UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

INTRA-PARTY CONFLICTS AND THE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN GHANA’S FOURTH REPUBLIC: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE NEW PATRIOTIC PARTY (NPP) AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS (NDC)

BY

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MPHIL POLITICAL SCIENCE DEGREE.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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DECLARATION

I, Akuamoah Ernest Mensah, declare that except for the works of other authors duly acknowledged, this research is the result of my own original study under the supervision of Prof. Kwame Boafo-Arthur and Dr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah towards the award of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. I therefore, bear full responsibility for any lapses, marginal or substantial, which may be found in this work.

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Date:.............................. Date:..............................
ABSTRACT

Political parties are vital instruments in the practice of modern representative democracy. As such, their relevance in ensuring stability and promoting democratic consolidation cannot be overemphasized. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) have dominated Ghana’s political scene since the return to multi-party democracy in 1992. They have made significant strides in the area of political education, mobilization, and deliberations on issues of national importance. Nonetheless, their internal activities leave much to be desired. Some of these activities violate basic democratic principles and have resulted in outcomes that are incongruous with democratic consolidation. Noticeably, internal party feuds have become a common feature of party politics in Ghana. These crises have contributed to the unhealthy internal relations and by extension have affected their effective functioning and inter-party relations. The study sought to identify the factors that account for internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC and how these developments affect the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the purposive non-probability sampling method was adopted in the selection of respondents. Primary data were obtained from Academics, Civil Society Organisations and Journalists through semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study revealed that struggle for power, lack of internal democracy, ethnicity, factionalism, imposition of candidates, paucity of ideology, godfatherism and favouritism are the causes of conflicts in the two leading political parties. Additionally, the study identified ignorance of party laws, high mistrust among factions and lack of confidence in internal conflict resolution mechanisms as the obstacles that hinder the effective resolution of conflicts in the NPP and NDC.
It is recommended in this study among others that, these challenges and constraints need to be surmounted in order to bolster our democratic gains. Also, political parties must promote attitudes and values that are germane to the process of democratic consolidation.
DEDICATION

The work is dedicated to the Gracious Lord for his unfailing love and grace showered on me throughout my life and especially during the duration of the program. Also, to my lovely parents; Mr. Eric Mensah Bruku and Madam Helena Agyeiwaa Adom for their continuous support and encouragement in every facet of my life. Lastly, I dedicate this work to the good memory of my grandmother Veronica Afi Atiblah. You will forever be remembered.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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To my uncles, Mr. Emmanuel Adu Wiafe and Mr. Eric Nuamah and Cousins, Mr. Eugene Obeng-Ntim and Francis Adjapong Yeboah, I say thank you for your generous contributions towards my education. God richly bless and enrich your endeavours.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Affordable Care Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Alliance for Democracy</td>
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<td>APP</td>
<td>All Peoples Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNP</td>
<td>Bosotho National Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDD</td>
<td>Centre for Democratic Governance and Development</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
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<td>CPP</td>
<td>Convention Peoples Party</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<td>DFP</td>
<td>Democratic Freedom Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPP</td>
<td>Democratic People’s Party</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>Electoral Commission</td>
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<td>EGLE</td>
<td>Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party</td>
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<td>FES</td>
<td>Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung</td>
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<td>FHR</td>
<td>Freedom House Ratings</td>
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<td>GDCSP</td>
<td>Ghana Democratic Consolidation Strategy Papers</td>
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<td>GDRP</td>
<td>Ghana Democratic Republican Party</td>
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<td>GPPP</td>
<td>Ghana Political Party Program</td>
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<td>GNPP</td>
<td>Great Nigerian Peoples Party</td>
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<td>IPD</td>
<td>Intra-Party Democracy</td>
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<td>LCD</td>
<td>Lesotho Congress for Democracy</td>
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<td>LP</td>
<td>Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFP</td>
<td>Marema-Tlou Freedom Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMDCs</td>
<td>Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives</td>
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<td>NCP</td>
<td>National Convention Party</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Committee</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Democratic Party</td>
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<td>NFIB</td>
<td>National Federation of Independent Businesses</td>
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<td>NGP</td>
<td>New Generation Party</td>
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<td>National Health Insurance Scheme</td>
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<td>Peoples Heritage Party</td>
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<td>PNC</td>
<td>Peoples National Council</td>
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<td>PNDC</td>
<td>Provisional National Defense Council</td>
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<td>PNP</td>
<td>Peoples National Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualitative Content Analysis</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Democratic Countries</td>
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<td>UGCC</td>
<td>United Gold Coast Convention</td>
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<td>UGM</td>
<td>United Ghana Movement</td>
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<td>UNC</td>
<td>United National Convention</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Political parties are indispensable tools in every representative democracy. According to Scarrow (2005), they are collective entities that help to articulate group aims, nurture political leadership, develop and promote policy initiatives and present voters with coherent electoral alternatives.

They also serve as mediums for citizens to participate in the political processes, broaden aggregation of varied political interests, facilitate systematic and democratic transitions, promote government accountability as well as impart legitimacy to the political system (Maiyo, 2008). However, it is important to emphasize that not all political parties can facilitate the democratization processes other than those whose internal processes are genuinely democratic. To a large extent, intra-party democracy is regarded as a *sine qua non* for promoting democratic culture in the society as a whole (Prasai, 2009).

Mainwaring (1995:11) notes that “the way political parties behave and carry out their activities affect such vital questions as the nature of, and citizens attitude to democracy, the level of accountability and the quality of elections in a country.” This perspective is shared by many political scientists. For instance, Anifowoshe (2004:59) argues that “Democracy exists where the principal leaders of a political system are selected by competitive elections in which the bulk of the populations have the opportunity to participate. As a matter of fact, the condition of the parties in a political system is the best possible evidence of the nature of any democratic regime”.

Implicit in the above statement is that the internal processes and activities of political parties are crucial to the practice and consolidation of democracy in every country.
The scope of political party activities requires that members express their views which may be shared or divergent. In a situation of divergence of interest, conflicts become inevitable (Momudu & Matudi, 2013). But a primal problem, which curbs party cohesion, institutionalization and the deepening of democracy in political parties in Africa, rests in their ideological emptiness (Okereka, 2015). Admittedly, political parties in Ghana seem to be freewheeling in their ideologies, but several studies (Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Bob-Milliar, 2012; Nugent, 1995) have established that ideology matters to some extent in Ghana’s party politics.

Prior to the third wave of democratization that hit Africa in the 1990s, most African countries had one-party regimes. Ghana made its successful return to multi-party democracy in 1992. Thenceforth, Ghana has been a relatively growing constitutional democracy (Boafo-Arthur, 2006; Agyemang-Duah, 2005). Ghana’s democratic construction recognizes the centrality of political parties. The constitution of the Fourth Republic and other laws such as the Political Parties Act 2000 give prominence to multi-party competition and party-based government. The laws recognize parties as one of the chief institutions of democratic politics and bestow on them full rights to participate in the political process (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah, 2008).

The contribution of political parties to Ghana’s democracy and its consolidation cannot be gainsaid. They have not only provided a link between government and the people but have also provided the platform for citizens to participate in the governance process and offered voters alternative programs during elections. Ghana has made significant strides in democratic governance and has been considered by many as the lighthouse of democracy in Africa. Indeed, Ghana has enjoyed twenty-five years of uninterrupted multi-party democracy and development. Its democratic credentials are exhibited by the conduct of seven successful elections, liberalization of political space, respect for
the rule of law, enhanced media freedoms, the protection of Human rights, among others.

The successful holding of seven consecutive elections (and three power alternations in 2000, 2008 and 2016) indicates that the country has passed Huntington’s two-turnover-test (Huntington, 1993) and demonstrates that Ghana is consolidating its democracy. Despite the praises and accolades showered on Ghana, severe challenges remain in its democratic practices that need to be surmounted. Ghana can therefore not boast of having fully consolidated its democracy, even though some efforts have been made in that regard (Arthur, 2009; Boafo-Arthur, 2002).

Although the 1992 Constitution of Ghana makes provision for a multi-party democracy, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) have dominated Ghanaian politics since the beginning of the Fourth Republic; creating a de facto two-party system (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar, 2014; Whitfield, 2009).

It is also worth mentioning that the NPP and the NDC have been mainly responsible for the mobilization as well as political education of voters in the seven general elections held under the Fourth Republic (Debrah, 2014). This notwithstanding, their activities are not without severe deficits. According to (Wanjohi, 2003 cited in Maiyo, 2008) the participation of party members revolve around the selection of leadership and candidate, formulation of policies, as well as their involvement in party structures at all levels. Sartori (2005:11) also notes that the main function of political parties in modern democracies is to serve as a link between the citizens and the government.

In order to effectively perform this role, political parties have to make provisions for the active participation of the rank and file in the decision-making process of the party. However, in Ghana, the internal processes and activities of political parties often tend
to violate internal party democracy (Debrah, 2014). These challenges, among other interposing factors, often result in unsought outcomes such as internal conflicts, lack of harmony, division and instability culminating in resignations, suspensions and/or dismissals, declining membership and electoral support which in the long-run subvert political parties potency as agents of democracy. Essentially, intra-party conflict appears to hinder orderliness in any democratic setting, by serving as impediments to proper and effective functioning of political parties.

The current trend of conflicts in the NPP and NDC provokes questions about their internal democracy, the effectiveness of their internal conflict resolution mechanisms as well as their commitment to ensuring democratic consolidation. The fundamental argument is that political parties cannot play their roles as genuine vehicles of citizen participation if their internal processes and practices undermine basic democratic principles. Thus, internal conflicts in the two leading political parties have far-flung implications on the practice and consolidation of Ghana’s democracy.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The 1992 constitution and other laws are committed to ensuring transparency, accountability, equity and internal democracy. Article 55 (5) of the 1992 constitution demands that parties internal organisation and activities conform to basic democratic principles as outlined in the Constitution and other statutory documents.

Sadly, this does not appear to be the case in the Ghanaian context. The study, therefore seeks to unravel why this seems to have become the norm in Ghanaian politics.

Although studies on various aspects of intra-party politics in Ghana abounds (Debrah, 2014; Bob-Milliar, 2012; Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah, 2008; Ninsin, 2006), none of them
has specifically looked at the internal conflicts in the two leading political parties namely the NPP and NDC. This is precisely the nagging issue this study seeks to address.

An examination of party activities in Ghana right from the colonial period reveals a disturbing varying degree of intra-party conflicts. Most troubling is the happenings of the Fourth Republic where the activities of political parties are characterized by so many internal wrangling and disputes. The question, therefore, is why is it difficult for political parties to put into practice the canons of internal democracy as clearly spelt out in the 1992 constitution?

From my personal observation, even though intra-party conflicts have not been the reserve of the NPP and NDC, its recent manifestations in these two political parties have assumed an unprecedented magnitude and a changing form and character. Violence has become a major feature of the internal activities of the NPP and NDC, resulting in loss of lives and destruction of properties. Also, it has been observed that most political parties in Ghana tend to take their conflicts out to courts rather than exhausting internal conflict resolution mechanisms (Debrah, 2014). This often ends up intensifying factionalism which deepens internal conflict and consequently results in some party members breaking away from their respective parties. Specifically, Article 4 of the NPP constitution spells out the disciplinary and grievance procedures, whereas Articles 39-41 of that of the NDC comprise the code of conduct and disciplinary code. The question then is why the recurrent conflicts despite all these provisions?

The incessant nature of conflict in the NPP and NDC serves as a major threat to Ghana’s democratization process, endangering the prospects of democratic stability and consolidation. This is because it has the tendency of weakening the leading political
parties hence affecting electoral mobilization, political socialization as well as civic and political education which help in shaping citizens orientation and expectations about the values of democracy and multi-party politics. Additionally, the activities of militant wings and party youth activists pose a grave threat to life and property and undermine the process of democratic governance.

Despite these challenges, intra-party conflicts in contemporary Ghanaian political parties remain largely unexamined. This makes it imperative to give serious thought to how these challenges could be prevented to promote peace and stability within political parties as well as deepen democratic governance in Ghana.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overarching objective of the study is to identify the factors that account for the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC and proffer ways it can be addressed.

The specific objective of the study includes the following;

• To identify the sources of internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC

• To assess the manifestations of conflicts in the NPP and NDC

• To find out the differences and similarities in the conflict of the NPP and NDC

• To ascertain how internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC affect Ghana’s democratic consolidation

• To measure the extent to which the constitutions and other laws of the NPP and NDC provides mechanisms for conflict resolution

• To bring out the factors that hinder effective conflict resolution in the NPP and NDC
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The burden of this research is to find out what accounts for the intra-party conflicts in the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

The following are pertinent questions posed for investigation.

• What are the sources of conflicts in the NPP and NDC?

• What are the manifestations of conflict in the NPP and NDC?

• What are the differences and similarities in the internal conflicts of the NPP and NDC?

• How do the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC affect democratic consolidation?

• Do the NPP and NDC have an effective conflict resolution mechanism?

• What are the factors that obstruct the application of the conflict resolution mechanisms in the NPP and NDC?

1.5 LOCATION OF THE STUDY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

The study falls under Comparative Politics, a sub-field of Political Science with special emphasis on internal conflicts in the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC).

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This work is relevant for many reasons. Theoretically, this work will expand in no small measure, the existing literature on party politics. Specifically, it will contribute to the understanding of internal party politics under the Fourth Republic. Ghana’s democracy is evolving and party politics in the period under consideration has been a defining moment in the country’s political history. Although political parties in Ghana face
severe challenges, they continue to be the principal actors of representative democracy. By studying their structure, their relationships and their responses to the changes in their environment one learns about the nature of power configurations and of collective political action. Probing and documenting these internal dynamics will add to the invaluable store of knowledge on party politics in Ghana as well as serve as a reference material to students of Ghanaian politics.

1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organised into five (5) chapters. The first chapter constitutes the introduction and comprises the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, location of the study in political science and organisation of the study.

The second chapter encompasses the theoretical framework of the study and a review of literature relevant to the subject matter. It includes the views of different authors on democracy, democratic consolidation, the importance of political parties in contemporary democracies, intra-party democracy, intra-party conflict and factionalism, intra-party conflict in advanced democracies, in developing countries, in Ghana with a special focus on the NPP and NDC. It also looks at the conflict resolution mechanisms in the NPP and NDC.

The third chapter deals with the methodology used in the research work. Here, an introduction begins the chapter and the various research strategies and sampling technique to be used. It also looks at the method of data collection, sources of data as well as data analysis framework. The issue of ethical considerations in research is not left out in this chapter.
The fourth chapter entails the analysis and discussion of findings under appropriate headings reflecting the objectives of the research. Lastly, the fifth chapter comprises the summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at the theoretical framework upon which the study is built and the review of literature relevant to the study. The first section of this chapter involves theoretical framework made up of system theory of political analysis and then the deployment of the theory to this work.

The second section reviews literature on the general issues regarding party politics, democracy, democratic consolidation, the importance of political parties in contemporary democracies, intra-party democracy, intra-party conflicts and factionalism, intra-party conflict in advanced democracies, in developing countries and in Ghana with a special focus on the NPP and NDC.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Scholars and theorists have developed theories in different times and periods to understand and explain why certain events take place in the world. Reeves et al (2008:631) writing along this perspective posit that “theories give researchers different ‘lenses’ through which to look at complicated problems and social issues, focusing their attention on different aspects of the data and providing a framework within which to conduct their analysis”.

Burchill et al (2013) have listed some of the benefits of theories to both abstract and practical lives. Firstly, theories help to prioritize information and enable humans to focus on the salient issues. Secondly, they have been employed to describe, explain and
predict what the future holds in order to prepare for upcoming events (Kaufman, 2013). Finally, they are used to galvanize support for the productive running of an action.

2.2.1 System Theory of Political Analysis

The study adopts the system theory of political analysis as its theoretical framework. This theory has its philosophical underpinnings in the works of sociologists and biologists such as Talcott Parson, Charles Darwin, and Ludwig Van Bertalanffy.

The major proponent of the theory is David Easton. Easton presented his framework in his book entitled *The Political System* (1953) which he further expounded in his two books, *A Framework for Political Analysis* (1965), and *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (1979). Skyttner (1997:7) defined a system as “a set of two or more elements where: the behaviour of each element has an effect on the behaviour of the whole; the behaviour of the elements and their effects, on the whole, are interdependent; and while sub-groups of the elements all have an effect on the behaviour of the whole, none has an independent effect on it”. Put differently, a system is made up of “sub-systems whose inter-relationships and inter-dependence move toward equilibrium within the larger system” (Steele, 2003:2).

The political system or the input-output approach is derived from the systems theory. David Easton identified the political system as the basic unit of analysis and focused on the intra-system conduct of various systems. Easton (1965: 57) defines political system as “those interactions through which values are authoritatively allocated and implemented for society”.

Easton (1965) argued further that a detailed explanation of the political system requires that one understands what is “political and system”. According to him, the political
refers to the process of governance and the administration of the public affairs, whereas system denotes interrelationship of parts and a boundary of some kind between it and its environment. The latter implies that when the properties of one element in a system change all other elements and the system, in general, is disturbed. Just like the human biological system in which all organs perform specific functions to ensure the survival of the human being, the political system has different frameworks and functions and every structure has its sub-systems charged with specific roles targeted at ensuring the effective working of the system as a whole.

The political system is comprised of all factors influencing collective decisions which includes the political parties, voters, interest groups, social movements, processes of recruitment and socialization among others. The proper functioning of each of the groups is essential for the effectiveness of the system as a whole.

According to Easton (1965), the political system is “anatomical” and encompasses various parts; inputs (demand and support), outputs, environment, and feedback. The input into the system includes fiscal contributions (payment of taxes), supports (obedience to laws and regulations as well as citizen participation in voting and political decision-making, etc.) and demands which are the aspirations and needs the people want addressed. The output refers to the decisions or public policies produced by the system which may be authoritative or democratic depending on the nature of the political system. Generally, outputs are responses to demands or connote efforts to meet or suppress them. Easton (1965) further asserts that political life is a system of behaviour engrafted in an environment which influences the political system and in turn reacts to it. The environment, therefore, encompasses all socio-economic, religious, ideological, cultural and other factors without which the existence of political system
will not be possible. Lastly, there is a feedback spiral which response to policies and also makes new demands into the system (Easton, 1953).

The benefits of the political system approach or input-output model cannot be overlooked. By focusing not only on the system, but also the sub-systems, and the entire environment, Easton’s political system approach, provides a complete set of techniques which can be adopted for the analysis of any political system as well as for making comparative study of various political systems. Jean (1969:25) notes that the political system “includes not only governmental institutions such as legislature, courts, and bureaucracy but the combination of all structures in their political aspects of social life”. Other scholars have argued that Easton’s system theory is unquestionably the most comprehensive systematic approach so far constructed purposively for political analysis (Hoffman, 1982; Leslie, 1968:170).

Despite the aforementioned strengths, some scholars have severely criticized the political system theory. According to Paul Kress, Easton’s input-output approach lacks empirical basis and is empty of facts (Kress, 1996). Other scholars have argued that Easton’s system theory is an abstraction whose relation to empirical politics cannot be established (Verma, 1975).

Meehan (1967) argued that Easton’s political system is “logically suspect, conceptually fuzzy, and empirically almost useless” (Meehan, 1967: 174). In spite of the above criticisms, the theory is still relevant to political science as a field and the systematic analysis of political events in the contemporary world. This is aptly captured by Carmani in the words below:

“Easton’s work has been a victim of its own success. His concepts have impregnated the minds of political scientists, as well as those of the wider public, so deeply that, in
a way, it goes beyond citation. In all fairness, it is quite difficult to imagine what
political science would have looked like had Easton’s political systems approach not
occurred” (Carmani, 2008: 12).

2.2.2 Deployment of Theory

Political parties are crucial to the effective running of every democratic state. Dode
(2010) contends that the presence of vibrant political parties is imperative for
democratic consolidation. However, it has been observed largely in Africa that political
parties do not practice what they preach. Ibeanu (2013) notes that they pursue and
proclaim democracy externally and oppose it within. This often ends up in undesired
outcomes such as internal conflicts which in the long-run hinder the prospects of
democratic consolidation.

In the case of Ghana, political parties, among other things, serve as mediums for citizen
participation in the political processes, channels for the mobilization and socialization
of citizens as well as avenues for the recruitment and nurturing of political leaders. As
such, they provide mediums for training and socializing citizens to imbibe democratic
ethos. The effective working of Ghana’s democracy at the state-level as well as its
consolidation should, therefore, be viewed against the backdrop of their internal party
activities. As the main vehicles of Ghana’s democracy, their internal processes and
activities have direct implications on democratic consolidation. Political parties who
practice internal democracy are more likely to project these same principles in their
inter-party activities and consequently at the national level. In contrast, if political
parties are internally undemocratic, definitely inter-party as well as national politics
will also be underpinned by democratic deficiencies. This is so because parties are
subsets of the political system and once a part of the system is affected, automatically
the remaining parts are also disturbed hence affecting the smooth operation of the entire political system.

Also, the issue of democratic consolidation in Ghana should be addressed starting from the party level. This is because; parties’ internal democracy is considered as a pre-condition for the development of democratic values at the state-level (Debrah, 2014). Political parties must, therefore, ensure that their internal practices and activities do not contradict basic democratic principles. By extension, the more political parties in Ghana attach much importance to their roles as agents of political mobilization and socialization, the more they will socialize their members to inculcate the democratic ethos and rudiments. Additionally, the more political parties enforce and deepen democratic principles in their internal activities including decision-making processes and electoral procedures, the more the obstacles to democratic consolidation in the Ghanaian political system is likely to be surmounted.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section contains a review of scholarly works that are relevant to the phenomenon under investigation with a special focus on intra-party conflicts in the NPP and NDC.

2.3.1 The Concept of Democracy

Democracy is a debatable concept both in definition and practice. According to Zagel (2010:2), the description of the concept has “changed, evolved, lost and gained in its complexity”.

The concept traces its origin to the ancient Greeks about BC 500. Democracy is derived from two Greek words; “demos” (people), and “kratis”, (rule). “Democracy” can, therefore, be literally translated as the “rule by the people” or “government of the
people”. Two opposing views by Plato and Aristotle serve as the basis for contemporary discourse on the essence of democratic governance.

In the considered opinion of Plato, a “philosopher king” who was knowledgeable and has a council of advisors should be at the helm of government. Aristotle, on the other hand, considered the mass participation of the citizenry as the crucial element of democratic governance.

One of the famous definitions of democracy, “the government of the people, by the people and for the people” can be ascribed to Abraham Lincoln. This definition, however, does not attempt to introduce any desirable form of its practice, but rather seeks to put people and the individual at the heart of the existence and functions of government. It is worth mentioning that modern-day democratic theory is based on two approaches, namely, the minimalist approach and the maximalist approach.

Joseph Schumpeter provided one of the earliest and most notable definitions of democracy. According to him, a democracy is an “institutional arrangement for arriving at the political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote” (Schumpeter, 1942:269). Schumpeter’s definition single out elections as the key element of democracy. Chauvet and Collier (2009) corroborate this argument by asserting that election is the most noticeable and defining characteristic of democracy.

Nevertheless, (Lindberg, 2006; Bratton, 1998) contend that election is necessary but insufficient in ensuring democratic consolidation. Lindberg (2006:2) opines that “elections in newly democratizing countries do not signal the completion of the transition to democracy, but rather foster liberalization and have a self-reinforcing power that promotes increased democracy in Africa’s political regimes”.

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This underscores the relevance of “founding” elections in new democracies. Scholars like Huntington and Diamond affirm Schumpeter’s emphasis on competitive elections or contestation as the essence of democracy. Huntington (1996) for instance, avers that competitive elections should serve as the means through which the people select their leaders. Likewise, Diamond (1999) views democracy as a system of government in which the principal political portfolios are filled through regular, free and fair elections. These perspectives, however, limit civil and political liberties to electoral rights and neglect the importance of rules and regulations in the democratic process.

Taking a critical look at the concept, Przeworski & Stokes (1999) argued that democracy is a rule-based competitive system marked by divided interests and alternation of power. Nonetheless, their emphasis on alternation of power as a characteristic of democracy makes their definition questionable. This is because some countries are regarded as democracies, but their political landscape has been dominated by one political party. Typical examples are South Africa and Botswana.

The African National Congress (ANC) and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) have been in government since their countries attained independence, but both countries have consistently been well-placed on the Freedom House ratings (FHR) of democratic states (Puddington, 2013). As a result of the lacuna created by these minimalistic proponents, other scholars sought to fill the gap by looking at the concept from a broader perspective. For instance, Robert Dahl provided a broader construct of democratic theory in his concept of “Polyarchy”. According to him, “Polyarchy” is a system that is considerably popularized and liberalized, highly inclusive and extensively opened to contestation. This in his view is different from the ideal type of governance (Democracy) that is totally or virtually completely responsive to its citizens (Stevens, 2013: 12).
Based on this, Dahl (1973) listed seven key elements required for the effective functioning of every democracy. These include control over governmental decisions about policy constitutionally vested in elected officials; periodic free and fair elections; Freedom of expression (i.e. the right to form and join autonomous associations such as political parties, interest groups, etc); universal adult suffrage; the right to run for public office; and access to alternative sources of information that are not monopolized by either the government or any other single group.

The debates on excessive electoralism or electoral populism; a phenomenon Karl (1986) calls the “fallacy of electoralism” which describes a situation whereby democracy is reduced to the conduct of regular elections applies to Africa. Africa has made significant strides in the practice of democracy and recorded considerable development over the past decade. A case in point can be made of Ghana’s electoral success story, which has surpassed Samuel Huntington’s ‘two-turnover test’ of democratic consolidation (the smooth transfer of power under different political parties in the 2000, 2008 and 2016 elections). However, various shortcomings dent Africa’s laudable success. Inclusive of such is; pervasive corruption across the continent, excessive executive powers permitted by African Constitutions and the under-representation of women in the political space.

Given such mixed achievements, the continent must give greater attention to ways the challenges identified, among others, could be surmounted in order to deepen democracy and improve the living conditions of the people. This observation is also consistent with Mamdani’s (1988) argument that democracy remains a fiction in Africa if its understanding is not directly linked to the living conditions of the people, especially those within the lower class.
2.3.2 Democratic Consolidation

The extant literature on democratic consolidation reveals that scholars hold varied opinions on the definition of the concept. Schedler (1998:101), for instance, describes it as “an omnibus concept, garbage can accept concept, a catch-all concept, lacking a core meaning that would unite all modes of usage”. However, virtually all scholars agree that the process of democratization is complex, can span over several generations and is liable to reversals. Sodaro (2008) simply defines democratization as “the transition from non-democratic to democratic forms of government”.

In the view of Boafo-Arthur (2002:248), advancing into “democratic governance after a long spell of military dictatorship is one thing and sustaining, entrenching or consolidating the democratic structures put in place is quite another”. Huntington (1996:6) re-echoes this point by noting that the process of democratic consolidation faces several challenges which include “problems inherited from their authoritarian predecessors as well as others peculiar to democracy and democratizing societies”. He further states that “democratization is the solution to the problem of tyranny, but the process of democratization itself can also create or exacerbate other problems with which new democracies must grapple”.

According to Stevens (2013), democratization involves two distinct stages (transition and consolidation) although they may sometimes overlap. Transition is the process by which a state moves from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997) usually via free and fair elections. It calls for the establishment of participatory and competitive political institutions such as political parties and an independent election management body. Lindberg (2006) argues that even though elections are not ends in themselves, the continuous conduct of elections has the
potential of ensuring democratic consolidation because democratization is not a one-off event but a process.

Despite evidence of regular elections becoming a common feature of party politics in Sub-Saharan Africa, Bob-Milliar (2013) observes that authoritarian practices serve as obstacles to the process of transition. Consolidation, on the other hand, may take a longer period to be achieved as it entails a widespread acceptance and incorporation of democratic values (Gunther et al, 1995).

According to Gyampo (2015: 2) “there is no fixed time frame for democratic consolidation and this stems from the fact that democracy is a process and requires constant engineering in light of the challenges that may confront the nation in question”. Boafo-Arthur (2002:249), argues that “the absence of a time frame has contributed, to some extent, to the general skepticism as to whether it is worthwhile to discuss democracy in terms of its consolidation”. It behooves therefore, to explain the concept in terms of the quality of change seen in the institutions and practices of the country under review over a period of time (Boafo-Arthur, 2002).

Schedler (1998) distinguished between “minimal democracies” and “liberal democracies”. He described the former as regimes characterized by relative free and fair elections, inclusive suffrage and the prospects of competition whiles the latter, he argued, are regimes in which political rights and civil liberties are highly respected. Schedler (1998:91) defined democratic consolidation as “attempts made to secure emerging democracies, to extend their life expectancy beyond the short-term, and to make them immune to the threat of authoritarian regression, by building dams against potential and actual reverse waves”.

Implicit in this definition is the fact that, the emergence of democracy in a state does not automatically guarantee its consolidation. Rather, the consolidation of democracy must be engineered through a conscious effort by the citizens and their leadership to safeguard democracy, and nurture it until it becomes “the only game in town”.

To achieve this requires the establishment of rules and regulations that will guide the activities of citizens, as well as institutions to supervise, implement and defend such democratic modalities (N’goma, 2016). In line with this position, Fernandez (2006: 67) remarked:

While democratization process could lead to a state with a democratic system, a consolidated democracy encompasses the understanding of the system and the formal and informal acceptance of its own citizens in regard to the institutional, political and societal obedience to democratic rules and practices.

Linz and Stepan (1996) provided one of the most notable definitions of democratic consolidation. According to them, consolidation is achieved when democracy becomes “the only game in town” (Linz &Stepan, 1996:5) so that it is inconceivable to act outside democratic institutions. This definition provides a clear distinction between consolidated democracies and those that have merely survived without complete institutionalization and internalization of democratic ethos (Stevens, 2013).

In his book, Consolidating The Third Wave of Democracies: Themes and Perspectives, Diamond (1997:16) reiterated Linz and Stephan’s point by arguing that scholars share a general perspective of a consolidated democracy as a distinct process by which the statutes, institutions, and limitations of democracy come to embody “the only game in town”, the only justifiable procedure for seeking and exercising political power.

Likewise, Mainwaring et al (1992:3) posit that a democracy becomes consolidated when all political actors accept the rules that guarantee political participation and
competition (Mainwaring et al, 1992:3). While summarizing the previous definitions, Gunther et al (1995) argued that democratic consolidation is attained when the political class and the masses have accepted democratic institutions, processes, and principles as the only legitimate frameworks.

Linz & Stepan’s definition encapsulate three dimensions of democratic consolidation—behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional. Behaviourally, a democracy is regarded as consolidated when there are “no significant anti-democratic political groups or attempts to secede from the state” (Linz & Stepan, 1996:6). The attitudinal dimension is attained when majority of the populace in spite of severe economic hardships and their displeasure with the performance of the incumbent, accept the democratic system as the most suitable means through which the society should be governed and firmly believe that the procedures that lead to changes in government must conform to the democratic principles.

Finally, the constitutional yardstick is achieved when all political actors (governmental and non-governmental forces) agree to resolve their disputes within the parameters of the approved laws, procedures, and institutions permitted by the state (Linz & Stepan, 1996:6). As succinctly described by Reynolds (1999:22), “democracy is unlikely to break down when it is behaviourally practiced, attitudinally widely accepted, and constitutionally entrenched”.

Additionally, Linz and Stepan advanced five interdependent indicators of a consolidated democracy which are- a free and lively civil society, relatively autonomous political society, rule of law, state bureaucracy and institutionalized economic society. First, a free and lively civil society refers to both a witting effort to design a political system where contestation is permitted by political actors as well as
a system in which political players compete for legitimacy in order to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus (Linz & Stepan, 1966).

Generally, political society comprises of institutions such as political parties, legislatures, elections, electoral rules, political leadership and inter-party alliances. The second indicator, an autonomous political society, refers to a system that ensures that civic organisations and other non-governmental groups are free from government control and undue interference. Nonetheless, this does not imply a divorce between civil society organisations and the State. Thus, Linz and Stepan emphasized the dual role of CSOs in the process of consolidation. They assert that CSOs play a crucial role in the process of transition where they spearhead democratic reforms.

It is, however, required of them to hold political actors accountable to their democratic commitments after transition to democratic rule (Stevens, 2013). The third indicator; the rule of law refers to a system where all political actors respect and uphold the rules and regulations as enshrined in the constitution. The fourth indicator of democracy, usable state bureaucracy, refers to the ability of the state to safeguard the rights of its citizens and provide other basic services that citizen’s request. The last indicator of a consolidated democracy, an institutionalized economic society, refers to the regulation of the economy and market forces through a system of approved rules and norms for economic engagement (Stevens, 2013).

It is imperative to point out that two important caveats underlie Linz and Stepan’s democratic consolidation model. Firstly, the fact that a regime is consolidated does not rule out the possibility of that regime experiencing a democratic reversal at a point in time. Secondly, the degree of democratic consolidation varies from country to country and a consolidated democracy still needs to improve its quality.
Sandbrook (1996) argues that these variations can be explained in relation to the differences in the arduous conditions that democratic reformers face as well as the varying dexterity and dedication of political leaders and movements in their quest to consolidate democratic governance.

To consolidate democracy requires the institutionalization of parties and party system (Matlosa & Sello, 2007; Sandbrook, 1996). Sandbrook (1996) posits that institutionalization is achieved when the populace accepts the institutions and the rules they embody. According to Diamond (1999:65), “…a democracy is consolidated when all the important political players, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine”.

To Thompson (2000:239), a congenial political culture, an effective civil society, and a supportive economy are preconditions for the consolidation of democracy. Ninsin (2006) notes that the stability of a democratic polity depends on the degree to which its institutions perform their roles in a sustainable manner. A consolidated democracy will, therefore, be difficult to achieve in the absence of an effective and well-functioning political parties (Matlosa & Sello, 2007). To advance democratic consolidation, there is the need for the existence of a political culture that promotes the “acceptance of the rights of opposition, of free speech and assembly, of the rule of law, of regular elections, of turnover in office, and the like” (Lipset, 2000: 5).

Flowing from the various scholarly viewpoints on democratic consolidation, this study is underpinned by a general acceptance of a wide range of democratic values including: strict adherence to democratic principles; internalization of democratic values such as tolerance, consensus-building and compromise; respect for the rule of law; strong
institutions of state; effective political parties; free, fair and transparent elections; independent judiciary and an effective justice system; broader participation of the citizens including the vulnerable in decision-making processes.

The prevailing economic crises on the African continent serve as a major hindrance to the process of democratic consolidation. Mutua (2000:8 cited in Boafo-Arthur, 2002) emphasized this point by arguing that “the most serious threat to democracy, civil society, and reforms remains, however, in the impoverished economies of African states”. As such, many scholars are quite skeptical about the continent’s prospects of democratic maturity (Boafo-Arthur, 2002). Evidently, Ghana faces economic challenges and institutional deficits which have affected the process of democratic consolidation. While for the moment the country cannot boast of having fully consolidated its democracy, the significant strides chalked so far is laudable and a clear indication of the country’s commitment to consolidate its democracy.

2.3.3 Political Parties in Contemporary Democracies

Political parties are regarded as important tools in modern democracies. Accordingly, their relevance in contemporary political dispensation was long noted by Schattschneider (1942: 1) when he posited that “political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the political parties”.

Dahl (1967:203) corroborates this line of argument by asserting that the “presence or absence of competing political parties can be used as a litmus paper test for...democracy in a country. No full-fledged modern democracy lacks parties that compete for votes and offices in national elections.” Inherent in the above assertions is that the existence of vibrant parties is important for the emergence of political pluralism and the survival of a democracy (Van Biezen, 2003; Randall & Svasand, 2002).
As argued by Gentili (2005:2), modern democratic polities are characterized by broader participation and government accountability and thus by definition are party democracies. The importance of parties in contemporary democratic systems is also evident in the crucial roles granted them by the constitutions of various democratic polities (Van Biezen, 2003). Indeed, political parties serve as key instruments for political participation and the emergence of multiparty system (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011; Van Biezen, 2003) which are necessary conditions for democratic consolidation.

Albeit the important roles parties play in democratic states, the literature reveals that their activities are not without shortfalls. Their roles are impaired by various negative activities such as unhealthy rivalry, division between and/or among ethnic groups, lack of internal democracy as well as violence. Biezen (2004) posits that “their increasing inability to perform many of the functions seen as essential to a healthy performance of democracy”, has been at the core of discourse among scholars in the field.

Similarly, Catón (2007) argues that political parties repeatedly fail to execute their roles satisfactorily or with decent reliability. Much of the recent criticisms that have been leveled at parties include failure on the part of party leadership and political class to fulfill their promises, organisational inefficiencies as well as their inability to provide enough avenues of representation (Van Biezen, 2003). Other scholars have criticized the overly hierarchical structure of modern political parties. Webb & Poguntke (2005) using the phrase “presidentialization of politics” contend that the influence of party leaders have increased in virtually all aspects of decision making. In the view of Catón, (2007) the over reliance on personal appeals of leaders weaken political parties. Additionally, candidate selections for political portfolios are not always based on merit and this affect the selection of the best candidate for political offices (Debrah, 2014;
Despite these shortfalls, the centrality of parties in contemporary democratic dispensation cannot be understated.

### 2.3.4 General Studies on Intra-Party Democracy (IPD)

There is an ongoing discourse among scholars with regards to the desirability and workability of democracy within parties. Nonetheless, many scholars and practitioners concur on some fundamental principles of participation, accountability, transparency, representation, competition, responsiveness and inclusivity (Rahat & Shapira, 2016; Cross *et al*, 2013; Mimpen, 2007) as the features of an internally democratic party. Internal party democracy, basically, seeks to create a level playing ground for the active participation and inclusion of the rank and file in the decision making processes of the party (Scarrow, 2005). Nonetheless, the benefits of intra-party democracy are contested. Scholars like (Cross & Katz, 2013; Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011; Sartori, 2005) have argued strongly that internal democracy is important to the health and survival of every democracy. Sartori (2005), for instance, contends that without IPD, the opinions of various groups within the party may not be heard and two key roles of parties, interest representation, and aggregation, would be marred.

Others have observed that IPD bolster the legitimacy of the democratic system through the provision of opportunities for political participation, which helps citizens to expand their civic skills, thereby promoting a democratic ethos within the party and the society at large (Amundsen, 2013; Mimpen, 2007; Scarrow, 2005). According to Mainwaring and Scully (1995), a major characteristic of a matured party is its internal democratic credos. In the considered opinion of Maiyo (2008), parties that are internally democratic are considerably better off than those that are not. Such parties are more likely to benefit from diversity of ideas and new personnel as a result of their inclusiveness (Rahat &
Shapira, 2016; Mimpem, 2007; Scarrow, 2005) and less likely to depend on a few individuals at the apex of the party hierarchy (Sartori, 2005). Cross et al (2013) simply state that parties that do not practice internal democracy are not committed to the democratic process.

Generally, arguments in support of IPD are suited in participatory and deliberative perspectives of democracy which attaches much importance to citizen participation in the political system (Mutz, 2006; Teorell, 1999). According to the participatory approach, parties that are internally democratic provides the citizens with the opportunity to nurture their political ambitions through their inclusiveness in the party’s activities (Debrah, 2014). Proponents of the deliberative approach argue that parties who practice IPD benefit from divergent opinions which enable them to make collective decisions based on informed preferences and stronger consensus (Hazan & Rahat, 2010; Barabas, 2004). This is consistent with Thompson (2008) argument that intra-party deliberations provide the medium through which party members reconcile their personal goals with that of the group.

In contrast, some scholars have downplayed the importance of intra-party democracy. Schattscheinder (1942 cited in Rahat & Shapira, 2016) for instance, argues that it is imperative to have democracy between parties, but not necessarily within them because the absence of democratic ethos in parties internal activities does not harm macro-level democracy if the latter is implemented correctly (Rahat & Shapira, 2016). Michels (1968) in his famous work of “iron law of oligarchy” contends that parties are intrinsically undemocratic and are most likely to adopt oligarchic principles (Ikeanyebi, 2014).
Gauja (2006) adds to the argument by noting that IPD negatively affects internal decision-making by preventing parties from selecting candidates they deem as most appealing to the electorate. That is, key political decisions are assigned to a small group of people at the expense of the larger membership. Chisinga & Chigona (2010) also notes that IPD creates room for party splits and crises. They note that IPD affects party efficiency. More time and energy is allocated towards internal competition and conflict resolution, which could otherwise be used for developing strategies aimed at ensuring electoral success. Mimpem (2007) cautioned that internal democratic modalities may be very profitable, “but that no–one-size-fits-all approach should be adopted” (Mimpem, 2007:2).

In the African context, issues of IPD significantly revolve around party institutionalization and democratization processes (Ikeanyibe, 2014). For instance, Maiyo (2008:3) in his study of some East African countries observed that “a combination of increased internal democracy coupled with low institutionalisation, lack of effective and independent conflict resolution mechanisms as well as a chaotic political culture in a highly heterogeneous society could be a recipe for open conflict and threaten social cohesion.” The internal democracy and proper functioning of political parties have been identified as key challenges of political parties in West Africa (Ikeanyibe, 2014).

Adejumobi (2007) after studying thirteen West African countries concluded that the activities of political parties in the sub-region contravene both their internal party rules and basic democratic principles. According to Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (2010), lack of internal democracy accounts for intra-party conflicts in Africa. In the specific context of Ghana, there appears to be few studies on intra-party democracy and its implications on the country’s drive towards democratic maturity. Debrah (2014:58), emphasized this
point by noting that “Indeed, inter-party rather than intra-party democracy has been the subject of many scholarly works on democratization in Ghana”. It suffices to state, however, that internal democracy is crucial to party organisation and multi-party politics at the national level.

Mainwaring & Torcal (2005) has observe that the party systems of democratic states in Africa are less institutionalized as compared to those of advanced democracies and this explains the differences in their effectiveness. The Ghanaian case is, however, different from the other African countries. Since the transition to political pluralism in 1992, party system in Ghana has developed into the most stable institutionalized two-party system on the continent (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar, 2014; Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah, 2008). The dual party system has been a major characteristic of party politics in Ghana and has flourished within a democratic setting marked by meaningful discourse among political parties on issues of national importance. These developments have largely promoted stability, legitimacy, and accountability of parties and have also boosted the confidence of Ghanaians in liberal democracy (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar, 2014).

Veritably, many scholars on the continent have indicated the institutional shortfalls of African political parties by arguing that they serve as avenues for ethnic mobilization or mediums of individual politicians (Boafo-Arthur, 2003; Van de Walle, 2002 cited in Bob-Milliar, 2012). Weak institutionalization affects party coordination and subsequently their performance in the polity. Institutionalization of parties and party systems are therefore crucial to socio-economic and political developments as well as an important step towards democratic consolidation (Mainwaring & Torcal, 2005).
2.3.5 Intra-Party Conflict and Factionalism

Conflict has been variously defined by scholars. Pruitt (1998) notes that there are many definitions of the concept as there are many scholars writing about it. Rubin et al (1994:5) defined conflict as “perceived divergence of interests or beliefs that the parties’ current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. It can manifest itself in many forms, some of which may be violent and inflict pain and suffering on both parties in conflict and to other people who may not be directly involved, due to its spillover effect”. It is significant to note that scholars hold divergent views as to whether conflict is good or bad. This is affirmed by multiple researches across various disciplines. Scholars like (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; Schwenk & Cosier, 1993; Black, 1990) contend that conflict is harmful to organisational functioning in that it affects the stability of an organisation. They further argue that groups with minimal conflict and high consensus are more effective than those with low consensus. Conversely, other scholars such as (Momudi & Matudi, 2013; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Bourgeois, 1985) assert that conflict under certain circumstances can be beneficial.

In the words of Momudu & Matudi, “functional conflicts engender creativity, positive growth and development, mutual understanding and healthy relationship between individuals and groups….¨ (Momudu & Matudi, 2013:3). To Maor (1997 cited in Momudu & Matudi, 2013) intra-party politics is generally based on conflict and consensus with various internal groupings searching for equilibrium between the two.

Drawing on the above definitions of conflict, intra-party conflict can be defined as a dispute which occurs when members of the same political party pursue incompatible goals or battle over the control of the party’s decision-making apparatus.
As Anyadike & Eme (2011:43) observed, it is a situation of “great shock, difficulty, and distress created in a political party due to the inability of the party concerned to resolve and reconcile effectively its internal differences or disputes”. Internal party disputes are mostly evident during the selection of candidates for elective and appointive positions (Ibrahim & Abubakr, 2015). These conflicts if not properly managed have the potential of creating divisions which may affect the party’s unity and its electoral fortunes in the long-run. Maor (1998:10) avers that intra-party conflict results in a decline in the party’s stability and/or cohesion. Several factors can be put forward as causes of intra-party conflict. Shale & Matlosa (2008) identified four causes of intra-party conflict. These include “Favouritism-Promoting one’s kith and kin,” “Unequal sharing of resources (leader’s constituency gets a lion’s share),” “Lack of regular meetings,” and “Centralized authority-power concentrated at the top” (Shale & Matlosa, 2008:13).

Several studies conducted on political parties have revealed a varying degree of organisational structures, internal dynamics as well as differences in the approaches adopted to achieve their aims. A careful study of the extant literature on party organisation reveals that parties are not homogenous groups but rather comprise of coalitions of political players who pursue their personal interests and goals (Kollner & Basedau, 2015). The formation of these coalitions according to (Panebianco, 1998 cited in Kollner & Basedau, 2015) hinges on the exchange of political resources. Maor (1997:147) opines that “intra-party politics is a matter of conflict and cooperation with factions looking for equilibrium between the two”.

Indeed, Harmel et al (1995:7) posits that “Factionalism is a fact of life within most political parties” (Cited in Boucek, 2009). Similarly, Heller (2008:2 cited in Momudu & Matudi, 2013) notes that “political parties are driven by the spirit of faction…factions
are ubiquitous.” Factions are organised groups within a party with a common purpose and identity who acts en masse to achieve their goals (Beller & Belloni, 1978; Zariski 1960). Party members with analogous opinions are likely to aggregate together in order to gain control over the party’s decision-making machinery. Sartori (2005) in his book “Parties and Party Systems” provided an extensive analysis of internal processes of political parties. He challenged the unitary actor assumption of parties and argued that they are made up of factions and groupings. Sartori further identified four factors that separately or collectively account for the emergence of factions in political parties- organisational, motivational, ideological and left-and-right. In explaining the factors mentioned above, Sarakinsky & Fakir (2015:63) succinctly note that factions take a coordinated form; there are reasons, concerns, and maxims that underlie its formation; they are based on well thought-out values as well as informed by positioning in relation to significant policy dispositions of the party.

Boucek (2009) identified three phases of factionalism within political parties, which are cooperative, competitive and degenerative. According to him, cooperative factionalism is marked by consensus-building between the various groupings within the party whereas the competitive factionalism is characterized by fragmentations and splits caused by disagreements and different predilections. Lastly, the degenerative factionalism is when the existence of the party is threatened as a result of mismanagement, excessive fragmentations and consequently the absence of conflict resolution mechanisms. Cooperative factionalism is most desirable because it influences party members to adopt conflict resolution mechanisms to settle their disputes (Boucek, 2009). Boucek (2003) supports this argument by noting that the recurrent interactions between factions promote the emergence of cooperative norms, which may create the incentive for the parties in conflict to make trade-offs and
compromise in order to settle their incompatible interests. Cooperation among factions is, therefore, essential to the effectiveness of the party.

It is imperative to note that diversity may serve as an obstacle to party’s unification, but it does not entirely forestall cooperation. Factions can be good or bad depending on how they are managed (Kollner & Basedau, 2015; Sarakinsky & Fakir, 2015; Boucek, 2009). The positives include, but not limited to, promoting party unity through articulating and harmonizing diverse group interest; incorporating diversity into manifestos; broadening the support base of party by appealing to a larger group of people; promoting essential competitions between ideas and persons as well as contributing to effective decision making (Kollner & Basedau, 2015; Sarakinsky & Fakir, 2015). Factions can also influence the prevalence of internal conflicts; however, the strength of this relationship differs remarkably between parties. Koger et al (2010) observe that parties with vigorous structures are more likely to cooperate whereas weak parties can be gravely affected by divisions to the extent that cooperation becomes inconceivable internally. Factions may pose a grave challenge to party cohesion and effectiveness; reduce important intra-party deliberations and issue-based discourses to inter-factional power struggles (Kollner & Basedau, 2015; Boucek, 2009).

The above discussion reveals that unless decorously handled, internal Balkanization can affect party cohesion and effectiveness. In this regard, it is imperative for parties to have effective internal mechanisms to manage factions and promote equilibrium between divergent opinions.

2.3.6 Intra-Party Conflicts in Advanced Democracies

Internal wrangling and rivalry is a feature of all parties around the world. Parties all over the globe engage in a series of internal discourse over a variety of issues.
Since parties are an assemblage of diverse interest groups, conflict becomes inevitable. Party members may converge on some salient issues and at the same time hold opposing views on others. Barnes (1994) asserts that all political parties are, to some extent, divided ideologically or in terms of their opinions on a specific issue. Indeed, Reiter (2004 cited in Bob-Milliar, 2012) observes that a significant number of parties in advanced industrialized democracies are divided along the lines of ideology, patronage or policy goals.

Koger et al (2010) assert that internal disputes and factions are a common place in American political parties. The Democratic Party is divided into two-New Democrat and Liberal Wing whereas the Republicans are split between pro-business conservatives and social conservatives (Koger et al, 2010). Both factions struggle for the soul of their respective parties. Notwithstanding the sharp disagreements that underlie policy formulation and implementation, Koger et al, (2010) note that these divisions are underpinned by organisational cooperation.

The Democrats under the stewardship of President Obama experienced some internal disputes on various policy issues, including the legalization of gay marriages and health care policy (Obamacare policy). A study conducted by the Washington Post and the Kaiser Family Foundation in 2012 identified four factions in the Democratic party-Urban liberals, Agnostic Left, God and Government Democrats and do-it-yourself or “DIY” Democrats and their stance on the issue of gay marriage (Washington Post, 18-08-2012). On one hand, urban liberals and Agnostic Left largely supported the legalization of gay marriage and advocated for a divorce between the church and the state. On the other hand, a significant number of God and Government Democrats and “DIY” Democrats called on the government to put in place measures to preserve America’s religious heritage.
On healthcare, the Obamacare or Affordable Care Act (ACA) which is aimed at expanding health insurance coverage to more Americans met some opposition from within and outside the Democratic Party. Some opponents of the policy have argued that it is an undue interference in the affairs of individuals and private businesses whiles others think that it falls short on a monumental health care expansion. After almost a year of deliberations in Congress and Senate, the policy was signed into law on March 23, 2010. The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) petitioned the judiciary to revoke the law, but was upheld by the US Supreme Court on June 28, 2012. Also, the keenly contested 2016 presidential primaries between Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton deepened the tension within the Democratic Party. The victory of Hillary consequently led to protests by Sanders supporters with some accusing the National Democratic Committee (NDC) of being bias towards Hillary (The New York Times, July 27, 2016).

More recently, the Republican Party was entangled in internal wrangling in the run-up to what was described by many as the most contentious presidential elections in the history of America. The party was divided with its presidential candidate Donald Trump at the centre of the infighting. The split in the party unity set into motion after Trump won over Ted Cruz to become the Republican presidential candidate.

The disputes, nonetheless, intensified as a result of certain comments made by Trump which include accusing American Muslims of harboring terrorists as well as calling for stringent measures that would deny Muslims entry to America. Also, his comment on the racially- motivated violence in South Carolina was regarded by many as a sign of disrespect to Black Americans and the African continent as a whole. The acrimony at times assumed racial tones. Donald Trump (2016) noted cynically:
“… Are they saying Black lives should matter than white lives or Asian lives? If Black lives matter, then go back to Africa? We’ll see how much they matter there.” (Trump, 2016).

The internal wrangling, however, got to the head after The Washington Post released a tape of Donald Trump making offensive and lewd remarks about women. Some prominent members of the party requested that he renounces his position to allow his running mate Mike Pence lead the party in the elections. Another notable member like Paul Ryan (Speaker of House of Representatives), although did not withdraw their endorsement, announced that they will no longer defend or campaign for Trump.

In disassociating himself from Donald Trump, John McCain, the Republican senator for Arizona noted: “He alone bears the burden of his conduct and alone should suffer the consequences” (The Economist, 15-21st pp.20 October 2016). Also, former Republican Secretary of State Colin Powell declared his support for Hillary Clinton saying “because I think she’s qualified and the other gentleman is not qualified” (The New York Times, 25-10-2016).

On the other hand, some Republican bigwigs like Reince Priebus (The chairman of the Republican National Committee) and Steve Bannon (Chief Executive Officer for Trump’s campaign) rallied behind Trump despite all the criticisms and insisted that the party defended their presidential candidate at all cost ( The Washington Post, 8-10-2016).

Political parties in Britain have also had their fair share of internal rivalry. The Conservative and Labour parties have experienced internal disputes which to a large extent revolve around factions. Since the 1990s, the conservative party has been split over an array of issues regarding the European Union (Forster, 2002).
The Labour party, while considered as relatively united under Tony Blair, was engrossed in ideological rivalry in the 1980s and continue to be divided over salient issues which include state pension, voting reform and the levels of minimum wage (Stanyer, 2003). It is worth mentioning that the Liberal Democratic Party has not been an exception. The party experienced intense internal conflict in the 1990s over its relationship with the Labour Party (Stanyer, 2001 cited in Stanyer, 2003).

David Cameron upon assuming the leadership of the Conservative Party in 2005 disclosed his intentions to improve the representation of women in the party. Subsequently, several reforms were introduced to the selection modalities of parliamentary candidates in an attempt to remedy the situation. While majority of the members supported the idea of a socially representative parliamentary party, there were disagreements over the procedures to be adopted. Consequently, the disagreements resulted in disputes between the leadership of the party and the local Constituency associations with the latter accusing the former of undue interference in their activities (Webb & Childs, 2011).

More recently, the conservative party has been hit by internecine warfare prior and after the famous “Brexit” referendum which saw 52% Britons voting in favour of Britain’s exit from the European Union. Prior to the referendum, the party was deeply divided. For instance, Prime Minister David Cameron and Finance Minister George Orsbone campaigned for a “Remain” vote while other senior members agitated for Britain’s exit (Reuters, 15-06-2016). Describing the disarray within the ruling party, Phillip Johnston of the Telegraph newspaper remarked:

It sometimes feels like we are trapped inside the tortured mind of a party that has been wrestling with demons for many years and has now succumbed to madness (The Telegraph, 19-04-2016).
One would have thought that the Labour party would exploit the conflict situation in the Republican Party and prepare itself adequately for the next election. The Labour party, however, has also been engulfed in internal rivalry which has led to mass resignations within its shadow cabinet. Also, some members of the party have called on Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of the party to resign (The independent.co.uk, 24-06-2016). These internal conflicts cast doubt on the seriousness of the Labour party as well as their readiness to claim power from the Conservatives.

The evidence above underscores the fact that intra-party conflict is not the reserve of political parties in Africa. Nonetheless, the violent nature of internal conflicts in Africa is rarely seen in advanced democracies. Internal party conflicts in advanced democracies, more often than not, revolve around policy issues with factions looking for equilibrium (Koger et al, 2010). Such internal divisions often emerge as a result of differences over the strategies and tactics to be employed (Webb & Childs, 2011).

No matter how intense these disputes may be; rarely do they end up in violence. The National Democratic Institute (NDI: 2011) found out that parties in established democracies are institutionalized and therefore adhere strictly to laid down procedures that guide their internal activities in relation to candidate selection, policy formulation, and conflict resolution. The existence of such mechanisms provides avenues for party members to resolve their differences making the possible occurrence of violence less likely.

2.3.7 Intra-Party Conflicts in New Democracies

Taking a cursory look at Africa’s political landscape in general and party politics in particular, one would identify several instances of intra-party conflict that continue to plague political parties on the continent. Indeed, intra-party conflict has become a
feature of party politics in Africa (Aleyomi, 2013). Although intra-party conflict can be beneficial or destructive (Momodu & Matudi, 2013), unfortunately, the latter has been the case in Africa (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016). Several studies conducted across the continent have revealed varying degrees of its adverse effects on the parties involved as well as their entire political system. For instance, Matlosa & Sello (2007) in a study conducted on Political Parties in Southern Africa (SADC) observed that intra-party conflict is prevalent in the region. However, they were of the view that the nature and duration of such conflicts depended on specific political context of each country. Among other findings, the study established that the internal conflicts within various political parties in the region resulted in party-splits which in turn resulted in the formation of breakaway political parties and consequently a proliferation of independent candidates.

In the case of Malawi, the 2004 general elections saw many independent candidates polling more votes and together winning more parliamentary seats than the political parties (Matlosa & Sello, 2007). The study also showed that lack of intra-party democracy mostly accounted for violent internal conflicts among parties in the region. Most of the political parties oppose dissenting views and adopt various strategies to marginalize dissenters. Members who find themselves marginalized or alienated are likely to resort to unlawful means to express their discontent about the administration of the party. Virtually all the major political parties in Lesotho-Basotho National Party (BNP), the Marema-Tlou Freedom Party (MFP) and the incumbent Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) experienced massive intra-party tensions, factionalism, defections and carpet-crossing in parliament ahead of the 2007 general election (Matlosa & Sello, 2007).
A study conducted by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung foundation on political parties in Kenya also established that the nomination and selection processes within the parties are marred by fraud and often do not emerge from consultative mechanisms within the parties (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2010). The study further showed that in spite of the various legislations which require parties to practice internal democracy, the rank and file is often marginalized in the decision-making processes of the parties. Party elites and funders control the process. The study concluded that the lack of internal democracy largely accounts for intra-party conflicts in Kenya. This is consistent with Thompson’s (2008) view that intra-party deliberations provide the medium through which party members reconcile their individual interests with that of the group interest. In the absence of such mechanisms, conflict becomes inevitable.

Several other studies have been conducted on internal party conflict in Nigeria with most of them focusing on the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) which is arguably the most successful party in Nigeria since the emergence of the Fourth Republic in 1999 (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016; Aleyomi, 2013). Ibrahim & Abubakr (2015) for instance, observed that intra-party conflicts in Nigeria dates as far back as the colonial period. Nevertheless, its recent manifestations in the Fourth Republic have raised serious concerns (Momudu & Matudi, 2013). While Muhammed (2008) admits the worrisome nature of internal party conflict in Nigeria; his point of departure is that intra-party relations during the pre-independence era were substantially harmonious. According to him, this period was characterized by nationalist struggles for independence and therefore parties that emerged channeled their energies to mobilizing the citizenry to end colonial rule and achieve self-government (Muhammed, 2008:44).

Olaniyan (2009) describing intra-party conflicts in Nigeria wrote that “party politics has adorned the toga of notoriety in Nigeria to the extent that its defining characteristics
have been intrigues, bickering, backbiting, schisms, and violence” (Olaniyan, 2009:51). Similarly, Anyadike & Eme (2011) observe that the internal activities of political parties in Nigeria have been characterized by so many disputes to the extent that they now serve as obstacles to achieving democratic stability rather than promoting democratic principles. The incessant nature of intra-party conflict in Nigeria is due to the fact that many people view politics as lucrative and therefore employ all kinds of strategies, including violence to achieve their goals (Aleyomi, 2013; Muhammed, 2008).

The various studies conducted on intra-party conflict in Nigeria identified the causes of conflict to include god-fatherism, paucity of ideology, lack of internal democracy, imposition of candidates by party stalwarts, monetization of primary elections, non-compliance of members with party constitution, non-inclusive decision making among others (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016; Ibrahim & Abubakr, 2015; Aleyomi, 2013; Momudu & Matudi, 2013).

In the considered opinion of Ibrahim & Abubakr (2015:116), the aforementioned factors can be broadly categorized under lack of ideology and absence of internal democracy. In describing the paucity of ideology and its effect on party politics in Nigeria and Africa as a whole, Okonkwo & Unaji remarked:

> Political parties in Nigeria are pendulums that swing depending on the nature and dynamics of the politics of the day. That is why politics in Africa and Nigeria, in particular, is often regarded as “do or die” affair making the game of politics dirty in Africa (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016:96).

Also, it has been observed that internal activities of political parties in Nigeria are underpinned by democratic deficits. The elites and party stalwarts often manipulate the democratic processes in favour of their preferred candidates.
These interferences have been possible because of the internal structures of political parties which allow party executives to control the party resources (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016; Momudu & Matudi, 2013). Aleyomi (2013) noticed that nomination and imposition of party leaders and candidates have led to major conflicts in political parties in Nigeria. For example, the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) in 2007 experienced serious internal disputes at all levels of the party organisation when President Olusegun Obasanjo unilaterally declared the Late Umaru Yar’dua as the presidential nominee (Ibrahim & Abubakr, 2015).

Also, Okonkwo & Unaji (2016) noticed that all the PDP governorship candidates for the 2003 general elections were exclusively selected by President Olusegun Obasanjo, the then head of state. It is also imperative to point out that intra-party conflict in Nigeria have led to defections as well as the formation of breakaway political parties. Typical examples are the Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) which broke away from the Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP) and the All Peoples Party (APP) respectively (Muhammed, 2008).

These internal disputes which usually culminate into violence gravely affect political parties in developing countries and consequently have severe consequence on the entire political system. The consolidation of democracy, however, requires the existence of strong parties, effective institutions and a conscious citizenry working in unison to protect and promote the tenets of democracy (Gunther et al., 1995).

2.3.8 Party Politics in Ghana

Ghana has had a chequered political history. Out of its 60 years of nationhood, twenty – two years have been under military rule with four democratic regimes.
The fourth attempt at democratic rule was ushered in with the promulgation of the 1992 constitution, which is currently in its twenty-fifth year of political pluralism.

The significance of political parties in Ghana’s democratic politics can be traced as far as the 1950s, when the country was in its penultimate years of transition to an independent state (Yobo & Gyampo, 2015; Ninsin, 2006). As many as eight political parties came to light between 1954 and 1957 to contest in the struggle for self-government. The most active political parties were the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), the National Liberation Movement (NLM), the Northern Peoples Party (NPP) and the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) (See Yobo & Gyampo, 2015).

It is important to emphasize that these parties had different identities and political orientations. Whilst some of the political parties were grounded in sub-national or ethnic and regional identities, others expressed religious or supra-national identities (Ninsin, 2006).

Ghana attained a Republican status on July 1, 1960, under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who led the country to independence. Nonetheless, after nearly a decade of a single party rule, the Nkrumah led CPP administration was unseated in a military coup on February 24th, 1966 by the National Liberation Council (NLC). The soldiers indicated Nkrumah’s abuse of incumbency and his violation of individual rights and liberties as the reasons that informed their actions. They further pointed to his incessant disregard for the rule of law which they saw as a threat to the military itself (Gocking, 2005).

The country, thereafter, has experienced a number of political developments. Between 1966 and 1992, Ghana recorded about five military interventions interposed with two comparatively short civilian governments.
Multi-party elections were conducted in 1969 and 1979 with the Progress Party winning the 1969 election, and Dr. Busia and Lawyer Edward Akufo-Addo serving as prime minister and president respectively (1969-1972). The 1979 election was won by Dr. Hilla Limann’s Peoples National Party (PNP). However, the PNP rule was short-lived (1979-1981) as a result of what many scholars describe as the “The Second Coming” of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings on December 31, 1981. Rawlings and his Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) dominated the Ghanaian political scene for the next decade until a restoration to multi-partyism in 1992 (Yobo & Gyampo, 2015).

The return to multi-party democracy in 1992 led to the liberalization of political space which provided the citizens the opportunity to participate in the governance process (Gakzepo, 2008). This was accompanied by a plethora of political parties. Between May 1992, when the ban on political parties was lifted and November of the same year as many as thirteen new political parties were registered -the National Democratic Congress (NDC), New Patriotic Party (NPP), People’s Heritage Party (PHP), Democratic People’s Party (DPP), New Independent Party (NIP), New Generation Party (NGP), National Convention Party (NCP), Peoples National Council (PNC), Ghana Democratic Republican Party (GDRP), Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party (EGLE), Peoples Party for Democracy and Development, National Justice Party and National Salvation Party (Yobo & Gyampo, 2015; Ninsin, 2006).

Some of the political parties – for instance, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), had its roots in an old political tradition (Danquah-Busia-Dombo tradition) in Ghanaian politics dating as far back as the 1950s and adhering to the ethos of a liberal democratic polity which places much emphasis on the rule of law and the protection of individual rights and freedoms in a free political milieu (Ninsin, 2006). Others like the National Salvation Party were completely new parties and had no ideological stand (ibid).
It is imperative to point out that parties in Ghana subscribe to either the Danquah-Busia-Dombo tradition which believes in liberalism or the populist/Nkrumahist tradition which promotes state control of the means of production (Morrison, 2004). For instance, on many occasions, the minor parties have rallied behind either NPP or NDC during run-off elections (Pokoo, 2012).

2.4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN GHANA

The main statutes that govern political parties in Ghana are the 1992 constitution; the Representation of the Peoples Law (PNDCL 284) of 1992 and revised in 2000; the Political Parties Act of 2000 (Act 574); the Political Parties Law (PNDCL 281) of 1992, revised in 2000; the Public Elections Regulations (C.I. 15) of 1996 as well as the Political Parties Code of Conduct of 2000, amended in 2004 (CDD, 2004). It is worth mentioning that the Political Parties Code of Conduct is not a legal framework and as such not binding on political parties.

The Code of Conduct was formulated by civil society organisations in consultation with the political parties and the Electoral Commission. Its main purpose is to provide guidelines for political parties in their routine activities and especially during campaign periods.

Chapter 5 of the constitution emphasizes the need to protect political and civil rights and several others and affirms the importance of multi-party politics. The constitution in Article 55 outlines the statutory parameters for the formation and internal operations of political parties. For instance, Article 55 (4) of the constitution states that “every political party shall have a national character, and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions” and section (5) of the same article stipulates that “the internal organisation of a political party shall conform to
democratic principles and its actions and purposes shall not contravene or be inconsistent with this constitution or any other law.”

It is also worthy to note that the aforementioned provisions are captured in the Political Parties Law PNDC Law 281 and subsequently the Political Parties Act, 2000 Act 574 as mandatory requirements for the composition of parties and in the exercise of their duties (Ninsin, 2006). The electoral commission is admonished in section 9 (a) of the Political Parties Act, 2000 not to register any political party unless its internal activities are consistent with democratic principles as prescribed by the constitution and other laws. Section 9 (b) (d) of Act 574 further stipulates that at least one member of the founding members of a party should be an ordinarily resident in each of the districts of Ghana and the national executive committee should consist of one member from each region. Political parties are expected to be national in character and have offices in all the 275 constituencies.

2.5 STRUCTURES, INTERNAL ORGANISATION AND DECISION-MAKING IN THE NPP AND NDC

2.5.1 Decision-Making

Both the NPP and NDC have clearly delineated party structures from the national to the local levels, as well as a perking order of national executives. The composition, roles and ground rules of each of the party structures are clearly defined in the parties’ constitutions and other party documents. Nonetheless, the structures at the apex of their political organisation deserve much attention because of the roles they play in the parties’ decision-making, membership, and financing (Ayee, 2008). Both parties regard their national delegates’ congresses as the supreme governing body (Debrah, 2014; Ninsin, 2006) through which crucial decisions are made concerning the party structures,
policies and constitutional issues (CDD, 2004). The National Council examines party issues and provides directives for National Executive Committee (NEC) on the course of action to be employed.

The National Executive Committee, which is chaired by the Chairman of the party superintends the activities of the party whiles the standing committees implement decisions made by NEC. Lastly, the disciplinary committee performs oversight functions (NPP, 1992; NDC, 2000).

**2.5.2 Membership**

To become a member of both parties, one must first be a Ghanaian of voting age (18 and above), and of sound mind as well as subscribe to the ideologies and policies of the party. In respect of article (55) (4) of the 1992 constitution which requires that parties have a national character, the constitutions of both parties stipulate that membership shall not be based on ethnicity, religious affiliations or other sectional divisions. Members of both parties enjoy certain rights and at the same time are obliged to perform some duties. For instance, they are required to protect the unity of the party; accept and publicly uphold the party’s constitution and other decisions; accept the disciplinary mechanisms and party’s rules of conduct; pay dues to support the day-to-day activities of the party among others. The Centre for Democratic Development in a study on political parties found that only a few members are able to pay their dues (CDD, 2004). The study further established that members’ inability to meet their financial responsibilities is due to poverty and a lack of appreciation of the functions political parties play in improving their living standards and the development of the country as a whole. Both parties occasionally hold training programmes for its members especially
party technocrats, party activists as well as members who represent the party during voter registration and elections (CDD, 2004).

2.5.3 Candidate and Leadership Selection

The ability of political parties to select the right candidates and leaders to contest national elections as well as handle party’s internal and external matters is crucial to the survival of the party (Ranney, 1981). Elections have become the usual mechanism by which political parties select their leaders and candidates (Bryan and Baer, 2005 cited in Debrah, 2014). Elections at all levels of the NPP and NDC are supervised by the electoral management body in order to ensure fairness. The constitutions of the NPP and NDC clearly outline the criteria for selecting candidates. Articles 11 and 12 of the NPP constitution and Articles 43 and 44 of that of the NDC respectively, provide legal restrictions on eligibility for Parliamentary and Presidential candidates. In the case of presidential candidates, both constitutions, state that an aspirant should be at least 40 years old, a committed member of the party of at least five (5) years, have no criminal record and have adequately satisfied all party obligations.

The presidential candidates of the two parties are elected at their national delegates’ congress and the winner must obtain more than 50 percent of the votes cast. In case no one attains the constitutionally required 50% + 1 vote, a run-off ballot is conducted for the two candidates who obtained the highest number of votes in the first round. For the parliamentary primaries, aspirants must be of good standing and meet other eligibility criteria which include; membership for at least two years; a registered Member and a voter in the Constituency which he or she seeks to represent.

The parliamentary primaries unlike the election of the presidential candidate are held at the constituency level and the candidate who obtains a simple majority is declared
winner. Additionally, both presidential and parliamentary aspirants are obliged to pay a non-refundable nomination fee to the party. Despite the fact that both parties do not have quotas for groups in the minority (CDD, 2004), these groups are encouraged to contest for portfolios for which they are eligible. Also, both the NPP and NDC have established women and youth wings to promote their participation in the internal activities of the parties (Debrah, 2014). The constituencies, regional and national executives of the NPP are elected every four years (NPP, 1992) whereas those of the NDC are elected every two years (NDC, 2000).

2.6 IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE NPP AND NDC

Ideology has been often described by scholars as the “most elusive concept in the whole of the social sciences” (McLellan, 1986:1) due to the difficulties surrounding its exact meaning. Bjornskov (2005:3) similarly argues that ideology is “Hotly disputed…difficult to define and consequently difficult to measure”. Gerring (1997) asserts that ideologies which denote a set of related beliefs and values become political ideologies when it spells out a definite programme of action such as a party manifesto. Ideology is very essential in all facets of politics because it does not only serve as a logical structure for looking at society in its totality, but also provide a robust apparatus “of conflict management, self-identification, popular mobilization and legitimization” (Nnoli, 2003:178).

Ideology is crucial in socializing party members to imbibe and internalize party ideals which in turn serve as a guide for their internal and external activities. Despite the confusion surrounding its role, there is a general agreement that ideology is vital to the strength, effectiveness, and harmony of a party (Katsina, 2016). Dahl (1967) opines that political parties must have an ideological base no matter how blurred and divorced these
foundations are from the actual behaviour of the parties. Ideology serves as the fulcrum within which the activities of the party revolve. In reality, however, this is rarely the case in Africa.

The NPP and NDC are divided along two ideological lines. The NPP claims to be a liberal democratic party (Centre-right) and consider an effective private sector as central to the effective functioning of the state. Hence, they support a free market economy, private ownership, and wealth-creation whiles at the same time ensuring that essential policies are implemented to safeguard the most vulnerable in society (CDD, 2004). The NDC, on the other hand, views itself as a social democratic party (Centre-left), an ideological label also upheld by two other parties Convention Peoples Party and Peoples National Congress (Ninsin, 2006).

The NDC champion state involvement in virtually all aspects of the economy and provide opportunities for private sector participation and ownership to some extent. The aforementioned ideologies also serve as the foundation for their respective policy decisions whether in the helm of government or opposition (CDD, 2004). In preparing the policy documents of both parties, party members, as well as specific groups within the party, are given the opportunity to make inputs which are subsequently subjected to the consent and acceptance of their highest decision making body -National Delegates Congress (CDD, 2004). Also, the findings of research polls and the socio-economic situation in the country serve as a guide for both parties in this regard.

Both parties prepare manifestos which serve as a scheme for campaign at the national, regional and constituency levels during elections.

However, it has been observed that ideology, though relevant is nearly insignificant in mobilizing support for political parties in Ghana (Gyampo 2012; Ninsin, 2006).
For instance, majority of the members of various political parties cannot clearly articulate the ideologies of their respective parties, neither are they very familiar with their party manifestos. As such, support for political parties is largely based on ethnicity, personal ties, clientelism among others (Debrah, 2014).

Ideologically driven political parties are consistent regarding their perspective on national issues. Nonetheless, it has been noticed in Ghana that the position of political parties on issues of national concern largely depends on whether they are in government or opposition. For instance, NPP during their tenure of office (2001-2009) implemented several social intervention programs that are usually not consistent with a liberal democratic party. These interventions include but not limited to the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Capitation programme, Free Maternal Care and the National Youth Employment Programme. Conversely, the Mahama-led NDC government scrapped off Teacher and Nursing Training allowances. This has led many to question the social democratic ideals that the NDC claim to uphold.

Also, parties driven by ideology have a vigorous and carefully laid down mechanisms for handling internal disputes and harmonizing the interest of members (Nnoli, 2003). Members can, therefore, hold divergent views across a variety of issues, but will still remain in the party because of the effective avenues available for every member to address issues that affect them personally and the party as a whole. It is imperative to note that the absence of such mechanisms often results in defections, and sometimes the formation of breakaway political parties as has been the case of parties in Ghana.

The above discussion underscores the ideological deficit, which characterizes political parties in Ghana.
2.7 FOURTH REPUBLIC AND INTERNAL PARTY CONFLICTS IN THE NPP AND NDC

The major sources of conflicts in political parties in Ghana do not differ much from those reported in other Sub-Saharan African countries. The causes include, but not limited to, the struggle for the control of the party, God-fatherism, factionalism, and favouritism. Intra-party conflict in Ghana stretch back several decades. Since the emergence of the Fourth Republic, the NPP and NDC have witnessed several internal conflicts than any other political party. Most of these conflicts have revolved around candidate nomination and selection (Debrah, 2014; Pokoo, 2012) and are often characterized by intense factionalism (Bob-Milliar, 2012).

Jackson & Roseberg (2005) assert that the politics of factions in Africa is not a new development, but has its roots in the period of independence. In both the NPP and NDC, the sources of conflict revolve around attempts by party elites, financiers, and political godfathers to gain control of the party structures at all levels (Ayee, 2008).

Secondly, children or descendants of former political figures who were instrumental in any of the two traditions (Danquah-Busia-Dombo or Nkrumahist/Populist tradition) are accorded much preference (Pokoo, 2012). This in part explains why party politics in Ghana is dominated by children or relatives of former political figures. With their political background, they are seen as better placed and more appealing to the electorates and are often preferred by party godfathers. Ayee (2008) has observed that there is an emerging class of intellectuals and business persons who have what it takes to represent their parties at various levels. Nevertheless, without the backing of political godfathers, it becomes arduous for such people to occupy higher positions in both parties (Pokoo, 2012).
In relation to election, most of the internal rifts in both parties have emerged as result of attempts by party elites to ensure the victory of their candidates. Debrah (2014) found out that the elite adopt various strategies, including violence to alienate the rank and file in the process of candidate and leadership selection. This he aptly described as the “embourgeoisement tendencies” within the parties. He further argued that party hierarchy often unanimously dictates who should be elected which deprives the rank and file opportunities to select their preferred candidates. Ninsin (2006) concurs by noting that officials at the apex of the party hierarchy often impose candidates on the electorates during primaries. Candidates dissatisfied with such decisions often contest the parliamentary elections as independent candidates or defect to other parties while a significant number of supporters do not vote on the day of election (Ayee, 2008).

2.7.1 New Patriotic Party (NPP)

The internal conflict in the NPP has its origin in a long-standing conflict between the Danquah and Busia factions which is deeply rooted in the antagonistic historical rivalry between the Asante and Akyem ethnic groups (Ninsin, 2006). In recent years, however, the party’s internal feuds are largely characterized by personal antagonism between its prominent members (Bob-Milliar, 2012).

The 1992 and 1996 NPP presidential primaries, although non-violent were characterized by some internal disputes. Despite the fact that six candidates featured in both elections, the internal rivalries were between the Boahen and Kufuor factions. Professor Adu Boahen an Asante (commoner) and a lecturer at the University of Ghana gained his nationwide popularity as a result of his incessant condemnation of the arbitrary rule of the PNDC regime. Kufuor on the other hand, an Asante royal, had served as a member of parliament for Atwima Nwabiagya constituency on the ticket of
the Progress Party. He was also once a secretary for Local Government under the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) regime. Factionalism was a major feature of these contests. The Asante elites were in favour of Kufuor’s candidature whereas the middle-class and ordinary Asantes’ preferred Adu Boahen (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Professor Adu Boahen won the contest, polling 1,121 votes (56.60%) while Kufuor placed third with 326 votes (16.50%).

The tables, however, turned in favour of Kufuor in the 1996 presidential primaries after an attempt by the Danquah bloc to allow Prof. Boahen run uncontested, was quashed by the Busia faction who were of the view that party primaries are crucial for intra-party democracy (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Kufuor won the primaries with 1034 votes (52%) but lost the general presidential election to Jerry John Rawlings of the NDC.

Similar to the 1992 and 1996 presidential primaries, internal rivalry resurfaced in the 2000 presidential primaries. The two leading aspirants were J.A Kufuor and Nana Akufo-Addo; both Akans from the Asante and Akyem ethnic groups respectively. The party was split over the personality of the candidates (Bob-Milliar, 2012). The Asantes’ supported Kufuor whiles the Akyems rallied behind Akufo-Addo. Kufuor polled 1,286 (64.40%) to win his second nomination, whereas Akufo-Addo trailed with 628 votes (31.64%). The contest was impaired with accusations and name calling. For instance, the Kufuor faction was called the “Ashanti Clique” whereas the Akufo-Addo faction was referred to as “Akyem Mafia”, a manifestation of an ancient rivalry between the Asante and Akyem ethnic groups (Pokoo, 2012). Bob-Milliar (2012) contends that internal disputes in the NPP emerge not over ideology, but as a result of discrepancies over intellectual dexterity, personal egos, and group interests.
Also, the 2005 National Delegates Conference, which took place at the University of Ghana was marred by disputes. Again, the selection of party leaders created problems. The Kufuor bloc canvassed support for Mr. Steven Ntim whereas the Akufo-Addo bloc was in favour of Mr. Peter Mac Manu for the national chairmanship position.

This culminated into severe internal conflict between the two factions which was characterized by political mudslinging, accusations, and counter-accusations over vote-buying (Debrah, 2014). This exposed the party to incessant criticisms from the NDC who questioned their commitment to the rule of law and made a mockery of their internal democracy.

The division between Kufuor and Akufo-Addo resurfaced in the run-up to the 2008 presidential primaries. With President Kufuor’s second term drawing to a close, the NPP was faced with the difficult task of selecting a presidential candidate for the 2008 general elections. Astonishingly, 17 prominent members of the party, including Alhaji Aliu Mahama (Vice President), Nana Akufo-Addo and Alan Kyeremanten who was believed to have the backing of Kufuor sought nomination to lead the party in the 2008 general elections. Nana Akufo-Addo polled 1,096 (47.97%) votes’ whiles Alan garnered 738 votes (32.30 %). With none of the candidates attaining the required 50% +1 votes, a run-off had to be conducted for the two with the highest votes cast. Alan Kyeremanten, however, declined the run-off and conceded defeat to Nana Akufo-Addo. It must nevertheless be pointed out that the contest was marked by conflict with pro-Alan and pro-Akufo-Addo labels accusing each other of vote-buying and intimidation.

The intense contest and acrimonious campaigns nearly damaged the party beyond repairs as a result of the deep divisions that emerged. It also provided the NDC with a lot of arsenal to attack the ruling NPP. Alan Kyeremanten accused the Akufo-Addo
bloc of intimidating his supporters, who planned on contesting for the parliamentary primaries and on the basis of that renounced his membership in April 2008 (The Statesmanonline, 2008). Some well-respected members of the party called on him to rescind his decision. Despite his return to the party, some pro-Alan supporters still contested the 2008 parliamentary elections as independent candidates (Bob-Milliar, 2012). These divisions ultimately led to NPP’s defeat in the 2008 national elections (Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2010 cited Bob-Milliar, 2012). This occurrence affirms Koger et al (2010) argument that internal disputes if not managed properly could make cooperation difficult and affect party’s effectiveness.

In 2015, the NPP was engulfed in serious internal disputes which resulted in the death of Mr. Adams Mahama (Upper East Regional Chairman of the NPP), Abubakar Saddiq (member of the NPP) at Asawase in Kumasi and the destruction of some properties at the party’s headquarters by alleged militant wings of the party (myjoyonline.com, 21-05-2015).

The disagreements and open utterances among the party executives became a source of worry for the members of the elephant clan. After several attempts to settle the disputes proved futile, the Disciplinary Committee of the party suspended Paul Afoko (National Chairman), Kwabena Agyapong (Secretary) and Sammy Crabbe (2nd Vice Chairman). Mr. Afoko, however, challenged his suspension at an Accra Human Rights Court but lost after several months of deliberations. It is imperative to state that the party has not seen any serious internal rifts since the suspension of these national executives. The NPP went ahead to have a resounding victory in the 2016 general elections despite their internal disputes.
Despite the fact that the tension in the NPP subsided after their victory in the 2016 elections, there has been some new developments. Waves of violence have been perpetrated both internally and externally by militant groups of the party and irate youth activists over the nominations of persons for various portfolios. In the Ashanti Region, a para-military group of the party called “Delta Force” stormed the Regional Coordinating Council where they vandalized properties and assaulted George Agyei who was appointed the Regional Security Coordinator. Members of the “Delta Force” claim that the appointee was not part of the struggle that contributed to the historic victory of the party in the 2016 general elections (Myjoyonline.com, 24-03-2017).

More recently, the selection of persons for nomination as Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executive (MMDCEs) positions has created tension within the camp of the NPP. The release of 212 names for the positions of MMDCEs has sparked an internal rivalry in the ruling NPP. In the Savelugu-Nanton Municipality in the Northern Region, angry youth burnt party billboards to show their displeasure with the choice of the president as his executive representative in the area (myjoyonline.com, 26-04-17). Similar disturbances have occurred in other areas. This is unfortunate because, in a democracy, there are genuine ways of expressing dissatisfaction without resorting to violence. This act of political thuggery which has come to characterize party politics has the potential of endangering Ghana’s democratic stability and consolidation.

2.7.2 The National Democratic Congress (NDC)

The NDC is an offshoot of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), a military regime which was formed on the principles of Probity, Accountability, and Social Justice and headed by Jerry John Rawlings.
The party has been described by some party stalwarts as the third political tradition in Ghana although some scholars argue that the party is grounded in the populist/Nkrumahist tradition (Pokoo, 2012).

The major divisions in the NDC revolve around the Pro-Rawlings and Anti-Rawlings blocs. These divisions have led to a number of internal conflicts with varying manifestations. However, the conflict that hit the party in 1995 was characterized by strained relations between President Rawlings and his vice Mr. Arkaah (Frempong, 2007 cited in Bob-Milliar, 2012). This was evident in their divergent perspectives on government economic policies. For instance, Mr. Arkaah in a May Day speech called on workers to oppose the 17.5% VAT implementation, claiming that the decision was not authorized by the cabinet (Ayee, 2007 cited in Bob-Milliar, 2012). Aggrieved by Arkaah’s continues opposition to his dictates, Rawlings physically assaulted him at a cabinet meeting held on December 28, 1995 (Frempong, 2007:154 cited in Bob-Milliar, 2012).

In order to strengthen his position in the NDC, Rawlings ensured that his favourites won internal elections at all levels of the party organisation (Debrah, 2014). Having completed the two-term constitutional mandate as a president, Rawlings was not eligible to run for the 2000 national elections. The NDC had to select a flag bearer to lead the party in the contest. The pro-Rawlings faction clamored for a unanimous decision in favour of Professor J. E.A Mills who was the vice-president during Rawlings second term in office. Conversely, the anti- Rawlings caucus advocated for an open contest (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Some party loyalists, including Goosie Tanoh expressed their interest to contest in the presidential race. Rawlings, however, ignored the party’s candidate selection procedures (Ayee, 2008) and unilaterally declared Professor Mills as his successor at their National Congress held at Swedru in 2000.
(Debrah, 2014). This action was met with some opposition which provoked internal disputes and consequently led some displeased members to leave the party and form the National Reform Party (Debrah, 2014; Bob-Milliar; 2012; Ayee, 2008).

Again, the 2002 NDC presidential primary which was between Professor J.E.A Mills and Dr. Kwesi Botchwey, a leading member of the party was soaked in violence. There were allegations of widespread interference of party bigwigs to deny Dr. Botchwey of victory. For instance, it is alleged that Rawlings was behind the attacks perpetrated against Dr. Botchwey and his torrid supporters (Debrah, 2014). Dr. Botchwey after losing to Professor Mills expressed his dissatisfaction with the party’s internal politics and left to USA (Debrah, 2014).

In reminiscent of the NPP, the 2005 NDC congress held at Koforidua was marred with conflict. Dr. Obed Asamoah and Dr. Kwabena Adjei contested for the position of the national chairman. Rawlings was in favour of Dr. Adjei and therefore adopted Machiavellian tactics to ensure his victory (Debrah, 2014). Supporters of Dr. Asamoah were intimidated, assaulted and coerced to forfeit their support in favour of Dr. Kwabena Adjei who eventually won the contest (Debrah, 2014). This consequently led to the resignation of Dr. Asamoah and some other notable members of the party including Kweku Baah (Vice-Chairman) and Professor Wayo Seini (MP for Tamale Central) who were not pleased with the turnout of events. Subsequently, some members of the NDC broke away and formed the Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) which was chaired by Dr. Obed Asamoah.

The internal disputes in the NDC re-emerged prior to the 2008 national elections. Having suffered two defeats in a row, with Prof. Mills as its flag bearer, the NDC were determined to avoid a third successive defeat.
The electability of Professor Mills took centre stage in the party’s internal discourse. The younger generation supported a change in favour of Dr. Ekow Spio-Garbrah whereas the conservatives backed Mills (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Prof. Mills won the contest overwhelmingly polling 1,326 (81.4%) of the votes cast. The internal conflict, nonetheless, resurfaced with some few months to the 2008 general election. This led to a division of opinions in the party with some members of the party, including its founder calling for an emergency congress to select a new presidential candidate. Nevertheless, some close friends of Mills and bigwigs of the (P) NDC (Totobi Kwakye and the Ahwoi brothers) opposed all attempts to displace their candidate (Bob-Milliar, 2012). The internal disputes, however, did not affect the NDC’s electoral fortunes as they went ahead to win the 2008 election in a run-off.

Remarks made by former President Rawlings after the elections were indicative of the strained relationship between his office and the Mill’s administration. First, he openly called on President Mills to dismiss all DCEs and Security Chiefs appointed by Kufuor’s administration within the first quarter of his administration (Myjoyonline, 2009). This was accompanied by requests for the arrest and prosecution of some officials of the Kufuor’s government. The Mills administration, however, did not heed to Rawlings’ aggressive demands, but asserted their willingness to follow due process in making such arrests and prosecutions (Pokoo, 2012). Unremittingly, Rawlings accused officials of the Mills administration of corruption and made a mockery of the composition of his government describing them as “Team B” (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Pokoo, 2012).

Again, conflict greeted the NDC in the run-up to the 2012 national elections. For the first time in Ghanaian politics, a sitting president was being challenged in a party’s presidential primary. The contest, which took place at the Sunyani Coronation Park
pitted President Mills against Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, (former first lady of Ghana). The heightened tension divided the party into two factions leading to the formation of “FONKAR” (Friends of Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings) and “GAME” (Get Atta Mills Elected). Political mudslinging, insults, and intimidation took centre stage of the contest. Mills had a resounding victory polling 2,771 votes (96.6%) votes, whiles Mrs. Rawlings trailed with 90 (3.1%) votes (Citifmonline.com, 2011). The deep scars created as a result of the contestation could not be healed leading to the breakaway of some aggrieved members of FONKAR and the formation of the National Democratic Party (NDP) with Mrs. Konadu Rawlings as its flag bearer (Bob-Milliar, 2012).

The 2015 presidential and parliamentary primaries of the NDC were also marked by conflicts. As the 2016 election approached, some bigwigs in the party were determined in ensuring that John Dramani Mahama, the sitting president goes uncontested and therefore adopted various tactics to guarantee his candidacy. Prospective members who expressed interest to contest Mahama in the party’s presidential race were opposed. For instance, the nomination form of Mr. George Boateng (an NDC youth organiser at the Oyarifa branch in the Madina Constituency) was rejected by party executives. In providing reasons for the rejection, Mr. Asiedu Nketia (General Secretary of NDC) argued that the form sold to Mr. Boateng was not the original but rather a draft. Subsequently, the administrative officers who issued the forms were dismissed (Graphiconline.com, 09-9-2015). There were also allegations of insanity raised against Mr. Boateng by some senior members of the party including Hon. Alban Bagbin (Majority Leader) and Mr. Asiedu Nketia (myjoyonline.com, 08-09-2015). Ultimately, President Mahama went unopposed and had the endorsement of 95% of the delegates.

The parliamentary primaries were marred by pockets of violence. Incidences of violence were reported at various constituencies (Tema South, Ablekuma South,
Klottey-Korle, Ningo Prampram, Nanton, Madina, Suame, Bole-Bamboi, Akatsi-South etc) over bloated register, missing names in register, stealing of ballot boxes, among others. Some candidates who lost the elections proceeded to court to seek redress whereas others announced that they will contest the 2016 parliamentary national elections as independent candidates. The NDC through its General Secretary Mr. Asiedu Nketia on November 1st, 2016 announced the dismissal of twenty-three (23) members including sitting MPs, arguing that their decision to contest as independent candidates run afoul of the party laws (myjoyonline.com, 01-11-2016).

A more recent feature of internal conflict in the NDC has been attacks perpetrated by party foot soldiers as a way of showing their displeasure at some party decisions especially with regards to the appointments and dismissal of District Chief Executives. In 2014, Gabriel Barimah and Nana Asare Bediako DCEs of Ahafo Ano South and Atwima Nwabiagya respectively were physically assaulted by foot soldiers of the party. Similarly, Moses Luri, DCE for Sissala West District was violently attacked by some youth activists who he alleged were incited by the Upper West Regional Minister, Alhaji Amidu Sulemana (The Statesmanonline, 26-10-2016).

In 2015, the DCE of Mpraeso and his ardent supporters engaged in violent clashes with NDC Constituency Executives (newsghana.com, 8-8-2015). Also, Emmanuel Twum, DCE of Atiwa was hospitalized after being physically assaulted by some youth activists who were instigated by constituency executives (Starrfmonline, 24-07-2015). The attacks continued unabated in 2016 with Nkoranza North, Chiana-Paga and Atebubu Amantin DCEs suffering physical assaults at the hands of party foot soldiers (The Daily Statesman, 26-08-2016). In the Wa West constituency in the Upper West region, some youth activists aggrieved by the failure of President Mahama to nominate their
preferred candidate for the DCE position set ablaze the constituency office and a vehicle belonging to the constituency chairman (Adomonline.com, 25-06-2016).

Also, the thumping defeat of the NDC in the 2016 general elections has led to some internal frictions. It is important to note that it is the first time a sitting president had failed to renew his mandate for a second term in office under the Fourth Republic. The governing NDC’s candidate, President John Dramani Mahama polled 44.40% to lose his re-election bid to Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP who garnered 53.85% of the valid votes cast. Some prominent members of the NDC have blamed their founder Jerry John Rawlings for masterminding their defeat by deliberately staying out of their campaigns which in turn led to voter apathy in the Volta region and other strongholds of the party (Myjoyonline.com, 13-12-2016).

Subsequently, confusion broke out at the party’s headquarters in Accra on Monday, December 12 after a “diehard” supporter of the party nearly assaulted the party’s Deputy Communications Director, Fred Agbenyo and other party functionaries for mismanaging resources apportioned for grass-root supporters during their campaign (peacefmonline.com, 1312-2016). Some incensed foot soldiers of the party in the Eastern Region on Thursday 16th March 2017 prevented their regional executives from participating in a meeting organised by a national body of the party (Kwesi Botchwey-led Committee) to identify the factors that accounted for their humiliating loss in the December 2016 elections. The irate foot soldiers and some constituency executives accused their regional executives of misappropriating funds meant for the electioneering campaign in the region and called on them to vacate their positions immediately. It took the timely intervention of the Eastern Regional Police coupled with efforts by Dr. Kwesi Botchwey and Edward Doe Adjaho, former speaker of parliament to calm tensions and restore normalcy (Dailyguide.com, 23-03-2017).
This development is analogous to what happened in Tamale where the fact-finding committee encountered a group of aggrieved supporters who vented their anger on the regional chairman, Sofo Azorka and his cohorts accusing them of causing the defeat of the party (Dailyguide.com, 23-03-2017). The dust appears not to be settling anytime soon as some party members continue to openly accuse and point fingers at each other for their thumping defeat despite the formation of a committee to probe the causes of their loss. Some party stalwarts including Kwabena Agyei (Former Chairman of the party), Mark Wayongo (Former Minister of Interior), Joseph Bipoba Naabu (MP for Yunyoo Constituency in the Northern Region) among others has blamed former President Mahama for their abysmal performance in the December 2016 elections by noting that he surrounded himself with the wrong people. According to Dr. Kwabena Agyei, the former president was deceived by some prominent members of the party into thinking he was in a comfortable lead when everything showed he was losing the election (myjoyonline.com, 23-03-2017). Joseph Bipoba also noted that ex-president Mahama surrounded himself with inexperienced people who only misled him causing electorates to vote against him out of anger.

He allowed those working around him like Omane Boamah, Felix Ofosu Kwakye, Baba Jamal and other presidential staffers like Stan Dogbe to influence him. These small boys who have not even rented a room by themselves, have not been able to buy a car, had this opportunity and they were just talking carelessly, insulting people and he was listening to them. Could you believe that someone like Bagbin went to him [Mahama] to meet him and people like Stan Dogbe gave instructions that he cannot see him (MP, Yunyoo Constituency;peacefmonline.com, 23-03-2017).

Yaw Boateng Gyan, a former national organiser of the party has admitted that the NDC was much more divided than the NPP but pretended as if all was well and spent time which could otherwise have been used to resolve their internal conflicts talking about the internal frictions in the NPP (myjoyonline.com, 23-03-2017).
These developments seem to deepen the wounds in the party thereby making conflict resolution difficult. It also has the tendency of affecting their electoral fortunes in the next general elections if not properly handled.

Prior to the 2016 elections, the NDC touted themselves as a united party and described their main rivals the NPP as a “conflict party” which should not be voted for. Nonetheless, the internal rift that has hit the NDC after the 2016 elections indicates that parties in opposition are more prone to internal conflicts than parties in power.

According to Ikeanyebi (2014), the democratic modalities for party’s internal elections generally depict its internal democracy. Norris (2004) avers that democratic competition should provide a level playing grounds for all aspirants. Similarly, Dahl (1998) posits that candidates and leadership selection processes should promote peaceful outcomes. However, the procedures for selecting candidates and leaders in both the NPP and NDC are often characterized by violence.

The evidence so far point to the fact that despite the regulations governing candidate and leadership selection in both parties, party primaries hardly promote equity and transparency. Party Patrons tend to monopolize the process in order to satisfy their parochial interests. This becomes possible because officials at the apex of party hierarchy wield power and authority and are constitutionally mandated to control party finances (NPP, 1992; NDC, 2000).

With enormous resources at their disposal, they promote patronage and sometimes resort to violence in order to achieve their goals (Debrah, 2014; Bob-Milliar, 2012). On this view, Ichino & Nathan (2013) found out that primary elections in Ghanaian political parties are largely based on patronage rather than policy issues.
Debrah (2014) argues that although patronage may be rewarding to both distributors and recipients in the short-run, it has the potential of weakening the party’s unity and affecting membership mobilization. Patronage may change the dynamics of contestation and give the candidate with more resources undue advantage over the other competitors. This makes it arduous for a better candidate with fewer resources to emerge as a winner.

In as much as weak party organisation may account for internal conflicts and divisions, intense factionalism which affects party unity and effectiveness emerge as a result of weak intra-party democracy (Debrah, 2014). Maiyo (2008) concurs by noting that the inclusive nature of internally democratic parties enable them benefit from diversity of ideas and new personnel which in turn contributes to party effectiveness.

Generally, ideological variations between the NPP and NDC are insignificant (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Gyampo, 2012; Ninsin, 2006). Also, factions and internal conflicts in the two parties exhibit similar characteristics. Factions in both parties promote their group interests and seek to gain advantage over party resources. This notwithstanding, factionalism in the NPP has ethnic undertones marked by the historical rivalry between the Asante and Akyem ethnic groups (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Pokoo, 2012). Unlike the NDC where internal disputes have often resulted in the breakaway and formation of new political parties (NRP, DFP, and NDP) by aggrieved members, the NPP has experienced just one of such developments. Charles Wereko-Brobity, a popular figure in the NPP left the party and formed the United Ghana Movement (UGM) which contested the 2000 general elections.

It is not surprising that most of the conflicts within both parties revolve around candidate and leadership selection. This is because the main aim of political parties is
to capture political power and control the direction of public policy (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). Also, factions seek to have monopoly over the decision-making apparatus of the party in order to satisfy their interests (Sarakinsky & Fakir, 2015). Therefore the selection of candidates and leaders is as important as the national elections itself; hence the heightened tensions that characterize their internal candidate and leadership selection process.

It is also evident from the above discussion that intra-party conflicts are not always detrimental to the electoral success of parties. The NDC and NPP in 2008 and 2016 respectively won the general elections despite their internal disputes. In the case of the NPP, they had a landslide victory in the presidential elections polling 53.85% of the votes cast whereas the NDC trailed with 44.40%. This suggests that the effect of internal conflict on party effectiveness and electoral success depends on how well such disputes are managed.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The chapter consists of the theoretical framework upon which the study is positioned, and how it assists in understanding and explaining the phenomenon under investigation. The basic assumption of the system theory of political analysis is that the political system has several interrelated parts hence changes in one area is likely to affect the others. In the same vein, the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC has serious ramification on Ghana’s democratic stability as well as its consolidation.

The chapter continued to probe some debates on various aspects of party politics in general. Consequently, the review focused on key thematic areas that clearly highlights the underpinning dynamics of intra-party conflicts in advanced and new democracies.
The review also situated the phenomenon under study in the specific context of the Ghanaian experience by focusing specifically on the internal feuds in the NPP and NDC. The literature review identified struggle for the control of the party, lack or weak internal democracy, godfatherism and favouritism, factionalism and ethnicity among others as some of the factors that account for the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the view of Hegsub (1979), research methodology does not only comprise of the strategies, tactics, and techniques for investigating social science phenomenon, but also attempts to clarify the logic and justification for using these approaches. The methodology, therefore, enables the researcher to clearly define the areas of interests and adopt the appropriate mechanisms to achieve results. While there is consensus among scholars that research methodology is the appropriate means for gathering research data, scholars hold divergent views with regard to the applicability of the scientific approach of inquiry in the field of social science.

According to Harwell (2011), a research methodology can be qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both which is referred to as mixed methods. Qualitative research is basically exploratory in nature. To Strauss & Corbin (1990:17), a qualitative research is “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification”. Qualitative research allows the researcher to obtain a richer and more intimate view of the phenomenon. It also provides a greater understanding of a phenomenon under study than do the rigid structures imposed by quantitative methods (Engel & Schutt, 2009).

Conversely, quantitative method of inquiry is concerned with quantities and measurements aimed at making scientific generalizations in a research activity (Biggam, 2008). Mixed methods, on the other hand, involves a synthesis of qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry in a single study (Creswell, 2009).
This chapter outlines and explains the procedures and techniques used in the study. The chapter comprises the research strategy/technique, data collection, sampling techniques, sampling size, research instruments, rationale for comparative study, ethics, framework for data analysis, limitations and challenges as well as Field work.

3.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY

According to Welman & Kruger (2001:46), the “research design is the strategy or plan which is used to acquire participants or subjects, and how to collect what type of data from them, in order to arrive at conclusions about the initial research question”.

The study adopts the Case Study Research Design. This approach enables the researcher to conduct a detailed, multifaceted investigation of a single social phenomenon using qualitative research methods (Orum et.al, 1991:2 cited in Kaarbo & Beaseley, 1999). To Kaarbo & Beaseley (1999:372), comparative case study entails “a systematic comparison of two or more data points ‘(cases)’ obtained through use of the case study method”. The main advantage of the case study method is that it enables the researcher to give sound explanations of complex phenomena which may not be obtained through other methods such as survey or experimental research (Zainal, 2007). Its main disadvantage is the difficulty of making generalizations (Tellis, 1997 cited in Zainal, 2007). Generally, this is as a result of the fewer number of cases being studied as compared to other strategies such as surveys. However, Bassey (1981:85) argues that the “reliability of a case study is more important than its generalizability”. Even though case studies can produce both qualitative and quantitative data, it is biased towards qualitative methods (Burnham et al., 2004:53).

The study, therefore, employed the qualitative or the interview method approach in the collection and analysing of data. The researcher’s selection of this method was
informed by the fact that it provides sound explanations, clarification and interpretation of research data. Denzin and Lincoln (2008:4) assert that qualitative research “involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world”. The use of interviews was consistent with the overriding research objective of obtaining an in-depth explanation of the factors that account for internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC. This provided the opportunity for the researcher to have an extensive discussion with respondents who are privy to the issues. Osuala (2007:171) notes that “the task of the qualitative methodologist is to capture what people say and do as a product of how they interpret the complexity of their world, to understand events from the viewpoints of the participants. It is the life world of the participant that constitutes the investigative field. Truth within this context is bound to humanistic caprice”.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) reiterate the above point by noting that, qualitative research enables the researcher to obtain in-depth experience of the respondents and aid in determining how meanings are formed. However, the qualitative method like other methods is not without deficiencies. One of the major disadvantages is that it is time-consuming and subjective (Osuala, 2007).

3.2.1 Data Collection

Collection of data is paramount in every research work. Data collection is considered to be vital in determining the success of a research (Burnham et al., 2004). The study made use of two major sources of data collection-primary and secondary sources. The primary data were acquired from field interviews using interview guides prepared by the researcher to obtain relevant information on the subject matter. An eclectic approach was adopted in the collection of secondary data.
3.2.2 Primary and Secondary Data

Primary data refers to the “original data collected for a specific research goal” (Hox & Boejie, 2005:593). Thus, the researcher collects the data for the current research problem at hand (Croach & Houdson, 2003). Given the nature of the study, there was the need to identify certain individuals with in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. The primary sources of data are basically qualitative in nature, and this was collected from field interviews conducted by the researcher. Primary data was gathered from party technocrats, civil society organisations, academics and journalists.

According to Hox & Boejie (2005:593), secondary data is the information “originally collected for a different purpose and reused for another research question”. This data was obtained from books, journals, articles and official documents such as the 1992 constitution and Acts of Parliament. These provided a rich source of data and some legal information on the functions of political parties in Ghana. Party documents such as constitution and manifestos supplemented data obtained, especially giving a detailed explanation of structures and established modalities within the political parties.

3.2.3 Population and Sampling Technique

According to Hungler & Polit (1999:37) “a population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specification”. Browns and Grove (1993:779) describe it “as all elements that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study”.

In the conduct of academic research, sampling is regarded as the major means of gathering accurate data from the field. Sampling is the process of acquiring data from the research population. The use of appropriate sampling methods is key in ensuring the efficiency of the research (Cochran, 1953). There are two main types of sampling-
probability and non-probability sampling. In a probability sampling, each unit or member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Osuala, 2007). Non-probability or judgment sampling, on the other hand, involves a subjective selection of respondents (Croach & Housden, 2003).

Due to the nature of the topic, the purposive sampling technique of non-probability was germane in the selection of participants. Tagoe (2009) asserts that purposive sampling is the most appropriate sampling in qualitative studies. Merriam (1988:48) notes that “purposive sampling is based on the assumption that one want to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most”. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003:713), purposive sampling strategy involves selecting participants “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly”. Thus, it allows the researcher the opportunity to choose participants or respondents who have an appreciable knowledge of the phenomenon the researcher is probing. In the opinion of Mugenda and Mugenda (1999:50), “Purposive sampling allows a researcher to use, study sites that have the required information that could answer objectives of the research.” Though purposive sampling has been criticized as vulnerable to researcher bias, it allows the researcher to conveniently select respondents who have adequate knowledge of the research problem and the central phenomenon under study.

In a study such as this, probability sampling will be irrelevant because the researcher might end up with respondents who have little or no knowledge about the subject matter. Therefore, there is the need for a purposive selection of respondents who are knowledgeable in the field of party politics as well as party officials who have adequate information on party’s internal conflicts.
3.2.4 Sample Size

According to Borrego et al., (2009:53-66), qualitative studies require a smaller amount of people or groups in order to pay much attention to great detail, as compared to quantitative studies. However, the sample selected should fairly represent the larger population being examined (Croach & Housden, 2003; Kumekpor, 2002). In this regard, 11 respondents were chosen. The breakdown is as follows: three (3) party technocrats or representatives each from the NPP and NDC, two (2) Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), two (2) academics, and one (1) journalist.

In the selection of the sample, some factors were taken into consideration, including elements of the population, knowledge of the population and the objectives of the study (Babbie, 2004). The selection of the respondents was based on their expertise and knowledge in party politics in Ghana and stakeholder participation in the country’s democratic process. These individuals do not only have a fair idea of the factors that account for the internal party conflict, but also know about the genesis of such conflicts.

3.2.5 Research Instrument

Primary data for this study was taken using in-depth interviews which was recorded on a voice recorder. Punch (2009) notes that interview is the major data collection instrument in qualitative research. An interview is a verbal conversation between two people with the objective of collecting relevant information for the purpose of research. It enables the researcher to obtain detailed information about the phenomenon under study.

Generally, scholars have identified three types of interviews-structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In a structured interview, the interviewer asks all
respondents the same questions in the same way (Corbetta, 2003). Semi-structured interview, on the other hand, combines a predetermined set of questions with opportunities for the researcher to explore particular themes or responses by asking additional questions. Lastly, unstructured interviews are those in which neither the question, nor the answers are predetermined (Minichiello et al, 1990 cited in Kajomboom, 2005). It is more flexible than the aforementioned types and there is no need for the researcher to follow a detailed interview guide (Kajomboom, 2005).

The semi-structured interview was adopted in the collection of primary data. Chilisa (2012: 205) asserts that “this type of interview allows for flexibility and makes it possible for the researcher to follow interests and thoughts of informants”. Semi-structured interviews are neither restrictive like close-ended questions, nor is it so open to mishap like unstructured interviews. It enabled the researcher to probe deeper into the phenomenon and explore new dimensions which were not taken into account initially. Additionally, the opportunity to ask further questions made room for clarification and better understanding of issues.

3.3 RATIONALE FOR COMPARATIVE STUDY

My choice of selecting the NPP and NDC was informed by the fact that they are the leading political parties in Ghana and have alternated power since the inception of the Fourth Republic. Secondly, although intra-party conflict is not peculiar to these two political parties, they have experienced more internal conflicts than any other political party and the form and character of these conflicts have raised serious concerns. Additionally, the comparative case study approach was adopted because of the researcher’s interest in identifying the differences and similarities of the conflicts in the NPP and NDC.
3.4 ETHICS

Ethics play a vital role in any scientific research. Researchers are expected to consider ethical principles when formulating a research plan. Social research brings people into direct contact with each other, and this makes it imperative to follow ethical values (Babbie, 2004).

Burnham *et al* (2004) note that there are five (5) ethical principles researchers must employ in the conduct of political research. These are avoiding deception, avoiding harm, ensuring privacy or autonomy of respondents, confidentiality, and informed consent.

Ryen (2011) also looked at ethics as orbiting around three issues which are: trust, confidentiality, codes and consent. Burns and Grove (1993:776) define informed consent “as the prospective subject's agreement to participate voluntarily in a study, which is reached after assimilation of essential information about the study”. In other words, the research should inform the participants of the purpose of the study, as well as the main uses to which findings will be put so that they can consciously decide whether to take part or not. The assurance of the person’s privacy without disclosing his or her identity is very important and needs to be taken into consideration for any research or study especially, the ones involving human participation. These ethical values were strictly adhered to in the collection of primary data.

For instance, verbal consent was sought from respondents before collecting the data. Also, the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents were maintained. Respondents were given the assurance that the information provided was only going to be used for academic purposes. As such, their names and addresses were expunged from the write-up to ensure anonymity. Burns and Grove (1993:762) posit that anonymity is attained
“when subjects cannot be linked, even by the researcher, with his or her individual responses”.

3.5 FRAMEWORK FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

According to Hatch (2002:148), data analysis is a ‘systematic search for meaning’ from a pad of information and data. This allows researchers to process raw data, in a scientific manner, ‘so that what has been learned can be communicated’ to others. The study adopted the qualitative Content analysis (QCA). This kind of analysis involves “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to tell others” (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:145 cited in Tagoe, 2009).

To Creswell (2008:148), data analysis in a qualitative research involves “preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes and finally representing the data through figures, tables or a discussion.” Burnham et al (2004) notes that qualitative content analysis enables the researcher to analyze large quantum of data systematically and precisely (Burnham et al, 2004). Its deficiency, however, stems from the fact that, in broad categorization, important and interesting materials may be overlooked.

The procedures entailed in qualitative content analysis can be categorized into three interrelated approaches- data description, data analysis, and data interpretation. The first step entails a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied. Nonetheless, the main aim of analysis is not limited to description, but includes interpretation, explanation, and prediction in same cases (Dey, 1993). Patton (2002:504) endorsed this point by noting that a good report “provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation, and sufficient interpretation to allow the
reader to understand the description”. Hence, data description sets the tone for analysis, but analysis provides the foundation for further description (Dey, 1993).

The researcher also compared and contrasted the data obtained from the field with the findings from the literature review to establish the similarities and differences. This process, according to (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009) constitutes qualitative data analysis. The three interrelated approaches (data description, data analysis, and data interpretation) employed in the qualitative content analysis ended with an interpretation of the synthesized research findings-data interpretation. The findings were organised into themes that reflect the objectives of the study.

3.6 LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

This study, like any other research work, had its limitations and challenges. According to Osuala (2007:37), limitations are those aspects of the research process that “may restrict the researcher in making generalizations”.

One of the major challenges the researcher encountered was getting access to respondents to participate in the study. Information from some individuals and institutions was not forthcoming. Others delayed in the provision of some information for the study. This, however, did not have any significant effect on the quality of the work as secondary data were used to fill the vacuum.

Another key limitation of the study is the fact that the adopted strategy (Case study) - usually makes it difficult if not impossible to make any scientific generalizations. Nonetheless, it is pertinent to note that, the case study approach provides detailed explanations of complex phenomena and thus makes up for the inability to make
generalizations. According to Bassey (1981:85), the “reliability of a case study is more important than its generalizability”.

The study was also limited by time constraints. The adoption of interview, as a principal tool in gathering primary data, is time-consuming. The researcher on several occasions did not meet the respondents and the interview date had to be rescheduled.

3.7 FIELD WORK

The researcher made initial visits to the various locations on different occasions. This included the party headquarters of the NPP and NDC, the office of CDD, IDEG, The Insight Newspaper, and Department of History and Political Studies, KNUST to establish and build rapport with the respondents. After the rapport has been established, an introductory letter from the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana indicating the purpose of the research was made available to be sent to the various institutions and individuals to grant the researcher permission to embark on the study.

The researcher then booked appointments with the respondents to conduct the actual interview. This was to ensure that the interview section does not affect their normal duties. In all of these, copies of the interview schedule were given to the respondents prior to the interview date to enable them familiarize themselves with the content of the interview and prepare beforehand.

On the respective days of the interviews, the researcher ensured that the interviews were carried out in a conducive environment which enabled respondents to provide the needed information without any intimidation from a third party. The researcher sought the permission of respondents and subsequently recorded the interviews on tape recorders for easy clarifications and to ensure that every important detail is captured.
The interviews were then transcribed and grouped into themes to assist in the answering of the questions posed in the study. Respondents were informed that the study is for purely academic purpose and were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality.

As such, the data collected during interview were destroyed immediately after transcription. Content analysis was done on the transcribed version after it has been grouped into themes that capture the objectives of the study.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter elaborated on the research methods employed and their justifications. The chapter presents a preview of how data was collected; the instruments and medium used as well as how the data was analysed. The chapter also highlights the importance of ethical standards in the conduct of research. The framework for data analysis together with limitations and challenges were also looked at. Lastly, the field work was also discussed.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The NPP and NDC have dominated Ghana’s political landscape since the inception of the Fourth Republic (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar, 2014; Whitfield, 2009). They have contributed immensely to Ghana’s democratization process by providing the platform for many to participate in the democratic processes and nurturing leaders to steer the affairs of the state. However, it has been observed that the nature of their internal activities, particularly internal conflicts pose serious threats to the country’s prospects of democratic consolidation. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the factors that account for these internal conflicts and proffer solutions to address these challenges.

This chapter presents the findings from the field and discusses the results vis-a-vis the literature. The findings of the research were obtained from the opinions of party technocrats, academics, CSOs, and journalists through personal interviews and secondary source of data. Due to the nature of the study, the purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study.

4.2 THE CONDUCT OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN GHANA SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

The 1992 constitution of Ghana and other laws such as the Political Parties Act 2000 and the Political Parties Law (PNDCL 281) uphold multi-party contestation and party-based government. The laws recognize the importance of political parties in modern democratic dispensation and grant them full rights to participate in the political process (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah, 2008).
These laws, in addition to others serve as the legal frameworks that guide the activities of political parties in Ghana. It is, however, important to note that the conduct of political parties in Ghana have produced mixed results. On one hand, they have contributed immensely to the practice and stability of democracy in the country. Indeed, Ghana is considered by many as the bastion of democracy in Africa and this enviable position could not have been possible without the crucial roles played by political parties. This is also noteworthy looking at the fact that Ghana’s multi-party democracy is relatively young as compared to other advanced democracies. On the other hand, some of the activities of political parties have been characterized by major shortfalls which have the potential of reversing their remarkable achievements.

Since the coming into force of the Fourth Republican Constitution in 1992, political parties have agreed to operate within the confines of the law and have accepted periodic elections as the means to elect the leaders of the country. Although there have been some disagreements among parties on a wide range of issues, including the mode of the conduct of elections, the mode of transmission of results and the way election results are declared, these misunderstandings, to a large, extent have been well managed by the various stakeholders thereby ensuring that they do not have a negative impact on the peace and stability of the country. Some of the respondents noted:

Political parties have performed fairly well. They have provided the platform for people to participate in the political arena. They have conducted themselves creditably and the contests have been fairly peaceful. The various political parties agreeing to offer candidates kick start the process of democratic governance. We have also experienced peaceful alternation of power on three different occasions which indicate that we have come to accept democracy as the way forward (Field work, 2017).

We have not performed badly at all. Any democratic institution takes time to mature. It can be created by legislation, but will mature as the years go by. Our multi-party democracy is just 25 years old. Some parties in the advanced democracies have been in existence for centuries, but are still grappling with some of the challenges we are facing. At least we have managed to conduct seven peaceful elections without any
violent conflicts and that is a remarkable achievement in our part of the world. But there is still more room for improvement (Field work, 2017).

The views of these respondents largely echo the minimalist perspective of democracy (Chauvet & Collier, 2009; Schumpeter, 1942) which is captured by Karl (1986) as the “fallacy of electoralism” which describes the situation whereby democracy is reduced to the conduct of periodic elections. Bratton (1998) and Lindberg (2006) note that although elections are important, they are insufficient in promoting democratic consolidation. In the view of Mamdani (1988), the practice of democracy should improve the living conditions of the people, especially those at the lower echelons of the society. In this regard, it will be inappropriate for political parties in Ghana to measure their success on the basis of peaceful electoral contests.

The role of political parties in modern representative democracy goes beyond elections to cover a wide spectrum of activities including the involvement of the citizens in the formulation and implementation of policies as well as their participation in the overall decision-making processes (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011; Sartori, 2005). Thus, political parties must provide the platform and an enabling environment for citizens to participate in the very processes which produce decisions that directly affect their lives. Gentili (2005) affirms this point by stating that contemporary democratic states are based on broader participation and government accountability. Likewise, Biezen (2003) asserts that political parties serve as cardinal instruments for political participation, which is a pre-condition for democratic consolidation.

Another important role of political parties is to nurture leaders (Scarrow, 2005; Sartori, 2005). Almost all the respondents affirmed this point and applauded political parties for ensuring peaceful contests despite the few infractions that has been seen over the years.
Political parties have nurtured and trained persons to run the country and have issued out manifestoes which encompasses the visions and beliefs of the parties as well as mobilized people to cast their votes during elections. An official of the Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG) affirmed this point by noting that:

Political parties have contributed greatly to democracy in the Fourth Republic by facilitating the conduct of elections through mobilizing people and organizing people to vote. That is why the voter turnout in Ghana is very high. Just in the last election, people were complaining that the turnout had reduced. Even that it was 69.7 %, which will be considered as very high in some countries. But we went as far as 85% so having dropped to 69.7% raises some concerns. This is the first time we have had elections that have gone below the 70% mark. It is largely these political parties that have ensured the high voter turnout by mobilizing people to vote on Election Day (Field work, 2017).

Even though there have been some concerns about parties who veer off their ideology and/or manifesto, the presentation of manifestoes sets the tone for debate with the various political parties offering differing views on important issues such as foreign policy, education, health, and employment, among others. Thus, political parties offer alternatives and give the electorates a wide range of policies to choose from. These debates have, at least, compelled many Ghanaians who will otherwise not be interested in political issues to look critically at these issues and make their decision as to which party to vote for during elections and this has brought a lot of people into the political arena. Debrah (2014) notes that political parties (the NPP and NDC) have been largely responsible for the political education and mobilization of voters in the general elections held under the Fourth Republic. The ability of political parties to canvass for votes, encourage people to register in order to exercise their franchise as well as educate their members on basic electoral procedures and democratic principles are conducts required for the effective practice of electoral democracy. Voter turnout in the local government elections has been the direct opposite of that of the national elections. Over the years, local government elections have recorded low turnouts and this can be partly
attributed to the absence of parties who have been effective in mobilizing people to vote. One of the respondents noted:

If you look at the local government system where there are no parties contesting for the elections, the voter turnout is always low. It is usually around 33-40%. This low turnout is as a result of the absence of parties and the lack of debate. For instance, there is no “Free Senior High school” versus “Progressively free Senior High school” and so on. People are therefore not very much interested in the processes. There are virtually no mechanisms at that level for mobilizing people and that partly accounts for the uninteresting and boring politics observed at that level. Clearly, political parties draw programs and try to indicate differences in their manifestoes, but we do not have that at the local level (Field work, 2017).

Political parties have also contributed to the transformation of electoral processes and laws in the country. This is clearly evident in the electoral reforms we have seen over the years. Political parties have ensured that the conducts of elections are free, fair and transparent. The active involvement of political parties, especially the NPP and NDC in these processes is commendable considering the fact that they are the leading political parties and as such enjoy massive following due to their large membership. An official of the Centre for Democratic Governance (CDD) averred:

When we talk of reforms, over the years we have had so many reform committees after every election (thus electoral commission post-mortem) and parties often times commit to the reform agenda and send representatives to the reform committee as we have in the 27 reform agenda of the electoral commission. Both the NPP and NDC send representatives to shape how the reform should be done. So it is a good conduct in the political process because they relay the information to their members. Though their public education has not been on a higher percentage, they have been quite impressive. In some countries, you do not even have a plus for that (Field work, 2017).

In their quest to deepen democracy in Ghana, political parties with the support of the government of the Netherlands have established the Ghana Political Party Program (GPPP). It comprises political parties who have representation in parliament. These parties have come together under the auspices of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and after conducting a post-mortem of the country’s political system have put together a document called Ghana’s Democratic Consolidation Strategy Paper
(GDCSP). Under the same initiative, the caucus of chairmen and the platform of general secretaries have been established. This serves as a medium for deliberations among the leaders of the various parties which is aimed at ascertaining the challenges that confront Ghana’s democracy and finding solutions to the problems identified. An official of the NDC noted:

All the chairmen and secretaries of the various political parties meet every month to discuss our democracy, its shortcomings, and deficits and what we have to do to improve it. We first establish baseline criteria for the evaluation of our institutions. We look at all aspects of our democracy in line with what we consider to be a near democracy. We then evaluate our institutions based on the criteria we have set for ourselves and proffer ways we can address the obstacles identified. We have done that for the whole of our democracy and we have established what we called democracy deficits (Field work, 2017).

Despite the fact that political parties in Ghana have made some significant progress, admittedly there have been some challenges. Ethnic politics and patronage is a case in point. Politics in Ghana is still largely based on patronage and ethnic mobilization. This observation is consistent with Debrah’s (2014) argument that politics in Ghana is characterized by ethnicity, patronage, and clientelism. This is what some respondents had to say:

I think one main thing is still lacking in our party politics which is “issue-based politics”. Our politics is still largely based on patronage and ethnic mobilization. But that is understandable because it is a general African problem. Although we have passed Huntington’s two turn-over test, the conduct of politics has been less issue-based and more of patronage, ethnicity, and populism (Field work, 2017).

I don’t think we have managed to build political parties in Ghana. I think what we have been able to do over the years is to build patronage and election machines. That is what we have. Political parties are founded purely on principles and certain ideological inclination; they are also guided by policy and so on. If you look at all the parties in Ghana, they don’t define anything. The NDC comes to power, NPP follows, and they both follow the same policies. Nothing changes. There is no disagreement in terms of policy direction and so on. What they disagree on mainly is who should have the power. I don’t think these are political parties (Field work, 2017).

The activities of political parties are also impaired by unhealthy rivalry, division between and/or among ethnic groups and violence. The politics of insult and political
mudslinging has become a major feature of party politics in Ghana (Bob-Milliar, 2012). Also, there seems to be a high level of mistrust among parties, especially the NPP and NDC and this has affected their relationship with the Electoral Commission as well as their commitment to the electoral processes. The mistrust has also led to the creation of paramilitary groups who perpetrate a lot of atrocities and often go unpunished because they have the backing of these political parties. The activities of these vigilante groups have been noteworthy, especially in recent times and have been condemned strongly by many people because of the danger they pose to the stability of the country. The following are some of the views expressed by respondents:

The political parties do not trust each other and that is the genesis of all those atrocities, intemperate language, backbiting, insults and then the formation of vigilante groups to attack each other when they go on a campaign trail. When you take the electoral commission, for instance, depending on which political party is in power, the electoral commission is a “devil”. Any party among the two leading political parties in opposition sees the EC as a devil and you bear witness to what happened prior and during the 2016 elections. “Charlotte Osei must go” “Charlotte Osei is in bed with the NDC” “Charlotte has registered foreigners”. So far their relationship with the EC is always negative when they are in opposition and it is also unfortunate that the incumbent seem to play the role of a PR for the EC. They do not allow the EC to do its work. That posture seems to confirm whatever the opposition says. So, therefore, you do not know who is speaking the truth and it becomes worse when they return from the inter-party advisory committee meeting and give different interpretation as to what actually transpired (Field work, 2017).

The actions of these vigilante groups have the potential of endangering our democracy and its consolidation. The recent invasion of the court by the ‘Delta Force’ in Kumasi to free their members who had been remanded is the height of contempt. This is complete lawlessness and should be condemned by every well-meaning Ghanaian. They [Vigilante groups] do these things because there are strong political people behind them. We must check the interference of parties in the work of independent institutions of the state (Field work, 2017).

I will say that we still have some way to go in achieving consolidation. Although we have had seven elections and three alternations in power, democracy is not just about conducting periodic elections, but it is also about what happens in between the elections and that is where democratic institutions come to play. If the institutions established in a democracy all have learned to play their role very well, it is at that point that we can say that we’ve a very solid and consolidated democracy. We are not there yet, but I think it is a gradual process. We cannot force it [democracy] to mature. Some of the institutions will mature through their collective experience of identifying where they’ve gone wrong and finding solutions to these problems. Others will mature by establishing norms and practices. We cannot make legislation for everything in a
democracy. There are some of the practices that grow to become the norm. In a democracy, you have laws, traditions, and conventions. Some of them are not legislated anywhere in black and white. But through constant practices and refining those practices those norms and traditions become part of the process. I think that we are in the 2nd phase of our democratic consolidation. We have been able to establish the laws that govern democracy; we have established the institutions that have key roles to play, i.e. electoral commission, parliament, judiciary, executive, investigative bodies, NCCE, the media - there are legislations for free press, civil society organisations and so on. We have to first assess their work and identify their deficits, then we will have a fair idea of where we have reached and what we have to do to make up for the deficits. Our institutions are doing very well, but we cannot say that they have reached their apex. The low confidence of Ghanaians in our institutions, for instance, is a clear indication that we still have some challenges to overcome. We all have a role to play in promoting democratic consolidation. We should, therefore, speak about the gaps and point out the deficits for the appropriate institutions to address them (Field work, 2017).

Juxtaposing the positive conducts against the negatives; it will be fair to conclude that political parties have performed satisfactorily since the re-emergence of multi-party democracy in 1992.

4.2.1 The Contribution of Political Parties to Democratic Consolidation in Ghana

A review of the literature showed that there is no agreement on the exact definition of the concept of democratic consolidation. What exist is a plethora of definitions (N’goma, 2016; Fernandez, 2006; Diamond, 1999; Schedler, 1998; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mainwaring, 1992). According to Schedler (1998), it is a comprehensive concept, lacking a crux that would unite all manner of usage. Nonetheless, almost all the scholars admit that the attainment of democratic consolidation is intricate, can span over a period and can be reversed. In the words of Gyampo (2015:2) “there is no fixed time frame for democratic consolidation and this stems from the fact that democracy is a process and requires constant engineering in light of the challenges that may confront the nation in question”.

The researcher sought to know the perspective of the respondents on the concept before eliciting information on the contributions of political parties to Ghana’s
democratization process. Below are some of the definitions extracted from their responses:

Any attempt by individuals, political parties, and civil society organisations to make the process of elections free, fair and transparent and its aftermath peaceful. Democratic consolidation is achieved when there is an involvement of the citizens in the political processes, the availability of a constitution and the practice of constitutionalism. Entrenchment of democracy has to do with ensuring that there is constitutionalism, transparency in government and the respect of the will of the people (Field work, 2017).

Democratic Consolidation is the acceptance of democracy as the most effective channel of governance and the commitment of all stakeholders to its stability and proper functioning (Field work, 2017).

I think democratic consolidation is the practical affirmation of the democratic tenets. In other words, where the political parties and the citizens, in general, are willing and ready to live by the tenets of the constitution—there is adherence to rule of law and due process, fairness, free and vibrant press, administrative justice; respect for independent state institutions like the Electoral Commission, Law Courts, CHRAJ, Peace Council, EOCO and the security forces (Field work, 2017).

The above definitions fall within Linz and Stepan’s multi-dimensional framework of democratic consolidation, which focuses on three dimensions (behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional) and five areas (free and lively civil society, relatively autonomous political society, rule of law, state bureaucracy and institutionalized economic society) of democratic consolidation as explored in the literature. According to them, consolidation is attained when democracy becomes the “only game in town”. Thus, when political actors (elites and masses) accept the rules that guarantee political participation and contestation as well as respect democratic values, principles and institutions (Gunther et al, 1995; Mainwaring et al, 1992). In the case of Ghana, consolidation is yet to be achieved even though some progress has been made.

Following the transition to multi-party democracy in 1992, political parties have made substantial efforts to promote liberal democratic culture and deepen democracy. Political parties in Ghana, to a large extent, have functioned within the limits of the law despite some few challenges and constraints which affects their effective performance.
Parties have played a vital role in the country’s democratization process by providing avenues for citizen participation and educating the public on democratic values and procedures as well as mobilizing people to vote during elections. This is evident in the seven successive elections that have been conducted since 1992 and improvements in other aspects of Ghana’s democracy such as the enjoyment of civil, political and economic rights. Since the beginning of the Fourth Republic, it has been observed that members of political parties have an upper hand over independent candidates during general elections. Independent presidential aspirants have performed abysmally during elections and only few independent candidates have won parliamentary seats with most of them seceding from their mother party often as a result of internal conflicts. This affirms the dominance and important position of parties in Ghana’s electoral democracy. Some respondents noted:

Political parties have continued to deepen our democracy by providing the avenue through which we can win elections and govern this country. Most of these parties also organise series of training for their leadership, members and those who are at the forefront of communication. So it is a form of deepening democracy through the concept of training and providing requisite political knowledge to people who are members. They also provide a source of socialization where people are able to meet through the platforms of the party, to share ideas, have fun and then have education from their leadership. This is usually more pronounced during electoral seasons (Field work, 2017).

They have contributed to democratic consolidation in Ghana in the sense that we have been able to get a lot of improvements in our politics. They have kept elections going and they have also generated debate. For instance, political debates and programs dominate our radio and television programs, especially in the early hours of the day. People have developed some love for these political programs and make it a point to listen or watch them on a daily basis. So I would say that one of the major contributions of political parties is that they have widened political participation. More people are now interested in politics (Field work, 2017).

Political parties have helped in stabilizing our democracy at least in the Fourth Republic. Hitherto, when we were in the PNDC and military regimes, the constitution was thrown overboard and parties were banned. There were a lot of atrocities and human rights abuses. Also, they nurture people and put up candidates to contest elections. Most often we have competent individuals contesting for presidential and parliamentary elections. It is the will of political parties to force or push their leaders
to accept electoral results and this has accounted for the three transitions we have witnessed in the Fourth Republic. We have not seen any government in the Fourth Republic trying to change the constitution to increase their tenure of office because parties have nurtured their members and inculcate in them the democratic principles and rudiments (Field work, 2017).

Political parties have also championed peaceful crusades before, during and after elections by way of advising their members to desist from acts that can mar the peace and stability of the country. Nonetheless, it is imperative to note that some minimal clashes have been recorded especially between the NPP and NDC during elections. These clashes have, however, not escalated in severity over the years.

Leaders of political parties have also shown their dedication to the peaceful course by accepting the results of elections as well as respecting the verdict of the law courts in the case of electoral disputes. The 2012 election petition marked an important landmark in Ghana’s democracy and its outcome placed the country in the limelight. An official of the NDC noted:

I think that to a very large extent they have ensured peaceful competition. But for the very reluctant, but consistent acceptance of the results of the EC, maybe we wouldn’t be still enjoying our democracy. Political parties have always accepted these results with a lot of reluctance and misgivings and that led to the election petitions brought by the NPP against the John Mahama government in 2012. Consistently, we’ve always accepted the results, but we still think something is wrong and we want to test it in law. Then again, when the court gave the final ruling, the NPP accepted the verdict. If they hadn’t accepted the ruling it could have caused mayhem and that could have destroyed our democratic credentials. I think that the posture of political parties to openly express their misgivings and yet consistently accept the verdict of the independent institutions we have put in place have, to a very large extent, contributed to Ghana’s democratic consolidation (Field work, 2017).

Look at what Akufo-Addo did after the 2012 election petition ruling. He accepted the verdict notwithstanding the fact that he did not agree with the ruling. This was a decision he took without even informing us [National Executives]. But after saying that everybody went in line (Field work, 2017)

By and large, political parties have contributed significantly to the process of democratic consolidation in Ghana. They have accepted the rules and agreed to play by them. In fact, they have been the key players in the democratic process and continue to
deliberate on important issues of national concern. Parties have made some gains in political education, mobilization and most importantly have given the citizens the opportunity to participate in the democratic process. The evidence above attests to the fact that parties have done well, even though their activities are not without shortcomings. Diamond (cited in Randall & Svåsand, 2002:30) has observed that ‘democratization is bound to be gradual, messy, fitful and slow, with many imperfections along the way’. It follows then that democratic consolidation is not a one-off event.

4.2.2 Some Specific Challenges of Democratic Consolidation in Ghana

Several factors have been identified as obstacles to Ghana’s democratic consolidation. These factors are subsumed under the following thematic areas for the purpose of discussion (i) Constitutional Challenges (ii) Ineffective Regulation of Political Parties (iii) Lack of broader participation in policy formulation (iv) low participation of women in politics (v) Antagonistic relationship among political parties (vi) Lack of Accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

Constitutional Challenges

The constitution of Ghana divides the state into three arms: the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary and specifies the scope of the performance of their respective powers as well as the restrictions on the exercise of those powers. This division is aimed at ensuring separation of powers and promoting checks and balances. This notwithstanding, there seems to be inadequate separation of powers at the state level. Article 78 (1) of the 1992 constitution, which states that “… majority of Ministers of State shall be appointed from among members of Parliament” defeats the principle of effective separation of powers and checks and balances. It allows the president and
the executive branch of government to control the legislature and this affects the work of parliament in the sense that those appointed by the president are more likely to support executive decisions without properly scrutinizing them. Also, other MPs of the incumbent may adopt a partisan approach to issues in their quest to catch the attention of the president for future appointments. This creates room for strict partisan politics which does not augur well for our democracy. Some aspects of the constitution need to be revisited after its twenty-five years of existence. Some respondents noted:

We have also identified some problems with our constitution. This actually led to the process of reviewing our constitution, which has stalled for some time now. For instance, the law which states that the president should select majority of his ministers from parliament should be taken a second look at. This does not make for an effective separation of powers (Field work, 2017).

There are some constitutional challenges we need to address and there are still institutions that we have to strengthen. For instance, there is no clear-cut separation of powers between the Executive and the Legislative arms of government. Also, I don’t believe that the president should appoint the IGP. I believe that the IGP and CDS must rise from the institutions so that the control of the powers that be on them will be minimal if not non-existent. I think they are supposed to be independent in order to work effectively (Field work, 2017).

In a very vibrant democracy, members of parliament can propose legislation to address some challenges they have identified. Although parliamentary rules and regulations in Ghana permit MPs to initiate legislation (Private Members’ Bills), they have not exercised this right due to lack of resources or competence to draft legislation (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2011). Specifically, Article 108 of the 1992 constitution, which states that any legislation or business that have financial implications must be introduced by or on behalf of the president restrict the rights of MPs to introduce legislation (money bills) and canvass for support to pass the bill into law. In other words, this provision affects the independence of parliament in making laws.

With regards to the judiciary, every democracy works to ensure that it has an independent judiciary. They are charged with the responsibility of protecting the rights
of the people and administering justice during trial. There are three interrelated dimensions of judicial independence (institutional, financial and decisional). Institutional independence emphasizes non-interference in the work of the law courts by any third party. This can be ensured when there are structures in the constitution that guarantees the financial independence of the Judiciary. In the case of Ghana, the financial independence of the judiciary is guaranteed in Article 127 (4) which states that “The administrative expenses of the judiciary, including all salaries, allowances, gratuities and pensions payable to or in respect of, persons serving in the judiciary, shall be charged on the Consolidated Fund”.

The independence of the judges in the exercise of their judicial functions is also guaranteed in Article 127 (2) which stipulates that “neither the President nor Parliament nor any person acting under the authority of the President or Parliament nor any other person whatsoever shall interfere with Judges or judicial officers or other persons exercising judicial power, in the exercise of their judicial functions….” Additionally, the constitution safeguards their tenure of office and spells out how appointments and dismissals should be done. These provisions protect the independence of the judiciary. But beyond this, in matured democracies, special importance is given to decisional independence of the judges. An official of the NDC asserted:

If a judge is so motivated by political and tribal considerations and also have his tenure of office secured, what do you do to such a person if he or she fails to apply the rules but give judgments based on his party affiliation or other inclinations other than the laws? If you have a judiciary whose independence cannot be vouched for, then there is a serious democracy deficit. Judges in advanced democracies are fully aware of their obligations to the state and therefore conduct themselves in a manner that does not jeopardize their judicial system (Field work, 2017).

The corruption scandal that hit Ghana’s judiciary in September 2015 following a two-year undercover investigation by investigative journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas is a dent on Ghana’s democracy and a such a big source of worry for a country touted by
many as the beacon of democracy in Africa. Judges must commit to discharging their duties in the national interest and strive to protect the image of the institution.

**Ineffective Enforcement of Laws**

Another challenge has to do with the ineffective enforcement of laws that govern the activities of political parties. The laws that guide the activities of political parties are not vigorously enforced. For instance, parties are required to establish offices in two-thirds of the districts; submit an annual account to the Electoral Commission, and also submit their expenditure to the Electoral Commission in every election. Parties do not strictly adhere to these provisions and this raises questions about their transparency. An official of CDD expressed his view on this as follows:

> The cost of democracy is very high and becomes more expensive if we do not have political parties who are very transparent as to be able to put out how they finance their activities as well as submit the required annual returns to the Electoral Commission. Over the years, it has been observed that parties run expensive campaigns during electioneering year. So the question is where do they get the money from? You end up saying that those in power are abusing their incumbency whereas those in opposition are soliciting campaign funding from potential investors and manufacturers with the aim of favouring them (huge Contracts) when they come into power. The expensive campaigns lead to all forms of dubious programs and corruption which are targeted at recovering their losses. We cannot have an improved democracy when parties continue to disobey the laws (Field work, 2017).

In other democracies, there are laws which clearly indicate the period for campaigning prior to the day of polls. We have similar laws in Ghana but unfortunately, they are not enforced effectively. The regulation of political campaigns has not been the best over the years. As pointed out by a respondent:

A major weakness is the inadequate regulation of party activities in Ghana. For instance, there seem not be a limit for campaigning in Ghana. Even on the day of elections, it is easy to find some form of campaign and this is terrible. Political parties must respect the laws that govern their activities and educate their members on the rules and regulations (Field work, 2017).
Lack of Broader Participation in Policy Formulation

Participation is very key in the practice of contemporary democracy. Political parties are expected to provide the platform for people to make input into the political system. In Ghana, it has been noticed that apart from the electoral processes, Ghanaians are largely not actively involved in other important aspects of democratic governance such as the formulation of policies which is limited to some few people. A highly perceptive respondent noted the following: The citizens should be given the opportunity to influence policies which have direct implications on their lives (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). A highly perceptive respondent noted the following:

Well, if you understand democracy to be the true expression of people’s aspiration and desires, and how these translate into policy, then we have a problem. You and I know that the people of Ghana do not feature at all in policy formulation. They [government] goes to the IMF, take decisions with them and move on. It does not matter what Ghanaians think. The people of Ghana over the last twenty to thirty years have been advocating for the elections of MMDCEs but it has never happened. Ghanaians have opposed the privatization of state enterprises for the past 25 years but nobody cares. The major defect is that the people don’t matter (Field work, 2017).

Low Participation of Women in Politics

Another setback that we often turn to ignore is the low participation of women in the political arena. To some extent, it is as a result of the patriarchal nature of the Ghanaian society. Ghana is lagging behind when compared to other African democracies of similar standing in terms of women's involvement in mainstream politics. Countries like Senegal (42.7%), South Africa (41.5%), Namibia (41.3%), Mozambique (39.6%), and Rwanda (61.3%) have recorded an increase in the involvement of women in the political space especially the legislature. Despite the fact that the number of women in the Ghana’s parliament increased from 30 to 35 in the 2016 elections, this marginal increase is quite insignificant considering the fact that women constitute more than half (51.2%) of the total population. Ghana placed 141st in an inter-parliamentary Union
ratings of women in parliament in 193 countries with Rwanda topping the list with 49 (61.3%) female parliamentarians out of the 80 parliamentary seats (IPU, 2017).

The low participation of women in local, district and national governance is a major blind spot in Ghana’s democracy that needs attention. As clearly pointed out by a respondent:

Currently you can see that President Nana Akufo-Addo is trying to engage a lot of women by appointing them as ministers. Also, president Kufuor appointed the first female Chief Justice who is still the head of the judiciary. This indicates that some attempts have been made to address this problem. The NPP adopted what they call the proactive approach to give women a 3rd of every position so that progressively over time they will be fairly represented in the political space. The NDC in their last primaries pegged the filing fee for women at half of the normal price to enable more women to contest. Clearly, the leading parties have made some efforts, but it has been very difficult because the men still dominate the group. You can see in the last two governments, especially the current one trying to deal with the issue of gender balance and the promotion of women to top public offices. However, the challenges are still evident (Field work, 2017).

Inter-Party Antagonism

Yet another setback has been the acrimonious relationship among the various political parties and most especially between the two leading parties (NPP and NDC). This mutual mistrust does not only lead to strained relationships among parties, but also affects their relationship with the electoral management body as well as the state security apparatus. The acrimonious relationship has also led to clashes between the supporters of the NPP and NDC which has resulted in injuries, destruction of properties and deaths.

For instance, prior to the 2016 elections, supporters of the NPP and NDC in Chereponi in the northern region were involved in violent exchanges which resulted in the death of one person and fourteen (14) others sustaining injuries (Graphiconline.com, 6-12-2016). Another pandemonium was recorded at Nana Akufo-Addo’s residence in Nima
on December 13th, 2016 when some supporters of the NDC on a health walk diverted their route to his house and clashed with his security (ghanaintimes.com, 14-12-2016). This unhealthy relationship has resulted in the formation of vigilante groups whose activities have been a disincentive to Ghana’s democratic growth. As found in the Field work:

Political parties in Ghana do not trust each other. Those in opposition usually accuse the state institutions as being in bed with the ruling government. Often you hear comments like ‘they are recruiting party foot soldiers as security personnel to go and control the polling station so that they can rig the elections’, ‘the Electoral Commission is not fair’ and so on. When it happens like that, people try to be extra vigilant leading to the formation of para-security groups and the creation of unnecessary tension in the country. You realize that the NPP in 2016 brought some people from South Africa to train their security personnel because they did not trust the police. When it is an election year almost everybody is afraid because of the high tension created by irresponsible elements and through jaundiced reportage. But we have come a long way and some of these issues should not be popping up (Field work, 2017).

One key challenge is the constant vilification and constant accusations of the same independent institutions that are supposed to help consolidate our democracy. We have political actors who depending on the order of the day and where their interest may lie consistently create doubt in the minds of the people as to the work of a particular institution. Before and during the 2016 elections there were countless times the NPP vilified the EC. The EC was called all kinds of names, but it is the same EC that declared them winners. That practice of parties deciding to consistently vilify institutions of states just because it would serve their political interests is one of the dangers that can affect our democratic consolidation (Field work, 2017).

Lack of Accountability, Transparency, and Responsiveness

Despite significant progress in various sectors of Ghana’s economy, there is more to be done in terms of improving the livelihoods of Ghanaians especially those at the lower echelons of the social ladder. One way of overcoming this obstacle is to promote accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. These values are critical to deepening and consolidating Ghana’s democracy. However, it has been noticed that often times government hide the truth from the general public or rely so much on propaganda rather than disclosing to the people what they need to know. Also, governments have not been very responsive to the needs of the people. Going forward, governments should be more
responsive to the needs of the populace. In addition, political parties must implement policies that are good for the growth and development of the country rather than adopting populist policies that are targeted at winning elections. One of the respondents pointed out that:

Projects that may win you [parties] elections may not necessarily be projects that the people want. So there is a clear difference between implementing policies that will meet the needs of the people and also carrying out projects that will make you win elections (Field work, 2017).

4.2.3 The Importance of the Constitutional Provision Which Require Parties to be Internally Democratic

Although scholars like Chisinga & Chigona (2010) and Gauja (2006) have highlighted the negative effects of intra-party democracy (1PD), it is still considered by many as crucial to promoting democratic consolidation (Cross & Katz, 2013, Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011; Scarrow, 2005; Sartori, 2005). According to Mainwaring and Scully (1995), one of the main features of a fully institutionalized party is its internal democratic practices. Scholars have identified participation, accountability, transparency, representation, competition, responsiveness and inclusivity as some of the fundamental principles of internal democracy (Rahat & Shapira, 2016; Cross et al, 2013; Mimpen, 2007). Sartori (2005) notes that, but for internal democracy, two important roles of parties (interest representation and aggregation) would be impaired.

The 1992 constitution of Ghana affirms the importance of IPD in Article 55 (5) which stipulates that “The internal organisation of a political party shall conform to democratic principles and its actions and purposes shall not contravene or be inconsistent with this constitution or any other law”. Article 23 buttresses this point by stating that the laws of any organisation be it operational or disciplinary must be
consistent with the letter and spirit of the constitution. This implies that the activities of parties must promote internal democracy. Political parties must, therefore, provide avenues for effective participation by the rank and file in the decision making processes of the party.

The main objective of political parties is to capture power and direct the affairs of the state (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). However, if the parties cannot conduct their internal activities within the framework of the established laws then it will be difficult for them to act in accordance with the law when they win power. According to Mimpem (2007) parties that are internally democratic are more likely to translate these values to the state level. The internal activities of parties is a microcosm of what happens in national level politics and as such parties must build internal democracy by ensuring free and fair elections, freedom of speech and accepting dissenting opinions. The entrenchment of discipline and promotion of democratic consolidation should, therefore, begin at the party level. Some respondents noted:

Political parties ought to be internally democratic. In a constitutional democracy, internal party democracy is required of all parties. Parties are incubators of leadership, and therefore must practice democracy within and groom leaders and members to imbibe the democratic ethos which they will translate to the national scene when they are in government (Field work, 2017).

Ghana is a democracy. We elect our president and MPs. It is, therefore, proper for parties to conduct elections to elect their Executives at the national, regional and constituency levels. If parties are not internally democratic how can they promote internal democracy at the national level? It ought to start from the very foundation (Field work, 2017).

Parties are required to function within the limits of established laws. For instance, the rules of contestation at the national level applies to parties internal elections-open of nomination; filing of nomination; vetting of candidates; campaign period; voting; seeking redress when the need arises( through internal mechanisms or going to court) and so on and so forth. Therefore the internal democracy of parties in Ghana is critical to the national interest and to the democratic consolidation we all aspire to achieve (Field work, 2017).
4.2.4 The Extent to Which the NPP and NDC Have Adhered to this Provision

Both parties to some extent have played according to the rules. In contemporary political parties, elections are the basic mechanism for selecting leaders and candidates (Bryan and Baer, 2005 cited in Debrah, 2014). The constitutions of both parties emphasize elections as the exclusive means of selecting and nominating aspirants to contest in national elections. At every level of the party’s hierarchy (i.e. national, regional and constituency), periodic elections are held to fill the various portfolios (Debrah, 2014). Also, both parties have adopted the Electoral College system which is aimed at involving members at the local levels in the selection of leaders as well as in the formulation of rules to guide the activities of the party.

Unfortunately, parties in Ghana do not often allow for dissenting opinions and adopt all manner of strategies to suppress dissidents. According to Maiyo (2008) parties that promote internal democracy have an advantage over those that do not in the context that benefit from a pool of ideas as a result of their inclusiveness (Rahat & Shapira, 2016; Mimpem, 2007; Scarrow, 2005).

Over the years, it has been observed that parties have allowed some sort of competitiveness by way of opening nominations for interested members who are eligible to contest, publicizing it widely and holding elections. But the question is how free and fair have these processes been? Internal contests have often resulted in intra-party conflicts and in some few case splits (Debrah, 2014; Bob-Milliar, 2012).

The Majority Leader (Formerly Minority Leader), Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah have blamed the low quality of discourse in Ghana’s parliament on over monetization of the processes that leads to the election of MPs. He bemoaned that, “… The quality has gone down a top notch and no thanks to the processes of selecting parliamentary candidates
by various political parties including my own party. I think increasingly the process is becoming too monetized and we need to do serious introspection to stop that” (Ghanaweb, 22-12-2016). For parliament to be effective, all political parties should deal with this canker which has come to dominate internal and national politics in Ghana.

It is evident in the Ghanaian case that:

There is no single intra-party contest that had not generated either allegation of corruption, bribery or antagonism. When you pick the 2008 NPP contest at Legon, where 17 candidates contested for the presidential aspirant portfolio, the contest was characterized by accusations and counter-accusations, name calling and so on. A similar thing happened in the NDC primaries that took place in Sunyani which saw Nana Konadu compete with Prof. Mills for the position of flag bearer. About 20,000 security personnel were deployed for the contest because of the heightened tension that marked the contest (Field work, 2017).

We heard in the past that the pro-Alan members who sought to contest for various positions in the NPP were told the nomination forms were finished when actually the nomination forms were there. In other instances, members of the Alan bloc were vehemently abused verbally. Some of them even said that they were personally attacked. The situation has not been different in the NDC. When Samuel Boateng wanted to contest Mahama in the 2016 presidential primaries, they said he was not mentally sound and when he went to submit his nomination form Asiedu Nketia and other executives of the party refused to accept his form. The party even went ahead to sack those who sold the form to him. That is not internal democracy. So in principle, they usually have democratic processes like elections of party executives, which make it look like they are obeying that particular provision. But the processes itself is not free and fair (Field work, 2017).

Another factor that hinders the strict adherence to this provision is the monetization of politics. The political sphere is now ruled by money and this makes it difficult for people who are competent but with less resource to win internal elections.

“Money politics” breeds corruption, affects accountability and does not promote issue-based politics (Debrah, 2014). The following are some of the views expressed by respondents:

How many people within the NPP and NDC could raise 10,000 Ghana cedis to contest for the parliamentary primaries? So there is something of an iron law of oligarchy within these parties. Few people with resources will always emerge to dominate the
The idea of deepening internal democracy is good but the monetization of politics serve as a major obstacle to this laudable requirement (Field work, 2017).

The problem with these parties is that money is influencing everything. When they go to congress to elect their party leadership the amount of money that is involved is outrageous. Regional elections for the Chairmanship position, especially are mostly characterized by huge spending. In fact, the process has become so completely marred in corruption and vote-buying. Both parties try as much as possible to be internally democratic, but the bribery and corruption that is associated with these internal processes hinder internal democracy and needs to be checked (Field work, 2017).

The low participation of women in the political arena has been an important focal point in contemporary politics. Many scholars have advocated for the participation of women in the internal decision-making mechanisms of political parties (Hinojosa, 2012; Matland and Ballington, 2004 cited in Debrah, 2014) as a means of promoting internal democracy. As such, both parties have established women’s wings at every level of the party organisation. The NPP and NDC have made efforts to increase the participation of women within their parties by halving the nomination fee for interested females who wish to contest for various portfolios. Despite all these efforts, both parties are far from achieving parity in terms of the representation of women to men.

The transformation seen in the NDC over the years in terms of their internal democracy is worth mentioning. The NDC which evolved as an offshoot of a revolution can be patted on the back for how they have improved their internal democracy. From the year 2002 downwards, all NDC candidates and leaders have been selected through elections with the main emphasis being placed on the eligibility criteria. The NDC has even gone beyond the Electoral College system and adopted a universal suffrage system which allows every card bearing member of the party to vote in the presidential and parliamentary primaries regardless of their locations within the country. Voting is no longer limited to delegates. This is aimed at ensuring that majority of party members have the opportunity to select their leaders. Progressively the NDC has improved its internal democracy and this is commendable. An official of the NDC averred:
In all the other political parties, people who share the same belief as to how a country should be governed came together to form the party and begun their battle to capture power. The NDC, on the other hand, emerged from a revolutionary government that was already in power, but had come under some pressure to adopt democracy and constitutionalism. So from the start, the party was weak and had to be directed by the government in power. Whereas in other parties, government is seen as a product of the work of the party, the NDC was seen from the beginning as a product of the government in power. In my view, decisions were not originating from the party, although there were some consultations. There were no presidential primaries in the NDC from 1992-2000. It was all by acclamation. The way of selecting parliamentary candidates was also not as democratic as we have today. In actual fact, in the very first parliamentary primaries in 1992, our candidates were named at the congress which took place at Cape Coast. The people in the constituency had no hand in voting to choose a candidate. As we approached 2000, it was getting to a point where the fates of MPs were in the hands of some party bigwigs. We lost the 2000 elections largely as a result of candidate imposition. At the congress after our defeat, we decided that we are no more going to have co-chairmen, but one chairman (constitution adopted in 2002). Since then we have made further improvement in every Congress, we have attended. Previously we had two chairmen with the same powers and this was purposely meant to divide and rule. For instance, If Chairman A decides to disagree with the president or national executives then they can use chairman B to have their way and ignore the former. It is no longer possible for anybody to dictate to anyone in the NDC now because of the laid down rules in our revised constitution (Field work, 2017).

The evidence above suggests that although some significant progress has been made, the NPP and NDC have not been democratic as they should be. Both parties have not strictly adhered to democratic principles enshrined in the constitution. Unfortunately, it is only the party in power that seems to come under the lens of the citizenry. However, the criticisms should be leveled against all political parties because those in opposition are alternative governments. Opposition parties are governments in waiting as such their internal activities will have its own effect when they form government. We should therefore not be charitable in our criticisms of parties whose internal activities contradict constitutional provisions. Being critical of parties and criticizing them constructively will ensure the deepening of intra-party democracy which is also crucial to healthy inter-party politics at the national level. It is, therefore, imperative to take a critical look at their constitutions, internal structures as well as their processes of
candidate and leadership selection with the aim of making them more democratic. A respondent made the following suggestion by way of advice to the political parties regarding IPD:

Both parties have their own constitution, which has been amended over the years, especially with the introduction of the Electoral College to give the masses the opportunity to select their leaders and candidates. But these constitutions must work within the national constitution which is the supreme law of the land. Parties’ internal democracy has been a worry over the years. In fact, CDD-GHANA and CODEO for that matter do not only monitor the national elections and the local government election, but also monitor elections that put leaders to the various structures of political parties. Both parties must deepen their internal democracy and promote participation (Field work, 2017).

4.3 FACTORS THAT ACCOUNT FOR CONFLICTS IN THE NPP AND NDC

Several studies (Okonkwo & Unaji, 2016, Aleyomi, 2013, Momudu & Matudi, 2013, Bob-Milliar, 2012; Webb & Childs, 2011; Koger et al, 2010; Muhammed, 2008; Banes, 1994) have shown that internal conflicts are a major characteristic of parties all over the globe. According to Banes (1994), all political parties are at least divided ideologically or in relation to their perspectives on specific issues. Since parties are an agglomeration of different individuals with diverse orientations and interests, conflict becomes inevitable. These conflicts have usually found expression in misunderstandings, violence, and secession.

In Ghana, internal party conflict is not a recent phenomenon. It traces its roots to the period of party politics in the colonial era. However, the recent manifestations of these conflicts in the two leading political parties have attracted much attention. The study established that the factors that account for conflicts in the NPP and NDC are not different from those identified in other African countries (Ibrahim & Abubakr, 2015; Friedriech-Ebert Stiftung, 2010; Anyadike & Eme, 2009; Olaniyan, 2009; Matlosa & Sello, 2007). The causes include, but not limited to struggle for power, factionalism,
god-fatherism and favouritism, imposition of candidates by party bigwigs (during candidate and leadership selection) lack of internal democracy, Ethnicity and paucity of ideology.

The struggle for the control of the party is a major source of conflict in the NPP and NDC. Factions struggle for the soul of the party in order to have control over party resources and the decision-making apparatus. This has contributed to the heightened tension that characterizes internal elections at every level of the party hierarchy.

These struggles have sometimes led to violence and in other instances resulted in breakaways and the formation of new political parties by irate members (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Pokoo; 2012; Ninsin, 2006). This is against the backdrop that political parties are very crucial for the consolidation of democratic governance. It is imperative to note that this acrimonious struggles are very common during candidate and leadership selection (Debrah, 2014; Pokoo, 2012; Bobmilliar, 2012). Some respondents noted:

> The struggle for positions is a major source of conflict. Each faction wants its candidate to get the best positions so as to get more benefits as well as control party resources and decision-making processes in the party. This is a delicate issue which has not been handled well over the years (Field work, 2017).

> Basically, their [NPP and NDC] internal disputes are about access to power within the party. The choice of personalities to fill various positions has been a major source of conflict. All factions want to have control over the decision-making apparatus of the party so that they can direct the affairs of the party (Field work, 2017).

> The selection of leaders and candidates is a primary contributor to conflict in both parties. The factions always have an interest they want to satisfy and will, therefore, go every length and breadth to ensure that they achieve their aim. They do not care if they will have to undermine other people in order to achieve this purpose (Field work, 2017).

Closely related to the point above is the imposition of candidates by party stalwarts. Many scholars have observed that candidate imposition have resulted in internal disputes in the NPP and NDC (Pokoo, 2012; Ayee, 2008; Ninsin, 2006).
Ninsin (2006) for instance, avers that party bigwigs often impose candidates on the electorates during primaries in their quest to gain control of the party structures at all levels. Pokoo (2012) also noticed that descendants of former political figures who played vital roles in any of the three traditions (Danquah-Busia-Dombo, Nkrumahist, and Rawlings traditions) are often supported by party godfathers. The victory of Zanetor Rawlings over Nii Armah Arshitey (the then sitting MP of Klottey Korle Constituency) in the 2016 NDC parliamentary primaries is a case in point. Party godfathers and elites employ various strategies, including violence to exclude the rank and file in the process of candidate and leadership selection (Debrah, 2014). Thus, members are deprived of real opportunities to select their preferred candidates. Imposition of candidates in both parties has led to serious internal conflicts which have resulted in court trials, violence and defections (Ayee, 2008; Debrah, 2014). Some respondents

Candidate impositions have not only led to internal conflicts in the NDC but have also affected our electoral fortunes in the past. This candidate imposition affected us so much in 2000 leading to our defeat. It also brings about division, which affects party unity (Field work, 2017).

It was obvious that the national executives of the NPP preferred Lawyer Addison to Nii Noi and therefore did everything possible to ensure his victory in the second election. I think that is one of the worse decisions they made and I was not surprised when Addison lost to Zanetor in the general elections. The popularity of Nii Noi was confirmed by the votes he had as an independent candidate. I hope our leaders will learn from this mistake and allow the people to choose their own candidates in our subsequent primaries (Field work, 2017).

The perceived favouritism in these two parties is a source of conflict. When members of the party develop the perception that some members are being favoured than others and there are no equal opportunities for all, they are going to question that structure and this may be done through violence (Field work, 2017).

With regards to their internal democracy, both parties have structures and laid down procedures that guide their actions. In the case of the NPP, the National Annual Delegates Conference is their supreme decision-making body whiles that of the NDC
is the National Congress/Conference (Debrah, 2014). Although these provisions and platforms are targeted at involving members in the activities of the parties, the NPP and NDC cannot boast of promoting grassroots participation in their internal decision-making mechanisms. Debrah (2014), in his study “Intra-Party Democracy in Ghana’s Fourth Republic: the case of the NPP and NDC” found that ordinary members were not privy to the information that delegates had and this affects the ability of the rank and file to participate effectively in the decision-making processes of the party.

The study also revealed that most of the decisions are reached with little or no inputs from the rank and file. The elites have monopolized the decision-making process to the detriment of the larger membership. Nevertheless, internal party democracy must promote inclusiveness, transparency and effective participation of all members in the activities of the party.

The discontents of the rank and file with party decisions have often found expression in violence and destruction of properties. Thompson (2008) affirms this point by noting that intra-party deliberations provide the medium through which party members reconcile their individual interests with that of the group interest.

In the absence of such mechanisms, conflict becomes inevitable. Ayee (2008:8) noted that the non-adherence to democratic principles in the internal activities of parties promote ‘bitterness and resentments’ which undermine ‘party cohesion’, and affects ‘healthy internal competition’ and ‘party organisation’. The following are some of the views expressed by respondents:

Internal democracy in both parties has not been the best. The elites have completely taken control over the internal processes of these parties. You sometimes wonder if the people at the grassroots matter. I think the only time they matter is during elections. In my opinion, they [rank and file] have not been given the opportunity to participate effectively in the party’s internal processes. This has sometimes informed their agitations and oftentimes the
use of violence to press home their demands. They [NPP and NDC] should try and involve the grassroots in their decision-making processes (Field work, 2017).

The ‘Mugabe syndrome’ has affected internal democracy in the NDC. There are people who feel they have been there for long, so they don’t want to give way and it has become a major source of conflict. People are unable to appreciate their level of contribution knowing that politics is about time, so they will give way when their time is over for others to continue. In Ningo-Prampram constituency, for instance, the conflict line between supporters of E.T. Mensah and Sam George is still very high and they will just not do anything together (Field work, 2017).

There have also been some conflicts between the youth wing of the party [NPP] and the elders. The youth who also believe that they have the energies and are being pushed to the background would like to exert themselves and take frontline roles in the party. These struggles have led to some unpleasant happenings in the party (Field work, 2017).

In contemporary Africa and indeed other developing countries, issues of ethnicity and identity are a major characteristic of party politics (Arthur, 2009; Chazan, 1982). This is despite the fact that ethnic politics continue to pose serious threats to the peace and stability of many African countries and thereby affect their prospects of democratic consolidation (Arthur, 2009). The high sense of entitlement to the national cake among the various ethnic groups has led to the heightened tensions that characterized inter and intra-party politics in Ghana. The ethnic rivalry in the NPP and NDC to some extent revolves around prominent members of the party.

This observation confirms Bob-Milliar’s (2012) argument that intra-party politics in the NPP and NDC are marked by animosity between its leading members and their supporters. It could be argued in the Ghanaian context that:

The internal conflicts in the NPP are largely based on ethnicity which can be traced back to the perceived Asante-Akyem rivalry. This rivalry has been there since the time of Victor Owusu where a section of the Akyems left the then Popular Front Party (PFP) to form the United National Convention (UNC). The victory of Limann’s People’s National Party (PNP) in the 1979 elections was blamed on this move by some members of the PFP. From the year 2000 downwards, the NPP was somewhat divided over the personality of Kufuor and Nana Addo (Field work, 2017).
I think it has to do with ethnicity and identity. The Asante faction was craving for agenda 2020. After Kufuor, they wanted Alan to lead the party so that they can maintain their power and influence. The Asante faction thought that Akufo-Addo leading the party will give the Akyem ‘Mafia’ an upper hand over the Asantes and that the Akyem ‘Mafia’ will take over the party. There were even malicious messages being circulated on social media that if Akufo-Addo wins he is going to empower the Okyehene and subjugate the Asantehene. So their internal disputes are purely based on ethnicity and identity (Field work, 2017).

In the NDC we have the ‘Fante Confederacy’, the ‘Voltarian Bloc’ and most recently the ‘Gonja Mafia’. The ethnic undertones play out strongly during candidate and leadership selection. Even when they were selecting their minority leader you saw the ethnic dimension coming up strongly. The Volta Caucus was strongly against and vehemently opposed Haruna Iddrisu’s candidature but he also had the support of the Northern Caucus. The perception that some ethnic groups have been marginalized and others projected is a major source of conflicts in political parties in Ghana (Field work, 2017).

Despite the fact that there is evidence of ethnic rivalry in both parties, the NPP have often been berated by many for these happenings in their internal processes. However, if what happened during the 2016 campaign trail is anything to go by then it can be argued that the NPP is trying to overcome the Asante-Akyem rivalry. An official of the NPP noted:

We all saw the important role president Kufuor and Alan played in Nana Addo’s campaign. What is most striking is the fact that Nana Addo had 70% of the total votes in the Ashanti region. Ex-President Kufuor a native and royal from the region [Ashanti] did not get such votes in the 2000 and 2008 elections. It clearly shows that the NPP is gradually building bridges and have prioritized the interest of the party above that of the factions. This is healthy for the development of the party (Field work, 2017).

Lack of ideology is also identified as a cause of conflict in the NPP and NDC. Ideology refers to the programmes and activities that a political party intends to implement when they form the government. Thus, it provides a clear direction as to how the business of the party should be carried out. The NPP and NDC claim to uphold some form of ideology, but it has been observed over the years that they have not conducted themselves within the spectrum of their ideology (Gyampo, 2012; Ninsin; 2006; CDD,
Their pursuit of almost the same policies when in government either suggests that they have no basic ideology or that the political goals of members are merely self-serving. The paucity of ideology has resulted in some internal disputes in both parties. Nnoli (2003) opines that parties driven by ideology have effective internal mechanisms for harmonizing the interest of members and this, to a large extent, reduces the occurrence of internal conflicts. Notwithstanding the fact that ideologically driven parties are not immune to internal feuds, there is a less likelihood of members crossing carpets. The underlying ideology which forms the basis for their formation ties them to their political parties. The lack of ideology in Ghanaian political parties can be explained in terms of the limited knowledge and understanding of most party members on what political ideology truly stands for and its relevance to party organisation.

It is, therefore, appropriate for political parties to socialize their members to accept and imbibe party values as well as ensure that their ideologies are in line with the needs and aspirations of the citizenry. The following are some of the views expressed by respondents:

Somebody who wanted to be an MP came to the party office to pick a form. This was a well-educated lady. I asked her a simple question—what is the ideology of the NPP and she said peace and love. In fact, I was sad that day. This clearly shows that there is a lot of work to be done with regards to educating our members. They should know and understand the principles, values and activities of the party (Field work, 2017).

In the NPP, there is a conflict between those who believe in liberal democracy and those who view it as a conservative party. The party’s constitution is not very clear on this matter. So people call them the ‘hawks and the doves’ but I choose to call them liberal democrats and conservatives. There is a sharp distinction in their principles which sometimes result in conflict (Field work, 2017).

The NDC has one ideology, but the problem is that we have differences in understanding what the ideology is. When we talk about social democracy some people equate it to socialism, communism, etc. This informs their perception about the way forward when there is an issue. These different interpretations have sometimes led to misunderstandings within the party (Field work, 2017).
Even though the NDC call itself a Social Democratic Party and the NPP view themselves as liberal democrats-You will see that the parties are an amalgamation of various interests; with interest sometimes conflicting. They are not parties that are formed basically on ideological lines. They are largely based on ethnic cleavages. The internal conflicts we usually see in these parties results from the contradictions that characterizes parties that are not ideologically driven but rather an assemblage of different interest and groups (Field work, 2017).

4.4 THE MANIFESTATIONS OF CONFLICTS IN THE NPP AND NDC

The internal conflicts in both parties have found expression in various ways, including intense factionalism, political mudslinging, court trials, violence, and secession. Factionalism is an integral part of party organisation anywhere in the world (Kollner & Basedau, 2015; Maor, 1997; Harmel et al, 1995). Nonetheless, its effect on the party depends on how well it is managed (Kollner & Basedau, 2015; Sarakinsky & Fakir, 2015; Boucek, 2009). Since political parties are an assemblage of individuals, members will certainly differ in some respects. There is, therefore, the need for the existence of mechanisms to get members to make compromises and/or ensure that the wish of the majority is carried out. Internal feuds in parties in advanced democracies largely centre on policy issues with the various factions searching for equilibrium (Koger et al, 2010). These conflicts often emerge over the approach to be adopted in conducting the business of the party (Webb & Childs, 2011). This is contrary to the observation of Bob-Milliar (2012) and Pokoo (2012) who concluded that factionalism in the NPP and NDC revolve around ethnicity and personality. Disagreement over policies has not been a defining feature of their internal rifts. A seasoned Ghanaian journalist noted:

There is no policy dimension to their internal disputes. I think the essential element has to do with who controls the levers of power. That is the main issue. For instance, the conflict between Afoko and Nana Addo was not about policy or ideology. I never heard them talking about the privatization of ECG-it was not an issue; I didn’t hear them fighting over the extension of the school feeding program. It was about how Akufo-Addo could become President and who is likely to help him to become president and so on. The interest of the people-the real issues confronting the people did not feature in that
confrontation. It is the same with the NDC. Their infighting was not based on
differences over policies (Field work, 2017).

Competitive and degenerative factionalism has been identified as detrimental to the
unity and effectiveness of political parties (Boucek, 2009). Unfortunately, these have
been the major feature of the internal activities of the NPP and NDC. The mistrust and
non-cooperation among the various factions in both parties have been a great
disincentive to their unity and effectiveness thereby affecting their electoral fortunes in
some instances. Some officials of both parties asserted:

The establishment of the Danquah Institute was one of the reasons we lost the
2008 elections. The institute was aimed at projecting Danquah and promoting
his ideas. The campaign was not managed from the party headquarters, but
from the Danquah Institute. Aggrieved members of the party, most of which
were from the Ashanti faction decided to relax and not play active roles in the
process and that resulted in our defeat. Also, the tension that was seen in the
NPP before the 2016 elections was as a result of the factionalism. Some
members of the Akufo-Addo bloc were of the view that Chairman Afoko and
Kwabena Agyapong are pro-Alan and for that matter could not be trusted.
This fuelled the mistrust among members of the party leading to internal
rancor (Field work, 2017).

We often deny the Asante and Akyem rivalry in the party [NPP]. I think it is
about time we face the reality and find permanent solutions to this rivalry. It
will go a long way to make the party strong and ready to win elections
whenever the time is due. These factions have a history. The Asantes have the
money and influence and the Akyems believe that they are the intellectual
belt of the party. The support in terms of votes the party gets from the Ashanti
region have made leading members from that part very powerful. We should
recognize that the Asante ‘thing’ is what we have and find a proper way of
dealing with it (Field work, 2017).

Some party members may not agree with me, but I strongly believe that the
inability of our party leaders to resolve their differences with Rawlings is one
of the major reasons for our humiliating defeat in the 2016 elections. It was
obvious that the founder of the party was not in good terms with the party
leaders and I think they underestimated his influence on the party supporters
in recent times. In Volta region, for instance, many people did not vote
because they felt that the founder of the party had been marginalized and
disrespected. So you will realize that whenever those conflicts are left
unresolved the punishment for that is the loss of political power (Field
work, 2017).
Going forward, both parties should adopt cooperative factionalism which promotes consensus-building and provide the incentives for groups in conflicts to make trade-offs and compromises during conflict resolution (Boucek, 2003).

In recent years, political discourse in Ghana have also been characterized by vilifications, personal attacks, insults amongst other uncivil behaviour employed by some politicians and party youth activists for political expediency.

The use of intemperate language has taken centre stage in political discussion in Ghana and this has contributed to the heightened tensions that characterizes intra and inter-party contests. Politicians have adopted the use of insults, vilifications, and mudslinging as weapons of attack against their competitors during elections. This in part accounts for the lack or less issue-based politics we have seen over the years. This development is not only counter-productive and a bane to national development, but also makes our democratic experiment fragile and vulnerable to negative consequences. For instance, the NDC after their mortifying defeat have been locked in accusations and counter-accusations against each other over the misappropriation of campaign funds and the possible cause of the defeat. This is in spite of the fact that a 13-member committee had been set up to investigate the cause of their thumping defeat in the 2016 general elections. Such conflicts if not properly managed can deepen the wounds in the party and cause further cracks which will be detrimental to the unity and stability of the party hence affecting their effective performance in the political system. An official of the NDC noted:

They find expression in people insulting each other and party members openly accusing and undermining each other. In recent times, the easiest thing people do if they disagree with you is to come out and say that you are corrupt (Field work, 2017).
Some of their internal feuds have degenerated into violence. In 2015, the internal conflicts in the NPP resulted in the death of its Upper East Regional Chairman Mr. Adams Mahama after suffering an acid attack. His death intensified the tension within the party leading to violent exchanges at the party’s headquarters. Also, on many occasions, presidential and parliamentary primaries in both parties have been marred by violence. This confirms Ninsin’s (2006) argument that parties in Ghana lack regulatory mechanism to forestall conflicts and promote accountability and transparency in their internal processes. Some respondents asserted that:

We [NPP] have recorded some violent acts which includes the vandalization of party properties and unfortunately the death of a prominent member of the party. It is important to state that the perpetrators of some of these acts are unknown. It is believed that the “Invisible Forces” are behind most of these unfortunate occurrences (Field work, 2017).

Our extreme conflicts have resulted in some form of minimal violence. But we [NDC] have not witness to any significant degree the manifestation of conflicts by way of violence (Field work, 2017).

There has been some form of violence in almost all primaries, both parties have had. They seem not to understand the democratic way of doing things. It is unfortunate that these things keep reoccurring (Field work, 2017).

Another manifestation of the conflicts in both parties has been court trials. Some aggrieved members of these parties have resorted to the national courts to seek redress, especially when they are unsatisfied with their internal conflict resolution mechanisms. It is important to state that these developments are very common during and after parliamentary primaries and disciplinary committee verdicts. In 2016, Joseph Mensah a member of the NPP challenged his disqualification from contesting in the party’s primaries in the Kwasimintsim Constituency in the Western Region at an Accra High Court. The ruling went in his favour and the court ordered a re-run of the elections. Similarly, Lawyer Addison, who was defeated by Nii Noi in the party’s primaries in the Klottey-Korle constituency petitioned an Accra High court to annul the results and
direct the NPP to organise fresh elections. In the NDC, Nii Armah Ashitey and Nii John Coleman, both aspirants in the November 2015 Klottey-Korle constituency parliamentary primaries filed a suit against the winner, Dr. Zanetor Rawlings claiming she is not a registered voter and therefore not qualified to be elected as a parliamentary candidate. After several months of contestations at the High court and Supreme Court, the election of Dr. Zanetor was upheld. Also, David Jawara an NDC aspirant in the Nadowli-Kaleo constituency primary in the Upper west region petitioned a High court in Wa to disqualify Roger Galeh a contender, in the primaries. The court, however, threw out the case based on the fact that the plaintiff refused to exhaust the party’s internal conflict resolution mechanisms.

Although not a major characteristic of recent internal conflicts in both parties, previously, internal feuds have resulted in resignations and breakaways of key members of the parties as stated in the literature review. Some respondents noted:

I must admit that more often we have attempted to respect the provisions of the party’s constitution. But where the internal structures cannot resolve the conflicts, the courts have been resorted to (Field work, 2017).

Aggrieved party members have resorted to the internal conflict resolution mechanisms of the parties and in some instances have resorted to a court of competent jurisdiction and in other cases have unleashed mayhem on themselves (Field work, 2017).

4.5 A COMPARISIM OF THE CONFLICTS IN THE NPP AND NDC

The conflict in the NPP may appear to be overly ethnic based whiles that of the NDC may be seen as largely revolving around personalities (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Pokoo, 2012). However, a critical look at the internal activities in both parties indicates that there is no substantial difference in their internal feuds. To a large extent, internal
disputes in both parties revolve around contest for positions (candidate and leadership selection), ethnicity, personality differences and factionalism (Bob-Milliar, 2012).

It is imperative to note that their internal rifts are more pronounced during the selection of leaders and candidates (Debrah, 2014). Also, internal conflicts in both parties have resulted in splinter groups. But unlike the NPP which have seen just one breakaway by Charles Wereko-Brobey, a prominent member of the party who later formed the United Ghana Movement (UGM), the NDC have seen three major breakaways which led to the formation of the National Reform Party (NRP), Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) and National Democratic Party (NDP) by Goosie Tanoh, Obed Asamoah and Nana Konadu in 1999, 2006 and 2012 respectively. It is important to mention that Mr. Kwame Pianim, a leading member of the NPP whose quest to lead the party in the 1996 general election was dashed by a Supreme Court ruling preventing him to contest for the highest office of the land resigned from the party in 2000 due to his displeasure of the trend of activities in the party (Ghanaweb.com, 31-01-2000).

Internal conflicts in both parties have also resulted in the suspension of key party figures. For instance, Josiah Aryee (former General Secretary of the NDC) and Kofi Adams (Deputy General Secretary and spokesperson for Rawlings) were suspended by the National Executive Committee (NEC) in 2004 and 2012 respectively, for allegedly plotting to ensure the defeat of the party’s presidential candidate (J.E.A Mills) in the general elections.

A similar incidence occurred in the NPP prior to the 2016 elections. Paul Afoko (Chairman), Sammy Crabbe (Deputy Chairman) and Kwabena Agyapong (General Secretary) were handed an indefinite suspension by the disciplinary committee of the NPP for breaching the party’s constitution. Some academics pointed out that:
Both parties have shown similar signs. Although the conflict within the NDC seems more like a personality thing if you dig deep you will find that there is a bit of an ethnic dimension too. Also, a careful look at the NPP reveals that personality is a major feature around which factions are built even though we often talk about the ethnic dimension. For instance, if you talk to the NDC people from the Volta region you get to know that they are very bitter with how the party has treated its founder recently. They feel that the man has not been accorded the respect he deserves. This largely accounted for the low voter turnout in that [Volta] region in the last election. In the past, some members of the NPP have accused president Kufuor of not supporting Nana Akufo-Addo in the 2008 and 2012 elections because of their personal issues. Conflicts in both parties are almost the same (Field work, 2017).

I think the causes are the same, but how they have been resolved in recent times is quite different. The NDC in the past have usually resorted to the use of violence or arms to get their grievances addressed or heard. But over the years they have matured a little bit, especially with regards to resolving their internal conflicts. They have been more diplomatic about their internal conflict resolution. The difference has been that over the years the NPP, especially with the creation of the ‘Invisible Forces’, have turned to be more violent in their approach to some of these issues than we have seen in the NDC recently (Field work, 2017).

### 4.6 HOW INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN THE NPP AND NDC AFFECT DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

The infighting in the NPP and NDC which sometimes results in violence pose a real threat to how both parties function as a unit, and to Ghana’s political system. Political parties, together with entities such as Parliament, the courts, and the various government agencies, are a crucial component of the 1992 constitution of Ghana. Internal disputes in parties, therefore, have wide implications that stretch beyond party politics and which could have potential consequences for the prospects of democratic consolidation. Democratic consolidation requires the existence of effective political parties and state institutions as well as conscious citizens working together to protect and bolster the values of democracy (Gunther et al, 1995). It is increasingly clear that a rough equilibrium is needed among the various political actors to ensure that the entire political system works effectively.
While effective political parties are crucial for a fledgling democracy, a steady intra and inter-party relations are a prerequisite in deepening Ghana’s democracy. The NPP and NDC have dominated Ghana’s political scene since the coming into force of the Fourth Republic. Indeed, they have been the key players in our democratic experiment and have led political debates on important national issues over the past two decades. However, their internal conflicts have been a great source of worry because of the danger it portends for our democratic consolidation. Political parties in Ghana have agreed to function within the limits of the law. The national constitution and other legal frameworks such as Political Parties Acts (2000) as well as the parties’ internal party mechanisms guide their activities. Resorting to violence is, therefore, a deviation from the norm and a move off the course of democratic consolidation. Some of these violent acts have resulted in the destruction of state properties and this has placed some financial strain on the national purse.

The resources used in renovating these properties could have been used for other developmental projects. Internal conflicts also affect political discourse. Parties spend a lot of time trying to find solutions to these problems which could otherwise be used for a higher objective of deliberating on issues of national concern. Additionally, it has been observed over the years that the vigilante groups who are mostly the perpetrators of violence in both parties continue their acts on the national scene when their party comes to power. There have been several instances where these para-military groups have clashed or interfered in the work of the state security apparatus and some independent state institutions. A typical example is the invasion of a court in Kumasi by the ‘Delta Force’ to free its members who had been remanded. This does not ensure orderliness in our democratic setting which is, however, important in consolidating our democracy.
The manifestations of internal feuds in the two leading political parties have far reaching implications on our democratic experiment. It does not promote dialogue, tolerance, consensus-building and compromise. Parties cannot function effectively as the genuine vehicles of citizen participation if their internal activities contravene basic democratic principles (Sartori, 2005). Some respondents noted that whenever there has been heightened intra-party contest for positions, it has impacted negatively on the national contest, especially in areas where such disputes resulted in breakaways with aggrieved members contesting as independent candidates. An official of CDD noted:

We have recorded more conflicts in those areas during the general elections. Since it is the Electoral Commission that supervises the internal contest, as well as the general elections allegations of rigging during primaries, cast the image of the institution in a bad light and this translates into the national elections. ‘So if people are saying somebody bribed the commission to rig the election for him/her, it means I cannot trust the electoral management body to be credible in the general elections’. The integrity and credibility of the institution is questioned and this fuels the mistrust among parties and candidates often resulting in violence in the general elections. So whenever the internal struggles become so intense in a particular election year it translates into heightened tension in the national elections (Field work, 2017).

Parties that are internally democratic and resolve their conflicts in a non-violent manner are more likely to translate these values to the national scene (inter-party relationship) and this will go a long way to improve Ghana’s democracy. In the words of Thompson (2000), a congenial political environment, an effective civil society and a supportive economy are prerequisites for the consolidation of democracy. Ninsin (2006) concurs by noting that the stability of a democratic country depends on the extent to which its institutions perform their duties in a sustainable manner. To Reynolds (1999:22), “democracy is unlikely to break down when it is behaviourally practiced, attitudinally widely accepted, and constitutionally entrenched”. The NPP and NDC should, therefore, put into practice the core tenets of democracy and socialize its members to accept these values. An official of IDEG opined that:
Generally, internal conflicts are very destructive to the development of democracy because it does not promote stability. Until parties make the constitution and constitutionalism the only legally binding document and practice that guide their attitude and behaviour as well as the beginning point of policy formulation, it will be very difficult for us to move towards consolidation. There is, therefore, the need to check these developments and find appropriate ways of resolving them whenever they come up (Fieldwork, 2017).

4.7 CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS IN THE NPP AND NDC

The conduct of the internal activities of both the NPP and NDC is clearly spelt out in their party constitutions and other party documents such as the party manifestos. For instance, Article 4 of the NPP constitution comprises the disciplinary and grievance procedures, whereas Articles 39-41 of that of the NDC spells out the code of conduct and disciplinary code. It is pertinent to note that their internal affairs are also legally guided by national legislative frameworks such as the Political Parties Act 2000 (Act 574) and other constitutional provisions which enjoin parties to practice internal democracy (Article 55 of the 1992 constitution).

In spite of all these regulatory instruments, there still exists in practice many challenges and gaps in implementation. A critical look at the constitutions of both parties shows a lack of elaborate conflict resolution mechanisms.

Although both constitutions provide formal structures and procedures for resolving conflicts, it is imperative to emphasize that these provisions are not far reaching but largely focus on disciplinary instruments for dealing with party members who have acted contrary to the party rules and regulations. Some respondents expressed their views on this as follows:

Well, they have managed to resolve their conflicts. And the conflicts are resolved by the strongest faction being able to defeat the other. It is not as a result of negotiations. All those who started rebellions have been kicked-out. They no longer hold sway in the party. For
instance, all those who disagreed with the flag bearer of the NPP are no longer party members; even those who are members of the party have been ostracized to a very large extent. It is the same thing in the NDC. That is how they deal with their issues (Field work, 2017).

The parties have what the disciplinary committee, council of elders and other structures set up to resolve conflicts. The disciplinary committees of both parties are, however, a punitive committee. Once you appear before them, they are going to punish you whether by fine, suspension or dismissal. But that is not conflict resolution. It rather creates more problems for the party. Conflict resolution must try to bring people together. They should find a way of getting people to work together. The disciplinary committees in both parties need to be reformed. They should not only be sanctioning people but rather resolve conflicts to bring about peace in the party (Field work, 2017).

More troubling is the fact that both constitutions are virtually silent on electoral related disputes within the parties. Presidential and parliamentary primaries in the NPP and NDC have been plagued by pockets of violence which have often deepened conflicts and factionalism in both parties. For instance, the 2012 presidential primaries of the NDC which took place at Sunyani was characterized by mudslinging, insults and personal attacks. The high tension prior to the contest divided the party into two blocs resulting in the formation of “FONKAR” (Friends of Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings) and “GAME” (Get Atta Mills Elected). Nana Konadu broke away from the party after the contest due to an apparent irreconcilable differences and formed the National Democratic Party (NDP). Also, the 2015 parliamentary primaries of the NDC were also marred by violence across the 10 regions of the country. Violent incidences were recorded at (Tema South, Ablekuma South, Klottey-Korle, Ningo Prampram, Nanton, Madina, Suame, Bole-Bamboi, Akatsi South etc) over bloated register, missing names in the register, stealing of ballot boxes among others. Similarly, the 2005 National Congress of the NDC held at Koforidua was soaked in violence. Supporters of Obed Asamoah, an aspirant for the position of National Chairman were intimidated
and assaulted. Consequently, Obed Asamoah and other displeased members of the party broke away and formed the Democratic Freedom Party (DFP).

The situation is not any different in the NPP. The 2008 presidential primaries which pitted Nana Addo over Alan Kyeranmanten were underlined by intense conflicts. The contest was marked by tension, animosity, and confusion between the Akufo-Addo and Alan blocs. Alan Kyeranmanten resigned from the party after the contest, but was prevailed upon by some party elders to return later. In reminiscent with the NDC, the 2005 National Delegates Conference of the NPP held at the University of Ghana campus was soaked in violence. The Kufuor bloc was in favour of Steven Ntim whereas the Akufo-Addo bloc canvassed support for Peter Mac Manu for the position of National Chairman. This led to an intense dispute between the factions which was characterized by vilifications, political innuendoes, and violent exchanges. The NPP also recorded some nasty and unseemly incidents in its 2004 parliamentary primaries. In Bawku Central, supporters of Mohammed Tahiru Nambu who were aggrieved by his disqualification from contesting the primaries vandalized properties at the constituency office and assaulted the general secretary. In Cape Coast, the preparations for the primaries triggered off conflict between the supporters of the two aspirants, Christine Churcher and Godwin Buckman. In addition, the 2015 parliamentary primaries of the Klottey-Korle constituency held at the NPP’s National Headquarters in Accra recorded some chaotic scenes when supporters of aspirants clashed.

Considering the pervasive irregularities and conflict that characterize party activities especially in relation to candidate and leadership selection, the absence of specific and/or detailed provisions on electoral disputes raises serious concerns. Respondents from both political divides hinted that this was not an oversight as there are ad-hoc committees to deal with such issues. However, they subscribed to the argument that the
provisions on electoral disputes should be elaborated to give a clear picture of the internal processes. In the view of some respondents:

There are no specific provisions for electoral related issues. So what the two parties have done is to set up an ad-hoc committee as soon as an electoral issue arises. These committees look into such issues and if you are not satisfied you can appeal to the National Executive Committee and even the council of elders. But as I have said, these mechanisms are not working because of the suspicion and mistrust among themselves which is largely as a result of the factionalism within the party. For instance, in the case of Afoko, he declined his summons to appear before the Disciplinary Committee because of the composition of the panel. Probably, he did not trust some of them. So the laws are not clear; they need specific laws to deal with specific issues. However, the structures are in place but they are not trusted (Field work, 2017).

I think it wasn’t exactly an omission. In fact, the provisions on conflict resolution were inserted really for those purposes. Basically, party disputes generally revolve around candidate and leadership selection. Except that one would have thought that those provisions will be more detailed particularly those on internal elections stating clearly what the options are when it is an electoral dispute. But unfortunately, it is not the case and I think that is one of the challenges we [NDC] also have (Field work, 2017).

With regards to specific provisions for electoral dispute, perhaps there are no provisions in the constitution because the party thinks these issues happen only during primaries which are held in four years and therefore is not very pressing like the issues they encounter on a regular basis. However, ad-hoc committees are sometimes set up to look at these issues. For instance, in 2012 the party [NPP] established a team that went around settling disputes in the various constituencies, especially those that arose from primaries (Field work, 2017).

Party primaries are crucial in promoting internal democracy and preserving party’s stability (Ibrahim & Abubakr, 2015). Considering the fact that most of their internal feuds have resulted from electoral disputes (candidates and leadership selection) one would have thought that there will be specific or at least detailed provisions on electoral disputes stating clearly the procedures to be employed in the events of electoral conflicts but unfortunately, that is not the case. Most of the respondents averred that candidate and leadership selection processes have not been fair enough.
There is, therefore, the need for both parties to establish mechanisms that will ensure fairness and peaceful contestation. Maiyo (2008) notes that in the absence of adequate formal avenues for accommodating dissonances, disputes are more likely to result in party splits than coordinated factionalism and this embolden embittered contestants to seek redress in the national courts. This has often been the case of the NPP and NDC with a significant number of displeased candidates taking their grievances to court after primary elections.

The consistent inability of both parties to resolve their internal disputes amicably points to the existence of a weak or lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms. This is consistent with Ninsin’s (2006) view that political parties in Ghana lack regulatory frameworks to prevent conflicts and promote accountability and transparency internally. This indicates a deficiency among the very structures and regulations established to promote and ensure party cohesion and internal democracy. Going forward, there should be provisions that spell out clearly the procedures and punishments matching appropriate offences so that the option of punishment is not left to the discretion of the disciplinary committees. Other respondents intimated as follows:

They have arbitration committees, disciplinary committees, the council of elders etc. Afoko, Kwabena Agyapong, and Sammy Crabbe were sanctioned by the disciplinary committee after the arbitration committee had sat on the case and the decision approved by the council of elders. The same thing happened in the case of Kofi Adams. As to whether these mechanisms are effective or not is another issue. People sometimes do not trust these internal mechanisms or may not be satisfied with their judgment, hence you see many party members going to court sometimes without exhausting all the avenues available internally (Field work, 2017).

Even though they have a constitution with structures that are somewhat hierarchical and provisions targeted at resolving conflicts, they do not work because of the mistrust and the factions within their political parties. Some members of the party do not trust the committees and the effectiveness of the structures and mechanisms
that is why you often see them going to court for redress despite their internal mechanisms. These people sideline such mechanisms because they are not confident that members of such committees will be fair and just in their judgments (Field work, 2017).

Where you have grievances, there are avenues to seek redress and I think they are fair. I don’t know why we [NPP] are still having some challenges, but I guess it is an evolving process and we have to look at it again and if there are some aspects we have to fine-tune we may have to do that because if you have all these provisions and yet people are having problems which sometimes degenerates into violence then I guess we have to humble ourselves and take a critical look at the processes again (Field work, 2017).

4.8 FACTORS THAT HINDER CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE NPP AND NDC

The study revealed a number of reasons for the unsuccessful resolution of conflicts in the NPP and NDC. Illiteracy and/or lack of education of party membership on the party principles was identified as a major obstacle affecting effective conflict resolution in both parties. Some members are oblivious of the core beliefs, whereas others are unaware of their internal mechanisms. This is because recruitment into the parties is not based on ideology, but rather revolve around personalities. A member of the NDC averred, “What happens to the membership of the party if those individuals decide to leave? People who defect easily are not staunch members who joined the party because of the beliefs, but their membership is as a result of their closeness to certain individuals or some benefits they get from the party”.

To deal with this, both parties need to emphasize on training. They must develop a strong capacity to constantly train their members and socialize them to accept the core beliefs of the party as well as help them familiarize themselves with avenues available for conflict resolution. The education of party members will lead to a well-informed membership with in-depth knowledge in the ethos and rudiments of the party. This will
promote the use of democratic means in resolving disputes and reduce the occurrence of violent conflicts. Some respondents had this to say:

People are sometimes ignorant of the provisions. We also have a role to play in ensuring that the people are educated on these provisions. The leadership will have to take these things to the grass root. Most of the people at the lower level are not aware of these provisions in the constitution and therefore employ other unconstitutional means to seek redress or as a way of showing their resentment. That has been a very big challenge. Also, people sometimes get unnecessarily emotional. We need to let them know that a political party is a mass movement of people but they have to be regulated by law and that is why we have a constitution. Otherwise, anybody gets up and do whatever he/she likes (Field work, 2017).

Most of our members at the grassroots are ignorant of some of these mechanisms available for conflict resolution. The party has a huge followership and a number of people have NDC membership cards but the people at grassroots have not been educated enough on what the party stand for, their modus operandi, the internal conflict resolution mechanisms available and so on. Because the structures permeate to the local level, we can charge our polling station executives to go down there and simplify relevant portions of the constitution for our people to come and appreciate and then put them to practice (Field work, 2017).

One other major obstacle to the process of conflict resolution in both parties is the high mistrust among factions. For a conflict resolution to be effective, all feuding parties must commit to the process. Nonetheless, the high level of mistrust among factions creates suspicion which affects the process of conflict resolution. Conflicting parties most often take entrenched positions and are not ready to make any compromise. This unmovable stands taken by factions do not promote effective conflict resolution, but rather deepen internal divisions. Also, the influence of some party bigwigs came up strongly during the interviews. They were identified as the financiers of some of the candidates. Their decisions, therefore, carry more weight and often sway the opinions and actions of conflicting parties. Thus, they pull the strings behind the scenes and dictate to the feuding parties as to the course of action to employ. The unwillingness of feuding parties to give up grounds and negotiate a solution or compromise makes the
process of conflict resolution arduous. Some respondents expressed their views on this as follows:

The NPP have a Conflict Resolution Mechanism. But sometimes the issues are very complex. For instance, the Nii-Noi-Addison conflict was not only a Ga problem. There were some chiefs and other personalities behind the scenes. After talks with him [Nii Noi] to rescind his decision of contesting as an independent candidate, he told us to go and talk to some chiefs. We got there only to be told by the chiefs that they are not in charge and they also directed us to some other people. Addison’s posture did not help. He was fresh to politics and did not know political maneuvering. Because of some promises and assurances he had from some big people he thought he will win the elections and therefore was not strongly committed to the conflict resolution processes (Field work, 2017).

I think the main obstacle has been that in almost all the cases you will see some important party leaders behind them. The activities of Delta Force in Kumasi are a good example. Without the backing of people like Kennedy Agyapong and Chairman Wontumi, they couldn’t have confidently engaged in such despicable acts. The problem is related to the sponsorship of these groups by party bigwigs for their political ends (Field work, 2017).

Another barrier to effective dispute resolution in both parties is members’ lack of confidence in internal conflict resolution mechanisms. It has been noticed that some do not trust their internal mechanisms hence proceed to court without exhausting all internal avenues available to them. For instance, there have been several instances where individuals or parties in conflicts have raised concerns with the composition of such committees and in other occasions have declined invitations to appear before these committees. This clearly confirms members’ lack of confidence in these internal processes. An official of CDD affirmed this point by stating that:

But because there are always factions’ people do not even trust the conflict resolution structures or committees. Afoko, for instance, did not go when he was summoned by the disciplinary committee because he had a problem with the inclusion of one lady on the committee. Kwabena Agyapong went but also had some concerns with the composition of the committee. When the NDC suspended Kofi Adams, Asiedu Nketia made certain comments that clearly showed that he was not part of his camp (Field work, 2017).
To avert these challenges and boost the confidence of members in these internal processes, individuals on the various conflict resolution committees should detach themselves from the factions. They should not be seen as supporting any personality or group of people during conflict resolution. The processes should ensure fairness and treat all party members equally. High ranking members should not be favoured over the rank and file should there be a conflict that involve such persons. Also, leading members should not be left off the hook if their actions violate party rules and regulation. One respondent asserted, “More often than not some members who violate the rules consider themselves to be bigger fishes and therefore do not want to be subjected to the internal conflict resolution mechanisms”.

In addition, the inability of conflict resolution committees to bring closure to disputes account for the recurrent conflicts often seen in the NPP and NDC. Ayee (2008:8) postulates that ‘the structure of the party’ sometimes ‘becomes so bureaucratic and personalized that of itself it constitutes a block to the resolution of conflict”. An official of IDEG noted that the NDC lost a lot of parliamentary seats because of the inability of their conflict resolution committees to resolve electoral disputes that emerged after their parliamentary primaries. This position was confirmed by an NDC respondent who opined that:

I remember that ahead of the 2016 elections there was a conflict resolution committee which said that they have resolved all conflicts but that wasn’t true. We had serious problems which emerged after the parliamentary primaries. They just say things to please people instead of confronting the real issues and this cost us in the elections. There are people in the NDC who can’t look at people in the face and tell them that they are wrong. This affects the conflict resolution processes within the party (Field work, 2017).

Some respondents also posited that the real stakeholders in disputes, especially at the lower levels of the party hierarchy are often not involved in the conflict resolution
processes. This is despite the fact that these individuals are parties to the conflict and are therefore better placed to help in the process of resolution. The absence of such mechanisms has led many embittered members to seek redress at the national courts (Maiyo, 2008). An official of the NDC was of the view that:

Currently, there is a conflict resolution committee going around to gather the views of members on why we lost the elections. One issue that will make their work difficult and ineffective is when they do not talk to the right people/stakeholders (Field work, 2017).

4.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter focused mainly on an assessment of the conduct of political parties since the inception of the Fourth Republic which was followed by the contribution of political parties to democratic consolidation in Ghana. It also explored some specific challenges to democratic consolidation in Ghana and looked at the relevance of the constitutional provision which requires parties to be internally democratic and the extent to which the NPP and NDC have adhered to it.

The chapter then presented the findings gathered from primary and secondary sources in line with the objectives of the study. The study established that there is no significant difference in the causes and manifestations of conflicts in both parties.

The section identified the struggle for power, imposition of candidates, lack of internal democracy, ethnicity, factionalism among others as the causes of conflicts in the NPP and NDC.

The chapter ended with an assessment of the conflict resolution mechanisms in the NPP and NDC as well as the factors that obstruct these processes. A review of the literature showed that although both parties have internal conflict resolution mechanisms some of these provisions are not detailed enough.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Political parties are very crucial to the sustenance of representative democracy. Accordingly, it is imperative for researchers to assess their performance and the factors that continue to shape their roles over the two decades of the existence of multi-party democracy in Ghana. The NPP and NDC have played significant roles in Ghana’s democratization process. They have alternated power since the return to democracy in 1992 and have led debates on matters of national interest. Nonetheless, it was observed that their internal conflicts have the potential to threaten Ghana’s stability and affect democratic consolidation. The crescendo of these conflicts in recent years leaves much to be desired. The study, therefore, sought to ascertain the factors that account for internal conflicts in both parties and proffer solutions to address them. Due to this, the study had the following objectives to achieve.

1. Identify the sources of internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC
2. Assess the manifestations of conflicts in the NPP and NDC
3. To find out the differences and similarities in the conflict of the NPP and NDC
4. Ascertain how internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC affect Ghana’s democratic consolidation
5. Measure the extent to which their constitutions and other laws provides mechanisms for conflict resolution
6. Bring to light the factors that hinder conflict resolution in the NPP and NDC
To attain the above objectives, interviews were conducted with three (3) representatives each of the NPP and NDC, two (2) Academics, one (1) journalist and two (2) CSOs employing the purposive sampling method in the selection of the participants.

This chapter summarizes the research findings and draw conclusions based on the findings. Recommendations are made and discussed for improving the conflict resolution mechanisms in the NPP and NDC as well as promoting values and attitudes that are essential for the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are summarized under the various research questions.

5.2.1 Research Question 1:
What are the Sources of Conflicts in the NPP and NDC?

The study found out that, conflicts in both parties are as a result of the struggle for power, factionalism, god-fatherism and favouritism, imposition of candidates, lack of internal democracy, Ethnicity and paucity of ideology. This confirms the findings of several studies conducted in various parts of Africa (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2010; Olaniyan, 2009; Anyadike & Eme, 2009; Matlosa & Sello, 2007). Factions want to have control over the decision-making machinery of the party to be able to call the shots. This has contributed to the heightened tension that mark candidate and leadership selection processes at every level of the parties organisation. Also, the imposition of candidates has resulted in conflicts. In an attempt to gain control of the party structures, party-godfathers adopt all kinds of strategies, whether fair or foul to ensure that their candidates emerge victorious. This, however, does not provide an equal playing field for all competitors which therefore serves as a recipe for conflict. Just like the NPP, the NDC have structures and laid down processes that are aimed at ensuring internal
democracy. However, the study established that the rank and file are not actively involved in their decision-making processes. Most of the decisions are made with little or no input from ordinary members. Noticeably, the rank and file have shown their displeasure with such decisions through violence and destruction of party properties. In terms of ethnic politics, the study revealed that issues of identity are a major characteristic of the internal activities of the NPP and NDC. Factionalism in both parties largely revolves around ethnicity and personality.

The ethnic rivalry has been a major source of conflict and has resulted in pockets of violence during presidential and parliamentary primaries. The dearth of ideology is also identified as another cause of conflict in both parties. Due to the paucity of ideology, they are unable to harmonize the interest of members and that have accounted for the increase in their internal disputes which on some instances have resulted in breakaways. It is important to emphasize that ideologically driven parties rarely experience breakaways. This is because the core beliefs on which basis the party was formed ties them to their political parties.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the manifestations of conflicts in the NPP and NDC?

It became evident in the study that there is no substantial difference in the expression of conflicts in both parties. Their internal conflicts have found expression in intense factionalism, personal attacks, vilifications, court trials, violence and on few occasions’ secession. The intense factionalism is more pronounced during the selection of candidates and leaders. This often deepens the cracks in the party and makes conflict resolution difficult. Another manifestation of conflicts in both parties has been personal attacks, allegations and counter-allegations, name-calling among other uncivil behaviours. A typical example is what happened in the NDC after their humiliating
defeat to their arch rivals the NPP in the last general elections. Party bigwigs were caught up in a blame game, accusing each other of causing the defeat of the party. Internal feuds in some instances have degenerated into violence. Additionally, politicians have employed the use of offensive language as a political tool against their competitors during elections. This development has far reaching implications on our body politic because it affects issue-based discourse.

Conflicting parties have sometimes engaged in violent exchanges which have resulted in the destruction of properties, injuries, and deaths. Their internal conflicts have also been evident in various court trials. This is very common after parliamentary primaries and disciplinary committee sanctions. Some irate members have resorted to the national courts to seek redress. Another manifestation of disputes in the NPP and NDC is the breaking away and formation of new political parties. It is, however, important to note that the NPP have seen just one of such developments as against three experienced in the NDC.

5.2.3 Research Question 3: What are the differences and similarities in the internal conflicts of the NPP and NDC?

The study revealed that there is no significant difference in the internal conflicts of both parties. To a large extent, their internal disputes revolve around the candidate and leadership, ethnicity, personality differences, and factionalism. Despite the fact that some scholars (Bob-Milliar, 2012; Pokoo; 2012) have argued that conflicts in the NPP is underpinned by ethnicity whereas that of the NDC is largely based on personality, a careful examination of the internal conflicts of the NPP and NDC shows that the above factors are not exclusive to each party. Rather, both factors are an underlying feature of conflicts in the two dominant political parties in Ghana. In addition, the manifestation
of conflicts in both parties have not been any different. They have found expression in name-calling, accusations, and counter-accusations, suspension of some party stalwarts, verbal and violent exchanges among factions as well as court trials.

5.2.4 Research Question 4:
How do the internal Conflicts in the NPP and NDC affect Ghana’s Democratic Consolidation?

The internal feuds in the NPP and NDC which occasionally results in violence affect their effective performance, threatens the stability of Ghana’s democracy as well as hinders the prospects of democratic consolidation. To consolidate our democracy, all political actors must carry out their duties within the framework of established laws. In every democracy, there are various structures and procedures put in place for resolving conflicts in a non-violent manner. These democratic principles are targeted at promoting dialogue, tolerance, consensus-building and compromise which are crucial for democratic consolidation. The inability of members of both parties in recent years to resolve their conflicts without resorting to violence is an indication of a violation of democratic rules and hence a move off the course of democratic consolidation. Some of these violent clashes have also led to the destruction of state properties which has placed some financial burden on the national purse. It was also established that anytime internal primaries in both parties have been marred by pockets of violence, it has impacted negatively on the national elections.

Additionally, it has been noticed that vigilante groups who are mostly the perpetrators of violence in internal party activities continue their lawless acts when their parties are in power. On countless occasions, these vigilante groups have clashed or interfered in the work of the coercive force of the state and some independent state institutions. Most striking is the fact that these para-military groups seem to have been accepted as part
of the structures of both political parties and therefore have the backing of some party bigwigs. The inability of the NPP and NDC to call these people to order poses a serious threat to our democratic consolidation.

5.2.5 Research Question 5:
Do the NPP and NDC have an effective conflict resolution mechanism?

The constitution of both parties provides structures and procedures for conflict resolution. However, a critical look at their constitutions revealed that the provisions on conflict resolution are not comprehensive but to a large extent narrowly focus on disciplinary instruments for dealing with members who violate the party rules and regulations. For instance, there are no specific provisions on electoral related disputes notwithstanding the fact that candidate and leadership selection have contributed a great deal to their internal disputes. Also, it was evident that the processes for internal contests have not been fair enough, hence the incessant conflicts that mark such processes at the various levels of the party hierarchy. Although both parties in the past have set up ad-hoc committees to address electoral related disputes, such committees in most cases are unable to bring closure to the disputes. In view of this, there is the need for both parties to elaborate some provisions in their constitution to provide clarity on issues.

5.2.6 Research Question 6:
What are the factors that obstruct conflict resolution in the NPP and NDC?

The resolution of conflicts in the NPP and NDC have been plagued with a lot of obstacles. The first challenge is the ignorance of party members of the structures and internal conflict resolution procedures. As a result, most of the members at the grassroots resort to unconstitutional means when there is conflict. Another has to do with the high mistrust among conflicting parties. Feuding parties often take entrenched
positions and are not ready to make compromises during conflict resolution. The study also established that some party bigwigs who are not openly involved in the conflict fuel the disputes behind the scenes. Also, it was discovered from the study that some members of the party do not have confidence in the internal conflict resolution mechanisms. Lastly, the inability of conflict resolution committees to bring closure to disputes accounts for its reoccurrence in both parties.

5.3 CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that the challenges and constraints identified in the internal activities of the NPP and NDC have the potential to subvert Ghana’s efforts to achieve its goal of democratic consolidation. The fierce internal contestations and the violent nature of their intra-party activities in recent times have been incongruous to the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy. Evidently, there are aspects and areas of functioning by these political parties that need improvement in order to consolidate our democratic gains as well as promote democratic culture that supports liberal democracy. The absence of internal democracy in the activities of political parties robs the society of effective and transparent leadership. In addition, internal conflicts pose a great threat to basic principles of the democratic process, such as tolerance, consensus-building, and compromise. These values, however, are very crucial to the consolidation of a country’s democracy. In this regard, there is the need to address these challenges and promote the strict adherence to democratic principles in the internal activities of political parties in Ghana. In view of this, the subsequent section advance recommendations to surmount these challenges.
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Political parties should always act within the confines of the law. They should adhere strictly to the national constitution and internal frameworks established to facilitate democratic procedures. Parties must accept the limitations on the performance of their functions and ensure that both their internal and external activities do not threaten the survival of democracy in the country.

The findings of the study indicated that lack of internal democracy is a major factor that accounts for intra-party conflicts in the NPP and NDC. There is, therefore, the need to ensure that their internal processes are free, fair and transparent. Both parties must provide equal opportunities for all aspirants in their candidate and leadership selection processes as well as make room for grassroots participation in their decision-making processes. Members of political parties should always act in accordance with the party constitution and not to the whims and caprices of godfathers and political cabals.

Also, both parties must embark on a massive education to empower and build the capacity of members at the lower levels and also to inform them about the internal processes available for conflict resolution. This will promote participation and inclusiveness of the rank and file in decision-making and reduce the use of unconstitutional means as a way of showing their displeasure. Additionally, parties should have an ideological orientation and educate their members to imbibe and exhibit behaviours that would promote democratization in Ghana.

Closely related to the above is the education of party elites by relevant institutions on the values of dialogue, tolerance, goodwill, consensus-building, compromise, and civility. This is desirable in order to ensure that intra and inter-party contests are devoid of ill feelings and other destructive manifestations which can affect the consolidation
of Ghana’s democracy. In line with this, the usual favouritism and god-fatherism which prevents equal contestations must be ceased forthwith.

It is also recommended that both parties strengthen their conflict resolution mechanisms. The processes should promote fairness. Conflict resolution committees must perform their duties in accordance with the due process. The processes leading to the composition of such committees should be looked at critically. Priority should be given to persons who are impartial and do not identify with any faction within the party. In an event where a member of the committee is a party to the conflict, he or she should recuse him or herself from the processes that results in the resolution. This will allay the perceptions of impartiality and boost the confidence of members in the structures and procedures established to resolve conflicts. In addition, some of the provisions in their constitutions should be elaborated to provide more clarity. This will prevent subjective interpretations and ensure effectiveness during conflict resolution processes.

Members of both parties should exercise decorum in their speech and be circumspect with their choice of words. Name-calling, personal attacks, vilifications among other uncivil behaviours affects internal unity as well as heighten tension in intra and inter-party contestations. The use of intemperate language should, therefore, be checked in our body politic.

Political parties should discourage the use of violence by their supporters and disband para-military groups within the parties. Any violation of the constitution that is allowed to go unpunished is a potential threat to the stability of Ghana’s democracy. As such, parties should not interfere in the activities of the courts when these vigilante groups acts in contempt of national laws. To consolidate Ghana’s democracy politicians should
refrain from ethnic or religious politics. They should rather engage in issue-based discourse which is healthy for a liberal democracy.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE NEW PATRIOTIC PARTY (NPP)

INTRODUCTION

The research is aimed at identifying the factors that account for the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC and proffer ways these challenges can be addressed to help in the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy.

INTERVIEW GUIDE (NPP)

1. What are your general impressions about the conduct of political parties in Ghana since the inception of the Fourth Republic?
2. What do you consider as Democratic Consolidation and how have political parties contributed to it?
3. What are the key challenges of Democratic consolidation in Ghana?
4. Comment on the constitutional provision which requires parties to be internally democratic
5. To what extent has the NDC adhered to this provision?
6. How can the NDC overcome its internal conflicts and deepen internal democracy?
7. What are the key issues that hamper development in the NDC?
8. What are the root causes of conflict in the NDC?
9. What are some of the manifestations of conflicts in the NDC and how have they been resolved?
10. What are some of the factors that account for the factionalism in the NDC?
11. What are the factors that serve as obstacles to effective conflict resolution in the NDC?

12. What can be done to improve the internal conflict resolution mechanisms in the NDC?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS (NDC)

INTRODUCTION

The research is aimed at identifying the factors that account for the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC and proffer ways these challenges can be addressed to help in the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy.

INTERVIEW GUIDE (NDC)

1. What are your general impressions about the conduct of political parties in Ghana since the inception of the Fourth Republic?

2. What do you consider as Democratic Consolidation and how have political parties contributed to it?

3. What are the key challenges of Democratic consolidation in Ghana?

4. Comment on the constitutional provision which requires parties to be internally democratic

5. To what extent has the NDC adhered to this provision?

6. How can the NDC overcome its internal conflicts and deepen internal democracy?

7. What are the key issues that hamper development in the NDC?
8. What are the root causes of conflict in the NDC?

9. What are some of the manifestations of conflicts in the NDC and how have they been resolved?

10. What are some of the factors that account for the factionalism in the NDC?

11. What are the factors that serve as obstacles to effective conflict resolution in the NDC?

12. What can be done to improve the internal conflict resolution mechanisms in the NDC?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMICS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, AND JOURNALISTS

INTRODUCTION

The research is aimed at identifying the factors that account for the internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC and proffer ways these challenges can be addressed to help in the consolidation of Ghana’s democracy.

INTERVIEW GUIDE (ACADEMICS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, AND JOURNALISTS)

1. What are your general impressions about the conduct of political parties in Ghana since the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1992?

2. In your view, to what extent have political parties contributed to democratic consolidation in Ghana?

3. What are the key challenges of Democratic consolidation in Ghana?
4. Comment on the constitutional provision which require parties to be internally democratic

5. To what extent have the NPP and NDC adhered to this provision?

6. How can the NPP and NDC overcome their internal obstacles and deepen internal democracy?

7. What do you consider as the main sources of conflict in the NPP and NDC?

8. What is the nature of conflicts in the NPP and NDC and how have they been resolved?

9. What accounts for the factionalism in the NPP and NDC?

10. Is the NPP and NDC ideologically driven? If yes why? If no why?

11. To what extent does ideology explain the differences and similarities in their internal conflicts?

12. How do processes of leadership and candidate selection engender intra-party conflicts in the NPP and NDC?

13. How different is the internal conflict in the NPP from that of the NDC?

14. How do internal conflicts in the NPP and NDC affect democratic consolidation?

15. Do the NPP and NDC have conflict resolution mechanisms?

16. What are the factors that serve as obstacles to effective conflict resolution in the NPP and NDC?

17. What measures would you suggest in addressing these challenges and improving the internal conflict resolution mechanisms in the NPP and NDC?