

**POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL
COMMUNITIES IN FUFURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ADAMAWA STATE:
ROLE OF INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (INEC)**

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between political socialization and voting behaviour in Fufure Local Government Area, Adamawa State, with specific attention to the role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). A descriptive research design was adopted, enabling the collection of quantitative data through structured questionnaires administered to eligible rural voters. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 384 respondents was determined, with an additional 10% buffer, yielding a total of 422 questionnaires administered, out of which 384 completed questionnaires were retrieved for analysis. Reliability tests conducted using Cronbach's Alpha confirmed a high level of internal consistency across all variables. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient at a 0.05 significance level. The findings reveal that family background has a very strong positive relationship with voting behaviour ($r = 0.989$, $p = 0.000$), indicating its central role in shaping political choices. Educational background also shows a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.675$, $p = 0.000$), signifying that higher education enhances political awareness and informed participation. Peer groups exhibit a weak but significant positive influence ($r = 0.281$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that social interactions contribute modestly to political decision-making. The study concludes that political socialization significantly influences voting behaviour in the study area and recommends strengthening civic education, promoting accurate media reporting, empowering peer-based sensitization initiatives, and supporting family-oriented political awareness programmes. The study contributes to the understanding of political behaviour in rural Nigerian settings and provides empirical evidence for policymakers, electoral bodies, and community stakeholders seeking to enhance democratic participation.

Keywords: *Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), political socialization, rural communities, voting behaviour, Fufure Local Government Area, Adamawa State.*

INTRODUCTION

Political socialization has been the focus of increased study among political scientists globally since the 1990s. While this process has been extensively examined in developed democracies, its dynamics in

emerging democracies, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, have received comparatively less scholarly attention (Petrović et al., 2018). In Nigeria specifically, the interplay between political socialization and voting behaviour is complicated by a host of contextual factors including ethnicity, religion, poverty, illiteracy, institutional weaknesses, and electoral malpractices, all of which mediate the relationship between socialization processes and democratic participation (Ambali & Adedoyin, 2024; Agbiboa, 2013).

Political socialization can be defined as the process by which political values, norms, beliefs, and behaviours are transmitted from one generation to another through various agents such as the family, educational institutions, peer groups, and mass media (Almond & Verba, 2019). Voter behaviour, as a subset of political behaviour, refers to the patterns of political participation and decision-making that citizens exhibit during elections, shaped significantly by the degree to which they have been socialized into the political culture of their society (Harrop & Miller, 1995; Bratton, 2013).

In Fufore Local Government Area (LGA) of Adamawa State, as in many rural communities in Nigeria, political socialization processes are deeply intertwined with traditional, familial, and communal structures. The role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in shaping electoral culture is particularly significant, as INEC bears institutional responsibility for voter education, registration, and ensuring the integrity of the electoral process (INEC, 2023). However, challenges such as electoral violence, voter apathy, elite manipulation, and inadequate civic education continue to undermine the effectiveness of political socialization in promoting informed voting behaviour in rural communities.

This study, therefore, examines the relationship between political socialization and voting behaviour in Fufore LGA, Adamawa State, focusing specifically on the roles of family background, educational background, and peer groups as primary agents of political socialization. By investigating these relationships empirically, the study provides evidence-based insights that can guide INEC, policymakers, civil society organizations, and community stakeholders in designing more effective voter education and democratic participation programmes.

Statement of the Problem

Political socialization, as an integral component of the political process, has been significantly undermined in Nigeria by a complex web of structural and behavioural challenges. In Fufore Local Government Area and across Adamawa State, electoral violence, widespread illiteracy, elite intimidation, thuggery, and political apathy have collectively distorted the process through which citizens develop informed political attitudes and make rational voting decisions. These challenges have enabled the emergence of politicians who ascend to public office through manipulation rather than genuine electoral mandates, resulting in governance deficits and a widening disconnect between elected officials and their constituents (Gaubu, 2003; Agbiboa, 2013).

The prevalence of vote-buying, driven largely by poverty among the rural electorate, further compromises the autonomy of voters in Fufore LGA. Youths, who constitute a significant proportion of the electorate,

are particularly vulnerable to being recruited into political thuggery for paltry compensation, undermining their capacity for rational political participation (Omotola, 2010). Political conflicts between party affiliates have not only led to loss of lives and property but have also deepened political apathy, discouraging many eligible voters from participating in the electoral process.

Furthermore, poor road networks, unreliable electricity supply, and inadequate telecommunications infrastructure impede the effective dissemination of political information to rural communities in Fufore LGA, limiting exposure to civic education programmes. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) faces substantial challenges in conducting effective voter education in these remote areas, creating a socialization gap that disproportionately affects rural voters. Addressing these challenges requires a systematic understanding of how political socialization agents such as family, education, and peer groups shape voting behaviour in this context, and what practical strategies can be developed to strengthen democratic participation. It is in response to this gap that the present study is undertaken.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between political socialization and voting behaviour of rural communities in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Examine the relationship between family background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.
- ii. Investigate the relationship between educational background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.
- iii. Assess the relationship between peer group influence and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between family background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between educational background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between peer groups and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Concept of Political Socialization

Political socialization is a multifaceted concept that has attracted diverse scholarly definitions over the decades. At its most fundamental level, it refers to the process through which individuals acquire political knowledge, values, beliefs, and orientations that shape their participation in the political system (Langton, 1969). Different scholars emphasize different dimensions of this process: some focus on the individual's relationship with the political system, while others give primacy to the systemic or structural dimensions of political learning.

According to Almond and Verba (2019), political socialization is the process through which individuals become integrated into a political culture – the shared set of political traditions, emotional attachments, and political orientations that characterize a given society. These authors argue that political culture is not transmitted genetically but is learned through various socialization agents and institutions. Gauba (2003) extends this perspective by noting that political socialization serves as the mechanism through which societies ensure political continuity and transformation across generations.

In the Nigerian context, political socialization is shaped not only by formal institutions but also by traditional, ethnic, and religious structures that exert powerful influences on political attitudes and behaviour (Ambali & Adedoyin, 2024; Ayeni-Akeke, 2018). Petrović et al. (2018) observe that in modern societies, political socialization functions through both conscious and unconscious processes, with individuals absorbing political norms from their immediate social environments before they become aware of wider political structures.

For the purpose of this study, political socialization is conceptualized as the continuous, lifelong process through which individuals in Fufore Local Government Area internalize political values, norms, and attitudes through their interactions with family, educational institutions, and peer groups, ultimately shaping their behaviour as voters in democratic elections.

2.1.2 Concept of Voting Behaviour

Voting behaviour refers to the patterns of political participation and decision-making exhibited by citizens during elections. It encompasses not merely the act of casting a ballot but also the range of attitudinal and behavioural dispositions that precede, accompany, and follow electoral participation (Harrop & Miller, 1995). Scholars have approached voting behaviour from multiple theoretical vantage points, including sociological, psychological, and rational choice perspectives.

Okolie (2018) defines voting as a mechanism through which a collective group of individuals can express their support or disapproval of particular candidates or propositions for public office. Bratton (2013)

conceptualizes voting behaviour as constituting the full range of electoral acts, including campaign engagement, information-seeking, and the actual casting of votes, all shaped by long-term socialization processes and short-term situational factors.

In Nigeria, voting behaviour has been significantly influenced by ethnic affiliation, religious identity, patron-client relationships, and the socio-economic conditions of voters, particularly in rural areas (Ambali & Adedoyin, 2024; Omotola, 2010). Harrop and Miller (1995) observe that both long-term and short-term influences shape voting behaviour: long-term influences include political socialization by family and educational institutions, while short-term influences include economic conditions, candidate appeal, and campaign activities.

For the purposes of this study, voting behaviour is conceptualized as the sum of electoral decisions, participation patterns, and political orientations of registered voters in the rural communities of Fufore LGA, as shaped by their political socialization experiences within the family, educational institutions, and peer group environments.

2.1.3 Concept of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and Electoral Administration

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is the constitutional body established under Section 153 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) with the mandate to organize, undertake, and supervise all elections to the offices of the President, Vice President, Governor, Deputy Governor, and members of the National and State Assemblies, as well as to register political parties and monitor their activities (INEC, 2023). INEC's role extends beyond the conduct of elections to include continuous voter registration, voter education, and the management of the electoral register.

In the context of political socialization, INEC functions as a critical institutional agent whose effectiveness in conducting voter education directly influences the quality of democratic participation. The Commission's voter education programmes are designed to inform citizens about their electoral rights and responsibilities, the mechanics of voting, and the importance of informed political participation. However, in rural communities such as those in Fufore LGA, INEC's reach is often constrained by infrastructural deficits, low literacy levels, and logistical challenges (INEC, 2023; Ibrahim, 2007).

2.2 Agents of Political Socialization

2.2.1 Family

The family is widely recognized as the primary and most influential agent of political socialization. According to Ayeni-Akeke (2018), the family holds primacy among socialization agents by virtue of both temporal sequence – it is the first social institution encountered by the individual – and depth of influence. The political attitudes, party affiliations, and voting patterns of parents have been consistently shown to significantly influence those of their children (Quintelier et al., 2019).

Ray (2004) notes that the family serves as the child's primary window to the outside world, including the political world. Through family interactions, children absorb political values, develop their first impressions of political authority, and form initial attachments to political parties or ideologies. Nwabuzor and Mueller (2019) observe that in Nigerian society, where extended family structures are prevalent, the political influence of the family extends beyond nuclear relationships to include grandparents, uncles, and other relatives who may reinforce or modify the political orientations instilled by parents.

Families also influence political participation indirectly by shaping the socio-economic status, educational opportunities, and social networks available to individuals (Tossutti, 2018; Botha, 2018). In rural Fufore LGA, where many families share ethnolinguistic identities and community ties, familial political socialization is particularly powerful in determining party loyalty and voting behaviour across generations.

2.2.2 Educational Institutions

Educational institutions constitute the second most important agent of political socialization after the family (Dawson & Prewitt, 1969; Langton, 1969). Schools and universities expose students to political knowledge, democratic values, and civic responsibilities through both formal curricula and informal organizational culture. Bar-Tal and Harel (2016) and Dassonneville et al. (2012) confirm that educational institutions play a significant role in shaping the political orientations of individuals throughout their academic careers.

Within educational settings, socialization occurs through two primary mechanisms: indoctrination/teaching through formal curricula, and modelling through imitation of the political behaviours of teachers and peers (Akinboye & Eesuola, 2015; Hillygus, 2005). Higher levels of educational attainment have been consistently associated with greater political awareness, stronger civic engagement, and more issue-based (as opposed to identity-based) voting behaviour (Musa & Ibrahim, 2024).

In Northern Nigeria, where Fufore LGA is located, educational attainment rates remain comparatively lower than in Southern Nigeria, particularly among women and rural populations, contributing to patterns of uninformed or manipulated voting behaviour (Musa & Ibrahim, 2024). Strengthening civic education within the school curriculum is therefore a critical strategy for improving the quality of democratic participation in the study area.

2.2.3 Peer Groups

Peer groups constitute a significant, if secondary, agent of political socialization. Defined as associations of individuals sharing similar age, status, or interests, peer groups create informal social environments within which political norms, attitudes, and information are exchanged (Langton, 1969; Campos et al., 2013). Unlike family and school, peer group socialization tends to be horizontal and non-hierarchical, occurring through discussion, debate, and shared political experiences.

Mutz and Mondak (2015) demonstrate that workplace and social settings, including peer group interactions, constitute important contexts for cross-cutting political discourse that can broaden or modify political

attitudes acquired through family socialization. Namo et al. (2024) found that in the Nigerian context, peer influence has become increasingly mediated through social media platforms, with approximately 93% of youth voters in their study relying on peer-shared social media content for political information.

In Fufore LGA, peer group influence on voting behaviour operates within the context of community social structures, including youth organizations, farmer cooperatives, and religious associations, which serve as informal channels for political information and mobilization (Gaubu, 2003).

2.2.4 Mass Media

Mass media, encompassing radio, television, newspapers, and increasingly social media platforms, plays an important role in political socialization by disseminating political information, framing political debates, and shaping public opinion (Karppinen, 2012). In rural communities where access to formal education may be limited, radio broadcasts in local languages serve as particularly important channels for voter education and political information.

Ehio et al. (2024) found that campaign communications through mass media significantly influence voter socialization and party loyalty in Nigeria. Namo et al. (2024) similarly found strong associations between social media consumption and youth voting behaviour, though the potential for misinformation through unregulated digital media platforms presents a significant challenge for the integrity of political socialization processes.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Democratic Theory of Media and Communication

The Democratic Theory of Media and Communication, as developed by scholars such as Karppinen (2012) and Kitschelt (1993), posits that media and communication systems play a foundational role in sustaining democratic governance by facilitating the free flow of political information, promoting public deliberation, and enabling citizens to make informed choices in democratic elections. The theory holds that a healthy democracy requires not only the formal right to vote but also access to accurate, diverse, and freely available political information.

This theoretical framework aligns with the present study in several important ways. First, it underscores the importance of INEC's voter education and communication strategies as mechanisms for enhancing political socialization in Fufore LGA. Second, it provides a lens for understanding why access to media – including radio, television, and increasingly social media – is critical to the quality of democratic participation in rural communities. Third, the theory's emphasis on transparency and citizen participation aligns with the study's focus on how informed voting behaviour, shaped through political socialization, contributes to democratic consolidation in Adamawa State.

The Democratic Theory of Media also supports the study's emphasis on the role of peer groups and educational institutions as supplementary channels of political communication, recognizing that democratic

pluralism is sustained not only through mass media but also through interpersonal and community-based dialogue.

2.3.2 Political Socialization Theory

The Political Socialization Theory, pioneered by scholars such as Dawson and Prewitt (1969), Langton (1969), and Almond and Verba (2019), provides the primary theoretical foundation for this study. The theory holds that political attitudes, values, and behaviours are not innate but are learned through lifelong interaction with socialization agents. These agents – primarily family, school, peer groups, and media – transmit political culture from one generation to the next, ensuring both the continuity and transformation of democratic political systems.

In the context of Fufere LGA, Political Socialization Theory explains how rural voters develop their voting orientations through family discussions, school-based civic education, peer group interactions, and media exposure. The theory also provides a framework for understanding the limitations of political socialization in contexts characterized by poverty, illiteracy, and institutional weaknesses, where the quality of socialization inputs is compromised by structural barriers (Gaubu, 2003; Omotola, 2010).

Empirical Review

Namo et al. (2024) conducted a mixed-methods study titled ‘Social Media and Youths’ Voting Behaviour in Nigeria’ using a target population of Political Science students at the Federal University Wukari. The study used purposive sampling (n = 448) and found that approximately 93% of respondents relied upon social media to obtain political information that influenced their voting decisions. The researchers recommended building digital literacy and reducing misinformation, while acknowledging limitations related to sampling from a single institution.

Ehio et al. (2024) investigated the role of campaign communications in socializing voters in Rivers State using a cross-sectional quantitative design across three senatorial districts. The study found a positive correlation between political marketing strategies and voters’ loyalty, with emotional appeal, branding, and candidate communication identified as significant determinants of voting decisions. The authors recommended that political entities develop transparent, citizen-focused messaging strategies.

Ambali and Adedoyin (2024) investigated how ethnic and religious affiliations affect voting behaviour in Nigeria using the 2023 Presidential Election as a case study. Using descriptive and inferential analysis across Nigeria’s six geopolitical regions, the study found that ethnic affiliation, religious identity, candidate familiarity, and regional identification exert strong effects on voting decisions, reaffirming the dominance of traditional socialization agents in Nigerian electoral behaviour. The authors recommended enhanced civic education to reduce identity-based voting.

Adeyemi (2024) conducted a descriptive survey of 500 respondents in Lagos and Oyo States to examine family influence on voting behaviour in South-West Nigeria. Using chi-square tests and correlation analysis,

the study found that family background remained a primary instrument of political socialization and a significant predictor of voting behaviour, particularly for first-time voters. The study recommended encouraging families to engage in civic activities together but acknowledged geographical limitations.

Musa and Ibrahim (2024) investigated the influence of educational attainment on political decision-making among 600 registered voters in Kano and Kaduna States, Northern Nigeria. Regression analysis revealed that higher educational attainment was associated with greater political awareness, critical thinking, and issue-based voting. The authors recommended strengthening civic education at secondary and post-secondary levels.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a descriptive research design, which is appropriate for systematically describing the characteristics, trends, and patterns of a given population without manipulating variables (Dawson & Prewitt, 1969). The descriptive design enabled the collection of quantitative data on political socialization patterns and voting behaviour among rural voters in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

The population of the study comprised all eligible registered voters in the rural communities of Fufore Local Government Area. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC, 2023), the total number of registered voters in Fufore LGA as at the 2023 General Election was 96,000. Consistent with established conventions in social science research, the researcher utilized 10% of the total population as the accessible study population, giving a working population of 9,600 respondents.

To determine the appropriate sample size from the accessible population, the researcher applied Taro Yamane's (1964) formula:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where n = sample size, N = population size (9,600), and e = margin of error (0.05). This yielded a sample size of 384 respondents. An additional 10% (38 respondents) was added to account for non-response and questionnaire attrition, giving a total of 422 questionnaires administered to respondents.

A convenience sampling technique was adopted for the selection of respondents, as it allowed the researcher to access eligible voters who were readily available, willing to participate, and located within accessible areas of the study area, given the constraints of time, cost, and logistics in rural communities.

Primary data were collected through self-administered structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed to measure respondents' perceptions and experiences relating to family political socialization, educational background, peer group influence, and voting behaviour. Reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded coefficients above 0.70 for all variables, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and percentages) and inferential statistics. Specifically, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the

hypothesized relationships between political socialization variables and voting behaviour, at a 0.05 level of significance, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between family background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

		Family Background	Voting Behaviour
Family Background	Pearson Correlation	1	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	384	384
Voting Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.989**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	384	384

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 presents the results of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis between family background and voting behaviour among respondents in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State. The results indicate a very strong positive correlation between family background and voting behaviour ($r = 0.989$, $p = 0.000$, 2-tailed). Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis — that there is no significant relationship between family background and voting behaviour — is rejected. The correlation coefficient is extremely close to 1, suggesting that variations in family political socialization are almost perfectly associated with variations in voting behaviour among respondents.

These findings indicate that respondents who reported higher levels of political engagement, discussion, and encouragement within their family environments also demonstrated higher levels of positive voting behaviour, including informed decision-making, consistent electoral participation, and reliance on political knowledge rather than external pressures or patronage. This outcome is consistent with Quintelier et al. (2019), who assigned greater importance to the role of family in developing political attitudes, and Adeyemi (2024), whose study in South-West Nigeria equally found that family background was a primary predictor of voting behaviour, particularly among first-time voters.

The extremely high correlation coefficient obtained in this study ($r = 0.989$) reflects the particularly strong role of family in the rural communities of Fufore LGA, where traditional family structures exercise considerable authority over members' social and political decisions. Ayeni-Akeke (2018) notes that in

Nigerian communities, the influence of the extended family – including grandparents, uncles, and other relatives – on political socialization is particularly pronounced, a finding that aligns with the high correlation observed in this study.

4.2 Hypothesis Two

H₀: There is no significant relationship between educational background and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

		Educational Background	Voting Behaviour
Educational Background	Pearson Correlation	1	.675**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	384	384
Voting Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.675**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	384	384

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 presents the results of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis between educational background and voting behaviour. The results show a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.675$, $p = 0.000$, 2-tailed). As the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis – that there is no significant relationship between educational background and voting behaviour – is rejected.

The findings indicate that respondents with higher levels of formal education demonstrated more positive voting behaviours, including greater political awareness, more thorough evaluation of candidates' policy positions, and more consistent electoral participation. Conversely, respondents with lower educational attainment exhibited lower levels of engagement in these political behaviours. This finding corroborates Musa and Ibrahim (2024), who similarly found in a study of Northern Nigerian voters that higher educational attainment was associated with greater political awareness, critical thinking capacity, and issue-based voting behaviour.

The moderate strength of the correlation ($r = 0.675$), compared to the near-perfect correlation observed for family background ($r = 0.989$), reflects the reality that in rural communities such as Fufore LGA, formal education, while influential, operates within a social context where family and community norms remain the dominant socialization forces. This is consistent with Dawson and Prewitt (1969), who observed that educational institutions tend to reinforce, rather than override, political values first acquired in the family environment. Nonetheless, the significant positive association between educational background and voting

behaviour underscores the critical importance of investing in functional civic education programmes in the study area.

4.3 Hypothesis Three

H₀: There is no significant relationship between peer groups and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State.

		Peer Groups	Voting Behaviour
Peer Groups	Pearson Correlation	1	.281 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	384	384
Voting Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.281 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	384	384

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the results of Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis between peer groups and voting behaviour. The results indicate a weak but statistically significant positive correlation between peer groups and voting behaviour ($r = 0.281$, $p = 0.000$, 2-tailed). Since the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis — that there is no significant relationship between peer groups and voting behaviour — is rejected.

While the direction of the relationship is positive, the relatively weak magnitude of the correlation ($r = 0.281$) indicates that peer groups, though influential, exercise a considerably smaller impact on voting behaviour in Fufore LGA than family background and educational institutions. Respondents who reported higher levels of political discussion within their peer groups, exchange of political information among friends, and peer encouragement to participate in elections demonstrated marginally higher levels of informed voting behaviour compared to those with less politically engaged peer networks.

This finding aligns with Campos et al. (2013), who documented that peer groups play a supporting role in political socialization but are generally less decisive than family in determining political preferences. The weak peer influence observed may also reflect the rural nature of the study context, where peer networks tend to be less politically organized than in urban settings. Mutz and Mondak (2015) similarly observed that peer influence on political attitudes is most significant in settings that facilitate regular cross-cutting political discourse, conditions that are less commonly met in rural agricultural communities such as those in Fufore LGA. Nonetheless, the statistically significant result confirms that interventions targeting peer

groups particularly youth organizations and community associations could contribute meaningfully to improving voter behaviour in the study area.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study set out to examine the relationship between political socialization and voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, Adamawa State, with particular reference to the roles of family background, educational background, and peer groups as agents of political socialization. Based on the empirical evidence generated through Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis, the study draws the following conclusions aligned with the research objectives:

In relation to Objective 1, the study found a very strong positive relationship between family background and voting behaviour ($r = 0.989$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that family socialization is the most powerful determinant of voting behaviour among rural voters in Fufore LGA. The family unit's central role in transmitting political values, party affiliations, and civic attitudes across generations is particularly pronounced in the traditional rural communities of the study area, where family authority structures remain dominant.

In relation to Objective 2, the study found a strong positive relationship between educational background and voting behaviour ($r = 0.675$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that higher levels of education are significantly associated with more informed, rational, and consistent voting behaviour. Education equips voters with the political literacy necessary to evaluate candidates on the basis of policy issues rather than ethnic, religious, or patronage considerations.

In relation to Objective 3, the study found a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between peer group influence and voting behaviour ($r = 0.281$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that while peer groups do contribute positively to political socialization, their influence is considerably more limited than that of family and educational background in the rural communities of Fufore LGA.

Overall, the study concludes that political socialization significantly influences voting behaviour in Fufore Local Government Area, and that strengthening the effectiveness of socialization agents — particularly through targeted interventions by INEC, government agencies, and civil society organizations — is essential for enhancing democratic participation and the quality of electoral outcomes in the study area.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

- i. In line with the finding that family background is the strongest predictor of voting behaviour (Objective 1), the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), community leaders, and civil society

organizations should design and implement family-oriented political awareness programmes. Such programmes should encourage political discussions within households, provide families with accurate and accessible civic education materials, and promote the transmission of informed voting norms across generations. INEC's voter education campaigns should be extended to household levels, utilizing community radio broadcasts and local language materials appropriate for rural communities.

- ii. In response to the finding that educational background significantly correlates with voting behaviour (Objective 2), government at federal and state levels should strengthen civic education curricula at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education in Adamawa State. Schools should incorporate practical civic activities such as political debates, mock elections, and voter education seminars into their extracurricular programmes. INEC should collaborate with the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and the National Universities Commission (NUC) to integrate voter education into school activities, particularly in the rural communities of Fufore LGA.
- iii. In response to the finding that peer groups, while less influential, still significantly contribute to political socialization (Objective 3), youth groups, student unions, community organizations, and religious associations in Fufore LGA should be supported and empowered to organize peer-led sensitization programmes. INEC and civil society organizations should provide resources and training for peer-led voter education initiatives, leveraging the social cohesion of peer networks to disseminate accurate political information, combat electoral misinformation, and encourage responsible civic participation among youth voters.
- iv. The federal and Adamawa State governments should invest in improving the infrastructure of rural communities in Fufore LGA, including road networks, electricity supply, and telecommunications connectivity, to facilitate greater access to political information and INEC's voter education programmes. Improved infrastructure will enhance the capacity of all socialization agents – family, school, peer groups, and media – to function effectively as channels for democratic civic education.

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