

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master in Political Science (MSc)
Specialization: Comparative Politics

How dangerous can violence be for elections?

An analysis of the effect of violence on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso

Marlous van Herten

s1018832

Supervisor: Dr. E. Escalante-Block

Nijmegen School of Management

Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

24 June 2021

Words 21643



Abstract

This thesis researches the effect that violence has on electoral integrity. From 2015 onwards, the Sahel region in Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced an increase in terrorist attacks from various jihadist groups. Theories disagree on the impact that violence has on electoral integrity of elections. Some argue that post-conflict elections cause peace and democratization. On the contrary, others argue that violence has a negative effect on electoral participation and the legitimacy of the regime. This thesis researches the effect that the increased terrorist attacks had on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso as a single case study. This Sub-Saharan country is selected because shortly before the terrorist groups entered the region, Burkina Faso faced many protests which led to a failed coup and eventually a regime change in 2015. These post-conflict elections were regarded with optimism, nonetheless these positive sentiments were short-lived since a couple months later the first terrorist attacks became a fact. Existing theories are yet unclear about the impact that violence may have on the electoral integrity in post-regime change Sub-Saharan countries that face the threat of terrorism. This thesis uses both a simple and a multiple linear regression to statistically analyze the impact of violence on the electoral integrity. The main findings are that violence was not the main cause for the decreased electoral integrity. Instead, media bias and voting irregularities led to a decrease in the 'freeness and fairness' of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso.

Key words: Electoral integrity, elections, violence, terrorism, Sub-Saharan Africa

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AI	<i>Ansaroul Islam</i>	41
AQ	<i>Al-Qaida</i>	2
CDP	<i>Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès</i>	3
EMB	Election Management Body.....	15
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Greater Sahara.....	2
ISGS	Islamic State in the Greater Sahara.....	41
JNIM	<i>Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimim</i>	41
MPP	<i>Movement du Peuple pour le Progrès</i>	4
UPC	Union for Progress and Change.....	40
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems.....	32

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

“This is a major test of the nation’s young democracy in the face of rising attacks, and the violence and intimidation show how limited the authorities’ control and legitimacy really are” (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 23).

This statement was made by election observers, referring to the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso. Five years before these elections, the country experienced a regime change, which was supposed to mark the start of a period of peace, prosperity, and democratic development. Only shortly after the new President, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was inaugurated in 2015, multiple terrorist groups entered the country from the north and attacked the capital. Since 2015 the country has experienced a constant fear of the terrorist threats and attacks, which caused many people to flee their home. The 2020 presidential elections were of high importance for a ‘peaceful’ future of Burkina Faso. Nonetheless, it was estimated that the chaos led to already one fifth of the population not being able to cast their ballot as a result of fear for terrorist attacks (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 22).

This first introductory section will explain the main research problem, which is based on the effect of violence on the electoral integrity. The next sections in this introductory chapter discuss the method that is used in the analyses, the scientific and societal relevance, and the larger outline of this dissertation.

The past couple years, Burkina Faso and the larger Sahel region have been under the attack of various jihadist groups. The violence increased just when Burkina Faso expected the start of a more peaceful era. In 2015 the former president Blaise Compaoré was forced to resign after 27 years in power. The incumbent President Kaboré took his place and promised the country democratic reforms, improved education and healthcare and to decrease youth unemployment (BBC, 2020, November 30). However, his well-intentioned reforms became second on the priority list when only a month after the

regime change terrorist groups attacked the capital, Ouagadougou. The attacks persisted which made many Burkinabé flee their homes and disrupted the new-found peace in the country. Where the elections in 2015 were the first elections since more than a decade to be regarded with relief, the 2020 elections were already regarded with fear. This research is therefore guided by the following research question *What is the impact of increased violence on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso when compared to the 2015 presidential elections? Analyzed through the democratic lens.*

The increased violence in this question refers to the increase in terrorist threats and attacks that started in 2015, shortly after the regime change occurred. Both the years of 2015 and 2020 are analyzed, by which the development of the electoral integrity over these five years is researched.

1.2 Research problem

This section provides a short summary of the main research problem in this thesis. An elaboration of the theoretical framework and the debate is discussed in chapter two.

Africa is the continent that has the most hybrid regimes, compared to other continents (Lynch & Crawford, 2011, p.281). The continent, in particular Sub-Saharan Africa, is also among the most underdeveloped regions in the world, which makes it also very susceptible for corruption. Even though international organizations are pushing for democratic reforms in Africa, so far this has resulted almost only in hybrid regimes. One of the other factors that influences the instability in Africa is (the threat of) violence and terrorism. Lyons (2004) has claimed that elections that are held after a conflict are ‘post-conflict’ elections, which often lead to an increase in both peace and democracy. These elections are therefore regarded as peace agreements and the start of a democratization process.

One of the areas where sub-Saharan Africa is currently experiencing violence is in the Sahel region, which covers the area between the Sahara and the savanna and includes (parts of) Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Sudan (Barkindo, 2020). Many terrorist groups related to Al-Qaida (AQ) and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) are active in the Sahel region. Shenga and Pereira (2019) have looked at the effect of violence on the participation in elections. It is not

yet clear what the effect of is this form of violence and terrorism is on the electoral integrity in the sub-Saharan, hybrid regimes. It would therefore be interesting to research the effect of violence on electoral integrity, since electoral integrity is regarded of high importance in hybrid regimes.

One of the countries that experienced an immense increase in violence and terrorism during the last decade is Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso, meaning the ‘land of honest men’ (BCC, 2020, November 30), is a landlocked country located in Sub-Saharan Africa on the north of Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, and Benin and on the south of Mali and Niger. The country is considered poor even for African standards and victim to many droughts because the Sahel desert covers part of the country (Barkindo, 2020). The major languages spoken are French and various indigenous languages, and the major religions are indigenous beliefs, Islam, and Christianity (BBC, 2020, November 30).

Burkina Faso had been part of the French colonial empire until the second half of the 20th Century. The country gained its independence in 1960 and changed its name from ‘Burkina Faso’ to ‘Republic of Upper Volta’ (Adibe, 2015, p.75) Even though the country has been independent since, it has not been entirely peaceful. Between 1960’s and 1984 the country experienced multiple coup d’états (Adibe, 2015). In 1983 Thomas Sankara seized power and aimed to introduce major reforms. Sankara was, and still is, therefore seen as ‘Africa’s Che Guevara’ (BBC, 2020) by many Burkinabé and African people in general. He was killed in another coup led by Compaoré from the political party ‘*Congrès pour la Démocratie et le Progrès*’ (CDP). Compaoré took official power in 1987 and introduced limited democratic reforms. He remained in power a long time, and only resigned from his office in 2014 because he was forced to do so by public pressure. Bratton and van der Walle (1997) classified the democratization process of Burkina Faso in 1994 as a ‘flawed transition’, which means that the incumbents had lost control during protests, which caused the reform of holding competitive elections. Nonetheless the power of the opposition was too weak, thus the incumbents were able to regain control. The democratization reforms that were occurring in African countries in the 1990’s often included term limits for presidents to prevent them gaining too much power (Adibe, 2015, p.84). Nonetheless these term limits were not always put into practice. Compaoré, who by 2014 had been in power for more than 27 years, tried to

amend the Constitution so that he could continue to stay in power. This attempt led to many large protests by the public, which shows that the Burkinabé are willing to do go out on the streets and ‘fight’ for achieving a liberal democracy (Adibe, 2015, p.81). He could not fight the protests anymore and had to step down because of popular pressure and the loss of his military support. The military, the US and the African Union were on the side of the Burkinabé (BBC, 2020, November 23), opposing Compaoré. The main reason of the military turning against him was the bad economic situation and political demands that were not met. After Compaoré stepped down, an interim government took place, which was almost overthrown by a military coup led by General Gilbert Diendere (Adibe, 2015, p.77). This shows that even though people are fighting for what they believe in, a democratic recession is always nearby.

After the resignation of Compaoré and the failed coup led by Diendere, a transitional government took over for a while. This was shortly followed by Kaboré winning the elections in 2015 with his party from the ‘*Movement du Peuple pour le Progrès*’ (MPP). The presidential elections that were held in 2015 were regarded with relieve and happiness, because it was the first election after 27 years of the Compaoré regime. Nonetheless, the first five terms of President Kaboré were not characterized by democratic reforms, as he intended, instead he was occupied with combatting terrorism. A couple months after Kaboré was officially installed as president, terrorist groups from the Sahel region, entered the country and attacked the capital in order to gain power. In 2020 alone more than 2000 people were killed because of the conflict in the Sahel region (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 23). Jihadist terrorism is a large issue in the Sahel area, which makes it one of the “world’s fastest growing humanitarian crises” (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 22). Most of the attacks by the jihadists are aimed Christian churches or organizations because their goal is to spread and implement a strict and extreme version of the Islamic belief. By attacking churches and cities, the terrorist groups attempt to seize power.

The recent regime change in 2015 in combination with the increased terrorism makes Burkina Faso an interesting country for a single case study in this research.

When applying this case of Burkina Faso to the theories of Lyons (2004) and Shenga and Pereira (2019), it is found that these theories contradict each other. According to Lyons (2004) the 2015 election could be regarded as a post-conflict

election because of the failed coup and the regime change in 2014 and 2015. According to the theory, the following years would be marked by an increase in peace and democracy. The 2020 elections would then, according to Lyons (2004), show this increase in peace and prosperity. Nonetheless the five intermediate years between the elections were characterized by an increase in violence from outside the country. Therefore, Lyons (2004) his theory might not hold in this case. On the contrary, Shenga and Pereira (2019), found that violence negatively affects the electoral participation, which would lead to a different outcome. Namely, Martínez i Coma and Trinh (2017) argue that violence has an extremely large impact on voter turnout. Specifically, in Sub-Saharan Africa, “citizens fearing victimization during election campaigns are significantly less likely to vote” (Martínez i Coma and Trinh, 2017, p.58). Violence thus has a negative impact on participation, which might also impact the electoral integrity.

The failed coup, regime change in 2014 and 2015 and the increased terrorist attacks from 2015 onwards create a research puzzle for the contradicting theories of Lyons (2004) and Sheng and Pereira (2019). In order to shed light on this debate, this research is guided by the main question of *What is the impact of increased violence on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso when compared to the 2015 presidential elections?* The next section shortly provides the methods that are used to conduct this research.

1.3 Method

This research question is answered using a statistical analysis. The data used to analyse the effect of violence on electoral integrity and is derived from the V-Dem dataset (Coppedge et al., 2021b). This data originates from the V-Dem institute, based at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. The analysis itself consists of two parts. The first part is a simple linear regression analysis in which the linear relationship between the independent variable, violence, on the dependent variable, electoral integrity is analysed. The second part of the analysis consist of a multiple linear regression analysis, in which, as addition to the independent variable of violence, four other independent variables are added as control variables. The two types of regression analyses are

necessary because the usage of two indicators for measuring electoral integrity is argued to be preferable over the use of a single indicator (van Ham, 2015, p.270).

1.4. Scientific and societal relevance

Electoral integrity by itself is a concept that is widely researched. Often the research is focused on elections that are held in Western countries, based on consolidated democracies. Nonetheless there are also many studies to be found on electoral integrity of elections held in non-Western countries. However, Bogaards and Elisher (2015, p.6) argue that there is a very limited amount of research on hybrid regimes in Africa. Therefore, this thesis obtains scientific relevance in several ways. First, this thesis adds to the research on electoral integrity of hybrid regimes in sub-Saharan Africa with this case study on Burkina Faso. Second, and most importantly, by including the research of the impact of violence on electoral integrity this thesis could be ground-breaking in theories on violence and electoral integrity in hybrid regimes located in sub-Saharan Africa. One of the largest current challenges to the African democratization process is the threat of violence and terrorism (Barkindo, 2020). Since the 1990s, more than a quarter of all the elections held in Africa experienced violence (Shenga and Pereira, 2019, p.2). Lyons (2004) found that post-conflict elections have a positive impact on both peace and democratization, nonetheless it is yet unclear what happens if another type of conflict follows the post-conflict elections.

In addition, research as shown that electoral violence has a negative impact on the democratic consolidation and on the legitimacy of the government (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.789). On the contrary, Shenga and Pereira (2019) have argued that violence has a negative effect on participation in elections, based on security reasons. Other academics analyzed the relation between violence and elections the other way around, claiming that the regime and election type influences level of threats and violence (Abbink and Hesselting, 2002; Höglund et al., 2009; Horowitz et al., 2005; Peterson, 2017). Nonetheless, the effect of violence as a result of terrorist attacks, on the electoral integrity of the 2015 and 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso regimes has not been researched in depth yet by using a statistical analysis.

Besides the scientific relevance, this thesis is also of societal relevance. Electoral integrity is a crucial element in a consolidated democracy (Haerpfer, 2009, p.314). Knowing which aspects of electoral integrity are influencing the increase or decrease of the level of democracy, enables more detailed targeting on how to improve the electoral integrity, hence it becomes clear on how to best improve the standard of living of the Burkinabé. Combatting the terrorist attacks, together with more detailed knowledge on how to improve the electoral integrity, both help improve the low standard of living.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

The remainder of this thesis is divided into four main chapters. Chapter two provides the main theoretical debate and is split into six sections. This chapter discusses the theoretical debate on the democratization and the role of elections therein, followed by the main theory on the concept of electoral integrity and its relation to violence. From the fifth section onwards, this chapter is narrowed down to theory concerning democratization and elections in Africa. The third chapter is divided into four sections and discusses the data used in this thesis, which methods are used in conducting the analysis and the operationalization of the main variables. This is followed by an elaboration on the case study and on the type of regression analysis used to analyze the data. The fourth chapter is the largest chapter in this thesis, which includes the main results and findings and is divided into seven sections. The first half of the fourth chapter provides some contextual information on the contemporary situation in Burkina Faso, which is followed by the statistical analysis and the results and discussion of the findings. The fifth and final chapter of this thesis contains the conclusion and reflection. This chapter provides a summary of the theoretical debate and of the main findings. Furthermore, it refers to the expectation and thereby describes consequences for existing research. Finally, it reflects on the complications and limitations of this thesis and provides suggestions for further research.

1.6 Conclusion

This introductory chapter introduced the main topic of this dissertation; the increased violence in Burkina Faso in the relation to the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential

elections. Furthermore, this chapter stated the research puzzle that on the one hand conflict is followed by post-conflict elections which cause peace and democratization. But on the other hand, research that proves that violence has a negative effect on voter turnout in elections, which also harms the electoral integrity. This research problem results in the following main research question guiding this dissertation: *What is the impact of increased violence of on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso when compared to the 2015 presidential elections.* Next, the method used to conduct this research, a statistical regression analysis, was shortly discussed. Furthermore, the scientific and societal relevance of this research were stated, followed by the outline of this dissertation. The next chapter elaborates on the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the main relevant literature and theories regarding democratization, elections, electoral integrity, and violence. This puts the research into a broader theoretical framework and enables forming a well-considered expectation regarding the effect that violence has on electoral integrity. This chapter consists of five sections; first the larger debate on democratization theories is discussed, followed by a more detailed description on the role of elections within democratization. The next section includes a discussion on the concept of electoral integrity, which discusses to what extent elections are held in a free, fair, and democratic manner. The last part of this chapter discusses the democratization and elections in Africa, also including the role of violence in African elections. The goal of this chapter is to explore the broader debate of democratization and theories of electoral integrity in order to answer the following main research question.

2.2 Debate on democratization

The goal of this chapter is to conceptualize ‘democratization’, and to discuss the main theories in regard to democratization, which is important in understanding the relevance of the concept of electoral integrity. As will be described in section 2.4, the concept of electoral integrity can be used and theorized from different angles (Norris, 2013). In this thesis the democratic angle is used, which requires a broader theoretical framework of the concept of ‘democratization’ and the role of elections therein. Understanding the different perceptions of democratization and the concept of electoral integrity is crucial for conducting research on the development of the electoral integrity in Burkina Faso. Norris, (2013) claims that elections can be analyzed through a diverse type of lenses, which are further clarified later in this chapter.

The nature or start of ‘democratization’ as a concept is in a non-democratic regime. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the world had predominantly only experienced monarchies, tsarist regimes and other autocratic regime types. The democratization process did not start at a specific point in time. Instead, it was a result of decentralizing power in Western monarchies, such as Prussia, the Netherlands and

England, creating a rule of law and various institutions (Rose, 2009, p.18). One of the final steps in the democratization process in the nineteenth century was the election of representatives, which could check and control the government (Rose, 2009, p.18). This shows that elections have been a crucial element in democracies from the start. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that this phenomenon developed in Western Europe, using Western norms and values, which may lead to a potential Western bias (Yilmaz, 2009). Since by now democracy has spread around the world, other cultures have adapted to it. Therefore Rose (2009, p.21) argues that it is an “oversimplification to divide regimes into those that are democratic and those that are not”.

There is a debate on the development of current democratization processes. As within every debate, there is a pessimistic and an optimistic side. The pessimistic side argues that countries which initially started the democratic transition in the 1990’s had already completed the democratization process but are now moving in the other direction, experiencing a democratic backsliding (Bermeo, 2016; Lührmann and Lindberg, 2019). Most democratic backsliding occurs as a result of the incumbent or through a coup, but not from popular will. On the contrary, the optimists believe that democratic recession is a myth, created by naïve judgements (Levitsky and Way, 2002, 2015). They argue that the scholars who claim that there is a democratic recession, in this thesis referred to as the pessimists, regard the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and an opening for democratization as identical. Nonetheless what they regard as the ‘autocratic opening’ was often just a trick by the dictator to prevent short term crisis (Levitsky and Way, 2015). Hence, the breakdown of an autocratic regime does not always lead to an opening for democratization. In addition, the optimists argue that the pessimists viewed the democratization process after the Cold War with ‘rose colored glasses’. The reason for this was that even countries, which did not have favorable conditions democratized (Levitsky and Way, 2015). However, these democracies were not all consolidated. Levitsky and Way (2015) claim that the pessimist judgement is based on two false assumptions: First, authoritarian breakdown and democratization were regarded as a similar phenomenon, second, autocratic breakdown has often not brought democratization.

Besides the optimists and pessimists, there is also a middle ground, which is predominantly occupied by Lehoucq (2005) and Carothers (2002). Lehoucq (2005)

does not believe that the states that started the democratization process but did not completed the consolidation, will return to an authoritarian government. However, Lehoucq (2015) does argue that these are still weak regimes because they are not able to provide solutions to joblessness, public insecurity and widespread poverty. In other words, the consolidation is of low quality. Carothers (2002) argues that the reality is not that positive, because of the 100 countries that were considered as transitional, only 20 resulted into successful democracies (Carothers 2002). The rest have entered a grey zone. Countries in the grey zone are also called ‘hybrid regimes’ or ‘competitive authoritarian regimes’, many of which developed during the post-cold war era. Hybrid regimes can be defined as “electoral autocracies,” with the façade of party competition disguising major violations of human rights (Levitsky and Way 2015; Schedler 2013; Simpser 2013). Hybrid regimes are neither an autocracy, nor a democracy. Instead, they occupy a space ‘somewhere in between’. There are many different forms of hybrid regimes, but in general all these regimes do hold elections, but they are often rigged, corrupt or characterized by fraud. In these regimes the electoral integrity is often harder to analyze. This is because these regimes are often characterized by biased media coverage, no transparency and often subject to fraud. Furthermore, the legislature often has weak power compared to the executive, and the judiciary is often bribed or extorted (Levitsky and Way, 2002, p.53) Finally, the media plays an important role in hybrid regimes. It is regarded as the central arena for contestation. In hybrid regimes free media exists, but they are often criticized, and journalists are often threatened and suppressed if the government does not like what they write (Veltmer & Rawnsley, 2009).

Thus, there is a debate on whether the world finds itself in a democratic recession or not, which influences the importance of the level of electoral integrity. However, there is one aspect that most scholars (Carothers, 2002; Lehoucq, 2008; Levitsky and Way; 2015; Lührmann and Lindberg, 2019) agree on, namely that it has become harder to analyze ‘how democratic a country is’ that started the democratization process at the end of the 20th century, compared to countries who democratized earlier. Autocrat rulers often make more use of clandestine practices, which makes it harder to pinpoint where it is going wrong. Sometimes the democratic erosion even happens through a legal process, which makes it even harder to analyze

(Bermeo, 2016). Most importantly, the fact that almost any country now holds elections, means that elections by themselves cannot be used as dichotomous factor for classifying a country as democratic. According to Lührmann and Lindberg (2019), the countries that started the democratization process at the end of the 20th century have a ‘legal façade’ (p.1104). Bratton (2009) illustrates this by describing the democratization process of sub-Saharan regimes. He argues that on average the regimes in sub-Saharan Africa go through the democratization process at a faster rate compared to Western Europe. The reason for this is that these regimes have much more room for improvement, but even more so because they can just apply the ‘tools’, for example elections, to their own country. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the elections are free and fair (Bratton, 2009, p.34).

Therefore, I argue that elections can be regarded as a vital part in democratic consolidation. It is even more important to analyze elections than before, because only when elections are analyzed in depth can we know whether they are held democratically or not, which also enables us to assess the level of democracy within a country. This leads us to the next section of this chapter, which assesses the role of elections in democracy.

2.3. Role of elections in democracy

The democratization process is often described in terms of waves or phases (Carothers, 2002, Lindberg et al. 2018; Lührmann and Lindberg, 2019). A phase starts with the liberalization period or the opening in an autocratic setting, secondly the democratic breakthrough, which includes holding (the first) elections, and the finally the consolidation phase. Carothers (2002) and Lührmann and Lindberg (2019) regard the last phase as crucial because it fosters the democratic principles in the country and reduces the threat of returning to an autocratic regime. The consolidation phase is often viewed with the prospective approach, which entails that a democracy can be regarded as consolidated after a certain amount of time. A well-known example of this is Huntington’s (1991) two-turnover test; a democracy is regarded as consolidated when it has experienced two executive elections peacefully. This test already shows the importance of elections to the consolidation of democracy. Therefore, the link between holding elections and the consolidation of democracy is deeply entrenched in the

literature (Elklit, 1999; Huntington, 1991; Svobik, 2014; Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014).

Historically, the first elections were held only among elites in the Western society, not including any type of competition (Birch, 2011; Karl and Schmitter, 1991). Later a country was considered to be democratic when it held elections (Norris, 2013, p.566). Nonetheless nowadays this argument does not hold anymore. Many scholars argue that holding of elections alone does not mean that a country is also democratic (Carothers, 2002, Elklit, 1991; Karl and Schmitter, 1991; Norris, Frank, and Martínez i Coma, 2014). This development can be described by the concept of ‘electoral fallacy’, created by Karl and Schmitter (1991). The concept entails that the “faith that merely holding elections will channel political action into peaceful contests among elites and accord public legitimacy to the winners”- no matter how they are conducted or what else constrains those who win them” (Karl and Schmitter, 1991, p.78; Norris, Frank, Martínez i Coma, 2016, p.792). Thus, elections can be held in transitional countries, or even in authoritarian regimes, but it is no longer a trustworthy measure for democratization. This highlights the relevance of certain indicators that enable measuring the democratic account of an election. Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma (2014) for example argue that elections are a vital organ within a liberal democracy, but they are of even more importance in hybrid regimes. This is because electoral malpractice occurs more often in hybrid regimes, since it is caused by lower turnout and distrust in the political regime (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.789). If people do not trust the polls or election results, the democratic legitimacy decreases. Norris (2013, p.573) also argues that autocrats currently face a new problem of “how to make elections appear credible and maintain their legitimacy without losing control of power”.

Electoral fallacy can also be viewed from a different angle. Various authors have argued that even though the holding of elections does not equate democracy, they are a necessary aspect of a democracy (Abbink and Hesselink, 2002; Elklit, 1999; Norris, Frank, and Martínez i Coma, 2014). Besides elections, other core political rights and civil liberties are also needed to complete the democratization process. This is in line with the claim that ‘democracy should be more than free and fair elections, but it cannot be less’ (Martínez i Coma and Trinh, 2017, p.54). Elklit (1999) adds another

important argument, namely that the better and higher the electoral integrity is, the higher the social costs will be for returning to an autocratic regime, which decreases the likelihood for a democratic recession. Due to the fact that the holding of elections is no longer a reliable measure for neither the development nor the legitimacy of a democracy, analyzing electoral integrity has become ever more important. (Elklit, 1999; Martínez i Coma and Trinh, 2017). The concept of electoral integrity is discussed in more depth in the next section.

2.4. Electoral Integrity

The role of elections within a democracy can thus be seen as a necessary but not sufficient aspect. In addition, it has become increasingly important to analyze its integrity. A broad definition of electoral integrity is ‘the extent that the elections genuinely represent the will of the people and whether the elections are conducted in a free and fair manner’ (Norris, 2013). The problem with monitoring and measuring electoral integrity is that ‘free and fair’ could be a subjective method of analysis, or it could be disputable what is regarded as free and fair (Birch, 2011; Elklit, 1999, p.33; Norris, 2013, p.564). Bishop and Hoeffler (2016, p.608) describe this debate by stating that some claim that an election cannot be regarded as free anymore if the runup to the election was unfair, while others only assess election day itself. Van Ham (2015) also discusses the debate between various scholars on how ‘electoral integrity is measured’. She claims these studies may differ on the following aspects: the concept name for electoral integrity, whether they regard this as positive or negative, a universal or particular study and whether they use a concept- or process-based approach (2015, p.717). The concept name of ‘free and fair’ elections is used by the following authors: Elklit (1999); Anglin (1998); Schmeets (2002), as described by van Ham (2015). Elklit (1999, p.36), elaborates on the difference between ‘free’ and ‘fair’ elections. She relates ‘free’ elections to a multiplicity of freedoms and opportunities, while the ‘fairness’ of an election is more related to transparency and correct counting. Likewise, this dissertation evaluates the notion of ‘free and fair’ elections and the impact that violence may have on it.

This thesis analyzes electoral integrity through the democratic lens (Norris, 2013). According to Norris (2013), Birch (2011) is the most prominent scholar of

electoral integrity within the democratic theory paradigm (2013, p.569). Birch's (2011) theory is based on three broad principles of electoral integrity: inclusiveness, policy-directed voting and allowing effective aggregation. This theory has frequently been used by other scholars in the field of electoral integrity and electoral malpractice (Jensen and Justesen, 2013; Daxecker, 2013). These scholars researched poverty and vote buying (Jensen and Justesen, 2013) and international election observation (Daxecker, 2013).

Birch's (2011) theory consists of three overarching principles, which also consist of multiple conditions. First, the principle of inclusiveness is focused on the freedom within an election, thus the inclusion of people, providing them the ability to vote and the availability of electoral options that are part of the elections. The conditions that belong to inclusiveness are the right to vote, the opportunity to vote and the right to stand for election. The right to vote is based on the definition of citizenship or residence, which often defines whether someone is eligible to vote or not (Birch, 2011, p.20). Thus, this condition deals with which group of a society can vote, all men and women or only a part of them, from which age onwards, and which ethnic groups hold suffrage. According to Birch (2011, p.20), in democracies the membership requirements are relatively loose. The second condition of the inclusiveness condition is having the opportunity to vote. This condition deals with the practical matters of making sure that there are sufficient polling places, the location of these polling places is known by all the members of the community and there is enough time for the citizens to cast their ballot (Birch, 2011, p.21). In addition, all the people eligible to vote must be able to understand what is written or depicted on the ballot (Birch, 2011, p.21). There also needs to be an organization that is accountable for this in a country, which is the Election Management Body (EMB). The third factor is the right to stand for election, which means that a country should limit the complexities of electoral entry. Birch (2011, p.21, 22) distinguishes between two types: first, formal requirements for entering elections (such as age and citizenship, and registration procedural requirements, which includes payments, signatures, and other details about organization) and the second principle, policy-directed voting (the criterion that people should have equal access to information and express their interests that are relevant, or policy-directed). The conditions that belong to the second overarching principle are

equal information and free expression of preferences. The condition of equal information focuses on the rights of freedom of information and expression, but also on the availability and reliability of the information (2011, p.22). By information is in this case meant information about the parties and candidates. The accuracy of media coverage plays a large role in this, as well as campaign advertising. According to Birch (2011), democracies must make sure that all candidates or parties receive a minimum number of resources to enable the spread of the correct information across all eligible voters (2011, p.23). The second condition relating to policy-directed voting is the free expression of preferences. This factor is focused on the fact that voters should, in a democracy, have freedom from coercion and intimidation. Birch (2011, p.24) argues that casting a ballot in secrecy is a good example of free expression of preferences, also because this limit the chances of people trading their vote or bribing of votes.

The last overarching principle is effective aggregation, which is focused on the equal weighing and contributing of votes (Birch, 2011). The conditions that belong to effective aggregation are accurate counting, neutral vote-to-seat conversion, impartiality, openness, and transparency. The first condition, accurate counting, is relatively straightforward, since it argues that in an election with high electoral integrity the votes are counted correctly. Both the counting and the reports must only include the real and true votes (Ibid.). The second condition is a neutral vote-to-seat conversion, which entails that the way the votes are converted into seats. If the electoral integrity is high, the vote-seat conversion “must reflect the needs of the choice rule underlying the model of democracy implicit in the institutional design of the policy” (Ibid.). This means that each vote should weigh equally, and electoral rules concerning appointment and district areas should be adhered to (Ibid.). The third condition is impartiality, meaning that the regulations and rules should be designed and implemented in a fair way, which should not steadily benefit the same group (Ibid.). The fourth condition, openness, is related to the free expression of preferences, since Birch argues that contestation and discussions should be able to be public, without hindrance and criticism from (non-)state actors (Ibid.). Finally, the fifth condition transparency should make sure that the elections are not only held in a free and fair manner but are also perceived as free and fair by the citizens (Ibid.). Transparency in all the stages and aspects of the election enhances the confidence of the citizens, hence the legitimacy.

As mentioned before, electoral integrity is specifically important to analyze in hybrid regimes (Lynch and Crawford, 2011, p.281). The most hybrid regimes of the world are located on the African continent. Hybrid regimes often experience a large diversity of electoral malpractices, from violent oppressions to unjust vote counting. It is argued that electoral malpractice can happen anywhere around the world, nonetheless it happens most and is also most dangerous in hybrid regimes (Norris, Frank, and Martínez i Coma, 2014). Africa is the continent that is home to the most hybrid regimes around the world, therefore the focus of this thesis is devoted to the democratization process and role of elections in Africa, more specifically the sub-Saharan state of Burkina Faso.

2.5 Democratization in Africa

Carothers (2002, p.5) argues that Africa has shown a “decline of one-party regimes” during the last quarter of the 20th century. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) compares the general literature on democratization on literature specific of the African democratization process and claims that comments range from optimism during the start of transition to pessimism about flawed transitions (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997, p.97). During the 1980’s many African regimes experienced a deep economic crisis, which led to a deficit in resources. This had two consequences, first the people lost faith in the government because it was not able to provide tolerable socioeconomic circumstances anymore. Second, the government also suffered from the crisis and was therefore not able to buy off its partners, hence it could not keep full grip of the population. This resulted in many protests by mostly students and young people in the beginning of the 1990’s. Initially they protested only for economic purposes, but soon the governmental legitimacy deficit took hold, which caused the protests to politicize. The government legitimacy deficit means that the government lost the support from its citizens. Legitimacy is often based on whether the government is able to provide order, prosperity and freedom (Welzel and Inglehart, 2009, p. 133). The responses by the government were diverse; in Burkina Faso, the army was used for repression, while in Côte d’Ivoire economic concessions were made. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) argued that concessions were often more politically effective than using coercion because at one point the rulers did not have the power and/or resources anymore to use

force and pay the military. Even though opposition parties were created, and protests were held, opposition leaders were not automatically striving for more democratization. Often, they were mostly driven by their own strive for power (Bratton and van der Walle, 1997; Levitsky and Way, 2015; Wahman, 2014).

Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma (2014) argue that democratization often flourishes in countries where the development level is also relatively high, or in postindustrial societies. This link between development and democratization is known as the ‘Lipset’ hypothesis. This hypothesis explains the complicated situation of many African countries; a combination of a late start of democratization and often underdeveloped living standards (Norris, Frank & Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.792). Nonetheless this hypothesis is often subject of debate, because some relatively poor, developing countries were able to consolidate their democracies. Development is also linked to a smooth democratization process because developed countries often have better institutions and resources to facilitate the democratization process (Norris, Frank, Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.792). Furthermore, it is argued that democratization in African states occur most in countries that liberalized as a result of political protests. However, often countries were liberalized but not (yet) democratized. Even though there is debate on the success of the African democratization, the African citizens are in general disappointed by the performance of democracy. This is often not even about ‘democracy’ in a sense of holding free and fair elections and having independent, democratic institutions itself, but about the reality of their living circumstances, poverty, inequality, insecurity, and violence (Berman, 2007; Bogaards and Elisher, 2015; Bratton and van der Walle, 1997; Lynch and Crawford, 2011, p.276; Svobik, 2014).

African autocratic rulers figured that they had to implement some reforms, even if democratization was not their intention, for the purpose of preventing more violent protests (Lynch and Crawford, 2011; Osaghae, 1999). Nonetheless as argued before, simply holding elections is not similar to starting a democratization process. This highlights the importance of studying electoral integrity. The next section narrows down on the African democratization process by describing the role of elections in Africa.

2.5.1 The role of elections in the African democratization process

The significance of election in the hybrid regimes is often emphasized in literature on African democratization. Wahman (2014) argues that there is no consensus among scholars on the role of elections in the African democratization process. The differences in level of electoral integrity among the sub-Saharan African states is quite large (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Elklit, 1999, p.34). It is also argued by multiple authors that African regimes are very good at introducing a democratic, electoral framework but that elections are characterized by blatant election-day fraud, which signals electoral fallacy (Bermeo, 2016, p.8; Schmitter and Karl, 1996; Osaghae, 1999, p.9). Elections in Africa are often chaotic and problematic, even in spite of involvement of observers monitors from multiple international organizations. The countries with the lowest electoral integrity countries with deep-rooted conflict (Wahman, 2014, p.795). Often, both incumbent and opposition parties accuse the other of manipulating election results, skewing the playing field and conducting other unfair practices (Osaghae, 1999; Wahman, 2014). Often the incumbent remains in power, but in some countries the opposition has gained power at some point, such as Ghana and Kenya. The main reason for electoral uncertainty is, according to Wahman (2014) the lack party institutionalization. When parties are well institutionalized the behavior of the political actors is more predictable. This is based on four elements; the party competition pattern is regular, there are stable roots of the parties in society, political actors regard the electoral system as legitimate and finally the interest of ambitious leaders are superior to party organizations (2014, p.225). However, many autocratic rulers survived the protests and critique of the opposition and implemented only a few democratic reforms. They were able to do so because the conditions were unfavorable for consolidation of neither democratic nor autocratic regimes, which created many hybrid regimes (Levitsky and Way, 2002). It is therefore also unlikely that these regimes will return to authoritarianism, which according to Osaghae (1999) provides hope for more democratic consolidation in the future. Nonetheless, the chances of democratic consolidation are unsure because various African countries face the threat of terrorism, violence, and war.

Norris (2013) argues that “citizens living in deeply rooted societies with recent experience of deep-rooted conflict can be expected to display minimal trust and

confidence in state authorities, legal institutions and legal practices. The potential dangers of electoral violations are also expected to be heightened by winner-take-all contests” (p.567). Conflict and the solving thereof merged with democratization at the end of the 20th century. Lyons (2004, p.36) argues that that during the 1990’s democratization and negotiated settlements led to the implementation of peace agreements in many post-conflict regimes, for example in Angola in 1992 and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996. These developments led to elections through which democratic political structures were built, which were of high importance, not only for the democratization process, but also in conflict resolution (Lyons, 2004, p.37). This is referred to as the ‘democratic reconstruction model’, which claims that elections held in post-conflict nations were predominantly used to implement peace agreement. However, there is another side to this argument, Lyons (2004) argues that elections in post-conflict areas were also held to serve as an end goal for the international community to reach the end of ‘peace implementation’. He argues that “post-conflict elections can serve the dual agendas of war termination and democratization if processes to ‘demilitarize politics are put in place during the interim period between the initial ceasefire and the final voting (2004, p.38). ‘Post-conflict elections’ are elections held at the end or after a conflict, with the intention of both peace keeping and of implementing democratic reforms, of which holding the election is already a democratic reform.

For these elections to be fully meaningful however, they must give voters a significant choice of candidates. Often civilians in sub-Saharan Africa thought they only had the choice between war or peace. This is why Lyons (2004, p. 57) argues that “Post-conflict elections can serve as a mechanism to demilitarize politics and transform the institutions of war that characterized the period of civil war into new political and social structures capable of sustaining peace and beginning democratization”. However, this type of start of a democratization process, through post-conflict elections, is only one example. Bratton and van de Walle (1997) argue that it is not fair to generalize the democratic transitions in Africa, since different countries took very different democratization paths. In addition, many countries had a different starting point of democratization and in some countries a transition started where no democracy was ever known before, in some it was about strengthening or re-democratizing where

it democracy had been known before and in other countries it was an extension of already existing democracy (Osaghae, 1999). As previously stated, this thesis discusses the electoral integrity of only one country, Burkina Faso, therefore in a detailed context of Burkina Faso is provided later in this thesis in Chapter 4. The last decade, parts of Sub-Saharan Africa have experienced an increased amount of violence, which has impact on the free and fairness of elections. Thus, the next section elaborates on the role of violence in elections and the democratization process in general.

2.5.2. The role of violence in democratization and elections

Most of the sub-Saharan countries still find themselves in a democratization process, but unfortunately these are often characterized by violence and terrorism (Lynch and Crawford, 2011). Adibe (2015, p.86) even argues that combatting terrorism currently poses one of the biggest threats to African democracies. Shenga and Pereira (2019, p.2) support this claim by stating that over the more than hundred elections that have been held in Africa since the 1990's, at least a 25% has experienced violence. Some measures that have been taken in order to combat terrorism also limits the freedom of the people, for example curfews and roadblocks (Adibe, 2015, p.87). However, these measures, in addition to the threat itself, also withhold people from casting their ballot (Shenga and Pereira, 2019, p.13). Furthermore, people that become trained in fighting terrorism could switch sides and use this knowledge to turn against the state, as occurred with the Burkina Faso general Diendere (Adibe, 2015, p.87). It is proved that an increase in electoral violence has a negative effect on both the democratic consolidation and on the legitimacy of the government (Shenga and Pereira, 2019). Other authors studied the link between the electoral process and violence the other way around, stating that the type of electoral process has an influence on whether or not violent incidents take place (Abbink and Hesselting, 2002; Höglund et al., 2009; Horowitz et al., 2005; Linebarger and Salehyan, 2020; Mochtak, 2019; Peterson, 2017). These statements, in addition to the liberalization taking place in the 20th century makes the African transition process a complicated one. Bratton and van der Walle (1997) argue that the end of a transition is marked by installing a new regime through the founding elections, based on competitive elections in a free and fair manner with the results being accepted by all participants. Nonetheless states that have to protect themselves against terrorism might

not always be able to hold elections. Indeed, violence has been found to have a negative impact on participation (Shenga and Pereira, 2019). Studies have shown that the level of electoral integrity affects the willingness for people to participate, in which a high electoral integrity is likely to result in a higher turnout (Shenga and Pereira, 2019, p.4).

Based on this research, and predominantly on the influence that violence has on participation in elections (Shenga and Pereira, 2019), a decline in the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso is expected, as a result of the increased threat of violence and terrorism during the last five years. This is expected to be observed despite the new leader (Kaboré) who is willing to push for democratic reforms, because of the large increase of (the threat of) violence and terrorism during the last five years. This expectation also opposes the post-conflict theory by Lyons (2004). This theory would argue that the elections following the failed coup and regime change in 2014 and 2015 would have led to both peace and democratization. Instead, the expectation is in line with the theory from Shenga and Pereira (2019), who claim that violence negatively affects the participation in elections. The next section provides some concluding remarks on this theoretical chapter.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter started with the broader context of the democratization-theory paradigm, because the electoral integrity in this thesis researched through a democratization perspective. The debate in the main theories described the general pathways to a consolidated democracy, in which elections play a crucial role. The sections on elections and electoral integrity discussed the fact that elections are a necessary condition for a democracy but not a sufficient one. However, an election by itself does not tell anything about the level of democracy in a country anymore, since nowadays any regime type holds elections. Measuring the electoral integrity provides scholars with a more accurate and correct information on how ‘democratic’ a country is, and/or how corrupt the elite are. Next, the section of democratization and elections in Africa discussed the fragility of the democracies in sub-Saharan Africa, including the instability of the regime types, characterized by clandestine practices, fraud, and corruption. The last section focused on the role of violence in Africa, which influences the level of ‘free and fair’ elections. Existing literature on the link between violence

and participation in elections led to the main expectation of this research: mainly that the increased violence in Burkina Faso has decreased the electoral integrity of the 2020 elections in comparison to the 2015 elections.

The next chapter provides the main method used in this thesis, including the data, measurement, and operationalization which enables conducting the actual analysis.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1. Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the method which will be used in this thesis. The first section discusses the data-gathering and the sources from which the data is retrieved from. The data used in this paper consists predominantly of statistical data. The statistical data is retrieved from a large dataset from V-Dem (Coppedge et al., 2021a) which includes 202 countries, covering the years from 1789 to 2020 and includes 483 indicators, all related to democracy and democratization (Coppedge et al., 2021a).

Existing literature on electoral integrity shows that the concept can be operationalized in multiple ways. The most prominent ones include statistical analysis and electoral forensics, natural or randomized experiments, cross-national and time-series data sets, historical analyses, and analysis of protests. Often, many techniques and methods are combined. For example, Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma (2014, p.790, 791) analyze electoral integrity based on 49 indicators in eleven categories to reflect the complete policy cycle. They created a rank of scores, standardized to 100 points and divided into three categories: high, moderate, and low level of electoral integrity (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.791). In their analysis they included 86 countries, in which 95 elections were measured. Nonetheless one of the main limitations of their grand research is that it lacks historical analysis, nonetheless a broader context of the development of electoral integrity cannot be analyzed. In their research they found the level of electoral integrity is correlated with the level of historic democratic capital and the level of economic development. Therefore, it is of important value to also conduct context-specific analysis as is the case in the thesis with Burkina Faso.

In section 3.3 the principles from the theoretical framework by Birch (2011) discussed in the previous chapter, are operationalized, and linked to the variables from the V-Dem dataset. First the six independent variables are discussed, followed by the operationalization of the dependent variable. Next is a description of the case study, Burkina Faso, and the multiple linear regression and measurement are discussed. The last section offers some concluding remarks on the method chapter. Using these data

and methods will provide the results, which will help answer the main research question of this thesis: *What is the impact of increased violence of on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso compared to the 2015 presidential elections?*

3.2. Data Gathering

The data necessary for conducting research on the electoral integrity of the 2015 and 2020 elections in Burkina Faso are derived predominantly from a statistical dataset. The conditions of ‘electoral integrity’ (Birch, 2011) are matched to the variables from the dataset to enable the measurement of electoral integrity. This data is derived from the V-Dem Dataset- Version 11.1 from Coppedge et al., (2021a). V-Dem is an independent research institute, based at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, as part of the Political Science Department (V-Dem, 2021.). The institute hosts many political science researchers and hosts conferences about a wide range of policy- and democracy-related topics. Furthermore, they produce various publications such as ‘Country Briefs’ and ‘Policy Briefs’ (Coppedge et al., 2021a)

The dataset includes 202 countries, covers the years of 1789-2020 and has 483 V-Dem variables. The codebook specifies on different variable types, based on who created the coding, variables retrieved from another source and on how they are calculated (Coppedge et al., 2021a). The election years of 2015 and 2020 for Burkina Faso, are included in this dataset. The ‘V-Dem Dataset-Version 11.1’ (Coppedge et al., 2021b) site enabled the downloading of the dataset. The site offers the opportunity to download the dataset in the formats of SPSS, STATA, CSV and R. SPSS has been selected to quantitatively analyse the dataset. More specifically, this thesis uses SPSS to conduct a simple linear and a multiple linear regression analysis, which will research the impact of violence in the development of the electoral integrity of the 2020 elections compared to the 2015 elections.

The V-Dem dataset can be considered valid if it measures “what they are supposed to measure” (van Ham, 2015, p.715). The dataset includes over two hundred countries, 483 variables, which are all coded by scientists and experts from all over the world. Hence the coding is done with both accuracy and includes a broad variety. The reliability is also of importance, which entails whether the data is subjective or objective

(van Ham, 2015, p.724). The V-Dem Data is created by more than 50 social scientists, which originate from six different continents¹. In addition, the research institution works with more than 3500 country experts and a global International Advisory Board. With these facts in mind, while also taking into account the many prominent scholars that use V-Dem data, it can be argued that the V-Dem data also has a high reliability.

3.3 Methods

In this section Birch's (2011) work is linked to the variables from the V-Dem Dataset. First the six independent variables (suffrage, violence, EMB capacity, media bias, voting irregularities and government intimidation) are operationalized, followed by the dependent variable (electoral integrity). This operationalization enables the measurement of electoral integrity. Next, the simple linear and multiple regression analysis are discussed, which are used to conduct the analysis. This is followed by the measurement.

3.3.1. Operationalization of the independent variables

In order to measure electoral integrity, it is best to “break up the concept of election integrity into multiple indicators, and measure each of these indicators separately”, according to van Ham (2015, p.720). Birch (2011, p.17) argues that there are three “principal conditions for democratic outcomes through electoral means: inclusiveness, policy-directed voting, and effective aggregation. Each of these conditions has corresponding factors. In this chapter these factors are linked to variables from the datasets, some of these factors are grouped with others and some are eliminated in this analysis, which enables the measurement of electoral integrity.

The first principle, inclusiveness, is based on “the right to elect and to be elected” (Birch, 2011, p.20) and consists of the following three conditions: the right to vote, the opportunity to vote and the right to stand for election. The first condition, the right to vote, is linked to the variable of percentage of the population with suffrage' (v2elsuffrage), which is an interval variable (Coppedge et al., 2021a, p.60). This variable measures the percentage of adult citizens that “has the legal right to vote

¹ More information on the V-Dem data is found on their website: <https://www.v-dem.net/en/>

in national elections” (2021a, p.60), which measures precisely which part of the population as the right to vote. The clarification of this variable in the codebook emphasizes that it measures the *de jure* right to vote, not the *de facto* right (2021a, p.60). I chose to use this variable because the practicalities of casting a vote adhere to the second factor, opportunity to vote. The opportunity to vote is measured by the variable of the EMB capacity (v2elemcap), an ordinal variable converted to interval by the model (2021a, p.63). This ordinal scale is positively formulated, meaning that a score of zero means little EMB capacity, while four means high EMB capacity. This variable measures to what extent the EMB have “sufficient staff and resources to administer a well-run national election?” (2021a, p.63). Since Birch (2011) argued that the EMB is accountable to ensure that citizens have sufficient opportunities to cast their ballot, the EMB variable, can be used to measure the opportunity to vote. The third factor, the right to stand for election is eliminated in this research does not focus on the ability to participate as a candidate. The regime change that took place in 2015 after 27 years already shows that there is a strong right to stand for candidate. In addition, the presidential elections welcomed various candidates who did not take part in the 2015 elections; therefore, this condition is accounted for (Election Guide, n.d.)

The second condition is policy-directed voting, which is focused on citizens being able to acquire the sufficient and correct information about the parties, party programmes and options they can choose from on election day. This condition consists of two factors, equal information, and the free expression of preferences (Birch, 2011, p.22), which are both separately linked to a variable. The factor of equal information is linked to the variable of ‘media bias’ (v2mebias) (Coppedge et al., 2021a, p.2020). This condition is linked to this variable as the media plays the largest role in providing information. Thus, it is important to know the amount of bias there is in media sources. This ordinal variable, that was converted to interval by the measurement model, measures whether there is “media bias against opposition parties or candidates?” (2021a, p.202). This variable is also ‘positively’ formulated, meaning that a score of zero means high media bias, while a score of four means little media bias. With media is meant both the printed and broadcasted media. The variable measures whether there is media bias against the opposition parties or candidates (Coppedge et al., 2021a, p.202). Voltmer and Rawnsley (2009, p.240) argue that the media is of particular

importance in new democracies, because the opposition and other, new parties are still creating their party organization and gain larger support. The mechanism through which this is done the easiest is through the media, because a large amount of people can be reached with only one message. In addition, free media and critical journalists are often criticized in hybrid regimes if they argue against the incumbent.

The fifth factor, free expression of preferences, is linked to the variable of 'election other electoral violence' (v2elpeace) (2021a, p.66). This variable also has an ordinal scale but is 'negatively' formulated. This means that a score of zero means a high violence score, while a score of four means little violence. This variable measures the extent to which the "campaign period, election day, and post-election process free from other types (*not* by the government, the ruling party, or their agents) of violence related to the conduct of the election and the campaigns?" (2021a, p.66). I have chosen to link this variable to the free expression of preferences variable because of the danger of other types of violence specific to the Burkinabé elections. Violence by the government is also relevant, nonetheless in the case of a country experiencing regular terrorist threats, the violence by groups other than the government is more relevant to analyse. The violence that is analysed with this variable is the external violence, so not the violence that might occur between politicians or from the opposition party, which I refer to as 'internal violence' This variable was originally ordinal, but also converted to nominal.

The third and last principle of electoral integrity is effective aggregation, which deals with the correct counting, weighing, and displaying of the casted votes (Birch, 2011, p.24). This condition exists of five factors; accurate counting; neutral vote-to-seat conversion; impartiality; openness and transparency. These factors are grouped and analysed by two different variables which measure the presence of 'intentional irregularities' in the election and if there was any repression or intimidation present in the elections. Since my aim is to analyse the electoral integrity through the democratic lens and focus on the importance of 'irregularities/ fraud; the following two variables from the V-Dem dataset are selected; 'election other voting irregularities' (V2elirreg) and 'election government intimidation' (V2elintim). These two variables cover the core meaning of this principle: the correct counting, weighing and displaying of the votes. The first variable 'election other voting irregularities' (v2elirreg) (2021a, p.65)

predominantly measures the amount of irregularities, and is linked to the conditions of impartiality and inaccurate counting of ballots. This ordinal variable is also negatively formulated, which means that a score of zero equates many irregularities, while a score of four means few irregularities. The variable measures if, and if so, how much, evidence of “other intentional irregularities by incumbent and/or opposition parties, and/or vote fraud?” there is (2021a, p.65). Other intentional irregularities include “use of double IDs, intentional lack of voting materials, ballot-stuffing, misreporting of votes, and false collation of votes” (2021a, p.65). This variable fits with this condition because these irregularities may hinder the accurate and effective aggregation of votes. Norris (2013, p.571) argues that these voting irregularities, or corrupt practices, have a negative impact on voter turnout, and thereby on the legitimacy of the government. The last variable is the variable of 'election government mandates' (v2elintim) (2021a, p.66). This variable, also ordinal but converted to interval by the measurement model, measures to what extent “opposition candidates/ parties/ campaign workers subjected to repression, intimidation, violence, or harassment by the government, the ruling party, or their agents?” (2021a, p.66). This variable is also negatively formulated, because a score of zero means high level of intimidation, while a score of four equates a low level of intimidation. If the opposition candidates or parties were not subject to any repression or intimidation, it is likely that open contestation and disagreement does not cause any problem. This variable is linked to the effective aggregation condition because it checks the level of openness and transparency. This variable cannot be compared to the other variable that measures violence, because here it is focused on ‘internal’ violence, or violence between the politicians. For clarification, the other variable is focused on external violence, outside the political paradigm.

To summarise, the three conditions; inclusiveness, policy-directed voting and effective aggregation hold originally ten factors, however in this research the ten factors are measured by six variables. These six variables make up the independent variables of the multiple linear regression, of which five of the variables function as a control variable for the effect of violence on electoral integrity.

3.3.2. Operationalization of the dependent variable

The dependent variable in this research is ‘electoral integrity’. Throughout this thesis ‘electoral integrity’ is also referred to as the holding of ‘free and fair’ elections. ‘Free and fair elections’ is used as a proxy variable for electoral integrity because these two concepts are often used interchangeably in existing research (van Ham, 2015, p.717) Furthermore, in research where only one indicator for electoral integrity is used, it is often ‘free and fair elections’ (van Ham, 2015). Thus, for the purpose of operationalization, this concept is linked to the variable of ‘election free and fair’ (2021a, p.69) from the V-Dem dataset. Therefore, the variables of suffrage, EMB capacity, media bias, violence, voting irregularities and government intimidation, are analysed in order to see whether any of them have an effect on free and fair elections and overall electoral integrity. The dependent variable, free and fair elections, analyses whether people considered “the pre-election period, election day, and the post-election process” (2021a, p.69) as free and fair. The variable focuses on how the election is perceived, not on how the election *is*. I think this is important to emphasize because the data in the dataset is retrieved from results from surveys. Therefore, the core of the data is the perception of the people that took part in the survey (V-Dem, 2021).

Below in table 1 an overview is presented of the overarching principles by Birch (2011) and the variables from the V-Dem dataset that they are linked to. The column on the left shows the three overarching principles, inclusiveness, policy-directed voting and effective aggregation, that when combined, measure electoral integrity (Birch, 2011). These overarching principles each have sub-conditions which are discussed in section 3.3.1. The next column, ‘V-Dem variables’ shows the independent variables from the V-Dem dataset that are linked to the principles from Birch (2011), and the dependent variable ‘free and fair elections. Table 1 shows six independent variables and one dependent variable. The third column presents the official variable name of the variables, and the final column shows the corresponding page number in the V-Dem Codebook (Coppedge et al., 2021a) per variable.

Table 1

Operationalization of the variables

Bircher principles	V-Dem Variables	Variable Name	Codebook page nr. *
<u>Independent variables</u>			
Inclusiveness	% Population with suffrage	V2elsuffrage	60
	EMB capacity	V2eembcap	63
Policy-directed voting	Media Bias	V2mebias	202
	Election other electoral violence	V2elpeace	66
Effective Aggregation	Election other voting irregularities	V2elirreg	65
	Election government intimidation	V2elintim	66
<u>Dependent Variable</u>			
	Election free and fair	V2elffair	69

*Coppedge et al.(2021a)

This section operationalized the independent variables and the dependent variable by discussing their definition and linking them to variables in the dataset. Table 1 presents an overview of the conditions linked to the variables. The next section provides information on the case selected for this research; the 2015 and 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso.

3.3.3 Case Study

As previously mentioned in the introductory section of this chapter, this thesis focusses on Burkina Faso as the main case study for analyzing electoral integrity and the influence of violence thereof. The case of Burkina Faso is an ideal case for researching the electoral integrity in sub-Saharan countries. These countries, in specific Burkina Faso, are in the process of democratic consolidation, however complications often disturb the process. The 2015 elections in Burkina Faso marked a regime change with the end of the ex-President Compaoré's rule for 27 years (IFES, 2020, p.3). Many Burkinabé hoped that this change would be the start of new democratic innovations (IFES, 2020, p.3). The winner of the 2015 elections was President Kaboré. Even though many people had high hopes for the coming years, the first term by Kaboré was marked by the need to fight jihadist terrorism coming from the North and East of the country. The next elections were held in November 2020. Lankoandé (2020, p.2) wrote in April 2020 that the upcoming elections were crucial because "the window of opportunity for the consolidation of democratic governance is slowly closing". Therefore, the country and its population got its hopes up with the regime change in 2015, but unfortunately then experienced terrorist attacks, which decreased the opportunity for democratic reforms (IFES, 2020). The 2020 elections are regarded as a "critical test for Burkina Faso's democracy. Thus, while the 2015 elections marked a milestone by deposing Compaoré, by which the Burkinabé got their hopes up for a better future, the 2020 elections were anything but peaceful and harmonious. Unfortunately, Burkina Faso is not the only country in sub-Saharan Africa facing internal complications on internal, electoral fraud, and external threats of terrorist attacks, therefore the Burkinabé case can be applied to similar countries, such as Burundi and Rwanda (Durotoye, 2016). These countries all do hold elections, but the power of the opposition is disputable.

The choice for analyzing only one country instead of conducting a comparative analysis between various countries is made because this enables a detailed analysis of the historical and political context of Burkina Faso. Carothers (2002) argues that democracy promoters should focus on key political patterns when aiming to intervene. In addition, Lindberg et al. (2018) claim that regime transitions, and thus the changing electoral integrity, are highly contextual, which makes an in-depth analysis of

fundamental importance. One of the disadvantages of conducting a large-scale analysis is the lack of historical analysis (Norris, Frank, Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.791). In a one-case analysis it is possible to conduct a historical analysis. In addition, even though the analysis of one case would enable understanding a larger class of similar cases, conducting a medium-N type of research would also have complications. Furthermore, the time and capacity available for this thesis would not allow a detailed analysis of multiple countries, therefore one-detailed case study is chosen. This one-case analysis adds to a larger class of newly democratizing countries located in sub-Saharan Africa that do hold elections but are not yet consolidated. Burundi is quite similar to the case of Burkina Faso. Its former president Piere Nkurunziza remained in office too long according to its constitution and accused of “running a police state which curtailed freedom of speech” (Durotoye, 2016, p.40). Since 2015, Burundi has likewise experienced an increase in terrorist attacks. In both Burundi and Burkina Faso, the former president, accused of being a dictator, was forced to resign (Durotoye, 2016). Rwanda experienced a similar situation; however, the current President Paul Kagame denied the request for his and he remained in power. The contrary is seen in the sub-Saharan countries of Ghana, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, Niger and Gambia which score relatively high on democratic values. This is the result of revolutions in which the dictators were ‘born again’ and reinvented their institutional system (Durotoye, 2016, p.42). These countries also enjoy a more consolidated form of democracy. Burkina Faso is thus an example of other sub-Saharan countries, like Burundi and Rwanda, that do not have a consolidated democracy yet, partly because of their relatively low electoral integrity.

3.3.4. Regression Analysis

The analysis is conducted on two time points, which strongly relates to the ‘two-turnover test’, see Huntington (1991). Thus, a country that has a high electoral integrity score in two consecutive years, could be regarded as a consolidated democracy. For Burkina Faso it is interesting to analyse the elections over these five years, because the elections in 2015 constituted a regime change, and the elections of 2020 were victim to many threats of terrorist attacks (IFES, 2020). The analysis of two consecutive elections

thus enables making a comparison and might provide more information on how consolidated certain factors of the electoral integrity are in Burkina Faso.

This section is divided into two subsections; first the simple and the multiple linear regression are shortly discussed, which is followed by the measurement.

3.3.4.1. Simple and multiple linear regression analysis

The regression analysis consists of two parts. The first part of the analysis consists of the simple linear regression analysis. This regression includes violence as the independent variable and electoral integrity as the dependent variable, by which is also referred to as ‘model 1’. By conducting this regression analysis, it becomes clear whether there is a linear relation between violence and electoral integrity, and how strong this relationship is. Hereby, the expectation that violence (partly) caused the change in electoral integrity between the years 2015 and 2020 is tested.

The second part of the regression analysis consists of the multiple linear regression analysis of all the independent variables (suffrage, EMB capacity, violence, government intimidation and voting irregularities) and the dependent variable electoral integrity. These variables are selected based on the operationalization of electoral integrity by Birch (2011). Norris (2013, p.569) refers to the framework of Birch (2011) as the most ambitious approach in defining electoral integrity in the light of liberal democratic principles. The multiple linear regression analysis is also referred to as ‘model 2’. The multiple linear regression analysis checks whether there is a linear relationship between each of the independent variables on the one hand and the dependent variable on the other hand, also for the years of 2015 and 2020. In the output of the multiple linear regression SPSS shows the effect of one independent variable on the dependent variable while holding the other independent variables constant. A problem that can occur in a multiple linear regression analysis is the problem of multicollinearity. The multicollinearity problem occurs when a combination of multiple independent variables explains or account for the same ‘part’ of variance occurring in the dependent variable (Field, 2018, p.401). This often occurs when the independent variables are highly correlated. This problem explains the need for conducting both a simple and a multiple linear regression analysis. This thesis is interested only in researching the effect of violence on electoral integrity, but in order

to be assured that this effect is accurate, the controlling variables need to be included. The multicollinearity problem might occur if part of the effect that violence has on electoral integrity appears to be the indirect effect of violence, on government intimidation, on electoral integrity. Thus, even though this thesis is solely interested in the effect of violence on electoral integrity, it is necessary to conduct the multiple linear regression analysis to check if the possible effect still holds while controlling for other variables.

3.3.4.2 Measurement

The full analysis consists of two parts, each part consisting of an analysis of 2015 and 2020. In the first part the effect of the six independent variables on electoral integrity is measured, whilst in the second part the effect of violence on electoral integrity is analysed more in depth, while controlling for the other independent variable. The variables are measured on an ordinal scale. Electoral monitoring research which includes multiple variables, as in this case, is often measured using an ordinal scale with four to five categories (van Ham, 2015, p.725). Most of the variables used in this research originally had an ordinal measurement scale but were converted to an interval scale by V-Dem. The independent variables from the dataset that have an ordinal scale also have a five-point scale, which is normal when compared to other measurements of electoral integrity. Even though a more detailed scale might improve the analysis, this would only be possible to do so if the data sources provide data that allow more detailed analysis. In the measurement of electoral integrity this is often not the case (van Ham, 2015, p.725). Therefore, the measurement by a five scale is justified (van Ham, 2015, p.725). In order to enable the measurement of the data, first various assumptions need to be tested in order to check if there is a linear relationship between the independent variable(s) and the dependent variable. This is followed by an analysis of the explained variance of the models, the regression coefficients, and the significance.

3.4 Conclusion

This third chapter discussed the data and methods of this research. The data used in this research is predominantly retrieved from a V-Dem dataset. Next, the independent variables and the dependent variable are operationalized. This chapter also elaborated

on the case study; the 2015 and 2020 elections of Burkina Faso and its relevance. Furthermore, the research is conducted using a simple and multiple linear regression analysis, which enables measuring the sole effect of violence on electoral integrity and the effect of violence on electoral integrity when other factors are held constant.

The following chapter contains the empirical results of the analysis. First an in-depth description of the country Burkina Faso is provided, which is necessary for understanding the context of this research. This is followed by the (statistical) analysis of the results, which will enable answering the main question of this thesis; what the effect of violence on the electoral integrity of the 2015 and 2020 elections in Burkina Faso is.

Chapter 4: Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter includes both the context of Burkina Faso and the empirical analysis in order to answer the main research question of this thesis, namely: *what is the impact of increased violence of on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso when compared to the 2015 presidential elections*'. The contextual part is divided into two sections; first the electoral context of the 2015 and 2020 elections is provided, followed by the role that violence played in the intermediate years. This information is crucial for understanding the context, and therefore for answering the research question. These sections are followed by the empirical analysis, which consists of two main sections: the statistical analysis and the results. The simple linear regression is discussed first, which includes violence as the only independent variable and electoral integrity as the dependent variable. Next, the multiple regression is analysed, which includes the following independent variables; violence, EMB capacity, voting irregularities, government intimidation and media bias. The simple linear regression analysis is used to analyse the impact that violence has on electoral integrity. This idea is borrowed from the research of Shenga and Pereira (2019), who analysed the impact of violence on participation. In this research, the dependent variable from Shenga and Pereira (2019), participation, is changed into electoral integrity, to check if this relation still holds if the concept of free and fair elections is used. However, since a vast amount of literature claims that electoral integrity is best analysed using multiple indicators because it is a broad concept (van Ham, 2015), the multiple linear regression analysis is also of high importance. This is because conducting the analysis with multiple predictors will show whether the relation between violence and electoral integrity will hold while controlling for other factors. The dependent variable remains the same, hence in the multiple linear regression analysis the dependent variable is also electoral integrity. First, the statistical analysis is conducted, which is followed by a descriptive analysis of the statistics that answers the main research question. The main answer to the research question is that there is some relation between violence and electoral integrity, however when controlling for the other predictors, the relation

between violence and electoral integrity does not hold. The final part of the analysis is the discussion, in which the results of the analysis are discussed and are placed in the broader theoretical framework. In addition, the contribution to the existing literature is discussed. This chapter ends with a concluding section that summarizes the context of Burkina Faso, the main statistical and substantive findings, and the key remarks of the discussion.

4.2. Elections

The nature of the political system in Burkina Faso is rather vague because the Constitution does not differentiate between a parliamentary or presidential regime (IFES, 2020). The executive power is shared between the president and the prime minister, but the system is not regarded as semi-presidential. The president appoints the prime minister but is only allowed to do so with approval of the parliament. The National Assembly consists of 127 members, of which 111 members are elected through provincial constituencies, and the remaining sixteen through a closed-list proportional representation system. Both the parliamentary and the presidential elections are held every five years. The presidential election is organized through a majority two-round system. If in the first round one of the candidates receives absolute majority votes he or she wins, if not a second round is held between the two candidates that obtained the most votes in the first round (IFES, 2020, p.3).

Compaoré, who had been the president of 27 years, was ousted on the 31st of October 2014 (Engels, 2015, p.1). He had survived already four terms as president. Prior to his forced resignation, he proposed an amendment to the constitution which would enable him to stand for re-election in the 2015. The Burkinabé had long ceased to be content with their leader. After Compaoré proposed his amendment for the constitution, the Burkinabé, in particular young people, protested with hundreds of people and went on strikes, which even caused secondary schools and universities to close (Engels, 2015, p.1). Unfortunately, the protests were not without violence and more than thirty people were killed in these demonstrations (Engels, 2015, p.1). During the second half of his Presidency Compaoré had already lost support from a large part of the population. In 1998 there were major protests which were triggered by the murder of a famous journalist, Zongo (Engels, 2015, p.3). In 2008 the general global crisis

caused higher living costs in Burkina Faso against which many people protested as well. The protests and demonstrations gained momentum in 2013 and 2014 when trade unions, human rights organizations, professional associations, and students cooperated against the proposed amendment to the constitution (Engels, 2015, p.3). In addition, Compaoré lost support of a part of his own party as well, which weakened his power. The multitude of developments, protests and discontent led to the forced resignation of former President Compaoré. The next presidential elections in 2015 were therefore regarded with much euphoria and high hopes (Engels, 2015).

The elections in 2015 were held on the 29th of November and the Burkinabé were able to choose from fourteen presidential candidates (The Guardian, 2015, December 1). Kaboré won with 53.5 % of the votes, while the former finance minister Diabre became second with 29.7 % of the votes (The Guardian, December 1, 2015). According to the Freedom House² and Lankoandé (2020), the 2015 election created a basis for a continued development of democratic institutions, a possibility to amend the constitution. A popular motto in Burkina Faso at that time was '*rien ne sera plus comme avant*' (nothing will be as it was before) (Lankoandé, 2020). Kaboré maintained his popularity because he is still the current leader of the country. He regards himself as a social democratic, focusing to fight youth unemployment and socioeconomic welfare in general, improve education and healthcare. The start of his presidency was marked by terrorist attacks from AQ and ISIS related groups in January 2016 in the capital, Ouagadougou, which killed 29 people (Lankoandé, 2020, p.1). AQ and ISIS are in principle rivals, nonetheless they seem to be cooperating in the Sahel region lately (Barkindo, 2020). Their main motive is spreading their extremist Islamic belief, however often they do so by the use of crime, political violence, and terrorism (Barkindo, 2020, p.22).

As a result of the terrorist attacks and threat of violence, at least 780,000 people have fled from their homes (Lankoandé, 2020, p.6). Even though Kaboré planned on improving the socioeconomic situation of the Burkinabé, his attempts were not regarded as sufficient by the population. During his first term as president there were often sit-in protests and strikes because the people were not satisfied with the reforms

² Burkina Faso, Freedom House, 2020 (<https://freedomhouse.org/country/burkina-faso/freedom-world/2020>)

so far. Lankoandé (2020, p.2) claims that “the government has not succeeded in containing the sit-in protests”.

The next presidential election was held on the 22nd of November 2020. This election marked the change in electoral rules because of several democratic reforms. For example, the 2020 elections were the first elections in which Burkinabé living outside of Burkina Faso were eligible to vote (IFES, 2020). The election was held between thirteen candidates. This is one candidate more compared to the 2015 elections and is regarded as a sufficient number of candidates to choose from, thus there is sufficient opportunity to stand for election.

Lankoandé (2020) argues that the political landscape in Burkina Faso is fragmented because even though there are more than 150 political parties, only a few have the organizational capacity to make it to the national elections. The most prominent parties are the MPP, CDP and the Union for Progress and Change (UPC). A local election-monitoring organization, Codel, set up crisis rooms where they can check the votes and election process for irregularities, voter suppression and violence (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 22). The 2020 elections were again won by President Kaboré with 57.87 % of the vote (France 24, 2020, November 26). His opponents showed concerns about the validity of the vote count, but international observers stated that the election results were justly counted. The only prominent irregularities monitored were 30 fake ballot votes, because ballot paper was not available (France 24, 2020, November 26). The victory of Kaboré was also accepted by supporters of the opposition.

4.3. Recent Violence

The Burkinabé were relieved when former president Blaise Compaoré had to resign after 27 years and hoped that better times were coming with Kaboré being the new President. However, Kaboré’s time in power has already experienced three different terrorist attacks in the capital, which unfortunately led to many lost lives and people losing their houses. Kaboré’s presidential inauguration took place in December 2015, while the first terrorist attack occurred only a month later, in January 2016. By the end of October 2020, more than 2,100 people were killed as a result of terrorism (IFES, 2020, p.3). During his campaign, Kaboré aimed to tackle corruption and poverty and implement more democratic reforms. Nonetheless, his first term as president has

already been marked by the necessity of combatting terrorism, leaving little room for Kaboré's great promises and plans of tackling corruption and inequality. This led to the continuing of many strikes and protest with the aim of increasing wages, mostly led by young people. Lankoandé argues that these protests show an erosion of the state's capacity and authority, because it fails to meet the needs of its people (2020, p.3). Nonetheless they also argue that the corruption level in Burkina Faso is on average lower compared to other Sub-Saharan countries. The sectors specifically vulnerable to corruption are the extractive industries, judiciary, and public health (Lankoandé, 2020, p.3).

The potential threat of terrorist attacks can often be traced back to jihadist groups. The threats and attacks by the jihadist groups started during the first five terms of Kaboré's presidency but gained momentum during the most recent elections in November 2020. 860 villages, out of 9,284, were not able to have polling stations during the 2020 elections as a result of the high insecurity threat (IFES, 2020, p.5). Al Jazeera (November 23, 2020) argues that there were no "reported incidents of major attacks", nonetheless the threat itself was already too high in some regions for people to cast their ballot. The president of the National Independent Electoral Commission, Ahmed Barry, said that almost 3000 polling stations did not open because of the threats, which prevented 350,000 people Burkinabé to cast their ballot (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 23). It was estimated that the area that faces threats covers about one fifth of the country. The campaigns that were held before the elections had to be halted for two days as a result of deadly attack in the North of the country (BBC, 2020, November 23). The chief of the election commission also argued that it is actually one of the goals of the jihadist groups to prevent the civilians to vote. He states that "those who put their finger in the ink can say goodbye to their finger" (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 22). The inability for the citizens to vote would show that the state is not capable of providing security and stability, which is likely to weaken the state's power and authority (Shenga and Pereira, 2019). Besides citizens being afraid to cast their ballot, the presidential candidates experienced assassination threats (Lankoandé, 2020, p.4).

The jihadist groups that are most prominent in Burkina Faso are Ansaroul Islam (AI), Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), which are all linked to al-Qaeda and ISIS. During the last decade, even

more so during the last five years, they have gained more influence and power in the Sahel region (Barkindo, 2020). These terrorist groups originate from North(-Eastern) Africa but have moved towards the Sahel region since its attractiveness in four different fields (Barkindo, 2020, p.24). First of all, the Sahel region is an important trade route from Africa to the Mediterranean. Secondly, the states in the Sahel region often have a weak regime, and therefore little control specifically in rural territory, which remains ungoverned. Thirdly, over the last couple years, Islamist extremist have tried to alter the ‘Sahelian form of Islam’, adjusted to cultural practices and beliefs of the Sahel region, into a more extremist form of Islam. Finally, climate change also has created the opportunity for an increase in terrorism. Aggressive desertification and change in the environment have created tension between herders and farmers, which increased the likeliness for criminal activities in the region (Barkindo, 2020, p.25).

These sections provided some contextual information, which is valuable when interpreting the results of the analysis. In the next section the statistical analysis, consisting of the simple and multiple linear regression analysis is conducted.

4.4 Statistical Analysis

This section contains the empirical findings of this dissertation. First, the assumptions are discussed shortly, followed by the simple linear regression analysis, which is also referred to as model 1. This is followed by the multiple linear regression analysis, also referred to as model 2. SPSS excluded variable ‘V2elsuffrage’, measuring the right to vote, from the analysis because it was constant, for both 2015 and 2020 it provided the values of ‘100.00’, meaning 100 %. Therefore, this variable is not included in the statistical analysis. In the analysis, ‘free and fair’ elections is used as a proxy variable for measuring electoral integrity. It is common for these concepts to be interchangeably used in the research field of elections (van Ham, 2015).

4.4.1. Assumption testing

Before being able to conduct a simple or multiple linear regression analysis, various assumptions need to be tested to see if there is a linear relationship present between the independent variable(s) and the dependent variable. This section shows two figures related to the assumption testing, the remaining figures used to test the assumptions for

model one can be found in appendix A, and the remaining figures for the assumption testing for model two can be found in appendix B. The scatterplot in figure 1 shows the dependent variable 'election free and fair' (electoral integrity) and the independent variable election other electoral violence (violence). Some linear relationship is seen when looking at the dispersion of the dots among the line. This shows that a simple linear regression analysis can be conducted. Similar to the simple linear regression analysis, multiple linear regression analysis also has assumptions that need to be passed to enable the analysis.

Figure 1

Scatterplot showing linear relationship between 'elections free and fair' and electoral violence

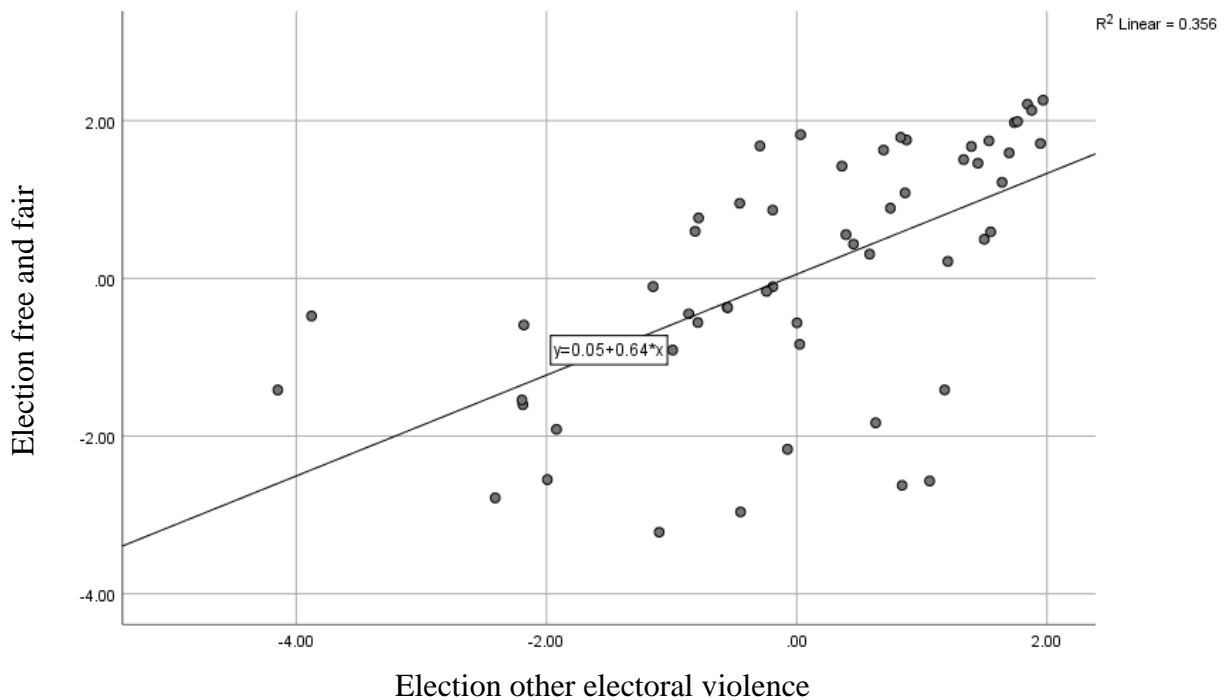
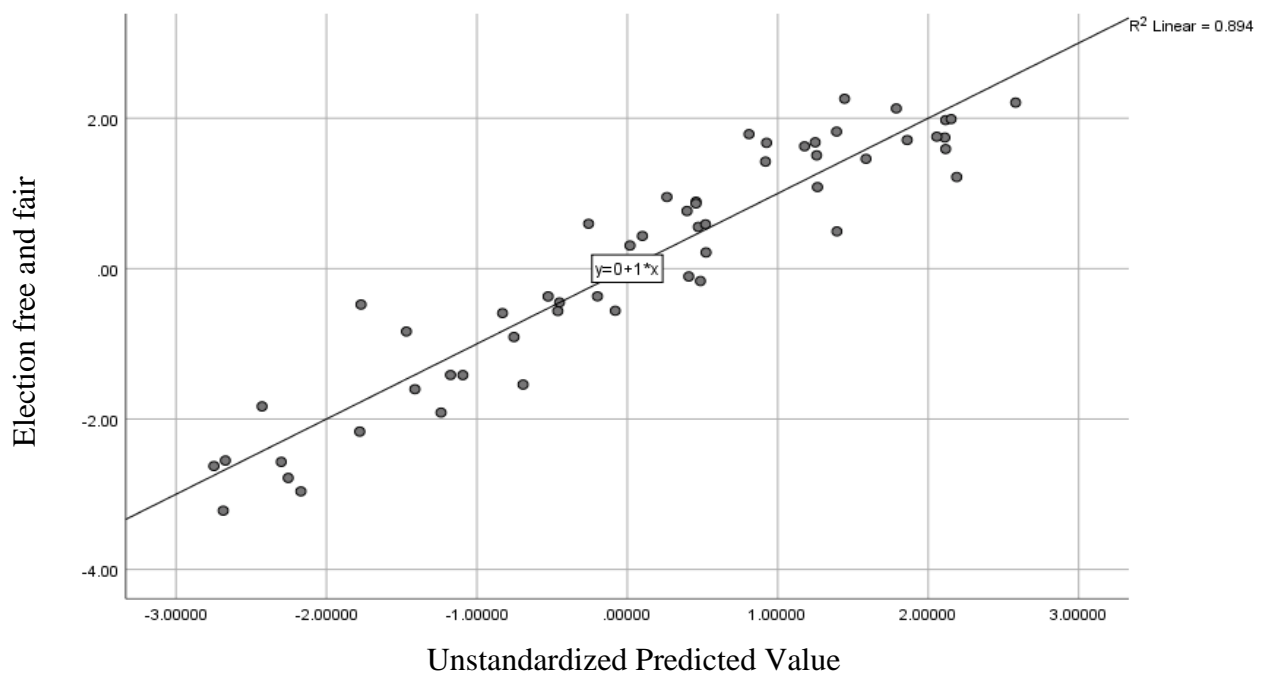


Figure 2 shows the dependent variable ‘election free and fair’ (electoral integrity) and the five independent variables combined, here named the ‘unstandardized predicted value’. The dots are scattered close to and in line with the fitting line. This means that there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable and the dependent variables. Hence, the multiple linear regression analysis can be conducted. In this analysis alpha of 0.05 is selected

Figure 2

Scatterplot showing the linear relationship between ‘election free and fair’ and the five independent variables combined



4.4.2. Regression Analysis

This section describes the statistical analysis of two regression models. Regression model 1 is the simple linear regression analysis which inspects the linear relationship between violence and electoral integrity. Regression model 2 analyses the linear

relationship between the following independent variables: violence, EMB capacity, government intimidation, media bias and voting irregularities and the dependent variable electoral integrity. These two regression analyses are necessary because existing literature argues that using multiple indicators for measuring electoral integrity provides more accurate results compared to using only one indicator (van Ham, 2015, p.270). Furthermore, it needs to be mentioned that the variable ‘suffrage’, linked to the condition of the ‘right to vote’ was deleted from the SPSS regression analysis because the values for 2015 and 2020 were both 100. The values remained constant, meaning that in both years the adults in Burkina Faso enjoyed full suffrage, hence the condition of the right to vote is fulfilled. The data for the dependent variable of electoral integrity show a value of 1.08 for 2015 and a value of 0.89 for 2020. Therefore, it can already be claimed that there has been a decrease in the electoral integrity of the presidential election in 2020 when compared to 2015. The full ANOVA table can be found in appendix C.

4.4.2.1. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

This section consists of the analysis of the output of model 1, the simple linear regression analysis. First the data of the summary of the model, which shows how much variation in electoral integrity can be explained by violence. This is followed by the analysis of the coefficients table, presented in table 3, which shows whether violence as independent variable makes a valuable contribution to the model.

Table 2 shows 0.356 as value for R^2 for Model 1. This means that 35.6% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the dependent variable. In this case this would mean that 35.6% of variance in electoral integrity over 2015 to 2020 can be explained by change in violence between 2015 and 2020.

The R^2 value of the simple linear regression shown in table 2 showed that 35.6 % of the change in the electoral integrity in Burkina Faso from 2015 to 2020 can be explained by the change in violence. The electoral integrity decreased from 1.08 in 2015 to 0.89 in 2020 (Coppedge et al., 2021b), which is a decrease of 17.6 %. This shows that violence has quite a large effect on the electoral integrity. Furthermore, the coefficients table in table 3 shows 0.639 as a value for B, the regression coefficient. This means that for each one unit decrease in violence, the electoral integrity

increases with 0.639, which proved to be statistically significant. The constant in model 1 is 0.052. The simple linear regression thus showed that the increase in violence over 2015 to 2020 played an important role in the decreased electoral integrity over those five years. This would indicate that the various terrorist attacks that happened throughout the five years in between the elections are one of the reasons why the electoral integrity of the 2020 election is lower compared to the electoral integrity in 2015.

The second part of the regression analysis checks whether the data is statistically significant, thus whether this 'sample' data reflects the 'real world' data and can scientifically be generalized. Furthermore, the coefficients table in table 3 also shows a value of .000 for 'Sig', which shows the probability of t . If the probability, or ' p ' is smaller than the alpha of <0.05 , the contribution of violence as an independent variable is significant. This p is lower than 0.05, therefore the data is statistically significant.

4.4.2.2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

This section includes the statistical analysis of model 2, the multiple linear regression. Both these types of regression are necessary because using multiple indicators over one indicator for the measurement of electoral integrity is preferable (van Ham, 2015). The two factors that did not have any (significant) effect on the electoral integrity are the right to vote and the right to stand for election. The right to vote was initially matched to the variable that measured 'the percentage of population with suffrage', 'V2elsuffrage', however this variable was deleted from the analysis by SPSS because it remained constant. Therefore, no linear relationship was present because it had the value of 100 % for both the years of 2015 and 2020. Furthermore, the factor of the right to stand for election was not linked to a variable in SPSS, because it was already proven to be true by the regime change in 2015. In the elections of 2015 fourteen candidates took part, while in the 2020 elections there were thirteen candidates. These facts already prove that in both years, there was an opportunity to stand for election, hence this factor also remained constant and could not have influenced the decrease in electoral integrity. Therefore, this condition is not included in the statistical analysis.

The multiple linear regression analysis also consists of the two tables. The ‘model summary’ table in table 2 is analysed first, which shows how much of the variance in electoral integrity can be explained by the five independent variables individually. Finally, model 2 in the coefficients table in table 3 shows which independent variables contribute to the model, and whether their contribution is statistically significant or not. The selection of variables used in this multiple linear regression analysis is justified since it is based on the framework by Birch (2011). Birch (2011) in turn is referred to by Norris (2013, p.569) as the most ambitious scholar in defining electoral integrity in the light of liberal democratic principles.

Model 2 in the model summary table in table 2 shows a value of 0.894 for R^2 , which means that all the independent variables; election other electoral violence, media bias, EMB capacity, election other voting irregularities and election government intimidation account for 89.4% of the variance in electoral integrity, which is a relatively high. However, since this is a multiple linear regression the adjusted R^2 also needs to be checked. This is necessary because multiple independent variables are included in the analysis, therefore the R^2 is adjusted for the number of independent variables included in the model. The value for the Adjusted R^2 in this model is 0.883, which means that the five independent variables together represent for 88.3% of the variance in electoral integrity, which is a little less than R^2 , but still high. The values for R^2 and the Adjusted R^2 are relatively close, which means there is a high cross-validity of the model, hence there is almost no similar aspect in the variation of electoral integrity that can be explained by multiple variables. The difference of fit of the two models is shown by R^2 Change, which is 0.538. This means that the second model explains 53.8 % more variance compared to the first model, which is likely to be a result of the multiple independent variables that are included.

Next, Model 2 in the coefficients Table in table 3 is analysed. This table includes data for checking the significance of the output of the multiple linear regression. This means checking if the ‘sample’ data of the independent variables reflect the ‘real world’ situation. The coefficients table in table 3 shows that the constant for this multiple linear regression is -0.275. The value of B, the regression coefficient, for the ‘violence’ variable is 0.048, which means that for each one unit decrease in violence, electoral integrity increases with 4.8%. This is because this variable is ‘negatively’ coded, which

means that a low score equates to a large amount of violence and a high score to little violence. The regression coefficient of the EMB capacity is -0.008, which means that with each increase in the EMB capacity, the electoral integrity decreases with 0.8%. This variable, in combination with the full suffrage, account for the overarching principle of 'inclusiveness of Birch (2011). The voting irregularities variable has a regression coefficient of 0.666, meaning that for each one unit decrease in voting irregularities, because the variable is the electoral integrity increases with 66.6%. This variable is also negatively coded, which means that a higher score results in less voting irregularities. The regression coefficient for government intimidation is 0.166, which means that each unit decrease in government intimidation, there is an increase in electoral integrity of 16.6%. This variable is also negatively coded, which means that a low score is similar to much intimidation, while a high score is similar to little intimidation. The two variables of voting irregularities and government intimidation account for the overarching principle of effective aggregation (Birch, 2011). Finally, the regression coefficient of media bias is 0.356, which means that for each decrease in media bias, the electoral integrity increases with 35.6%. The variable of media bias and violence combined account for the overarching principle of policy-directed voting (Birch, 2011).

The final necessary element in the analysis is checking the significance of all the independent variables. This is done by checking table 3. The 'Sig' column, which shows the probability of t . The probability, visible in the rightmost column, is referred to as p . The violence variable has a p -value of 0.588, which is higher than the alpha of 0.05, and is therefore not significant. The second variable, the EMB capacity, has a p -value of 0.930, which is also higher than the alpha of 0.05, therefore also not significant. The third variable of election other voting irregularities has a p -value of 0.000, which is lower than the alpha of 0.05, and therefore significant. The fourth variable, election government intimidation, has a p -value of 0.201, which is higher than the alpha of 0.05, therefore not significant. The last variable of media bias has a p -value of 0.003, which is lower than the alpha of 0.05, and therefore is significant. This leaves the model of five independent variables of which two are significant, election other voting irregularities and media bias, and the other three, peace, EMB capacity and government intimidation, are insignificant. This indicates that there is multicollinearity in the

second model or phrased differently; correlation between the independent variables of model 2. This means that some of the variables explain a part of the effect that other variables have on electoral integrity. This might decrease the effect from some variables on electoral integrity, which might make them insignificant. It is likely that this happened to the violence variable. The values for the 'Standardized Coefficients' under Beta also show the strength of the impact that each independent variable has on the dependent variable. The values for Beta of model 2 in table 3 also show voting irregularities with the value of 0.615 and media bias with the value of 0.326 as the two highest Beta variables. This strengthens the claim that voting irregularities and media bias have the strongest influence on the decreased electoral integrity.

The statistical analysis included both a simple and a multiple linear regression, in two models. In model 1, the violence variable had a significant effect on electoral integrity, but in model 2 the same violence variable has an insignificant effect. The other independent variables in the second model explain part of the correlation between violence and electoral integrity, they overlap, which results in violence having an insignificant effect on electoral integrity in model 2. However, the variables of voting irregularities and media bias do have a significant effect on electoral integrity. Therefore, it can be argued that voting irregularities and media bias can be regarded as more important than violence in assessing the free and fairness of presidential elections.

In the multiple linear regression, the dependent variable 'electoral integrity' remained constant and is thus similar to the dependent variable in model 1. However, in the multiple linear regression model four more variables were added to the regression analysis. Model 1 only included violence as an independent variable, whereas in the second model the following four independent variables were added to the violence variable: EMB capacity, election other voting irregularities, election government intimidation and media bias. By including these other variables, their effect on electoral integrity is also analysed, which enables analysing the true effect of violence on electoral integrity while controlling for other variables. The R^2 value in table 2 showed that the five independent variables in model 2 together account for 89.4% of the change in the electoral integrity over the five years between 2015 and 2020, which is an extensive part of the change. The coefficient table in table 3 showed the extent that electoral integrity would increase or decrease with a one-unit change in

the independent variables. In model 1 the independent variable violence was statistically significant, however in model 2 only two of the five independent variables are statistically significant. The independent variable ‘election other voting irregularities’ and ‘media bias’ are statistically significant. For one unit decrease in voting irregularities, the electoral integrity increases with 0.666. In addition, for each unit decrease in media bias, the electoral integrity increases with 0.356. The regression coefficients of the other three independent variables, violence, EMB capacity and election government intimidation are not statistically significant, which means that the data used in this data set is not generalizable for Burkina Faso in general. This could occur because of the multicollinearity problem: in the some of the variables overlap in the effect they have on electoral integrity. This is what happens to the main independent variable in this thesis: when only analysing the effect of violence on electoral integrity there is a significant effect, nonetheless when other factors that could possibly influence electoral integrity are controlled for, the effect of violence on electoral integrity decreases, and becomes insignificant. Presumably, this occurs because of the overlapping effects that the independent variables might have on each other, or on their effect on electoral integrity. The variables that are significant, voting irregularities and media bias do have a clear, direct impact on the decreased electoral integrity in 2020. The next section, discussion of the results, elaborates on the effect of these two significant variables.

Table 2

Model Summary table variation explained of electoral integrity Burkina Faso (2015-2020)

	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	Sig. F Change
Model 1	0.356	0.344	0.356	.000*
Model 2	0.894	0.883	0.538	.000*

Notes: Dependent variable is electoral integrity. * $p < 0.05$. Source : V-Dem Dataset 11.1 (Coppedge et al., 2021b)

Table 3

Coefficients independent variables on electoral integrity Burkina Faso (2015-2020)

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	(Constant)	.052	.171		.306	.761
	Violence	.639	.118	.597	5.412	.000*
2	(Constant)	-.275	.159		-1.726	.091
	Violence	.048	.088	.045	.545	.588
	EMB capacity	-.008	.094	-.006	-.089	.930
	Voting irreg.	.666	.111	.615	6.014	.000*
	Gov. Intim.	.166	.128	.149	1.296	.201
	Media bias	.356	.115	.236	3.091	.003*

Notes: Dependent variable is electoral integrity. * $p < 0.05$. Source : 2020 V-Dem Dataset 11.1 (Coppedge et al., 2021b).

4.5 Discussion of the results

The results of the two different analyses might seem incompatible when assessing the effect that violence has on electoral integrity. The results of the simple linear regression showed that violence has a clear and relatively high effect on electoral integrity. The decreased electoral integrity in 2020 could then be explained by the increase in terrorist threats and attacks from 2015 onwards. Nonetheless, while controlling for the other independent variables the relationship between violence and electoral integrity becomes insignificant. Hence, the significant effect of violence on the electoral integrity that is seen in model 1, does not hold when accounting for other factors in model 2. Model 2 adds four additional independent variables to the regression analysis and thereby explains more of the variance in electoral integrity compared to model 1. Hence the other variables, EMB capacity, media bias, voting irregularities and government intimidation can also explain the decrease of the electoral integrity over the five years. This does not mean that the overall effect of

violence on electoral integrity is not important, it does have some impact, but not significant. The variables of voting irregularities and media bias do have a significant effect in the second model; hence it can be claimed that these two variables have the strongest effect on electoral integrity. Thus, there is some relation between violence and electoral integrity to be found, nonetheless this relation does not hold when accounting for other influencing factors. Therefore, it can be stated that there is no significant, direct effect of the terrorist attacks and violence on the decrease of the electoral integrity in 2020.

The results of this thesis contribute to the existing literature in multiple ways. First of all, van Ham (2015) discussed the different ways of measuring electoral integrity. One of the aspects that she discussed is the use of one indicator for measuring electoral integrity compared to using multiple indicators (2015, p.270). This thesis shows that the use of multiple indicators is of high importance, because the relation between violence and electoral integrity changed when controlled for four extra factors. Hence, it is not sufficient to only look at one factor to influence electoral integrity because it diminishes the importance of other relevant factors. In a similar way the results of this thesis also support the theory by Birch (2011). She based her conceptualization of electoral integrity on ten different factors, from which the operationalization of this thesis is also derived. Hereby Birch (2011) also highlights the importance of using multiple indicators, hence this thesis aligns itself with Birch (2011) in the debate posed by van Ham (2015) between using a single or multiple indicators for electoral integrity.

Even though the abovementioned findings are of a valuable addition to the existing literature and theory, the results of this thesis do not provide a strong basis to make larger claims regarding the impact violence has on the Burkinabé democracy. The scope of this thesis is too limited to make any claims on the debate on the effect of electoral integrity on democratic consolidation or backsliding. Nonetheless, the results do allow to support the claim of existence of electoral fallacy (Karl and Schmitter, 1991; Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2016). By this is meant that the mere holding of elections is not sufficient to be classified as a democracy. Burkina Faso holds elections, hence the deficit in electoral integrity forms an obstacle for the country to be regarded democratic.

Most importantly, the results of this thesis support neither the theory from Lyons (2004) nor the theory from Shenga and Pereira (2019). Lyons (2004) argues that elections that are held after elections are 'post-conflict' elections, which supposedly cause both an increase in peace and democracy. Before the 2015 presidential elections Burkina Faso experienced a coup, many protests, and a regime change, therefore the elections of 2015 and 2020 are regarded as post-conflict elections. Whereas the 2015 elections were regarded with high hopes and relief, the 2020 elections were marked with fear, violence, and threats. The developments between these two elections caused the electoral integrity in 2020 to decrease, which are no clear signs of neither peace nor democratization. Therefore, decreased electoral integrity disproves the theory of Lyons (2004). Furthermore, the theory by Shenga and Pereira (2019) also included electoral violence as the independent variable in their research, nonetheless they researched the effect of electoral violence on the participation in elections as the dependent variable. Their main finding is that electoral violence has a negative effect on the voter turnout. In addition, they claimed that an increase in electoral violence has a negative effect on the legitimacy of the government and on the democratic consolidation (Shenga and Pereira, 2019). Shenga and Pereira (2019) referred to violence as internal violence, coming from incumbents, while this thesis focusses on the external violence, coming from outside the political realm, even from outside the Burkinabé borders. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the existing literature, predominantly as an extension of Shenga and Pereira's (2019) research by analyzing the effect of external violence instead of internal violence, and by analyzing the effect of violence on the electoral integrity in general, instead of solely participation. The results of this research on the effect of violence on electoral integrity show that the linear relationship is not comparable to the study of Shenga and Pereira (2019), who studied the effect of violence on electoral participation. Finally, this thesis disproves the theory from Lyons (2004), because in the case of the 2020 presidential elections there was neither an increase in peace nor democratization to be found.

The main research question of this thesis, what the impact of violence is on the electoral integrity of the 2020 elections can now be answered. There has been some impact of violence on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in

Burkina Faso. However, the impact is not regarded as significant because other factors, voting irregularities and media bias, accounted more for the decreased electoral integrity. The simple linear regression showed that the effect of violence on the electoral integrity was relatively strong, nonetheless its effect declined when multiple variables were included in the analysis. This showed that violence by itself has a strong influence on electoral integrity, however when accounting for other factors which have a stronger effect on electoral integrity, the effect of violence on electoral integrity became insignificant. This is likely the result of overlapping causal effects from violence, media bias and voting irregularities on electoral integrity. This finding can be supported by the theory from Voltmer and Rawnsley (2009, p.240), who claim that media is particularly relevant in newer democracies. This is because the opposition and new parties and candidates need the media as a tool to reach the citizens, spread their ideas and make citizens aware that they are taking part in the election. This is of specific importance in newer democracies or hybrid regimes because citizens are often not used to having multiple parties or candidates to choose from. In addition, the variable of voting irregularities also has a significant effect on the decline of electoral integrity. Voting irregularities is a collective term for all kinds of corrupt practices such as ballot-stuffing, false collation of votes, misreporting of votes and the use of double ID's (Coppedge et al., 2021a, p.65). Norris (2013, p.571) claims that these practices also have a negative effect on the general legitimacy of the government. Nonetheless, focusing on the key independent variable in this research, violence, the answer to the research question is that violence played some role in the decrease of electoral integrity, but not significant role.

This answer is not in line with the expectation that was set in section 2.5.2. The expectation was that the electoral integrity declined because of the increased threat of violence and terrorism during the years in between the elections of 2015 and 2020. The electoral integrity has indeed decreased, of which a small part is accountable to the violence, but the increase in violence played no significant role in the decreased electoral integrity. This also disproves the theory of Lyon (2004), who argues that elections after a conflict cause peace and democratization. The pre-2015 election period is regarded as a conflict because of the failed coup, protests and regime change, which, according to Lyon, would then lead to peace and democracy in

the future. However only five years after the conflict, the electoral integrity and peace have both decreased already.

4.6. Conclusion

First, this chapter provided some contextual information of Burkina Faso. This section was followed by the analysis of the effect of violence on the electoral integrity of the 2015 and 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso. The contextual sections elaborated on the information of both elections, who the candidates were, when the elections took place and what the formal electoral rules are. The 2015 elections marked a regime change, with Kaboré taking the power from Compaoré after 27 years. Kaboré had enthusiastic plans of democratic reforms, but unfortunately his first five years in office were marked by combatting the terrorism that entered the country on the north. In between 2015 and 2020 multiple jihadist groups attacked the country, in particular the capital Ouagadougou. This resulted in many polling stations being closed on election day in 2020, simply because the threat for terrorist attacks was too high.

The following sections included the analysis, divided into the statistical and descriptive analysis of a simple linear regression and a multiple linear regression. These results were debated in the discussion section, which claimed that the simple linear regression did show a strong effect of violence on the electoral integrity, while the multiple linear regression showed that other variables, voting irregularities and media bias, had a stronger impact on the electoral integrity, which diminished the effect of violence on electoral integrity. Therefore, I claim that even though initially there was some effect of violence on electoral integrity, this relationship does not hold when accounting for other factors and is for this reason not regarded as significant. The effects on electoral integrity that were found significant are media bias and voting irregularities. Literature claims that the role of the media is particularly important in democratizing states (Voltmer & Rawnsley, 2009). Furthermore, the concept of voting irregularities includes various types of corrupt practices, such as ballot-stuffing, use of double ID's and misreporting of votes (Coppedge et al., 2021a). This provides that Burkina Faso has an 'electoral fallacy'; the country does hold elections, nonetheless these elections are not considered free and fair, therefore the country is

not classified as a democracy, despite the fact that it is holding elections. (Karl and Schmitter, 1991; Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2016). The results of this analysis are further discussed in the next and concluding chapter of this thesis, which summarizes the theoretical debate, main findings and provides suggestions for further research.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Reflection

5.1 Introduction

The 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso were regarded as “a major test of the nation’s young democracy in the face of rising attacks and the violence and intimidation show how limited the authorities’ control and legitimacy really are” (Al Jazeera, 2020, November 23). The previous presidential elections, held in 2015, were regarded with high hopes since these elections ended a period of protests, and a failed coup, which marked a regime change. However, during his first term, the in 2015 newly elected President Kaboré was occupied with fighting multiple terrorist groups. This thesis has reflected on the importance of measuring the electoral integrity in hybrid regimes, and on the debate of the effect of violence on electoral integrity. This final chapter is divided into five remaining sections. First, a summary of the theoretical debate is provided, followed by the findings and discussion of the expectations, which answers the main research question. This is followed by a section on what the results of this research mean for the existing theories. Next, the complications and limitations of this thesis are discussed, which is followed by the last section on recommendations for further research within the paradigm of electoral integrity.

5.2. Summary of the theoretical debate

African countries have experienced a massive decline in one-party regimes over the last couple decades. A vast amount of literature claims that a high socioeconomic development level normally leads to an easier democratization process (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014). Nonetheless, sub-Saharan Africa is considered to be one of the poorest regions in the world (Barkindo, 2020). The combination of these aspects resulted in the opposition often gaining power at some point, nonetheless in the end still many autocrats survived, but not without a cost. Democratic reforms, such as elections, were implemented but did not automatically lead to democratic consolidation. Instead, it led to the creation of hybrid regimes, in which the level of democracy becomes even harder to analyze.

One of the largest current challenges to the African democratization process is the threat of violence and terrorism. Since the 1990's, more than a quarter of all the elections held in Africa experienced violence (Shenga and Pereira, 2019, p.2). Lyons (2004) claims that elections that are held after a conflict, in the Burkinabé case the failed coup and regime change in 2014 and 2015, are called 'post-conflict elections'. These supposedly lead to an increase in peace and democratization. In addition, research has shown that electoral violence has a negative impact on the democratic consolidation and on the legitimacy of the government (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma, 2014, p.789). Other scholars analyzed the relation between violence and elections the other way around, claiming that the regime and election type influences level of threats and violence (Abbink and Hesselting, 2002; Höglund et al., 2009; Horowitz et al., 2005; Linebarger and Salehyan, 2020; Mochtak, 2019; Peterson, 2017). Furthermore, Shenga and Pereira (2019) have argued that violence has a negative effect on participation in elections, based on security reasons. The main debate in this theoretical framework is that Lyons (2004) would expect that the integrity would have increased, because the period after conflict was analyzed. On the contrary, the theory from Shenga and Pereira (2019) would claim that the electoral election would decrease, and therefore the electoral integrity is likely to decrease as well.

This thesis expected and tested whether violence has had an impact on the decreased electoral integrity in the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso. The results showed that there was some negative effect of violence on electoral integrity, but no significant effect. The decreased electoral integrity is likely to be caused by voting irregularities and media bias, as those variables were found significant. The next section elaborates on the findings of this research.

5.3 Findings and expectation

In order to investigate the unexplored research within the field of electoral integrity, this research was guided by the main research question of *What is the impact of increased violence on the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential elections in Burkina Faso when compared to the 2015 presidential elections?* The research is conducted through the democratic lens, which means that electoral integrity is regarded as a crucial element in the consolidation of a democracy.

At the start, the results of this thesis seemed incompatible. The first model, which consisted of the simple linear regression analysis, showed that there is a relatively strong correlation between violence and electoral integrity. However, the second model, a multiple linear regression analysis, showed no significant effect of violence on electoral integrity. The second analysis included five independent variables in total and showed that media bias and voting irregularities came out as having the strongest effect on electoral integrity. This means that the effect of violence on electoral integrity shown in model 1 lost its significance when accounting for other, more influential, factors. This is likely because violence has an indirect effect on voting irregularities or media bias, resulting in an overlap of their effect on electoral integrity.

This answer to the main question in this thesis is not in line with the expectation discussed in section 2.5.2. Based on the existing literature and theory, the expectation was that the electoral integrity of the 2020 elections would have decreased compared to the 2015 elections as a result of the increased threats and attacks of violent terrorist groups. This expectation would have been true when only the simple linear regression analysis had been conducted. However, the relationship between violence and electoral integrity does not hold. Therefore, the increase in violence as a result of the multiple terrorist threats and attacks between 2015 and 2020 did not (directly) cause the decrease in electoral integrity in the 2020 presidential elections compared to the 2015 presidential elections.

5.4 Consequences for existing theories

Even though the expectation that was set in section 2.5.2. is not supported by the results, the findings of this research still have consequences for existing theories. This section elaborates on three main implications this research has on existing theories. First, van Ham (2015) described the debate between scholars on how to best measure electoral integrity. Some scholars, such as Donno, (2013); Lindberg, (2006); Schedler (2013) and van de Walle (2003), measure and research electoral integrity based on solely one indicator, often being ‘free and fair elections’ or something similar (van Ham, 2015, p.721, 722). Others such as, Anglin (1998); Birch (2011); Hyde and Marinov (2012) and Simpson (2013) claim it is more accurate to analyse electoral integrity by a multitude of indicators, because of the broad nature of the concept (van Ham, 2015,

p.721, 722). Even though one variable was used in this research as well to measure the electoral integrity as the dependent variable, the multiple linear regression analysis that this variable was influenced by a wide variety of factors. Therefore, in order to most accurately measure electoral integrity multiple indicators should be used. Hereby, this research adds to the existing literature that has already claimed that electoral integrity is based on a wide variety of elements (van Ham, 2015).

The second statement is that, although not explicitly researched, the findings of a decreased electoral integrity are not likely to lead to a deeper consolidation of democracy. An argument for this is that the multiple linear regression showed that voting irregularities and media bias were the main reason for the decreased electoral integrity. As stated before, media is of crucial importance in hybrid regimes. Therefore it can be argued that democracy in Burkina Faso has not improved in terms of freedom of expression in the media during the last five years. Furthermore, as long as voting irregularities significantly hinder the electoral integrity, the elections cannot be regarded as free and fair and, neither can the democracy be classified as consolidated. Even though no full research has been conducted on the consolidation of the Burkinabé democracy, it can at least be argued that the democratization process in Burkina Faso is currently not at a high pace. It lies beyond to the scope of this research to argue anything about the future of the democratization of Burkina Faso as well as, about the development of its living standards. However, it can be claimed that the decreased electoral integrity and the increased violence from the terrorist groups are not beneficial for either the democratization process or the living standards.

The third and final consequence of the findings on existing research is on the theories by theory by Shenga and Pereira (2019) and Lyons (2004). Shenga and Pereira (2019) claimed that violence has a negative impact on the participation in elections, and legitimacy. Shenga and Pereira (2019) described the indirect effect of violence on electoral integrity, by analysing the effect of violence on participation. This thesis borrowed their idea and researched the direct effect of violence on electoral integrity this thesis researched. The effect did not appear to be significant when accounting for other influential factors. Therefore, the theory of Shenga and Pereira (2019) remains intact, but any wider claims made based on this theory should be made with caution, since the findings of this thesis prove that the wider claim of the relation between

violence and electoral integrity is not statistically significant. Furthermore, following the theory from Lyons (2004), the years after the conflict that Burkina Faso experienced in 2014 and 2015 would experience peace and democratization. This did not happen due to the increased terrorist attacks and the decreased electoral integrity. Therefore, this thesis builds forth on his theory by researching the development of electoral integrity during a new conflict after ‘post-conflict elections’.

5.5 Complications and limitations

The main complication of this research has been the availability of data. The 2020 elections were held on the 22nd of November, which left a relatively short amount of time for datasets to be computed and/or information about the elections to be put out in the world. This limited the research because no more than five independent variables could be used to analyse the effect of electoral integrity. If more data would have been available, the research could have had a bigger scope and more information about other aspects of elections and electoral integrity could have been analysed. Furthermore, this thesis was also limited by measuring electoral integrity based on a dataset from a research institute. Even though this data originates from a reliable source, more in depth-research in the form of fieldwork in Burkina Faso would have resulted in a more interesting analysis, with a higher chance of finding interesting aspects.

The final complication is that this thesis is written from a Western perspective in regard to the concept of democracy. The development of democracy as a regime type started in Western Europe, based on Western norms and values (Yilmaz, 2009). These might differ from the Sub-Saharan norms and values, which limits the research since it concerns a Sub-Saharan regime.

5.6 Further research

Further research on the topic of violence and elections could be conducted by applying this research framework on similar sub-Saharan regimes, such as Côte d’Ivoire or Togo. In addition, it would also be interesting to conduct further research on the effect on violence on electoral integrity of elections in consolidated democracies. This would discover whether the effect of violence on electoral integrity increases or decreases according to the level of consolidation of a regime. Furthermore, in light of the Western

bias of democratization, it would be interesting to research the effect of violence on electoral integrity through a different lens, for example an autocratic or socialist regime. This might discover strengths and weaknesses of each regime type.

5.7. Conclusion

This research has shown that the electoral integrity in Burkina Faso has decreased in 2020 compared to 2015. The reason for this decrease has not been the increase in terrorist threats and attacks, but a biased media and voting irregularities. Even though no significant effect of violence on electoral integrity was found, it has increased instability in the country since many people had to flee their homes. The instability eliminated the positive and relieved atmosphere that characterized the 2015 elections. Hopefully, the theory of Lyons (2004) holds in future Burkina Faso, resulting in an increase in peace and democratization after the conflict of the current terrorism.

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Appendix A: Output for testing assumptions simple linear regression

Figure 3

Scatterplot showing linear relationship between 'election free and fair' and the residuals

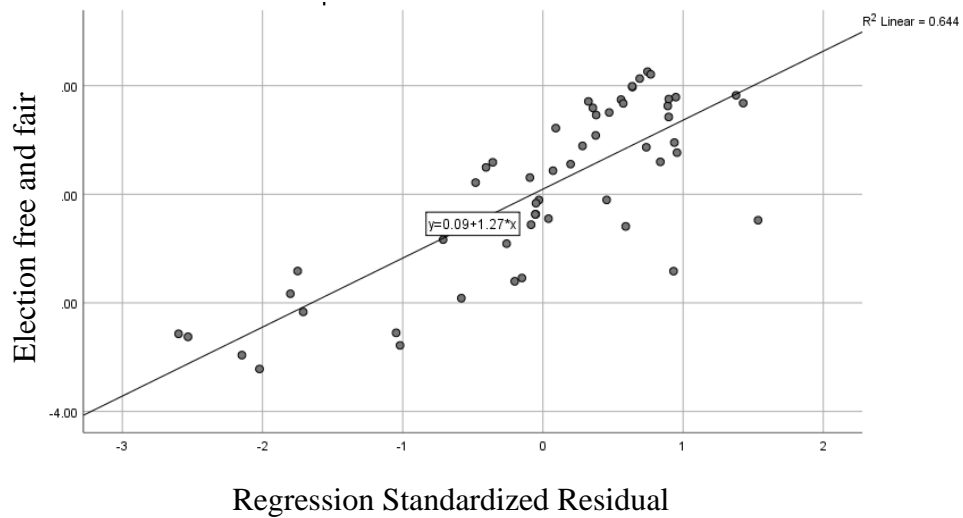


Figure 4

Normal P-Plot showing normal distribution of errors

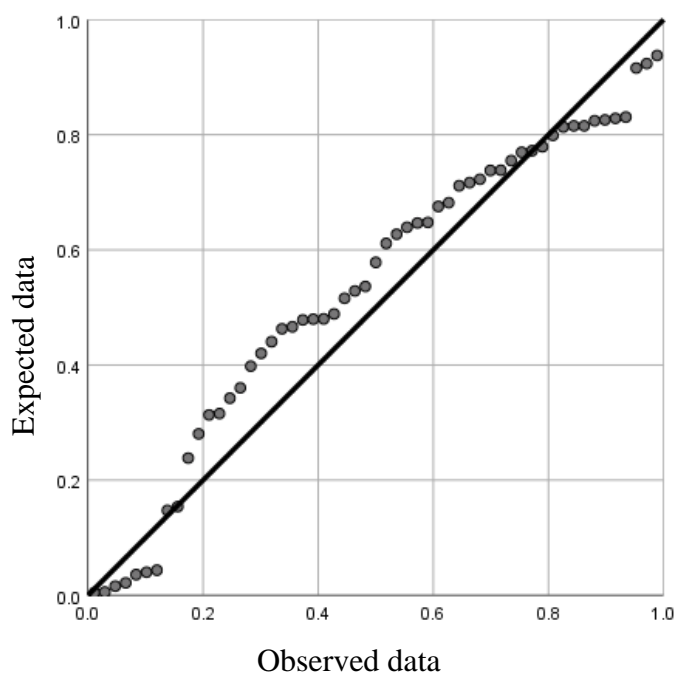
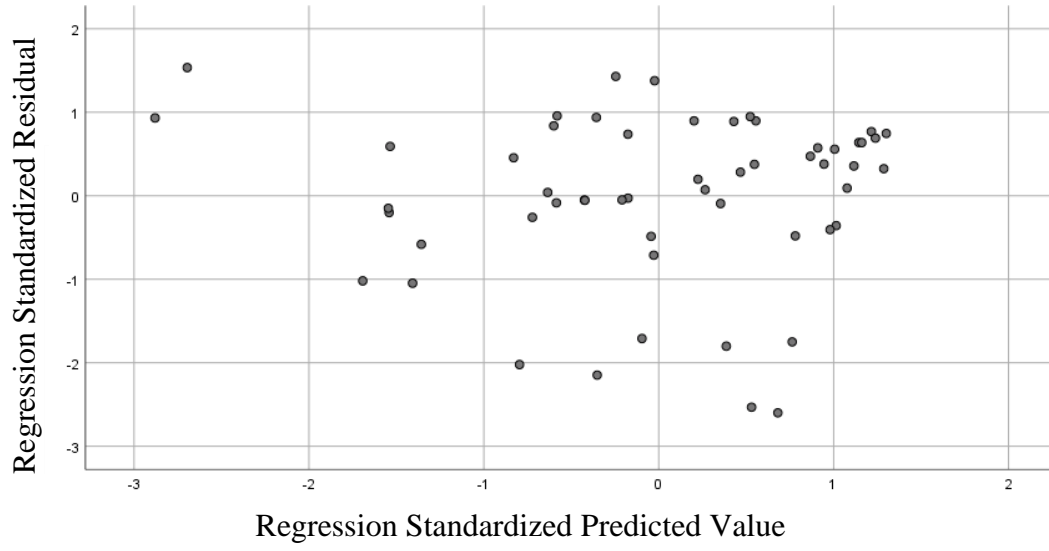


Figure 5

Scatterplot showing normal distribution of residuals



Appendix B: Output for testing assumptions multiple linear regression

Figure 6

Scatterplot showing linear relationship between 'election free and fair' and the independent variables collectively

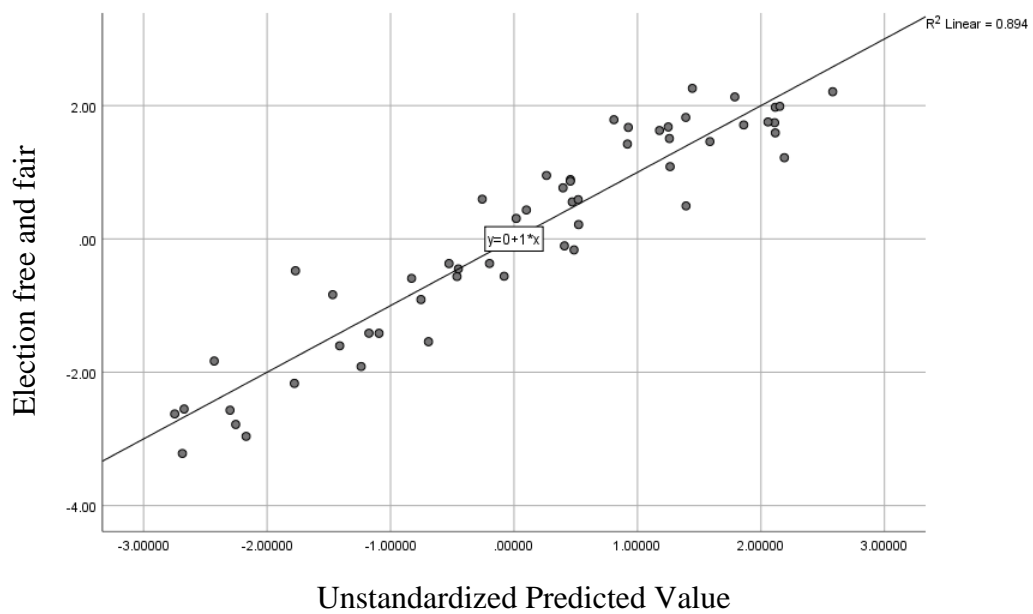


Figure 7

Scatterplot showing linear relationship 'election free and fair' and residuals

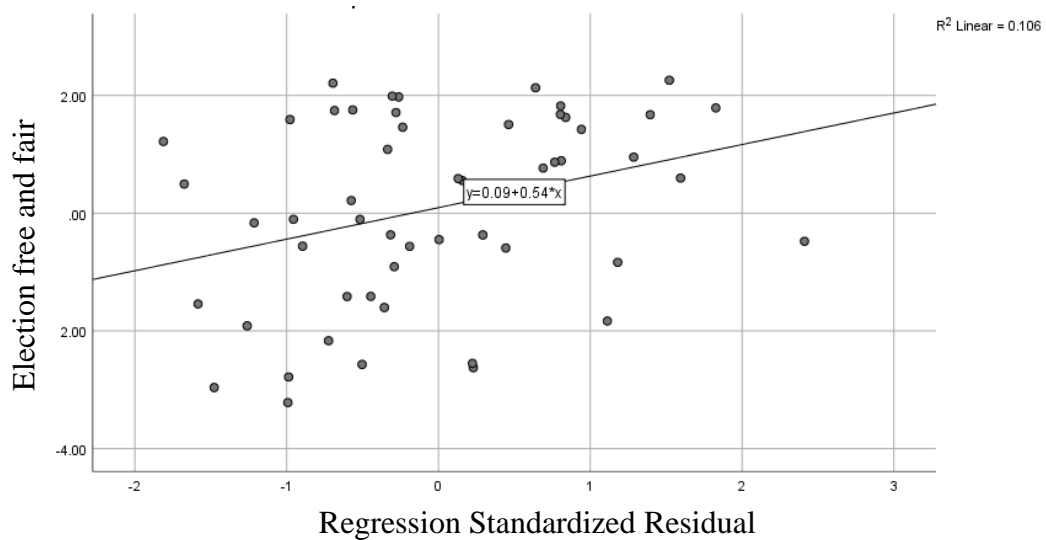


Figure 8

Normal P-P Plot showing normal distribution of errors

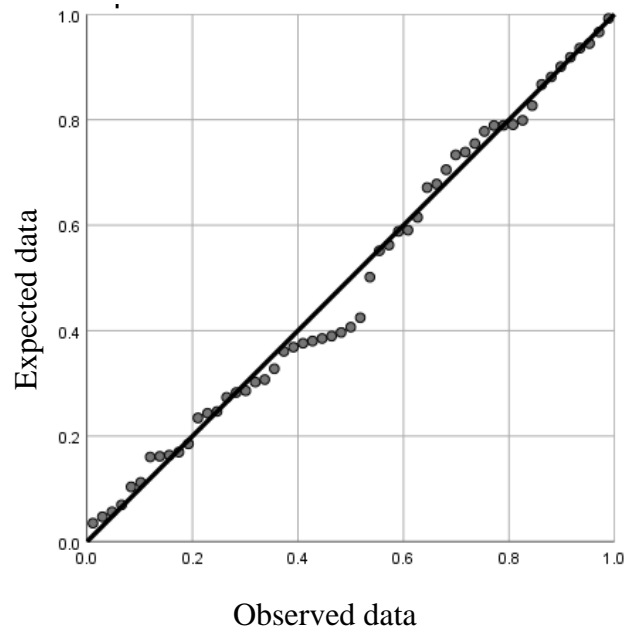
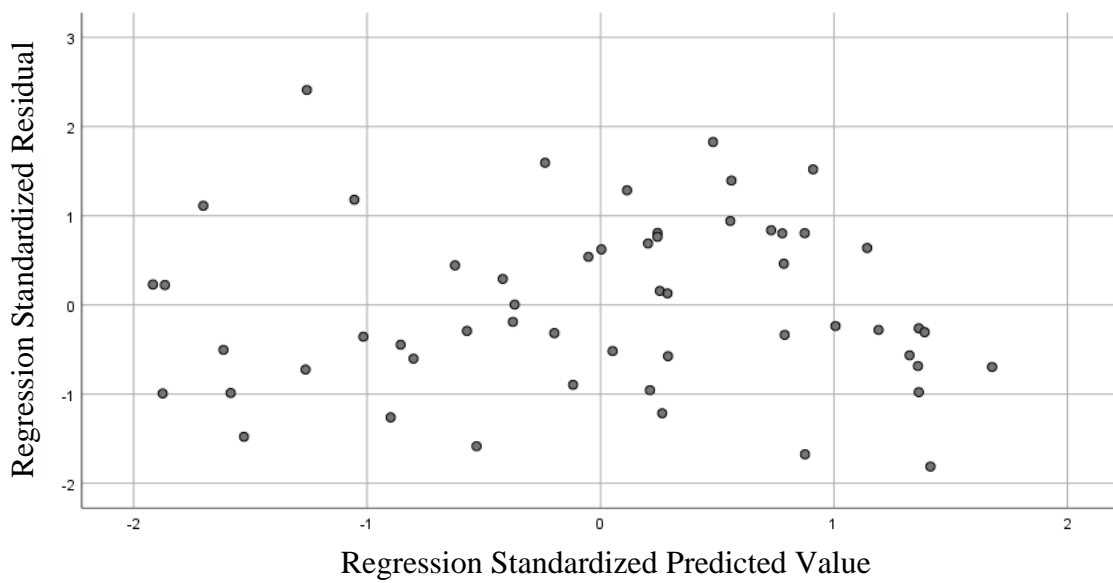


Figure 9

Scatterplot showing normal distribution of residuals



Appendix C: ANOVA table Model 1 and 2

Table 4

ANOVA table independent variables on electoral integrity Burkina Faso (2015-2020)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	47.244	1	47.244	29.285	.000
	Residual	85.501	53	1.613		
	Total	132.745	54			
2	Regression	118.667	5	23.733	82.610	.000
	Residual	14.078	49	.287		
	Total	132.745	54			

Notes: Dependent variable is electoral integrity. * $p < 0.05$. Source : 2020 V-Dem Dataset 11.1 (Coppedge et al., 2021b).