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The Jigawa Journal of Politics (JJP), a biannual peer review publication of the Department of Political Science, Federal University Dutse. The journal contains well-researched article written from a political Science perspective or show relevance to contemporary politics in Nigeria, Africa and the entire globe.

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1. An article submitted for publication must have an abstract of not more than 250 words, 5 key words, and must be typed in Times News Roman with 12 font size and double line spacing. It should not exceed 20 pages (A4).
2. Cover page must contain title, full name (s) institutional affiliation, telephone number (s) postal and email addresses of the author(s).
3. Referencing style must be APA 6th Edition, papers with different referencing style will not be considered.
4. Articles submitted for publication must be original and should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.
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The Implications of Vote Buying on Government Legitimacy: An Insight from the Ekiti State 2018 Gubernatorial Election

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Abstract

Election period is a defining moment in any democratic system. It provides the platform for people's participation in politics especially during the period of recruitment of political office holders. However, the desperate tendencies of average politicians to win electoral contest usually make electioneering periods to be tense with violence and other anti-social activities. More recently, politicians have resorted to the use of money to induce voters in their desperate bid to win election at all cost which consequently gives popularity to the concept of vote buying in Nigerian politics. This trend seems to pose a great threat to democratic survival in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that this paper will attempt to examine the implications of vote buying on government legitimacy with insight from the recently concluded 2018 gubernatorial election in Ekiti state. The specific objective of the paper is to develop an early-warning mechanism to neutralize the threat which vote buying can pose to government legitimacy in the wake of the forthcoming 2019 general elections. In doing these, the paper will adopt qualitative research design, with data to be gathered from secondary sources and analyzed using thematic analytical method. The paper will recommend implementable alternative solutions that could mitigate the challenges of vote buying in Nigeria's electoral politics.

Keywords: Vote buying, money politics, moneybags, political parties, vote selling and legitimate government

Introduction

Democracy and election are intertwined. Election has become a cornerstone for democratic sustenance, if it is free, fair and credible. It is the most acceptable form of transforming a democratic government from one civilian to the other worldwide. For any government to be considered legitimate, the mandate of the people in an election must prevail. One of the cardinal principles of a democratic system is when the citizens are fully involved in decision making of the state through representative government. In democratic system, politics is all about struggle for power. The struggle usually arises among political actors, who have the sole aim of winning and controlling the steering wheel of the government, in order to allocate the resources for the society. As affirmed by Davies (2014:419) that politics in all ramifications is connected with the struggle for power among political class or actors who pursue different desires on public matters. The sole interest of who emerged the mantle of leadership is to authoritatively allocate values, including setting of the economic,

social and political agenda for the state. The scholar lamented further, that the actors desire to acquire political power by all means at all cost, is not only to secure for themselves materials needs, safety and security, but also to dominate the citizens.

Meanwhile, it has become an incontrovertible fact, that elections are a big issues in Nigeria. This is because stakes are always very high with all the parties involved, that is, the candidates, and political parties are keenly interested in winning elections by all means at all cost. Preclude to 2007 general elections in Nigeria, the polity became so intense, to the extent that the former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo lamented, that the election would be do-or-die affair for the People's Democratic Party (PDP), (Korikye, 2011:14). While money and violence played dominant role in the 2007 presidential election that ushered in Late President Yar'adua and Good Luck Jonathan respectively. In statement credited to one-time Deputy Premier of the Western region of Nigeria, Chief Adetokunbo Fani-Kayode that "whether you vote for us or not we remain in power"(Dudley, 1973 cited in Kimse,2019). The Scholar, argued further that the statement shows that elections in Nigeria, are devoid of social contract and choice and therefore, leaders can do what they like while the electorates are at the mercy of a leadership whose human remains largely untamed. By implication, the leaders do not have respect for those they are representing or the electorates.

However, the phenomenon of money politics is not new to Nigeria's elbow politics. It started since Nigeria's second republic 1979 to 1983, to the moribund third republic (1992). Since Nigeria's returned to democratic rule in 1999 Political parties, politicians and money bags have taken vote buying and selling as a trade for attaining political offices, profit making, continue participation and relevance in electoral politics in Nigeria. It has become a yardstick to determine who participate in electoral politics. Money drowns votes and voices in Nigeria, as political patrons overtly lamented, on their sponsoring elections for their clients and ensuring their victory in the election through vote buying. Business men and women are not left out in the illegitimate use of money for political influence. Citing the example from the interview conducted with Gen. T. Y Danjuma, who confessed that he helped to financed President Olusegun Obasanjo's first term election. According to him, I raised \$7million slightly more than half of it came from my business associates. (Adetula, 2008).

Corroborating the above assertion Davies (2014) opines that:

Paradoxically, money itself has become a dominant factor not only in all economic affairs but also in deciding issues in the political and social arena, money seems to have been playing a leading role in the political process in most countries, and in Nigeria politics. It even appears to be so dominant in the electoral process to such an extent that the word money politics with a pejorative connotation had crept into the country's political lexicon. (Davies, 2014).

Admittedly, the practice has become so worrisome, to the extent, that any political office seeker in Nigeria, that is not financially buoyant to compete in an election, must have to seek for a back-up from money bags tied to signing a bond both physically and spiritually, on the account, that his victory in the election must be based on returns, both in cash and in kind. The arrangement started from the purchase of nomination forms, election campaign and finally during the elections. The fact remains, that, money is stronghold in any democratic polity, as it is needed to fund the party activities such as printing of Posters, Bill boards, Placards, Campaign activities and host of other. In Nigeria today, money politics, vote buying and selling, including the practice of godfatherism has been described as fraudulent electoral behavior of Politicians, Political parties and Voters (Adetula and Ezekiel, 2009). Indeed, for people to secure good governance in democratic society, there is need for to transfer their mandate to others without necessarily expecting a pay back on cash or negotiating for individual recompense from the elected political office holders.

Obviously, the phenomenon of vote trading has become a dominant feature of Nigeria political process. The financial inducement of voters, since Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999, the practice has continue aggravate series of anti-democratic activities, such Political thuggery, Kidnapping of the Politicians, killing of the political opponents by power-hunger politicians or dodgy politicians. There has been upsurge fears that the menace may not only impede franchise of the electorates, but has continue to imperil the enthronement of legitimate government, retarding the political and economic growth of Nigeria, encouraging corruption, and political violence, infrastructural decay, waste of public resources, encouraging criminal politics among others.

Conceptualising Vote Buiying, Money Bag Politics and Patron-Client Relations

Scholars such as (Adetula, 2008, Ayoade, 2008, Omotola, 2006, Animashaun, 2016, Ovwasa, 2014, Davies, 2014, Walecki, 2006, Ojo, 2006 among others) have written on money politics, money bag and patron client relations in Nigerian polities. Because of the unacceptable universal definition of the concepts, the above scholars among others have come up with the conceptual clarification of the above concepts.

Monetization of politics in Nigeria today is surging upwards. It is an instrument used by the politician to induce their supporters or electorates in order to secure victory in an election. With the peculiar nature of Nigerian Politics, the policy has been conceptualized as cash and carry politics (Akogun, 2015). In this situation the highest bidder emerged as a winner in an election. that is to say, the contenders for a political office negotiate with the electorate, to sway their support. Any candidate who induced the voters with huge amount carries the day. On this platform, the voters, does not vote in accordance with their wishes or choice but vote for money. Admittedly, voters are not always persuaded to vote for the candidates of their choice but on the force of money that has changed hands (Ovwasa 2014). The policy of money politics and vote

buying is usually a contract agreement between the would be political office seekers and the electorate, who are ever ready to purchase and to sell at a negotiated amount.

By extension, Abdulrahman, Danladi, and Danni, (2016) argues, that vote buying, is a situation whereby electorates conscience and views are influenced to the advantage of parties' candidates in an election with the use of money to sway the support of the electorates. Parties and candidates buy votes by offering some benefits to the electorates. Candidates may generally aspire to sway political support at the ballot box in accordance with the policy of market exchange (Bettsech and Akpoo, 2015). In actual sense, of it, candidates and parties, whose victory is not certain in an election, adopt policy of vote buying to secure their position in an election. Not only that, they induce the followers to sustain their relevance in the party, Adetula(2009) asserts, when a candidate is sure of losing an election, his or her members or followers votes are trade for position in the regimes of the winners. The implications of this according to the scholar, the greatest losers are the citizens whose civic rights or franchise are hijacked and subverted as a result of money that play the leading role instead of the wishes of the masses. Ojo (2008) observes, that money politics is synonymous to vote buying and selling. From one perspective, vote buying details, the arrangement made by politicians, parties and candidates, during election period (Campaign, and election days) to pay the voters or electorates to vote for a party candidate even though, the candidate is not their choice. The truth is that, all leading parties, including the ruling party all engage in vote buying and selling. In the view of Akume, the National Publicity Secretary of the Abundant Renewal Party (ANRP) quoted in premium times, that:

Elections for sale where the highest bidder carries the day are akin to a death knell on our democracy. What we have presently is democracy for sale - a democracy that perpetuates ignorance, poverty, violence and underdevelopment. The ugly trend is entrenching the practice of corrupting the system to earn illicit money in order to buy votes from an impoverished and psychologically change populace. This leads to politicians offering bad governance-gaining illicit wealth in the process and repeating tanghe cycle (Premium Times 2018, cited in Cletus, 2018).

It is altruism, that vote buying and selling is still common to Nigeria's electoral system. The practice can be likened to high level of poverty, corruption, high level of illiteracy and low level of political awareness in Nigeria. It is undebatable fact, that a similar practice is obtainable in other part of the world where democracy is being practice, but it differs in magnitude and manifestation from one country to the other. Adetula (2008) corroborated, the way an electoral system operates determines the degree of people's or masses confidence and support for the democratic system itself. Weak structures and ineffective operations of legal framework in Nigeria is one of the constitute factor to the excessive use of money to induce the electorates during elections in Nigeria. In another words, Patron-Client relations is another term that is

inseparable from money politics and vote buying. Max Weber, (1979) cited in Kevin (2013) described patron-clients relations as patrimonialism, when he defines it as a system of which the power relations between the ruler and ruled be it political or administrative, are personal relations. The policy kg personal relations KS based on principle of reciprocity, Hyden, (2006) amplify that:

People invest in social obligations to create interdependence, some of which may load a role of insurance over the long run. In this system, people share wealth with others - generosity is highly regarded sharing wealth cements the bonds of personal relations and create future obligation for the recipients. Therefore access to power has come to involve an obligation to redistribute, to exchange one's benefits but magnified by propensity for immediate consumption, which has put pressure on those with access to state resources. Hyden, 2006 cited in Kevin. 2013).

Following the above line of argument, Therkilden (2005) argues that patrons are individuals that occupy political office and have access to public fund, use such resources to sustain themselves in power. They seized the advantage of being in power to build, allowing them to perpetuate themselves in power. This is mostly practicable in an environment, where poverty, deprivation, disempowerment, oppression and exclusion are the lots of the majority. In such an environment, leaders who provide succor to the masses, either in terms of cash or kind, becomes a leader or godfather. (Beyer, 1999: Jones, 2001 cited in Animasawun, 2016). It is a settled fact that because of the peculiar nature of the Nigerian economy, especially with high level of poverty and penury, any individual who succeeded in bailing the masses out of their predicament or provide them with their daily bread becomes an automatic leader or personality. Better still a messiah that deserve to be worship.

Animasawun (2016) argues further that a Patron-Client relation is a situation where the patron placed gifts to the clients or masses, and in return the recipient of the gifts pay back in vote offering. Also related to that, is Money Bag. Ayoade (2008) described money bags as politicians who invest or commit their money into the political process of a country in order to hijack political positions and decisions. The motive of money bag politicians in deployment of their resources into the politics is to get a stronghold on the country's political landscape. Their paramount intention is to dominate the party machinery and ensure that their decisions are superior. In fact, they are mostly interested in financing a ruling or popular party where they could also influence the decision of the government. The scholar states clearly, the dichotomy between money bag and godfatherism, which many have been used interchangeably. He asserted that 'money bag' engage in the business of politics with the sole aim of deriving personal benefit, while political godfather is selfish and deceptively philanthropic working for their godsons, sometimes for exaggerated political recompense (Ayoade, 2008). Following this assertion, the stark reality, is that both money bag and political godfathers are working towards the same goals. The

expectation of both in deployment of their resources into politics is for recompense either in cash or in kinds and also influence the party's decisions.

One of the highly point to be noted, is that politicians or those who aspire to occupy one office or the other in a democratic State, could only get there by means of periodic election, which must be free, fair, credible and transparent. But in Nigeria, political office seekers adopt all means in order to secure and retain. Their political mandate which why elections in Nigeria have been marked by widespread of irregularities especially vote buying and selling before and during election period in the Country. This menace has been one of the root causes of the bloody elections or violence in Nigeria. This because the dodgy politician are ever ready to manipulate the voters choice and ensure they encourage strong voter participation in their interest.

According to Dubey (1973 Cited Kunse, 2019). It is the interest of psychopathic and sociopathic group of politician that Nigeria election should remain flawed, since these groups of people benefit from the flawed elections. The scholar stressed further, that elections are thus like two-edged swords; an ideal state, they serve the interest of the populace while in a flawed state, it serves the interest of those capable of subverting the electoral process.

The shortest cut to affiance and influence and influence is through politics. Politics means money and money means politics. To get politics, there is always or price..... To be a member of the Government party means open avenue to Government patronage, contract deals and the party (and the individual members naturally uses the same governmental machinery to stay in power. The leadership becomes a self-recruiting oligarchy – and no self recruiting oligarchy has been known to tolerate opposition to itself (Dudley, 1973 cited in Kimse, 2018).

Monetization of Electoral Politics: Nigeria in Perspective

Money politics, vote buying and patron-clients relation is becoming a common practice to the extent that the policy has reach a zenith in Nigeria and other Africa countries. Though, it is common to developing and developed countries of the world. To be sure, the practice becomes glaring in the 19th and 20th century in England, France among other countries. The proposition of vote trading in Nigeria politics landscape has come of age. It is a practice that does not stop during election period, but commence during and before electioneering campaign. It is observed that because of high level of poverty and penury coped with inability of Nigerian politicians to meet up with the demand of the citizens they resort to vote trading during electioneering campaigns and election period to sway the support of the electorates. I strongly argue that it is poor understanding coped with poverty on the part of Nigeria citizens that made the electorates trade their vote with token and miserable material gifts. Whatever is pushed out by the politician during elections is always accepted

without recourse to previous pains, neglects and oppression the people suffered in the hands of the ruling party.

Politics before Nigeria's independence centered around significant issues. The issues were built by the Nationalist towards self –government. Political parties and Candidates of this era were committed to the aspiration of the Nationalist by ensuring achievement of their targeted goals. The situation took another dimension since second republic to the present fourth republic in Nigeria. Currently, electoral politics in Nigeria could be described as what Sohner (1973) referred to as, Mothers' milk of politics, which gladiators must drink for them to remain in the business of politics. Politics in Nigeria, since second republic to date has been tied to "Chop and Go", which is about looting and making money (Onapajo, Francis and Okeke, 2015). Though the level of political awareness was low, which also discourage political participation, compare to what was obtainable in the moribund third republic (1993). The situation was tensed in 1993. Huge amount of money was invested as the contest was between two parties (SDP and NRC). And two powerful business tycoons for the presidential seat. Though the situation of money politics permeated every facets of electoral process in the third republic, Abdulrahman, Danladi et'al (2016) views money politics and vote buying in 1993 as a situation that was worse, as it took every form root in the political activities of contestants. Excessive use of money was demonstrated during the parties' primaries and during presidential election in 1993. Nwosu (1996) corroborated the assertion, that the use of money before and during election was so pervasive to the extent that a candidate who lost out claimed that money paid to party functionaries, who were demanding and negotiating the amount of money to be given to them for payment to win offices and others and how votes will be allocated to aspirants (Nwosu, 1996).

Admittedly, most of the contestants, under the platform of various parties, that is SDP & NRC who step down during the party primaries, demanded for compensations and refund for the payment of their forms and other expenses. Apparently the policy of money politics and vote buying has reached it zenith since the inception of the fourth republic in 1999. The situation became more pronounced and glaring during the 2003 civilian transition. Though, because of the long period of military in power coped with the high expectation of Nigerians awaiting the return to civil rule, and the monitoring or the conduct of the election by the military regime of Abubakar Abdulsalam, the then Head of State, much money was not committed into 1999 electioneering campaign and election period. Meanwhile, in 2003, vote trading becomes upsurge. As the stake was so high, that the president chief Olusegun Obasanjo and his vice president Abubakar Atiku under the same party PDP were locking horns. Atiku was so ambitious to take over from his boss Olusegun Obasanjo. Though with the help of federal might and access to state resources Obasanjo was fortunate to subdue his seating vice president Atiku Abubakar using money, lobbying the National Assembly members and the party stakeholders. To be sure, their second term in office as

president and vice president the going between the duos was not so smooth. In fact, at the expiration of their second term Atiku left PDP to form ACN.

It is suffice to note that the situation becomes worst in 2007. The contest became higher that all parties, candidates and the electorates were keenly interested in the 2007 general elections. All the parties involved deployed all means to sway electorates, to ensure their electoral victory in the election. As a matter of fact, enormous money was invested in 2007 elections, which paved way for the victory of PDP both at the federal level and the states level. Some of the States controlled by the oppositions before the 2007 elections were captured by the PDP in 2007 elections especially the states in the south west except Lagos state that was unable to be capture by PDP, with the aid of money politics and vote buying. Ojo (2008) corroborate the assertion that in the 2003 civilian to civilian transition programme, was a matter of money to buy vote. Politicians were spending recklessly that everyone knew that politics had become a matter of money.

To be sure, the former President, of Nigeria in the fourth republic, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, cry out in 2013 that:

With so much resources being deployed to capture elective offices it is not difficult to see the correlation between politics and the potential for high level corruption The greatest losers are the ordinary people, those voter whose faith and investment in the system are hijacked and subverted because money (sic) of money, not their will, are made the determining factor in election. Can we not move from politics of money and materialism to politics of ideas, issues and development (Adetula2008).

Be that as it may, Chief Obasanjo further examined the cost of conducting election in Nigeria and lamented that;

I have said that we prepared for elections as if we are going to war and I can state without hesitation, drawing from my previous life, that the parties and candidates spend during last elections, more than would have been needed to fight successful war. The will of the people cannot find expression and flourish in the face of so much money directed solely at achieving victory. Elective offices becomes mere commodities to be purchased by the highest bidder, and those who literally invest merely to see it as an avenue to recoup and make profit ..Politics becomes business mainly to divert public funds from the crying needs of our people for real development in their lives(Adetula, 2008)'

The open secret is that, since the inception of fourth republic, with the elections conducted in 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 in Nigeria, were characterized with the misuse of money to buy votes. The practice of ballot box snatching, and intimidation

of voters during election period, has reduced to certain stage. The common practices, which have been affecting good governance in Nigeria, is the phenomenon of money politics and vote buying. In fact, desperate, politicians, parties, candidates and money bags have taken the policy as means of their survival, and relevance in politics.

In a statement credited to one-time Deputy Premier of the Western region of Nigeria Chief Remi Adetokunbo Fami-Kayode that “whether you volte for us or not, we will remain in power” (Dudley, 1973 Cited Kinse, 2019). The statement shows that elections in Nigeria are devoid of social contract and choice and therefore, leaders can do what they like while the electorate are at the mercy of a leadership whose human nature remains largely untamed.

Saliu (2014) lamented, that the political combatants are always out to win the vicious political battles by resorting to using all manners of inducements to win their essential egoistic battles. In achieving this they adopted the strategy of polarizing the citizens into two and this made the citizens to be handicapped in their struggle towards development of the State.

Interrogating the Incidence of Vote Buying in 2018 Ekiti Gubernatorial Election

Undoubtedly, the founding pillars of any democratic political system, whether considered fragile or established, remain elections. (Mestin, 2008 cited in Kimse, 2019). In ensuring good governance in any democratic society, there is need for people to transfer or give their mandate to others without necessarily expecting a pay back on cash or negotiation for cash, recompense from the elected officers. Election has been described as a competitive process which involve two or more people, who are vying or seeking to control both the political and economic power with legitimate support of the people who are qualify to elect their representative among the contending candidates. (Abdulrahman, Danladi et'al, 2016). The above assertion was corroborated by peter and Obi (2014), that elections are platform for the celebration of fundamental human right to vote and be voted for in an election.

However, considering the mean and strategies by the politicians, especially the policy of inducing the electorate to sway their support, through the use of vote trading, infringed upon the right of the citizens. Election period in Nigeria becomes a forum where candidates, parties and electorates enter into robust transaction. The candidates persuade the electorates to vote against their wish with the use of money. Vote trading policy target either the electoral choices or electoral participation. The policy is targeted to influence an individual to vote in a certain way or vote or not to vote in the first place (Bectseh and Akpoo, 2005).

Consequently, due to high level of poverty and unemployment rate in Nigeria, the practice have encourage voters or turnout in an election. However, in regardless or whichever, angle individual had perceived the use of money in politics as an integral feature of virtually all the electoral processes be it in Nigeria or worldwide, the fact

remains, that lack of strong legislature to control the excessive spending or election finance, has continue to upset the practice worldwide. As observed by Bawa(2014) absent of effective institutions to check against the illegal use of money during election period especially in Nigeria has led to undermine citizens access to the political process, affording rich and powerful individuals, corporations and big businesses to wrest political influence out of the hands of the citizens. Better still hijacked the electoral process from the common masses.

In the recent years, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has left no stone unturned to improve in the conduct of elections in Nigeria.

Since 2011, 2015 and 2018. Indeed, the conduct of 2011 and 2015 general elections in Nigeria marked a watershed in election administration.

The international observers and domestic observers gave a passed mark to the INEC on the conduct of 2011 general elections and in 2015. There was a tremendous improvement on the conduct of the election. Building up to 2011 general elections, some of the steps taken by the INEC to improve the electoral process was the recruitment of Corp members as poll workers to preside over the elections. Introduction of Biometric permanent voters cards(PVCs) to scan voters card and validate finger prints among others became part of the strong steps put in place by INEC to improve on Election Management in Nigeria(NDI, 2018).

In 2015 there was significant improvement in the conduct of the general elections in Nigeria by INEC. To be sure, the incumbent president of the country in person of Goodluck Jonathan concede to the defeat by Muhammadu Buhari. During this period most of the seating governors, National Assembly members lost their seats to opposition parties. This is in contrast to what was obtainable in the previous years.

However, there was anticipation by Nigerians that 2019 general elections would see further improvements in the electoral landscape of Nigeria. Although there was a widespread desire too strengthen the democratic culture in Nigeria, but many Nigerians were worried about the over-personalization of politics and use of money to sway the electorates in the elections (NDI, 2018). Meanwhile, research shows that vote buying in an election does not just occur, sometimes electorates demand for the incentive from politicians and sometimes, politicians also give to the electorates from their own will (Frank, Shirley and Isaac, 2018). The scholars further cited the instance in Ghana, where a group of people was compelled to ask or request for "chop money" from a visitor (candidate) or someone who visited them and declares his/her ambition and ask for their support.

In the build up to 2019 general elections in Nigeria, th electorates were desperate and ever ready to see another great improvement in their democracy. However, two states gubernatorial election were penciled down to serve as a litmus test for INEC. The states were Ekiti State and Osun State. Aside from Nigerians who build confidence in

INEC, the international community was also keenly interested in the peaceful and transparent outcome of the elections.

In this paper, our departure point is EKITI 2018 gubernatorial election. For the 2018 gubernatorial election in Ekiti state, the two major contending parties were Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress (APC). Though, other parties includes: Labour Party (LP) AD, PPA, YDP, ADP, APDA, KOWA, GPN, NPC, PANDEL, PDC, and MPN among others. The eligible citizens of Ekiti state were politically active during the election period because of their keen interest and opportunity it provides for the politics. They demonstrate keen interest in who their next state governor becomes in 2018, and state assembly members (state Law makers) and other elective position in the state (YIAGA, Africa Initiative, 2018).

Politically speaking, these was so intense, as the election was seen to be a contest between the incumbent government Ayo Fayose, who was deeply interested in the candidature of Prof Kolapo his deputy Governor to succeed him in the election and a seating Minister Dr. Kayode Fayemi. Prof Fayemi contest under the platform of All Progressive Congress (APC). Because of the peculiar nature of Nigeria politics, the election became litmus test for 2019 general elections, couple with the high expectation of the Ekiti state indigene in changing of their government machineries. To attain this thirty thousand policemen, Nineteen thousand Nine hundred and Ninety-Seven NSCDC personnel were deployed to monitor the election. Not only that, surveillance vehicles and sniffer dogs and money soldiers were equally deployed as one would expect that the election would be free, fair and credible (Cletus, 2018).

The open secret of Ekiti state 2018 poll was that of Fayose who was struggling rounding up his second tenure of office was strongly determined to hand over power to his deputy professor Kolapo Olusola, the situation degenerated into serious crisis within PDP. The political battle caused severe disaffection within the party leaders and the members. This decision was publicly challenged by Chief Adeyeye one of the strongest party leader. This eventual led to defection of these leaders to APC as Fayose refused to bulge in his determination to ensure power shift or U-turn in his decision (Center for Democracy and Development, 2018). All Progressive Congress was also battling with its challenges over who gets the ticket of the party in Ekiti.

Ekiti state 2018 polls, witnessed an unprecedented level of vote trading, a trend which is fast becoming a norm in Nigeria electoral practice. Despite the over bearing presence of security operatives to curb vote buying and selling, the phenomenon still take the centre stage in Ekiti state gubernatorial polls, with observers reporting the dolling out of cash to voters (Center for Democracy and Development 2018, cited in Premium Times, 2018).

The reporter cited the example of a party agent who was caught on video by PTCIJ and CDD's observer sharing five thousand naira (#5000) to voters in Poll 012 Igbemo Ward of Irepodun-Ifelodun L.G.A of Ekiti State.

Another party agent in ward C, Olanrewaju, Poll 16 was reported dishing out cash to voters whom already cast their votes.(CDD;2018). The above assertion was affirmed by Cletus (2018) that in Ekiti state election voters were paid as high as ten thousand naira (#10 000). The scholar quoted an aggrieved electorate as saying "PDP middlemen are distributing #3000 instead of #5 000"(Pulse, 2018 cited in Cletus, 2018). Meanwhile the incumbent governor Ayodele Fayose was reported to have been crediting workers account with the sum of #3000 ahead of the election. Thus, the workers raised alarm that instead of payment of their salary and arrears, the governor made part payment of salary and also credit their account with #3000 as an advance gift for their cooperation and support in 2018 gubernatorial election in the state.

In another dimension on Ekiti state 2018 gubernatorial election, another international community affirmed that, voter turn-out in Ekiti 2018 election was impressive. However, the election was characterized by brazen and scandalous high level of vote buying and selling by agents of political parties and voters. To be sure they called it "Operation See and buy" (Centre for Transparency Advocacy, 2018).

Studies from various observers, scholars, and thinkers on the issue of Cash-for-vote in Ekiti state 2018 elections shows that there was free flow of Cash-for-Vote in Ekiti State election in 2018, despite the deployment of heavy Security Personnel to Curb all forms of election malpractice.

To remove all form of doubt on vote buying and selling in Ekiti State 2018 investigation stated, that purchases of votes were going on, in presence of police and other security agencies, all kept safe distance from where the transaction was carried out (Yiaga Africa Initiative, 2008). It is also important to note that, not only cash was used to purchase votes, but other valuable items such Television sets, handset (GSM) among others were distributed to the electorates. Another Yoruba terms was used to buy and sell votes "Dibo Ko Se be" means Vote and make a pot of Soup. In addition, a voter was interrogated by observer, on why he collected money from politician he lamented that "why I no go collect money, I did ooo. If you no collect your dues now, they no go know(sic) No you when they get to office" (Yiaga Africa Initiative, 2018).

A cursory look at the 2018 Ekiti State gubernatorial election result would give us an in-depth understanding of the outcome of the election. The table below shows the result of 2018 gubernatorial election in Ekiti State.

S/N	L.G.A's	All Progressive Congress (APC)	Peoples Democratic Party(PDP)
1	Oye	14, 995	11, 271
2	Ilejemeje	4, 153	3, 937

3	Irepodun	13, 869	11, 456
4	Moba	11, 837	8,520
5	Ijero	14, 192	11, 077
6	Gbonyin	11, 498	8,027
7	Emure	7, 048	7, 121
8	Ikere	11, 515	17, 183
9	Ekiti West	12, 648	10, 137
10	Ido Osi	12, 342	11, 145
11	Ikole	14, 522	13, 961
12	Ise/Orun	11, 001	6,297
13	Ekiti East	12, 778	11, 564
14	Ekiti Southwest	11, 015	8, 423
15	Ado Ekiti	28, 111	32,810
	Grand Total	197, 459	178, 121
Total Registered Voters		909,585	
Accredited		405, 861	
Total Valid Votes		384,594	
Rejected Votes		403, 451	
Total Votes		403, 451	

Sources: This Day Newspaper, (2018 July 15). Ekiti State Gubernatorial Election Final Result. Retrieved April 30, 2019, from This Day Newspaper: <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018-ekiti-state-gubernatorial-election-final-result/>

Finding shows that after the announcement or the declaration of results by the INEC, Several video clips were released showing, how cash was exchange between party Agents, Candidates and Electorates.

Meanwhile several Factors were highlight to have accounted for vote trading in Ekiti State 2018 elections among these are:

- ✓ Poverty and huger
- ✓ Non payment of Workers Salaries, Pension and allowances.
- ✓ Failure of Political office holders to fulfill Previous campaign promises.
- ✓ Neglect of rural communities in the even distribution of Infrastructural Facilities
- ✓ Improved Checks and balances in the electoral process.
- ✓ Corrupt Leadership
- ✓ Greed on the part of the politicians. (Yiaga Africa Initiative, 2018).

Its Implications for Government Legitimacy

The policy of cash for vote has become an impediment to good governance and threat to legitimate government in Nigeria electoral process. The policy has become so

rampant to the extent the citizens especially the poor ones rely heavily on cash for voting during elections. The implications are among others

Unaccountability and responsibility: The manifestation for vote trading in Ekiti state and the entire country undermine the political legitimacy and make nonsense of the country's democracy. As this have been breeding unaccountability and irresponsible government. Thus, voters may not have say in a government they had trade their right for cash. The masses will not have the moral ground to demand for good governance from elected leaders (Cletus, 2018).

The ugly trend, also affect the credibility of elections. It undermine, the entire electoral process as both the electoral umpire, Security agents among others compromised their duties during the election. All the party involved in 2018 gubernatorial election in Ekiti state, were reported to have involved in vote buying. Research shows that, despite the heavy number of Security agents personnel deployed to the state to monitor elections there was exchange of cash for vote in presence of security agents. Though, attempt were made by some security operatives in some polling units to curb vote buying and selling (Centre for Democracy and Development, 2018). The agreement by the federal government in deploying every security personnel was to safeguard the electorate but the position was criticized that the move was to facilitate rigging in favour of APC candidate, Kayode Fayemi.

The implication is that, unpopular candidates always emerged as winner and therefore becomes responsive to their godfathers, who sponsor their electoral victory.

Another notable implication of vote buying for legitimate government in Ekiti state, is that against all the odds, it trigger corruption by the politicians, who had invested heavily in the election. Once they have been elected into the office, the first thing is to get back all the money invested during electioneering campaign and election. And also fulfill their agreements with their godfathers, based on cash and kinds. Therefore leading to the abuse of State resources. It promotes systemic poverty; the high prevalence of vote trading or money politics in Ekiti State, has been becoming alarming. The situation has been tie to poor implementation of economic policies of the State, Sit-tight Syndrome, greediness on the part of the political leaders in the State and attempt by the political actors in the various political parties within and outside the State to protect their interests, politically has made money politics to gain moral ground in the State by implication, the masses are always at receiving and, therefore impeding the development of both human and material resources of the State.

Docility in taking leaders to task: it is a known fact, that he who – pays-the-pie. Pier dictate the time. The implication of this is that sometimes, whatever the leaders in the State pushed out, the people accept it without objection. The culture of silence has denied our politics robust engagement and that has made the actors to show less

concern for transparency and active participation of people in the policy making process (Salihu, 2014).

The practice has contributed not in small measure to the weakness of institution of government. Especially, the Legislature in the State. The House of Assembly in the State has been turn to robber stamp. Since they receive directives from their godfathers. Thus, retarding the performance of not only the Legislature, but that of Executive arm in the State. Since the two arms are products of politicians. Therefore rendering the legislature to becomes godfathers' assembly, rather than people's parliament.

Conclusion

Ekiti state 2018 gubernatorial election, despite the high level of vote trading in the election with peoples anticipation that the election might result to violence, yet the election was generally peaceful. Surprisingly, INEC was highly commended for their improvement in the management of the election. It is sadden, that despite the deployment of heavy security personnel to monitor and curb all forms of election foot on rigging and vote buying and selling, the security agencies were reported to have compromised their duties, by folding their arms watching the ugly cash to vote policy.

From the foregoing, the research recommends that security agencies should live up to the task and abide by electoral law in the discharge of their duties in the future elections. Independent National electoral Commission (INEC) should also improve on the areas, where lapses were discovered during Ekiti State 2018 election. The research also suggested that funds earmark for election activities should be approved without much ado by both the National Assembly and Executive arm of government. Electorates should be adequately educated on the danger attached to vote buying policy. The government should provide employment or job opportunities for the foot soldiers and unemployed graduates as an idle hand they said is the devil's workshop.

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