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State Repression and Democratic Dispensation in Uganda 1996–2016

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Article information



Abstract

State repression covers several and many aspects such as wrongful detention, harassment, intimidation, torture, beating, and killings within state boundaries. This study adopted a desk survey qualitative research design to document state repression acts during five presidential elections. Secondary and primary data were gathered from Uganda Electoral Commission presidential elections results, African Elections Database, and Inter-Parliamentary Parline database. This was augmented by interviews carried out with purposively selected political activists from different political shades and members of civil society organizations. The data collected from documentary reviews and interviews were thematically analyzed using the content analysis method. The findings were that successive presidential elections won by National Resistance Movement (NRM) were characterized by state repression acts amounting to human rights abuse such as torture, denial of political gatherings, wrongful arrest, and detention, intimidation, and killings. Drawing from the study findings, the conclusion is that NRM has used state institutions to repress opposition to shield its regime and to lure mass support to remain in power, undermining democratic dispensation it restored in the country.

Keywords

Elections, state repression, democratic dispensation, human rights abuse

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