

COMMUNITY THEATRE: RE-HUMANIZING THE LOCAL POPULACE AGAINST VOTE-BUYING IN NIGERIA'S ELECTORAL PROCESS

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Abstract

Over the years the Nigeria's democracy has been under serious threats due to unlawful deeds by politicians to buy the votes of electorate. This illicit act shines more at the 2018 Ekiti and Osun state gubernatorial election and drew the attention of local and international observers to the frantic act for power. It is quite unfortunate that despite various allegations as regard vote-buying which marred the aforementioned elections, the 2019 presidential and gubernatorial elections still witnessed the inglorious vote-trading. Without doubt, majority of the electorate (most especially the poor) are always willing to sell their votes to the party which bid high without minding the consequences. These ones need to be re-orientated, re-informed, educated and in whole rehumanized to act in conformity with standard moral values for national development and specifically, avoid being a customer to vote-trading. Community Theatre as a theatrical approach for economic and socio political information, reformation and development cannot be left out in this process of propagation against vote-buying. Thus, this work focuses on community theatre as a means to rehumanize the local populace against vote-buying in Nigeria's electoral process.

Keywords: Community Theatre, Re-Humanizing, Local Populace, Vote-Buying, Electoral Process

Introduction

One of the pillars that support every democracy is elections. Elections seem to have become a major factor in the stabilization and democratization of emerging democracies. It forms an important pillar that places the power to govern with the people. To Boafo-Arthur (2006) elections are important to a nation's construction and the electorate since it performs the role of a litmus test for democratic institutions. It ensures that democratic pillars including rule of law, ballot secrecy, separation of powers, independence of the

judiciary and many more are strengthened. Elections and more specifically voting are important mechanisms for selecting leaders for political offices in every democracy. They aggregate preferences, help select better public officials, and provide incentives for politicians to act in the interest of the voters they represent (Persson & Tabellini, 2000). According to Heywood (2002), it is a device for using an office or post through choices, made by a designated body of people, the electorate.

Chazan (1987) in Frank, Shirley and Isaac (2018) identifies two main functions of elections in the world and particularly in Africa that is whether to change a regime and its leadership or to seek approval from the electorate to enhance democratic and constitutional transition. Several countries in the world currently select their national leaders through multi-party elections. However, in some developing countries especially in Africa, the quality of elections still varies widely as elections have been plagued with problems such as ballot fraud, intimidation, multiple voting, low voter education, snatching of ballot boxes, violence, giving out of electoral incentives or buying of votes and others (Stokes, 2005; Schaffer, 2007; Vincente, 2008; Kramon, 2009).

Just as democratic elections have spread across the globe since the early 1970s, so has electoral incentives and buying of votes. Vote buying has been widespread in many countries that have continued along the path towards democracy. In the words of Vicente (2008), vote buying happens frequently in many parts of the world.

Indeed, vote buying which in some literature is referred to as clientelism has a long history. The use of electoral incentives to buy votes has been a frequent practice during electoral campaigns and elections in several developing and developed countries. It was prevalent in the Roman Republic (Yakobson, 1995), Britain and the United States (O'Leary, 1962) and the phenomenon still remains common around the world (Schaffer, 2007). Scholars have documented widespread use of these campaign strategies in countries such as Nicaragua (Gonzalez-Ocantos, Jonge, Mel'endez, & Nickerson, 2012), Argentina (Brusco, Nazareno & Stokes, 2004; Stokes, 2005), Taiwan (Wang & Kurzman, 2007), and Lebanon (Corstange, 2010), as well as African countries like Sao Tome and Principe, Nigeria (Bratton, 2008; Vicente, 2008), Kenya and Ghana (Kramon & Posner, 2013).

With reference to the above, vote buying is not fundamentally new to Nigeria's electoral politics or only restricted to Nigeria or Africa. However, since the return of democracy to Nigeria in May 1999, vote buying has steadily grown in scale and brazenness. Several videos and images have emerged, showing unabashed sharing of cash, food and valuable items among the electorate by politicians and parties during the past elections (before 2019) in Edo, Anambra, Ondo, Ekiti and Osun states. Even, it was noted in the past House of Representatives bye-election for Ekiti/Irepodun/Isin/Oke-Ero federal constituency in Kwara state (vanguard, 2018), Bauchi South senatorial bye-election

(Premium Times, 2018) and House of Representatives bye-election for Kankiya/Kusada/Ingawa Federal Constituency in Katsina state. Most recently, various forms of vote-buying was highly observed in the 2019 presidential and gubernatorial elections. This has led to the apt description of Nigeria's electoral politics as "cash-and-carry democracy" (Adamu. Ocheni and Ibrahim 2016). If not urgently addressed, this trend may portend grave danger for Nigeria's democracy.

In contemporary time, the awareness of vote buying as a corruptive acts used by desperate politicians to buy off the mandate of the poor electorate and as a destructive tool to Nigeria's democracy had recently grown unbearably and has caught the attention of INEC officials, patriotic scholars, politicians with integrity and well-wishing national and international observers for urgent measures to prevent it in subsequent elections. However, among the measuring mechanisms that may be designed to check the aforementioned could be curriculum review, communal workshop, sensitization programme on social media, educative and remolding community theatre art, youth empowerment and development programmes among others. All with the sole aim of re-humanizing the citizens to be patriotic, well-informed and oriented, hard-working, self-disciplined, non-destructive, non-dogmatic, non-compromising, self-reliant and politically decisive in order for them to be able to give their mandate to candidate with good designed policies and programmes that is capable of touching lives of the majority of people and avoid being tempted by desperate politicians.

Community theatre as one of the measuring mechanisms suggested to propagate desist from vote buying, is a theatre which engages the attention of people through a dramatic presentation of problems. It makes the audience see their problems in fresh and critical ways. In addition, this is a very important potential of the theatre as an art form. When properly used by the artist, it could have a tremendous positive influence on the audience. In Africa, drama/theatre has always addressed the problems affecting the society ranging from cultural conflicts, to development problems, which include corruption, exploitation, and oppression. This is referred to as "Praxis of Social Utility" that is using drama to address social anomalies (Chukwukelue,2014).

Without doubt, the culture of vote trading is fast growing and spreading to become a norm in the Nigeria electoral system. Its threats may cause an unbearable set back to her democracy and national development. Thus, the need to re-humanize, that is to re-inform or re-educate the local people to act in conformity with the good moral values of the community which they live in or the ones they find themselves and assist in preaching against the negative values for the betterment of humanity becomes paramount. In view of the above, the writers sought to examine the means through which community theatre can be used for re-humanizing the local populace against vote-buying in Nigeria's electoral process.

Concept of Vote Buying

The past decade has witnessed an explosion in the use of the term “vote buying” in academic and media circles. An often-cited definition of vote buying describes it as “the exchange of private material benefits for political support”. Vote buying is seen as a contract, or perhaps an auction in which the voter sells his or her vote to the highest bidder. Vote buying is defined here as any form of financial, material or promissory inducement or reward by a candidate, political party, agent or supporter to influence a voter to cast his or her vote or even abstain from doing so in order to enhance the chances of a particular contestant to win an election. Thus, any practice of immediate or promised reward to a person for voting or refraining from voting in a particular way can be regarded as vote buying. In most democracies, vote buying is considered an electoral offence (Onuoha and Ojo, 2018).

Dr. Musa Abubakar, the Acting Chairman of ICPC in Vanguard (2018) defined vote buying, as a type of electoral fraud which takes the form of collecting payment from candidates after voting for them. “Such payments are usually made through agents either directly or through phone transfer.

An Overview of Cases of Vote Buying in Nigeria (2015-2019)

The vote buying practice, which is completely antithetical to the ethos and norms of democracy, has become a common feature of party primaries and general elections conducted in recent years in Nigeria. For example, during the All Progressive Congress (APC) presidential primary in Lagos State before the 2015 elections, it was reported that “over 8000 delegates who participated allegedly made US\$5 000 each from the candidates. Delegates were supposed to have received US\$2 000 each from the Atiku Abubakar group and also US\$3 000 each from the Buhari group. Given that more than 8 000 delegates were reported to have attended the primaries, the competing camps could have spent more than US\$16 million and US\$24 million respectively on vote buying at the primary stage” (Matenga, 2016).

There were widespread allegations of vote buying in the off-cycle governorship elections in Edo and Ondo States in 2016. In the 28 September 2016 gubernatorial election in Edo, observers reported massive vote buying by the two main political parties, the APC and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP). The parties were accused of giving N3 000 to N4 000 for votes in several polling units. The Whistler (2016) Similarly, in the 26 November 2016 governorship election in Ondo State, it was observed that members of the APC, the PDP and the Alliance for Democracy were giving money to voters at most polling centres across the state. Some polling stations in Odigbo, Okitipupa and Ilaje local government areas were given N450 000 while each voter got between N3 000 and N5 000” (Dada, 2016).

Vote trading often takes place in the presence of security agents who appear unable, unwilling or too compromised to deter such electoral offences. In the 18 November 2017 gubernatorial election in Anambra State, many observers condemned the brazen incidences of vote buying during the poll, stating that the level of commercialisation of the vote was an eyesore to democracy. In particular, the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room noted that “even more lamentable was the fact that the buying and selling of votes took place in the full glare of security men and election officials. It was simply a bazaar in which the election officials and security agencies were undoubtedly complicit” (Vanguard, 2017).

Widespread acts of vote-buying were also reported during the recently held governorship election in Ekiti State on 14 July 2018. For example, the Punch newspaper documented the case of a retiree who claimed that an APC agent offered him money to vote for the party. According to the septuagenarian:

I was offered N5000 to vote for the party but I rejected it. I am 73 years old retired teacher. I cannot allow the future of my children to be bought by moneybags. I don't know how we descended to this level when people brazenly offer money to people to secure their votes. It was not like this in the past. Will our votes count with this problem? (Atoyebi, Ajaja and Aworinde 2018).

The high incidence of poverty in Nigeria means that many people are susceptible to selling their vote for immediate gratification.

The result showed that Kayode Fayemi, of President Muhammadu Buhari's APC won the governorship election, polling 197 459 votes while Kolapo Olusola scored 178 114 votes. Both the APC and the PDP were alleged to have paid voters N3 000 to N 5 000 each. AFP (2018) the impunity of vote-buying is becoming the norm in Nigeria's electoral politics with political parties trying to outwit each other in the amounts paid to voters.

More so, in preparation for the 2019 presidential election, the presidential primary of the people's Democratic Party which was held in Port Harcourt on 6th October, 2018 was observed to have been marred with rain of dollars to induce delegates at the convention (Andah, 2018).

Other aspirants gunning for the PDP presidential ticket include senate president Bukola Saraki; former Vice-President Atiku Abubakar; and Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal. Others are Gombe State Governor, Ibrahim Dankwambo; former Kano State Governor Senator Rabi'u Kwankwaso; and former Kaduna State Governor Ahmed Makarfi. Also in the running are former Senate President David Mark; former Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang; former Jigawa State Governor Sule Lamido; Atahiru Bafarawa; Tanimu Turaki; Datti Baba-Ahmed; and Stanley Osifo.

According to Vanguardonline, a particular aspirant, who had taken part in a presidential primary before, was said to have first offered the delegates \$2,500 each in exchange for votes. "But when he heard that another aspirant offered the delegates \$3000, he increased his own to \$4000." Our correspondent however gathered that the second aspirant later offered same amount of \$4000, an action that forced the man who offered \$4000 to increase his own to \$5000. "Another aspirant was also said to have offered a mere \$1000." (Esien, 2018).

Another report given by Onuocha and Ojo (2018) and Dailypostonline, reads that the key players in the race all partook in the act of financial inducement to delegates with dollars as follows:

Atiku \$5000 per delegate

Saraki \$1000 per delegate

Tambuwal \$500 per delegate

Kwankwaso \$200 per delegate.

This undemocratic act extends to the 2019 presidential election as both the two contending parties (that APC and PDP) cannot prove to be innocent in the perpetration of vote-buying.

Community Theatre: its concept and practice for development in Nigeria:

Though, the concept of community theatre has been in our society from time immemorial via the numerous traditional festivals, local poets and entertainers but the official launching of community theatre for development in Africa has much to do with the activities of Laedza Batini projection in Botswana in 1974. The effect of this project soon spread to other parts of the continent including Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, and of course Nigeria. Emphatically, what is known as community theatre today has developed in context where drama is used as a tool for communication in a more direct and interpersonal way with under privileged sector of the society to bring them that only by means of their own participation can their lives change and society becomes democratic. Community Theatre is an important device for communities to collectively share stories, participate in political dialogue in order to break down the increasing exclusion of marginalized groups of citizens and build peace (van Ervan, 2001 in Apena, 2012). Barlow and Steve (1994) in Apena (2012) define community theatre as an art form that provides individuals with practical opportunities to express themselves and develop aesthetic understanding (Barlow and Steve, 1994). Iyorwuese (1990) defines it as "*a theatrical style which stresses participant dialogue, critical consciousness etc as the practitioners of this theatre are committed to social transformation through cultural action using theatre*".

It is a kind of theatre that aims at achieving a developmental objective within community; it is a non formal adult education to develop the consciousness of rural dwellers through the use of traditional media. Nwamuo in Iyorwuese generalize that all

theatre forms that aim at stimulating a process of community or group- problem solving and actions using the people to create the theatre themselves in their own language/idiom that they can understand, express themselves in and identity will all be synonymous to Community Theatre (Apena, 2012).

Based on the above submission of Nwamuo, it is then logical to say that like the Popular theatre the earliest form of Community Theatre in Nigeria could be linked to the Alarinjo Theatre of the Yoruba. However, the current trend of this genre of theatre manifested in the northern part of Nigeria. Ever since then, various name such as Theatre For Integrated Development (TIDE), Community Theatre for Integrated Rural Development (CTFIRD), Theatre for Integrated Rural Development, (THIRD) and so on. Whatever the appellation given to it the underline tone of this theatre according to Gbenga Ganzalo of 1998 is that they all:

*“Signify theatre of the people
by the people and for the people
and is used as an instrument of change”.*

It is the kind of theatre that is put at the service of the disadvantaged rural and urban poor for the purpose of discussing and working out strategies for dealing with their socio-economic conditions. This is very pertinent because there is need to develop the kind of theatre which will speak to the people in their own languages and idioms and deal with issues of direct relevances to their lives. It was on this line of meaningful practice that Michael Etherton in 1976, experimented Community Theatre through the drama unit of department of English in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria and since then the department of English has lost count of number of productions and workshops done in the field of Community Theatre.

The popular project on Community Theatre in Sumaru in 1985 was also a landmark. On this project, students of drama unit of the university moved into Sumaru settlement, collected data on their origin and aspects of the life of the people and improvised plays based on data collected to treat the issues affecting them at that moment. Hence the philosophy that **“theatre should be brought to people instead of expecting the people to come to theatre”** was achieved.

Following the success of Community Theatre on Samaru and its environs there were births of several based group in Community Theatre in Hayin, Dage, Borno, Palladam and other places in Zaria, as observed by Yerima and Okwori in Iyowuese. In addition, the efforts of people like Harry Hagher in 1980 who introduced Community Theatre in Arts council Makurdi and College of Education Katsina-Ala of Benue State also helped to spur the development of Community Theatre in Nigeria. These efforts were complimented with the works of James Alu Alachi in 1981 by starting Community Theatre workshop in Abwa, Wombo, Amafu areas of Katsina-Ala, and Tar Ahua who

prominently engaged in several workshops and seminars concerning Community Theatre (Apena, 2012).

The activities of the Guerilla Theatre of Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife founded by Wole Soyinka in the late 1980's could be linked to the growth of Community Theatre practice in the southern Nigeria. Though the guerilla was meant to serve as a protest theatre against the corruption of the military regime of that time, it also used drama to conscientize the people against the ills of the society and bad governance.

Today, the concept of Community Theatre in Nigeria has gone through a lot of evolutionary process. The practice has moved beyond the confines of the University of Environment (as seen in ABU and OAU). Many governmental and non-governmental organizations whose focuses are on development are now using this medium to propagate their objectives. Such governmental agencies like Mass mobilization for Social justice, Economic Recovery and Self Reliance (MAMSER) use Community Theatre to propagate its aims and objectives towards successful implementation of the transition programme in the third republic. The gesture made by MAMSER is an eloquent testimony of the potentials of the Community Theatre as a veritable medium for community mobilization for development. Community thus serves as the most economical mode of expression which can convey an idea that can be accepted as true, and its impact is also direct and more immediate than other forms of expression. The immediacy and correctness of drama also qualify this forms as that for inculcating social and political value. All these go a long way to show the importance of Community Theatre.

Significance of community theatre to humanity

According to some scholars, the relevance of community theatre to humanity is that, it is:

1. An effective means of communicating sensitive issues (Eyoh,1986)
2. A powerful means of engaging community members emotionally (Bently, 1983)
3. A powerful tool for stimulating community action (Borrini-Feyerabend & Dianne, 1997)
4. A way of giving a voice to the voiceless (Barlow and Steve, 1994)
5. A communications device for education and decision making (Shank & Schirch, 2008)
6. A sustainable tool for community sensitization and mobilization

Re-humanizing the local populace against vote-buying in Nigeria's electoral process through community theatre

Since majority of voters have accepted the act of vote-buying as being a feature in Nigeria's political culture, community theatre can be considered as a constructive mechanism channeled towards enlightening the local populace on factors affecting Nigeria's democracy and national development. Specifically, it can be used to re-

humanize the local populace against the trending act of vote-buying in the Nigeria's electoral process.

Below are some of the discussion on areas through which community theatre can serve as a means to reduce or curb vote-buying in Nigeria

Community theatre as a means for informing the local populace on the criminalization of vote buying

Vote buying is prohibited in Nigeria. Article 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, as amended, states that: A person who — (a) corruptly by himself or by any other person at any time after the date of an election has been announced, directly or indirectly gives or provides or pays money to or for any person for the purpose of corruptly influencing that person or any other person to vote or refrain from voting at such election, or on account of such person or any other person having voted or refrained from voting at such election; or (b) being a voter, corruptly accepts or takes money or any other inducement during any of the period stated in paragraph (a) of this section, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of N100,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both (Punch, 2018; Electoral Act, 2010).

Similarly, the 2018 Revised Code of Conduct for Political Parties in section VIII (e) provides that, "... all political parties and their agents shall not engage in the following practice: buying of votes or offer any bribe, gift, reward, gratification or any other monetary or material considerations or allurements to voters and electoral officials" (INEC, 2013). Notwithstanding its prohibition, vote buying continues to be a widespread practice in Nigeria's recent elections.

The above cited sections can be propagated and given widest publicity through community theatre with focus on practical penalties for perpetrators as well as the socio-political cum economic effect of the act on their future living. Socially, perpetrators may be stigmatized of being an ex-convict and by such may not enjoy free relationships with other members of the community. Politically, persons who perpetrated in the act of buying votes have indirectly created a constructive point for opposition to use against him or her during campaign. Economically, the integrity of perpetrators will be highly doubted by business associates. Thus, earning living may be difficult for such persons. Above all, vote buyer who does not receive compliance from the electorate may be tempted to hire thugs to snatch ballot boxes and paper which may lead to sudden death of any of the thugs hired under self-defense or as authorized by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, just like we experienced in the order given by President Muhamadu Buhari to the security agencies against ballot box and paper snatchers. Having practically revealed the adverse implications to the people, there is high tendency for barest reduction in the perpetration of the act by vote buyers and sellers in the subsequent elections.

Community theatre as a means for informing the local populace on the two main approaches to buying votes for election gains.

The first is the Cash for Vote approach. It involves giving or promising the prospective voter some agreed amount of money well before the individual casts his or her vote at the polling station. The payment is done before the actual voting, and could be within the vicinity of the polling station or farther away. The “settlement” is made secretly or in the open. Often, the vote buyers demand evidence of ownership of a voter’s card and assurance that the voter will vote for their party before offering the money (Atoyebi, Ajaja and Aworinde 2018). In this approach, trust is key to the contract. It is also known as the pre-paid method of vote buying.

The second approach is the Vote for Cash approach. It involves giving or rewarding the voter with the agreed amount of money or material compensation after the individual has shown evidence that he or she voted for the party. There are several ways the voter can prove to the vote buyer that he or she voted for the agreed candidate. One method is where the voter shrewdly displays the ballot paper that (s)he has thumb printed in favour of a particular party, so that the party agent standing strategically nearby can confirm compliance with the unholy contract as (s)he emerges from the cubicle at the polling station (Tribune, 2018). Another method is for the voter to photograph the thumb printed ballot paper to show as evidence. Thereafter, compensation in cash and/or kind can occur either immediately or at the close of balloting, and may take place within the precinct of the polling station or at an agreed place. In this approach, evidence is key to the consummation of the contract. This approach is also known as the “see and buy” or the post-paid method.

With community theatre, the local populace can be practically exposed to the above mentioned approaches to vote-buying and the consequences attached to it. With doubt, one of the consequences is personal insecurity. A person who adopted the “vote for cash” or “cash for vote” may subject himself or herself to threat from the opposition should the result favour or not favour them.

Community theatre for empowering the disempowered against vote buying

An extract of the performance and post performance evaluation of a community play titled “empowering the disempowered” at Eredo Local Council Development Area by some selected students of Cultural and Creative Arts, Michael Otedola College of Primary Education (MOCPE) under the auspices of Mr. Apena, J.A reported that:

The day of performance as expected was a high Opener day to the villagers from both immediate and remote environs. The same performance was presented in two different places based on the geographical distribution of the communities. The first presentation was at the Pobo market, Poka while the second one was at Mojoda Bus stop popularly called Okada Park. The community where the play making process took place was deliberately avoided for performance venue not because of the political god father’s

alleged threat but simply because the environment had witnessed the playmaking process fully and even participated in it, which brought about the agitation, so to a large extent, the empowerment had taken place in that environment, it was then logical to try a new ground. The play went very well in the two places. It was a six to seven scenes performance reflecting on the aforelisted analyses. A political party had hitherto promised a candidate Hon. Bayo who stepped down due to party pressure that he would be given a slot in the next election. This refused to be as he was robbed of his right which was roughly masterminded by the political god father who dished out money and arms at will to foment trouble. This was queried by Hon. Bayo and he was beaten, his wife's salary stopped, their shops burgled. Hon. Bayo crossed to another party and people continued to support him, this threatened the godfather and had him kidnapped on Election Day, yet Hon. Bayo won the election despite all attempts to rig it by the opponent. People stood their ground and refused to be enslaved, Bayo miraculously escaped from the kidnappers and was declared winner. The people wish was manifested (Ighorojeh, Salau and Apena, 2012).

The post performance evaluation was a thought provoking one, it was a very critical evaluation of the drama, controversial and debatable, many questions were asked and observations were made. They saw that there was a relationship between the play and their lives. A Reverend Father said what he appreciated most in the play was that it was the people who actually made their community triumph which meant that everyone's destiny lies in his hand. He went further to make the people realized their potentials and their ability to initiate action to improve their unbearable situation. The Reverend Father who said he actually came to the market to buy few essentials said he was attracted by the crowd and he moved nearer and could not live until he saw the end of the play. He admonished the team and encouraged them to make it regular, he even gave the team financial encouragement. Some faces that were in the market performance at Pobo followed the team to the Mojoda Park performance. There were tension and more agitation because it was full of motor bike riders. It got to the stage during the evaluation that a man with passion said he was ready to mention the people which the play was talking about and they unanimously agreed that they were ready to bear the consequences. A market woman said the aspect that touched her most was that most of these godfathers had children overseas enjoying and they were using theirs to foment trouble, she ended up raising curses and abuses on the godfather (Ighorojeh, Salau and Apena, 2012).

Captivating title of community theatre play for re-humanizing the local populace against vote-buying

S/n	Title	Objective	Possible Implication on Humanity
1	Voting without inducement	To enlighten the local populace on the possibility of voting without being induced	The ideology of expecting financial or material inducement from politician in order to vote them or their wish would reduce to some extent
2	Calling the future leaders	To bring the awareness of youth to the roles they can play in curbing vote-buying	The youths would be strongly ready to reject political inducement offered to buy their votes. This may prompt them to stand on the ideology of “Not-Too-Young-To-Rule”. Thus, coming together to support a youth worthy of being trusted
3	To whom is my vote	To enlighten the local populace on how to evaluate contestants in an election	The electorate would cultivate the culture of measuring integrity, personality and credibility of contestants based on past leadership records to determine who to vote for
4	Sold right	To inform the local populace on how vote-buying is a means of selling their rights.	The populace would be aware of the fact that their right is indirectly bought through vote-buying. Thus, the rate of perpetration on the part of the electorate would reduce.
5	The way forward	To state guides on how the populace can build a good political culture	The local populace would build on the guides and imbibe a good political culture devoid of selling their votes
6	The settlement	To reveal the contractual nature of vote-trading	The populace would change their act of selling votes as they would have been made to understand that the development which they may be expecting have been fulfilled with the money used to buy their votes
7	Lazy youth	To reawaken the youth so that they can avoid being used as political thugs	The youths would be reawakened, efficient, effective and determined to work to earn living so as to be self-reliant and take independent political decision
8	Where are we?	To reveal to the local populace where we are, where we should be and where we can be	The people would understand the implication of vote-buying on governance, what should be done to change the situation so that the country can experience holistic development
9	The inducement	To expose the local populace to various forms of inducement channeled towards buying their votes	The electorate would understand various approaches of vote-buying and try every possible best to avoid being victim of such act
10	Fooling the fooled	Readiness to collect the money from vote buyers with intention of doing according to one’s desire	If politicians refuse to desist from the act of vote-buying, the electorate would understand the fact they can collect their money and vote according to their own desire

(presenters’ initiative, 2019)

Conclusion

The use of incentives to buy votes may have repercussions on Nigeria's elections. It can negatively impact the quality (freeness and fairness) of elections. It can contribute to the wrong political parties being elected to serve the nation. Once voters are paid to cast their votes in a certain way, they become enslaved by their political paymasters as, by default, their rights to challenge their vote buying political paymasters are restricted. As vote buying is so widespread, it raises concerns about the quality of emerging democratic institutions and how potential elections conducted will help to deliver better and more accountable governments.

However, the adoption of community theatre can be used to rehumanize the local populace (most especially the youths) by reawakening, remaking, re-enlightening, re-informing, re-orientating, re-instilling or re-sensitizing them on the need to be aware of vote-buying, its implications on national development and how such act can be reduced to its barest minimum.

Recommendations

To further achieve the core aim of this paper, the following recommendations are made:

1. Locally based theatre groups or perhaps Local Government Area (LGA) Mobile Theatre Groups should be encouraged with regular orientation so as to emphasize more community based participatory action against immoral values such as vote buying, ballot snatching among others
2. There is need to advocate for the inclusion of budget lines in Federal Government innovation to local government Area/ LCDA that have drama group and use them as an important part of their local information and communication strategy.
3. Voters, governments, NGOs, electoral bodies, civil societies, and non-state actors should find it an activity to spearhead and strengthen democracy by mounting vigorous campaigns to educate the electorate not to accept financial or material rewards before they vote for a particular candidate or party as this amounts to selling one's conscience.
4. Since senior secondary school students also take part in national elections and are targets in distributing the incentives, the curriculum at this level of education should include vote buying to sensitize and conscientize them about the menace.
5. There is need for support through local churches, mosques and other religious group to address their congregation through drama approach which may be exhibited in their place of worship or an open place in the community

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