

ASSESSING THE NEXUS BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN JALINGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of democracy on good governance in Jalingo local government area (LGA) of Taraba State, Nigeria. The aim is to examine how democratic processes influence governance outcomes in the area. Specifically, the study seeks to: (i) identify the democratic processes that affect good governance in Jalingo LGA; (ii) examine the reality of the democratic process in achieving good governance; and (iii) investigate the implications of the democratic process on good governance in the area. The study adopted a descriptive research design, utilizing both primary and secondary data. A structured questionnaire was administered to selected respondents, including local government officials, community leaders, and residents. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The theoretical framework underpinning the study is the Social Contract Theory as propounded by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. The theory explains that citizens consent to be governed in exchange for protection of rights, transparency, and public accountability—essential components of good governance. Findings show that although democracy has the potential to foster good governance, its practical application in Jalingo LGA is undermined by poor electoral practices, weak accountability systems, lack of political education, inadequate infrastructure, and minimal civic participation. The study concludes that democratic governance in the area is still evolving and requires strategic reforms to yield meaningful impact. It recommends reforming the electoral system, enhancing political education, improving public accountability, and investing in infrastructure—all within the framework of a renewed social contract between the government and the governed.

Keywords: *Democracy, good governance, free and fair election, local government, community leaders*

1.1 Introduction

The concept of democracy originated in ancient Greece, where it was defined as “rule by the people.” In modern times, democracy has evolved into a global political ideal, widely associated with good governance—characterized by transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and citizen participation. Across the world, democratic systems are viewed as mechanisms for promoting social equity, development, and political stability.

Nigeria’s return to democratic rule in 1999 was a pivotal moment in its history, symbolizing hope for better governance and national transformation. However, like many emerging democracies, Nigeria has struggled to align democratic principles with the realities of governance. Despite the presence of democratic institutions, many Nigerians continue to face poverty, inequality, unemployment, and a lack of essential public services. Ideally, democracy should enhance governance and improve citizens’ welfare, yet the Nigerian experience reflects a gap between democratic form and function. A frustrated citizen once remarked, “Nigerians have never experienced any good governance since 1999, and that for citizens to have

any sense of belonging, there should be provision for social amenities and infrastructure, employment, health, security, and a constant power supply” (Akosile, 2010).

This concern resonates with global observations that democracy alone does not guarantee good governance. In both developed and developing countries, sustainable development and citizen satisfaction depend largely on how well governance practices support democratic values. As Audi, Salisu, and Zakari (2021) noted, good governance involves the responsible and effective use of political power to promote state development and institutional efficiency. Similarly, Oni and Excellence-Oluye (2016) emphasized that the sustainability of democracy is heavily reliant on the equitable and transparent management of national resources.

Taraba State, particularly Jalingo Local Government Area (LGA), exemplifies the challenges of local governance in a democratic setting. Like many other regions across the world, it grapples with corruption, poor infrastructure, and limited access to basic services. The lack of good governance in Jalingo LGA continues to hinder efforts at local development and frustrates democratic expectations.

This study, therefore, examines the impact of democracy on good governance in Jalingo LGA, within both the Nigerian and broader global context. It aims to contribute to the discourse on how democratic systems, especially in developing nations, can be reformed and strengthened to deliver tangible benefits and sustainable development for all citizens.

1.2 Statement of problem

It is imperative to note that democracy deals with popular participation of the majority in the act of governance, governance with the consent of the people as opposed to autocracy, it involves the rule of law, supremacy of the constitution above all, professional reportage by mass media of communication, autonomous judicial system to protect the rights of individuals and the constitution, independent electoral commission to guarantee free fair and credible elections, the existence of multiparty system and son on are essential ingredients of constitutional democracy that will provide good governance.

Despite the introduction of democratic institutions and processes in Nigeria, the country continues to face numerous challenges related to governance. One of the most pressing challenges is the lack of good governance at the local government level. Jalingo Local Government Area (LGA) in Taraba State is no exception. The LGA has faced numerous challenges related to governance, including corruption, inefficiency, and lack of accountability. The lack of good governance in Jalingo LGA has had a significant impact on the lives of the local population. Poverty, inequality, and lack of access to basic services such as education and healthcare are rampant. The infrastructure in the LGA is also in a state of disrepair, with many roads, schools, and healthcare facilities in need of renovation or reconstruction.

Despite the importance of good governance, there is a dearth of research on the impact of democracy on governance outcomes in Nigeria, particularly in Jalingo local government. Most studies have focused on the national level, with little attention paid to the local government level. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of democracy on good governance in Jalingo LGA, Taraba State. The research problem is further complicated by the fact that the relationship between democracy and good governance is complex and multifaceted. While democracy is often seen as a necessary condition for good governance, it is not a sufficient condition. Other factors, such as the strength of institutions, the level of civic engagement, and the quality of leadership, also play a critical role in determining governance outcomes. It is against this

backdrop that this study examined the impact of democracy on good governance in Jalingo Local Government Area.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of democracy on good governance in Jalingo Local Government Area. Other specific objectives are to:

- i. Identify the democratic process that affects good governance in Jalingo local government area.
- ii. Examine the reality of the democratic process in achieving good governance in Jalingo local government area.
- iii. Investigate the implication of democratic process on good governance in Jalingo local government area.

1.4 Research questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the democratic process that affects good governance in Jalingo local government area?
- ii. What is the reality of the democratic process in achieving good governance in Jalingo local government area?
- iii. What is the implication of democratic process on good governance in Jalingo local government area?

1.5 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: Democratic process does not affect good governance in Jalingo local government area. **H₀₂:** The reality of democratic process (transparency and accountability) has not helped in achieving good governance in Jalingo local government area.

H₀₃: Democratic process does not have implication on good governance in Jalingo local government area.

2.1 Literature review

2.1.1 Concept of democracy

"Democracy on its own does not imply good government. It is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end. "Deep-rooted and consolidated democracy in the form of liberalism or what Cheema and Maguire (2004) call 'maximalist democracy' indeed has been found to be able to engender good governance". According to them, "maximalist democracy encompasses various rights and liberties that must be associated with a competitive and inclusive system of government." Diamond, 1999). Diamond, "while appraising the maximalist approach of democracy, submits that democracy is a concept that allows for fundamental human rights, broadening political participation and guaranteeing credible and periodic elections".

To turn democracy into good governance, Linz and Stepan (1999) point to "five inter-related conditions that must be met; the rule of law to guarantee citizens' freedoms and independent associational life, functional state bureaucracy which can be used by the democratic government to deliver public good, free and lively civil society, a relatively autonomous and valued political society and an institutionalised economic society". Democracy has consequently been recognised as the sole moral and lawful means of administering a society. Thus, academics and international financial institutions such as the World Bank have established an unbreakable link between democracy and good governance.

Democracy, when properly understood, is a theory that establishes some fundamental rules under which a decent government, whatever its form, must operate (Oluwole, 2003). These ideals include justice, equity,

freedom, liberty, accountability, openness, and transparency in government. Indeed, effective democratic governance depends on public participation, accountability, and transparency. Most countries now utilise these concepts to distinguish between good and terrible governments. In this regard, democracy not only defines how political power should be won but also what to do with it or how it should be exercised. Therefore, democracy specifies who constitutes the legitimate government and wields the authority inherent in the state (the elected representatives), how they acquire authority (free and fair elections, choice between parties) and how they are to exercise it (in broad harmony with public good) (Parekh, 1993).

Using the most popular definition of democracy by one time United States President, Abraham Lincoln, who defined democracy as government of the people, by the people, and for the people, it is clear that in a democracy, the government is constituted from among the people for themselves to serve their collective interests and to carry out their wishes. However, on the African front, with Nigeria included, it is imperative to note that democracy deals with people as opposed to autocracy. It entails the rule of law, the supremacy of the constitution above all, professional reporting by mass media, an autonomous judicial system to protect individual and constitutional rights, an independent electoral commission to ensure free, fair, and credible elections, the existence of a multiparty system, and so on.

Good governance

"Good Governance (GG)" includes elements such as participation, transparency, and accountability. It's also efficient and egalitarian. "And it promotes the rule of law." (UNDP, 1997). The General Assembly is "... epitomised by predictable, open, and enlightened policy making; a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law" (World Banking Corporation, 1994).

"Good governance (GG)" promotes equity, participation, pluralism, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law in an effective, efficient, and long-lasting manner. In putting these ideals into effect, we see free, fair, and frequent elections, representative legislatures that make and oversee laws, and an independent judiciary that interprets those laws. Corruption, violence, and poverty pose the greatest risks to GG, undermining transparency, security, participation, and fundamental freedoms. (UN, 2013). "Good governance is a concept that has become commonplace among a wide spectrum of development agencies and other international actors. What that entails exactly, however, has not been thoroughly established." (UNU, 2012). Good governance refers to the political and institutional processes and outcomes that are regarded necessary to fulfil social development goals. It has been stated that "is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and ensure the realisation of human rights in a manner essentially free of abuse and corruption, relying on the rule of law" (UN, United Nations Human Rights, 2016). The interlinking of the four Pillars (Accountability, Transparency, Predictability, and Participation) is seen as the cyclical process of Good Governance. Therefore, "if the governance sectors, institutions, or groups accompany with answerable, reasonable, and logical qualities in response to people depending on rules, laws, and regulations, people will find it easy, understandable, reliable, timely, and relevant" (UN, 2016); in other words, Effective accountability is understood to refer "to people's consciousness of what their responsibility, daily activities, and benefits are, resulting in transparent institutions and participation from the citizens". "Transparency is essential for excellent predictability. In short, the benefits of an institution's responsibility, openness, and clear predictability can significantly

contribute to increased engagement" (UN, 2016). "The concept of good' in 'governance' is an appendage to the word 'governance' and it is seen as the process and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised (World Bank, 2014). Furthermore, governance includes how governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced with an emphasis on the capacity of government to manage resources and respect the rule of law" (World Bank, 2004; Boyte, 2005). Accordingly, the word implies governance. In this context, Babawale (2007) defines good governance as the use of political authority to promote the common good and the welfare of the people. He defines good governance as the absence of government accountability, corruption, and political repression, the smothering of civil society, and the denial of fundamental human rights. He identifies the following characteristics of good governance in any society: accountability, transparency in government procedures, a high expectation of rational decisions, predictability in government behaviour, openness in government transactions, free flow of information, respect for the rule of law and protection of civil liberties, and press freedom.

"In the context of this research, governance is defined as the process of allocating resources through the state's instrumentalities to achieve public benefit. Thus, governance encompasses institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes, capability for policy formulation and implementation, personnel development, information flows, and the character and style of leadership within a political system (World Bank Institute, 2003).

Democracy and good governance in Nigeria understanding the Nexus

Attempts to comprehend the relationship between democracy, good governance, and development have yielded opposing viewpoints. For liberal thinkers, democracy and development are intimately intertwined, with good governance serving as the connecting link (World Bank, 1992). The importance of excellent governance in the overall process has been widely recognised. According to Kofi Annan (1998 Potter, 2002), the UN has increasingly begun to focus on good governance since "no amount of funding, no amount of charity will put the developing world on the path to prosperity." Member nations have increasingly recognised that excellent governance is essential for developing peaceful, wealthy, and democratic societies. According to Bhalla (1997) and Potter (2000), democracy is closely related with greater freedom, which leads to increased economic growth and development. The idea that democracy stifles progress, particularly in poor cultures, stands in stark contrast to the preceding. In those circumstances, authoritarian regimes are thought to be better suited to promoting development. However, some have argued that there is no direct or systematic causal link between democracy and development. The various propositions have been supported in differing degrees by actual data (Lane & Ersson, 1997; Potter 2000). This rationalisation is supported by the fact that these notions are conceptually linked and interlinked. If the goal of development is to achieve consolidated democracy, effective governance indirectly provides the circumstances for this to happen. Furthermore, both democracy and development have fundamental characteristics such as popular engagement, capacity expansion, and freedom (Nwabueze, 1993; Adedeji, 1997; Mazrui, 2002). Clearly, these are part of the inherent values of effective governance. It is vital to emphasise that while democracy may engender development, most of it depends on the context within which the analysis is carried out. Furthermore, the impact of democracy on development may be influenced by both the duration and the depth of the democratic process. Given the multidimensional nature of development, it could also be inspectoral, particularly in the near term. Development in one area, such as politics, may eventually lead to development in other areas. Given this, it is prudent to avoid making broad

statements about their relationship. This explains why a contextual analysis would be of high usefulness, given its ability to account for variances in the same occurrence in different systems (Osaghae, 1994).

Theoretical framework

This paper used social contract theory. "The social contract theory is an old political philosophy notion advanced by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The theory was chosen based on its appropriateness in explaining the creation of nature and the operation of democratic institutions, which include periodic elections to assure regular leadership turnover.

Hobbes (1588-1679) emphasised a state of nature, portraying it as poor, ugly, brutish, and short, because it contains certain characteristics connected with human conditions, such as equality of need, scarcity, essential equality of human strength, and limited altruism. The state of nature lacks fundamental social amenities for satisfying human needs due to poor social cooperation in producing these basic amenities, and in order for man to avoid this state of nature, there must be a guarantee that people will not harm one another and that the government will fulfil its part of the agreement with the citizens."

This theory provides an outline of how governments in an organised society are founded, maintained, modified, or overthrown. It explains why people come together to avoid living a brutish, nasty, and short life that characterises the state of nature where political authority is absent, which is commonly obtained through periodic elections in a liberal democracy, and that elections that meet the requirements of that contract are termed legitimate.

Tenets/Assumption of the Theory

The social contract theory, as espoused by philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, posits that individuals voluntarily surrender some of their natural rights to a governing authority in exchange for protection and stability. In the context of democratic process and good governance, the social contract theory assumes that citizens have a moral obligation to obey the laws and institutions established by their government, as long as the government upholds its end of the bargain by protecting their rights and promoting the common good. One of the fundamental tenets of the social contract theory is that individuals are rational and self-interested actors who are capable of making informed decisions about their own lives. In the context of democratic process and good governance, this assumption suggests that citizens are capable of participating in the democratic process, holding their leaders accountable, and demanding good governance. However, this assumption also acknowledges that individuals may prioritize their own interests over the common good, which can lead to conflicts and challenges in the democratic process.

Another key assumption of the social contract theory is that individuals are equal and have inherent rights that should be respected and protected by the government. In the context of democratic process and good governance, this assumption suggests that all citizens should have equal access to the democratic process, regardless of their race, gender, religion, or socioeconomic status. This assumption also implies that governments have a moral obligation to protect the rights of all citizens and promote the common good. The social contract theory also assumes that governments derive their authority from the consent of the governed. In the context of democratic process and good governance, this assumption suggests that governments are accountable to their citizens and should be transparent and responsive to their needs and concerns. This assumption also implies that citizens have the right to participate in the democratic process and hold their leaders accountable for their actions.

Furthermore, the social contract theory assumes that individuals have a moral obligation to obey the laws and institutions established by their government, as long as the government upholds its end of the bargain by protecting their rights and promoting the common good. In the context of democratic process and good governance, this assumption suggests that citizens should respect the rule of law and the institutions of government, even if they disagree with specific policies or decisions. However, the social contract theory also acknowledges that governments can fail to uphold their end of the bargain, leading to a breakdown in the social contract. In the context of democratic process and good governance, this assumption suggests that citizens have the right to resist or revolt against a government that fails to protect their rights or promote the common good. This assumption also implies that governments have a moral obligation to reform themselves and restore the social contract when it is broken. In conclusion, the social contract theory provides a framework for understanding the relationship between citizens and their government in the context of democratic process and good governance. The theory assumes that individuals are rational and self-interested actors who are capable of participating in the democratic process and holding their leaders accountable. However, the theory also acknowledges that governments can fail to uphold their end of the bargain, leading to a breakdown in the social contract and the need for reform or resistance.

Social Contract Theory

The social contract theory has significant implications for democratic process and good governance. According to the theory, citizens voluntarily surrender some of their natural rights to a governing authority in exchange for protection and stability. In a democratic system, this means that citizens have a moral obligation to obey the laws and institutions established by their government, as long as the government upholds its end of the bargain by protecting their rights and promoting the common good. One of the key applications of the social contract theory in democratic process and good governance is the concept of consent. According to the theory, governments derive their authority from the consent of the governed. This means that citizens have the right to participate in the democratic process and hold their leaders accountable for their actions. In a democratic system, citizens can express their consent through free and fair elections, public debates, and other forms of civic engagement.

The social contract theory also emphasizes the importance of protecting individual rights and promoting the common good. In a democratic system, this means that governments have a moral obligation to protect the rights of all citizens, including minority groups and vulnerable populations. Governments must also promote the common good by providing public goods and services, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Another key application of the social contract theory in democratic process and good governance is the concept of accountability. According to the theory, citizens have the right to hold their leaders accountable for their actions. In a democratic system, this means that citizens can use various mechanisms, such as elections, impeachment, and public protests, to hold their leaders accountable for their actions. The social contract theory also emphasizes the importance of transparency and openness in government. According to the theory, citizens have the right to know how their government is functioning and how their leaders are making decisions. In a democratic system, this means that governments must be transparent and open in their decision-making processes, and must provide citizens with access to information about government activities. In addition, the social contract theory highlights the importance of civic engagement and participation in the democratic process. According to the theory, citizens have a moral obligation to participate in the democratic process and hold their leaders accountable for their

actions. In a democratic system, this means that citizens must be actively engaged in civic activities, such as voting, volunteering, and community organizing. In conclusion, the social contract theory provides a framework for understanding the moral and philosophical foundations of democratic process and good governance. The theory emphasizes the importance of consent, individual rights, accountability, transparency, and civic engagement in a democratic system. Applying the principles of the social contract theory, citizens and leaders can work together to build a more just, equitable, and democratic society.

Methodology

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional survey design is a research methodology that involves collecting data from a sample of participants at a single point in time. The study population comprised of residents of Jalingo Local Government Area. The Local Government Area has a projected population of 581,000 (NBS, 2023) people at 3.2% annual growth rate. The paper adopted Taro Yamane (1967) sample determinant formula to ascertain the sample size. The formula is denoted as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size N = Population $e^2 =$ Degree of freedom $(0.05)^2$

Substituting the formula to the population of Jalingo LGA which is 581,000 it was determined as thus:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{581,000}{1 + 581,000 (0.05)^2} \\ n &= \frac{581,000}{1 + 581,000 (0.0025)} \\ n &= \frac{581,000}{1 + 1452.5} \\ &= \frac{581,000}{1453.5} \\ n &= 400 \end{aligned}$$

The cluster and simple random sampling techniques was adopted for the study. When it comes to studying democratic processes and good governance in Jalingo LGA, there are various sampling techniques at the disposal of researchers. Two of such techniques are cluster sampling and simple sampling. The cluster sampling techniques was used to divide the population into clusters or groups, such as households or villages, and then randomly selected the clusters to include in the sample. All individuals within the selected clusters are then included in the sample. The data collected for this study was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize and describe the characteristics of the sample, such as the frequency table and simple percentage. Inferential statistics was used to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Data presentation and analysis 4.1 Respondents characteristics

This section highlights the respondents' characteristics to better understand their underlying characteristics. Table 5 highlights the respondent characteristics covering the following aspects: gender, status of employment, age, and lastly level of education.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 30	88	23.0
31– 45	137	35.9
46 – 60	119	31.2
61 and above	38	9.9
Total	382	100

Source: Fieldwork (2024)

Table 4.3 above shows the age distribution of respondents. Those within the ages of 18 – 28 were 88 representing 23.0%, those within the ages of 29 – 39 were 137 representing 35.9%, those within the ages of 40 – 50 were 119 representing 31.2% while those above 51 were 38, representing 9.9% of the entire respondents. This implies that those between the ages of 29 – 39 who are 137 responded more to the questionnaire administered in this study.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Male	197	52.1
Female	185	47.9
Total	382	100

Source: Fieldwork (2024)

Table 4.2 above shows the sex distribution of respondents. 197 respondents representing 52.1% were from the male folks while 185 respondents representing 47.9% are females. This implies that males responded to the questionnaire administered more than females as shown by 197 male respondents who represented approximately 52% of the total respondents.

Table 4.3: Marital Status

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Single	167	43.7
Married	175	45.8
Divorced	40	10.5
Total	382	100

Source: Fieldwork (2024)

Table 4.4 above shows the marital status of the respondents. A total of 167 respondents representing approximately 44% are single, 175 respondents representing 46% are married while 40 respondents representing 10.5% are divorced. This implies that a total of 175 respondents representing about 46% who are married responded more to the questionnaire administered.

Table 4.4: Level of Educational

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Primary School	62	13.1
Secondary School Level	172	52.1

Tertiary Level	105	28.4
Others	43	6.4
Total	382	100

Source: Fieldwork (2024)

Table 4.4 above shows the educational qualification of respondents in this study. A total of 62 respondents representing 13.1% are primary school certificate holders, 172 respondents representing 52.1% are secondary school certificate holders, 105 respondents representing 28.4% are tertiary certificate holders while 43 respondents representing 6.4% have other forms of education such as Qur'anic education. From this result, it means the number of young people sampled is higher implying that the sample would generate the necessary responses relevant to the study under review.

4.2 Regression Analysis

This study attempts to assess the impact of democracy on good governance by examining the democratic process that affects good governance, the reality of the democratic process, and the implication on good governance. Democracy is therefore the dependent variable while good governance is the independent variable resulting in three (3) null hypotheses. Using primary data obtained from a sample of 382 respondents, the following are the outcomes of the regression model.

In this study three dimensions of democracy namely (process, reality and implication) were regressed against good governance, and the regression model is significant. In order words, democratic process, reality and implication are significant factors that explain good governance. As shown on Table 4.11, $F(3,378) = 25.163$, $p < 0.001$. The model as developed for this study therefore explains 0.624 of the variance in the dependent variable while the multiple correlation value is 0.769. This information is shown on Table 4.11 by reading the R^2 and R statistic.

Table 4.5: ANOVA Table

Model		Sum of	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Squares						
1	Regression	101.701	3	25.425	25.163	.000 ^b
	Residual	212.188	378	1.010		
	Total	313.888	381			

a. Dependent Variable: Good Governance

b. Predictors: (Constant), democratic process, reality of the democratic process and implication

Source: SPSS Version 26

Table 4.6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.769 ^a	.624	.311	1.005
a.	Predictors: (Constant), democratic process, reality of the democratic process and implication			
b.	Dependent Variable: Good Governance			
Source: SPSS Version 26				

4.3 Tests of Hypotheses

As indicated in the method of data analysis, the test of hypotheses is done using the t-statistic with its p-value. This information is presented in Table 4.8 below. From Table 4.8 below, the three null hypotheses were rejected. The OLS regression result indicates that democratic process significantly affects good governance as reported by the following values $B = 0.201$, $t = 2.195$, $p = 0.030$. The reality of democratic process (transparency and accountability) has significantly influences good governance with values $B = 0.128$, $t = 1.995$, $p = 0.048$. Lastly, democratic process have implication on good governance with $B = -0.282$, $t = -3.585$, $p < 0.001$.

Table 4.7: Test of Hypotheses

Democratic Process does not affect Good Governance in Jalingo Local Government Area (H ₀₁)	201	.092	2.195	.030	Rejected
The reality of democratic process (transparency and accountability) has not helped in achieving Good Governance in Jalingo Local Government Area (H ₀₂)	.128	.064	1.995	.048	Rejected
Democratic Process does not have implication on Good Governance in Jalingo Local Government Area (H ₀₃)	-.282	.079	-3.585	.000	Rejected
		Unstandardized	T	Sig.	
		Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error		

Decision

Dependent Variable: Good Governance

Source: Author Computation (2024)

Summary of findings

The study hypothetically revealed that democratic process affects good governance in Jalingo Local Government Area. The second hypothesis revealed that the reality of democratic process such as transparency and accountability, regular election, involvement of citizens and civil society organization in

decision-making will help in achieving good governance in Jalingo Local Government Area. The third hypothesis revealed that democratic process has implication on good governance in Jalingo Local Government Area. Overall, these findings are consistent with that of scholars like Audi et al (2021); Ntuk (2017); Shafiu et al (2023); Okoroafor (2010). Specifically, Audi et al (2021), in their study revealed that democracy has enhanced good governance and development for the people in Keffi Local Government. They asserted that Karu Local Government council to some extent has provided the people of Karu Local Government Area with social amenities like roads, pipe born water, functional hospital, schools and others essential service for the citizens. Shafiu et al (2023) revealed in their study the current reality of democracy in Nigeria by asserting that the present state of democracy, good governance and development in Nigeria gives cause for concern, as it tends towards the direction of disempowerment. They outlined some challenges and critically examined them leading to the basic question of whether if Nigeria is really making steps to democracy, good governance and development. While democracy, good governance and development have been on course, it has not taken a firm root, because it has so far been pursued and predicated on western institutions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the impact of democratic processes on good governance in Jalingo LGA is significant. While there are challenges to be addressed, the implementation of democratic processes can promote good governance and ensure that the rights of all individuals are protected. Therefore, it is essential for the local government, civil society organizations, and citizens to work together to promote democratic processes and achieve good governance in Jalingo LGA.

Recommendations

In line with the objectives of the study, the following recommendations are proffered:

- i. The study recommends that in order to enhance the democratic processes that influence good governance in Jalingo LGA, there is a need to strengthen electoral transparency and promote active citizen engagement. Local authorities, in collaboration with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), civil society organizations, and traditional institutions, should intensify civic education programs that inform residents about their electoral rights and responsibilities. This will ensure informed participation, reduce voter apathy, and reinforce democratic legitimacy at the grassroots level.
- ii. It was also recommended that in order to actualize the democratic process in achieving good governance, Jalingo LGA must institutionalize effective accountability and feedback mechanisms. Establishing platforms such as public hearings, community development forums, and participatory budgeting sessions will enable residents to assess the performance of elected officials. This participatory governance approach will promote transparency, reduce corruption, and foster responsiveness from local authorities, thereby making democracy more functional and impactful.
- iii. The study equally recommends that the democratic process must be strategically linked to measurable socioeconomic outcomes to enhance its implication on governance in Jalingo LGA. Policymakers should adopt a performance-based governance model where elected officials are evaluated based on service delivery in areas like education, healthcare, and infrastructure. This model, driven by democratic accountability, will ensure that governance is not only representative but also result-oriented, thereby fulfilling the social contract between leaders and citizens.

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