



Cashless Policy and Vote Trading in the Nigeria's 2023 Presidential Elections

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Abstract

This study examined cashless policy and vote trading during the 2023 presidential general elections in Nigeria. It aimed at ascertaining the effects of the cashless policy on vote buying on the nation's political development. The paper was hinged on System theory by Easton. This study used documentary research for data collection where relevant textbooks, journals and newspapers were consulted. Cashless policy was partly designed at making cash out of stock for vote-buying during the polls. The policy was intended to guarantee a bribery free election in 2023, where voters and agencies of government would be offered money to vote wrong candidates into power but the results indicate that the political elites adopted other digital measures for vote trading in the midst of hardship and frustration all over the country. Furthermore, the analyses indicate that the policy exerted pressure on the Nigeria's fragile socio-economic and political conditions and most voters who had no access to their money in the banks did not vote during the elections because they could not afford their transport fares to the polling units. The paper concludes that the policy was able to checkmate the excessive use of cash by anxious politicians but the war against vote trading is yet to be eradicated. The paper recommends among others adequate orientation towards electioneering campaigns by the government to encourage the citizens to embrace the right morals, conscience and a good sense of judgment while stiff penalty should be meted on anyone caught on the act of vote trading.

Keywords: cashless policy, general elections, political development, Nigeria and vote trading

Citation of article: Akpan, U. (2024). Cashless Policy and Vote Trading in the Nigeria's 2023 Presidential Elections, *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies, AJPAS*, 17(2):63-81

Date submitted: 16/08/2024 **Date Accepted:** 18/09/2024 **Date Published:** December, 2024



Introduction

In the evolution of mankind the urge for money and subsequent desire for cash is always traceable to the barter era. In this period, there was a direct exchange of goods for goods, services for goods and sometimes service for services and the practice inhibit trade, speciality and division of labour which is the trademark of contemporary economies. Accordingly, in the process different types of currencies were used in various societies to facilitate trade based on their occupation until the dawn of uniform money in ancient Lydia about thousands years ago, Almeida, Fazendeiro and Inacio (2018). This discovery made money a vital part of transactions largely due to simplicity, durability and trust no matter the ages past. A cashless policy is predicted on the fact that development should be wide-ranging with an improved access and use of financial services to enlarge payment structures of a nation in order enhance the lot of every economic agent and spread the dividends of development to all sundry in a society, (Resendiz, 2017, Kabakova and Plaksenkov, 2018).

The introduction of the cashless policy by the CBN in 2012 was to fast-track and encourages digital payment, minimizes the use of currency in transactions and to ensure the stream of funds within the banking structure. Consequently, in the wake of 2023 general elections the federal government announced the redesigned of three denominations of the nation's currency and adoption of cash less policy in the financial system. The development exerted pressure on Nigeria's fragile socio- political environment and there were reactions in all parts of the country all point to the frustration and hardship Nigerians went through. Ezeamalu (2023) asserts that the cashless policy was partly aimed at making cash out of stock for vote-buying during the polls however, the political elites adopted new strategy by using either electronic transfer or distribution of gifts.

Globally, democracy is regarded as the best form of government, however, in most African countries with Nigeria inclusive it is being continuously abused due to the marvel of money politics and vote trading. On May 1999 Nigeria inaugurated democratic governance in the fourth republic but the dividends of democracy to the people seem a mirage, Ovwasa (2014). This is largely due to poor practice of democracy by the political elites and the application of the



concept is quite different in Nigeria. Succinctly money politics and vote buying have violated the merits of democracy in the country. Indeed, the menace of money politics and vote trading are regarded as some of the issues that undermine good governance in Nigeria.

Babatunde, Iwu and Osuji (2019) opined that money politics in Nigeria's democratic process have taken an alarming aspect of vote trading. Accordingly, Ovwasa (2014) believes that the marvel of money-politics became noticeable in Nigeria's elections after independence but the tsunami of money politics blown to greater heights during the 1979 and 1993 general elections. It was noticed that during the campaigns for the conduct of the 1993 election "extreme use of money for the party primaries and the presidential elections" were involved. Several scholars have alluded that the use of money to trade votes is quite disturbing since the wake of the fourth republic in 1999, Beetseh and Akpoo, 2015; Walecki, 2006; Kura, 2011; (Alli, 2016, Soriwei, 2017; Ovwasa, 2014; Ukase, 2016,. In fact, the style is growing worse since the country transited from military to democratic governance in 1999 and each phase of the election always comes with ugly development.

In Africa, the quality of elections varies widely and most elections have been plagued with problems such as ballot fraud, intimidation, multiple voting, low voter education, snatching of ballot boxes, violence, giving out of electoral incentives and votes trading. Just as democratic elections have spread across the globe since the early 1970s, so has electoral incentives and buying of votes. In our democratic journey, the greatest threat that always influenced the power to choose is vote trading by the politicians and the electorates. The purpose of vote trading which is meant to compel electorates to elect certain candidates and their political parties has assumed an alarming situation. Votes' trading entails giving certain benefits to the electorates in the form of gifts or incentives for them to interchange with their votes to the candidate.

Regardless of the importance and merits of the digital payment channels Nigerians prefer cash driven financial structure to cashless plan. Given the role exhibited by the political elites and their agents during the elections, it is vital to undertake this study in order to ascertain the impact of the policy on vote trading. The poor handling of our electoral procedure, the prevalent of



money-politics and vote trading is major threat to democratic development. The concern of this paper is to examine the effects of cashless policy on vote trading in Nigeria's 2023 general elections. The paper attempted to give a broader negative role of vote buying and suggest strategies for curbing the challenges.

Literature Review

Cashless policy

Cashless system is one in which individuals, households and businesses interrelate and assist exchange through cashless device. It a plan that downplay the use of vast raw cash for dealings but encourages the use of bank transfer ATM card, point of sales, and other monetary instruments for sending cash in dealings, Ajayi, (2014) Ezeamama, Ndubuisi. Marire and Mgbodile,(2014) and Dumani (2020). Cashless policy entails electronic book entries that is, the credit entry for every receipt and debit for every transaction devoid of physical cash

Election and the Nigerian Electoral System

Election is an essential element of democracy as it determines the extent of people's participation in governance. Election gives the citizens an opportunity to freely decide who rules them through the ballot papers. When an election is free, fair and credible, it produces credible leadership which pilots the affairs of the state with a sense of patriotism, selfless service and commitment. Election became noticeable in Nigeria with the implementation of the 1945 Richard constitution, which brought the concept of regionalism which provided a fruitful ground for the emergence of different political parties which strived to gain control of government through elections.

Laski (1982) states that the problem of democratic government is not less a problem of finding men suitable to the use of its machinery than the problem of a monarchy which finds "a race of kings" fitted by their endowments to benefit the state. He argues that a democratic organization is doubtless a final form of political organization in the sense that men who have once tasted power, will not, without conflict surrender it. This means that those who gained access to government do not want to relinquish power without struggle. It is through the elections that bad leaders are voted out, while new leaders are voted in. This explains why election has become a



“do or die” battle in Nigeria that must be won by heartless politicians who will not stop at nothing than being elected into a office. Dudley (1982) defines election as a “procedure recognized by the rules of a state where all or some of the members choose a small number of persons to hold an office or offices of authority within the state”. Mohammed and Imaobong (2011) observe that generally, elections are not just the casting of votes to elect leaders, but also the active participation of people in governance. Elections are pivotal to the wheel of democratic process and substances of democracy. One major function of election is to provide an opportunity for a peaceful succession and smooth transfer of power from one person to another.

In Nigeria, people struggle to win elections at all costs just to secure and keep political power. Manipulation of electoral process, right from the nomination of political party primaries, through the electioneering campaigns, voting at the polls, counting of votes and announcement of results has become the order of the day. The unemployed youths are co-opted and given guns to shoot and kill innocent political opponents, electoral officers are paid to rig and compromise the elections results, the electorate are given money to sell their votes, security agents are paid to intimidate innocent people at the polls, while the election results are doctored and changed by dishonest electoral officers.

The electoral body currently named Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had since independence been accused of bias and collaboration in rigging elections to favour of ruling parties or the prefer party as in 2015 presidential election. Good governance is promoted when the elections and outcome is free and fair and the elected elites exhibit the traits of accountability to the electorates whose power lies with. If Nigeria wants to have integrity and sustain democracy both institutions and the citizens should be ready to re-orient them positively towards the electoral process.

Ajayi and Ojo (2006) asserted that one of the requirements for the growth of national economy is to inspire a payment structure that is expedient, secure and cheap. In this regards, most developed nations in the world to a large extent are moving away from the cash payment instruments toward electronic strategies, especially the payment cards, Humphrey, (2004) and



.Adu (2016). The specific aspects of running of the cashless economy include e-finance, e-money and e-exchanges

A cashless policy is a structure whereby businesses are not done mostly in exchange for real cash Akhalumeh and Ohiokha, (2012). This is majorly a mobile transaction system that permits operators to make expenses over phones with internet facilities. The practice enhances expediency, provide extra facility options, reduces cash- related crimes and create inexpensive access to banking services and admittance to credit (Yaqub, Bello, Adenuga and Ogundeji, (2013). Cobb (2005) opined that effective and suitable electronic transaction always involve a significant range of macro – economic benefits whereas the high level of cash payments generates an occasion for the electronic payment business, which also imposes a cost on indigenous economies.

Mamudu and Gayovwi, (2019) asserted that in cash centered economy money must be produced, calculated and reconciled, securely reserved and maintained for use and re-use over time and again. The handling charges always remain high while the costs of electronic structure are static. Once the infrastructure has been built, the charges per transaction are very low and whenever the cards are used at the point of sale by the users they are helping to retain money within the banking system. A cashless driven economy does not portray the complete absence of cash, it is structure whereby goods and services are purchased and payment made through electronic system. Woodford (2003) described cashless economy as one in which there are expected to be no dealings resistances that can be reduced from the use of money balances which provide a reason for holding such balances even when they earn rate of return. In a cashless system the amount of cash in your possession is virtually immaterial because one can pay for his/her purchases through any outlet of banks' transfer.

The emergence of mobile banking services through CBN is absolute tool to generate payment access to those unbanked Nigerians in both urban and rural areas, and it will assist to drive financial inclusion in the country. Financial analysts believe that with the high level of mobile communications usage in the country is expected to transform into increase in bankable Nigerians if perfectly managed, Amaka, (2012)



Historicizing Cashless Policy in Nigeria

Given the primary function of money as a unit of account a cashless society does not infer an outright lack of cash transactions in the economic purpose but one which the quantity of cash-based businesses are reduced.. It is an economic structure that activities are not performed majorly in exchange for liquid cash Daniel, .Swartz, and Fermar, (2004).

In a cashless society like USA, the unit of account in dollar, that is provided by the government. is a general affair. The practice of non-cash transaction devices such as credit and debit cards controls the use of money in payments. The card based payment structure has numerous players such as the card providers- MasterCard and Visa which offer their payment networks for the system to function. The banks are another set of providers that act as acquirers for merchants and issuers for card owners and reach the card payments services to the ultimate users. The card payment structure is a channel for an income generating creativity which is motivated to manage the system because there is adequate profit to drive the operations, Elechi and Rufus, (2016).

Emerging countries are improving their payments structures to enable wider acceptance and better practice of cash less means and networks. They are open to improvements that can broaden their still-nascent base of consumers (World Bank payments report 2011). According to Awi (2023) Sweden has gone cashless and over 85 per cent of all transactions are made electronically. This has ensued in the creation of inventive financial solutions such as instantaneous mobile payment systems and even a national digital currency. In Africa, however, Kenya leads the way with at least one individual in 96 per cent of Kenyan households is using M-Pesa for payments.

Globally the use of cash transaction is prevalent mostly for low-value payment. However, though cash may be suitable, it makes payment of taxes not transparent, and it is expensive to manage the process. To reduce these costs many countries encourage the cashless payment means. Nigeria is cash centred economy while advanced nations are exploring other mediums of payment with quality outcomes. This is based on the belief that development should be all-



encompassing and that an improved access and use of financial services would enlarge payment systems of a nation and better the lot of every economic agent and spread the dividends of development to all and sundry in a society, Kabakova and Plaksenkov (2018) and Dumani (2020). To be in line with global trend, considering Nigeria's ambition to be amongst the top 20 economies of the world cashless economy is imperative

The cashless policy was introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2012 as pilot scheme in Lagos. The policy permits carrying out financial transaction without the use of banknotes. The policy stipulated "a cash handling charge" on daily cash withdrawals that exceed N500,000.00 for individuals and N3 million for corporate bodies. The policy was effective in Lagos which led to the CBN extending the policy to six other states, Kano, Rivers, Anambra, Abia Ogun and Abuja in 2013 and in July 2014 it rolled out nationwide. Cashless policy does not infer an outright end of cash in circulation in the economy but the procedure of a banking system that reduces cash dealings to the simplest minimum. The apex bank set daily bounds of cumulative withdraws and lodgments of N150, 000 for individuals and N1, 000, 000 for corporate customers but currently N150, 000 and N3million respectively. The operation of the policy is not against an individual or corporate organizations keeping cash in excess of N150, 000 and N1million currently N500, 000 and N3million respectively at any point in time, however the cumulative cash dealings with the bank should not surpass these limits in a day. The policy was designed to encourage electronic transaction of payment, and not to discourage cash holdings and stipulated penalty fees of N100 and N200 has been reduced to 3 per cent and 5 per cent respectively are to be charged per extra N1, 000 (Ezumba 2011)

Within the operation of the policy it is expected that instead of making huge withdrawals for payment for good and services such cash will be kept in the banking organization since payments are made through "credit card-like means". The system supplied customers with electronic cards that can be slotted into special electronic machines in order to effect payments and at the midpoint of such payment arrangement are the Point of Sales (POS) stations as opined by Azeez, (2011). The cashless policy of the CBN was undertaken to provide portable transaction services and to collapse the outmoded barriers hampering financial inclusion of millions of Nigerians and



brought low cost, safe and suitable financial services to urban, semi – urban and rural areas across the nation.

If the cashless policy was fully complied with at the first instance, the nation would not have felt the impact and shortage of the cash flow as witnessed during the period. The cash less policy was designed to reduce the use of cash by anxious political elites and their agents to trade votes during the general elections. However, the political parties and their agent still devise ingenious means of vote buying to induce voters mostly those who were cash trapped couple with poverty in the land.

Theoretical Underpinning

The System theory as propounded by Easton (1957) is adopted for this study. The author opined that every system consist of many sub systems that work in harmony for the survival of the entire system. System theory uses the political or social system as the proper unit of analysis. It was introduced to sociology and politics principally by Talcott Parsons in his book: “The structure of Social Actions” (1973) and by David Easton, “The Political System” in (1957). Parsons, for instance, spoke of a social system as containing four sub-systems, devoted to adaptively, goal-seeking integration and latency, which relate to the economy, politics, society and the family. Both Parsons and Easton were influenced by biologist models of ecological systems (Katz, 1965).

The relevance of system theory lies in its interaction function between the centre and the peripheries. The environment consists of the objectives, conditions and forces that generate demand and support inputs. In every system there are two major functions namely, the input and output. The input is made of the demand and the support. The demands are majorly requests, appeals, proposal and constructive criticisms made on the system by the citizens. Support consists of adherence to laws or positive system such as loyalty and patriotism and could come from diverse networks which may include the media, delegations, visits, conferences, representatives and institutions.

The demands are always injected into the system and processed through either the legislative, or the executive or the bureaucratic change process and sent out to the society as policies,



programmes and plans to be implemented. It is through the feedback mechanism of the system that the feelings, reactions, responses and comments of the citizens are transmitted into the system for synergy and improve performance. The systems theory provides an organizing principle for integrated inter-disciplinary study that is purposive and can treat complex interdependencies dynamically. The system theory has the advantage of an insight into the totality of the electoral process and into the interactions between the component parts. Elections are crucial factor in political stability and development of any nation. The viability and sustainability of any sovereign political entity depends largely on free and fair elections. It is from this perspective that the system theory is applied

Most times popular policies of government always attract range of support from the citizens. On the other hand, unpopular policies and programmes do draw negative responses and possible rejection from the citizens. However, Dye (1990) opines that “ the more controversial a proposed policy from the government, the more it is, that one part of the society will benefit at the cost of another section” System theory will assist in explaining the various structures that are playing specific role and the extent to which these structures are performing their functions. The Nigerian political system is structured to conduct elections in every four year. Previous elections have been characterised with numerous malpractices such as violence, rigging money politics and vote trading.

Money politics and vote buying are complete nullification of what democratic elections meant for globally. The marvel of vote buying has laid bare the fragility of democracy in the country. These dangers are with clear implications on lives, political development and global recognition. Vote buying and money politics have bred serious crisis in our political processes such that if not properly checked could ultimately lead to the dis-integration of the country, Ovwasa, (2014).

The introduction of cashless policy before 2023 general elections by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) was designed to checkmate the fraudulent practice of vote trading during the elections. The policy was necessitated as part of the demands generated from the citizens based on the reports of previous elections in order to sanitise the political environment and produce credible elections. In a system, adequate performance of all sub-systems to be functionally interrelated is



a panacea for a better society. However, the fault of any sub-system will definitely affect the entire system and may lead to pressure and eventual collapse if not correctly managed. Currently, the political environment is overheated with petitions of the presidential election and the Supreme Court is yet to rule on the matter. The allocation of value and credibility of Nigeria's elections has continued to be difficult since certain sub-system or institution, representing marginal percentage of the population is divergent to the development process. The inability of INEC to transmit the results of the election during and after the voting in line with the legislation guiding the process did undermine the electoral system

Methodology

The data were largely sourced through secondary sources such as journals, textbooks, newspapers and other documented materials. The analysis of the data was undertaken qualitatively where the research analytically discusses the cashless policy and its implication on vote trading in Nigeria. The work also focussed on the political development during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

A month before the general elections the Central Bank of Nigeria imposed a deadline to withdraw old banknotes from circulation and to replace them with new designed notes. One of the major objectives of monetary policy of the apex bank is the review of cash withdrawal limits for individuals and corporations. Cashless policy was introduced to reduce much money in circulation. Specifically, the currency in circulation was N3.23tn and out of which N2.7tn was out of the banking system. The policy was designed to stop corrupt politicians and limit vote trading and violence sponsored by the political elites that were common practice in earlier elections. The procedure was chaotic and branded 'Naira crisis': when old banknotes became illegal and after 14 February, citizens were forced to deposit their cash in exchange for the new banknotes that were not only available but limited in quantities. Hence, the massive majority of Nigerians were left without cash for more than 2 months.



The naira redesign policy was also the product of the electoral period few months before the presidential election, the policy that was meant to tackle dishonest politicians, kidnappers and criminals became roughly close to a war against its own residents. The existence of a very large unbanked population of 55 percent of the adult in 2016 showed that the country was not ready to move into a cashless policy regime.

Findings further revealed the policy scarcity created enormous suffering but some individuals found it more attractive to sell their votes during the elections. The cashless election did not guarantee the reduction of vote-buying rather made it more desirable for voters. Policy implementation imposed untold hardship on poor Nigerians who scrambled for naira notes.

The scarcity led to protests in many parts of the country, increasing fears that it would disturb the conduct of the election. During the demonstrations, properties worth millions of naira were lost while traders were to count their losses. However, traders of perishable goods were forced to sell them at cheap prices in order not to incur more losses. Banks and other financial institutions were not spared during the protests. Ayantoye (2023) opined that over seventeen banks across the country were attacked and about N5bn was lost.

The policy was counterproductive since in a bid to create a cashless society where politicians will not have access to use heavy cash to purchase votes, both the electoral officers and voters were stranded while the politicians were ahead in a way because the new naira notes that the masses found it difficult to access were mopped up by them for the election. More so, despite the scarcity of the naira notes political elites devised means to buy votes with foreign currencies.

Vote trading and its Implications on Nigerian Democracy

The significance of money to finance elections in terms of funding, printing of party manifestoes, campaign and other activities is well accepted, however, the extreme practice of money with the intension of acquiring votes is abnormality of good governance. Once undue use of money is engaged to effect elections outcome the result becomes equal with the gentle art of 'getting votes



from the poor and campaign funds from the rich with a promise to defend one another (Sohner, 1973 and Ovwasa, 2014))

Vote trading is practice which usually occurred mostly during electoral campaigns in many countries of the world. It is the violation of the electoral laws which underplay the reliability of the elections and draw back the progress of political development, IDEA, (2022). Scholars have regarded vote trading as economic operation where political parties and individuals share out materials benefits to the public in exchange for the anticipated support at the poll. The electoral development in Nigeria has been overwhelmed by money politics. Money politics has become a widespread feature in most African countries and as a medium of deciding who should be the leader arising from widespread poverty in the system and close competition of party manifestoes.

Vote trading has become a precondition in recent elections just as its past predates the reappearance to democracy in May 1999. The practice of vote trading apart from being as old as the electoral history of the nation has been an integral element of money politics. Vote trading occurs at multiple phases of the electoral cycle such as voter registration, nomination period, campaign and the election's day predominantly shortly before or during vote casting. Vote trading is like an open market and the commodity of sale is the vote to be cast and the medium of exchange could either be monetary or non -cash items. The market force that determines the value of vote is the level of desperation of political elites to win in that particular locality. Vote trading is steady with in our political journey largely due to commercialization of the political parties. Most people with lower income status have become victim for political parties in vote trading, though the rich are not equally left out. In May 2022 during the primaries delegates of the two major parties were paid thousands of dollars to induce them to vote for a particular candidate. This was a significant factor in the emergence of most candidates at the primaries.

Salihu (2023) reports that the manipulation of ballots has given way to material and cash incentives and the trades of the Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) and their accompanying Voter Identification Number (VIN). This was openly displayed in 2022 governorship elections in Ekiti and Osun states and the voters were convinced by party agents with inducement offers ranging



from N3,000.00 and above. During 2015 and 2019 general elections, vote trading was carried out with hasty abandon by political parties, and in some cases, with the active participation of electoral officials and security agents. These electoral compromises had resulted in a number of people losing their lives and property. Ojo (2023) while citing Hassan, Director for Democracy and Development read the preliminary report of the Centre on the 2023 general elections on March 18 reported data from 1,500 observers deployed across the country showed there were more cases of vote-trading during the governorship election compared to the presidential poll of February 25. The reality reflected across all six geopolitical zones.

In the North-West, observers in all seven states reported increased reports of vote trading, primarily by political party agents. Money was used alongside other materials such as food items, wrappers and ‘credit voucher,’ and those items would be redeemed after the results. Similarly, in the North-East, political party agents in Taraba infiltrated queues, pretended to be voters and used the chance to offer cash for votes. In the South-East, there were reports of APGA and LP party agents using materials, phones and other souvenirs to entice voters in Anambra State. In the South-South, multiple states reported desire for voters to show proof of their votes before being paid, with party agents reportedly compiling a list of their voters in Esan Central LGA, Edo State.” In addition, The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission stated that four vote traders were arrested in Sokoto and Katsina states during the governorship and houses of assembly elections on Saturday, March 18, 2023 while on February 25 about nine persons for trading vote in Osun, Ondo, Borno, Akwa Ibom and Sokoto states during the presidential and National Assembly Elections were apprehended.

Conclusion

The paper has examined the cashless policy and vote-trading and its negative impacts during the 2023 presidential general elections in the country. It is revealed from the analysis that the cashless policy among others was intended to reasonably eliminate vote trading and other forms of financial inducement to the voters, INEC’s workers and election entrepreneurs’ that always bent on rigging the election. The policy was against vote buying and corruption of the electoral process, in addition to the introduction of BVAS and INEC determination to conduct a free and



fair election, the opening for rigging became very slim. However, while the policy of redesigned naira notes was able to reduce the use of cash by anxious politicians and their representatives to buy votes, the analysis revealed that other inventive means of vote trading was devised to persuade voters

The investigation also revealed that any polity where voters are not completely shielded from outside forces, most especially money, they cannot elect freely. Collaborating with Andreas cited in Ojo, 2006 and Ovwasa, 2014) that “if power and money determines electoral choices, constitutional guarantees of democratic freedom and equality turn into dead letters” such development always hinders good governance. Finally, the implementation of the policy options as suggested in this paper, will help to reduce the negative influence of money politics and vote-trading on good governance in Nigeria as practiced globally.

Recommendations

There is the need for more voters’ education and sensitisation awareness of citizens about the malpractice of vote trading. It should be noted that the use of enticements to purchase votes, the authority of the ordinary Nigerian is slowly handed over to the rich political elites to decide who wins an election in the country.

Poverty reduction should be seen as a strategy to reduce vote trading. There is a positive correlation between money and voters decision, hence government should as a matter of necessity reduce poverty in the system. The Nigerian economy need to be improved and to empower the citizen economically. This is necessary because when poverty is reduced the electorates can then make independent electoral choices in voting for credible politicians rather than inept but money spending politicians.

The INEC and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC) should develop a deliberate co-operative framework for active monitoring of political parties’ campaign finances in order to checkmate electoral fraud which includes vote trading. INEC should develop a strategy by which secrecy can be enhanced during elections.



Government should initiate programmes that can change the value system of the citizens and encourage issue-based campaigns during the elections that will hold the political leaders accountable of their electoral promises.

Government must have the political will to in still stiff punishment on any individuals or group of persons found involving in the act of vote buying. In short the war against vote trading in the nation would be fruitful if the government in power do not emerge through any form of corruption.

Finally, future and genuine democratic rule are largely depend on how the numerous stakeholders such as the political elites, political parties, the electorates, government officials and institutions, the non –government organisations, the civil society and the media are willing to determine it. .

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