



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi state, Nigeria

ABUBAKAR Saidu Ainoko *, Prof Abdullahi N Liman, ABDUL Adamu, ADAMA Ahmed Mohammed and OBAJE Godwin

Institute of Governance and Development Studies, Department of Security and Strategic Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.

World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 21(02), 1364–1373

Publication history: Received on 08 January 2024; revised on 18 February 2024; accepted on 20 February 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.21.2.0552>

Abstract

This study examines the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study specific objectives are to examine the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Nigeria. The study adopts survey research design. The population of the study is 4,473,600. This study employs scientific sampling technique determination of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to arrive at a sample size of 384. Purposive sampling method was adopted as the sampling technique for this study. The study utilized primary data source. The primary data for this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed in five Likert scale. Simple Ordinary Least Square regression was used to check the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study found that electoral violence has a negative impact on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study concludes that electoral violence has remained a sour taste in Nigeria's bid for democratic governance in Nigeria. The study also concludes that electoral violence discourages election of credible leaders and people's participation in the electoral process thereby militating against electoral credibility in Nigeria. The study recommends for the need to reconstruct security architecture of the country, sanction political leaders, political parties and individuals that violate electoral laws, tackle the problem of arms proliferation and embark on political education and enlightenment that will encourage citizens to adhere strictly to democratic tenets. The study recommends for a reduction in the financial attractiveness of political offices, handing down of stiffer penalties to perpetrators of electoral violence by the government so as to deter others from demonstrating such acts in the future.

Keywords: Democratic Governance; Electoral Credibility; Electoral Violence; Frustration Aggression Theory; Survey Method.

1. Introduction

Democracy as a system of government is commonly practiced in most countries of the world. While it is popular mostly due to its unique attribute of selecting leaders through elections, it is characterized by various levels of electoral violence in some regions especially among developing countries. The violence that is perpetrated before, during and after elections is mostly referred to as election violence (Flores & Nooruddin, 2023). Democracy is considered as the solution to Africa's problems; but it has become a major source of violence and conflict in countries with some of Africa's big economies like Nigeria.

However, with democracy taking shape across the continent, new forms of conflicts are emerging, including electoral violence, which seems to be pushing democracy into total regression (Yusuf, 2019). It is true that democracy come with

*Corresponding author: ABUBAKAR Saidu Ainoko

its own challenges. Sadly, however, electoral violence has become a common trend and is assuming a dangerous dimension in the continent's democracy. Electoral violence has great consequences to the Nigeria citizens, government and the image of the country before the international communities. With electoral violence, some Nigerians will view elections and democratic process with apprehension and anxiety as nobody wants to sacrifice his/her life because of elections. Also, the popular confidence of the citizens will gradually erode in the electoral process so long as electoral violence is the order of the democratic process in Nigeria. Electoral violence undermines legitimacy of government and threatens democratic stability of a nation and this includes Nigeria (Yusuf, 2019).

Yusuf (2019) noted that while the main purpose of electoral violence is the manipulation of the electoral system to favour particular candidates or political parties through the use of violence, various forms of violence are usually employed by unpopular candidates with the aim of hijacking the electoral process to their favour. Ebiziem (2015) agreed that electoral violence is one of the main challenges affecting democracy as it tends to affect electoral outcomes as well as the overall quality of governance. Looking at electoral violence from a diverse perspective, Mollah and Jahan (2018) are of the opinion that electoral violence is mainly used by incumbents as means to win elections fraudulently in order to hold on to power (Yusuf, 2019; Mollah & Jahan, 2018).

Electoral violence tends to affect most areas of a country's development thereby leading to poor democratic governance, insecurity, corruption among other effects. Electoral violence is one of the major challenges facing Nigerian electoral processes since independence. It has been observed that elections in Nigeria are always faced with different forms of violence. Violence around elections increasingly captures the attention of donors and practitioners, who invest growing resources into enhancing the safety and security of democratic practice around the world (Althaus et al., 2022).

Electoral violence remains one of the challenges confronting democracy since the wave of democratisation in Africa began in the 1990s, after many decades of military rule (Diamond, 2022). Since the introduction of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, Kogi State has witnessed a series of election violence which is seen as having a negative effect on democratic governance. Hardly ever are elections conducted without some forms of violence either before, during or after the election results are announced. This is believed to constitute a real setback to the consolidation of democracy in Kogi State.

Since the return of democracy in 1999, Kogi State has experienced different forms of electoral violence (Ladan-Baki, 2016). It is crucial at this point to provide the contextual nature of the political environment in Nigeria. Nigeria was replete with a plethora of violent conflicts even before the re-introduction of democracy in 1999 (Ijere, 2015). Between 1999 and 2017, all elections conducted in Nigeria have experienced one form of violence or the other (Ladan-Baki, 2016; Cohen, 2015). Even the Nigerian general elections of April 2011 which most observers (local and international) considered to be the fairest in the nation's history (before the 2015 general elections though), yet, there were rioting and destruction that killed hundreds of people in campaign violence (Adesote & Abimbola, 2014).

Though the 2015 general elections were relatively peaceful compared to the previous ones nevertheless, there was violence in Kogi State. Conducting elections in Kogi State has been problematic to the electoral management bodies as all forms of violence are introduced to mar the polls. The state is a place where gangs and all types of organised violence like muggings, carjackings, kidnappings and armed robberies are very rife according to the National Working Group on Armed Violence /Action on Armed Violence (2013). Kogi is ranked ninth among twenty-seven states in Nigeria surveyed in terms of the prevalence of political fatalities (Bello, 2014). Election violence was witnessed in the State in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and the 2019 general elections (Human Rights Watch, 2004). There is also communal and religious violence, political and electoral contestations; religious and ethnic rivalry, class interests, class antagonism and the recklessness of the politicians which could be among the underlying factors or possible triggers of most election violence in Kogi State and largely in Nigeria.

Idoko et al. (2015) averred that the problem of election violence in Kogi revolves around bad governance and corruption, which has become public policy. They argued that corruption has become a culture such that it has hindered democratic governance. Thus, any attempt at fighting corruption through the polls by bringing about change in the power equation is always met with violence. The politics of party defection in Kogi State (as common in Nigeria) is adduced to be a factor in fueling election violence (Aloyemi, 2013). The tradition in Kogi is that politicians defect at any time they perceive their chances of winning an election in a particular political party is slim, to a more saleable party. This in itself destroys trust and is conceived as a betrayal of former party members. The resultant effect is acrimony, hatred, and attacks that are at most times, detrimental to democratic consolidation.

The heat and passion associated with off-season governorship elections in Nigeria often make elections appear like war. The violence had led to the death of many politicians, their supporters and innocent citizens in off-season governorship

elections in the following states; Kogi, Bayelsa, Osun, Ekiti, Edo, Anambra among others. Election security is crucial for creating the proper environment that electoral officials require to carry out their duties, for voters to freely and safely go to their polling units to vote, for candidates and political parties to organize rallies and campaigns and for other numerous stakeholders to discharge their responsibilities under the Constitution and the Electoral Act. Police is the foremost internal security matters agency in Nigeria and handles all internal security matters including the provision of security for the conduct of any election in Nigeria.

However, much of the research on election violence and democratic governance to date has been merely descriptive in nature and has failed to holistically analyse and interpret the role of election violence on democratic governance, specifically in Kogi State, Nigeria. Surprisingly, democratic governance and election violence in Kogi State, Nigeria has not been closely examined particularly on an analytical scale. Consequently, not much is known about how election violence contributes to the slow pace of democratic governance in this area. It is also unclear if the different factors and ways through which election violence continues to undermine democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State. This, therefore, constitutes the gap which this study seeks to fill, and it is upon this basis that this study was predicated with the aim to help understand and analyse the interplay between election violence, democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Prior studies in Nigeria like Erunke et al. (2022) examined the relationship between political violence and the sustenance of democratic values in Nigeria, with particular reference to Nasarawa State. While Ita (2022) explored the prevalence of electoral violence in Nigeria between 1999 and 2019 with evidences from the South-South geo-political zone. Deinibiteim and Samuel (2021); Okpuvwie (2021); Adekola (2021) all examined the effects of electoral violence on the democratization efforts and democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Though, Momoh (2023) investigated voters' perception in Lokoja metropolis on electoral violence and the electoral credibility of the 2019 gubernatorial election in Kogi State. While Jooji (2022) investigated the factors that triggered ethnic politics during the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis and how it undermined the electoral process during the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election. From the forgoing review of literature, there is gap on impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. Hence, this study seeks to make contributions to this research endeavour.

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are stated to guide this study in order to achieve its objectives;

- **H₀₁:** Electoral violence has no significant impact on democratic governance in Kogi State, Nigeria.
- **H₀₂:** Electoral violence has no significant impact on electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria.

This study focused on the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State between 2003 and 2019. The scope of this research was limited to the 2003-2019 general elections in Kogi State, Nigeria. The choice of Kogi State was informed by the fact that Kogi State happened to be the core of the old Middle Belt which has been a major theatre of electoral violence till date. Also, the choice of Kogi State is because the State is a heterogeneous State having all the traits inherent in the Nigerian nation in terms of different cultural backgrounds, religious differences and ethnic groupings.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concept of Electoral Violence

Bamgbose (2011) opined that violence is an act of aggression that leads to inflicting injury on persons, destruction of properties and causing pandemonium within a given social gathering, community or society. Electoral violence is defined as an acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections; such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions.

Balogun (2003) explained electoral violence as any form of violence that arise at any stage (pre, during and post-election) from differences in opinions, feelings and engagements of electoral processes. Ladan-Baki (2016) also noted that electoral violence during general elections include the snatching of ballot boxes to rig and manipulate election results; causing pandemonium in polling stations to hinder voters from voting; beating up electoral officers and sometimes killing same in the process when weapons such as guns and cutlass are used during the elections.

Electoral violence refers to any threat of attack or attack meted out against persons or group of persons in relation to an election before, during and after the election. It is usually an organized action carried out by the political elites (politicians), their supporters or hired thugs/gangs to unleash terror on opponents in the course of electioneering activities, which in many cases, lead to loss of lives and destruction of properties. Fischer (2002) sees electoral violence as any random or organized act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail or abuse a political stakeholder in seeking to determine, delay or to otherwise influence an electoral process.

2.2. Democratic Governance

2.2.1. Concept of Democratic Governance

Democratic governance is building open, responsive, and accountable institutions and processes that serve the needs and preferences of the public. It is a system of government where institutions function according to democratic processes and norms, both internally and in their interaction with other institutions. Democratic governance is giving citizens a say in how decisions are made, and is fundamental to ensuring that democracy delivers for all of society. Strong democratic governance is characterized by transparency and accountability in both the public and private sectors. An open, participatory governance process responds to citizen and business needs, resulting in better and fairer government policies. To this end, democratic governance programs promote open, informed public decision-making and principled corporate governance (Sari, 2023).

The culture of a democratic governance moves beyond the mere procedures of democracy and the establishment of democratic institutions. It involves promoting the sustainability of democracy which includes an enduring capacity for: the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government; the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law; the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and, the transparency and accountability of a responsible civil service, functioning at both the national and local levels (Liambomba, 2023).

2.2.2. Electoral Credibility

Credible election is always used interchangeably with clean, acceptable, free and fair elections. These are elections conducted in accordance with the existing electoral rules and in which every contestant is given equal opportunity to win. It is an election conducted without partiality or undue advantages of any party or candidate (Ayagu et al., 2019). Credible election is election conducted in a democratically acceptable manner/process. It must provide for equal electorate and freedom which afford them opportunity to make real and meaningful choice devoid of coercion or intimidation (Eminue, 2001).

Furthermore, credible elections are indispensable to the establishment and maintenance of democracy. This is because elections, inter-alia, provide legitimacy for the state and its custodians. In developed liberal and social democracies such as the United States and many European states, elections have been institutionalized for fostering competitive party politics, taking stock of the performance of leaders at various levels of the polity and ensuring the smooth and orderly transfer of the reins of power.

3. Empirical Review

3.1. Electoral Violence and Democratic Governance

Uche et al. (2022) examined the Nigerian State and electoral violence, particularly the violence that emanated from the 2019 presidential election in Nigeria. Documentary sources of data collection and analysis was adopted. The research found out that the Nigeria State has been failing to address the root causes of electoral violence, namely, poverty and unemployment. Therefore, it has failed in its primary responsibility of ensuring the security and welfare of its citizens as enshrined in the constitution of Nigeria.

Erunke et al. (2022) examined the relationship between political violence and the sustenance of democratic values in Nigeria, with particular reference to Nasarawa State. This work is a survey research and, hence, adopts the use of primary and secondary sources of data collection as method of investigation. The major tool applied in the survey was

questionnaire and interview method, while data was collected and analyzed using simple percentage analysis. The results from the findings reveal that though conscious efforts have been made by government and other stakeholders to mitigate violence during elections, not much has been achieved in sustaining the peace before, during or after elections.

Rosenje (2022) investigated how security lapses accentuated electoral violence thereby threatening democratic consolidation in Southwest Nigeria's Fourth Republic. It made use of documentary data gathered through secondary data source. The paper contended that the nonchalant attitude of Nigerian leadership towards the security of the electoral process does not give room for the consolidation of democracy in the country. It further averred that these inadequacies of the security personnel, the politicisation, and manipulation of its deployment by the leadership as well as prevalent arms proliferation had posed challenges to peaceful conduct of elections.

Ita (2022) explored the prevalence of electoral violence in Nigeria between 1999 and 2019 with evidences from the South-South geo-political zone. The paper ascribed the recurring and high level of political violence in the country to over-zealousness and desperation of political gladiators to win elections or remain in office at all cost.

Deinibiteim and Samuel (2021) examined the effects of electoral violence on the democratization efforts and democratic consolidation in Nigeria since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999. The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were mainly drawn from mainly the authors' observations during elections, over the years, while secondary data were drawn from existing literature on the subject matter. The study revealed that the pervasive violence at different elections has greatly discredited and emasculated democratic governance in the country.

Okpuvwie (2021) conducted a study on electoral violence and the growth of democracy in Nigeria. The study used secondary data and content analysis method. The paper revealed killings, arson, snatching of ballot boxes and thuggery as forms of violence that characterized the electoral process in Nigeria. The causes of electoral violence in Nigeria according to the paper include poverty/unemployment, bribery/corruption, manipulation of electoral results and lack of political will by political leaderships to prosecute perpetrators of electoral violence.

Adekola (2021) examined electoral violence in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: Implication for democratic development. It adopts secondary source of data collection using all relevant documented materials to analyse the work. It discovered that electoral violence occurs in three occasions, which are: Pre, during and post elections periods. Consequently, violence that characterised elections in Nigeria's fourth republic is a major obstacle to democratic development and Nigerian inability to conduct free, fair and credible election.

Igwe and Amadi (2021) explored how the prevalence of political violence has undermined Nigeria's democracy. The analysis follows survey data to address the questions regarding democracy and political violence. The study draws from the frustration-aggression and group violence theories and provides a deepened analytic exploration. Based on some of the assumptions of democracy understood as freedom, equality, accountability, rule of law, the study argues that these assumptions obviously constitute a 'universal pattern' in democratic practice, which makes a critical evaluation of the Nigerian experience important.

3.2. Electoral Violence and Electoral Credibility

Momoh (2023) investigated voters' perception in Lokoja metropolis on electoral violence and the electoral credibility of the 2019 gubernatorial election in Kogi State. Survey research design was adopted for this study. Data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The sample of size of 400 registered voters from a population of 137,301 registered voters was collected from Lokoja. The result showed that electoral violence had an influence on electoral credibility in Lokoja during the 2019 Kogi State gubernatorial election. Furthermore, the study also found that electoral violence discourages citizens from voting in the 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis, Kogi State.

Jooji (2022) investigated the factors that triggered ethnic politics during the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis and how it undermined the electoral process during the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election. The study collected data from primary and secondary sources. This study used a sample of 400 people from the study's population of 137,301. Besides, the alternative hypothesis which states that there is significant relationship between factors that promotes ethnic politics such as political marginalization and illiteracy, electorates' value system, weak electoral laws and corruption and the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis is accepted. Also, the alternative hypothesis which states that there is significant relationship between the ways ethnicity undermined the credibility of electoral process during the Kogi State 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis is accepted.

3.3. Theoretical Framework

3.3.1. Frustration Aggression Theory

The theory of Frustration-Aggression as postulated by Dollard et al. (1939) is based on the notion that frustration leads to aggression. The theory posits that frustration leads to aggression and that aggressive behaviour is the result of inhibition or hindrance of someone’s effort, aim or ambition to achieve a certain goal. When the source of the aggression cannot be confronted, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target.

The frustration-aggression theory has been used to explain violence and its tendencies across various disciplines in the social sciences and the applied sciences (Breuer & Elson, 2017). Breuer and Elson note that the theory initially holds that aggressive behaviours always presupposes the existence of aggressive behaviour, and contrariwise, that the existence of frustration often leads to some forms of aggression. Thus, the reaction that comes from the frustration from gaining access to an individual’s expectations (Dennen, 2005). However, this theory has been criticised first, for claiming aggression is a function of frustration; the assumption that frustration always leads to aggression is not true. Despite this critique, this theory has been instrumental in explaining the nexus between election violence and democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Furthermore, this theory employed in the study examines the relationship between electoral violence and democratic governance (Nwobashi, 2015). The violent behavior expressed through electoral violence is undertaken by the people who are disadvantaged economically, wanting to change the existing economic inequality in the society. This is made manifest sometimes during the period of political recruitment, when the structure of economic relations does not favor the poor and reduce inequality in the society; violent behavior will continue. This is because the fundamental concern of human beings is survival and security and so anything short of these, are to his dissatisfaction (Nkwede, 2015).

4. Methodology

Survey research design was used to examine the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. This study focuses on Kogi State, Nigeria; the population of the State is 4,473,600 as at 2016. The population of this study is a finite population and is large, therefore, the entire population was not studied. This study employs scientific sampling technique determination of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) that recommends a sample size of 384 for a population above 4 million.

Purposive sampling method was adopted as the sampling technique for this study. This is because it helps in the identification of appropriate respondents as well as adequate sampling of information sources (that is people, places, events). Therefore, respondents were selected purposively based on their position during the critical election time, experiences, and knowledge on the research subject, as well as availability and willingness to share information. This study purposefully selects one (1) local government in Kogi East Senatorial District, one (1) local government was selected from Kogi West Senatorial District while one (1) local government was selected from Kogi Central Senatorial District to make up with twelve local governments. The one (1) local government selected in Kogi East Senatorial District is Dekina. In Kogi West Senatorial District, the local government selected in Kogi is Lokoja. The local government that was selected in Kogi Central Senatorial District was Okene Local Government Area. The study sampled 128 respondents in each of the Local Government.

The main avenue through which data and information were gathered for this study is primary sources. The primary data for this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed in five likert scale. The primary source obtained from the administering of structured questionnaire using the instrument’s five-point scale Likert scale shown as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5 points, Agree (A) = 4 points, Undecided (U) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point.

Simple OLS regression was used to check the impact of electoral violence on democratic governance and electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria.

4.1. Model Specification

The functional representation of the model for the study is given below;

$$DEMGO = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ELEC V + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{eq(i)}$$

$$ELEC R = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ELEC V + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{eq(ii)}$$

Where;

ELECV = Electoral Violence

DEMGO = Democratic Governance

ELECR = Electoral Credibility

B_0 = is the constant or coefficient of intercept

β_i = the corresponding coefficients for the respective independent variable

ε = stochastic error term

Equation (i & ii) is estimated using the method of Simple Ordinary Least Square to ascertain the coefficients β_1 , which measures the slope of each of the variable above.

4.2. Reliability and Validity Test

Reliability of the primary data is checked through Cronbach's alpha. Reliability of the survey instrument is evaluated through Cronbach Alpha. The study computes separate and combine reliability estimates, which are similar to the normally used coefficient alpha statistics. Cronbach value beyond ($\alpha = .7$) signifies acceptable reliability.

Table 1 Summary of Cronbach's Alpha Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	Number of Items
Electoral Violence (ELECV)	0.964	7
Democratic Governance (DEMGO)	0.972	7
Electoral Credibility (ELECR)	0.861	7
Total Questions	0.995	21

Source: Extracted from SPSS Output, 2023.

The measurement scales' computed Cronbach's Alpha (α) results in table I above indicates that Electoral Violence (ELECV) revealed Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.964, while Democratic Governance (DEMGO) showed Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.972. Electoral Credibility (ELECR) revealed Cronbach's Alpha (α) of 0.861. The overall questions had Cronbach Alpha (α) of 0.995. The measurement scales were reliable as all the Cronbach's value are well above 0.6 threshold which is the recommended coefficient for a given research instrument.

5. Data Analysis and Results

Table 2 Ordinary Least Square Regression Result for Model I

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-statistics	Prob. Value
C	0.300	0.029	10.504	0.000
ELECV	-0.079	0.036	-2.196	0.029
R ²	0.925			
Adjusted R ²	0.885			
F-Statistics	5765.862			
Prob. F-Statistics	0.000			

Source: SPSS Output, 2023 (Dependent Variable: Democratic Governance (DEMGO)).

The F-Statistic of 5765.862 and its corresponding P-value of 0.000 indicates that the model is fit and the independent variables is properly selected and used. The Coefficient of Determination (R²) of 0.925 indicates that about 92% of Democratic Governance (DEMGO) is likely explained by Electoral Violence (ELECV). The remaining 8% are attributed to other independent variables that are not captured in the regression model.

From table II, the regression result demonstrates that Electoral Violence (ELECV) has a negative impact on Democratic Governance (DEMGO) in Kogi State. This indicates that an increase in electoral violence will lead to reduction in

democratic governance in Kogi State. The impact of electoral governance on democratic governance is significant as the p-value of 0.029 is less than the significant level of 0.05. Thus, we do have appropriate reason to reject the null hypotheses, we therefore conclude that electoral violence has significant negative impact on democratic governance in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Table 3 Ordinary Least Square Regression Result for Model II

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-statistics	Prob. Value
C	0.666	0.155	4.300	0.000
ELECV	-0.382	0.054	-7.044	0.000
R ²	0.798			
Adjusted R ²	0.637			
F-Statistics	140.328			
Prob. F-Statistics	0.000			

Source: SPSS Output, 2023 (Dependent Variable: Electoral Credibility (ELECR)).

The F-Statistic of 140.328 and its corresponding P-value of 0.000 indicates that the model is fit and the independent variable is properly selected and used. The Coefficient of Determination (R²) of 0.637 indicates that about 63% of electoral credibility is likely explained by Electoral Violence (ELECV). The remaining 37% are attributed to other independent variables that are not captured in the regression model.

The regression result above demonstrates that Electoral Violence (ELECV) has a negative impact on Electoral Credibility (ELECR) in Kogi State. This indicates that an increase in electoral violence will lead to reduction in the credibility of elections in Kogi State. The impact of electoral governance on electoral credibility is significant as the p-value of 0.000 is less than the significant level of 0.05. Thus, we do have appropriate reason to reject the null hypotheses, we therefore conclude that electoral violence has significant negative impact on electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria.

6. Discussion

The study found that electoral violence has a significant negative impact on democratic governance in Kogi State, Nigeria. It indicates that reveals that the persistent violence at different elections conducted in Kogi State has greatly undermined, discredited and emasculated democratic governance in the State. This finding is in line with prior works of Erunke et al. (2022); Rosenje (2022); Harry and Kalagbor (2021); Okpuvwie (2021)' Adekola (2021).

The result gotten from the regression result indicated that electoral violence has a negative significant impact on electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. The result showed that electoral violence had a negative influence on electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. This is the findings of Momoh (2023); Jooji (2022); Mezieobi et al. (2017); Akpan (2017); Nwachukwu (2017); Tyonzughul et al. (2021); Iheanacho (2015).

7. Conclusions

The study concludes that electoral violence has remained a sour taste in Nigeria's bid for democratic governance in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study concludes that the persistence of electoral violence in Nigeria is a threat to democratic governance in the country. The study also concludes that electoral violence discourages election of credible leaders and people's participation in the electoral process thereby militating against electoral credibility in Kogi State, Nigeria. Much of the electoral violence is attributable to the failure of institutional mechanisms and similar apparatus to provide a functional polity where compliance to electoral rules could redress violence.

The study recommends for the need to reconstruct security architecture of the country, sanction political leaders, political parties and individuals that violate electoral laws, restructure Nigeria's federal system, tackle the problem of arms proliferation and embark on political education and enlightenment that will encourage citizens to adhere strictly to democratic tenets.

Recommendations

The study recommends for a reduction in the financial attractiveness of political offices, handing down of stiffer penalties to perpetrators of electoral violence by the government so as to deter others from demonstrating such acts in the future as well as effectively educating the citizens on the dangers of electoral violence and its effects on democratic stability in the country.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

References

- [1] Adekola, A. A. (2021). Electoral violence in Nigeria's fourth republic: implication for democratic development. *Journal of Administrative Science*, 18(2), 320-344.
- [2] Adesote, A.S., and Abimbola, J.O. (2014). Electoral violence and the survival of democracy in Nigeria's fourth republic: A historical perspective. *Canadian Social Science*, 10(3), pp.140-148.
- [3] Aleyomi, M. B. (2013). Election and politics of party defection in Nigeria: A clue from Kogi state. *Covenant Journal of Politics and International Affairs (CUJPIA)*. 1(1), pp.82-94.
- [4] Althaus, C., Ball, S., Bridgman, P., Davis, G., & Threlfall, D. (2022). *The Australian policy handbook: A practical guide to the policymaking process*. Taylor & Francis.
- [5] Ayogu, G. I., Egbara, E. A., & Aleje, G. O. (2019). Credible elections in Nigeria: Panacea for stability, growth and development authours.
- [6] Balogun, T.A. (2003). Nigeria: Electoral Violence and National Security. Retrieved on 20th April, 2018 from the website <http://aceproject.org/eroen/regions/africayNG/electoral-violence-nigeria/view>
- [7] Bamgbose, A.J. (2011). Electoral violence and Nigeria's 2011 general elections. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(1), pp. 205-219.
- [8] Bello, S.K. (2014). Political and Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Mapping, Evolution and Patterns. June
- [9] Breuer, J. & Elson, M. (2017). Frustration-Aggression Theory. Ed. Sturmey, Peter, In: *The Wiley Handbook of Violence and Aggression*. Germany: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- [10] Cleen Foundation, (2011). Kogi State: Election Security Threat Assessment: Security Brief. No1 Online at: www.cleen.org/security. (Accessed: 15/10/2016).
- [11] Cohen, C. (2015). Violence Between and Within Political Parties in Nigeria: Statistics, Structures and Patterns (2006-2014). IFRA-Nigeria working papers series, N50, pp.1-29.
- [12] Deinibiteim, H. M., & Samuel, K. B. (2021). Electoral violence and democratic consolidation in Nigeria: Issues and challenges. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, 8(7), 140-156.
- [13] Dennen, J.M.G. (2005). Frustration and Aggression (F-A) Theory. Default Journal. Online at <http://rint.rechten.rug.nl/rth/dennen/a-fat.htm> (Accessed: 24/09/2018).
- [14] Diamond, L. (2022). Democracy's Arc: From Resurgent to Imperiled. *Journal of Democracy*, 33(1), 163-179.
- [15] Dollard, J., Miller, N.E., Doob, L.W., Mowrer, O.H., & Sears, R.R. (1939). *Frustration and Aggression*. Yale University Press.
- [16] Ebiziem, J. E. (2015). Electoral violence and sustenance of democracy in Nigeria, A critical appraisal of 2015 presidential election. *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research*, 1(8), 37-51.
- [17] Eminue, O. (2001). *Introduction to Political Science*. Cats Publishers. p.35
- [18] Erunke, C. E. Shekwo, J., Abdullahi, B., & Maikeffi, R. (2022). Political violence and democratic sustenance in Nigeria: An assessment of the 2015 and 2019 general elections in Nasarawa State. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, 21(3), 1-30.

- [19] Fischer, J. (2002). Electoral Conflict and Violence. A Strategy for study and Prevention, IFES White Paper. retrieved from <http://unpan1/.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UNTC/UNPAN019255.PDF> 20042011.
- [20] Flores, T. E., & Nooruddin, I. (2023). Why incumbents perpetrate election violence during civil war. *Conflict management and peace science*, 40(5), 533-553.
- [21] Human Rights Watch(2004). Nigeria's 2003 Elections: The Unacknowledged Violence. June 2004.
- [22] Idoko, C.U., Agenyi, E., & Oluyote, S. (2015). Corruption and the Challenges of Good Governance in Kogi State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research (IJMSR)*. 3(1), pp.66-73.
- [23] Igwe, P. I., & Amadi, L. (2021). Democracy and political violence in Nigeria since Multi-Party Politics in 1999: A critical appraisal. *Open Political Science*, 4(1), 101-119.
- [24] Ijere, T.C. (2015). Democracy and violent conflict: A reflection on the crisis in Nigeria. *Developing Country Studies*. 5(18), pp.29-34.
- [25] Ita, V.E. (2022). Electoral violence in Nigeria's Fourth democratic experience: A survey of South-South Geo-Political Zone. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, 10(2), 16-33.
- [26] Jooji, I. (2022). Ethnic politics and the credibility of the 2019 Kogi State gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 10(06), 1082-1089.
- [27] Ladan-Baki. S.I. (2016). Electoral Violence and 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science Research*, 16(1),1-8.
- [28] Liambomba, D. Y. (2023). The right of access to public information: Human rights issues, transparency and good governance. *Constitutionale*, 4(1), 1-28.
- [29] Mollah, M., & Jahan, R. (2018). Parliamentary election and electoral violence in Bangladesh: The Way Forward. *International Journal of Law and Management*, 60, 741-756. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJLMA-07-2017-0161>
- [30] Momoh, Z. (2023). Voters perception on electoral violence and the credibility of the 2019 gubernatorial election in Lokoja Metropolis, Kogi State, Nigeria. *Benin Journal of Social Work and Community Development*, 6, pp. 78-87.
- [31] Nkwede, J. O. (2016). Electoral violence and 2015 general elections in Nigeria: a focus on the ramifications of political developments in Ebonyi State. *Developing Country Studies*, 6(9), 9-18.
- [32] Nwobashi, H. N. (2015). "Electoral violence in Nigeria" In: Itumo, A and Nkwede, J. O. (eds.) *Democracy and Electoral Studies: A Reader*, Enugu: De-envoy print media.
- [33] Okpuvwie, E. J. (2022). Electoral violence and the growth of democracy in Nigeria. *Socialscientia: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 7(2).
- [34] Rosenje, M. O., Nkwede, J. O., Peju-Rosenje, T. O., & Adeniyi, O. P. (2022). Security, electoral violence and democratic consolidation: Consolidation: Evaluating the trajectories of Southwest Nigeria's Fourth Republic. *EBSU Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 12(1).
- [35] Sari, A. R. (2023). The Impact of Good Governance on the Quality of Public Management Decision Making. *Journal of Contemporary Administration and Management (ADMAN)*, 1(2), 39-46.
- [36] Uche, O., Okeke, V.O.S., & Mbah, C.C. (2022). The Nigerian State and electoral violence: An analysis of the 2019 presidential election. *Global Scientific Journals*, 10(3), 133-151.
- [37] Yusuf, I. (2019). Electoral violence in Nigeria: Disentangling the causes. *Research on Humanities and social Sciences*, 9, 38-47.