive within a narrow range. If the official results fall within YIAGA AFRICA's estimated ranges, then the public, political parties and candidates should have confidence in the ballots cast at the polling units. Only INEC, however, has the legal mandate to announce the election results. As soon as INEC announces the official results,

YIAGA AFRICA followed up with a final press conference to share its own statement on the accuracy of the election results and publicized these projections. Utilizing information and communication technology and statistical principles, PVT is the gold standard for citizen election observation, and has been utilized throughout Africa and the world. In recent elections in Africa, the conduct of parallel vote tabulations by nonpartisan citizen organizations has bolstered citizen confidence and provided credible, independent estimates of presidential election results in Zimbabwe (2018), Kenya (2017), Ghana (2016), Zambia (2016 and 2015), Côte d'Ivoire (2015) and Burkina Faso (2015).

YIAGA AFRICA has also deployed this methodology for recent off-cycle gubernatorial elections in Nigeria, including: Osun (2018), Ekiti (2018), Anambra (2017) and Ondo (2016). On election day YIAGA AFRICA expects to receive more than 33,000 observer reports containing over 500,000 unique pieces of information on the process and results of the election. Over 94 data clerks as well as a team of data analysts will work tirelessly throughout February 23 and 24 to process, analyze and verify these reports at the Watching the Vote National Data Center located on Floor 02 of the Transcorp Hilton in Abuja. On 23 February, the Watching The Vote National Data Center will open promptly at 6:30 am and will remain open until counting has finished at all sampled polling units and all YIAGA AFRICA citizen observers have sent in their observation reports.

The Electoral Act and Vote Buying

In most democracies, vote buying is considered an electoral offence. In Nigeria, the provisions of Section 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, states that: A person who — (a) corruptly by himself or by any other person at any time after the date of an election has been announced, directly or indirectly gives or provides or pays money to or for any person for the purpose of corruptly influencing that person or any other person to vote or refrain from voting at such election, or on account of such person or any other person having voted or refrained from voting at such election; or (b) being a voter, corruptly accepts or takes money or any other inducement during any of the period stated in paragraph (a) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N100,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both (Electoral Act, 2010).

In addition to this, Section 124 of Electoral Act (2010) gives a fine of N500,000 or 12 months' imprisonment or both on conviction for anyone caught paying money to any other person for bribery at any election. Also, the same section of the Act criminalizes accepting anyone accepting or receiving money or gift, for voting or to refrain from voting at any election with the same penalty as the giver.

Despite the clear provisions of the Electoral Act against vote buying, politicians appear to have been violating it with impunity. The fact that none of those arrested by the Nigerian police suspected to be party agents allegedly with a bag containing N640,000 out on a mission to buy votes in the course of voting in the Osun governorship election are yet to be prosecuted several months after the election provide impetus for politicians to continue in this nefarious practice (*News Agency of Nigeria*, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Economic Theory of Democracy

This theory was proposed by Richard Joseph in 1991. Joseph used the construct of prebendalism to characterize the pattern of politics whereof state power is sought by all and sundry as a means of personal material aggrandizement. This obtains in a context where the state has usurped the role of the economy as the major wealth creator, employer of labour, and guarantor of socio-economic security (Okoli, 2009; Okoli and Otegwu, 2010; Okoli and Orinya, 2014). The prebendal character of politics in Nigeria has significantly influenced how state power is sought and utilized. In this respect, politicking attracts inestimable premium and high stakes.

As observed by Bratton: Elections are struggle over the access to the resources controlled by the state, which are the biggest prize in society. Given these high stakes, politicians resort to a variety of means – whether fair or foul – to attain public office (2008:1). The expediency of power struggles in the arena of electioneering necessitates and compels the adoption of extra-legal incentives to ensure electoral success and victory (Okoli and Iortyer, 2014). In this regard, politicians often resort to material inducement or intimidation in their desperate bid to gain electoral advantage. In this circumstance, vote buying becomes a competitive electoral strategic tactic. The point being established in the foregoing is that prebendal political culture in Nigeria has led to the commercialization and materialization of electioneering and partisan relations in the country. The exchange of votes for money as exemplified in the phenomenon of vote buying/selling is, therefore, a necessary consequence of the prebendal character of politics in Nigeria.

Development and Corruption Theory

Development and corruption model 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.

General Incentive Model

The general incentive model was developed by Clark and Wilson (1961). They posit that if we know the kinds of incentives that an organisation may give to induce members' greater cooperation, then something can be learnt about the incentive system a political party uses to sustain members' participation in its activities. Clark and Wilson (1961, p. 130) pointed out that the internal and external events of organisations may be explained by understanding their incentive systems. They stated that all organisations in good standing must provide —tangible or intangible incentives to their members to induce optimal contribution.

In the use of incentives to buy votes of the electorates, politicians often use monetary and nonmonetary incentives to influence the behaviour of voters. These incentives are usually targeted

at the poor or less educated class of opposition backers, not to turn out and vote which is referred to as —negative vote buying, swing voters and a party’s main supporters to turn out and vote which are also referred to in this model as ‘turnout buying’ (Cox & McCubbins, 1986). While negative vote buying reduces votes for the opposition party, turnout buying increases votes for the party buying votes. Vote buying incentives provide goods which are short-term, private, and have a high degree of certainty (Desposato, 2007). Because of this, poor voters assign higher values to vote buying where uncertainty of the compensation for their vote is low (Desposato, 2007).

Two main purposes are intended to be achieved during the distribution of these vote buying incentives. These are to ensure positive or participatory vote buying and also to achieve negative turnout. The poor and less educated among the electorates are often the target during the distribution of vote buying incentives. This is attributed to the fact that gifts have more force among the poor. Hence, parties will buy the votes of the poor before trying to buy those of the wealthy (Stokes, 2005). The poor who finds a naira note on the street, for example, will be made happier by finding it than will a wealthy person. This is due to diminishing marginal utility of income.

Empirical Review

In a study conducted by Adigun (2019) on Vote Buying: Examining the Manifestations, Motivations, and Effects of an emerging dimension of election rigging in Nigeria (2015-2019), the content analysis method was adopted using 120 references or news report from five national news platform, it was found that while vote buying is not alien to some advanced democracies, Nigeria needs to step up the game by putting heavy penalties on vote buying or selling. The incident of vote buying in some of the recent elections in Nigeria might be a signal that Nigerian democracy is at a critical juncture for future dubious electoral manipulation similar to the 2007 election. Therefore, urgent electoral reforms are most needed to avert an impending political and electoral crisis in the near future..

Vande (2022) carried out a study on Vote Buying and credible elections in Nigeria: An Opinion Survey Of Voters On The 2019 General Election In The Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, in the study a population of 367, 786 was adopted while the sample size of 400 was determined using the Taro Yamane’s formula and it was found that vote buying has a significant but negative effect on the 2019 General elections in Nigeria.

Yakubu (2020) conducted a study in Kano on the effects of Vote Buying on the electoral process in Nigeria, a population of 1,984,765 was used while the sample size of 399 was determined using the Taro Yamane’formula and it was found that election officials, legislators and civil society activities in a number of countries should try as they have been trying to curtail or eliminate the practice of vote-buying. The electoral law has very specific penalties for vote buying and selling

and they range from disqualification of the violators as voters, or disqualification of violators who are in position of authority from retaining such.

The use of money to buy votes does not even stop at election time. It is a common practice in Nigeria as it is in many other countries, for numerous private interest groups and political action committees which seek policy goals and legislations to serve their narrow private needs to continue to use all the means at their disposal including money, to solidify or expand their influence on the elected officials (Wright: 1985). It is observed that the relative ease with which the elected officials show their gratitude by endorsing the legislative and policy proposals of campaign contributors seems to support the hypothesis that there is a correlation between special donations to political parties and candidates and legislative votes.

Consequently, according to Sohner (1973:190) “money has, in fact, been made to become the mothers’ milk of politics, which the political gladiators must drink to remain in business”. Good governance which suffers because of the phenomenon of money politics and vote-buying can be defined as all the governmental and institutional arrangements in a polity which are operated on the basis of strict compliance with the tenets and practices of democracy. All stakeholders must uphold the tenets of access to quality education, economic empowerment, effective health-care delivery system, rule of law and other necessary social amenities. All seem to agree that democracy is the best and the most civilized method of governance known to man.

Election observer group, Yiaga Africa, has identified cases of vote buying, intimidation of voters and malfunctioning of BVAS in some polling units in the Saturday’s Osun State governorship election. It made the observations in its preliminary report on the election holding across the 30 local government areas of the state. The two dominant political parties – the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) – along with 13 other political parties fielded candidates for the election.

In some polling units, it said, agents of the PDP and APC were seen inducing voters with cash ranging from N2,000 to N5,000. In PU 009, Akinlalu Commercial Grammar School, Ward 01 in Ife North, Yiaga observed that party agents strategically positioned themselves by the voting cubicle to see how voters marked their ballots. While in PU 003 Opp. Olomu Mosque in Osogbo, PDP agents were seen handing out between N2000 and N5000 to induce voters.

Also, in Disu Polling Unit 003, ward 7 in Orolu LGA, APC agents were seen distributing N4,000 to voters who voted for the party while PDP party agents were seen distributing N2000 to induce voters.

Yiaga also queried some voters who were seen showing how they marked their ballot papers to APC agents before dropping them in the ballot boxes – compromising the secrecy of the process.

This happened in Ward 11, Unit 3, Palace Town Hall, Boripe. In the same Local Government, Yiaga observed that thugs associated with the APC, threatened to stab any voter who did not vote for the APC but the voters however insisted on casting their votes for the candidate of their choice.

Research Design

Research design refers to the plan for selecting sources and type of information used to answer the research questions (Cooper and Schinder, 2005). It deals with the strategy for identifying the problem with the data collection method, processing and interpretation in a study. The type of research design used is the descriptive survey research. Survey is a systematic gathering of information through instruments like the questionnaire to ascertain the reality in which the respondents are exposed to. Survey design was employed because the researchers are dealing with questionnaire and survey is convenient for both small and large populations.

Population of the study

The population of a study refers to all the conceivable elements that make up a group. The researchers studied the number of eligible voters in Enugu state. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission, the number of eligible voters in Enugu State, is 1,900,000, out of which 1,450,000 have collected their PVC's. Therefore the population of study is 1,450,000.

Sample Size Determination

Taro Yamane's formula. Yamane (1964) was used to draw a sample of 400 from the population

Sampling Technique

The researchers adopted the random sampling procedure, where every member of the population had equal chance of being chosen from the population. In the random sampling procedure, everything is controlled by the probability and the researchers cannot influence the choice of the members chosen for the study.

Data Relating to Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the Enugu State voters' level of awareness about YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign?

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on whether they are aware of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Yes | 201 | 52 |
| No | 176 | 45 |
| No idea | 10 | 3 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 1, shows that 201 respondents, representing 52% said yes they are aware of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign, 176 respondents representing 45% said no while 10 respondents representing 3% said no idea.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents on whether they became aware of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign prior to the 2023 General election

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 211 | 55 |
| Agree | 120 | 31 |
| Undecided | 41 | 11 |
| Disagree | 9 | 2 |
| Strongly disagree | 6 | 1 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 2, shows that 211 respondents, representing 55% strongly agree that they became aware of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign prior to the 2023 General election, 120 respondents representing 31% agree, 41 respondents representing 11% were undecided, 9 respondents representing 2% disagree while 6 respondents representing 1% strongly disagree.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on whether their level of awareness of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign has been growing steadily

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 200 | 52 |
| Agree | 109 | 28 |
| Undecided | 46 | 12 |
| Disagree | 20 | 5 |
| Strongly disagree | 12 | 3 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 3, shows that 200 respondents, representing 52% strongly agree that their level of awareness of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign has been growing steadily, 109 respondents representing 28% agree, 46 respondents representing 12% were undecided, 20 respondents representing 5% disagree while 10 respondents representing 3% strongly disagree.

Research Question Two: To what extent does YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influence the attitude of voters in Enugu state?

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on whether they have been having political apathy before their awareness of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 132 | 34 |
| Agree | 124 | 32 |
| Undecided | 45 | 12 |
| Disagree | 44 | 11 |
| Strongly disagree | 42 | 11 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 4, shows that 132 respondents, representing 34% strongly agree that they have been having political apathy before their awareness of YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign, 124 respondents representing 32% agree, 45 respondents representing 12% were undecided, 44 respondents representing 11% disagree while 42 respondents representing 11% strongly disagree.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on whether YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 152 | 39 |
| Agree | 141 | 36 |
| Undecided | 57 | 15 |
| Disagree | 16 | 4 |
| Strongly disagree | 21 | 6 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 5, shows that 152 respondents, representing 39% strongly agree that YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent, 141 respondents representing 36% agree, 57 respondents representing 15% were undecided, 16 respondents representing 4% disagree while 21 respondents representing 6% strongly disagree.

Research Question Three: To what extent does YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu State.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on whether their behavior towards voting has changed as a result YIAGA African vote buying media campaign

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 101 | 26 |
| Agree | 132 | 34 |
| Undecided | 41 | 11 |
| Disagree | 58 | 15 |
| Strongly disagree | 55 | 14 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 6, shows that 101 respondents, representing 26% strongly agree that there are challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state, 132 respondents representing 34% agree, 41 respondents representing 11% were undecided, 58 respondents representing 15% disagree while 55 respondents representing 14% strongly disagree.

Research Question Four: What are the challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state?

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents on whether there are challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | 106 | 27 |
| Agree | 128 | 33 |
| Undecided | 54 | 14 |
| Disagree | 53 | 14 |
| Strongly disagree | 46 | 12 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 7, shows that 106 respondents, representing 27% strongly agree that there are challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu State, 128 respondents representing 33% agree, 54 respondents representing 14% were undecided, 53 respondents representing 14% disagree while 46 respondents representing 12% strongly disagree.

Distribution of Respondents on whether the challenges militating against YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign includes poverty and lack of awareness of the implications of vote buying

| RESPONSES | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | 159 | 41 |
| Agree | 110 | 28 |
| Undecided | 24 | 6 |
| Disagree | 52 | 13 |
| Strongly disagree | 42 | 11 |
| Total | 387 | 100 |

Table 8, shows that 159 respondents, representing 41% strongly agree that the challenges militating against YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign includes poverty and lack of awareness of the implications of vote buying, 110 respondents representing 28% agree, 24 respondents representing 6% were undecided, 52 respondents representing 13% disagree while 42 respondents representing 11% strongly disagree.

Test of Hypotheses

The Statistical Package for the Social Scientist (SPSS) was used to test the hypothesis The research hypothesis one sought to determine the extent YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state

Hypothesis One

H₀: YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign does not influence the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

H₁: YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .623(a) | .594 | .594 | .423876 |

a Predictors: (Constant)

ANOVA(b)

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|----------|---------|
| 1 | Regression | 356.322 | 1 | 642.418 | 4248.334 | .000(a) |
| | Residual | 52.069 | 387 | .142 | | |
| | Total | 408.391 | 388 | | | |

Source: SPSS Version 2.0 output

Dependent Variable: Attitude of voters in Enugu state

Independent Variable: YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign

Coefficient of Multiple Determinants { r^2 }

The R^2 {R-Squared} which measures the entire regression, shows the value as .594 and adjusted to .594. This means that R^2 accounts for 88.5 percent approximately 60 percent. This indicates that the independents variables account for about 60 percent of the variation in the dependent variable. From the result, F-calculated (4248.334) is greater than the f-tabulated (2.7858), that is $F_{cal} > F_{tab}$. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept Alternative hypothesis which means that the overall estimate has a good fit which also implies that our independents variables are simultaneously significant. We now conclude from the analysis that YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**Discussion based on Objective One**

The level of vote buying in the electoral system in Enugu state is high. The study confirmed this, through the comparison of the finding with the literature review. The evidence is shown in the F-calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858). Hence, the research accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

Discussion Based on Objective Two

YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent. The study confirmed this, through the comparison of the finding with the empirical review. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858). Hence, the research accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent.

Discussion Based on Objective Three

YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu State.. The evidence is shown in the calculated value The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858).. Hence, the research accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that the challenges militating against YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent

Discussion Based on Objective Four

The challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state include poverty and politicians do or die attitude. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858 (166.23) Hence, the research accepted the alternate hypothesis which states that YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent.

Summary of Findings

1. YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu State. The evidence is shown in the calculated value. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858)...
2. YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the attitude of voters in Enugu state to a large extent. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858)....
3. YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign influences the behavior of voters in Enugu State. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858).
4. The challenges militating against YIAGA in the campaign against vote buying in Enugu state include poverty and politicians do or die attitude. The evidence is shown in the calculated value (4248.334) which is greater than the critical value (2.7858 (166.23).

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings.

- 1) What we need is a deep sense of patriotism and a devoted sense of selfless to the acquisition of wealth by unjust means and refuse to be bought at election time or to commit any electoral offence or other kind of evil during elections and if we refuse to make ourselves marketable commodities, the elections will be free and fair
- 2) Introduction of electronic voting system could potentially reduce incidence of voting buying and selling in elections.
- 3) The Nigerian government should pursue a policy of aggressive diversification of the economy to create more employment opportunities and reduce the level of poverty that makes people susceptible to criminal, financial and material inducements.
- 4) YIAGA Africa needs to intensify voter education and enlightenment campaigns on the negative implications of vote trading– particularly on how it raises the costs of elections, promotes political corruption and undermines good governance

CONCLUSION

YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign has significant effect on the attitude of voters in Enugu state. Interestingly, the study clearly showed that poverty plays a crucial role in vote buying in which the politicians are aware of this fact. Politicians are aware of this fact that poor standard of living has driven majority of the people into poverty and exploits this weakness to make them trade their votes for any amount of money which influences voters behaviour in a negative way. Political parties often use vote buying as a strategy to bribe officials, police and law enforcement agencies, distributing food and other goods to induce voters to vote for a particular party that has taken over the order of the day. Conclusively, if the act of vote buying continues, electoral fraud and manipulation of voters' choice in Nigeria's electoral process and democratic structures will be difficult to sustain. However., YIAGA Africa vote buying media campaign has created awareness on the incidence of vote buying , hence, electorates have continually said they will collect the money but vote for whoever they want to vote for.

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International Journal of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Essays

Vol.8, No 1, pp. 27-50, 2024

ISSN 2514-9237 (Print),

ISSN 2514-9245 (online)

Website: <https://www.eajournals.org/>

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK

YIAGA AFRICA Initiative, (2018) Duly Elected Or Duly Purchased? Report on Vote Buying and Selling in the 2018 Ekiti Governorship Elections View publication