

## Money Politics: The Problem of Good Governance in Ese-Odo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study examined critically how money and gifts have been used to influence the electorates during elections in Ese-Odo Local Government Area of Ondo State. Politicians in Nigerian society, especially in Ese-Odo LGA seem to have their ways in forcing themselves into seat of power by manipulating the thought of the electorates thereby engaging them into vote-buying and vote-selling. The population for study consisted of 213600 citizens. The sample consisted of four hundred (400) respondents. Three research questions were raised for the purpose of the study. The data that were retrieved from the respondents were three hundred and ninety-eight. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data and one hypothesis was also tested. The study found out that using money and other gifts by the politicians to influence the electorates is one of the major reasons for bad governance in Ese-Odo LGA. The study concluded that money politics has brought a great setback to democracy and has hampered the development of the masses and that of the society at large. The study, there for, recommended that for there to be free and fair elections in the society, the electorates must be enlightened on the civic rights of the electorates so as not to get involved in money politics. This will enable the electorates to vote for any political aspirant of their choice. Electoral laws should be strictly adhered to, and any electoral officer who is involved in using the period of elections as a means of extorting money from the political contestants should be dealt with. However, any political member who is caught in the act of vote-buying should be severely punished according to electoral laws. By doing this, the masses will be able to secure their well-being and that of the generations yet to come for sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Democracy, election, money politics, corruption and bad governance.

### Introduction

In democratic system of government, elections are meant to be conducted in free and fair manners. The political parties involved are to choose their representatives or leaders in this type of system in as much they are to go into seats of power to serve the people. According to the law of democracy, choosing these representatives or leaders depends on the wish of the general populace without external forces. Choosing these leaders, at times depends on how responsible, useful, intelligent, sensible and moral values they possess. However, the present social order of today's political system appears to negate these qualities of a good leader mentioned above, and this seems to bring about governmental instability (Kwaghga & Tarfa, 2015). Nigeria seems to witness bad leadership and bad governance in the recent time as money seems to be ever present in politics.

Election seems to have been one of the major problems in African countries, especially in Nigeria. What every sane society is expected to achieve during election is for the process to be free and fair without any form of inducement. Nigeria seems to have been a place where political system has been bastardised by manipulating the thought of the masses due to



superstition, illiteracy, hunger, poverty and ignorance. Many of the individuals seem to prefer collecting gifts and money from political aspirants during elections.

The ignorance and lack of social consciousness are sometimes used by the political leaders in order to gain the sympathy and the supports of the electorates so as to emerge as winner during elections. In his own opinion, Omoyele (2018) states that hardly will someone witness election in Nigerian society without money or gift been shared. This seems to have been tagged with the slogan, “*dibo ki o sebe*”. This is a Yoruba statement which means “*cook stew through your vote*”. This can also be referred to as stomach infrastructure by voting after someone must have collected money or gift items. Many of the citizens seem to prefer to trade their votes because of stomach infrastructure not minding the sufferness that may befall them in the next four years. This seems to have become more critical to the extent that the highest bidder emerges as winner. Nigeria seems to be in the period where accountability, honesty and moral virtues no longer count. In other words, any individual aspiring for any position without distributing money or gift may not emerge as winner.

Money politics in Nigeria seems to be the major problems in African countries. Especially, Nigeria seems to experience money politics from time to time. In the view of Edward (2014), money entails the provision of individual cash payment or goods to voters before or during elections. In other words, anyone who has a good ambition towards the development of the people and the society at large but refuses to distribute money to the electorates may find it difficult to gain the supports of the electorates. In most societies where the people involve themselves in this type of act are likely faced with oppressed-oppressors contradiction. It must be noted that one of the major powers of the electorates is his franchise. That is, a way of electing good people into power through voting.

According to Babayo and Mohammend (2018), money seems to be influential in determining the outcome of elections in almost democratic regimes in the world, especially in Nigeria. It appears that developing democracies like Nigeria witness the incidence of money being used openly during elections in order to secure victory by the political aspirants. Not only that, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) seems to be one of the tools used in manipulating election results in order to favour the highest bidder after INEC officials seem to have collected bribe from the political aspirants. Example of this, is that of governorship election in Osun State in the year 2018. The election that was conducted was declared inconclusive when the results of the election supposed to be announced by INEC.

Abdulrahman, Danladi and Sani (2016), opine that money politics and vote buying seem to have become strategies by many politicians in the society today, especially Nigerian in securing political victory. Abdulrahman et al (2016) express further that money politics is the process whereby contenders for elective positions use money or money is used on their behalf by their agents as an inducement to influence their supports which is not based on persuading the electorates to vote according to their wish and conviction as against the wish of the electorates. This is a process whereby voter's decision, choice, view and conscience of the voters are manipulated to the advantage of the contestants or political parties.

### Causes of Money Politics

For a particular society to have involved it in vote buying and vote selling there must be reason(s). And this may be as the following reasons:

- **Ignorance:** This means when individuals are not socially conscious of the happenings around them. That is, they lack the knowledge and necessary information capable of making them more human. When the people lack social consciousness they can easily be deceived. To become more human goes beyond being alive, therefore, to become more human is the ability to be aware, think, reflect critically and analyse the happenings of one's environment. When individuals lack the necessary rigours to become more functional in order to bring about positive development, such individuals may decide to trade his right by collecting money instead of voting for the right person. Therefore, such person's thought likely be manipulated.
- **Unemployment:** Unemployment is also a factor that seems to bring about vote buying and vote selling in Nigeria. There seems to be many graduates on the streets roaming around without job. Many of these graduates seem to find it difficult to cater for themselves, and as a result, many of them are being used as thugs by giving them token of money by the political parties or party members in order to secure their victory. However, some of these youths seem to see the period of elections as the period to make money. Some of these individuals are used as tools for snatching ballot boxes and cause violence during elections.
- **Hunger and Poverty:** This is lack of physiological need for food and material possessions, especially, in terms of money. Hunger and poverty appears to be one of the major problems in African countries, especially in Nigeria. For an individual who could not afford to feed properly may not have any option than to trade his vote for a token amount of money. He may even decide to trade his vote for two rubbers of rice or other gift items not minding the negative outcome in the next four years. This type of person may have the grasp of the injustice and corrupt practices in his society, but because of his present condition, he may be forced to vote for the wrong person by offering him money or gift.

- **Illiteracy:** Illiteracy is explained here, as an individual who is unintelligent, not sensible, uncultured, uncouth, mannerless, crude, uncivilised and uneducated (Akinpelu, 1988). In the denotative sense, it can also be seen as someone who cannot read and write. This usually takes place in the rural areas where they have little or no education. Individuals in these parts are the people that feel little or no impart of the government. These people may see no reason of voting for any candidate aspiring for any position. The thought of these people may sometimes be manipulated by giving them money or other provisions so as to have their support whether favourable or not. It must be noted that majority of these individuals seem to vote for the highest bidder instead of voting for honesty, sincerity and integrity of the contestant.

### Implications of Money Politics

There may be prevalence of social injustice and inequality when a leader is not able to give proper control or proper judgment in the society. A leader who mount the seat of power through vote buying and vote selling may not be able to proclaim social justice and also bring about community development to the people. These are the types of leaders that use the resources of the society to enrich their family. In this type of system of government, the wishes of the masses are sometimes in conflict with the wishes of the leaders, thereby leading to bad governance.

Bad governance involves the abuse of human rights, corruption and lack of accountability. Bad governance is the inability of a public institution to manage public affairs and public resources; failure of the government to meet the needs of the society making while making the best use of all resources at their own disposal. According to MidjkAn (2014) it is characterised by corruption, crime, no freedom of expression, etc.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to:

- Examine the perceptions of electorates towards money politics in Ese-Odo LGA
- Investigate the causes of money politics in Ese-Odo LGA
- Examine the consequences of money politics in Ese-Odo LGA.

### Research Questions

The following questions were raised in the study:

- What are the perceptions of electorates towards money politics in Ese-Odo LGA?
- What are the causes of money politics in Ese-Odo LGA?
- What are the consequences of money politics in Ese-Odo LGA?

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was formulated for this study:

- Causes of money politics will not significantly influence consequences of money politics.

### Methodology

The study made use of descriptive research design of the survey type on Money Politics and Nigerian Society. The study for the population comprises adult (that is, someone who has attained the age of 18 years and above) who are eligible to vote in Nigeria. The study sample consisted 400 adults in Ese-Odo LGA., Ondo State. Self-constructed instrument was used in collecting data from the participants. The data collected were analysed by using inferential and descriptive statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

### Findings and Discussions

#### *Demographic Analytical Outcomes*

This section gives the overview of the demographic data of the respondents in the study area. The study adopted the survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 213600 citizen in Ese-Odo Local Government Area in Ondo State, Nigeria Populated by the Ijaw (Izon) ethnic Sub groups of Western Apoi tribe and Arogbo tribe. It presents the distribution of participants by gender, age and academic qualifications. A sample size of 400 potential voters was used for the study; however 398 which represent 93.3% of the questionnaires were retrieved.

The main instrument adopted for data collection was a 15-item structured questionnaire called Money Politics Questionnaire (MPQ) and the questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Management and Tests and Measurement from Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State. The questionnaire was trial tested using 50 voters with Cronbach Alpha Statistic to establish its reliability that yielded  $r = 0.79$ . This coefficient indicated high internal consistency. The data collected were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation to answer research

questions and inferential statistics as Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient (PPMC) to test the formulated hypotheses at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

### Findings

Table I

Attributes	Responses	Frequency	Per cent
Sex	Male	211	53.0
	Female	187	45.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Age	18-30 years	113	28.4
	31-40 years	127	31.9
	41-50 years	96	24.1
	51 years and above	62	15.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Educational Qualification	SSCE	75	18.8
	OND/NCE	93	23.4
	B.Sc/HND	182	45.7
	M.Sc	48	12.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Occupation	Student	82	20.6
	Farming	98	24.6
	Fishing	108	27.1
	Civil Servant	80	20.1
	Unemployed	11	2.8
	Apprentices	19	4.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Income	Less than 18,000-30,000 monthly	91	22.9
	18,000-30,000 monthly	88	22.1
	31,000 – 50,000 monthly	79	19.8
	51,000 – 70,000 monthly	71	17.8
	71,000 – 90,000 monthly	42	10.6
	91,000 – 120,000 monthly	19	4.8
	121,000 and above monthly	8	2.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study sought to find out whether there was any significant difference in respondents' sexes. The distribution of respondents by sex shows that 211(53.0%) of the respondents were males, while the remaining 187(45.0%) were females. This means that there were 16(4.0%) more male respondents in the study than female. This discrepancy in the distribution of respondents by gender could be attributed to the fact that, generally, more males who are voters were willing to take part in the study than potential female voters.

Age range of respondents indicates that 113(28.4%) of the respondents were within the ages of 18 -30 years, 127(31.9%) represent respondents that are 31-40years, 96(24.1%) represent respondents that are 41-50 years while 62(15.6%) represent respondents that are 51 years and above. The results indicate that most of the respondents were within the ages of 31 and 40 years. The implication of the majority within the productive population which is the age bracket of 18-40 indicates that they would have to be informed about money politics and its implications in the society.

Educational qualification of respondents shows that 75(18.84%) of the respondents attained secondary school, 93(23.4%) of the respondents had OND/NCE as their educational qualification, 182(45.0%) of the respondents had B.Sc and HND as their educational qualification while 48(12.1%) of the respondents had M.Sc. as their educational qualification. The results indicated that most of the respondents were B.Sc/HND holder and the implication of this result is that the majority of the respondents could read and write. It is therefore rational that they could make informed decisions based on the questionnaires and interviews administered to them.

Occupation of the respondents revealed that 82(20.6%) students, 98(24.6%) were farmers 108(27.1%) were fisher men and women, 80(20.1%) were civil servants, 11(2.8%) were unemployed while 19(4.8%) were apprentices. The outcomes of this result revealed that majority of the respondents were fisher men and women.

Respondents' levels of income revealed that 91(22.9%) of the respondents earned less than ₦18,000-₦30,000 monthly, 88(22.1%) earned ₦18,000-₦30,000 monthly, 79(19.8%) earned ₦31,000 – ₦50,000 monthly, 71(17.8%) earned ₦31,000 – ₦50,000 monthly, 42(10.6%) earned 71,000 – 90,000 monthly, 19(4.8%) earned ₦91,000 – ₦120,000 monthly while 8(2.0%) earned 121,000 and above monthly. The outcome means that the majority of the respondents were on income of less than ₦18,000-₦30,000 per month. The consequence here is that such people are possible to be influenced by politicians with gifts and incentives during electioneering campaigns and election days to select their leaders.

### Research Question I

What are the perceptions of electorates towards money politics in Ese-Odo?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviations of responses of electorates on their perception towards money politics in Ese-Odo.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Money politics is usual practised in Nigeria electoral process	249	130	8	11	2.51	0.94	Accepted
2	Politicians in Nigeria use money to purchase votes during election	207	186	2	3	2.84	0.98	Accepted
3	Politicians influence electoral laws in order to ensure their victory during election.	228	162	8	0	3.03	0.88	Accepted
4	Electorates on their part see money politics especially during election as an opportunity to sell their votes to represent their own share of the national cake.	148	224	22	4	2.29	0.89	Rejected
5	There are electoral laws to regulate the use of money during political campaigns	209	183	5	1	3.02	0.87	Accepted
<b>Cluster mean</b>						2.74	0.91	

Data presented on table 2 revealed the mean ratings of the electorates in Ese-Odo Local Government on their perception towards money politics. The data showed that the mean ratings of the electorates for items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are 2.51, 2.84, 3.03, 2.29, and 3.02 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.94, 0.89, 0.88, 0.98 and 0.87. Based on the cut-off point of 2.50, electorates rated items 1,2,3 and 5 acceptable indicated that money politics is usual practice in Nigeria electoral process, politicians in Nigeria use money to purchase votes during election, politicians influence electoral laws in order to ensure their victory during election and there are electoral laws to regulate the use of money during political campaigns. However, item 4 was rejected by electorates which clearly indicate that some electorates on their part do not see money politics, especially during election as an opportunity to sell their votes to represent their own share of the national cake. The cluster mean of 2.74 and standard deviation of 0.91 indicates that electorates' perception towards money politics in Ese-Odo has continue to be pervasive in many electoral regimes.

### Research Question 2

What are the causes of money politics in Ese-Odo?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviations of responses of electorates on the causes of money politics in Ese-Odo.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
6	The existence of ignorance among the electorates	185	201	11	1	2.99	0.98	Accepted
7	Poverty	191	196	10	1	2.59	0.95	Accepted
8	Political contributions for favours, contracts or policy change.	212	171	12	3	3.05	0.82	Accepted
9	Selling appointments, honours, or access to information.	144	232	22	0	3.24	0.83	Accepted
10	Corruption on the part of electoral officers and party agents.	189	198	8	3	3.43	2.24	Accepted
<b>Cluster mean</b>						3.06	1.20	

The data on table two showed that, items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 have mean rating scores of 2.99, 2.59, 3.05, 3.24 and 3.43 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.98, 0.95, 0.82, 0.83 and 2.24 respectively well above the cutoff point. Based on the data, the respondents' view is that items 6-10 are the reasons for money politics in Ese-Odo. According to them, the existence of ignorance among the electorates, poverty, political contributions for favours, contracts or policy change, selling appointments, honours, or access to information and corruption on the part of electoral officers and party agents are the causes for money politics in Ese-Odo. The cluster mean of 3.06 and standard deviation 1.20 indicates that they share the same view on the causes of money politics in Ese-Odo.

### Research Question 2

What are the consequences of money politics in Ese-Odo?

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviations of responses relating to the consequences of money politics in Ese-Odo

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Money politics and vote buying brings about bad governance in Nigerian system of government.	240	136	12	10	3.37	0.87	Accepted
12	Money politics and vote buying in Nigeria accounts for social injustices in the society.	270	116	22	0	2.85	1.07	Accepted
13	Money politics do not discredit Nigeria's electoral process and untimely democracy.	18	20	160	200	2.33	0.98	Rejected
14	It leads to threats to personal safety, threats to the safety of family members, and the loss of property as a result of violence.	207	179	0	12	2.75	1.06	Accepted
15	It encourages conscientious people participating in electoral politics and causes citizens to have faith in state institutions.	10	28	180	180	1.82	0.81	Rejected
<b>Cluster mean</b>						<b>2.62</b>	<b>0.96</b>	

The data presented on table 3 showed that mean rating scores of items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are 3.37, 2.85, 2.33, 2.75 and 1.82 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.87, 1.07, 0.98, 1.06 and 1.81 respectively. Based on the cut-off point of 2.50, respondents rated items 11, 12 and 14 were acceptable while items 13 and 15 were rejected. This implies that money politics will result in bad governance in Nigerian system of government, accounts for social injustices in the society and leads to threats to personal safety, threats to the safety of family members, and the loss of property as a result of violence. The cluster mean of 2.62 and standard deviation 0.96 shows that the majority of the respondents share the same view on the consequences of money politics in Ese-Odo.

### Hypotheses Testing

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Causes of money politics will not significantly influence consequences of money politics.

To test this hypothesis, data collected on causes of money politics and that of consequences of money politics were subjected to Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) and this is shown on table 2

Table 4:

Relationship between causes of money politics and consequences of money politics.

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Df	r-cal.	r-tab	decision
Causes of money politics		43.98	9.30				
Consequences of money politics.	398	34.17	7.31	396	0.614	0.195	rejected
Significant at 0.05							

Table 4 shows that r-calculated value of 0.614 is greater than r-table value of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the tested null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that causes of money politics will significantly influence consequences of money politics.

### Discussion of Findings

Results of Table 1 revealed that the electorates' perception towards money politics in Ese-Odo has continued to be pervasive in many electoral regimes as is a usual practice in Ese-Odo electoral process. This study is in line with the findings of Owasa (2013), who reported that money politics and vote buying have taken the centre stage in our political activities. This is because parties and candidates have shown by their conducts during political campaigns, that good party manifestoes and integrity of candidates jostling for public offices are no longer sufficient to guarantee electoral success; thus, they resort to vote-buying.

Results of Table 2 revealed that money politics will result in bad governance in Nigerian system of government, accounts for social injustices in the society and leads to threats to personal safety, threats to the safety of family members, and the loss of property as a result of violence. This result is in line with the findings of Omilusi, (2016) posited that political parties and politicians sometimes or most of the times seek to acquire power as their ultimate aim of venturing into politics and therefore, they can employ all their available financial materials and other logistics such as human resources and political strategy in order to achieve their set target. In the process, money politics occur because they incessantly spend in order to win against their opponents. On the other hand, the electorates too have obviously demonstrated cynical electoral behaviour by the readiness to sell their votes to the highest bidder. This uncharitable behaviour or practice constitutes a blemish on public policy and on the electoral process. In fact, it portends dangers to the democratic process of electing officers and in turn prevents good governance. Results in Table 3 also supported the result in table 2. This result corroborate with the findings of Mohammed and Aluigba, (2013) posited that money politics leads to subversion of democratic process and affects electoral processes and outcome because it causes rigging of elections and other malpractices.

Results in table 4 revealed that causes of money politics will significantly influence consequences of money politics. This result is in line with the findings of Kura, (2014) posited that money politics is perceived as one of the corrupt practices that is bedeviling Nigerian democracy and it is impeding good governance as a result of existence of ignorance among the electorates, poverty and political contributions for favours, contracts or policy change.

### Conclusion

Considering the outcomes of the results, one would notice that democratic system of government seems to have lost its values in Ese-Odo LGA as a result of vote-buy and vote-selling, which later results into bad governance. Many of the politicians seem to take the ignorance of the electorates as advantage to secure their victories. Majority of these political leaders seem to have decided to use their veto power to secure political positions for their family members in an attempt not to lose their political power. Therefore, it is necessary to reactive electoral laws in Nigerian society, especially in Ese-Odo LGA for good governance.

### Recommendation

For there to be positive development during elections in Ese-Odo LGA, government should penalise political members who engage in vote-buying according to the law. However, it must also be noted that one of the causes of money politics are the electorates. Therefore, there should be social awareness through all the media, such as; radio, television, newspaper, magazines, posters, etc. The electorates should be enlightened towards the rules and regulations of elections, and this can also be done through Adult Education Programmes (ADEP). Every citizen must cultivate right attitudes towards political activities in order to achieve good governance. It must be noted that any political party who emerges as winner during elections through the use of money politics would in no means allow the electorates to be conscious of their rights. Members of such party would rather continue to enjoy the ignorance of the electorates for their own selfish interest. Therefore, non-governmental agencies and Philanthropist Sponsored Programmes (PSP) should also assist in educating the masses to be aware of the dangers that are involved in selling their votes for perishable gifts or money.

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