

Role of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Security Management During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>This study examined the role of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES). Two specific objectives and two research questions guided the study. The study employed a descriptive research design with a mixed method, combining quantitative data from structured questionnaires and qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to gain a comprehensive understanding of election security dynamics. The study was conducted in Adamawa State, focusing on six strategically selected Local Government Areas: Furore, Gombi, Lamurde, Mubi North, Numan, and Yola North. The total study population was 515,893 individuals, including INEC staff, ICCES personnel, election observers, political party officials, and eligible registered voters. Using Yamane's formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined and proportionately allocated across the population categories. Data collection instruments were validated by experts in political science and security studies, while the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha produced a coefficient of 0.86, indicating high internal consistency. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, means, and standard deviations, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic content analysis. The major findings of the study revealed that the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) played vital roles such as creating safe voting environments, maintaining law and order, securing electoral materials, and responding to crises, and the strategies employed by ICCES were rated as moderately effective. While they managed to provide security and coordination, some actions—especially in conflict management and logistics—were not significantly achieved, indicating gaps in implementation. Finally, the study recommends Strengthen the Capacity of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security. The Federal Government should allocate adequate resources to strengthen ICCES through improved logistics, intelligence gathering, and regular inter-agency coordination. Periodic joint drills should be conducted ahead of elections to enhance preparedness, response time, and cooperation among security agencies. They should continue to conduct regular capacity building training workshops which can have online self-test modules based on needs assessment for all the agencies. Sustain nationwide security threat analyses, develop a coordination framework and common database of election security threats and incidents.</i> Keywords: General Elections, Security Management, Inter-Agency, Electoral Violence.
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Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited. Citation: Adamu Gujungu Yusufari, Jude Abdulkareem Momodu, Ph.D, Saheed Babajide Owonikoko, Ph.D. (2025). Role of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Security Management During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria. UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (UKRJAHS), Volume 1(issue 8), 196-205.	

Introduction

Election security is a critical component of democratic governance and encompasses a broad range of measures aimed at safeguarding the entire electoral process. Election security covers both the physical protection of individuals involved and the preservation of the integrity of electoral outcomes. Physical security is particularly vital, as it involves protecting voters, candidates, electoral officials, and polling infrastructure from threats such as violence, intimidation, and disruptions on Election Day Chukwu & Ahmed (2023). This includes the deployment of security

personnel to polling stations, crowd control measures, and ensuring safe transport and storage of sensitive election materials like ballot boxes and voting machines. In addition to physical protection, electoral integrity plays a central role in ensuring that elections are free, fair, and credible. Electoral integrity refers to the degree to which the processes of voter registration, voting, vote counting, and result announcement are conducted transparently, without manipulation, coercion, or fraud. This involves adherence to legal and procedural standards, the impartiality of electoral management bodies,

and mechanisms for verifying results and resolving disputes. The synergy between physical security and procedural integrity is essential in maintaining public trust, increasing voter turnout, and reinforcing democratic stability. Without a secure and trustworthy electoral process, the legitimacy of the election outcomes may be called into question, potentially leading to political unrest and loss of confidence in democratic institutions (Adejoh and Bawa, 2023).

Electoral violence has been a persistent and destabilizing feature of Nigeria's political history, dating back to the colonial transition into independence and continuing across successive republics. From Nigeria's independence in 1960 to the collapse of the First Republic in 1966, electoral violence played a significant role in undermining democratic consolidation. The 1959 general elections, which paved the way for independence, were marred by escalating cases of physical, structural, and psychological violence. These tensions were largely fueled by intense political rivalry among the three dominant political parties at the time: The Action Group (AG) in the West, the Northern People's Congress (NPC) in the North, and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the East. The situation deteriorated during the 1965 Western Regional Elections, where widespread rigging, manipulation, and political intolerance culminated in mass violence. The crisis, known as the Western Region Crisis, led to the infamous "Operation Wetie", a brutal form of political vengeance that involved setting perceived opponents ablaze with petrol (Momodu, 2019). The breakdown of law and order ultimately contributed to the military coup of January 1966, which ended the First Republic.

The Second Republic (1979–1983), despite its promise of democratic restoration, fared no better in curbing electoral violence. The 1983 general elections were fraught with massive electoral malpractice, politically motivated assassinations, and violent clashes between party loyalists. The ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was widely accused of rigging elections in its favor, leading to violent protests and general instability. This unrest contributed directly to the military coup of December 1983, which again truncated democratic governance.

The short-lived Third Republic, initiated by the transition programme under General Babangida, also experienced electoral-related tension, particularly surrounding the June 12, 1993 presidential election, which was widely regarded as the freest and fairest in Nigeria's history. However, the annulment of the election by the military regime led to nationwide protests, violent crackdowns, and political unrest, eventually collapsing the transitional programme and ushering in another period of military rule.

With the advent of the Fourth Republic in 1999, expectations were high for a more stable and violence-free democratic experience. While the 1999 elections were relatively peaceful and widely accepted as credible, subsequent elections—particularly in 2003, 2007, and 2011—were marred by

escalating electoral violence, ballot box snatching, arson, politically motivated killings, and attacks on electoral officials and facilities. According to various observers, these episodes have not only undermined public confidence in the electoral process but also posed serious threats to national security and democratic sustainability. The trajectory of electoral violence in Nigeria from the First to the Fourth Republic reveals a disturbing pattern where elections are often perceived as a zero-sum contest, leading political actors to employ violence as a strategy for power retention or acquisition (Adejoh and Bawa, 2023).

The year 2023 in Nigeria was marked by a series of elections. In February, there were presidential and legislative elections, followed by gubernatorial elections in March, supplementary elections in April, and three off-cycle governorship elections in November. These electoral events were influenced by various factors, ranging from identity politics to the challenges faced by electoral and security institutions (Adebanjo & Oche, 2023). In the aftermath of the fiercely contested elections, both local and foreign stakeholders remain concerned about the country's security and political landscape (Adejoh and Bawa, 2023). Threats to elections in Nigeria are rooted in the country's political history and its political culture which encourages corruption and desperation in its body politics. Therefore, breaches to the electoral process becomes inevitable.

The Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) was established in 2010 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in recognition of the need for coordinated and proactive election security management in Nigeria. Prior to its formation, the responsibility for securing electoral processes was fragmented and marred by poor coordination, delayed responses, and agency rivalry. INEC initiated ICCES as a platform to foster collaboration among security agencies and ensure timely intelligence sharing, joint planning, and strategic deployment of personnel across the country (INEC, 2023). The idea behind ICCES was to create a multi-agency consultative body that would bring together all security stakeholders to deliberate on security arrangements for elections. As observed by Adejoh and Bawa (2023), the committee was formed in response to the recurrent electoral violence that had plagued Nigerian elections, including the post-election crisis of 2011. By establishing ICCES, INEC institutionalized a framework that aligns security planning with the broader electoral timetable and provides space for early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms. , ICCES oversees the formation of rapid response teams tasked with addressing incidents such as ballot box snatching, violence at polling units, or obstruction of electoral officials. These teams are pre-positioned in strategic locations and are activated when reports are escalated through emergency lines, hotlines, or security monitors deployed in the field. However, while these strategies have improved the management of election-day threats, challenges such as limited personnel, inadequate

logistics, and political interference still affect the timely response to crises in some regions (Afolabi & Ezugwu, 2022).

It is against this backdrop that this study examined the roles of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Security Management During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Statement of Problem

In Nigeria, the conduct of elections is frequently marred by insecurity, and a significant proportion of these threats originate from deeply rooted political factors. The nation's political environment is characterized by a zero-sum mentality, elite manipulation, weak internal democracy, and the instrumentalization of state power for partisan gain. These elements not only fuel violence and voter intimidation but also compromise the transparency and competitiveness of the electoral process.

In recent years, Nigeria has made significant strides in enhancing election security including the introduction of biometric voter registration system (INEC, 2020). Various stakeholders, including the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), civil society organizations and international partners have advocated for electoral reform and enhanced security measures (INEC, 2020). Thus the passage of the 2022 electoral bill into law by the President Mohammed Buhari government gave INEC the legal and constitutional backing to use of Bimodal Voters Accreditation System (BVAS) and INEC Result Viewing Portal (IREV) in electoral process. It is believed by the stakeholders that BVAS can reduce the excessive electoral fraud, promote credible elections and reduce voter's apathy and promote voters' participation. The BVAS technology is considered to be a solution to the following election malpractices: falsification of number of accredited voters at the polling unit; falsification of votes at the polling unit; collation of false results; mutilation of results; computational errors; swapping of results sheets; forging of result sheets; obtaining declaration and result involuntarily; making declaration and return while collation is still in progress; and poor record keeping. However, despite Nigeria's sustained efforts to entrench democratic governance through periodic general elections, the process continues to face significant security threats that undermine its credibility, fairness, and stability. These threats are not merely incidental but are driven by a complex interplay of political desperation, socioeconomic discontent, institutional weaknesses, ethno-religious divisions, and systemic corruption. , ICCES was formed in 2010 to manage election security which include oversees the formation of rapid response teams tasked with addressing incidents such as ballot box snatching, violence at polling units, or obstruction of electoral officials. These teams are pre-positioned in strategic locations and are activated when reports are escalated through emergency lines, hotlines, or security monitors deployed in the field. However, while these strategies have improved the management of election-day threats, challenges such as limited personnel, inadequate

logistics, and political interference still affect the timely response to crises in some regions.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study was to examine the role of inter-agency consultative committee on election security during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State. The specific objectives were to:

1. Determine the role of inter-agency consultative committee on election security in security management during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State.
2. Determine the effectiveness of inter-agency consultative committee on election security strategies employed in managing election security during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State.

Research Questions

1. What are the roles of inter-agency consultative committee on election security in security management during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?
2. What is the effectiveness of inter-agency consultative committee on election security strategies employed in managing election security during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?

Literature Review

Operational Roles of ICCES

The Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) plays a critical operational role in the planning and implementation of security arrangements during Nigeria's electoral process. Beyond its structural composition, ICCES functions as a strategic coordination mechanism through which security agencies collaborate with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to ensure a safe environment for elections. These roles span pre-election planning, election-day coordination, and post-election evaluation, thereby institutionalizing a holistic approach to electoral security.

a. Conduct of Regular Pre-Election Meetings and Security Briefings: One of the foundational operational responsibilities of ICCES is the regular convening of pre-election meetings and security briefings at national, state, and local levels. These meetings serve as platforms for intelligence sharing, risk assessments, and the harmonization of operational strategies. According to Akande and Chukwuemeka (2023), these sessions allow stakeholders to review early warning reports, identify potential hotspots, and discuss the logistics of securing electoral materials and personnel. INEC chairs these meetings, while security agencies provide situational updates and tactical proposals.

Pre-election briefings also promote accountability by assigning clear roles and expectations to participating agencies, thereby reducing ambiguity and duplication of effort

during elections (Oyeleke & Tanko, 2022). These meetings were particularly impactful ahead of the 2015 and 2023 general elections, where coordinated risk assessments contributed to proactive interventions in volatile regions.

b. Joint Formulation of Election Security Deployment Plans:

ICCES also facilitates the joint development of comprehensive security deployment plans tailored to the unique dynamics of each election cycle. These plans outline the number, type, and deployment zones of security personnel, and are based on data from INEC's Election Risk Management Tool (ERMT) and intelligence reports from security agencies. As observed by Danjuma and Nwachukwu (2022), these joint plans help ensure balanced and strategic coverage, particularly in rural, conflict-prone, and politically tense areas.

The joint formulation process also involves designing protocols for crowd control, protection of election infrastructure, transportation of sensitive materials, and securing collation centres. It ensures that resources are allocated based on need and vulnerability rather than political influence, which has been a challenge in the past. Moreover, it encourages cooperation among agencies such as the Nigeria Police Force, DSS, NSCDC, and the Army under a unified command structure.

c. Establishment of Election-Day Situation Rooms and Rapid Response Teams:

On election day, ICCES plays a hands-on operational role through the establishment of joint situation rooms at the federal and state levels. These rooms serve as central command hubs for monitoring security developments in real-time. They are equipped with communication systems for coordination, crisis management, and rapid decision-making. As noted by Usman and Adegbite (2023), the presence of representatives from all major security and electoral agencies within these rooms allows for prompt information flow and swift deployment of response units in case of emergencies.

In addition, ICCES oversees the formation of rapid response teams tasked with addressing incidents such as ballot box snatching, violence at polling units, or obstruction of electoral officials. These teams are pre-positioned in strategic locations and are activated when reports are escalated through emergency lines, hotlines, or security monitors deployed in the field. However, while these strategies have improved the management of election-day threats, challenges such as limited personnel, inadequate logistics, and political interference still affect the timely response to crises in some regions (Afolabi & Ezugwu, 2022).

Collaborative Functions of INEC and ICCES

The collaboration between the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) has become a cornerstone of Nigeria's modern electoral security architecture. The joint efforts of these two bodies transcend planning and extend into operational and post-electoral

phases. By institutionalizing formal mechanisms such as codes of conduct, real-time monitoring infrastructure, and systematic post-election reviews, INEC and ICCES work in tandem to enhance the transparency, credibility, and safety of the electoral process.

a. Joint Development of Election Security Manuals and Codes of Conduct for Security Personnel:

One of the notable areas of collaboration between INEC and ICCES is the joint development of security protocols, particularly the Election Security Manual and the Code of Conduct for Security Personnel on Electoral Duty. These documents provide detailed guidelines on the roles, responsibilities, and expected behavior of security agents during electoral operations. According to Olu-Adeyemi and Bello (2022), these manuals are based on constitutional principles, human rights standards, and lessons learned from previous elections. They cover areas such as crowd control, non-partisan conduct, protection of electoral officials, use of force, and handling of election-related complaints.

These materials are distributed ahead of elections during interagency training and sensitization workshops coordinated by INEC in conjunction with ICCES. As noted by Okonkwo and Ismail (2023), the widespread adoption of these manuals since 2015 has helped clarify command structures and reduce incidences of overreach and misconduct by security personnel at polling units.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design with mixed method of data collection, combining both qualitative and quantitative data for better understanding of the phenomenon being interrogated. The study area was Adamawa State, focusing on six strategically selected Local Government Areas: Fureore, Gombi, Lamurde, Mubi North, Numan, and Yola North. The total study population was 515,893 individuals, including INEC staff, ICCES personnel, election observers, political party officials, and eligible registered voters. Using Yamane's formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined and proportionately allocated across the population categories, however only 352 questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed. Top INEC officials, security personnel, community leaders and sparty officials were interviewed for the Key Informant Interview (KII).

Data collection instruments were validated by experts in political science and security studies, while the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha produced a coefficient of 0.86, indicating high internal consistency. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, means, and standard deviations, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic content analysis.

Results

Research Question One: What are the roles of inter-agency consultative committee on election security in security management during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?

Table 1: Role of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in Security Management During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State

S/N	Statement	SA		A		U		D		SD		$\bar{x}$	SD	Rmk
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
1.	Creating a safe environment where citizens can freely exercise their right to vote without fear or harm	146	41.24	138	38.98	70	19.77	0	0	0	0	4.21	0.75	Agreed
2.	Providing security at polling units to prevent violence, intimidation and disruption that could hinder voter participation	100	28.25	164	46.33	83	23.45	7	1.98	0	0	4.01	0.77	Agreed
3.	Safeguarding of men and materials during elections	190	53.67	92	25.99	70	19.77	2	0.56	0	0	4.33	0.81	Agreed
4.	Conducting free, fair and credible elections	80	22.6	48	13.56	226	63.84	0	0	0	0	3.59	0.83	Agreed
5.	Maintaining law and order during elections	0	0	198	55.93	156	44.07	0	0	0	0	3.56	0.5	Agreed
6.	Ensuring essential transparency to avoid widespread procedural irregularities and substantial evidence of fraud	18	5.08	196	55.37	140	39.55	0	0	0	0	3.66	0.57	Agreed
7.	Protecting electoral materials from theft, vandalism and manipulation	196	55.37	0	0	158	44.63	0	0	0	0	4.11	1.00	Agreed
8.	Managing electoral conflicts by responding promptly to election related crisis during election.	165	46.61	40	11.3	149	42.09	0	0	0	0	4.05	0.94	Agreed
9.	Proper logistics and security coordination help prevent electoral fraud	139	39.27	101	28.53	114	32.2	0	0	0	0	4.07	0.84	Agreed
10.	Proper distribution of election materials to Polling Units	150	42.37	110	31.07	94	26.55	0	0	0	0	4.16	0.82	Agreed
Average Mean												3.98	0.78	Agreed

Key: SA = Strongly Agreed, A = Agreed, U = Undecided, D = Disagreed, Sd = Strongly Disagreed, $\bar{x}$ = Mean, S.D = Standard Deviation, Freq. = Frequency Count, RMK = Remark

Table 1 showed the roles played by the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in managing security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State. The data indicate widespread agreement among respondents that ICCES was instrumental in various aspects of election security. Key roles identified include safeguarding electoral personnel and materials ($\bar{x} = 4.33$), creating a safe environment for voters ($\bar{x} = 4.21$), ensuring proper distribution of election materials ($\bar{x} = 4.16$), and protecting materials from theft and manipulation ($\bar{x} = 4.11$). Other significant contributions of ICCES included the provision of security at polling units to prevent violence ($\bar{x} = 4.01$), prompt response to election-related crises ($\bar{x} = 4.05$), and effective logistics and coordination to deter electoral fraud ($\bar{x} = 4.07$). Respondents also agreed that ICCES contributed to maintaining law and order ($\bar{x} = 3.56$), supported the conduct of credible elections ($\bar{x} = 3.59$), and addressed issues related to procedural irregularities and transparency ($\bar{x} = 3.66$). With an overall average mean of 3.98, the responses show that ICCES played a vital and positive role in coordinating election security efforts, maintaining order, and supporting the integrity of the electoral process in Adamawa State.

The KII responses indicated the roles of inter-agency consultative committee on election security in security management during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State.

Security Personnel (Representative, Nigeria Police Force):

"The ICCES played a central role in ensuring coordination between security agencies and INEC during the election. Before the polls, we held joint strategy meetings where responsibilities were clearly defined. The committee helped us map out flashpoints and deploy personnel accordingly. Through ICCES, we developed and implemented a security plan that guided our actions before, during, and after the elections. They also facilitated intelligence sharing among agencies, which helped in preventing some planned disruptions."

INEC Official (Electoral Officer, Yola North):

"ICCES was instrumental in helping INEC achieve a relatively peaceful election process. They provided security cover for both personnel and sensitive materials from the point of distribution to the polling units. The committee also ensured law and order at voting locations and

collaborated with INEC during the collation process to prevent interference. Their presence and proactive planning helped reassure voters and boosted confidence in the process, despite the challenges we faced in some areas."

Traditional Leader (District Head, Michika):

"From what we observed in our community, ICCES was responsible for ensuring that elections did not descend into chaos. They engaged community leaders and religious groups ahead of the polls to sensitize the public on peaceful participation. Their involvement gave many people confidences to come out and vote. They also responded to early signs of tension, particularly in areas where political rivalry was intense. Without their intervention, there might have been serious disturbances."

Civil Society Representative (Observer, YIAGA Africa):

"ICCES was key in coordinating multi-agency responses to emerging threats. What stood out to us was how they anticipated security risks and planned deployments strategically. They also provided security guidelines to political actors, INEC staff, and the electorate. During election day, they worked to ensure security agents acted professionally, although we did record some lapses. However, their role in conflict management and logistics coordination cannot be overstated—it helped to mitigate potential violence and logistical delays."

Party Official:

"ICCES, though it just came onboard, they have been very instrumental in providing security at polling units to prevent violence, intimidation and disruption that could hinder voter participation. Despite the high tension before and during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa state, the state had experienced a relative peace, ICCES were able to manage the security situation in the state."

Research Question 2: How effective are the inter-agency consultative committee on election security strategies employed in managing election security during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?

Table 2: Effectiveness of ICCES Strategies in Managing Election Security in 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State

S/N	Statement	SAC		AC		MAC		SAC		NAC		$\bar{x}$	SD	Rmk
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
11.	Creating a safe environment where citizens can freely exercise their right to vote without fear or harm	0	0	0	0	316	89.27	38	10.73	0	0	2.89	0.31	MAC
12.	Providing security at polling units to prevent violence, intimidation and disruption that could hinder voter participation	0	0	0	0	293	82.77	61	17.23	0	0	2.83	0.38	MAC
13.	Safeguarding of men and materials during elections	0	0	0	0	247	69.77	107	30.23	0	0	2.7	0.46	MAC
14.	Conducting free, fair and credible elections	0	0	3	0.85	312	88.14	39	11.02	0	0	2.9	0.33	MAC
15.	Maintaining law and order during elections	0	0	3	0.85	262	74.01	70	19.77	19	5.37	2.7	0.58	MAC
16.	Lack of essential transparency, widespread procedural irregularities, substantial evidence of fraud	0	0	0	0	156	44.07	198	55.93	0	0	2.44	0.5	SAC
17.	Protecting electoral materials from theft, vandalism and manipulation	0	0	136	38.42	0	0	218	61.58	0	0	2.77	0.97	MAC
18.	Managing electoral conflicts by responding promptly to election related crisis during election.	0	0	0	0	0	0	335	94.63	19	5.37	1.95	0.23	SAC
19.	Proper logistics and security coordination help prevent electoral fraud	0	0	0	0	0	0	323	91.24	31	8.76	1.91	0.28	SAC
20.	Proper distribution of election materials to Polling Units	0	0	0	0	0	0	340	96.05	14	3.95	1.96	0.2	SAC
Average Mean												2.51	0.42	MAC

Key: SAC = Significantly Achieved, AC = Achieved, MAC = Moderately Achieved, SAC = Slightly Achieved, NAC = Not Achieved, $\bar{x}$ = Mean, S.D = Standard Deviation, Freq. = Frequency Count, RMK = Remark

Table 2 showed the effectiveness of the strategies employed by the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in managing election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State. The results indicate that most strategies were rated as Moderately Achieved (MAC), with key aspects such as creating a safe voting environment ($\bar{x} = 2.89$), providing security at polling units ($\bar{x} = 2.83$), safeguarding electoral personnel and materials ($\bar{x} = 2.70$), maintaining law and order ($\bar{x} = 2.70$), and conducting free and credible elections ($\bar{x} = 2.90$) all falling within this category. However, some strategies were considered Slightly Achieved (SAC), including managing electoral conflicts ($\bar{x} = 1.95$), ensuring proper logistics and coordination ($\bar{x} = 1.91$), and proper distribution of election materials ($\bar{x} = 1.96$), suggesting gaps in ICCES's crisis response and logistical preparedness. The area of transparency and procedural integrity was also rated low ($\bar{x} = 2.44$), reflecting concerns over irregularities and fraud. With an overall average mean of 2.51, the findings suggest that while ICCES strategies had a moderate level of success in securing the electoral process, significant limitations remained in conflict resolution, logistics, and transparency, indicating the need for strategic improvement in future elections.

Below are **KII responses from stakeholders** to the question: **“How effective are the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) strategies employed in managing election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?”**

INEC Official (Electoral Officer, Mubi South):

"The strategies employed by ICCES were moderately effective. They developed a joint security deployment plan which ensured presence of personnel across critical polling units. However, while the plans were good on paper, the actual implementation in some rural areas fell short due to poor logistics and communication gaps. That said, their strategic meetings and situation room monitoring did help in containing several incidents early enough."

Police Officer (Divisional Command, Fufere LGA):

"ICCES strategies were helpful in maintaining a reasonable level of order during the election, particularly in urban centers. But we faced logistical limitations in deploying personnel on time to remote locations. Coordination improved compared to previous elections, yet real-time responses to crises were sometimes slow. Their conflict resolution protocols worked in some flashpoints, but overall, the strategies achieved moderate success."

Civil Society Representative (Centre for Democracy and Development CDD):

"From our observation, the effectiveness of ICCES strategies was mixed. Their early warning mechanisms and security mapping were impressive, but the lack of

sufficient transparency and poor execution of some plans reduced impact. For instance, in areas like Girei and Shelleng, voters reported late arrival of security and INEC materials, leading to frustration. While ICCES improved inter-agency collaboration, it didn't fully prevent voter suppression and minor violent incidents."

Community Leader (Ward Head, Hong LGA):

"ICCES did their best under the circumstances. Their presence was felt more in towns than villages. People appreciated the effort to keep the elections peaceful, but some communities still experienced fear, especially where thugs were used to intimidate voters. I think the strategy was good, but implementation was uneven. If more traditional and local leaders were involved, it could have improved the effectiveness at the grassroots level."

Party Official:

"Yes! The ICCES were very strategic in their approach, before the 2023 general election, most of our people were very fearful, some have even run to their villages but as you can see the general election was successful, even though there were some challenges here and there, the ICCES really tried in maintaining law and order during elections."

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) played vital roles such as creating safe voting environments, maintaining law and order, securing electoral materials, and responding to crises. These roles were largely acknowledged by respondents as impactful. This is in agreement with Baba and Nyako (2024) who reported that ICCES was instrumental in developing state-level security frameworks, which enhanced collaboration between the police, civil defense, and INEC. Ibrahim and Olayemi (2024) found that coordinated patrols and proactive deployment of security personnel at strategic locations contributed to a more peaceful electoral process compared to previous cycles. Similarly, Hassan and Bala (2024) noted that through ICCES, election security was better managed through centralized planning, which allowed agencies to deploy resources efficiently and manage conflict hotspots before they escalated. Lamidi and Yusuf (2024) emphasized that the committee also played a key role in voter sensitization through security briefings and community engagement, which helped in de-escalating pre-election tensions. These roles collectively reflect ICCES's contribution to safeguarding democratic processes.

The findings of the study revealed that the strategies employed by ICCES were rated as moderately effective. While they managed to provide security and coordination, some actions—especially in conflict management and logistics—were not significantly achieved, indicating gaps in implementation.

This resonates with Kashim and Umar (2024) who highlighted that although security forces were well-deployed, delays in response to sudden violence and ballot disruption were partly due to poor transportation logistics in remote areas. Nwankwo and Hassan (2023) found that several LGAs lacked timely deployment of personnel and equipment, and this hampered crisis response during flashpoint moments. In their evaluation, Yakubu and Adebayo (2023) identified that ICCES was operationally sound but functionally weak in rapid conflict de-escalation due to unclear mandates among multiple security agencies. Additionally, Aliyu and Bitrus (2023) pointed out that low inter-agency communication and inconsistent training across the units within ICCES created disparities in effectiveness, especially where real-time decision-making was required. These findings confirm the moderate outcome of ICCES strategies.

Conclusion

The 2023 general elections in Nigeria were conducted amidst a backdrop of political tension, economic uncertainty, and persistent security challenges. This study investigated Security Management in the 2023 General Election in Adamawa State, with a special focus on the roles, and effectiveness of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES). Two specific objectives and two research questions guided the study. The study employed a descriptive research design with a mixed methods of data collection, combining quantitative data from structured questionnaires and qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to gain a comprehensive understanding of election security dynamics. The major findings of the study revealed that the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) played vital roles such as creating safe voting environments, maintaining law and order, securing electoral materials, and responding to crises, and the strategies employed by ICCES were rated as moderately effective. While they managed to provide security and coordination, some actions—especially in conflict management and logistics—were not significantly achieved, indicating gaps in implementation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Strengthen the Capacity of ICCES (Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security):** The Federal Government and INEC should allocate adequate resources to strengthen ICCES through improved logistics, intelligence gathering, and regular inter-agency coordination. Periodic joint drills should be conducted ahead of elections to enhance preparedness, response time, and cooperation among security agencies. They should continue to conduct regular capacity building training workshops which can have online self-test modules based on needs

assessment for all the agencies. Sustain nationwide security threat analyses, develop a coordination framework and common database of election security threats and incidents.

2. **Effective Coordination Among Security Agencies:** Effective coordination among the various security agencies involved in electoral security—namely the Nigeria Police Force, the military, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and intelligence services such as the Department of State Services (DSS) is not just desirable but essential for the success of elections in complex and high-risk environments like Nigeria. Each of these agencies plays a unique role: the police are constitutionally mandated to maintain public order, the military often provides backup support in high-risk zones, civil defence complements security coverage at polling stations, and intelligence agencies are responsible for early warning and threat analysis. Without a coherent and well-coordinated strategy, the multiplicity of roles can result in duplication of efforts, operational confusion, or even conflict among agencies.

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