



ELECTION MONITORING REPORT

Conducted in:
**Karaga, Sagnarigu, Tamale South,
and Kassena Nankana West**



Published by:
Simba Ghana

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Executive Summary

This survey was conducted by Simba Ghana in four constituencies across the Northern region of Ghana. This survey sorts to evaluate electoral practices to identify challenges and opportunities for ensuring fair and transparent elections. Observational study design was used in this survey and 61 responds were sampled using purposive sampling. Data collected were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) and Microsoft Excel.

Key findings reveal widespread issues, including voter inducement, unauthorized activities, and inadequate preventive measures. The study provides actionable recommendations, such as strengthening legal frameworks, improving monitoring systems, and fostering voter education, to safeguard electoral integrity and enhance public trust in democratic processes.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Elections are the bedrock of democratic governance, offering citizens the essential right to choose their leaders and actively participate in shaping their nation's future. As a central pillar of democracy, elections are intended to promote accountability, transparency, and responsiveness within political systems. However, the credibility of electoral processes is increasingly compromised by unethical practices such as vote-buying and voter inducement.

These forms of electoral malpractice distort the democratic process by shifting focus from policy and competence to short-term material exchanges. Rather than enabling citizens to vote based on informed choices and national interest, such practices exploit economic vulnerabilities and reduce voting to a transactional act. Consequently, public trust in democratic institutions is eroded, the legitimacy of elected leaders is questioned, and citizens may lose faith in the power of their vote.

Moreover, these practices can undermine meritocracy in leadership, paving the way for individuals who lack the vision, competence, or commitment to public service, but who possess the financial means to influence voters. This contributes to a deepening culture of transactional politics, where governance is shaped not by principles or policies, but by patronage and personal gain.

This evaluation seeks to examine the prevalence, patterns, and drivers of vote-buying and voter inducement in selected constituencies. It will assess the effectiveness of existing legal, institutional, and civic frameworks intended to deter these practices and safeguard electoral integrity. Ultimately, the study aims to provide practical, evidence-based recommendations for strengthening democratic processes and promoting a more accountable, inclusive, and citizen-driven political environment.

1.2 Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation seeks to assess the prevalence of electoral malpractices, such as vote-buying and voter inducement. Analyze the effectiveness of preventive mechanisms in deterring these malpractices and provide evidence-based recommendations to improve electoral transparency and accountability.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the study include:

1. Evaluating voter behavior and the influence of incentives.
2. Analyzing the conduct of political parties during elections.
3. Assessing the presence and effectiveness of anti-vote-buying measures.
4. Identifying gaps in monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

1.4 Evaluation Method Used

The study utilized an observational method to gather data. Monitors visited polling stations to document interactions, distributions of incentives, and other activities that could compromise electoral integrity.

1.5 Monitoring Areas

The monitoring exercise was conducted across four constituencies (Karaga, Sagnarigu, Tamale South, and Kassena Nankana West). A total of 61 polling stations were conveniently selected and monitored by various field personnel within these constituencies.

1.6 Study Population

The study challenges targeted voters, political party agents, and election officials present at polling stations during the elections. Group of monitors were selected to provide a comprehensive view of electoral activities. These monitors were trained on how to navigate the data collection (kobo tool box) to ensure that right data was been collected form monitors obsetvations.

1.7 Sampling Size

A sample of 49 polling stations was visited out of which 61 responses were received from the observers.

1.8 Sampling Procedures

The study employed a purposive sampling to select the various district and municipalities for observation. However, polling stations were visited based on monitors convenience.

1.9 Data Collection

Methods

- **Observations:** Monitors documented interactions, distributions of incentives, and other activities at polling stations. This method provided direct insights into behaviors and practices that could affect electoral integrity.

Instruments

The study utilized kobotool box as primary data collection tool.

Procedure

Field teams conducted visits to selected polling stations on the Election Day. Observers adhered to ethical guidelines, including maintaining neutrality and confidentiality.

1.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

Collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques:

- **Quantitative Analysis:** Statistical tools were used to calculate percentages and identify trends.
- **Presentation:** Results were presented using tables, charts, and descriptive narratives to ensure clarity and accessibility.

2.0 Results:

The survey shows that 23 (37.7%) reported that voters were being approached by individuals offering money, gifts, and incentives at the polling stations visited. 15 (24.6%) incidents of voters showing tokens, receipts, or items provided by political were observed. Also, 15 (24.6%) incidents of voters were observed openly discussing offers of incentives with others near polling centers.

Table 1 Voter behavior

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Voters being approached by individuals offering money, gifts & incentives		
Yes	23	37.7
No	38	62.3
Observed voters showing tokens, receipts or items provided by political parties		
Yes	15	24.6
No	46	75.4
Voters openly discussing offers of incentives with others near polling center		
Yes	15	24.6
No	46	75.4

The table below shows that 24 (39.3%) incidences of foods (food, drinks, and branded materials) were distributed near/ around the polling center in this survey. Also, 14 (23.0) observed cash or items being exchanged, suggesting direct attempts at voter influence.

Table 2: Activities around the polling station

	Frequency	Percent
Are there groups of people congregating near the		

polling center		
Yes	20	32.8
No	41	67.2
Foods (food, drinks, branded materials) being distributed near/around the polling center		
Yes	24	39.3
No	37	60.7
Cash transactions/handing over of other items between individuals near polling center		
Yes	14	23.0
No	47	77.0

On the behavior of political parties on the day of elections, there were 18 (29.3%) instances where political party agents were seen interacting with the voters before and after they voted. Also, some political party agents were seen distributing items or providing incentives near the polling center, there were 11 instances of search cases.

Table 3: Behavior of political parties

	Frequency	Percent
Are political party agents interacting with the voters before the enter polling station		
Yes	18	29.5
No	43	70.5
Have political agents seen distributing items or providing incentives near polling center		
Yes	11	18.0
No	50	82.0

A majority **69%** of respondents did not observe any unauthorized individuals near the polling centers, which suggests that, in most polling areas, voter interactions and activities remained within expected regulations. However, the **31%** reporting unauthorized individuals indicates a significant minority where issues of concern regarding unauthorized presence and possible voter influence were observed.

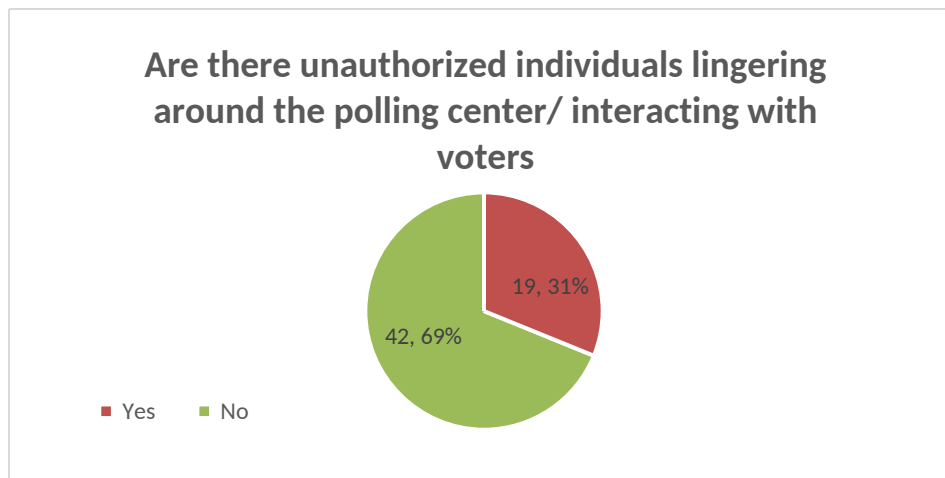


Figure 1: Presence of unauthorized individuals

Majority of **38 respondents**, representing **approximately 62%**, did not witness attempts to influence voter decisions near polling areas. This suggests that, in most areas, voter decisions appeared to be free from external interference.

However, **23 respondents** representing **38%** reported observing attempts to influence voters. This is a significant proportion and indicates that voter interference remains a challenge in some polling areas

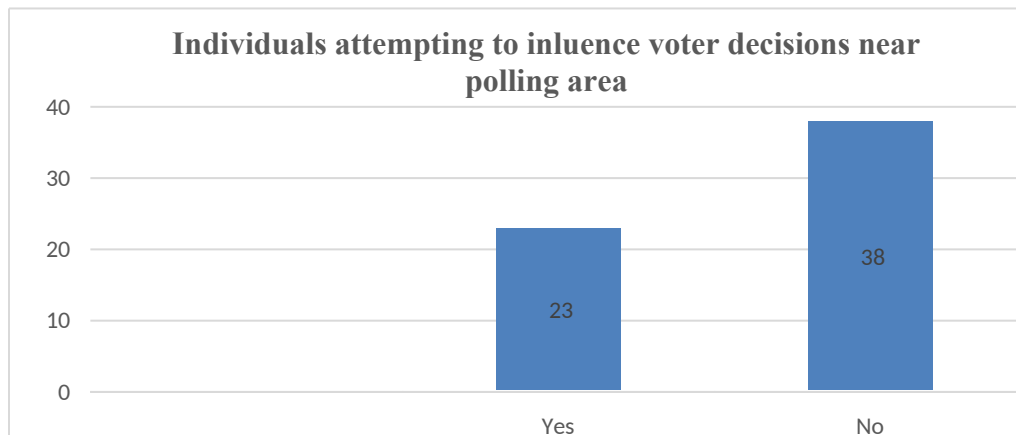


Figure 2: Individuals attempting to influence voter decisions near polling area

A significant majority of **82%** of polling stations lacked visible signs discouraging vote buying. This suggests that measures to visibly communicate anti-vote-buying messages are largely absent, creating a gap in awareness and enforcement.

Only **18%** of respondents observed such signs, indicating that few polling areas had efforts to visibly discourage vote buying.

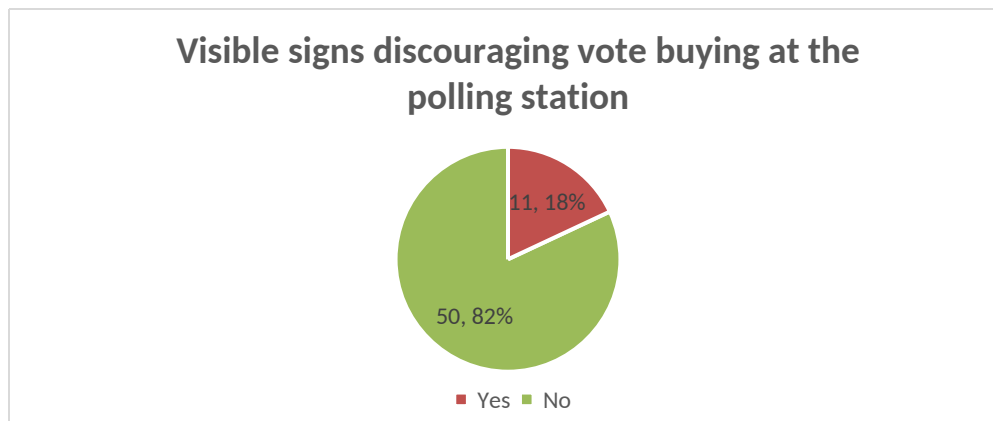


Figure 3: Reporting and Preventative Measures

Only **14 respondents** observed election officials actively monitoring for vote-buying activities. This represents a small portion of respondents, indicating limited vigilance or intervention from election officials. A significant majority of **47 respondents** reported that election officials were **not actively monitoring** for vote-buying activities. This lack of active monitoring suggests that vote-buying could go unchecked at polling stations.

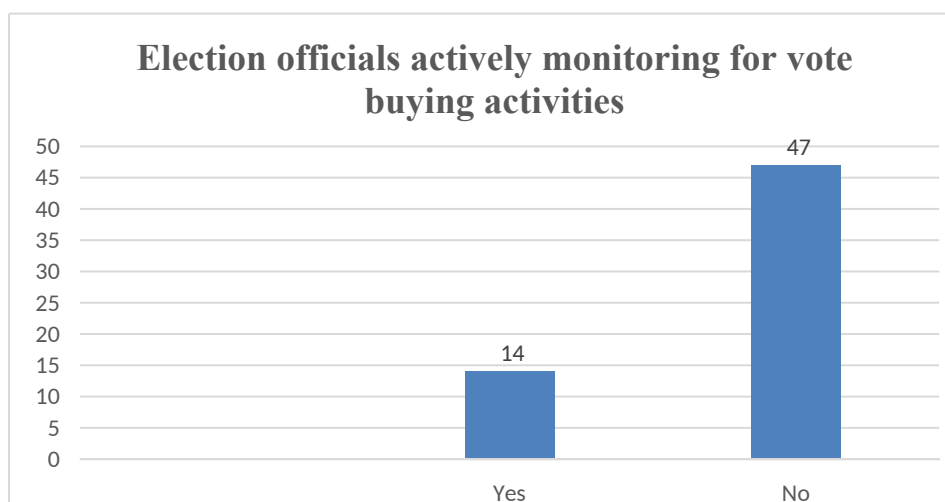


Figure 4: Election officials actively monitoring for vote buying activities

A total of **13 respondents** confirmed observing incidents of vote-buying at the polling station. This represents a smaller proportion of the responses but indicates that vote-buying activities were detected in some instances. The presence of **13 reports** of vote-buying highlights that the issue exists and requires further investigation and preventive measures. A significant majority of **48 respondents** stated that they did not observe any vote-buying activities. This suggests that vote-buying, while present, is not a widespread phenomenon at most polling stations observed. While the majority did not observe any incidents, this data underlines the need for continued vigilance and monitoring to prevent vote-buying practices.

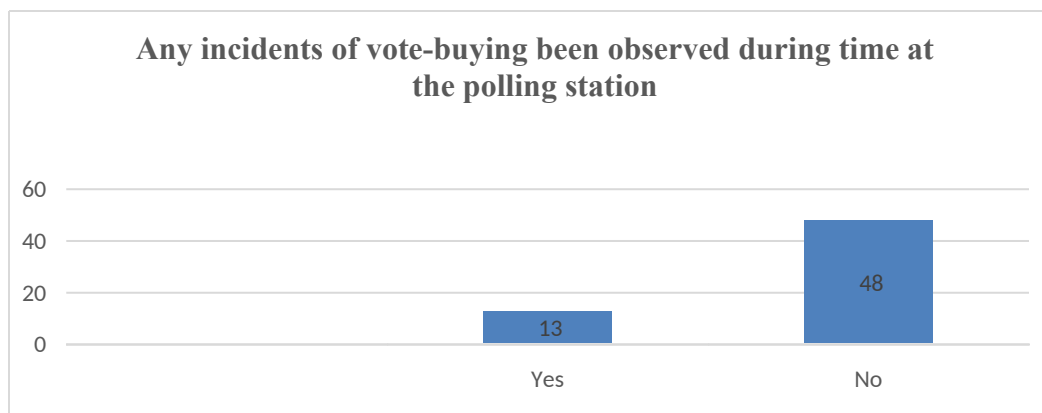


Figure 5: Any incidents of vote-buying been observed during time at the polling station

7 respondents reported the presence of photography, video, or written evidence of vote-buying activities. This indicates that some tangible evidence of vote-buying exists. A significant majority of 54 respondents indicated that they did not have any photographic, video, or written evidence of vote-buying.

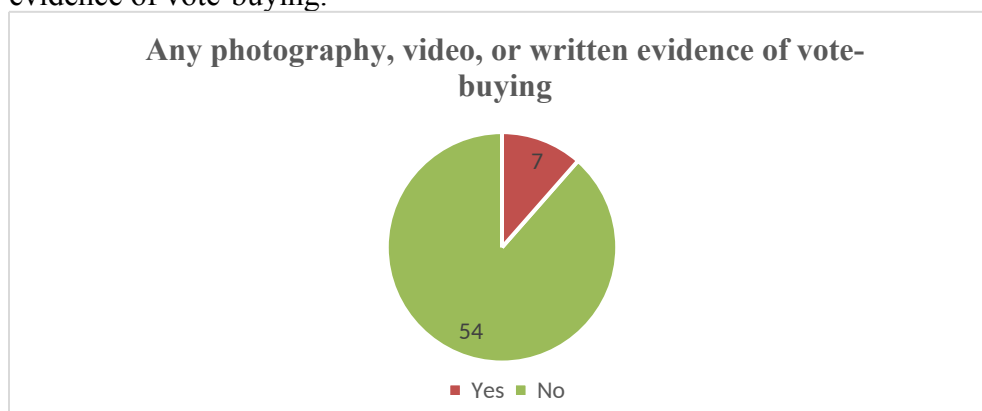


Figure 6: Any photography, video, or written evidence of vote-buying

Recommendations

- Strengthen laws to penalize vote-buying and voter inducement with clear enforcement mechanisms.
- Develop targeted voter education programs emphasizing the negative implications of vote-buying on governance and democracy.
- Increase visibility of anti-vote-buying messages at polling centers.
- Train election staff to recognize and act on vote-buying and voter inducement activities.
- Collaborate with civil society organizations to foster grassroots movements advocating against vote-buying.
- Promote community-led initiatives to ensure transparent and fair elections.

Conclusion:

The findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to mitigate vote-buying and associated malpractices. By implementing the proposed measures, electoral integrity can be safeguarded, reinforcing public confidence in democratic processes.