

## VOTERS' EDUCATION AND CREDIBLE ELECTION IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

**Saheed Olasunkanmi ODUOLA**

Obafemi Awolowo University, Faculty of Administration, Department of Local Government Studies, Ile-Ife, Osun State,

**Hayatullah Boladale HASSAN**

Obafemi Awolowo University, Faculty of Administration, Department of Public Administration, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

**Banna SAWANEH**

University of The Gambia, School of Business and Public Administration, MDI Campus, Gambia

---

### ABSTRACT

*Following the transition from military dictatorship to democracy, the Nigerian-state has suffered several electoral misconducts since 1999. In an attempt to stop this ugly trend, voters' education and effective electoral institution remain integral to a successful conduct of the electoral process especially, in a bid to grow and sustain the democratic process in Nigeria. Albeit, voters' education has been acknowledged as a means of sanitising as well as educating citizens on democratic principles. However, the just concluded 2019 elections were visibly marred by violence, vote buying, logistics and operational debacles and massive rigging. Therefore, this paper examined the import of voters' education in credible elections and its attendant issues and challenges in Nigeria. The study is however sourced predominantly from secondary sources of data. It concluded by recognising the need for viable or credible electoral system as well as the inauguration of Electoral Crime Commission charged with the prosecution of electoral offenders especially regarding vote buying.*

**Keywords:** *Voters Education; Credible Election; Electoral Institution; Electoral Malpractices; Democratic principles*

### INTRODUCTION

The transitions from military dictatorship to democracy within the Nigerian-state have been plagued with various electoral misconducts since 1999. Instances of 1999-2003, 2003-2007, 2007-2011, 2011-2015, and 2015-2019 proved not to be sufficient for the nation's achievement of best electioneering process (Moshood, 2019). Despite previous elections marred by violence, electoral malpractices, and rejection of results by the masses, the Nigerian state is yet to learn from past mistakes as manifest in the myriad challenges posed by the just concluded 2019

general elections with instances of mass rigging, ballot box snatching, vote buying or trading and thuggery as major highlights (Baiyewu & Adesomoju, 2019). Also, the election did not influence existing lapses and conventions of delay, postponement or outright cancellation of election schedule, hence, the shift from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2019 as a result of logistics and operational failure.

Subsequently, a measuring parameter in considering critical issues surrounding the 2019 general election is the pattern of voting behaviour marked by political conviction as induced by a number of factors like emotion, ethnic affiliation, religion, gender, race and cultural inclinations. These factors affect voters' choice of candidates. Again, related factors influencing voters' conduct include political socialisation, socio-cultural perspective, and the resilience of a consolidated political, media, and quality of voters' education (Punch, 2019). The place of voters' education in an electioneering process is dependent on perspectives, ideologies, convictions, and available information to eligible voters (Heppell & Hill, 2008).

It gives necessary information and instruction for voter participation. The essence of voters' education can never be over emphasised (Fivaz & Nadig, 2010), hence the need to start early in order to reach the goal by making the process more effective. Election's frameworks offer an extraordinary chance to the voter in exercising their civic franchise by voting candidate of their choice. In the 2019 general election, the Nigerian government spent over 100 Billion Naira to deliver the general election (Maclean, Egbejule & Alfa, 2019), yet the process had several challenges resulting in electoral malpractices like vote buying, rigging, violence, intimidation and harassment of the electorates, electoral officers and militarisation. The paper therefore examined the import of voters' education in credible election and its attendant issues and challenges regarding the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This paper will interrogate conceptual definitions on voters' education, political participation, voting, voting behaviour, and credible election. Its descriptive nature allows for exploration of related concepts through documentary style of information gathering as the instrument of study. The study is however sourced predominantly from secondary sources of information. The data were assessed from outputs of related media report texts, magazines, newspapers, journal articles, mamographs, official publications and the internet, on topical issues in voters'

education, political participation, voting, voting behaviour, and credible election and their observable operational patterns on electioneering process in Nigeria.

## **CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **Voter Education**

Voter education equips the electorates with necessary information that educate them on their right to select the candidate of their choice. It contains vital aspect like when, where to register and vote casting (ECI, 2016). Election Management Bodies (EMBs) organise regular voters' education updates or broadcasts through messages, aired on radio and the print media. The EMBs modify its operation to be in tune with contemporary media trends for example, the maximum use of the internet. Elections cannot be generally said to be credible unless the voters are aware of the right choice. In addition, detailed information on voting methodology should be available ahead of time of Election Day. Voters' education activities could be directed by either the EMBs or other stakeholders like the civil society in disseminating information on what is required of the electorates throughout the electioneering process.

### **Political Participation**

Political participation is the willful, non-coercive participation of electorates in politics of the nation. For Conway (2000), political participation is a political commitment. He added that it could equally be thought of as the citizens' rights and obligations manifest in formal political settings. Similarly, Gil de Zúñiga, Jung and Valenzuela (2012) had noted that the concept, 'Political Participation alludes to activities undertaken by the electorate in active participation in processes leading to selection of governmental representatives or leaders. Again, Gil de Zúñiga et al., (2012) described political participation as a movement that affects government activity; either directly or indirectly in constituting those involved in governance.

### **Voting**

Voting is a common practice in contemporary democratic political activities (Berger, 2017). Zahida and Younis (2014) considered voting as the function of electing representatives by casting votes in an election, and that citizens use this method to either express their approval or disapproval of government decisions, policies and programmes, by various political parties as

well as selecting the right candidates that would maximally project the interest of the people (the electorates). Brams and Fishburn (2002) conceptualised voting as a broad and encompassing procedure. Thus, voting encompasses various interrelated functions like selection of governors, influencing government policies, office holders and candidates, individual's allegiance to the existing constitutional regime; voter's disaffection from existing constitutional regime; emotional significance and expression of political group interest. From the foregoing, voting no doubt gives rise to the voting behaviour of the electorates.

### **Voting Behaviour**

Voting behaviour is a form of political conduct and a good understanding of the voters' behaviour or conduct; clarifies how and why of the choices made in selecting leader, has become major concern for political researchers (Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno & Brusco, 2013). To conceptualised voting behaviour, political science and political psychology as related fields of study are fundamental in the study of human behaviour especially regarding the choice of candidate (Lasswell, 2017). Political psychologists like (Harold Lasswell, George Gallup among other) examined the manner of emotional impact enabling voters' preference of a particular candidate to the other. Ridout (2018) posited that voters would always prefer a candidate to another regardless of their political mindfulness and complexities.

Achterberg and Houtman (2006) noted that valid deduction on behaviour regarding voting decision, takes into consideration certain factors like race, gender, culture, and religion. Furthermore, political socialisation, tolerance of diverse political views and the mass media can no doubt influence voting behaviour (Zhang, Johnson, Seltzer & Bichard, 2010). Consequently, the concept of voting behaviour is best understood through attitudes, beliefs, knowledge structures and the style of information processing. For instance, individuals feel more relaxed in

cultures or places where their voting rights remain unhindered. In addition, social influences from the mass media and pressure groups play important roles in determining outcome of elections and voting behaviour. The question now is what is the best method in dissociating social influences from other external factors? Thus, the degrees to which voting decisions are influenced by both internal and external forces determine the quality and validity of a democratic process.

### **Credible Election**

Credible elections are marked by inclusiveness, candor and accountability (Norris & Nai, 2017). It ensures that eligible voters take part in choosing their representatives. This liberty in exercising their franchise is however regulated by the provisions of the law. Stakeholders must therefore devise means of delimiting perceived hindrances to the electioneering process at both ethnic and religious divides. Elections are considered credible where each process is available for cross examination, by parties involved. The period of election allows citizens to decide whether government is accountable, yet there must be accountability in the process. There must be powerful penalties set up for infringement of citizens' election-related rights. There must be authoritative accountability for those conducting elections and those leading governmental activities identified with elections (Svara, 2016).

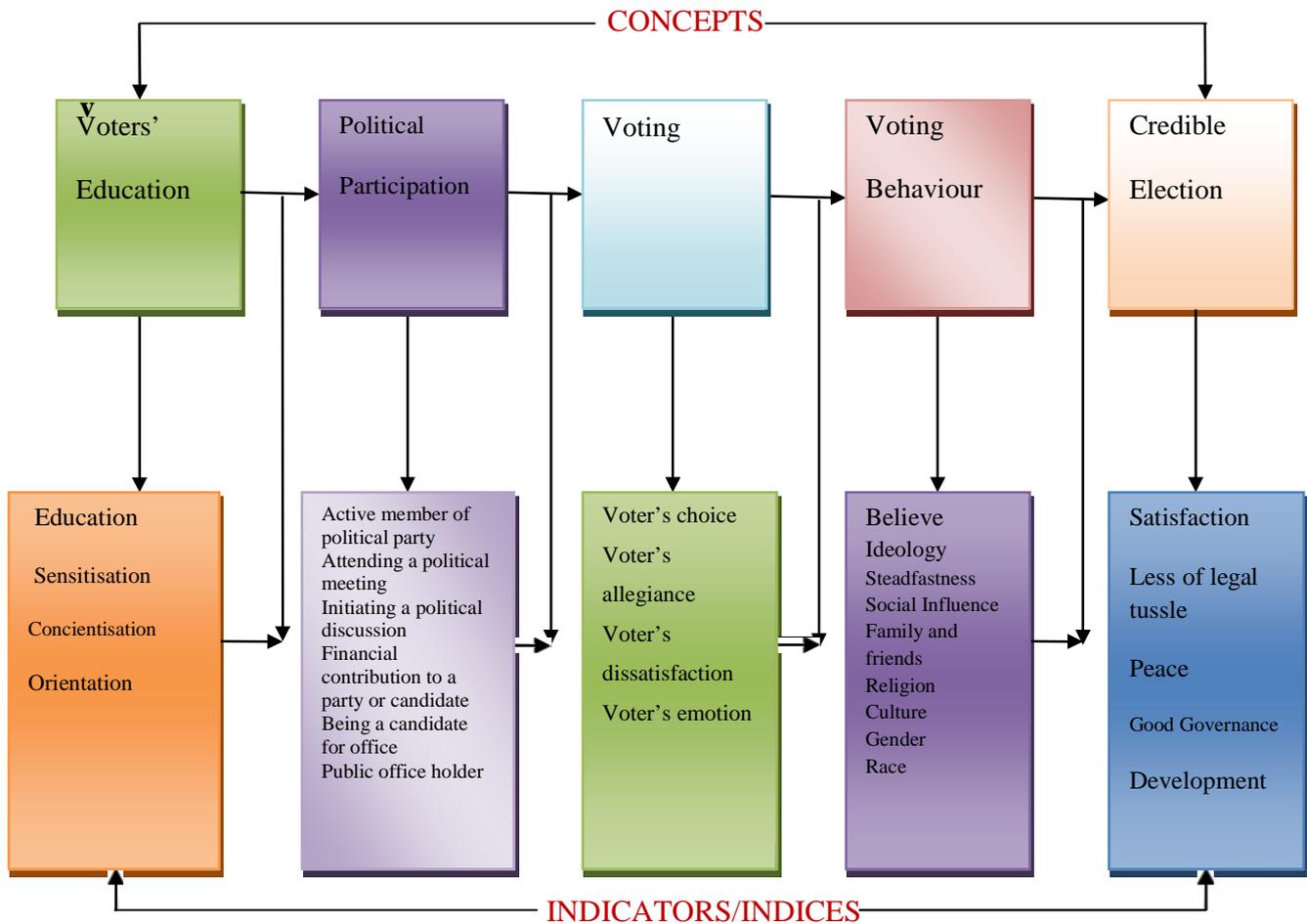


Figure1. Conceptual Model of Credible Election

Source: Authors, 2019

### **Appraisal of INEC voters' education during the 2019 general election**

Beginning with the 1999 general elections, reports of widespread and monumental electoral malpractices and irregularities have been reported (Oyeweso & Amusa, 2019). Prior to this time, emphasis has not been placed on the need to educate the voters on election matters. On the average, past elections have been marred by intimidation, manipulation, multiple voting, bribing of INEC officials and security agencies, election rigging, snatching of ballot boxes, vandalism, terrorism, vote buying among others (Punch, 2019); but the 2015 general election was absorbed from most of the listed problems. Educating the voters is integral to the sustainability of any democratic process (Noris, 2004). Thus, educating the voters is no doubt capable of leading to a sustainable democratic regime in Nigeria. A viable voters' education allow for successful election as well as ensure their willingness to participate actively in the process. It not only reminds the voters of their obligation, but teaches effective ways of carrying out their civic responsibilities.

Regrettably, not every Nigerian citizen has a good knowledge of a credible electioneering process, hence, the need for voters' education. For instance, voters must know that to be eligible, they must be registered and be in possession of the Permanent Voter Card (PVC). INEC in Nigeria is responsible for conducting elections for the following positions: President, Governor, National Assembly as well as State Houses of Assembly. This assignment of INEC is germane and it calls for uninterrupted, articulate, and streamlined voters' education which should keep in touch with voters and the entire citizen in educating them on the electoral matters, current issues, post electoral reports and decisions. Though INEC as an electoral body has various responsibilities, they initiate the following helpful strategies:

### **Procedure to voting**

This strategy is designed to help voters understand approved voting procedures during an election. They are qualified to vote once the voters have duly registered for voting identity at their respective polling units (INEC, 2019). On the Election Day, polling units are expected to open for accreditation, then voting from 8:00 am to 2.00 pm. However, voters on the queue before the closing of poll by 2:00 pm are accredited and allowed to vote.

At the polling unit, a voter is expected to join the queue where INEC officials are expected to double check if voters are at the right polling unit as well as confirm the authenticity of the PVC presented using the card reader. Afterwards, the voters are asked to place the index finger on the card reader, after the INEC officials have confirmed each voter's name on the voters list. After the confirmation, the voter's name is ticked and the finger inked to confirm the completion of the voting exercise. If a voter's name is not found, such voter will not be allowed to vote. The presiding officer will then stamp and sign voter's ballot paper so as to permit the voter to cast his or her vote. The 2019 electoral policy states that voters are expected to roll the ballot paper with the printed side inward before being directed to the voting cubicle. The voter can either leave the polling unit or wait if a party agent so decides in an orderly and peaceful manner up to declaration of results to ensure a credible election.

### **Voters' right on the Election Day**

According to INEC (2019), on each of the election days, voters should access polling units, receive necessary information from officials. Conversely, the voters are expected to comply with laws and necessary guidelines as stipulated by INEC and encourage other voters to do the same.

### **Transfer of voters' registered**

Every Nigerian has the right to live in any part of the country. An important part of voter registration is that eligible persons are advised to enroll at centres closest to their residence. This will allow for easy access on election day. However, a person who relocates to another place, outside the unit cannot vote unless he/she transfers the registration. The procedure as published by INEC (2019), suggests that such voter is expected to apply to the commission at the state level through the Electoral Officer (EO), such applicant shall attach a copy of the Permanent Voter Card (PVC) with the application and submit at the nearest INEC office. The Resident Electoral Commissioner shall verify and approve the application thereby authorising the transfer of voting right to the new preferred location. At the new location, the applicant is issued new Permanent Voter Card and the previous one retrieved.

### **General rights of the voters**

According to chapter four of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the right of all citizens are well listed. It refers to the things or activities to which a Nigerian citizen is lawfully entitled, without fear of prosecution, discrimination or any form of hindrance. In an electoral process, these rights according to INEC (2019) include:

#### **(i) Right to vote and be voted for**

An electorate having satisfied the requirements as stipulated by law is eligible to vote and be voted for. However, this right can only be executed once the voter is in possession of a valid voter's card, with name on the voter register list. Moreover, to be qualified as a candidate for an election, the aspirant must fulfill all legal requirements in relation to the office he/she may be

ying for. Thereafter, the aspirant must only be authenticated by a registered political party (INEC, 2019).

(ii) Right to recall an elected representative

A voter can participate in the process of recall of an elected officer e.g., legislator. The recall is a process of summon to withdraw the mandate initially given to a duly elected legislator during an election. Only registered electorates of the affected constituency can participate in the process of recall.

(iii) Right to privacy when voting

The voters reserve the right to mark their ballot papers i.e., make their choices in secret during an election. Due to peculiarities of the electioneering process in Africa, the process is fraught with dangers, violence and rivalry. Therefore, to avert assault, the polling booths often provide the required privacy for the elections.

(iv) Right to information about election

A voter has a right to be informed about the details of the elections such as the time, date, procedure, etc.

(v) Election offences and penalties

Laws govern all aspects of human life and elections are no exception. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, the Electoral Act 2010, as amended and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Rules and Regulations constitute the legal framework that regulates the electoral process (Okechukwu & Nkwachukwu, 2014). Provisions like these validate the right to associate, vote, form political parties etc. Others include registration of voters, Election Day procedures and dispute resolution mechanisms.

A violation of any of the above listed provisions attracts penalties, which once convicted may be a fine, a jail term, or both (INEC, 2019). Anything contrary to the prescribed regulations of the Constitution or Electoral Act is considered a serious breach and punishable under the law. Worthy of note is the fact that electoral offences can be perpetrated by INEC officials, security agents, political parties and part agents as well as candidates, observers, journalists/media houses or the general public. INEC (2019) published some electoral offences in leaflet that is applied *mutatismutandis* with Nigerian Law as at 31st January, 2017 (INEC, 2019); a breach of any of these provisions is liable to being charged to court and prosecuted by INEC.

(vi) Collation and declaration of results

An election is considered successful based on efficient planning and execution, i.e., the process of accreditation, voting, counting, collation and results declaration (INEC, 2019). According to INEC (2019), each procedure feeds into another but collation and declaration of results are most critical in the entire process. Where results are not completely collated and transmitted in quick, transparent and systematic manner, it quizzes credibility of the election process and this will in turn decide whether the outcomes will be accepted by the parties involved. There are instances where the integrity of a well-run electoral process is marred by challenges during collation and declaration of results (INEC, 2019).

Collation is therefore the process of tabulation or summation of votes cast during an election (INEC, 2019), while declaration of result is the final step in the process heralding the official announcement of winners by a returning officer. The announcement of results is mandatory and a legal requirement of each electoral process. To sustain the integrity profile, results must reflect the number of votes, taking into account decisions reached on disputed ballots.

(vii) Levels of collation

According to INEC (2019), there are levels of collation; depending on the type of election. At each level, there is announcement of total votes cast. They include: Registration Area (RA)/Ward Level; local Government Area (LGA) Level; State Assembly Constituency Level; Federal (House of Representatives) Constituency Level; Senatorial District Level; State Level; and Collation and Declaration of Presidential Election Result at the National Level.

(viii) Legal issues in declaration of election result

According to INEC (2019), a candidate contesting for office of Chairman of Local Government Area shall be declared winner if he/ she has majority of the votes cast during election and must have not less than one-quarter of total votes in at least two-thirds of the Wards within the Local Government Area. Similarly, those contesting for elections to State Houses of Assembly and National Assembly can only be announced winners by simple majority votes. The candidate for office of the Governor shall be declared winner provided he/she has the highest number of votes during the election and not less than one-quarter of total votes in at least two-thirds of all the LGAs in the state.

The office of president is declared if the candidate has the highest number of votes cast during the election; not less than one-quarter of votes cast in at least two-thirds of all States in the Federation and the FCT, Abuja. Where two or more candidates have equal number of votes as the highest in number of votes cast in an election, the Returning Officer shall not return any of the candidates, thus, a fresh election shall be held for the candidates on a date announced by the Commission (Section 69 of Electoral Act 2010 as amended). Also, where no candidate gets the required spread, the Commission shall within seven (7) days of the declaration of result of such election arrange for another between the candidate who scored the highest number of votes at the

election and any other candidate having majority of the votes in each state. Where there is more than one candidate in this category, the candidate with the highest total number of votes cast shall be the second for the election (section 133 (3) and (4) of the 1999 Constitution).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Issues and challenges of 2019 general election**

The 2019 general elections were conducted twenty years after returning to democratic system in Nigeria. In February, Nigerians went to poll to elect candidates into office of the President, state governors and the legislators (YIAGA Africa, 2019). Historically, elections in Nigeria have been tense; campaign gets underway with promises of total breakdown of rule and order. For most Nigerians, the just concluded election was not left entirely in the hands of political gladiators. During the election, Nigerians voted to return a sitting president. However, the citizens were disappointed by government's inability to live up to expectation and deliver on its promise.

Amidst the electioneering process, thuggery, shooting, ballot box snatching, killings were top most in the list of witnessed threats to the outcome of the 2019 general elections. In corroboration, the European Union Election Observation Mission final report revealed that “ the elections were marked by severe operational and transparency shortcomings, electoral security problems and low turnout of voters, considering increase in the number of PVC collected prior to the general elections” (European Union Election Observation Mission, 2019).

However, voters' education on electioneering process is reliant on mentalities, convictions, knowledge and the wellspring of accessible information to the voters. Adequate and effective voters' education by the Election Management Bodies (INEC and stakeholders) is the heart of successful and credible elections. Hence, in discussing issues and challenges militating against

INEC's conduct of credible elections as a result of inadequate and ineffective voters' education the following factors are considered;

### **Logistics and operational failure**

The challenges of the 2019 general elections cannot be discussed without a reference to the systemic failure and its attendant import on the electioneering process. This was reiterated in the press release: The European Union Election Observation Mission to Nigeria Published final report on the 2019 general elections where, Maria Arena and the EU Chief Observer noted systemic failings seen in the elections, and relatively low levels of voter participation, indicating the need for fundamental electoral reforms (Maclean *et al.*, 2019). Supporting the position of European Union Election Observation Mission to Nigeria on 2019 general election, Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth, and Advancement Africa (YIAGA) noted that the logistics and operational failure was responsible for delaying in the deployment of sensitive materials, which led to delay in commencement of elections in some polling units on Election Day across the country.

YIAGA observed that as at 12 pm on Election Day, election had not commenced in most polling units, whereas electoral officials were expected to be at polling units by 7:30 am. Again, reports were received that as at 10:00 am, only 41% of the polling units had resumed. Furthermore, another logistics challenges were related to security. From the available reports, security operatives were fully deployed in at least 90% i.e., 120,000 polling units nationwide. Despite this security architecture, there were reports of activities of political thugs on motorbikes in Lagos (Moshood, 2019). At present, investigations are ongoing to determine how political thugs gained access to polling units, in a bid to cart away the ballot boxes, destroy election materials and

attack voters. Observers and eyewitnesses noted that electoral officials were abused, beaten, threatened and in some cases killed (Simon, *et al.*, 2019).



Figure 2: Electoral Officers during the 2019 General Elections in Nigeria.

Source: The Guardian, 2019

### **Operational Efficiency of Card Reader Machines**

The use of card readers during the 2019 elections in Nigeria had been a source of national and international concern in recent time. Consequently, its malfunctioning during accreditation exercise resulted in non-verification of voters' fingerprints, their PVCs, slow down the accreditation process due to poor internet connection as well as lack of knowledge in the use of card readers by both INEC officials and voters. There were instances of fingerprint rejections among the elderly and cases of card readers not working at all. Some pictures on card readers were not clear while others did not pick up on time. Power failure due to low battery and total battery drainage were also reported.

### **Money Politics, Vote Trading and Vote Business**

Money politics is rooted in bribery and corruption, thereby militating against credible elections in Nigeria (Oyeweso & Amusa, 2019). Bribery is the bane of sustainable democracy in Nigeria which has found its way into the voter and electorate framework. Most individuals are culprits of corruption either directly or indirectly. Though, most Nigerians live below poverty line, the economic condition no doubt has become insensitive on their electoral decisions. Hence, political gladiators entice eligible voters (Ngara, Esebonu, Ogoh & Orokpo, 2014)

According to Baiyewu *et al.* (2019), PVCs were bought from potential voters by election dealers (politicians), hence, voters' consciences were merchandised. The business of money politics is seemingly lucrative for vote sellers (voters) and the vote buyers (politicians). The reluctant effect of vote business is an imminent destruction of democracy in Nigeria. Voters gradually lose their power by trading it for money and material gains. Since politicians now buy their way, eligible voters continue to lose their civic power, as more people discover their voting power gets weaker by the day. In addition, vote business has become a means of survival as one vote now cost between #1,000 to #10,000 naira.

Political parties and groups that lack purchasing power fail to win elections, while buoyant ones win and recoup their losses through corruption and budget padding. Subsequently, electoral procedures become more expensive for ordinary candidates. Most candidates now believe that without money, they cannot pay their way into individuals' soul hence, cannot win elections.

Vote buying no doubt will ruin the chances of good candidates winning election to represent the masses at various levels of leadership. Voters are unwilling to vote without money and material things. Democracy should enjoy some freedom, such that candidates have a level playing ground

where money does not contribute to the outcome of elections in any way. Moreover, the nation will not be able to favourably compete with others so long as vote business continues.

### **Poverty**

Poverty was the major cause that militated against 2019 general election because the inability of the potential voters to meet their needs have made them vulnerable to the politicians who determined the choice they made as far as 2019 general election was concerned. This is not entirely the people's fault heightened by bad governance. The negative impact of poverty on the democratic process is evident in the purchase of Permanent Voter Cards by party candidates or their agents. Those who are confronted daily with existential problems cannot think of their franchise, when offered money to sell their votes (Akinnaso, 2019). The online sale of cloned PVCs, which was recently condemned by INEC, may not be as serious as the sale of INEC-issued PVCs, as evidence of this was reported in the 2018 governorship elections in Ekiti and Osun State.

Poverty is also the reason for many voters to sell their votes. In a recent post-election poll, many respondents indicated that voters were offered various sums, ranging from N1, 000 to N10, 000 for their votes. There are, of course, voters who sell their votes, not because they are necessarily poor but because they are greedy. Such voters are known to have collected as much as N10, 000 or more for voting for the party of their paymaster.

Another fallout of poverty is the recruitment of poor, unemployed youths into gangs of political thugs. If they are not busy intimidating, maiming, or even killing political opponents, they are charged with snatching ballot boxes or disrupting collation centres. Whatever action they take is handsomely rewarded with money and other material goods, including cars and, in some cases,

houses. Rivers State provides a good case study of large-scale thuggery and its implications for electoral outcomes.

### **Rigging**

Challenges of election brutality and rigging have been in previous elections with allegations of illegal thumb printing on ballot papers, at times 24 hours before the elections. In this form of rigging, INEC officials and security agencies were alleged to have been involved. There were similar allegations of doctored results, indiscriminate declaration of election as inconclusive among others despite the subsequent challenge of this inconclusiveness in the court of law. Evidence from 2019 general elections is the case of Bauchi State governorship election to which a court issued a restraining order against the Independent National Electoral Commission on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, restricting it from concluding its planned collation and announcement of results until the hearing of an application filed by the All Progressive Congress (APC) and its candidate, in protest of the exercise that was alleged to be rigged (Toromade, 2019).

### **Political Thugs**

Involvement in political thuggery is on the increase especially among the youths due largely to lack of quality education, poverty, deficit business opportunities and unemployment for the youths (Mbaya, 2013). This is a direct result of inadequate voters' education, poverty and lack of business opportunities for the youth. The thugs were paid, prepared ahead of elections and on Election Day, disrupt, snatch ballot boxes and election materials (Olurode, 2013). In spite of guarantee by the Inspector General of Police that all security measures would be in place to ensure free, fair and credible election in the country, however, instances of violence, brutality, killings, kidnapping of INEC staffs, were recorded.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The task ahead of political parties, INEC and stakeholders in electioneering process in Nigeria is to continuously improve on voters' education before the next election, and not only during the period of election. There is also the need for inclusive electoral reforms that emphasise on political leadership dedicated to the rights of Nigerian citizens. Voters' education combined with national dialogue involving parties, the media, and related institutions are also encouraged. Voters' education club should be encouraged in schools and colleges to ensure eligible voters know their right, avoid vote buying and other related electoral malpractices in a bid to safeguarding the democratic process in Nigeria. INEC can achieve a lot if there is diffusion of power, such that sub institutions are established to reduce the risks of operational failure. The government should consider expanding the scope of ministry of transportation by including sectors that provide logistic support for INEC, while other parastatals in connection with services required by INEC should be expanded to cover EMB timelines on logistics. Finally, there is need for INEC to increase its budget on voters' education as this will achieve tremendous results. Also, government should as a matter of urgency set up an Electoral Crime Commission for easy prosecution of electoral offenders.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the paper recognizes the creation of viable electoral institution as well as inauguration of Electoral Crime Commission charged with the responsibility of prosecuting electoral offenders, especially in case of voting buying. Also, INEC must strengthen its operational capacity and procedures for the collation of results. Besides, there is a need for inter- agency collaboration to ensure electoral security and transparency. Electoral tribunal should ensure a completion of pre-election cases to reduce the number of petition per time, and the need to reform the licensing system for the broadcast media to provide for media pluralism in the country and other elections-related issues and challenges. Lastly, adequate and effective voters' education needs to take centre stage of all INEC activities in order to pave ways for credible elections in Nigeria.

## **REFERENCES**

- Achterberg P, Houtman D (2006). Why do so many people vote ‘unnaturally’? A cultural explanation for voting behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45 (1), 75-92.
- Akinnaso N (2019, January 15). Poverty and the 2019 elections. *Punch online*, p 1.
- Baiyewu L, Adesomoju A (2019, March 12). 2019 elections: We noticed vote-buying, violence, militarisation, say foreign observers. *Punch online*, p 1
- Berger AA (2017). *Political parties: A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy*. Routledge.
- Brams SJ, Fishburn PC (2002). Voting procedures. *Handbook of Social Choice and Welfare*, in: K. J. Arrow & A. K. Sen & K. Suzumura (ed.), *Handbook of Social Choice and Welfare*, edition 1, volume 1, chapter 4, pages 173-236 Elsevier.
- Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. (1999). Federal Republic of Nigeria
- Conway MM (2000). *Political Participation in the United States*. Third edition. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 227.
- Election Commission of Indian (2016, October 19-21). *Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed & Ethical Participation*. New Delhi. ECI Press.
- Electoral Act 2010 as amended. Declaration of Result. Section 69
- European Union Election Observation Mission (2019, February 9 and March 23). *Nigeria General Elections 2019 Final Report*.
- Fivaz J, Nadig G (2010). Impact of voting advice applications (VAAs) on voter turnout and their potential use for civic education. *Journal of Policy & Internet*. 2(4): 167-200.
- Gil de Zúñiga H, Jung N, Valenzuela S (2012). Social media use for news and individuals’ social capital, civic engagement and political participation. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 17(3), 319-336.
- Heppell T, Hill M (2008). The Conservative Party Leadership Election of 1997: An Analysis of the Voting Motivations of Conservative Parliamentarians. *British Politics*. 3(1): 63–91
- Independent National Electoral Commission (2019). *Regulations and Guidelines for the 2019 General Elections*. Abuja, INEC
- Lasswell HD (2017). *Power and society: A framework for political inquiry*. Routledge.
- Macleane R, Egbejule E, Alfa I (2019, February 24). Nigeria election marred by vote buying, tech failures and violence. *The Guardian online*, p 1.

Mbaya PY (2013). The Implications of Political Thuggery on Socio-Economic and Political Development of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*. 3(10): 2090-2103.

Moshood I (2019, February 24). Watching the Vote Preliminary Statement on the 2019 Presidential Election. *YIAGA Africa Online*, p 3.

Moshood I (2019, August 30). 2019 Elections: Opportunity Lost? *YIAGA Africa Online*, p 1.

Ngara CO, Esebonu EN, Ogoh AO, Orokpo OFE (2014). Poverty, Inequality and the Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *Journal of Good Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa*, 2(1): 48-60

Norris P, Nai A (2017). *Election Watchdogs: Transparency, Accountability and Integrity*. New York. Oxford University Press

Norris P (2004). *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior*. Cambridge

Okechukwu I, Nkwachukwu O (2014). Approaches to Civic and Voter Education: Nigeria's Experience in Comparative Perspective (Eds.). Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Nigeria.

Olurode L (2013). *Election security in Nigeria: Matters arising*. (Ed.) Fredrich Ebert. Abuja, Eddy Asae Nig. Press

Oyeweso S, Amusa S (2019, February). Institutional Constraints for Effective Performance of INEC in the 2015 General Elections. Paper presented at the INEC Nigeria.

Toromade S (2019, March 20). Court adjourns case preventing INEC from concluding Bauchi Governorship Election. *Pulse online*, p 2.

Ridout TN (2018). *New Directions in Media and Politics*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) Routledge.

Sidgwick H (2012). *The Elements of Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Simon U, Theophilus O, Adekunle P (2019, February 24). Ballot box snatchers kill three Delta voters, repelled in Edo. *Punch online*, p. 1.

Stokes SC, Dunning T, Nazareno M, Brusco V (2013). *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Svara JH (2016). The Shifting Boundary between Elected Officials and City Managers in Large Council-Manager Cities. *Public Administration Review*, 59. University press.

Zahida A, Younis AS (2014). Determinants of Voting Behaviour in India: Theoretical Perspectives. *Public Policy and Administration Research*. 4 (8): 104-108.

Zhang W, Johnson TJ, Seltzer T, Bichard SL (2010). The Revolution will be networked: The influence of social networking sites on political attitudes and behavior. *Social Science Computer Review*. 28(1): 75-92.