



ELECTORAL CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA:
A STUDY OF THE

2019 **GENERAL** **ELECTIONS**

DECEMBER, 2020



Centre for Democracy & Development
Centre pour la démocratie et le développement

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Idayat Hassan

Director

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About SCRAP-C

The Strengthening Citizen's Resistance Against Prevalence of Corruption (SCRAP-C) Project is funded with UK aid from the UK government and is designed to contribute to a reduction in corruption as a result of changing public attitudes that increasingly disapprove of corrupt practices.

Through its Upright for Nigeria campaign, the project seeks to build public demand and attitudes for anti-corruption through strengthened and organized collective and individual actions and voices.

Through its strategy, the campaign has national and state specific engagement in Kaduna, Kano (extending activities to Jigawa), Lagos, Enugu, Borno and Akwa Ibom

The Upright for Nigeria campaign, will amongst other creative and inclusive strategies, embark on a robust behaviour change campaign including the engagement of civil society organizations and informal sector associations.

Key activities include capacity building for effective response to corrupt practices and engagement with citizens to change the narratives moving towards a corruption averse mentality.

Working with the media and leveraging on relevant entertainment education and consensus building platforms, the Upright for Nigeria campaign will develop and implement a coherent, communication strategy to achieve campaign goals.



Poverty of the masses enables the wealthy to capture the democratic institutions and use them to promote their selfish ends. This has been the experience in Nigeria over the years as witnessed by the growing incidences of "elections without the electorate" and "cash and carry go" politics. Unarguably, democracy cannot take firm roots and flourish in an environment of hunger, poor health, inadequate shelter, social injustice and physical insecurity.

Indeed, poverty and its twin brother, corruption, have been the banes of Nigerian politics and electoral processes in the post-independence period.

[Report of the Electoral Reform Committee, 2008, pp. 90-91].



The confirmation of the increasing concern over the illegal deployment of huge state resources by incumbents both at the federal and state to outdo opponents and unfairly win elections is one of the major highlights of the data from the field. Section 15(5) of the 1999 Constitution prohibits abuse of power. Item 9 of the 5th Schedule to the Constitution also prohibits public officers from doing any act or directs same to be done in abuse of his office. Any violation of this provision attracts a punishment of vacation from office, forfeiture of the assets derived from such abuse and disqualification from holding public office for at least 10 years. This is without prejudice to any criminal offences that may be brought against the violator.

All incumbents swear to an oath to uphold these provisions. This study however reveals gross violation of these sacred constitutional provisions by incumbents.

[Akomaye, in chapter on Akwa Ibom in this Report]

Background

A major pillar of post-1990 democratic transitions in Africa is the periodic organization and conduct of constitutionally entrenched competitive party elections, by an independent electoral management body (EMB), to elective public political offices in the executive and legislative branches of government in the African state. The conduct of the elections is required to conform substantially with guiding principles of electoral integrity that provide the indicators and measure of free and fair elections. [See Box 1]

The principles are designed to guarantee that the outcomes of democratic elections are uncertain, in the sense of their being "indeterminate ex-ante." The outcomes are expectedly "indeterminate ex-ante" because the measures and indicators to ensure such outcomes are designed to create a competitive electoral level playing ground to make it possible for yesterday's winners to become today's losers, and yesterday's losers, today's winners.¹ Although there is no general agreement on the meaning of electoral integrity, the operative or defining word in the concept, integrity "refers to incorruptibility or a firm adherence to a code of moral values," in the conduct of democratic elections.²

Box 1: Guiding Principles of Electoral Integrity

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Respect for principles of electoral democracy* | 2 Ethical conduct | 3 Professionalism and Accuracy |
| 4 Institutional Safeguards | 5 Oversight and Enforcement | 6 Transparency and Accountability |

*for a statement of what this means, see the Carter Center's Data base of Obligations for Democracy Elections, www.cartercenter.org/des-search/des/Default.aspx

Source: www.cartercenter.org/des-search/des/Default.aspx

1 Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, Ch. 1, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

2 <https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/ei/onePage>, accessed 25 October 2020

The principles are set out in African and international codes, conventions, and standards on democratic elections, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation; the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; the O.A.U. Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa; the Declaration on Unconstitutional Change of Government; the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality; the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), and in national constitutions. Their indicators and measures are set out in some of the codes and standards and in national electoral laws, related subsidiary legislation, and regulations issued by the EMB.

Nigeria has witnessed six unbroken conduct of back-to-back quadrennial general elections (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019), at the federal and state levels, in addition to the conduct of seven off-cycle governorship elections. The off-cycle elections were conducted because the courts declared null and void earlier governorship elections conducted in Edo State, Ondo State, and Osun State, during the 2007 general elections.³ The declarations created a new quadrennial sequence of general elections in the states different from the sequence in the other twenty-nine states and the FCT. Several bye-

elections have also been conducted, since 1999, to fill vacancies in national assembly and state houses of assembly seats, either because the elections to them were voided by the courts, or became vacant as a result of the resignations or deaths of the elected members holding the seats.

Although the quadrennial general elections have been unbroken and were conducted within the timeline as provided by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, the elections, particularly the presidential and state governorship elections, have been typically mired in bitter controversy and were seriously flawed in several respects, precipitating or trailed by deadly violent election-related conflicts. The reports of election observer groups that INEC accredited underscored how the 2019 general elections had degenerated abysmally.

The reports attributed the degeneration to the electoral corruption and violence that sullied them, narrowing the free and fair competitive level playing ground, so vital to make the outcomes of the elections indeterminate ex-ante, and incorruptible. More worrisome than some of the earlier elections since 1999, the 2019 elections continued an historic trend that shows that elections in the country are essentially mechanisms for anti-democratic and fractious party competition and violent conflict.

3. See, Adele L. Jinadu, "Nigeria," p. 144, Table 6, in Ismaila Madior Fall, Mathias Hounkpe, Adele L. Jinadu, and Pascale Kambale (co-authors), *Election Management Bodies in West Africa*, Open Society Foundations, 2011.

INEC registered 91 political parties to contest the 2019 general elections, with only 73 of them putting candidates on the ballot for the presidential elections. However, the country is effectively a "two-party state" at the federal level, and in several states, indicating an alternation of presidential and governorship power between the APC and the PDP, at the federal and state levels, although there are also some states that have effectively remained one-party dominant since May 1999.⁴

Table 1 provides the state of the two major parties (APC and PDP), before and after the 2019 general elections at the federal level, and in the states covered by this study.

Table 1: Political party strength in states and the FCT selected for the study

State	Ruling Party (pre -election)	Party winning 2019 Presidential	Party winning 2019 Governorship
Akw a Ibom(South - South)	PDP	PDP	PDP
Bauchi (NE)	APC	APC	PDP
Borno (NE)	APC	APC	APC
Enugu (SE)	PDP	PDP	PDP
Imo(SE)	APC	PDP	APC
Kaduna (NW)	APC	APC	APC
Kano (NW)	APC	APC	APC
Kwara (NC)	PDP	APC	APC
Lagos(SW)	APC	APC	APC
Osun (SW)	APC	APC	APC
Plateau NC)	APC	PDP	APC
Federal Government	APC	APC	-

4 This classification of party systems follows that in M.A. Mohammed Salih and Per Nordlund (Eds.), Political Parties in Africa: Challenges for Sustainable Multiparty Democracy: Africa Regional Report, Stockholm: International IDEA, 2006 ,p.50, where African party systems are classified as follows: a) "A two-party system is duopolistic in that two major parties that have equal prospect of winning government power dominate it"; (b) A dominant party system is competitive in the sense that a number of parties compete for power in regular and popular elections, but is dominated by a single party that consequently enjoys prolonged periods in power; and (c) "A multi-party system is characterized by competition between more than two parties, thus reducing the chance of single-party government and increasing the likelihood of coalitions."

Table 1A shows the number of legislative seats (Senate, House of Representatives and state Houses of Assembly) by political parties in the six selected states and the FCT (Senate only) during the 2019 general elections.

Table 1A: Legislative seats won by parties in the selected states and the FCT during 2019 general elections

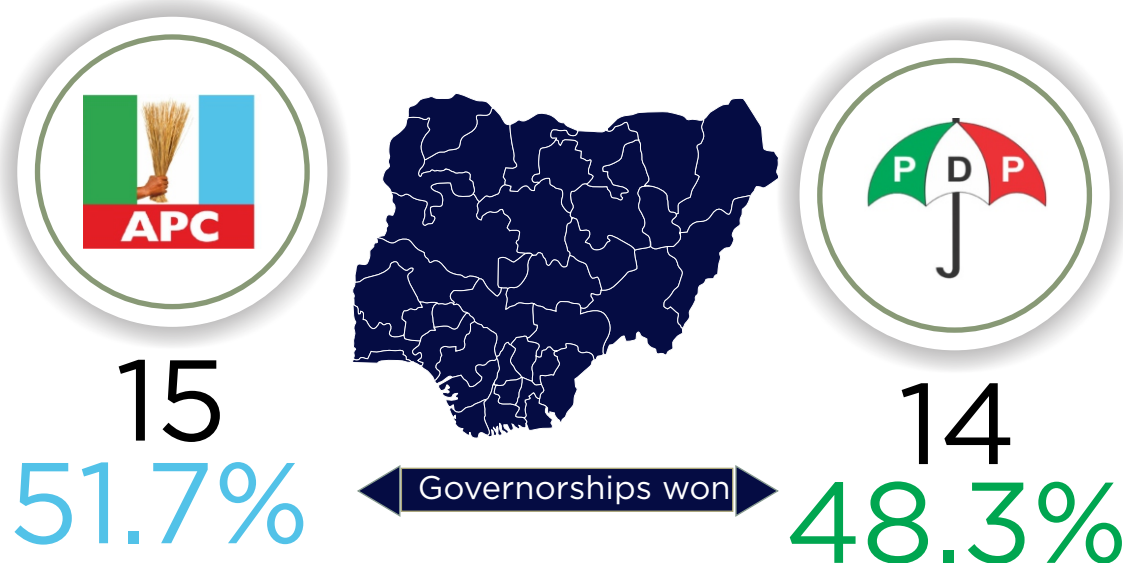
State	Party	Senate	House of Representatives	House of Assembly
Akwa Ibom (S/S)	APC	0	0	0
	PDP	3	10	26
Bauchi (N/E)	APC	3	9	20
	PDP	0	2	20
	PRP	0	1	0
	NNPP	0	0	1
Borno (N/E)	APC	3	10	28
	PDP	0	0	0
Enugu (S/E)	APC	0	0	0
	PDP	3	8	24
FCT	APC	0	-	-
	PDP	1	-	-
Imo (S/E)	APC	2	2	0
	PDP	1	6	13
	AA	0	2	8
	APGA	0	0	6
Kaduna(N/W)	APC	2	12	24
	PDP	1	4	10
Kano (N/W)	APC	3	24	27
	PDP	0	0	13
Kwara (N/C)	APC	3	6	24
	PDP	0	0	0
Lagos (S/W)	APC	3	21	40
	PDP	0	3	0
Osun (S/W)	APC	2	6	23
	PDP	1	3	3
Plateau	APC	2	4	15
	PDP	1	4	9

*For the Senate, each state has three Senatorial seats and the FCT only one senatorial district.

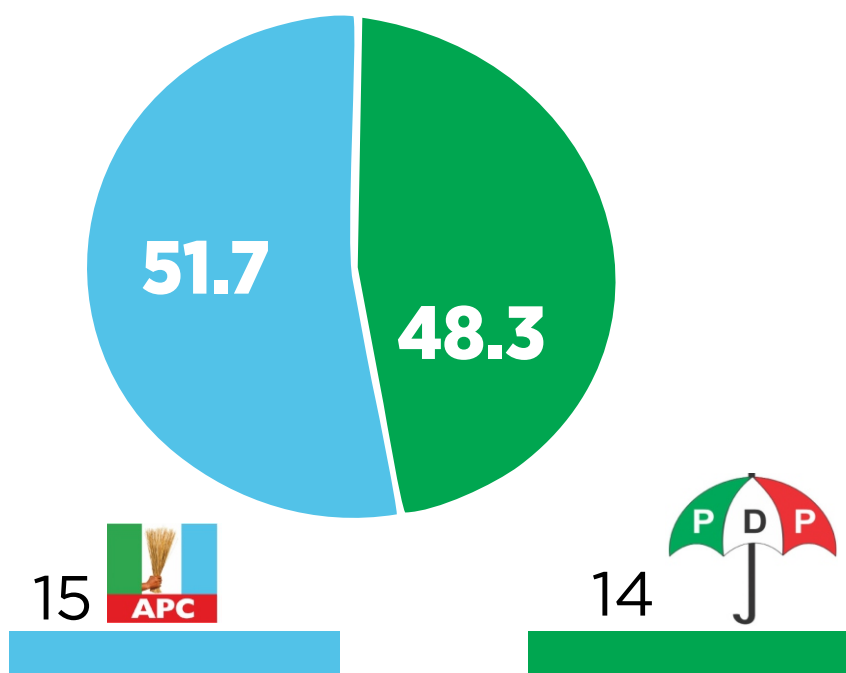
Source: Abstracted from: INEC, Report of the 2019 General Election, Abuja, 2020, pp.334-384

The graphics below show the number of governorship elections won by each of the two major parties (APC and PDP) during the 2019 general elections.

Summary of governorship elections won by party during 2019 general elections across the country.

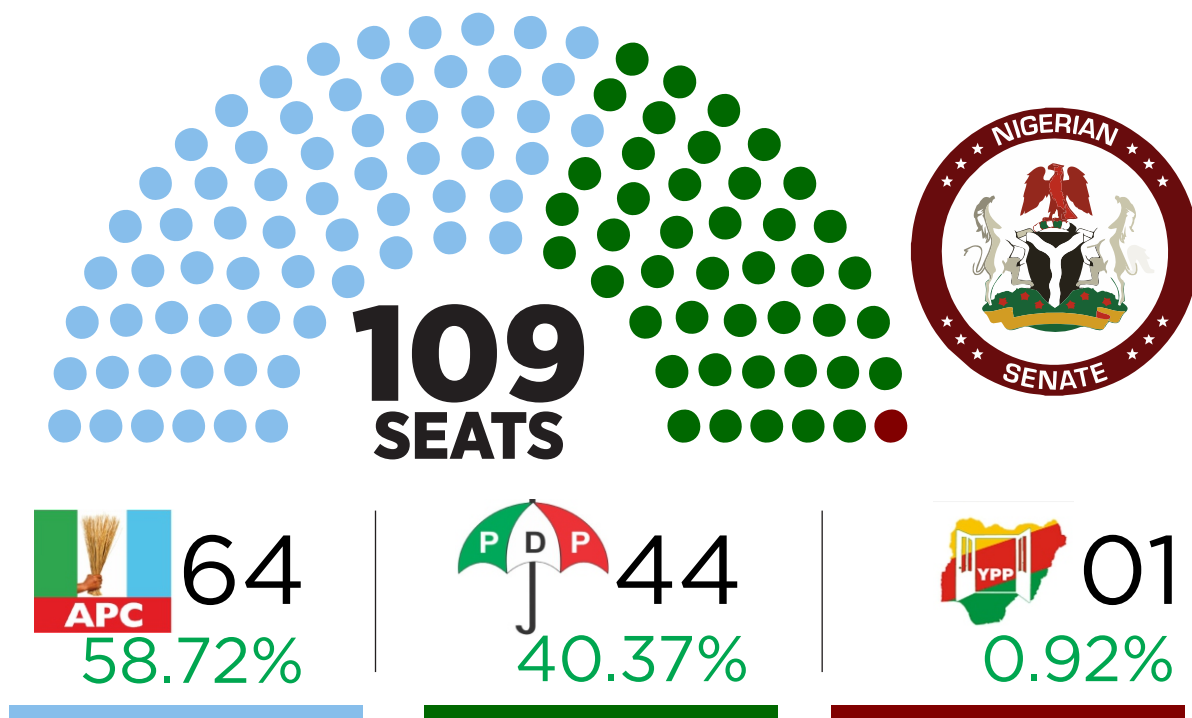


No of Governorship Elections Won by the Major Parties during the 2019 General Elections

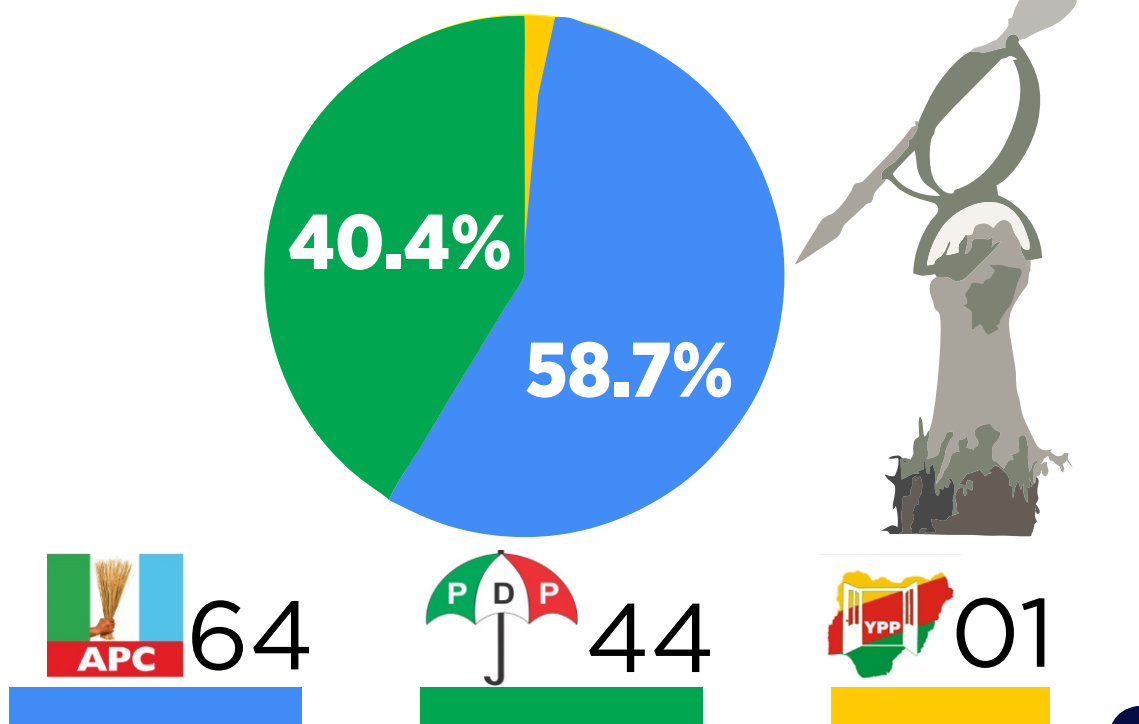


Source: INEC, Report of the 2019 General Election, Abuja, 2020, p.338

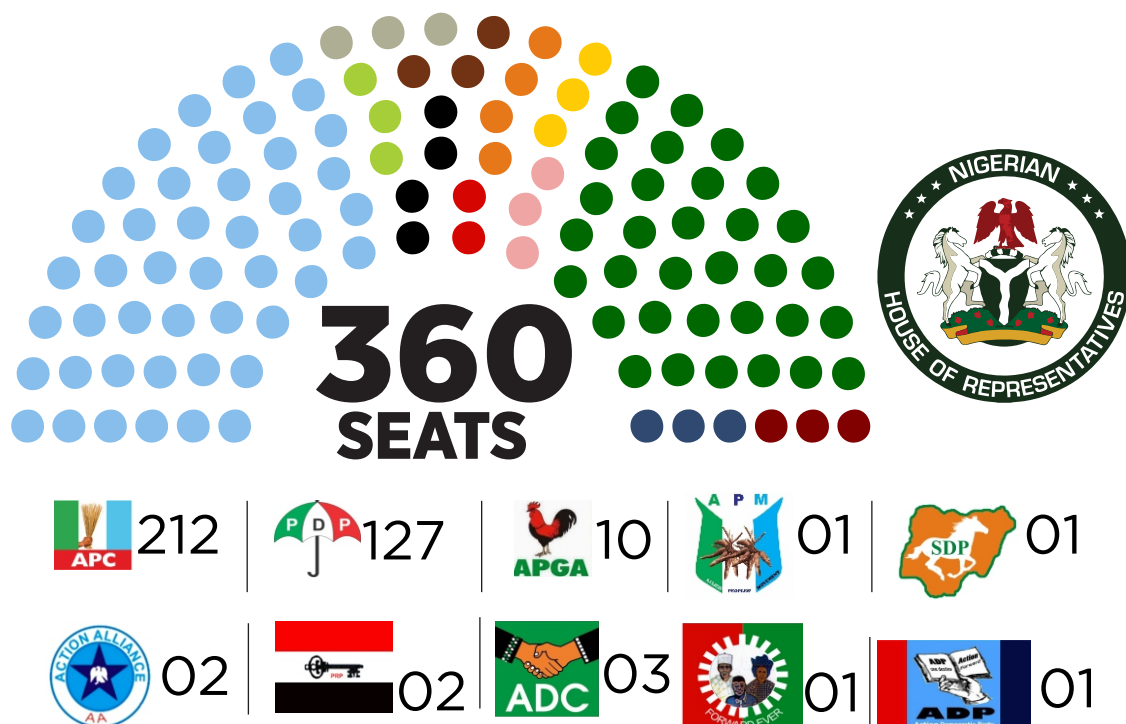
The graphics below outline the number of senate seats across the country won by political parties during the 2019 general elections.



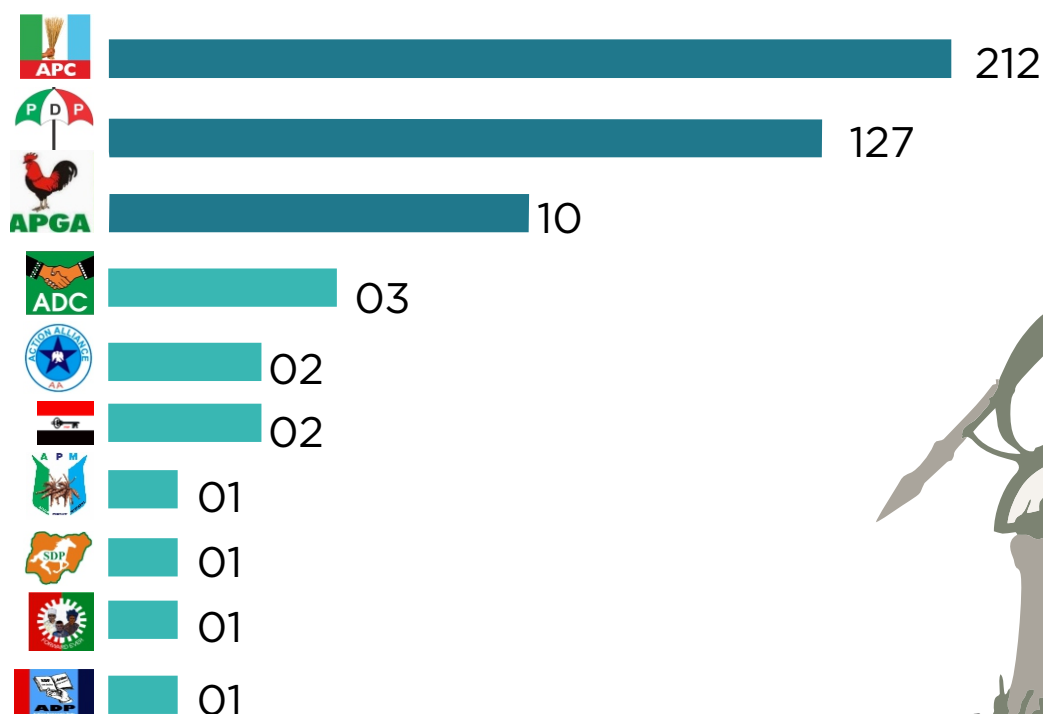
Summary of seats won by parties during the Senate elections across Nigeria during the 2019 General Elections



The graphics below show the number seats in the House of Representative across the country won by political parties during the 2019 general elections.

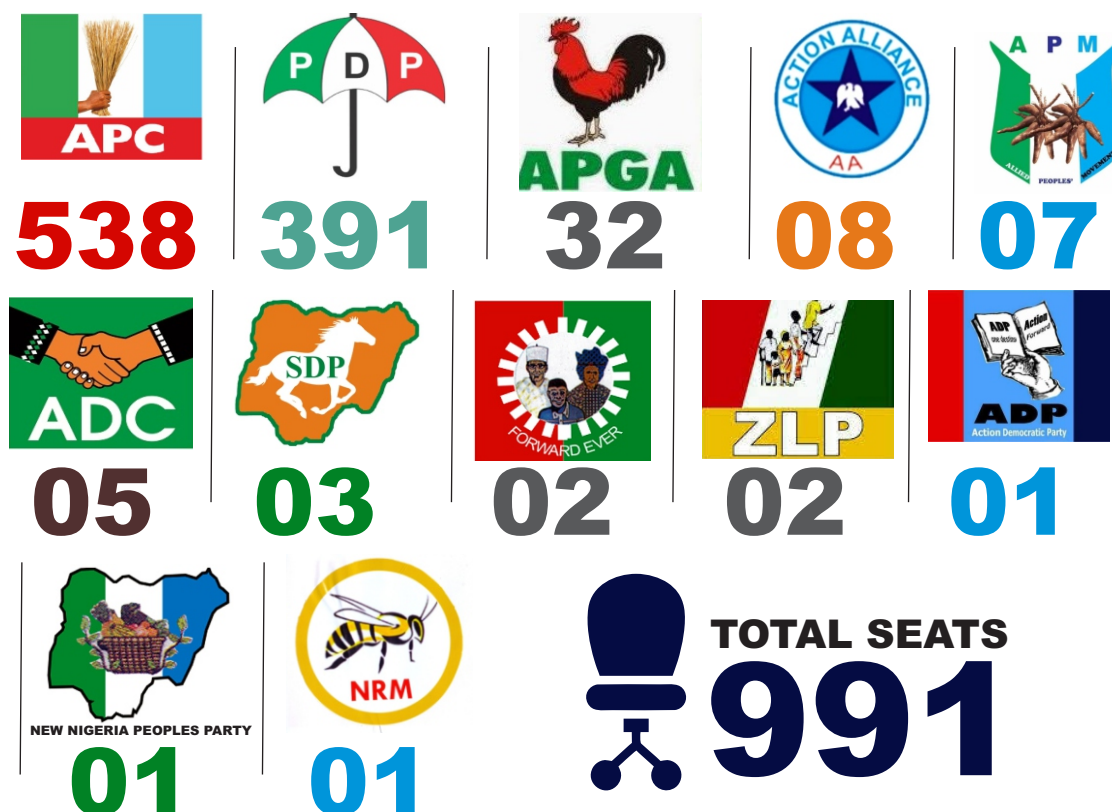


Summary of House of Representatives seats won across the country by parties during the 2019 general elections



The graphics below show the number of seats in state Houses of Assembly across the country won by political parties during the 2019 general elections.

Seats in state houses of assembly across the country won by political parties during the 2019 general elections



Source: INEC, Report of the 2019 General Election, Abuja, 2020, p.379

Electoral corruption is defined stipulatively in this Report as political and electoral behaviour that violates the spirit (moral anchors) and the letter of the principles of electoral integrity. It is deliberately deployed to undermine the indeterminate ex-ante condition for democratic elections. It is criminal behaviour and moral subversion of Nigeria's electoral process. For example, it is prohibited under Part VII, Electoral Offences, particularly Sections 120(1)(d), 121(1)(2), 124, 129, 130, and 131) of the country's 2010 Electoral Act (as amended). It ranges over behaviour such as electoral violence, including election-related or induced arson and assassination, voter intimidation, voter

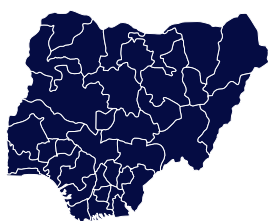
inducement, voter suppression, vote-buying, ballot box snatching and destruction, manipulation of election results, falsification of election results, under-age voting, multiple voter registration, multiple voting, deliberate late or non-supply of election materials to opposition strongholds, deliberate or contrived delay in opening polling centre located in opposition strongholds, and illegal printing of election result sheets.

Electoral corruption as used in this Report also includes a range of behaviour, outside of that enumerated above, that can be broadly classified as the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party and electoral gain

[See Box 2], that is contrary to the spirit and the letter of Section 15 (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended). The Section provides that “the State shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power.” In the same vein, Item 9 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) provides that, “a public officer shall not direct or direct to be done, in abuse of his office, any arbitrary act prejudicial to the rights of any other person knowing that such an act is unlawful...”

The commonplace abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan electoral gain reflects the wider trend in the African state of the failure of public political officeholders to separate politics from administration. This failure reflects an age-long deep-rooted zero-sum approach to politics and the weakness of countervailing institutions of accountability in state and society to constrain or check the abuse. Box 2 points to the unsavoury consequence of the abuse of power of incumbency for democratic elections in Africa, which captures the essence of the Nigerian electoral experience with it.

Box 2: Abuse of power of incumbency and electoral outcomes



Partisanship of state agencies

In some [African] countries, the partisanship of state agencies (police, intelligence forces, and the army) fuels electoral conflict. The agencies often promote the incumbent party by repressing other parties during elections. When such agencies and party-linked militia combine, capacity to deal with electoral violence is further undermined. Election rigging becomes more likely if state agencies support the incumbent party.

Source: [United Nations Economic Commission for Africa \(ECA\), African Governance Report III: Elections & the Management of Diversity, Oxford: University Press, 2013, p.10](#)

This Report attempts to shed some light, through desk and survey research, on the experience and perception of survey respondents on electoral corruption in Nigeria during the 2019 general elections. Anecdotal accounts of electoral corruption abound in Nigeria. The accounts point to how electoral corruption is embedded in the country's four-year electoral cycle, not just a feature of the voting process on election day but also of the voter registration process and other pre-election day processes and

activities, such as party election nomination processes.⁵ The Election Reform Committee Report 2008 [ERC] provides a brief historical sketch of the conduct of elections in Nigeria since 1922. The ERC Report concludes that, “The 85-year-old-history of Nigeria's elections shows a progressive degeneration of outcomes,”⁶ with electoral corruption highlighted as a significant causative factor.

The degeneration, thus, has deep

5 For details, see Jibrin Ibrahim, “Nigeria's 2007 Elections: The Fitful Path to Democratic Citizenship, Special Report, United States Institute for Peace, 2007; L. Adele Jinadu, “Nigeria,” Chapter 5, in Ismaila Madior Fall, Mathias Hounkpe, Adele L. Jinadu and Pascale Kambale (co-authors), *Election Management Bodies in West Africa*, Open Society Foundations, 2011

6 Electoral Reform Committee, *Report of the Electoral Reform Committee, Volume 1, Main Report*, 2008, p.21, Abuja: December 2008

historical roots in Nigeria's colonial and post-colonial political economy of underdevelopment. It is a political economy that has woven a complex web of "booty" capitalism⁷ that has entangled and held competitive party and electoral politics in the country hostage to electoral corruption. It has also spawned and encouraged impunity and a generally anti-democratic political and legal culture in the country's mainstream public political life. The perception of the growth of electoral perception in Nigeria in recent years is intimately related to the country's position in global rankings of corruption perception and global corruption barometer,⁸ in a way that shows how grand and petty corruption⁹ merge to provide the various threads in the web of political and electoral corruption that has entrapped democracy and development in the country.

The substantial and proactive investment of the country's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in internal administrative and financial reform and in the application of high technology to bolster trust in, and enhance the integrity of its electoral operations, has paradoxically barely flattened the rising curve of electoral corruption in the country. More ominously, the rising level of electoral corruption is aggravating the mixture of despair and hope that is progressively building up into a revolution of rising expectations about democracy and development in Nigeria by the general public, especially among the youth and

“

the more INEC succeeds in reducing electoral malpractices through the administrative reforms and the application of integrity enhancing technology in its operations, the more is there an increase in vote-buying and recourse to the abuse of power of incumbency for illicit electoral gain.

women, and other déclassé groups in the country. This development points to a paradox: the more INEC succeeds in reducing electoral malpractices through the administrative reforms and the application of integrity enhancing technology in its operations, the more is there an increase in vote-buying and recourse to the abuse of power of incumbency for illicit electoral gain.

In view of this development, the challenge before Nigeria is the urgent problem of policy reform to mitigate and neutralize electoral corruption in the country. Electoral corruption has contributed to moving general elections in Nigeria, as envisioned and indeed as provided under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), and the country's electoral legislation, away from being what they should and are designed to be, veritable democratic mechanisms for managing political succession and the country's diversity. Rather, the country's elections, under the intertwined burden of political and electoral corruption, have become a lightning rod for the fratricidal political mobilization of ethnicity for sowing and peddling hate in the country.

7 "Booty capitalism" is used to refer to the pursuit of their private interests by political actors, and their godfathers and patrons, abusing public (state) resources, trust, and apparatuses for the purpose

8 Although contested by Nigeria's Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Crimes Commission (ICPC), the 2019 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Nigeria, with a score of 26 out of 100, 146 out of 180 countries worldwide and the second perceived most corrupt country in the Economic Community of West Africa. See <https://www.transparencyinternational.org/en/countries/nigeria#>, accessed 17 October, 2020

9 Grand corruption refers to corruption at the highest level of government by elected public political officeholders; petty corruption is corruption by low- and middle-level public functionaries; and political corruption

Objectives

CDD undertook the research, of which this Report is the outcome, to understand the drivers and the implications of two forms of electoral corruption, vote-buying and the abuse of the power of incumbency, in Nigeria, and to offer recommendations to diminish their salience as contributory factors in the distortion of competitive party and electoral politics in the country.

The broader objective is that the data-based analysis, findings, and recommendations for political and electoral reform in the Report will help to generate policy advocacy, action and reform to diminish the unwholesome impact of the two forms of electoral corruption on the conduct of general elections in Nigeria. Hopefully, it will strengthen electoral integrity and the protection of the mandate of the electorate more firmly and sustainably, and brighten the conditions and prospects for good governance in the country substantially.

Unless the toxic economic, political and socio-economic environment that inhibits good governance in the country is sanitized, democratic elections cannot serve the positive function of democratic consolidation in the country.

With this in view, the main objective of the study was to find out and analyze the experience and perceptions of the two forms of electoral corruption during the 2019 presidential and governorship, by a randomly stratified sampled population of voters in the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, and in two states in each of the six geopolitical zones of the Nigerian Federation. [See, Table 1]

Methodology

Survey data was collected and analyzed as follows:(a) perception and experience of vote-buying/vote-selling, used synonymously with vote inducement, and (b) perceptions of the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan political gain. [See Table 2]

Table 2: Forms of Electoral corruption

Forms of Vote-Buying	Compliance Strategy	Abuse of power of incumbency
1. Foodstuff 2.T-Shirts 3.Brande party materials 4.Cash 5.Promise	1.Oath-taking 2.Threat of attack/death 3.Threat of loss of job/business premises 4.Display/snapping of thumb printed ballot paper 5.Service before payment 6.No condition attached	1.Collaboration of security agencies with agents of the ruling party 2.INEC staff gave undue advantage to ruling party agents 3.Government officials actively promoted interests of the ruling party 4.Government resources (state radio, state TV, state newspaper) deployed to favour/give advantage to the ruling party 5.Massive deployment of other state resources(vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes) in favour of the ruling party

The choice of these two forms of electoral corruption was dictated by the general public perception and specific individual's experience of their pervasive prominence during the 2019 general elections. What, if any, is the basis for the perception of voter-buying and abuse of power of incumbency? What is the nature of the experience of vote-buying? If there is, what is the extent of the perception or experience? What is the perception/experience of the relative importance attached to each form of electoral corruption and what explains it? What should be done to mitigate their pervasive prominence in future elections?

It should be emphasized that the concern of this Report is neither with detailing and substantiating specific cases of these forms of electoral corruption; nor with finding out if vote-takers actually voted the way vote buyers dictated or expected. The concern is not also to show that the two forms of electoral corruption made or did not make a difference between losers and winners of the presidential and governorship elections.

Proving vote-buying and the abuse of the power of incumbency in court has not been easy, despite anecdotal accounts and general perception about them. Courts have voided some

governorship elections because of other forms election corruption, based on evidence before them, declaring losers winners in some, while ordering fresh elections in the others. INEC has had to declare as inconclusive some governorship elections in progress because of demonstrably wanton disregard for the electoral law. Yet no presidential election has been declared null and void since 1999 because the petition before the Supreme Court against the declaration of the winner by INEC had failed to prove that the election had not satisfied the substantial compliance test for credible, free and fair elections.¹⁰

The primary concern of this Report is, however, to document and explain the subjective perception and experience of the respondents and of CDD's field observers about forms of electoral behaviour that violated the provisions of the country's Constitution and electoral law, while also seemingly subverting the guiding principles of electoral integrity, during the 2019 general elections.

The research utilized a simplified research methodology that combined two research instruments: (a) desk research; and (b) perception/opinion survey research that involved the administration of questionnaire to a stratified sample of respondents from

10 According to Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, Re: Supreme Court on 2007 elections: Another Missed Opportunity, in mimeo, December 2008, "The Supreme Court by its decision in the last (2007) election ensured that it is now impossible to prove electoral fraud or manipulation certainly in a Presidential election."

the voting-age populations of the states selected in order to collect from them data on a broad range vote-buying and abuse of power of incumbency for quantitative analysis, supplemented with key informants' interviews and the conduct of focus group discussion with another set of randomly selected participants.

The Questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part A (Sections A-C) that profiles the respondents; and Part B (Sections D-G) that elicits the respondents' perception and experience of vote-buying, and their perception of the abuse of power of incumbency.

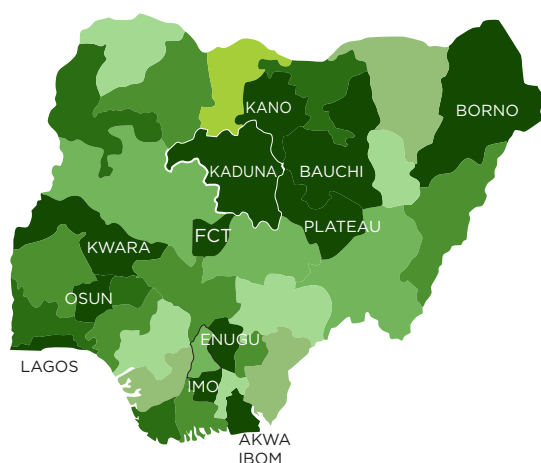
The graphics below provide an overview of various elements of the questionnaire

Part A

Profile of respondents(Name, state, senatorial district, LGA, gender, marital status, occupation, education, religion, age, membership of political party, age)

Part B

Perception of givers, drivers, and forms of electoral corruption



300
SURVEY
RESPONDENTS

KANO AND
LAGOS STATES

200
SURVEY
RESPONDENTS

AKWA IBOM, BAUCHI, BORNO, ENUGU, IMO,
KADUNA, KANO, KWARA, LAGOS, OSUN,
PLATEAU AND THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY.

3

FOCUS GROUP
DISCUSSIONS

IN EACH STATE
AND THE FCT

6

KEY INFORMANTS
INTERVIEWS

IN EACH STATE
AND THE FCT

12

STATES AND
THE FCT

Questionnaire questions are each presented in a "cafeteria" format offering each respondent between 2 and 6 options from which to choose answers.

For example on the experience of vote-buying, respondents were asked whether they were induced in any form

to vote during the 2019 general elections; and on perception vote-buying, whether they observed any form of inducement to voters during the general elections. The questionnaire on the abuse of the power of incumbency was limited to eliciting its perception by the respondents.

The survey and field research components of the research were conducted in the following states across the six geopolitical zones of the Nigerian Federation, and in the Federal Capital Territory: i) Akwa Ibom (South-South); ii) Bauchi (North East); iii) Borno (North East); iv) Enugu (South East); v) Imo (South East); vi) Kaduna (North West); vii) Kano (North West); viii) Kwara (North Central); ix) Lagos (South West); x) Osun (South West); xi) Plateau (North Central); and the Federal Capital Territory.

300 survey respondents each from Kano and Lagos States, because of their population and 200 respondents from each of the other states, and FCT were selected to fill the questionnaire.

They were selected to reflect diversity in gender, marital status, occupation,

education, religion, age, geographic location and, as appropriate, party membership. Three (3) FGDs were conducted in each state and the FCT, and participants were clustered into five groups [Table 3]. Six (6) key informants' interviews (KIIs) were held in each state.

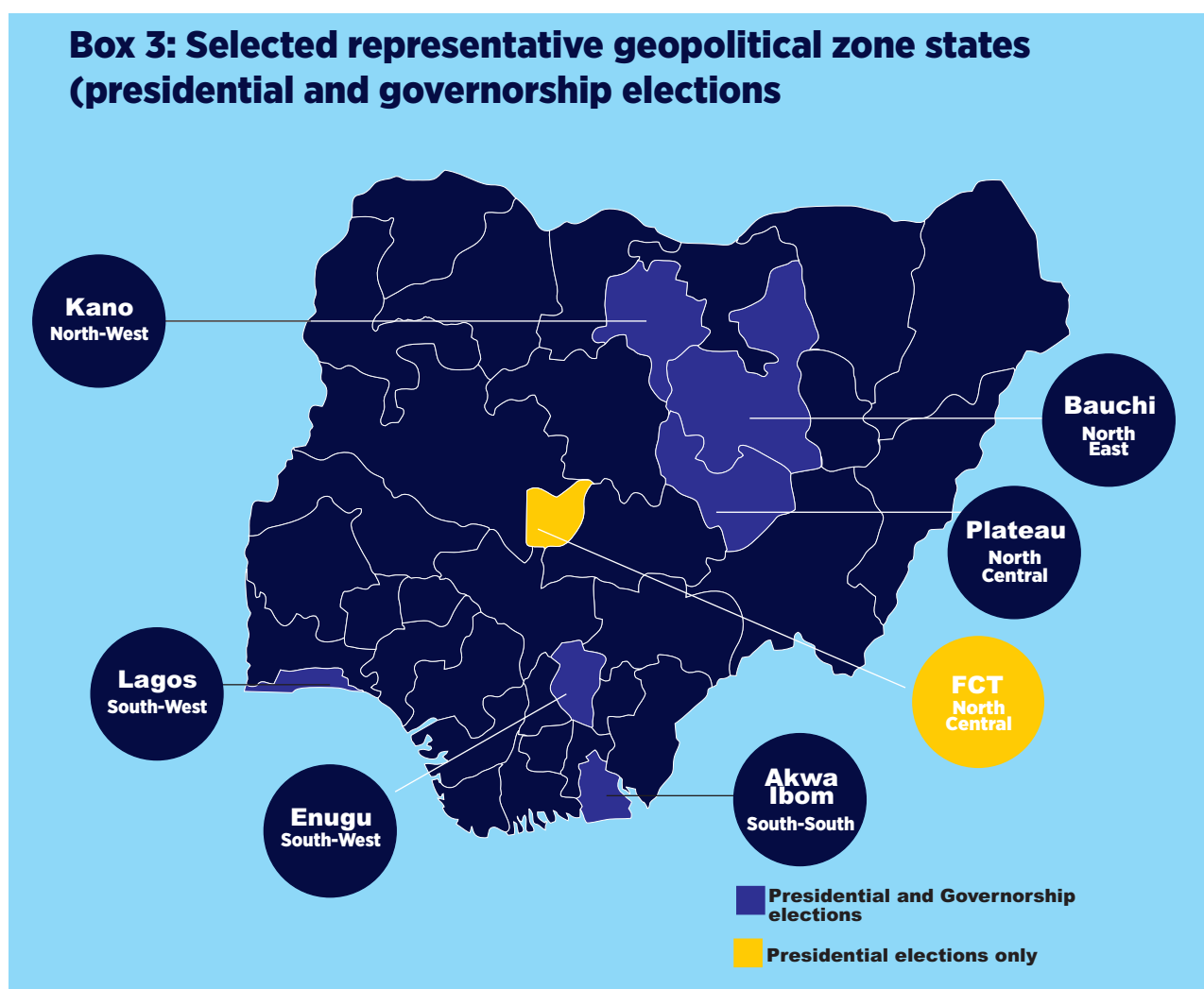
Both the FGDs and KIIs were designed to serve as platforms through which to find out from the participants their perceptions and experience of vote-buying and the abuse of the power of incumbency and, in the case of the FGDs to generate debate among them about the economic, political, and socio-cultural context within which to situate, understand, and address the problem of electoral reform and governance reform generally, arising from the focus of the research on the two forms of electoral corruption.

Table 3: FGD Participants

Identified Stakeholders	Groupings of Stakeholders
1. Political parties	Group 1: Political parties
2. Election observer groups	Group 2: Election observer groups and Media
3. Media	Group 3: The Electorate (Traders, NURTW members, Voters, youth)
4. Traders	Group 4: INEC
5. NURTW Members	Group 5: Security personnel
6. Voters	
7. Youth Groups	
8. INEC	
9. Electoral security personnel.	

The sections that follow present overview and analysis of data from the perception and experience of vote-buying and the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party and electoral gain by respondents to the research questionnaire, key informant interviewees, and participants in the focus group discussions in six representative states, drawn to reflect the country's geopolitical zones, in respect of both the presidential and governorship elections[Box 3]. For the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), which does not have the office of governor and, therefore, does not elect one, only data for the presidential elections are provided.

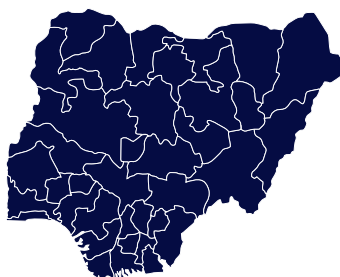
Box 3: Selected representative geopolitical zone states (presidential and governorship elections)



OVERVIEW I: FINDINGS ON VOTE-BUYING

The survey questionnaire sought information on the experience and perception of vote-buying during the 2019 general elections as listed in Box 4. It is important not to confuse experience with perception of vote-buying. A voter may not be approached to sell his/her vote but he/she may observe, 'perceive' vote-buying during the elections. A similar distinction, between experience (objective incidents) of vote-buying/electoral fraud and their subjective/individual perception was made in two studies on vote-buying and electoral fraud in Nigeria.¹¹

Box 4: Selected Survey Questions: Experience and perception of vote-buying during the 2019 general elections



Question 23: Did you observe any form of inducement to voters in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)?

Question 24: How will you rate the level of inducement in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)?

Question 25: If you voted in 2015, how does the level of voter inducement in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship) compare with 2015?

Question 27 : Were you induced in any form to vote in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)?

What follows is an overview of the responses of the respondents to the questions in the survey questionnaire, supplemented with relevant highlights from the KIIs and the FGDs.

Question 23: Did you observe any form of inducement to voters in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)?

A majority of the respondents (51.6%) in the six states and the FCT answered that they observed vote-buying during the presidential elections, while 32.2% did not observe it. [Table 4]

¹¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNDOC), Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends, Second Survey on Corruption as experienced by the Population, UNDOC Nigeria Office, December 2019, pp. 61-64; Ursula Daxecker, Jessica di Salvatore, and Andrea Ruggerie, "Fraud Is What People Make of It: Election Fraud and Protesting in Nigeria," Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 63, No. 9, 2019, p. 2099

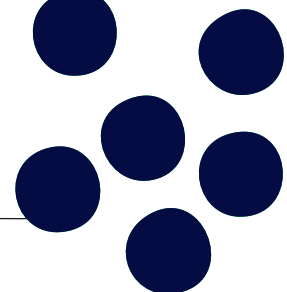


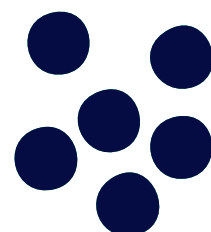
Table 4: Did you observe any form of inducement during the 2019 presidential elections?

State	Yes %	No %	Not aware %	Unsure if action is inducement %	No Response %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	57.0	23.0	6.0	3.5	2.0
Bauchi (NE)	34.5	46.5	10.5	5.5	2.0
Enugu (SE)	73.6	18.4	6.0	1.0	1.0
FCT	76.0	16.0	4.5	2.0	.5
Kano (NW)	51.2	29.9	9.0	3.0	7.0
Lagos (SW)	30.5	59.0	1.0	5.5	2.0
Plateau (NC)	38.5	32.5	22.0	1.5	4.5
Total (Average)	51.6	32.2			

For the governorship elections, a majority of the respondents (51%) observed vote buying, and a minority (31.6%) did not observe vote-buying during the elections [Table 4A]

Table 4A: Did you observe any form of inducement during the 2019 governorship elections?

State	Yes %	No %	Not aware %	Unsure if action is inducement %	No Response %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	56.5	22.5	5.0	6.5	2.5
Bauchi (NE)	49.5	36.0	5.5	5.0	3.0
Enugu (SE)	67.7	21.9	8.0	.5	1.0
Kano (NW)	63.2	16.9	10.9	1.5	7.5
Lagos (SW)	33.0	60.5	2.0	-	2.0
Plateau (NC)	36.5	32.0	22.0	2.5	4.5
Total (Average)	51.0	31.6			



It is noteworthy that Lagos State was the only state where respondents did not reflect the general trend of the perception of vote-buying by the majority of respondents in both the presidential and governorship elections: while a minority of the respondents (30.6%) said they observed vote-buying, 59% said they did not, during the presidential elections; while for the governorship elections in the state, 33% said they observed and 60.5% said that they did not observe vote-buying.

Question 24: How will you rate the level of inducement in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)?

A majority (57.4%) of the respondents rated the level of inducement during the presidential elections as high and very high; while 20.1% rated it low and very low. But Lagos bucks the general trend, with only 36% of the respondents rating it high and very high, 21.5% rating it low and very low, and 23% “Don’t know,” as answer. (Table 5)

Table 5: How will you rate the level of inducement in the 2019 presidential elections?

State	Very High %	High %	Low %	Very Low %	Don't know %	Not Applicable	No response
Akwa Ibom (SS)	27	30	15.5	1.5	18.0	5.5	2.5
Bauchi (NE)	18.0	18.5	10.5	18.0	13.5	19.0	2.5
Enugu (SE)	24.9	43.3	13.4	3.5	11.9	1.5	1.5
FCT	47.0	30.5	8.0	2.5	5.0	7.0	-
Kano (NW)	29.9	30.3	20.4	7.5	3.5	3.0	5.5
Lagos (SW)	21.5	14.5	21.0	.5	23.0	15.0	4.5
Plateau (NC)	15.0	51.5	19.0	-	11.5	2.0	1.0
Total (Average %)	26.2	31.2	15.4	4.7	12.34		

For the governorship elections, a majority of the respondents (54.25%) in the six states answered that the level of inducement was high and very high. 23.2% of the respondents were of the opinion that it was low and very low, with 12.7% answering, “Don’t Know.” As was the case with the presidential elections, the perceived level of inducement in Lagos State differed from the general trend of the majority of

respondents in the other 5 states, who rated their perception level high and very high: in Lagos State, a minority of respondents (36%) rated it high and very high, while a combination of low/very low (27.5%) and “Don’t Know”(22.5%) answers were given by 50% of the respondents. (Table 5A)

Table 5A: How will you rate the level of inducement in the 2019 governorship elections?

State	Very High %	High %	Low %	Very Low %	Don't Know %	Not Applicable %	No Response %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	24.5	28.0	19.5	5.0	15.0	5.0	3.0
Bauchi (NE)	21.5	19.0	13.0	14.0	12.5	17.0	3.0
Enugu (SE)	25.4	39.8	15.9	4.5	10.4	2.5	1.5
Kano (NW)	37.3	37.3	8.0	6.5	3.5	2.5	5.0
Lagos (SW)	15.0	21.0	27.0	.5	22.5	13.0	1.0
Plateau (NC)	13.5	43.0	25.5	.5	12.0	4.0	1.5
Total (Average)	22.9	31.35	18.0	5.2	12.7		

Question 25: If you voted in 2015, how does the level of voter inducement in the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship) compare with 2015?

As revealed by Table 6, a simple not absolute majority (39.6%) of the respondents rated their perception of vote-buying higher than those who thought it was either at the same level (22.7%) or lower 18.6% than the 2015 level. This shows a disturbing trend across the six states and the FCT of increase, albeit marginal, when it is

compared with a combination of “same level” response (28%) and “lower” response (18.6%) totaling 41.3% during presidential elections from the 2015 presidential elections, representing an absolute majority of the respondents. (Table 6)

Table 6: If you voted in 2015, how does the level of voter inducement in the 2019 presidential elections) compare with 2015?

State	Higher %	Same Level %	Lower %	Don't Know %	No Response %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	33.0	26.0	18.0	3.5	2.0
Bauchi (NE)	16.0	23.0	31.0	21.0	3.0
Enugu (SE)	45.8	26.4	11.9	9.5	4.0
FCT	60.0	16.0	9.5	6.0	-
Kano (NW)	37.8	26.9	23.9	2.5	6.5.
Lagos (SW)	35.0	12.5	26.0	15.5	.5
Plateau (NC)	49.5	28.0	10.0	9.0	1.5
Total (Average)	39.6	22.7	18.6		

In the governorship elections, a similar trend in the perception of a simple majority (35.1%) of the respondents that the level of vote-buying was higher than during the 2015 governorship elections. But with a combined total of 47% of respondents, those who thought the level of inducement during the governorship election was at the “same level” (29.8%) or “lower” (17.2%) constituted the absolute majority of the respondents. (Table 6A)

Table 6A: If you voted in 2015, how does the level of voter inducement in the 2019 governorship elections) compare with 2015?

State	Higher %	Same Level %	Lower %	Don't Know %	No Response %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	30.0	28.0	19.5	4.0	2.5
Bauchi (NE)	27.5	28.0	23.0	8.0	6.0
Enugu (SE)	40.3	31.8	13.9	7.0	4.5
Kano (NW)	45.8	33.3	11.4	1.5	6.0
Lagos (SW)	23.0	26.0	25.5	15.5	1.5
Plateau (NC)	44.0	31.5	10.0	9.0	2.0
Total (Average)	35.1	29.8	17.2		

Question 27 : Were you induced in any form to vote in the 2019 general elections. (presidential and governorship)?

A minority of the respondents (35.3%) across the six states and the FCT experienced vote-buying (i.e. were approached directly by those who offered to buy their votes) during the 2019 presidential elections, as opposed to an absolute (58.3%) of respondents who did not experience it [Table 7].

The rating contrasts sharply with the response of 51.6% for observation and 32.2% for non-observation of

inducement, during the presidential elections (Table 4); and 57.4% for High and Very High, and 20.1% Low and Very Low for the respondents' perception (observation) of the level of vote-buying during the presidential elections [Table 5].

The contrast may reflect the general perception of vote-buying as a feature of elections in the country, which may not necessarily reflect the actual experience of the respondent

Table 7A : Were you induced in any form to vote
in the 2019 governorship elections?

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	32.5	62.0	4.0	1.5
Bauchi (NE)	35.5	58.5	4.5	1.5
Enugu (SE)	58.2	36.3	5.0	.5
Kano (NW)	53.7	35.3	10.0	1.0
Lagos (SW)	16.0	76.5	3.5	4.0
Plateau (NC)	34.5	55.5	7.0	3.0
Total (Average)	38.4	54		

The findings from the presidential elections in the FCT point to a novel form of vote buying, Smart Card Reader (SCR) fraud. The excerpts from the FCT component of this Report (Box 5) describes how the SCR fraud is carried out.

Box 5: Manipulation of Smart Card Reader and Vote-buying



Manipulation of Card Readers through pre-loading of votes for a preferred candidate is another type of vote buying. In this case, rather than buy directly from voters, a deal is struck between a candidate, his agents or party representatives with INEC officials who are the only custodians of Card Readers. Having been heavily compromised, the INEC staff pre-load a certain number of votes cast in a polling Unit, knowing from experience that the turnout is usually low. After polling, the remainder of the ballot papers is freely thumb-printed in favour of the preferred candidate. For example, in a typical polling Unit of 900 voters, a return of 899 votes is recorded with the preferred candidate scoring probably 80% or more of the votes cast. Revelations from the FGDs confirm that this normally happens in polling booths where there is less attention and vigilance and scrutiny by citizens, election observers and security agents. [FCT Study in this Report]

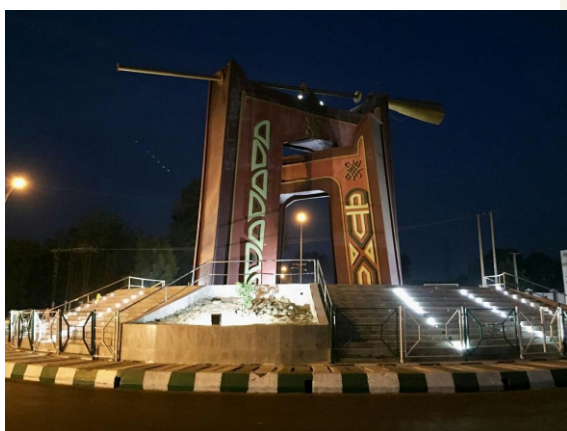
The majority of FGD participants and of key informants' interviewees, as exemplified in the excerpts from the KII and FGD from the Kano study [Box 6], believed that vote-buying had plunged to the lowest depths of amorality and impunity during the 2019 general elections. They attributed the descent to the combination of a dominant political culture of zero-sum electoral competition, the social problem of poverty, weak enforcement of the law against vote-buying and other forms of electoral offences, and failure to create an Elections Offences Commission, as recommended by the country's Electoral Reform Committee Report, 2008.

Box 6: Comments on vote buying during KIIs and FGDs in Borno and Kano



During Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews almost 52 per cent of respondents alleged that vote-buying by parties and candidates featured prominently in the 2019 elections. Almost 47 per cent of respondent reported that vote buying was common during party nomination of candidates. Other respondents affirmed that massive voters' card (PVCs) buying occurred in the run up to the elections. While some respondents observed that cash for votes manifested more at polling units on election days, 28 per cent reported the cases of stomach infrastructure and commodification of votes where politicians from different political parties distributed food items and other essential commodities for voters. Similarly, few respondents stated that INEC Ad-hoc staff were bribed during elections and 25 per cent alluded that distribution of relief in IDP camps was politicized by politicians where showing PVCs became a condition for receiving aid for IDPs. [Borno State Report]

Kano KII & FGD



Kano KII

In Kano here, we were using our own money to buy vote for Buhari, how many people out brought out money and other resources just so that he can win the election? It was not even necessary as almost everyone wanted the change. The story [was about] change in 2019. There was massive vote buying as people didn't really care about who will win the presidential election. We were disappointed with Buhari; and Atiku is not well liked either, so people just voted and some didn't. The focus for us in Kano was more on the gubernatorial election than the presidential" (KII, trader Kano).

Kano FGD

"As far as I am concerned the 2019 gubernatorial election in Kano state was not an election because of so many misconduct [notably inciting words, vote buying, voter intimidation]. It is here in kano that a party leader said publicly 'Ko da tsiya, Ko da tsiya tsiya sai mun ci zabe' (We must win this election no matter what it takes). (FGD participant, Kano)

OVERVIEW II: FINDINGS ON ABUSE OF POWER OF INCUMBENCY

The selected survey questions in this section (Box 7) sought information on the perception of the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party electoral advantage during the 2019 general elections by respondents in the selected state in each geopolitical zone during the presidential and governorship elections, and in the FCT for only the presidential election.

Box 7: Selected Survey Questions: Perception of Abuse of incumbency during the 2019 general elections



Question 33: I noticed the security personnel collaborated with or aided agents of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)

Question 34: I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)

Question 35: Government officials actively promoted the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)

Question 37: Massive deployment of other state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes, etc., in favor of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship).

The survey made no difference between the party in power at the federal and state levels in eliciting respondents' perceptions of the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party electoral gain. The two major parties (APC and PDP) are ruling parties in different states (See Table I), but only one of them can be in power at the federal level after each quadrennial presidential election. It is because only two major parties have ruling parties in this sense that other parties have tended to accuse them of allegedly abusing the power of incumbency for partisan and unfair party electoral advantage.

There is a sense, however, in which the presumption generally is that the party in power at the federal level has an advantage in deploying "federal might" unfairly and in a partisan party

manner across several states in order to affect or influence electoral outcomes during governorship elections in the states. This is particularly so in respect of the huge electoral war chest available to it through federal procurements and secrecy shrouding its control over oil revenues and the power to deploy security forces, ostensibly to keep and maintain peace and order in strategic states where there are strong opposition to the ruling party at the federal level, and where it is bent on retaining or flipping power during governorship elections.

What follows is an overview of the responses of the respondents to the questions in the survey questionnaire, supplemented with relevant highlights from the KIIs and the FGDs.

Question 33: I noticed the security personnel collaborated with or aided agents of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship).

The majority of respondents (61.1%) in the six states and in the FCT responded that they did not observe that "security personnel collaborated with or aided the agents of the ruling party" during the presidential elections [Table 8].

This negative response ranged from a high response of 77.5% in Lagos State to 51.2% in Enugu. The overall negative

response rate compares with 34.2% positive response rate for respondents across the six states and the FCT who observed collaboration between security agents and the ruling party during the presidential elections. The highest positive response from a state was 50.5% from Plateau State, with Lagos at 19.5% the lowest positive response rate.

Table 8: Security personnel collaborated with/aided agents of the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	33.0	62.0	.5	4.5
Bauchi (NE)	20.5	65.0	4.0	6.0
Enugu (SE)	45.8	51.2	1.0	2.0
FCT	39.5	59.5	1.0	-
Kano (NW)	30.8	65.7	1.0	1.0
Lagos (SW)	19.5	77.5	1.0	2.0
Plateau (NC)	50.5	47.0	.5	2.0
Total Average	34.2	61.1		

For the governorship elections (Table 9A), the majority of respondents (65.6%) across the six states offered negative (“No”) response to the statement, “security personnel collaborated with or aided the agents of the ruling party,”. The highest state-level negative response was from Lagos State respondents (74.5%), with the lowest negative response at 51.7% from Enugu State. By contrast, the positive (“Yes”) response rate from the minority of respondents across the six states was 29.6%, with the highest positive rate from Plateau State (36%) and Bauchi State, the lowest positive rate (17.5%)

Table 8A: Security personnel collaborated with/aided agents of the ruling party during the 2019 governorship elections

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	29.5	65.0	1.0	4.5
Bauchi (NE)	17.5	73.0	5.0	4.5
Enugu (SE)	44.3	51.7	1.0	3.0
Kano (NW)	27.9	70.1	1.0	1.0
Lagos (SW)	22.5	74.5	1.0	2.0
Plateau (NC)	36.0	59.5	.5	4.0
Total Average	29.6	65.6		

Question 34: I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship).

The majority of the respondents (58.9%) in the six states and in the FCT [Table 9] gave a negative (No) response to the observation, “I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections.”

The highest negative response (73.5%) was from Lagos State respondents and the lowest negative response (43.8%) was from Enugu State. On the other hand, the positive (“Yes”) response from the minority of respondents across the six states and the FCT was 37.4%, with the highest positive response (53.7%) from Enugu State respondents, and the lowest (23%) from Lagos State respondents.

Table 9: I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	32.0	65.0	1.0	2.0
Bauchi (NE)	25.0	65.0	4.0	6.0
Enugu (SE)	53.7	43.8	1.0	1.5
FCT	43.0	55.0	.5	1.5
Kano (NW)	39.8	57.2	2.0	1.0
Lagos (SW)	23.0	73.5	1.0	2.5
Plateau (NC)	45.0	52.5	.5	2.0
Total Average	37.4	58.9		

For the governorship elections, the majority of respondents (59.5%) across the six states answered negatively (“No”) to the proposition, “INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the 2019 governorship elections.”

The highest negative answer (73%) from a state was from Bauchi State (73%) and the lowest negative answer (47.8%) was from Enugu State. The minority of respondents (35.9%) from all the six states answered positively (“Yes”) to the same proposition, with the highest positive answer (48.8%) being from Kano State and the lowest positive answer (17.5%) from Bauchi State.

Table 9A: I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the governorship elections

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	28.5	69.0	.5	2.0
Bauchi (NE)	17.5	73.0	5.0	4.5
Enugu (SE)	48.8	47.8	1.0	2.5
Kano (NW)	41.3	56.2	1.5	1.0
Lagos (SW)	39.0	57.0	1.0	3.0
Plateau (NC)	40.5	54.5	.5	4.5
Total Average	35.9	59.5		

Question 35: Government officials actively promoted the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship)

The majority (51.2%) of survey respondents across the six states and the FCT answered negatively (“No”) to the statement, “Government officials actively promoted the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections,” while the minority of respondents (45.5%), answered positively (“Yes”) to

the question. (Table 10) The highest negative (“No”) answer 60.2% from the FCT, with the lowest negative (“No”) answer at 42.5% from Lagos State. The highest positive (“Yes”) answer from a state was 54.5% from Lagos State., and the lowest (33.5% from Bauchi State.

Table 10: Government officials actively promoted ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections, including the days before and on election day

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	50.5	45.0	1.0	3.0
Bauchi (NE)	33.5	58.5	2.5	6.0
Enugu (SE)	46.8	50.7	1.0	1.5
FCT	37.8	60.2	1.0	1.0
Kano (NW)	46.8	52.2	.5	.5
Lagos (SW)	54.5	42.5	1.0	2.0
Plateau (NC)	48.5	49.0	.5	2.0
Total Average	45.5	51.2		

For the governorship elections, the majority of the respondents (48.6%) across the six states answered positively (“Yes”) to the statement, “Government officials actively promoted the ruling party during the 2019 governorship elections,” while the minority of respondents (47.3%), answered

negatively (“No”) to the question. (Table 10A) The highest positive (“Yes”) answer (58%) from a state was from Lagos State, and the lowest positive (43.5%) was from Bauchi State, with the highest negative (No) answer (51.7%) from Kano, and the lowest negative answer (39%) from Lagos State.

Table 10A : Government officials actively promoted ruling party during the governorship elections, including the days before and on election day

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	48.0	47.0	1.5	3.5
Bauchi (NE)	43.5	48.0	3.0	5.5
Enugu (SE)	50.2	46.3	1.0	2.5
Kano (NW)	47.3	51.7	.5	.5
Lagos (SW)	58.0	39.0	1.0	2.0
Plateau (NC)	44.5	51.5	.5	3.5
Total Average	48.6	47.3		

Table 11 shows that the narrow majority of survey respondents (49.2%), across the six states and the FCT, rejected the claim that there was a “massive deployment of other state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes, etc., in favor of the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections.” On the other hand, a sizeable minority (46.7%) of the survey respondents

agreed with the claim. Of the majority that rejected the claim, the highest rejection (63.2%) from a state was from Kano State, and the lowest (28%) was from Lagos State. Of the minority that agreed with the claim, the highest (65%) was from Lagos State, and the lowest (26.5%) was from Bauchi State.

Table 11: Massive deployment of state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes etc., during the 2019 presidential elections

State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	53.0	44.0	.5	2.5
Bauchi (NE)	26.5	61.5	7.0	5.0
Enugu (SE)	49.3	49.3	1.0	.5
FCT	49.5	49.0	.5	1.0
Kano (NW)	35.3	63.2	.5	1.0
Lagos	65.0	28.0	6.0	1.0
Plateau (NC)	48.5	49.5	.5	1.5
Total Average	46.7	49.2		

For the governorship elections, a narrow majority (48.8%) of the survey respondents across the six states concurred with the claim that, there was a “massive deployment of other state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes, etc., in favor of the ruling party during the 2019 presidential elections.”

On the other hand, a sizeable minority

(46%) of the survey respondents rejected the claim. Of the majority that concurred with the claim, the highest concurrence (77%) from a state was from Lagos State, and the lowest (36%) was from Bauchi State. Of the minority of survey respondents that rejected the claim, the highest rejection (57.7%) was from Kano State, and the lowest (15.5%) was from Lagos State. [See Table 11A]

Table 11A: Massive deployment of state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes etc., during the 2019 governorship elections

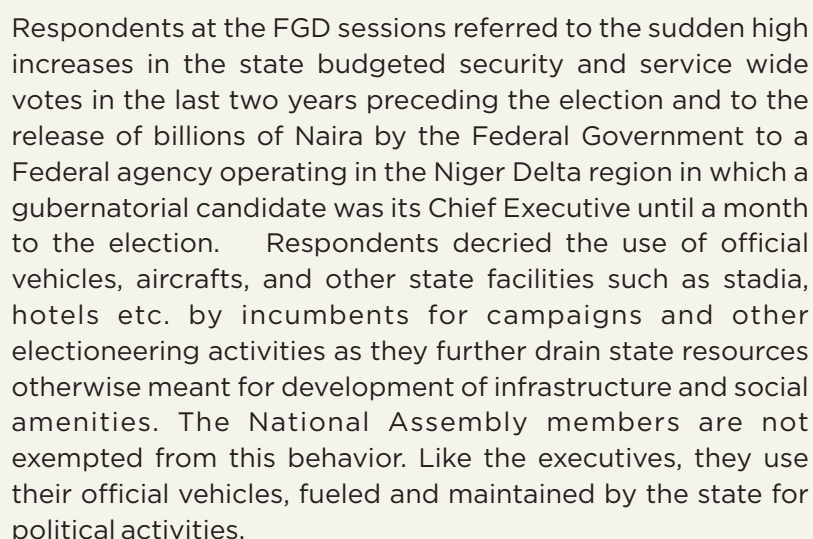
State	Yes %	No %	No Response %	Not Applicable %
Akwa Ibom (SS)	43.0	54.0	.5	2.5
Bauchi (NE)	36.0	52.0	8.0	4.0
Enugu (SE)	50.7	46.3	1.5	1.5
Kano (NW)	40.3	57.7	1.0	1.0
Lagos (SW)	77.0	15.5	6.0	1.5
Plateau (NC)	45.5	50.5	.5	3.5
Average Total	48.8	46.0		

The survey respondents' perception of nature of the resources of the state (at federal and state levels) deployed for the abuse of power of incumbency include: i) security votes; ii) service wide votes; c) inflated contracts; d) defence contracts; and v) social safety nets programmes, such as You-Win, N-Power, Sure-P, School Feeding Programmes, Trader-Money. The diversion of public funds for partisan party political purposes is not strange to Nigerian politics, as the Foster-Sutton Tribunal, in 1957 and the Coker Commission of

Inquiry, in 1962 showed. It is pertinent also to observe, that a similar pattern of diversion of public funds for partisan political gain, especially as an electoral 'War Chest,' has been detailed in respect of a number of other African countries, notably Kenya, as brought out in KANU's Cash Call and the Goldenberg Scandal of 1990-1992. Box I summarizes some of the findings from the research on perceptions of the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party electoral gain.

Box 8: Excerpts from findings on abuse of power of incumbency in selected state reports

Participants during the FGDs and KIIls were near unanimous that the abuse of state resources by incumbents by diverting same for selfish electoral gains was a major reason why governance is failing. This is in clear violation of Item 9, Schedule 5 of the 1999 Constitution and Article 7(3) of the UNCAC which is a mandatory provision requesting state parties to ensure transparency in the funding of candidates for elected public office.



AKWA IBOM STATE



The use of state media as a propaganda organ of incumbents was said to be equally prevalent. Respondents at the FGDs and KIIIs were emphatic that the state owned media was grossly abused as its programs were devoted to the incumbent campaign while not according the opposition the same advantage. Participants, particularly those from state government media were unanimous that incumbents expect nothing less than the full use of such agencies to advance their partisan political interest. Any adherence to professionalism which does not at the same time support the incumbent is unacceptable.

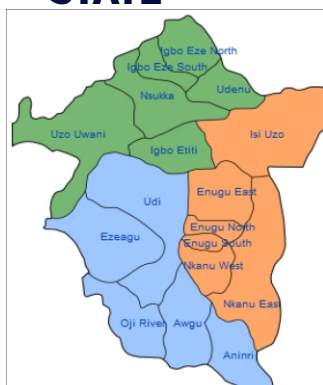
IMO STATE



Several FGD participants in Owerri, Imo State claimed that 100 Sienna vehicles were allegedly given to the police few weeks to the election[in the state] to facilitate easy manipulation during the election. Again, posting of Police Commissioners was allegedly influenced by the governor in order to achieve his aim during the election. Notably, multiple government plate numbers were given to private cars, screen of some road transport vehicles were changed, tinted and painted with government colour for easy access to every polling unit during the election to do their biddings without police obstruction. INEC trained ad-hoc staff were changed and replaced by incumbent loyal friend on the day of the election.

Key informant interviews in Imo State suggested that employment was used by the state governor to attract youths to vote in his favour. One of the FGD participants alleged that the government employed 3,800 youths without regularization few months to the election as an avenue to lure youths to vote for him and his preferred candidate.

ENUGU STATE



FGD participants in Enugu identified the following subtle means commonly used by incumbent governors and presidents to get re-elected: starting up projects they do not intend to complete in areas they have weak support base. The participants pointed to Ugboka, Amuri and other communities in Enugu State where road projects were started but were abandoned shortly after the elections. In a related development, the participants mentioned that different communities in Enugu State were promised ten million naira (N10m) each for the execution of any project of their choice. Half of this amount was made available to each community but the balance was not paid.

FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY



The deployment and use of government officials for political activities is becoming pronounced contrary to the oath of office to which such officials swore to be non- partisan and neutral. Regrettably, incumbents demand 'loyalty' from government officials and this is meant to include not only support for the ruling party by campaigning for it but also to vote their candidates. Respondents during the FGDs confirmed that the ruling government normally punishes officials suspected to be 'disloyal', a practice that has politicized the civil service.

04

CONCLUSION

The quantitative data from the response of the survey respondents and the qualitative data from the FG Ds and KIIs make clear that vote-buying and the abuse of the power of incumbency for partisan party electoral gain remain highly problematic for the conduct of free and fair elections, based on the guiding principles of electoral integrity.

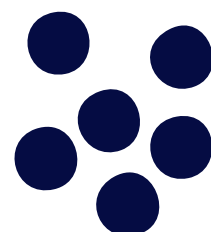
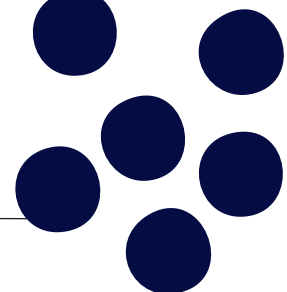
For example, the absolute majority of survey respondents (51.6%) across the six states and the FCT, during the presidential elections, and 51%, during the governorship elections, across the six states affirmed that they observed inducement (i.e. vote-buying) during the 2019 presidential elections. (Table 4 and Table 4A). The majority of respondents (57.4%) during the presidential elections, across the six states and the FCT, and 54.25% during the governorship elections, across the six states, affirmed that the level of inducement during the 2019 general elections was higher than during the 2015 general elections. (Table 5 and [Table 5A](#))

On the perception of inducement, (Question 25) there was some

difference between the Northern group of states (Bauchi, Kano and Plateau) and the Southern group of states (Akwa Ibom, Enugu and Lagos). With the aggregation, the respondents' perception of vote-buying are as follows: 36.1% positive ("Yes") response in the North, and 36.7% positive ("Yes") in the South for the presidential elections; 57.3% negative ("No") response in both the North and South for the governorship elections.

As shown in [Table 12 and Table 12A], the Northern group, gave an average positive ("Yes") response (41.4%) and the Southern group (53.8%) to the question, "did you observe any form of inducement...?" while the negative ("No") response was 36.3% (Northern group) and 33.7% (Southern group) for the presidential elections.

As shown in Table 12 and Table 12A, there was slight difference between the two groups of states in the perception of voter-buying during the presidential and governorship elections. For the presidential elections, there was 12.4% difference between the two groups over positive ("Yes") response to perception of



vote-buying: 41.4% (Northern group) and 53.8% (Southern group). For governorship, the negative (“No”) response was slightly different (5.7%), with 28.3% negative response for the Northern group, and 34% from the Southern Group.

Significantly, however, the majority of positive response from both groups (41.4% for Northern group of states;

53.8% for Southern group) agreed that there was vote-buying during the presidential elections. For the governorship elections the response was a higher positive (“Yes”) response rate (49.8%) for Northern group and a slightly lower one (52.4%) for Southern group. [See Table 12 and 12A]

Table 12: Question 25: Did you observe any form of inducement during the 2019 general elections

Northern States	Yes % (Presidential)	No % (Presidential)	Yes % (Governorship)	No % (Governorship)
Bauchi	34.5	46.5	49.5	36
Kano	51.2	29.9	63.2	16.9
Plateau	38.5	32.5	36.5	32
Total	41.4	36.3	49.8	28.3

Table 12A: Question 25: Did you observe any form of inducement during the 2019 general elections

Southern States	Yes % Presidential	No % Presidential	Yes % Governorship	No % Governorship
Akwa Ibom	57	23	56.5	22.5
Enugu	73.6	18.4	67.7	21.9
Lagos	30.5	59	33.0	60.5
Total	53.8	33.7	52.4	34.9

Although the survey responses regarding the abuse of the power of incumbency was fairly balanced between positive and negative perceptions, there is a great deal to worry about, in view of the closeness between the positive and negative percentage responses, indicating the abuse was perceived to be a commonplace feature of the 2019 general elections.

For example, regarding whether or not “government officials actively promoted ruling party during the presidential elections,” the positive (“Yes”) perception was 45.5% and the negative (“No”) response was 51.2%. In the case of the governorship elections, the positive response was 48.6%, to the negative (“No”) response of 47.3% [Table 10 and Table 10A].

To the observation that there was “massive deployment of state resources”, during the presidential elections, the positive response (“Yes”) was 46.7%, and the negative (“No”) response was 49.2%. For the governorship elections, the positive (“Yes”) response was 48.8%, and the negative (“no”) response was 46%. The closeness between the positive and negative responses shows that “massive deployment of state resources was perceived as a commonplace feature of the 2019 general elections.

[Table 11 and Table 11A] For this reason, the negative response is as much a cause for serious concern as does the positive response.

Of interest is the negative response by the absolute majority of survey respondents to the observation, “I feel INEC staff gave undue advantage(s) to agents of the ruling party during the general elections.” For the presidential elections, the majority respondents’ negative (“No”) response was 58.9%, in contrast to a positive (“Yes”) responsive of 37.4%. For the governorship elections, it was a negative (“No”) response of 59.5% to a positive (“Yes”) response of 35.9% [Table 9 and Table 9A]

Table 13 shows the comparative rate of positive (“Yes”) to negative (“No”) response to the question about “the massive deployment of state resources....during the presidential and governorship elections” in the Northern group of states.

For the presidential elections, the positive (“Yes”) response was 36.8% to a negative (“No”) response of 58.1% . For the same group of Northern states, the perception response for the governorship elections was 40.6% positive (“Yes”) and 53.3% negative (“No”) responses.

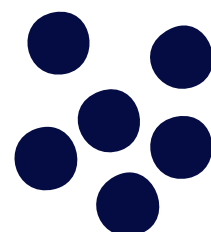
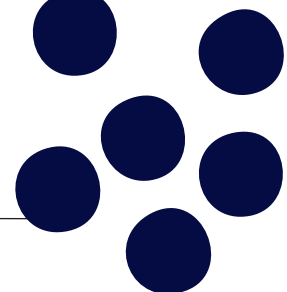


Table 13: Question 37: Massive deployment of other state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes, etc., in favor of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship).

Northern States	Yes % (Presidential)	No % (Presidential)	Yes % (Governorship)	No % (Governorship)
Bauchi	26.5	61.5	36.0	52.0
Kano	35.3	63.2	40.3	57.5
Plateau	48.5	49.5	45.5	50.5
Total. Average	36.8	58.1	40.6	53.3

For the Southern group of states (Table 13A), the positive (“Yes”) response for the presidential elections was 55.8%, and a negative response of 40.4%. For the governorship, it was 56.9% positive (“Yes”) and 38.6% negative (“No”) responses.

Table 13A: Question 37: Massive deployment of other state resources, such as vehicles, cash, helicopters, planes, etc., in favor of the ruling party during the 2019 general elections (presidential and governorship).

Southern States	Yes % Presidential	No % Presidential	Yes % Governorship	No % Governorship
Akwa Ibom	53.0	44.0	43.0	54.0
Enugu	49.3	49.3	50.7	46.3
Lagos	65.0	28.0	77.0	15.5
Total Average	55.8	40.4	56.9	38.6

Across the Northern group of states, for both the presidential and governorship elections, a majority of the respondents answered negatively (58.1% for presidential, and 53.3% for the governorship) [Table 13]. But the reverse was the case for the Southern group of states [Table 13A], where the majority of the respondents gave positive answer, 55.8% for the presidential and 56.9% for the

governorship elections. But where the negative (“No”) response was in the minority for both the presidential and governorship elections, the response is a cause for considerable concern (40.4%) for president and 38.6% for governorship elections, in the Southern group of states.

05

RECOMMENDATIONS

These findings show that the problem of vote-buying requires fundamental governance reform in the country, as does the problem of the abuse of the power of incumbency. The objective of the governance reform should be to (a) vigorously enforce the law against vote-buying and the criminal diversion of state resources to build an electoral war chest; and (b) routinize a material and robust political culture of

transparency, participation and inclusion to bring about a reorientation in the practice and management of public affairs as a people-centered project, as laid out in Chapter II of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) and the Report of the ERC.

To this end, the following dissemination and advocacy activities are recommended to:

implement as public policy the fundamental objectives and fundamental objectives of state policy enumerated in Chapter II of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999.

A

establish a network of citizens' groups from the ward/local government level up to the national level to serve as watchdogs against vote-buying and other forms of electoral corruption, especially on election day.

B

establish an electoral offences commission and vigorously enforce the law against vote-buying to deter vote-buying on election day.

C

reform the country's electoral system through the adoption of a mixed proportional representation system to ensure more inclusiveness, participation, and power-sharing in governance processes, in ways to dilute the zero-sum approach to politics.

D

encourage and support INEC to continue with its internal administrative reform and application of high technology, both to sanitize the electoral process and strengthen disincentives for electoral corruption

E



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