

EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES OF ELECTORAL CREDIBILITY IN NIGERIA'S 2023 GENERAL ELECTIONS

Isah Musa Yusuf

Department of Political Science, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

Corresponding Author's email: isahmyusuf@gmail.com



Abstract

Like most elections in Nigeria, the 2023 general election was conducted under a deeply contentious, and disputed atmosphere, including widespread insecurity and uncertain government policies introduced ahead of the election. This is despite INEC's introduction of new technology which include the Bi-modal Voting Accreditation System (BVAS) and INEC Results Viewing Portal (IReV), to improve administration of the 2023 polls, as well as the reforms contained in the Electoral Act 2022. Against this backdrop, the paper examined the challenges of election credibility in the 2023 general election, specifically focusing on a broader range of variables like insecurity, institutional weaknesses, corruption and vote-buying that influenced both the process and the result of the election. The data for the research were collected from secondary sources. Discourse analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The study established that while INEC has played a fundamental role in coordinating the security architecture of the elections, the credibility of the 2023 election was greatly marred by numerous pitfalls in election administration which include instances of vote manipulation, political violence, lack of transparent results collation and declaration process. Moreover, the pressing issues that face Nigeria, which include widespread poverty, corruption, and insecurity, as well as an inadequate electoral infrastructure also affected the credibility of the election. The paper recommends, among others, that a multifaceted approach is required to strengthen Nigeria's democracy by implementing layered reforms like electoral and institutional reforms that increase transparency, accountability, and security in all aspects of the electoral process as well as a clear demonstration of political will by the government to achieve free and fair elections in the country.

Keywords: Credible Elections, Democracy, Election, Election Security, Nigeria