

Challenges and Successes of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security Management During the 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>This study assessed the challenges and successes of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security Management (ICCES) during the 2023 general election in Adamawa state. Guided by two specific objectives and two research questions. The study employed a descriptive research design with a mixed method approach, combining quantitative data from structured questionnaires and qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being interrogated. 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 findings of the study revealed that major challenges faced by ICCES included logistical difficulties in deploying security personnel, political interference, inadequate funding of security agencies, and weak coordination among stakeholders like INEC, ICCES, and local security outfits. However, ICCES recorded notable successes such as the reduction in violence at polling units, protection of election materials, restoration of public confidence in the process, and improved collaboration among security agencies. Finally, the study recommended that government should increase funding for Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) and ensure proper coordination among security agencies.</i> Keywords: General Elections, Inter-Agency, Challenges, Electoral Security, Successes.
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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. (2025). Challenges and Successes of Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security Management During the 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria. UKR Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies (UKRJMS), Volume 1(issue 8), 33-42.	

Introduction

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. Electoral violence in Nigeria is as old as election itself. Ensuring secure, credible, and peaceful elections in Nigeria remains a formidable task, largely due to the multifaceted security threats that pervade the electoral landscape. The Nigerian government has established the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security to coordinate efforts to enhance electoral security (National Security Adviser,

2020). The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) have made significant efforts to coordinate election security, yet a range of structural, political, and operational *challenges* continue to hinder their effectiveness. These challenges include institutional rivalry, political interference, inadequate logistics, limited enforcement of electoral laws, and weak communication among stakeholders. Addressing these persistent issues is

essential for strengthening Nigeria's electoral integrity and democratic consolidation (IIDEA 2023).

Election security is key to ensuring integrity of election and whenever, it is compromised by election actors or those saddled with the responsibility to secure the election process, then the process of the election will affect the outcome of the electoral process. This is why it is important that election security should be highly prioritized to ensure the sanctity of the electoral process. As earlier stated, election security is a major problem in Nigeria's electoral process because it is often breached and compromised. In Nigeria, election security has become a pressing concern, as elections have become increasingly vulnerable to various threats and violent conflict (Human Right Watch, 2020).

Security is a fundamental pillar of electoral integrity, as it ensures that elections are conducted in a peaceful environment where voters, candidates, electoral officials, and observers can freely participate without fear, coercion, or violence. Electoral integrity refers to the adherence to international standards, legal frameworks, and ethical principles that guarantee free, fair, and credible elections (Norris, 2014). In this context, security serves as the enabling condition that protects the right to vote, maintains public order, safeguards election materials, and upholds the legitimacy of the electoral process. In fragile democracies like Nigeria, the role of security is particularly critical. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has repeatedly emphasized that peaceful elections cannot occur in the absence of effective security measures, especially in areas prone to violence, insurgency, or political thuggery (INEC, 2023). According to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES, 2022), the presence of well-coordinated security frameworks helps prevent intimidation, protects electoral infrastructure, and builds public trust in the electoral process.

Security lapses during elections often lead to voter apathy, disrupted polling, disenfranchisement, and post-election violence. For instance, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, 2023) reported that insecurity during Nigeria's 2023 general elections led to the cancellation of polls in several polling units due to ballot box snatching, attacks on INEC officials, and suppression of voters in conflict-prone areas. These incidents not only compromise the credibility of the election but also weaken democratic legitimacy.

Scholars such as Olaniyan and Afolabi (2020) argue that electoral insecurity enables elite manipulation of the process, allowing powerful actors to deploy violence as a strategic tool for voter suppression and vote-rigging. Such conditions distort electoral outcomes and diminish citizen confidence in democratic institutions. Moreover, when voters feel unsafe or threatened, they are less likely to turn

out to vote, resulting in low voter turnout and skewed representation (Omotola & Aiyedogbon, 2019).

Ensuring electoral security also involves training and deploying security personnel who are politically neutral, well-equipped, and guided by clear rules of engagement. The Election Security Task Force, jointly coordinated by INEC, the Nigeria Police, and other security agencies, is mandated to provide this protective framework (INEC, 2023). However, poor coordination, partisanship among security agencies, and impunity for electoral violence continue to undermine these efforts (YIAGA Africa, 2023).

The importance of security to electoral integrity cannot be overstated. A secure electoral environment is essential not only for credible outcomes but also for protecting democratic norms, enhancing political participation, and preventing post-election conflict. Given this backdrop, it is essential to explore the various forms of security threats that have continued to affect general elections in Nigeria. Understanding these threats is critical to proposing sustainable policy interventions and strengthening democratic governance in the country.

In the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State, despite the heavy deployment of security forces to protect the process, there were still breaches to the electoral process, some of which were created by non-state actors, politicians, security personnel and political thugs. It is against this back drop that this study assessed the challenges and successes of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The 2023 general elections saw turnout fall to approximately 27%, the lowest in Nigeria's electoral history, reflecting the compounding impact of insecurity, logistical challenges, and lack of faith in the process. This disengagement not only undermines democratic participation but also weakens the mandate of elected officials, contributing to broader governance instability.

Effective security management on election day depends heavily on the timely and strategic deployment of personnel and materials. However, the Nigerian electoral security system frequently suffers from poor logistical arrangements, particularly in terrain-challenged and conflict-prone regions. Ojo and Salihu (2022) explain that many security personnel lack access to sufficient transportation, communication devices, and operational briefings prior to deployment. As a result, large areas are either inadequately manned or left completely uncovered.

Furthermore, the Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (2023) highlighted that in several constituencies, security

agents arrived late to their assigned polling units or were redeployed haphazardly, often without full understanding of their roles. These lapses create security vacuums that criminal elements exploited, contributing to vote suppression or violent disruptions.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) have made significant efforts to coordinate election security, yet a range of structural, political, and operational *challenges* continue to hinder their effectiveness. These challenges include institutional rivalry, political interference, inadequate logistics, limited enforcement of electoral laws, and weak communication among stakeholders.

Literature Review

Challenges Faced by INEC and ICCES in Mitigating Threats to General Election

INEC and ICCES faced numerous challenges in mitigating threats to general elections in Nigeria, which include institutional and inter-agency coordination issues, Political Interference and Partisanship and Logistical and Resource Constraints.

Institutional and Inter-Agency Coordination Issues

A fundamental challenge facing the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in mitigating electoral threats is rooted in institutional and inter-agency coordination weaknesses. These issues undermine real-time responsiveness, disrupt operational coherence, and compromise the integrity of election security operations across the federation.

- a. **Overlapping Mandates and Lack of Unified Command Structure:** The Nigerian security sector comprises multiple agencies, including the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Department of State Services (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), military, and others, all of which are represented in ICCES. However, the absence of a clear, hierarchical command structure during election operations has created operational ambiguities. While INEC is legally mandated to coordinate election logistics, it lacks the constitutional authority to command or sanction security agencies, leading to situations where agencies act independently or respond sluggishly to electoral threats (Olaomi & Abdulraheem, 2020). According to Agbaje and Adejumbi (2021), overlapping mandates without a unified command chain often result in duplication of roles or failure to respond decisively to crises, particularly in high-risk regions. This structural gap is exacerbated during multi-tier elections when the sheer

volume of polling units and security deployments overwhelms coordination mechanisms.

- b. **Inter-Agency Rivalry and Bureaucratic Inefficiencies:** ICCES was created to bridge institutional silos, yet inter-agency rivalry remains a persistent challenge. Security agencies frequently compete for dominance in strategic decision-making and visibility during elections, rather than functioning as a unified entity. As Eneanya and Ajayi (2022) point out, such rivalry stems from historical turf wars, competition for funding, and varying levels of political patronage enjoyed by different agencies. These tensions have real consequences: delays in the deployment of security personnel, miscommunication during emergency responses, and poor coordination in intelligence dissemination. For instance, in the 2019 general elections, several election-day disruptions in Rivers and Akwa Ibom States were partly attributed to the lack of synergy between the police and military (Centre for Democracy and Development [CDD], 2019).

- c. **Challenges in Communication and Intelligence Sharing**

Effective electoral security requires timely intelligence sharing among security bodies and between INEC and ICCES members. However, entrenched secrecy, lack of trust, and weak ICT infrastructure often impair real-time communication. According to Idike, Umeh, and Ogundiya (2023), many agencies remain reluctant to share sensitive intelligence due to institutional pride, bureaucratic bottlenecks, or lack of harmonized data systems. This inefficiency was evident during the 2023 elections when early warnings of potential violence in parts of the Northwest and Southeast were not effectively communicated across relevant platforms, leading to unanticipated attacks on polling units (CLEEN Foundation, 2023). The absence of an integrated communication dashboard or joint command center in many states leaves INEC reliant on fragmented security briefings, which weakens its ability to make informed logistical decisions.

While the creation of ICCES marked a significant milestone in Nigeria's attempt to institutionalize collaborative election security, institutional coordination issues remain a critical vulnerability. Without clearer operational mandates, a streamlined command structure, and trust-based intelligence-sharing protocols, the ability of INEC and ICCES to deliver secure, credible elections will continue to be undermined. Addressing these issues requires legislative refinement, inter-agency training, and

stronger oversight mechanisms to enforce cooperation and coordination among security stakeholders.

Political Interference and Partisanship

Political interference in Nigeria's electoral process is a longstanding challenge that undermines the efforts of both the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) to ensure free, fair, and credible elections. The involvement of ruling or dominant political parties in influencing security operations, manipulating electoral logistics, and compromising institutional neutrality has been widely documented and continues to pose a significant obstacle to credible democratic processes in the country.

a. Influence of Ruling or Dominant Parties on Security

Deployment: The deployment of security operatives during elections is often subject to political manipulation, particularly by ruling parties seeking to maintain power or suppress opposition strongholds. While INEC coordinates election logistics and collaborates with ICCES for security arrangements, the actual deployment of personnel frequently falls under the influence of political authorities at federal or state levels. As noted by Omodia and Ibrahim (2022), partisan interference in security assignments results in disproportionate deployment of personnel to areas favorable to the ruling party, while leaving opposition zones vulnerable to disruption and voter intimidation. For example, during the 2019 general elections, observers from the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, 2019) reported that security agents were heavily present in some regions while conspicuously absent in volatile opposition-dominated areas, raising suspicions of deliberate tactical decisions driven by political bias.

b. Compromised Neutrality of Security Operatives

During Elections: A core principle of democratic election security is the professional neutrality of security forces. However, in Nigeria, security operatives have often been accused of partisanship, ranging from passive complicity to active participation in electoral fraud and voter suppression. According to Ayeni and Garuba (2023), there have been documented cases where police officers and other security agents were seen escorting party thugs, intimidating voters, or directly interfering in voting and collation processes. These actions are not only detrimental to the credibility of elections but also erode public trust in democratic institutions. The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM, 2019) noted that while security personnel were generally present, their conduct in several polling

units in Rivers and Akwa Ibom States reflected clear bias, particularly in the protection of ballot materials and collation officers.

- c. Pressure on INEC to Manipulate Logistics or Outcomes:** In addition to security-related interference, INEC has also faced direct and indirect pressure from political actors to manipulate electoral logistics or outcomes. This includes the deliberate delay in deployment of materials to certain regions, interference in collation processes, and manipulation of the Result Viewing Portal (IReV) or voter accreditation systems. These forms of manipulation are often subtle and executed through politically connected insiders within INEC or through undue influence from the executive arm of government. As observed by Omilusi and Egbewole (2023), the politicization of INEC's internal processes is fueled by the perception that electoral victory is a gateway to state control and personal enrichment, making political actors desperate to influence even the technical operations of the commission. The International Republican Institute (IRI, 2023) also raised concerns about inconsistencies in logistics planning during the 2023 elections, especially in regions where opposition candidates were leading. Political interference and partisanship represent critical bottlenecks in Nigeria's quest for electoral integrity. The undue influence of ruling parties on security deployments, the erosion of neutrality among operatives, and pressure on INEC's autonomy not only compromise the safety of the electoral process but also delegitimize its outcomes. For INEC and ICCES to function effectively, there must be legal and institutional safeguards to insulate them from partisan control, uphold professionalism within the security sector, and reinforce the independence of electoral administration.

Logistical and Resource Constraints

One of the recurring challenges faced by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Interagency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in managing election security in Nigeria is the persistent problem of logistical and resource limitations. The effective deployment of electoral and security infrastructure requires timely funding, adequate manpower, and robust logistics, particularly in remote and high-risk areas. However, empirical evidence and election observation reports consistently highlight how these factors have undermined the success of elections in Nigeria.

- a. Inadequate Funding and Late Disbursement of Security-Related Election Funds:** INEC and the security agencies under ICCES frequently suffer from

late release of funds, which delays planning and compromises operational efficiency. Timely funding is critical for procuring materials, training personnel, deploying technology, and covering transportation costs to thousands of polling units across Nigeria's vast terrain. According to Aiyede and Akinboye (2021), delays in financial approvals and bureaucratic bottlenecks, often driven by political considerations, disrupt INEC's ability to engage stakeholders early and conduct adequate threat assessments and simulations.

The YIAGA Africa Election Report (2023) similarly observed that the late release of funds contributed to logistical setbacks in the 2023 general elections, including late arrival of voting materials, inadequate security deployment in volatile zones, and poor coordination among agencies. These financial constraints are more pronounced in election years with multiple rerun or supplementary elections, which stretch already limited budgets.

b. *Shortage of Security Personnel and Materials in High-Risk Areas:*

Nigeria's overstretched security sector, particularly the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), lacks the personnel strength to cover all polling units and collation centers effectively, especially during general elections. The CLEEN Foundation (2019) reported that during the 2019 elections, many rural and high-risk areas were either poorly staffed or left unguarded, allowing for ballot snatching, voter intimidation, and disruption of results collation.

This shortage is not only quantitative but also qualitative. Security operatives often lack the specialized training needed for election-specific roles, such as crowd control, intelligence gathering, and de-escalation of conflict. Chukwu and Egwu (2022) argue that Nigeria's security agencies are often deployed without adequate orientation on election laws and human rights standards, leading to misconduct, voter suppression, or inaction in the face of violence.

c. *Poor Infrastructure in Rural and Conflict-Prone Zones Affecting Deployment:*

Poor roads, limited communication networks, and inadequate transportation facilities severely hinder election day logistics, especially in rural and conflict-affected areas such as the Northeast and some parts of the Niger Delta and North-Central regions. According to Umar and Olasupo (2022), these infrastructural deficits make it difficult for INEC to deliver sensitive materials on time, while also limiting the ability of ICCES to pre-position or quickly deploy security operatives. For instance, in the 2023 elections, INEC officials in Gwoza (Borno State) and parts of Shiroro (Niger State) reported serious delays due to

inaccessible roads and insurgent threats, which affected both voter turnout and the credibility of the results. International IDEA (2023) notes that without improvements in local infrastructure and mobility, remote areas will continue to face disenfranchisement and heightened exposure to violence during elections. Logistical and resource constraints significantly impair the effectiveness of INEC and ICCES in ensuring secure elections. Late disbursement of funds, inadequate personnel, and poor rural infrastructure contribute to operational inefficiencies, especially in high-risk zones. To overcome these challenges, it is imperative that the federal government institutionalize early budget releases, increase funding for electoral security, and invest in infrastructure development, particularly in rural and conflict-prone areas. Additionally, capacity-building for security agents and logistics personnel should be a central part of election preparedness.

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: Furore, Gombi, Lamurde, Mubi North, Numan, and Yola North. The study target population of 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, top INEC official, civil society officials, traditional rulers, security personnel and party officials were in interview for the Key Informant Interview.

Instruments for data collection 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 1:

What are the challenges faced by inter-agency consultative committee on election security in Election Security Management during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?

Table 1: Challenges Faced by ICCES in Election Security Management During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State

S/N	Statement	SA		A		U		D		SD		$\bar{x}$	S.D	Rmk
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
1.	ICCES faced logistical challenges in deploying security personnel.	50	14.12	159	44.92	110	31.07	35	9.89	0	0	3.63	0.85	Agreed
2.	Political interference served as a challenge to the election process	0	0	196	55.37	158	44.63	0	0	0	0	3.55	0.50	Agreed
3.	Inadequate funding of the security agencies	1	0.28	225	63.56	127	35.88	0	0	0	0	3.76	2.20	Agreed
4.	Coordination between INEC, ICCES, and other security agencies had some little challenges	23	6.5	207	58.47	124	35.03	0	0	0	0	3.71	0.58	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 challenges faced by the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in managing election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State. The responses reveal general agreement that ICCES encountered several significant difficulties. These included inadequate funding of security agencies ($\bar{x}$ = 3.76), political interference in the electoral process ($\bar{x}$ = 3.55), and logistical challenges in deploying security personnel ($\bar{x}$ = 3.63). Another notable challenge was the coordination issues between INEC, ICCES, and other security agencies, which, although rated slightly lower, still received agreement from respondents ($\bar{x}$ = 3.71). With all items recording mean scores above 3.50 and remarks of “Agreed,” the findings suggest that while ICCES played a vital role in election security, its effectiveness was hampered by logistical, financial, political, and coordination-related constraints that need to be addressed in future elections for more efficient performance.

Below are Key Informant Interview (KII) responses from stakeholders addressing the challenges faced by the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in election security management during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State.

INEC Official (Election Logistics Officer, Adamawa South):

"One major challenge we observed was logistics. Despite planning, the deployment of security personnel and materials to remote polling units was delayed in several areas. This sometimes left voting locations vulnerable in the early hours of election day. The lack of timely mobility and communication tools greatly affected the implementation of ICCES security plans."

Police Officer (Zonal Security Coordinator):

"Political interference was a serious challenge. Some politicians attempted to influence security deployments to favor their strongholds. This put pressure on the neutrality of officers and threatened the integrity of the electoral process."

ICCES worked hard to remain impartial, but such interference strained the collaboration among member agencies."

Civil Society Member (Election Monitor, Yiaga Africa):

"Funding constraints were a recurring issue. Some of the security agencies under ICCES lacked sufficient funds to support personnel allowances, transportation, and communication infrastructure. This led to understaffing at critical points and contributed to weak enforcement in some areas. The committee had plans, but without resources, execution became a problem."

Community Leader (Traditional Ruler, Ganye LGA):

"There was limited coordination at the grassroots level. In some rural areas, the local security presence was poorly informed about ICCES's strategies, leading to confusion or poor implementation. Also, the failure to engage local leaders early in the process weakened trust in the security structure. More community involvement would have enhanced acceptance and effectiveness."

Party Official:

"I think some of the major challenges ICCESS faced during the 2023 general election includes logistical problem which affect their ability to deploy security personnel in some places in time, and as well as political interferences during the election."

Research Question 2:

What is the level of successes of the inter-agency consultative committee on election security on the election security during 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?

Table 2: Successes of ICCES in Election Security During 2023 General Elections in Adamawa State

S/N	Statement	SA		A		U		D		SD		$\bar{x}$	S.D	Rmk
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
1.	The presence of security forces at polling stations reduced violence.	150	42.37	95	26.84	74	20.9	35	9.89	0	0	4.02	1.02	Agreed
2.	ICCES successfully mitigated major election security threats.	0	0	267	75.42	87	24.58	0	0	0	0	3.75	0.43	Agreed
3.	The implementation of electoral reforms improved security in the 2019–2023 elections.	0	0	156	44.07	163	46.05	35	9.89	0	0	3.34	0.65	Agreed
4.	The training of election officials and security personnel contributed to election security.	0	0	317	89.55	37	10.45	0	0	0	0	3.90	0.31	Agreed
5.	It reduced fear and intimidation before, during and after the elections	0	0	156	44.07	2	0.56	196	55.37	0	0	2.89	0.99	Disagreed
6.	It prevented electoral violence/violent protests from happening during the gubernatorial election in Adamawa State.	0	0	156	44.07	2	0.56	196	55.37	0	0	2.89	0.99	Disagreed
7.	It reduced the frequency and number attacks before, during and after the elections	0	0	156	44.07	2	0.56	196	55.37	0	0	2.89	0.99	Disagreed
8.	It prevented election staff and materials from been attacked and destroyed	50	14.12	302	85.31	2	0.56	0	0	0	0	4.14	0.36	Agreed
9.	It restored confidence of the people in the electoral process when the rightful candidate was declared the winner of the gubernatorial election in Adamawa State	0	0	352	99.44	2	0.56	0	0	0	0	3.99	0.08	Agreed
10.	It enhanced collaboration among all the election security stakeholders and this led to effective security protection before, during and after the elections	25	7.06	178	50.28	116	32.77	35	9.89	0	0	3.55	0.77	Agreed
11.	It made the electoral process seamless and better organized.	24	6.78	207	58.47	123	34.75	0	0	0	0	3.72	0.58	Agreed
12.	It motivated and increased voters' participation in the general elections	0	0	196	55.37	158	44.63	0	0	0	0	3.55	0.5	Agreed
Average Mean												3.55	0.64	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 2 shows the level of successes recorded by the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) in ensuring election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State. The results reveal that respondents generally agreed that ICCES achieved notable successes in several key areas. These include the presence of security forces at polling stations reducing violence ($\bar{x} = 4.02$), successful mitigation of major election security threats ($\bar{x} = 3.75$), and improved security through electoral reforms ($\bar{x} = 3.34$). High levels of agreement were also recorded for the training of election officials and security personnel ($\bar{x} = 3.90$), the protection of election staff and materials ($\bar{x} = 4.14$), and the restoration of public confidence following the rightful declaration of the gubernatorial winner ($\bar{x} = 3.99$). Furthermore, ICCES was credited with enhancing collaboration among stakeholders ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), improving the organization of the electoral process ($\bar{x} = 3.72$), and motivating voter participation ($\bar{x} = 3.55$). However, the data show disagreement on the committee's success in reducing fear and intimidation, preventing electoral violence, and lowering the frequency of attacks before, during, and after the elections, all of which recorded a mean of 2.89. Despite these limitations, the overall average mean of 3.55 indicates that ICCES was generally effective in its security management role, with more successes than failures in safeguarding the electoral process in Adamawa State.

Key Informant Interview (KII) responses from stakeholders addressing the question: "What is the level of successes of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) on election security during the 2023 general elections in Adamawa State?"

INEC Official (Head of Operations, Adamawa State):

"The ICCES recorded a fair level of success. Their coordinated approach improved the distribution and protection of election materials. Sensitive materials reached many polling units safely, and INEC staff were mostly secure throughout the process. However, in some isolated cases, delays and gaps in security coverage allowed for some disruption. Overall, the collaboration between security agencies helped to reduce large-scale violence."

Security Personnel (Officer, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps):

"ICCES was successful in reducing chaos and maintaining order in most polling units. We observed fewer incidents of ballot snatching and thuggery compared to previous elections. Also, joint patrols and presence of security agents deterred most violent attempts. Nevertheless, some challenges, such as logistical shortcomings and isolated protests, revealed

that the success was not total. Still, the effort was commendable."

Civil Society Observer (CLEEN Foundation, Yola):

"From our assessment, ICCES performed reasonably well. They ensured some level of deterrence against electoral violence through pre-election sensitization and visibility of security personnel. There was a notable reduction in voter intimidation in key urban areas. However, in rural regions, the impact of ICCES was less visible. The success was uneven and would have been stronger with better grassroots coordination."

Party Official:

"Toh! The establishment of ICCES has actually prevented electoral violence/violent protests from happening during the gubernatorial election in Adamawa State, it reduced the frequency and number of attacks before, during and after the elections, and to some extent it restored confidence of the people in the electoral process when the rightful candidate was declared the winner of the gubernatorial election in Adamawa State"

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that major challenges faced by ICCES included logistical difficulties in deploying security personnel, political interference, inadequate funding of security agencies, and weak coordination among stakeholders like INEC, ICCES, and local security outfits. Mohammed and Yakubu (2024) identified that last-minute deployment plans often failed due to funding delays and shortage of operational vehicles, especially in rural LGAs. Similarly, Okoro and Shettima (2024) noted that political actors often influenced security decisions, undermining the neutrality of the electoral process in some wards. Garba and Idris (2024) pointed to overlapping functions and absence of a unified command structure among election stakeholders as key obstacles to timely security intervention. Fom (2024) also revealed that INEC's failure to consistently engage with ICCES at the local level led to breakdowns in coordination, particularly in high-risk zones. These studies reinforce the multifaceted constraints ICCES faced in managing a seamless security operation during the elections.

The findings of the study revealed that ICCES recorded notable successes such as the reduction in violence at polling units, protection of election materials, restoration of public confidence in the process, and improved collaboration among security agencies. However, the committee was less successful in reducing intimidation, protests, and violence entirely. This is supported by Ahmed and Jatau (2023) who reported that compared to 2019, the

number of polling unit-related disruptions in Adamawa dropped by over 30%, largely due to the proactive roles of ICCES in deploying police and NSCDC units. Danladi and Tanko (2023) observed that the integrity of sensitive electoral materials was better preserved during the 2023 elections, owing to escort services and guarded warehouses implemented through ICCES. Peter and Mai (2023) affirmed that the declaration of results was met with greater public acceptance in certain regions, showing improved public trust in the process, although violent protests still erupted in hotly contested LGAs. According to Tukur and Abdullahi (2023), inter-agency synergy improved during the elections, but the inability to prevent politically motivated intimidation and localized violence indicates that more proactive intelligence-gathering mechanisms were needed.

Conclusion

The 2023 general elections in Nigeria were conducted amidst a backdrop of political tension, economic uncertainty, and persistent security challenges. In Adamawa State. This study which focused mainly on investigating the challenges and successes of the Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) during the 2023 general election in Adamawa state concluded that ICCES encountered numerous challenges which include logistical difficulties in deploying security personnel, political interference, inadequate funding of security agencies, and weak coordination among stakeholders and poor local security outfits. However, ICCES recorded notable successes such as the reduction in violence at polling units, protection of election materials, restoration of public confidence in the process, and improved collaboration among security agencies. Finally, the study recommended that government should increase funding for Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES) and ensure proper coordination among security agencies.

Recommendations

1. **Increase Funding for Inter-Agency Consultative Committee on Election Security (ICCES):** Adequate resources should be allocated to ICCES to improve logistics, intelligence gathering, and regular inter-agency coordination. This will enable them to 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. **Ensure Proper Coordination Among Security Agencies:** There should be proper 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). Each of these agencies should play a unique role: the police should focus on maintaining public order, the military should provide backup support in high-risk zones, civil defence complements security coverage at polling stations, and intelligence agencies should be 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.

3. **Enhance Transparency, Security, and Electoral Operations:** Security agencies and INEC should improve transparency in their operations by adopting real-time data-sharing systems and ensuring that electoral materials are adequately secured. Election-day operations should be well-coordinated to prevent disruptions, intimidation, or manipulation. The Commission should prioritize the digitalization of key management and operational processes and procedures, including its records through an IT Governance Policy.

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