

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE AND OUTCOMES IN NIGERIA'S GENERAL ELECTIONS : A STUDY OF THE 2019 AND 2023 GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS IN ABIA STATE

Alozie, Cyprian C., Uduka, Kalu U., Ogonnaya Udoh, Elendu Acho & Ekwuribe Uchenna
(aloziechimdi@gmail.com), (cyprian.alozie@abiastateuniversity.edu.ng)

Abstract

The restoration of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 has seen elections and their outcomes influenced by several factors across the various states. Consequently, this study examined the political economy of electoral violence and outcomes in Nigeria's general elections, with specific focus on the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections in Abia State. The study area is Abia State, with a total population of **2,470,000** drawn from the two major cities of Aba and Umuahia. A sample size of 400 respondents was selected. A mixed-method research design was adopted, while descriptive statistics were used in the analysis. The Marxist political economy approach served as the theoretical framework. The results revealed, among other findings, that the tendency of political actors to win elections by all means heightened electoral violence and shaped electoral outcomes in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections. The study concludes that equitable wealth distribution among the various groups and classes in Abia State would reduce further incidences of electoral violence and improve electoral outcomes in the state.

Keywords: Abia, Economy, Election, Gubernatorial, Violence

Background to the Study

The world over, election has remained a veritable instrument of entrenching liberal democracy among states. Election which often times is competitive afford the citizens the freedom to choose their representatives. Generally, election represents the means through which peaceful changes in leadership in societies or nations are attained. In addition, elections have also become effective mechanisms through which modern representative democracy get offices filled in the legislature and executive arms in particular (Efebeh & Okolo, 2016). In other words, election denotes a decision making mechanism that gives the people the freedom to choose individuals that would hold formal offices through which they precede over the activities of society, the state or nation.

At the macro political level, the history of elections in Nigeria has been characterized by electoral violence of various dimensions which have had an extension into the fourth republic. At the micro political level, the various forms of electoral violence have also been witnessed in the various states in the country such as Abia State. According to Efebeh&Okolo (2016:187) the general elections of 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 in some states were marred by violence, intimidation, widespread fraud and rigging. Successive governments in Nigeria have also used politically motivated violence in a systematic and more brutal manner to advance their political goals.

The political economy of electoral violence and outcome in Abia State represented the breaching and undermining of the constitutionally ordained and ideal process for attaining political leadership. Usually, "politics" represents the superstructure whereas the economy which represents the structure influences the superstructure. The bid for politicians to control these has exacerbated electoral violence and outcome especially in capitalist states such as Nigeria. Thus, electoral violence denotes the employment of force and other undemocratic means by politicians and their supporters to intimidate, frighten and harass their opponents in a bid to gain electoral victory. Electoral violence has become a sad feature of Nigeria democracy for most parts of Nigeria political history. For Igbuzor (2010) electoral violence denotes any act of violence made by political opponents in the course of political activities. It may manifest at pre, during and post election periods. It may include any or a combination of the following acts: thuggery, application of force to disrupt political meetings or actual elections, use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters or cause bodily harm to electoral officials and destruction of election materials.

Abia State was not spared from the incidence of electoral violence in several parts of the state especially in Aba and Umuahia during the 2019 and 2023 general elections according to the election reports revealed by CLEEN Foundation after each of the elections (CLEEN Foundation Election Reports, 2019 and 2023). Having identified the major triggers of electoral violence and outcome in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections, this study therefore seeks to examine the political economy of electoral violence and outcome during the above elections in Abia State.

Justification of the Study

In Nigeria's pre and post independence political experience, it has been observed that general elections in the country has been characterized by electoral violence and its corresponding outcome either before, during or immediately after the elections. In Abia State for instance, the CLEEN foundation election reports of both the

2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections revealed instances of electoral violence at the various stages of the elections. Scholars such as Folorunsho & Stella (2023) identified some factors such as internal party politics, ethnicity, weak legal framework among others as factors that propel electoral violence in Nigeria general elections in general and Abia State in particular.

Abia State has not been left out on the issue of the dynamic nature of politics, electoral violence and outcome in contemporary political environment. Thus, some key fundamental factors that occasioned electoral violence and outcome manifested in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections. The investigation of the diverse nature of electoral violence and outcome in Abia State during the period under review and its implications on elections, political participation and governance in the state serves as a justification of this study.

Conceptual Clarifications

The Concept of Election

Election constitutes the integral part of every representative and thriving democracy. One of the globally approved criteria to measure the quality of democracy is the quality of elections being conducted in a political system (Owoeye, Ajakaiye, Ojeka, Akereye & Afalowo, 2021). It is the most important or primary means by which the governed expresses their choice and assesses their representatives. Election fundamentally resolves around the selection of leaders (Babalola, 2019). The inevitability of elections in a democracy was captured by Obi (2017:4) when he contends that: “because of the practical impossibility of people directly running the government themselves a system has to be evolved whereby people periodically select from among themselves those who would run the machinery of government on their behalf”.

Folorunsho & Stella (2023) submit that election is a process that includes all stages of selecting people to fill elective positions, registering voters, publishing election notices, nominating candidates, running for offices, counting and announcing the result.

Awopegu, Afolabi & Agunyai (2024) contend that election is a process of selection of one or more persons to serve in public office. According to Omotola (2007:4) election also denotes a formal method for the selection of individuals to fill existing vacant positions or offices by way of choices made by the electorate. In other words, election represents an organized channel of popular expression through the instrumentality or sanctity of the ballot box.

In modern democracies, election offers the citizens the opportunity to choose among competing policies and leaders, replacing older selection methods like co-option or inheritance (Tsokwa & Nwanegbo, 2024). Scholars have established a strong link between democracy and election. Thus, Obi (2017:241) contends that: “The centrality of periodic elections in democratic countries arises mainly from the fact that they serve as the major means through which representatives of the people are recruited. Thus, the nature, organization and level of transparency involved in the process goes a long way in determining the authenticity of the outcome”.

Nigeria and other democratic states have seen the process of election as a major process of consolidating democracy. In other words, the restoration of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 has seen Nigeria conducting general elections at periodic periods in different states in the country. Although some of the elections have often been marred by various forms of electoral violence or malpractices, the Nigeria judiciary has also been involved in the process of consolidating democracy in the country through its judicial rulings on electoral disputes brought before it.

The outcome of the gubernatorial election results of 2019 and 2023 in Abia State which attracted some level of electoral violence is shown in tables 1 and 2 to further illustrate the study on general elections in Nigeria.

Table 1: Abia State Gubernatorial Election Result for 2019

S/N	Name of Candidate	Gender	Party	Votes Received	Remark
1	EmekaUwakolam	Male	A	4	
2	Ubani Vincent Anthony	Male	AAC	43	
3	OparaAlphonsusObinna	Male	ADC	254	
4	ObinnaKelenna	Male	ADP	166	
5	OkeyOkoroudo	Male	ADP	333	
6	IgwoNnannaOkpan	Male	AGA	522	
7	OnuohaUkoIgwe	Male	AGAP	249	
8	UlunwaUtokanmandu Morgan	Male	ANP	287	
9	OgahUchekukwu Samson	Male	APC	99,574	
10	Alex Otti	Male	APGA	64,366	
11	Umeh Charles Okezi	Male	APP	138	

12	ChijiokeOwanta	Male	ASD	35	
13	Michael Mojo Ndu	Male	AUN	29	
14	Chinwuba Queen Edith Asikaralinoun	Female	CAP	21	
15	Obasi Heavens Ugochukwu	Male	DA	14	
16	Paul Chinedu Emmanuel	Male	FRESH	22	
17	Annyalewachl Nwaozuru	Male	GPN	33	
18	Gilbert Chikezie Chris	Male	ID	38	
19	Charles OkechukwuOkereke	Male	JMPP	40	
20	Benson ChibunnaOnyekachi	Male	KP	102	
21	Igara CeekayKalu	Male	LP	520	
22	Udeagha Rose Uzoaru	Female	MPN	124	
23	Madu Anthony Chukwuonye	Male	PDC	442	
24	Okezie Victor Ikpeazu	Male	PDP	261.127	Declared
25	Okoronkwo Fortunes Paul	Male	PPC	1,044	
26	ChukwudiNnabugwu	Male	PPN	624	
27	Awa Ezekiel Anya	Male	PT	53	
28	AhaiweUdochukwu Elvis	Male	RP	89	
29	Hon (Mrs) Blessing Nwagba	Female	SDP	2,191	
30	Francis OnuiguUkwu	Male	UPP	151	
31	Nkoro Joseph Ngozi	Male	YPP	100	
32	Orji Kingsley	Male	ZLP	291	

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission, (INEC) 2019

As shown in table 1, the gubernatorial election in Abia State in 2019 was hotly contested for by thirty two (32) gubernatorial candidates. The votes received by each of the candidates under their various political parties is also shown on the table. The context was very hot as each of the candidates, their supporters and parties struggled hard to win the gubernatorial seat which of course heightened electoral violence in the state during the period.

Table 2: Abia State Gubernatorial Election Result for 2023

S/N	Name of candidate	Gender	Party	Votes Received	Remark
1	NwankpaEmeka Michael	M	A	1,528	
2	AkumaKalu Wilson	M	AA	474	
3	Otuche, Bond Oluchikwu	M	AAC	298	
4	Onuoha Sunday Ndukwo	M	ADC	2,529	
5	Jonas OkoroaforChibuike	M	ADP	601	
6	EmcnikeIkechi	M	APC	24,091	
7	Ibe, Gregory Ikechukwu	M	APGA	18,119	
8	Chikezie, AnyimUguru	M	APM	570	
9	UzorKalu Mascot	M	APP	11,728	
10	Ekeji Lucky Achinihu	M	BP	1,141	
11	Otti Alex Chioma	M	LP	175,464	Declared Elected
12	UkpaiUkpaiIro	M	NNPP	2,068	
13	IjomaKalu	M	NRM	472	
14	OkeyAhiwe	M	PDP	88,529	
15	Lancaster-OkoroNnennaya	F	PRP	168	
16	Johnson-Ogbunke Gladys	F	SDP	773	
17	NwaforEnyinnayaChima	M	YPP	28,972	
18	Onukwu Prince Chibunna	M	ZLP	1,011	

Source: Independent National Electoral Commission, (INEC) 2023

Table 2 shows the result of the Abia State governorship election result for 2023. Even though the number of the governorship candidates reduced at this time, each of the candidates, their supporters and parties did not relent in adopting overt and covert mechanisms to win the election which also intensified electoral and political violence in Abia State during the period.

Electoral Violence

Specifically, violence in its various forms and dimensions is seen as a disruption of the peaceful order of society. It denotes the eruption of a drive to overtly or covertly destroy anything perceived as a barrier to one's self-esteem, aspirations, movement, growth, or ambition. According to Nkwede (2015: 272) "violence occurs in different dimensions of human existence or activities ranging from political, psychological, social, economic, racial, cultural and religious. Electoral election violence can occur at any stage of the electioneering process. Thus, Kovacs (2018:8) contends that "electoral violence can take place at all stages of the electoral process, notably, before, during and after an election". Usually, the major target of electoral violence is for the perpetrator to influence the process of elections unduly and gain an advantage over other political rivals or opponents (Lambe & Mubarak, 2023). Thus, electoral violence is generally aimed at subverting the due process towards the emergence of a candidate or candidates during an election. Among others, electoral violence emphasizes the snatching and stuffing of ballot boxes and other election materials, removal or destruction of bill boards, posters and other information pertaining to the opponent. Other undemocratic acts that also constitute electoral violence include political riots, thuggery, the forceful declaration of fake results even when there is no evidence of an election, refusal to swear in the winner of an election, refusal to vacate office after losing an election, and refusal to honour judicial rulings on election matters..

Causes of Electoral violence in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 Gubernatorial Elections

Scholars, such as Omenazu & Paschal (2011) and Orji & Uzodi (2012) among others have carried out series of studies on the root causes of electoral violence in Nigeria politics generally and Abia State in particular. Specifically, the factors ranges from socio-economic, political, social, psychological, ethnic and religious.

This study therefore examined the following:

(i) Bribery and Corruption

Although these are related concepts, bribery has to do with the use of financial, material and other forms of inducements to gain undue advantage. Similarly, corruption which takes a good number of forms and dimensions occur whenever an official either in private or public sector compromises his position by accepting dishonest gains, offers or allow himself to be used by others for dishonest gains. These anti-democratic vices exacerbated electoral violence in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 general elections. There were reported and proven cases of money and other materials exchanging hands in the various polling stations across the state. This was perpetrated by both the candidates of the political parties, their agents, some political party leaders that represented some interests and some INEC officials.

(ii) Unemployment and Poverty

Unemployment has remained a social burden and major challenge among the teeming population of Abia youth in particular. Unemployment exist when a particular segment of the populace who are ready and willing to work under an existing wage rate lack the opportunity to be engaged. Similarly, poverty is an undesirable social condition where individuals lack access to financial, material and other life enhancing resources for meaningful social or human survival. In a study conducted by Okorie & Anowor (2017) it was revealed that unemployment is a contributory factor to poverty. The frustrated group of unemployed Abia state youth constituted as serious threats during the 2019 and 2023 general elections in the state as they were recruited as body guards and thugs by some politicians and aspirants just for a fee (BCA News, March, 2025, 8.00pm).

(iii) Weakened Judicial System

The judiciary remains a major pillar of democracy. Its rulings on electoral and other matters are expected to be free, fair, and unbiased, no matter whose ox is gored. In Nigeria generally and in some states in particular such as Abia, the reverse has virtually remained the case with respect to judicial rulings on electoral matters for most parts of the fourth Republic. Several times, judicial pronouncements and rulings on electoral matters have often resulted to public protests and sad memories on the faces of the people given the way and manner the judiciary often compromise and truncate the will of, or wishes of the people on electoral matters. In 2023 for instance, the nullification of the victory of Senator Darlington Nwokocha of the Labour Party (Abia Central) as was declared by INEC by the court in preference for senator (Colonel) Austin Akobundu of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) attracted much electoral violence in the zone.

(iv) Prevalence of Politics of Primordial loyalty by political party candidates and their supporters in Abia State.

The seeming poor performance of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) that dominated Abia politics from the restoration of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 up to May 29, 2023 as alleged by members of the

opposition and alleged politics of godfatherism exacerbated political and electoral violence in the state during the 2023 gubernatorial elections. The period witnessed a high level of political alignment and re-alignments, campaigns of calumny, expression of historical and tribal sentiments and emergence of political cliques among other undemocratic moves initiated by politicians just to score cheap political points. These moves ended up heightening political tension and electoral violence in Abia State.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is predicted on the Marxist political economy theory. The theory is also known as economic determinism, in which case, emphasis is placed on the material condition of man as the basis of his socio-economic survival and political stability. The theory advocates that man's actions or inactions in society is a function of his economic position given prevailing economic realities or socio-economic variables (Ezirim, & Okoye, 2018). Ekekwe (2009) also contends that Marxist interpretation of political economy provides a scientific method to the study of the organic relationship between the sub-structure (economy) and super structure (polity). Therefore, the Marxist view of political economy differs from the view of the classical political economists such as Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, among others (George – Genyi, 2009).

The point of departure is that the Marxist political economy provides a holistic and critical view on the relationship or interaction between politics and economy. It studies society from the point of view of social or class relations, class struggle and class conflict. In the Marxist tradition, it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but their social or material existence determines their social consciousness. Therefore, the entire world view and social consciousness of individual's in society is basically a reflection of their material or economic condition.

Generally, the Marxist political economy postulates that the ruling class in every society pursues, captures, exercises and exploits power, and resources for selfish and class interest. Thus, contrary to the liberal assumption that the state is an unbiased umpire and neutral power broker as it affects the interest of capital and labour, capitalist states in particular essentially function to project, advance, defend and promote the interest of capitalism and capitalist accumulation and profiteering by the ruling class. This way, the minority rich few therefore struggle to capture state power for exploitation of the state and society's resources for personal aggrandizement and protection of their selfish interest whereas majority of the people wallow in abject poverty (Okechukwu & Philip, 2015).

Applying the Marxist political economy theory to this study, the theory best captures and explains the nature of politics in Abia State as well as the character of the ruling class during the governorship and general elections of 2019 and 2023. Thus, the Marxist postulation that the state is made up of antagonistic socio-political classes that seek power mainly for personal gains holds sway contrary to the liberal view that the state pursues the general interest of the people.

The salient point is that during both the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections in Abia State, available records revealed that the target of the various political parties, their leadership as well as the candidates they fielded during the elections was essentially to capture political power and use it to authoritatively allocate values and resources to their satisfaction and leave the rest of the people with little or nothing. Thus, this inert propensity to capture political power by the various groups for the purposes so outlined exacerbated electoral violence and outcome in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 governorship elections.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. Did the nature of wealth distribution in Abia State contribute to electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections?
- ii. Did the concentration of the production of goods and services in certain parts of Abia State contribute to electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections?
- iii. Did the ownership and control of property among indigenes and residents of Abia State influence electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections?
- iv. Did public policy and government interaction with citizens affect electoral violence and outcomes in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections?

The following hypotheses were investigated in this study:

- i. The nature of wealth distribution in Abia State did not contribute to electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections.
- ii. The concentration of the production of goods and services in certain parts of Abia State did not affect electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections.
- iii. The ownership and control of property among indigenes and residents of Abia State did not influence electoral violence and outcomes during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections.

- iv. Public policy and government interaction with citizens did not affect electoral violence and outcomes in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections.

Sources of Data

The study adopted primary and secondary sources of data.

Instrument of Data Collection

Instrument for primary data collection were structured questionnaire. The copies of the structured questionnaire were administered by the researchers to the respondents.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were presented using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviation of each item were analyzed under the four hypotheses of the study, based on a 5-point Likert scale.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consist of the selected respondents in the two major cities of Abia State, that is, Aba and Umuahia. The population of the study is 2,470,000 residents. Out of this, purposive sampling technique was adopted to distribute our questionnaire to 400 respondents drawn from the selected communities.

Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Findings

This study examined whether factors such as wealth distribution, concentration of production, property ownership and government-citizen interactions influenced electoral violence and outcomes in Abia State during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections in the state.

The mean and standard deviation of each item was grouped under the four hypotheses using a 5-point Likert scale:

- i. Strongly Agree (SA) = 5
- ii. Agree (A) = 4
- iii. Undecided (UN) = 3
- iv. Disagree (D) = 2
- v. Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1

Hypotheses Testing

The study adopted one-sample t-tests to test each hypothesis against the neutral point (mean = 3), which represents “undecided”.

If the test shows a P=value <0.05, we reject the null hypothesis, that is, there is a significant difference.

Analysis and Results

Hypothesis 1: Wealth Distribution and Electoral Violence

Item	SA	A	D	SD	UN	Mean	Std. Dev
1a	177	221	16	6	4	4.34	0.68
1b	182	218	11	8	5	4.35	0.69
1c	198	204	13	7	2	4.40	0.65
Average						4.36	0.67

One sample t-test vs.3:

$t = 33.45, P < 0.001$

Interpretation: Respondents significantly agree that wealth distribution is associated with electoral violence and outcomes. Respondents strongly agreed that unequal wealth distribution contributes to electoral tension and violence. Wealthy individuals were perceived to have the power to influence both electoral violence and outcomes.

Reject Hypothesis 1

Claim: No significant difference between wealth distribution and electoral violence.

Mean score: 4.36

Implication

- (i) Economic inequality fosters political instability
- (ii) Policies promoting wealth redistribution and transparent campaign financing may reduce electoral violence.

Hypothesis 2: Production of goods and services concentration

Item	SA	A	D	SD	UN	mean	Std. Dev.
2a	105	261	35	14	9	4.06	0.78
2b	100	203	86	10	25	3.85	0.91
2c	98	200	93	15	18	3.80	0.92
Average						3.90	0.87

One sample t-test vs.3:
t = 18.52, P< 0.001

Interpretation: Respondents believe that production concentration in certain parts of Abia State influences electoral violence. Concentration of economic activity in selected parts of the state is viewed as a driver of resentment, leading to increased competition and electoral violence during elections.

Claim: No significant difference between goods and services concentration and electoral violence.

Implication:

- (i) Decentralization of development and infrastructure is needed.
- (ii) Promoting equity in economic opportunity may improve political stability.

Reject Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3: Property ownership and electoral violence

Item	SA	A	D	SD	UN	Mean	Std. Dev.
3a	100	178	90	15	21	3.82	0.93
3b	95	203	88	21	21	3.79	0.93
3c	92	220	75	17	17	3.85	0.90
Average						3.82	0.92

One sample t-test vs. 3:
t = 15.75, P< 0.001

Interpretation: Property ownership and control are perceived to significantly contribute to electoral violence. Political office is seen as a means to gain access to assets and lands. Areas with high property value (especially urban) are more prone to contestation and violence.

Claim: No significant difference between property ownership or control and electoral violence.

Implication:

- (i) Implement land reform and anti-corruption policies regarding public asset allocation.
- (ii) Strengthen checks on the use of political office for personal enrichment.

Reject Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4: Public Policy Government Interaction and Electoral Violence

Item	SA	A	D	SD	UN	Mean	Std. Dev
4a	16	79	225	95	9	2.31	0.84
4b	66	21	81	2.48	8	2.09	0.97
4c	116	233	50	12	13	4.01	0.86
Average						2.80	1.22

One sample t-test vs. 3:
t = 2.43, P = 0.016

Interpretation: Perceptions of public policy and interaction vary. Some policies help, others harm. Since mean <3 and P<0.05, citizens largely disagreed that public policy and government interaction reduced electoral violence. A disconnect between citizens and public institutions likely exacerbate electoral violence and tensions.

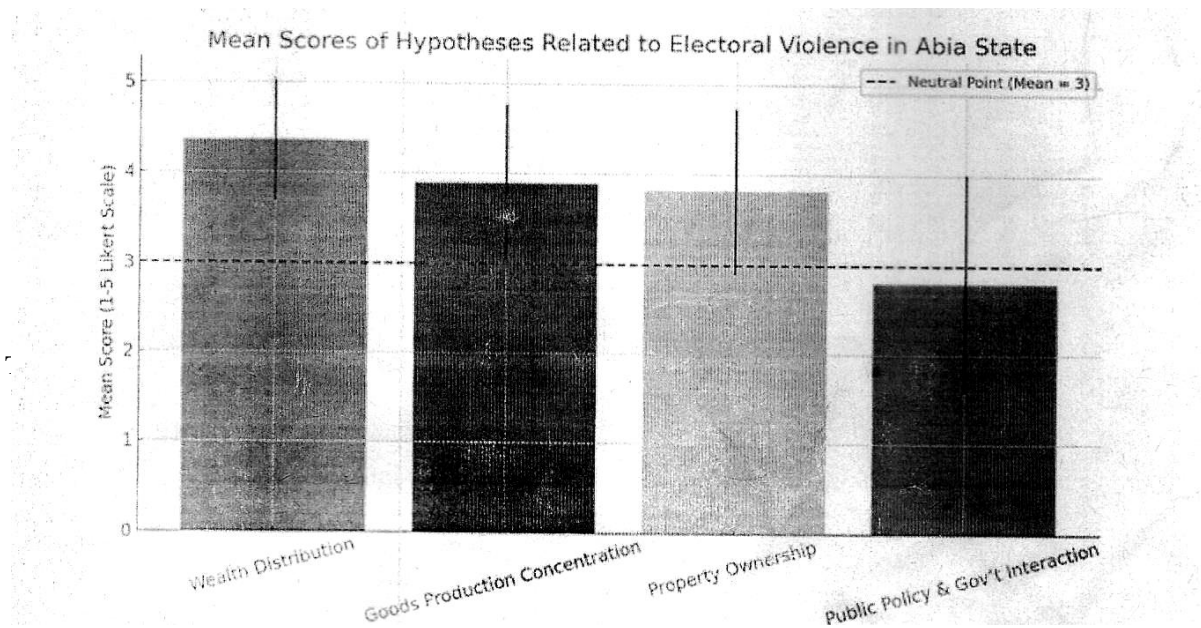
Claim: No significant difference between government interaction, policy and electoral violence.

Implication:

- (i) There is a need for consistent civic engagement and citizen-orientation policy making.
- (ii) Increasing transparency, dialogue and service delivery can restore trust and reduce electoral and political violence.

Reject Hypothesis 4.

Summary Report



3.0 indicates disagreement.

All four hypotheses were rejected, indicating strong associations between socio-political economic factors and electoral violence during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections in Abia State. The most influential factors were wealth distribution and government performance, underscoring the importance of inclusive governance and economic equity.

Hypothesis	Result	Conclusion
H1: Wealth Distribution ↔ Violence	Rejected	Wealth inequality significantly influences electoral violence
H2: Goods Production Concentration ↔ Violence	Rejected	Resource concentration influences electoral outcomes and violence.
H3: Property Ownership ↔ Violence	Rejected	Control of property significantly relates to violence and outcomes
H4: Public Policy/Government Interaction ↔ Violence	Rejected	Poor interaction and policy gaps relate to increased electoral violence

Conclusion

Electoral violence and outcomes have continued to be a major feature of Nigeria's politics and democratic experience, despite the various legal frameworks put in place to reduce it to the barest minimum. The bitter experiences at the national level during general elections have often been replicated at the state level. In Abia State, for instance, electoral violence prevailed among political parties, their candidates, and supporters during the 2019 and 2023 gubernatorial elections. The primary objective of every political party and the candidates they fielded was to capture political power, which they could then use to allocate resources selfishly and fulfill personal or partisan objectives. Unsurprisingly, this heightened the incidence of electoral violence and influenced electoral outcomes in the state during these elections.

Recommendations

This study proposes the following recommendations:

- (i) Political power in Nigeria should not continue to be seen as a means to personal wealth. Political offices should also not be made so economically attractive, in order to discourage die-hard power seekers who may attempt to capture political power by any means.
- (ii) There is a dire need to strengthen Nigerian institutions involved in election management and the declaration of election results, so that they can be truly independent and discharge their functions without fear or favour.
- (iii) The state, at all levels, should continue to pursue good governance, accountability, and the proper engagement of unemployed Nigerian youth, who are often used as instruments of electoral violence.

- (iv) The “winner-takes-all” nature of politics in Nigeria should be reviewed to ensure that losers in elections are adequately accommodated.
- (v) Politics of tolerance, especially towards members of the opposition, should be concretely integrated into Nigeria’s political culture..

References

- Awopeju A., Afolobi O. & Agunyai, C.S. (2024). Information and communication Technology and Democratic consolidation: A study of the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria. *Journal of Transylvanian Review* (32) 3.
- Babalolo, A. A. (2019). Awoism and the unending search for transformational leadership in Nigeria. Political, Economic, Educational and Social Challenge. *Journal of sustainable Development, Laws and Policy* 10(1) 133-155.
- Broadcasting Corporation of Abia State (2025, March, 2005, 8.00pm News) Unemployment Surge as 17,000 applicants Jostle for 2000 teaching jobs in Abia, <https://ww.bca>. Accessed 27th October, 2025.
- CLEEN Foundation Election Report (2023) Electoral violence risks in the 2019 and 2023 Gubernatorial Elections. *A Policy Brief*, 012.
- Efebeh, V.E. & Okolo, P.O. (2016). Democracy and Election in Nigeria: An appraisal of youths involvement. *Studies in Politics and Society*, 4(1), 187-198.
- Ekekwe, E.N. (2009). *An Introduction to Political Economy. Nigeria: Chuzzy Services*.
- Ezirim, G.E & Okoye, A. (2018). The Nigerian state and management of terrorism. *South East Journal of Political Science* 4 (2), 31-51.
- Folorunsho, I. & Stella, E. U. (2023). Electoral Reforms and 2023 General Elections in Nigeria: Lessons for African countries. *NnamdiAzikiwe Journal of Political Science (NAJOP)*, 8 (4).
- George - Genyi, M.E.(2009). Situating the African Development Palaver. The Reverence of the Political Economy Approach. *African Journal of Indigenous Development*(5), 1 & 2, 86-97.
- Igbuzor, O. (2010). *Electoral Violence in Nigeria*. Asaba: Action Aid.
- Independence National Electoral Commission (INEC) Abia State Gubernatorial Election Results (2019 and 2023), National Headquarters, Abuja.
- Kovacs, M.S. (2018). Introduction: The Everyday Politics of Electoral Violence in Africa. In M.S. Kovacs & J. Bjarnesen (eds), *Violence in African Elections: Between Democracy and Big Man Politics*. Zed Booker <https://doi.ng/10.50409781350223837.0005>. Accessed, 8/12/24.
- Lambe, E.O. & Musarak, S.J. (2023). Political Conflict and Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Implications on National Security. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies*, 11(2), 442-452.
- Nkwede. J.O. (2015) Electoral Violence and 2015 General Elections in Nigeria: A focus on the ramifications of political developments in Ebonyi State. *Journal of developing country studies*, 6(9), 2016.
- Obi, E.A. (2017) Appraising Party Systems and Election Administration in Nigeria. In E. A. Obi (ed), *Political Parties and pressure groups*. Onitsha: Book Print Publishers.
- Okechukwu, S.A. & Philip, T. (2015). The State, Redistributive Justice and Political stability in Nigeria. *Vuna Journal of Politics and Diplomatic Studies*1(1), 28-40.
- Okorie, G.C. & Anowor, O.F. (2017). Empirical Appraisal of Poverty-Unemployment Relationship in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Research* 3(6), 91-97.
- Omenazu, E. & Paschal, N. (2011) Nigeria’s Displaced Polls Violence. Red Cross. *Daily Independent*.
- Omotola, J.S. (2007). Godfathers and the 2007 Nigeria General Elections. *Journal of African Elections*, 6(2) 134-154.
- Orji, N. & Uzodi, N. (2012). *The 2011 post Election Violence in Nigeria*. Abuja, Nigeria: Policy and Advocacy Centre.
- Owoeye, G., Ajakaiye, O.P., Oyeka, J., Akereke, O. & Afalowo, J. (2021). Democratic Consolidation and Election Management in West Africa: Issues and Challenges. *Mulafia Journal of Social Science*.4(1), 11-28.
- Tsokwa, S. & Nwanegbo, J. (2024). The impact of the 2022 Electoral Reform in the credibility of the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Culture and Society* 2(3), 236-252.