UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP IN
GHANA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE NEW PATRIOTIC
PARTY AND THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS IN
THE 4TH REPUBLIC

BY
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DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL
SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
JUNE 2017
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, this Master of Philosophy (MPhil) thesis submitted to the Political Science Department of the University of Ghana is an original and independent work with the exception of specific quotations and references attributed to specified sources. I am absolutely certain that this work does not contain any material that has been previously published or material that has been accepted by any institution for the award of any other degree. Sources of materials used have been duly cited and duly referenced.

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ABSTRACT

The members (membership) of a political party remain the most important resource for political party organisation. Regardless of the indispensable nature of political party members, there is often limited effort aimed at managing them effectively. This scenario has led to a global surge in political-party-membership-management interventions. This current study, therefore, seeks to employ the theory of Customer Relationship Management as a basis for comparing the membership management of the two dominant political parties in Ghana (National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party) using selected constituencies in Ghana as the target population. The sample of the study was eighteen participants consisting of two participants from each of the eight constituencies and two National Officers drawn from the two parties.

The study is qualitative in nature and draws on in-depth interviews in its data collection. Data was analysed qualitatively using the thematic and textual technique. The study found that both parties adhere to administrative processes in their constitution to enhance the management of their membership. Again, the study found that the NPP prioritises the use of technology than the NDC in the management of their membership. Further, the study found that the parties have no deliberate programme to provide the needed managerial, technical and human relation skills to its staff at the constituency level. The study, therefore, recommends political parties utilise technology to enhance the management of their membership and again, equip their staff with adequate managerial, technical and human relation skills. However, the study focused only on some selected strong and swing constituencies; hence its findings cannot be generalised. Future Research should, therefore, focus on other constituencies of the Ghanaian society. Finally, quantitative research may be useful in exploring other critical areas that may enhance the management of the membership of political parties.
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My parents, Madam Esther Sarfo and my late father Joseph Osei Kwadwo whose advice, support and inspiration has brought me this far. My wife, Barbara Obi Asante, for her encouragement and emotional support during my studies. My brother Ebenezer Osei Adu-poku and a very good friend Samuel Dobbin whose contribution cannot be priced and my nephews and nieces; Nana Akosua Ampofowaa Agyekum, Nana Yaw Afriyie Agyekum, Ama Achiaa Owusu Agyekum, Oheneba Osei Owusu Seinti and Barima Osei Yaw Akoto.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely wish, first of all, to express my profound gratitude to the Almighty God, who has been the source of my strength and foundation of every aspect of my life, including academics. I must confess that but for His invaluable support, this thesis would not have become a reality. I say Glory and honour be unto Your Holy Name for how far you have brought me.

I also wish to express my appreciation and special acknowledgement to my supervisors, Dr Evans Aggrey-Darkoh and Dr Nicholas Amponsah. Your fatherly supervision, critique and fine corrections not only gave an intellectual foundation to this work but also shaped my personality. To the Head of Department of Political Science, Dr Bossman Asare, I say a big thank you for your support and the constant reminder of date for submission. Another acknowledgement goes to all the lecturers at the political science department for your impact in my life since undergraduate level.

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<td>ALP</td>
<td>Australian Labour Party</td>
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<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<td>ANES</td>
<td>American National Election Studies</td>
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<td>APPFI</td>
<td>Africa Political Party Finance Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDD</td>
<td>Centre for Democratic Development</td>
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<td>CDU</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Union</td>
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<td>CRM</td>
<td>Customer Relationship Management</td>
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<td>DCE</td>
<td>District Chief Executive</td>
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<td>DF</td>
<td>Danish People’s Party</td>
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<td>DGD</td>
<td>Democratic Governance for Development</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>FDC</td>
<td>Forum for Democratic Change</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FI</td>
<td>Forza Italia</td>
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<td>GFD</td>
<td>Ghana Federation of the Disabled</td>
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<td>GOP</td>
<td>Growth and Opportunity Project</td>
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<td>IFP</td>
<td>Inkatha Freedom Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>NFP</td>
<td>National Policy Forum</td>
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<td>NIMD</td>
<td>Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<td>NRM</td>
<td>National Resistance Movement</td>
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<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<td>PWD</td>
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<td>RP</td>
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<td>SNP</td>
<td>Scottish National Party</td>
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<td>SPD</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>UDC</td>
<td>Central Democratic Union</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>UNITED KINGDOM</td>
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<td>UKIP</td>
<td>UK Independence Party</td>
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<td>UNECA</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Africa</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>URP</td>
<td>United Russia Party</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>Voter Relationship Management</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Political Parties seeking to contest, win elections and to have an effect on the formation of government and political opinion must have a large membership base (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011). “A vibrant membership is the energy that drives any party, be it elite, mass or oligarchic” (Chege, 2007: 47). Maintaining political party membership is key among the numerous functions of political parties (Democracy, 2010). Therefore political parties must continuously recruit new members to replace lost membership with a new and a more vigorous membership (Chege, 2007). Political party thus define, “is a group of people that is organised for the purposes of winning government power, by electoral or other means” (Heywood, 2007: 272). Political party therefore, as an organization must be run with a conscious effort and a motive of maintaining and expanding their existing membership to accomplish their primary goal of capturing political power. In short, party membership is an organizational affiliation by an individual to a political party, assigning obligations and privileges to that individual (Heidar, 2007). In the past, citizens commitment to political parties especially in Europe could be likened to churches and the party was a way of life (Rogers, 2005). But as Roger (2005) puts it,

These days, however, such political commitment as people feel is more likely to be invested in extra-party political organisation and movements like green groups, the anti-globalisation movement, or evangelical, ‘pro-life’ groups. The membership of single issue campaigning groups has swelled as membership of political parties has shrivelled. (Roger, 2005: 601).
To add, as argued by Katz and Crotty (2006), single-issue political action committees appearing attractive will be detrimental to general party recruitment especially to young activist who wants things done than generalist parties. Heidar (2007: 3) also argue that “Voters burning for particular issues may well find agitation, demonstrations and single issue organizations more inspiring and worthwhile than the generalist, full package approach of party politics”. Also, for example, as opined by Scott (1999), in Australia decline in party support is partly due to young voter’s concentration on social issues than economic issues affecting their parents as well as government concerns with managing the economy. Yet, one cannot downplay the significance of political parties in modern democratic systems. Rogers (2005) also posits that, though there has been growing public disengagement of political parties, this has not rendered political parties less important in the modern political system. More so, Gyampo (2015) is of the view that this growing public disengagement suffered by political parties in recent times has affected political party financing as members contributions decline with falling membership. Though membership size creates legitimacy for parties, Roger (2005: 602) is of the view that “political parties have lost their character as mass member organisations that worked to recruit and mobilise large swathes of population… have become professional organisations reliant on public purse for their survival”.

Therefore, membership is key to political party’s existence. Hofmeister & Grabow (2001: 33) “opines that, members are the fundamental part of any party and its most important connecting link to the society”. Similarly as argued by Mair & van Biezen (2001), because politics is a numbers game, political parties regardless of their form and nature assert to be embarking on membership winning drive but however raises concern when membership levels seem to be falling. Inferring from the above, a large membership base if well managed, involved and encouraged to contribute towards party
operations can boost party financing which is seen as key to political party vibrancy and competitiveness (CDD-Ghana, 2005: 5). Also, for political parties to perform well in an electoral contest and win elections, it needs to retain existing members as well as win new members to expand its membership base.

Payne, Christopher, and Peck (1995) opine that, among others things, organizations whose orientation are transactional are basically characterised by discontinuous customer contact, placing little attention on customer relations, limited commitment to meeting customer expectations and single sales approach. He further emphasises the need for organisations to build continuous customer contact, focus on long time scale and build customer retention as part of organisations relationship management strategy. Relationship of such transactional nature are not likely, create member apathy and looks expensive as parties have had to spend more resources within a short while nearing election to re-engage their active and non-active members in an election year. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2005) has also indicated that nearing half of African voters periodically attended political gatherings to engage themselves but these rallies are seldom organised until few times to election. Therefore, political parties conscious of their members will seek to maintain good data base, maintain good frequent communication with them, and engage them through year-round periodic programmes through personal contact and other electronic mediums such as electronic customer relationship management.

This description to a larger extent mirrors the general organisation and management of political parties in Africa and Ghana in particular.
1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There has been a downward trend of political party membership globally and “Parties are struggling to hold on to their membership organisations as they are failing to recruit significant numbers of new members” (Biezen & Poguntke, 2014: 205).

Indeed, it appears that studies on the management of political parties have been tackled in fragments ranging from political party financing, declining membership of political parties, characteristics and classification of political party membership, managing political party from the leadership point of view etc. Some of such studies include (Biezen & Poguntke, 2014; Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2012; Mair & van Biezen, 2001; Heidar, 2007; Rogers, 2005; Chege, 2007; Katz and Crotty, 2006; Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2005; Governance & Development, 2013).

According to the Political Party Organisation and Management in Kenya, an Audit Institute for Education (1998: 6) “membership base is therefore vital to the future of a political party”. To this effect, the NDC launched a national biometric registration in July 2015 to capture data of its members in line with management practices (Peacefmonline, 2015). Similarly, the NPP in 2011 took steps and issued biometric cards to its members aimed at capturing membership data as part of its membership management strategies and practices.

Even though Act 574 of the Political Parties Act 2000 requires of them to organise at the district levels, in Ghana political parties have endeavoured to organise also at constituency level to aid them mobilise membership effectively.

In Ghana, the limited research on political party management focus on political party financing, membership in the context of participation and disengagement, etc (CDD-
Ghana, 2005: 5; Ninsin, 2005; Gyampo, 2015). Also, evidence from literature portrays the lack of studies on the management of political party membership in Ghana. Ninsin (2005: 11-12) classified political party membership in Ghana into “card bearing or fee-paying membership with informal or floating membership” and argued that “membership record of any of the existing political parties is purely conjectural”. While Ninsin (2005) come close to the subject of political party membership, his study was limited to categorisation of party membership. Similarly, while Gyampo comes close on the subject of political party membership, his contribution was limited to the effect of declining party membership on political party financing and funding of political parties in general (Gyampo, 2015).

In light of the above, there is an undisputable need for a scientific study into the membership management of political parties in Ghana using management principles.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

For the purpose of this study, the following research objectives have been outlined.

1. To examine the administrative processes of the two political parties and its impact on the management of their membership.

2. To ascertain the various technology employed by the two parties to enhance the management of their membership.

3. To enquire into the staff training programmes of the two political parties and the impact on the management of their membership.
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
The current surge in the need for management of party membership owing to decline in party membership has increased the need to employ scientific management principles and practices in the management of political party membership globally. This research is apt because of the under listed reasons. It seeks to provide deeper insight into the membership management practices of Ghanaian political parties in the 4th Republic. The study will also contribute to the literature on management of political parties and party membership in Ghana. The study will provide guidelines to policy makers in formulating policies that will focus on management of political party and party membership.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY
The study will be conducted among party executives in selected rural stronghold, urban stronghold, rural swing and urban swing constituency two each of the NPP and NDC in each selected constituency, as well as one national executive/officer each of the NPP and NDC. The selection of constituencies as strongholds is based on the strength of the parties in successive elections (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012) conducted under the 4th Republic of Ghana (Ayee, Anebo, Debrah, 2007). Kaushik & Pal (2012) describe political stronghold as based on the electoral votes accrued by a political party at the constituency level.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The following limitations were encountered by the researcher in the course of the study;
1. Time constraint is a possible limitation since the researcher has less than one year to complete the study.

2. Additionally, financial constraints to and fro data collection sites which may influence access to participants is also anticipated as the research is not financed.

3. More so, getting respondents at a time when they are free would be difficult because most of the interviews would be done at a time respondents are free especially those in formal employment or active business.

4. More so, the study focused only on some selected strong and swing constituencies. Therefore, its findings cannot be generalized.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organised into seven chapters;

**Chapter one** “Introduction” focuses on the introduction consisting of the general background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope, and limitations of the research and chapter organization of the research.

**Chapter two** “Literature Review” will start with a review of the relevant literature on management of political party and party membership globally and Africa with a concentration on Ghana and also develop a research framework for the research based on the perceived attributes of management.

**Chapter three** “Theoretical Framework” deals with the theoretical framework that explain the philosophical context of the phenomenon under study as well as bringing out the key variables surrounding the research problem in a proper perspective.
Chapter four “Research Methodology” will also deal with the methodological approaches, research strategy, and the population of the study, sampling techniques, data collection instrument, and method.

Chapter five “Data Analysis” will focus on Presentation and analysis of the data collected.

Chapter six “Research Findings and Discussion” will also deal with the research findings and discussions comparatively.

Finally, Chapter seven “Summary of Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions” concludes, summarises and make recommendations for future studies.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. For the purpose of this study, literature is reviewed in the following: Management of political party membership, studies on political party mobilization and participation and declining political party membership. Political parties constitute the lifeblood, an important medium in a modern democratic system. They provide a platform for citizen engagement, providing alternative policy proposals for voters to choose from during elections as well as an avenue for citizen engagement with the body politics. Political parties are therefore seen as inevitable in modern representative democratic systems. Therefore, the literature on political party and democracy is also reviewed.

2.1 GENERAL STUDIES ON MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP

Managing people as an integral part of an organisation is one of the most important challenges a manager has to contend with. Warigon (2014) studying the importance of people in organisations points out that, no organisation can exist and achieve its target without proper management of its members. He further asserts that organisations that do not manage their people well are bound to fail. Nonetheless, people are mostly taken for granted by the very organisations they provide followership and stewardship.

Political parties have become inevitable in modern democratic systems, providing a means for citizens engagement in politics, influencing public policies as well as
providing citizens with alternative policy proposals among others. More so, “Political parties are the vehicle through which the ideals of multi-party democracy could be achieved in any fledgling democracy” (Gyampo, 2015: 3). Therefore, one cannot underestimate the growing importance of political parties in modern democratic systems. A political party is therefore defined as “an organised association of people working together to compete for political office and promote agreed-upon policies” (Maliyamkono and Kanyangolo, 2003: 41).

Schlager & Christ (2014) suggests that Political Party Membership Management strategies embrace key decisions on nominating leaders and elaborating programmes and policies: both are imposed on the party by the relevant level of executive bureaucracy. In their study of modern political party management in selected countries (France, South Africa, Singapore, United States, Russia, Germany, Japan and China), they indicate that political party membership has not been high in France but political parties experienced decline between the years of 1981 and 1990s. Schlager & Christ on management of political party membership indicate that, the French Socialist Party for the purposes of membership management, has created platforms at both local and national level to engage members by organising frequent membership meetings at both local and national to discuss issues affecting the party as well as its three years periodic convention to discuss national issues.

They argue that for the purposes of political party management, political parties should embark on continuous membership recruitment and cites as an example the United Russia Party which embarked on a deliberate membership recruitment which saw an increased in its membership from four hundred thousand (400,000) to one million (1,000,000) and subsequently to 1.8 million in 2003, 2006 and 2008 respectively. They further indicated that for the purposes of political party management “the SPD employs
full-time staff on the basis of regular labour contracts for the tasks requiring continuous party work. This is true for all levels—from the sub-districts up to party headquarters” (Schlager & Christ, 2014: 72).

Similarly, in the USA the Republican Party “losing the popular vote in five of the last six presidential elections”, rolled out the Growth and Opportunity Project (GOP) aimed at conscientizing, winning their lost members and new members as well (Steinhafel, n.d: 2). The Republican Party in its (GOP) project report 2013, outlined how the Democratic Party used improved technology in the communication and management of its members and how it inured to their electoral advantage.

More so, Australian political parties responding to declining and inactive or less active membership,

have… series of membership innovations, for example: online policy forums, policy rather than geographic membership branches, community organising techniques for campaigning, experiment with inclusion of supporters in the selection of parliamentary candidates and, in the ALP, allowing members to vote in leadership contest. (Cross & Gauja, 2014: 612).

In furtherance to the above, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) implemented the National Policy Forum (NFP), a strategic management programme aimed at getting members involved in the party’s policy development as well as supporters through “online policy deliberation” (Cross & Gauja, 2014: 617).

Cook (2011) contributing to the management of political party membership writes on the factors leading to membership disengagement and decline within Australian political parties. He posits that Australian political parties have resorted to television, computer database and the internet as an alternative medium in engaging and managing their members.
More so, Mielke (2011: 3) studying membership mobilisation and power management in Germany, indicate that party members are not happy just being used as campaign instruments but, “they want to participate in political decision making by… either electing the leaders or campaigning candidates for public offices and mandates or by influencing the party’s political programme and platform”. Therefore, political parties must consider their members as partners in their effort to capture political power and not just campaign instruments.

On the other hand, while Schlager & Christ (2014) stress on continuous membership recruitment as an important instrument in party and party membership management, Mielke (2011) and Stojarová, Šedo, Kopeček, & Chytilek (2007) share similar view on membership mobilisation as important to party and party membership management but carry some variations in their reasons. Mielke (2011: 3) further asserts that political parties must learn to recruit younger members to break “the massive dominance of older cohorts… because it is above all the younger members who are needed for mobilisation and campaigning”. As a point of departure to this argument, Stojarová, Šedo, Kopeček, & Chytilek (2007) opine that intra-party communication though important, it is dependent on several factors including availability and access to the internet which allows for emails among others. Madden (2008: 1) wades into this argument and posits that, though electronic voter/constituent relationship management which “consist of a series of technology-enabled processes allowing candidates and parties to effectively target and connect with constituents/voters from initial contact to the polling place” exist and plays an important role in western democracies, same cannot be said about countries with limited literacy rate.

Došek (2014) studying Latin American political party membership indicates that Latin American political parties lack membership records, an important management tool as
well as poor communication between leadership and party members. He further argues that membership records do not exist or the party leaders have no estimation in Bolivia, Ecuador and Columbia. Similarly, Salih, & Nordlund (2007) also argue that most political parties are unable to maintain membership lists. Supporting Došek on lack of membership data, Stojarová et al. (2007) also posits that, membership records of political parties have often been vague and inaccurate with the exception of countries with minimum requirement for membership as a pre-condition for registration such as in Estonia where a party needs at least 1,000 members to be registered.

More so, Van den Berg (2013) Studied strategic planning in its application to management of political parties (organisations). He argues that political parties are plagued with a lot of challenges in the environment they operate which tends to have an impact on their performance in the achievement of their primary goal of capturing government power. These challenges range from its membership base to constitutional requirement for its establishment “such as the number of local branches a party must have” among others. He also opines that “a party’s capacity to act and organise can also be subject to sudden change, depending on the continuity of funding” (Van den Berg, 2013: 18). He indicates that,

Clearer insights into a party’s strengths, weaknesses and priorities allow it to achieve better results using fewer resources. In this context, better results do not mean better electoral results, but achieving organizational goals such as stable or increased levels of funding, enhanced capacity to organize party congresses, more effective and efficient ways of selecting candidates, and better training programmes. (Van den Berg, 2013: 14).
He therefore argues that party strategic planning helps political parties to improve their performance as well as being proactive in their response in dealing with party members and their environment. In annexing the environmental challenges facing political parties, Van den Berg (2013: 18) is of the opinion that, it is the responsibility of political party leaders (managers) to handle political parties in their challenging environments “and managers are best able to do this effectively if they act based on a carefully developed strategic plan”. He, therefore, argues political parties embark on strategic planning which “helps political parties define where they want to be and what kind of action agenda is necessary to strengthen their institutional capacity in the future” (Van den Berg, 2013: 14).

Also, Hofmeister & Grabow (2011) in their book “Political Parties: Functions and Organisations in Democratic Societies” underscores the argument that, democracy is unthinkable without the existence of well-functioning political parties. Hofmeister & Grabow (2011: 33) are also of the opinion that, “the members are the fundamental part of any party and its most important connecting link to the society”. They argue that there is bound to be party members who will not participate in party decision-making or will not be willing to actively participate politically regardless of the level of a party’s internal democracy. They therefore avows that, for the effective and efficient management of a party, “parties should be led professionally and should be equipped with modern techniques of communication”. They further avows that as part of political parties’ management strategy, political parties should establish a “technical department that concentrate on certain issues to prepare the party’s positions on actual themes of the political debate and to provide party members and representatives with information and arguments” (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011: 30).
They also argued the importance of database in the management of political party and party membership. They opine that membership record (database) though important in party membership management, should not be limited to only party members but political parties must also build a database of potential members as well. On this, they established that,

The correct management and update of the database… is of high important, as it can be used for various purposes (such as distribution of political information, raising funds, and support in election campaigns). Besides the personal address, telephone number, email, Facebook or other communities, Twitter address and the profession of each members, additional information on the special interest of every member, his or her experiences in different fields and his or her membership in other organisations or associations should be included. This enables the party to specifically inform the members on particular topics and to mobilize them for political activities in their respective fields of interest. (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011: 37).

On the importance of finances in the management of party and party members, they established that,

political parties need financial resources in order to carry out effectively their functions in the spirit of fostering the democratic society to acquire expertise to develop their programmes and distribute them, to maintain a stable organisational structure, to cultivate communication with the members and, last but not the least, to conduct electoral campaigns. (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011: 55).
They contend that political parties provide the platform or medium for citizen engagement in the political system as well as serving as training grounds for future political leaders. They are however of the view that, political parties become meaningful and “able to fulfil their functions when more citizens are willing to engage politically in parties” (Hofmeister & Grabow, 2011: 55). In arguing the importance of financial resources in the management of political parties’, they also argue that membership dues is an important source of party financing among other sources of party finance even in countries with some government support for political parties. They further opine that, even though not all members can pay membership dues, “parties should try to collect some small fees from their members—but they also should offer some service in return” as well as being transparent and accountable to members as misuse of party funds leads to loss of trust. Hofmeister & Grabow (2011: 55) further avows that, membership “fees are a sign of the bond between members and their party”. Though the study presents interesting and strategic antidote in the management of party and party membership, Hofmeister & Grabow (2011: 55) seem to have ignored the existing institutional, structural and poverty hindering effective management of political parties as argued by Merten and Mofokeng (2012) who stated that, ownership of parties in Malawi is in the hands of its leaders (wealthy leaders) who fund party operations and not from the financial support of party members. Similarly, according to Governance & Development (2013), party life in Nigeria is most active during election time and is built on loyalty to “patrons and godfathers” relationship who pay for members engagement and loyalty to them than to the party. This argument is further supported by Omilusi, Adu, Polytechnic, & Ekiti (2016) who similarly argues that,

Key leaders who provided finance to the parties cashed in on their leverage to occupy top political positions both in the parties and in government… were, in
most cases, the owners of the parties, whose interests and world views ultimately became the objectives, manifestoes, rules and regulations of the parties. Political parties were no less than the personal property of their leaders, who decided on who should [be] a member. (Omilusi et al., 2016: 41).

It has been a tall order for political parties ensuring continuous improvement in the management of their membership and party as an institution to meet the growing demand for membership participation and adapting to societal challenges to meet their ultimate goal of capturing government power. Therefore, management of political party and party membership which require substantial financial resources is hardly achieved.

2.1.1 Studies on Management of Political Party Membership in Africa

Merten and Mofokeng (2012) citing Kelth Khoza, ANC’s party spokesman on party membership in South Africa argue that “members are a crucial presence in a society and play an important role in convincing the broader public to vote ANC”. They further posit that “membership is really for a core of party activists. It is for activists and those who want to be seen as a member for various reasons”. On the management of political party membership, they argue that political parties in South Africa faces the problem of keeping accurate and proper membership records or database in the wake of increasing membership. They further opine that, even though increasing membership is of vital importance to political parties’ existence and its vibrancy,

The upward trend in membership can cause administrative headaches, particularly in a country with a not-so-great culture of record-keeping. This is made more complicated as all parties, except the IFP offer online membership applications-although it is not clear how long it will takes between hitting the send button and receiving the membership card. (Merten and Mofokeng, 2012).
They further opine that, even though increased membership has the positive effect on party financing through membership dues and contributions, the ANC is however challenged with the difficulty of maintaining and managing its members and database. Merten and Mofokeng (2012) are also of the view that, “membership, despite bargain basement fees, has little, if anything, to do with voting support and any political party’s ultimate goal of clinching to power and governance”.

Even though, they posit that “instead, penetration of political parties identity across society beyond the narrow reach of members is a crucial factor” their argument is weakened on the grounds that “the members are the fundamental part of any party and its most important connecting link to the society” as argued by Hofmeister & Grabow (2011: 33) and it is the members who join campaign trails, embark on door to door campaign to renew and win new members as well as fixing party banners and posters.

Kainja (2012) also wrote about party membership in Malawi. He argued that in Malawi political party members are not considered partners in the political process, have limited say and influence in party decision largely because party financing is not dependent on party membership dues. He further postulates that, notwithstanding the position of party members in Malawian political parties, “membership fees empower party members to hold their leaders to account because these members have a stake in it”. Kainja (2012) further states that, in Mawali, ownership of political party is in the hands of its leaders who fund party operations and not party members. Therefore, members do not feel a sense of ownership to their respective political parties. He further avows that, it is for this reason why political parties in Malawi lack “royal support”. On the basis of these, one can safely describe membership management of Malawian political parties as transactional as members participation is paid for by rich party owners to achieve their personal political goals.
Chege (2007) in his study of five African countries opined that political parties in East Africa are weak in their membership mobilisation, unable to keep updated membership list, weak communication with members, as well as their inability to engage members largely because they draw their membership from ethnic groups. Similarly, in Nigeria, party life is most active during election time and is built on loyalty to “patrons and godfathers” relationship who pay for members engagement and loyalty to them than to the party (Governance & Development, 2013). To add, in Nigeria, the UNDP under the Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) programme of which the capacity of Nigerian political parties was assessed also indicate that, in Nigeria, most political parties lack the capacity to manage their members, recruit and admit new members (Governance & Development, 2013). They also argue that key among the challenges of political parties is the existence and engagement of party members. Salih (2006) also argue that internal party democracy in terms of the selection of candidates, leadership contests, regular membership conventions, and internal rules to discipline the party leadership and hold it accountable to party members is in short supply in all the major political parties in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi.

Similarly, Maiyo (2008: 7) also opines that “in East Africa, political parties are characterised by a top-down organisational structure where power and decision-making is highly centralised”, leaving party members with little or no space in party decision making. Maliyamkono and Kanyongolo (2003) are however of the view that, this management structure has a long root in colonial administration, where the educated political elites together with the colonialist dictated to the local people without a room for input or engagement politically.

More so, Political Party Organisation and Management in Kenya an Audit Institute for Education in (1998: 6) on political party management in Kenya indicate that large
membership base is crucial to the growth and survival of political parties. Political parties should, therefore, recruit,

people who are committed to its ideology and principles and who will be able to participate in party governance, policy formulation, and campaigning. From among these members, the party leaders are elected. The membership base is therefore vital to the future of a political party. (1998: 6)

Maiyo (2008: 53) Studying intra-party democracy within political parties in Africa opined that “The conceptualisation of political parties as instruments of collective human action, mobilisation of social forces and aggregation of diverse interests implies a significant place for party membership within its organisational structures, activities and orientation”. He contends that political parties in East Africa are creatures of the political elites to pursue their personal goals as well as controlling the masses. On membership of political parties, Maiyo (2008: 53) like Ninsin (2006) argued that political parties in Africa is more of supporters than card bearing and registered members. He therefore opines that “Party affiliation is thus fluid and membership participation in multiple parties is not uncommon. In most cases, card bearing membership ended with the demise of autocratic single-party rule where card possession was proof of political loyalty and patriotism” (Maiyo, 2008: 53). He further contends that, political parties in East Africa lack adequate membership records (database), an important management tool and further established that “in Uganda for instance, despite the alleged existence of a national data centre, the NRM could not produce any figure to support this” (Maiyo, 2008: 53). He further opines that, with the exception of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) and the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in Uganda, almost all the other political parties in the country do not have a functioning website and an email address to communicate with its membership.
Maiyo (2008), also avows that, most political parties in East Africa are only active during periods of elections and dormant in-between elections. One can therefore safely argue that political party membership in East Africa is transactional and erratic which only gets activated during election times.

He also underscored the importance of proper communication between the political party and its members. He opines that effective communication helps political parties to establish platforms for information sharing as well as soliciting for members’ views in party decision-making. Maiyo (2008) identified “public rallies, party meetings and individual correspondence” as primary in a party to party membership communication.

Maiyo (2008) further opines that, in selecting credible candidates and leaders who represent a party, the processes of selecting and electing these leaders and candidates should be democratic. He however argues that, if the process of selecting party leaders and candidates is not credible and democratic, then the likelihood of it leading to loss of trust and confidence in the selection process on the part of party members will be high and which eventually kills membership loyalty to a party as well as making members feel their views are not considered in the party decision-making process. The study, therefore, emphasised the significance of transparency, fairness and membership inclusivity in party decision-making on issues of party candidates and leaders’ selection. In as much as the study analysed the relationship between structural, institutional and the impact of financial resources on the internal democracy and membership of political parties in Africa (East Africa), it however failed to address the influence of individual dispositions and values associated with the rational choice model.
Bryan & Baer (2005) also studied the influence of money in politics and its impact on political parties. Relying on the Africa Political Party Finance Initiative (APPFI) survey of 22 countries, Bryan & Baer (2005: 10) opines that, of the 22 countries studied 34% indicated in the African countries studied that, political parties largely finance their operations from “membership dues and levies on political office holders, party fund raising events and in-kind contributions from party members, and proceeds from party-owned businesses”. Similarly, Van den Berg (2013:22), in his work “Strategic Planning for Political Parties: A Practical Guide” also pointed out that strategic planning and capacity building of political parties include, building internal management capacities of political parties, “internal party democracy, financial management, ideological identity, inclusivity of women and youth”, campaign planning and “parties capabilities to govern”. This affirms the relevance and importance of party members to the survival of political parties. Therefore, management of this membership is key to political party operations. They also opined that management of party funds has an impact on party membership and their management. They therefore argue that, when party funds are not well managed and made transparent to members, “internal democracy also becomes compromised” (Bryan & Baer, 2005: 12).

This has the tendency of causing members to lose trust and confidence in the political system, and thereby leading to membership disengagement with its subsequent party membership decline.

2.1.2 Studies on Management of Political Party Membership in Ghana

Ninsin (2006) studying political parties and their role in political participation in Ghana categorise political party membership in Ghana into “formal and informal membership” and describes political parties in Ghana as mass parties (Ninsin, 2006: 11). He argues
that informal membership dominates political party’s membership in Ghana as compared to formal membership and describes this membership as passive or erratic which “springs to life only during general elections” (Ninsin, 2006: 12).

This argument is supported by Boafo-Arthur’s (2001) study of voting outcomes in the Mfantseman West Constituency and Cape Coast Constituency in the Central Region. Boafo-Arthur established that 62% and 68% of voters in the two constituencies respectively, indicated they do not belong to any political party. Ninsin (2006: 12) further argue that these informal membership “do not attend political rallies, do not attend party meetings, and do not engage in any form of political activity other than voting. Their acquaintence with political party activities is largely episodic” (Ninsin, 2006: 12). He argues that political party membership in Ghana is flexible, members are not coerced to join any party and “membership of a political party does not impose a rigid contractual obligation requiring performance at all cost” unlike authoritarian regimes. He further avows that, political parties in Ghana to a large extent depend on the votes of these large informal or uncommitted members/voters to seek electoral victory “whose votes they desperately try to capture through manipulative appeals to primordial identities, other irrational or emotive factors and material inducements”, thereby increasing the expenditure of political parties during election periods (Ninsin, 2006: 12). He is therefore of the view that, this increases the financial expenditure of political parties during an election period. For this reasons, one can safely describe political party membership management in Ghana as “transactional” as parties tend to mostly actively engage their members during election periods. Though Ninsin came close on the subject of political party membership in Ghana, his study was limited to the categorisation of party membership, their mode of participation, and his study was descriptive.
Gyampo (2015) studied state funding of political parties in relation to the strength and viability of political parties in sustaining Ghana’s democracy. He avows that, political parties in Ghana are most active during election time and less active or inactive in-between elections. Despite the growing importance of political parties, Gyampo (2015: 3) opines that political parties “are the most neglected of all… political institutions in Ghana”. Gyampo (2015: 4) like Ninsin (2006) is also of the view that, “political parties… are inactive during inter-election periods and are unable to establish and maintain offices in many parts of the country because of the financial challenges they face”.

Though Gyampo’s work focuses much on public funding of political parties, he manages to establish relationship and impact of the financial standing and membership contributions of a political party in maintaining offices across Ghana, an important management yardstick.

Okumah (2008) wrote on political parties in Ghana and their role in Ghana’s democracy. He also spoke about the relevance of political parties in a modern democratic system and argues that “undeniably, the political parties are serving as umbilical cord between society and the state, ordinary citizens and social groups on the one hand, and organs of government on the other hand”. He further argues that political parties cannot be underrated in its contribution to multiparty democracy and described them as “the heartbeat of the political system”. On the management of party members, he argues that “it behoves political parties to ensure that their members are disciplined, accountable and transparent in all their activities since the parties are an avenue for the training of political leaders. This is of essence because, in a democracy, political parties have been a major vehicle for the recruitment of political leadership providing electoral choice and peaceful political competition and forming of alternative policies”.

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Though political party membership plays an important role in the survival, vibrancy and effectiveness of political parties, limited literature exists in this area of study and therefore calls for an in-depth study into the management of political party membership in Ghana.

2.2 STUDIES ON POLITICAL PARTY MOBILIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

Political parties play an inevitable role in modern democratic systems through citizen mobilisation and participation, particularly in recently established democracies with a weak political affiliation as well as voter apathy.

Like all other concepts in the social sciences, political participation defies a single definition. Several scholars have therefore defined the concept in different ways. Bergström (2006:3) defines political participation “as the actions of private citizens seeking to influence or support Government and politics”. McClosky (1968: 252) also defines political participation as “those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy”. More so, according to Tolbert & McNeal (2003: 177), “Political participation is… defined by activities such as contacting political officials, attending a rally, or signing a petition”.

2.2.1 General Studies on Political Party Mobilization and Participation

Modern politics goes beyond or cannot be limited to a citizen-government relationship. Political participation can therefore not be reduced to government and politics. Lam (2003: 491) therefore argues that, “Political participation refers to lawful or unlawful activities of support, making demands, debates, and other forms of expressions communicated verbally and/or through the media targeted at the PRC (People’s
Republic of China), ROC (Republic of China) and Hong Kong Governments”. Acts of political participation also include political activities that are targeted at private institutions, such as university administrations and businesses, and that they are designed to pose challenges to existing rules, norms and practices”. Political participation can, therefore, be considered a yardstick in measuring the vibrancy and effectiveness of a democracy.

Karp and Banducci (2007) studied mobilisation strategies of political parties across twenty-three (23) new and old democracies. They make a distinction between new and old-established democracies and argue that old democracies tend to be institutionalised with “stable and strong partisan attachments, low electoral volatility, trust in parties and elections, and well-resourced parties that are not dominated by a single personality” as compared to new democracies where there exist weak mobilisation and attachment to political parties as well as limited resources (Karp & Banducci, 2007: 218). They further argue that political parties contact with voters is influenced by some motivations including the political regime, the party system in a country, and argue that political mobilisation is key in promoting citizens engagement and political participation in new democracies. They further opine that the extent of a party’s contact with voters is dependent on the resources at the disposal of the party or its resource capacity. They are however of the view that,

while every vote may count equally in PR systems, candidates are less likely to have an incentive to campaign on a personal level, especially in districts with a large district magnitude. In candidate-based systems, candidates have… incentive to cultivate a personal vote and consequently have a greater incentive to contact voters. (Karp & Banducci, 2007: 219).
Karp & Banducci (2008), shared a similar view in their study on variations in party mobilisation system. They argue that there is a greater likelihood of increased contact between political parties and voters on one hand and candidates and voters on another hand in candidate-based systems than proportional representation systems. They further concluded in their findings that “When citizens are contacted by parties they are more likely to vote and more likely to participate in the campaign than are citizens who are not contacted” (Karp & Banducci, 2007: 229).

Even though, extent literature (Gosnell, 1927: Gerber and Green, 2000: Bochel and Denver, 1971: Kramer, 1970: Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993: Marsh, 2004: Karp and Banducci, 2004) attest to the fact that there exist a greater likelihood of citizens contacted by political parties voting, Karp and Banducci reflecting on the rational choice theory which assume that an individual’s motivation to participate in voting or not is dependent on the benefit they expect to get, argue that if the cost of voting is higher than the intended benefit, then there is the likelihood of low participation. Therefore to enhance participation, “Parties may reduce the costs of voting by supplying information about candidates or even arranging transportation to the polls. Party contact may also make citizens aware of the importance of their votes” (Karp & Banducci, 2007: 220). They also maintain that political participation is not limited to persuading citizens to vote, but also include citizen’s attendance to political party meetings, helping fix party posters among others and indicated that citizens are more likely to vote when contacted by political parties.

Wielhouwer and Lockerbie (1994) analysing data from the 1952-90 American National Election Studies (ANES) in their study “Party Contacting and Political Participation” studied party mobilisation and citizen participation and argued that, political party contacting voters or party contact with voters has the likelihood of getting those
contacted voting except in 1976 when education weighed much higher than party contacting. They also argued that “political parties play an important role in mobilising the electorate not only to vote but to get involved in the process of politics” (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994: 226). They further assert that people participate in politics taking into consideration the cost of participation and the perceived benefit from participation. Wielhouwer and Lockerbie (1994) therefore see party contact as a mechanism for reducing (or overcoming) the perceived cost of participation and as one of the crucial connections between the party-as-organisation and the party-in-the-electorate. On the influence of political participation on party finances, they avow that, political party contacting voters is key in a political party and candidate fund raising. They are therefore of the view that “few people would spontaneously make a financial contribution; they need to be asked” (Wielhouwer and Lockerbie, 1994: 225). Also, Wielhouwer and Lockerbie (994: 217) identified “party identification”, “the role of economic circumstances” and “demographic characteristics” such as “residential mobility” or nearness to an urban city and region among others as having the potential to influence political participation/voting behaviour.

Norris (2000) studying the impact of the media (both print and electronic) on political participation points out the significant role of the media in a political party or vote mobilisation. He argues that the media can either encourage or reduce political participation through the messages (positive or negative) that it churns out to the public. Norris points out that, invective language somewhat contributes to public disengagement from politics in recent times. He identified two dimensions of these negative messages:

One concerns the effect of the use of negative or attack adds by politicians where candidate or party campaigns criticise their opponent’s character or
records… The other concern relates to common practices originating in the news media… such as where routine headlines emphasise political scandals, government incompetence and/or partisan conflict. (Norris, 2000: 2).

On the role of the internet in promoting political participation, he argued that the internet provides a new, unique and expanded platform of political participation different from the conventional modes of engagement such as “working for political parties, organising grassroots social movements, or lobbying elected officials”. He further make the case that, this has the potential of “sharply reducing the barriers to civic engagement, levelling some of the financial hurdles, and widening the opportunities for political debate, the dissemination of information, and group interaction, it is thought that more people will become involved in public life” (Norris, 2000: 6). But he however raises questions about the number of people having internet access, its relative impact on political participation, its relative impact on online political news and engagement as opposed to traditional mediums of political communication and engagement and argued that, reliance on the internet news has gain percentage more than the orthodox medium of political engagement.

Similarly, Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, (2001) deducing from the National Geographic Web Survey 1998 concludes that there exist a positive participatory relationship between internet users and non-users and attributed higher rate of political participation to higher internet usage. They further argued that internet interaction is only supportive or complements conventional personal one-on-one interaction.

Even though one cannot underestimate or ignore the growing importance and role of the internet in a modern political system, Gibson, Römmele, & Ward (2004) shares a contrary view. They are of the view that, the use of the internet in mass communication
with members as opposed to conventional political party and party membership mobilisation, communication and relationship building strategy such as local level campaigning is largely seen as the reason for the disconnect between voters and the political system. Similarly, Karp, Banducci, & Bowler (2008) attribute decline in door to door campaigning to advancement in technology and the use of the internet. Nonetheless, they maintain that there is the greater likelihood of political parties relying more on door-to-door campaigning than on the use of the telephone, email and other electronic mediums for canvassing. Crotty & Jacobson (1980) also wades into this debate and attributes public disengagement from the political process to the role of the modern day media as citizens are unable to identify reliable information in their decision to vote.

Gibson, Römmele, & Ward (2004: 4) further argue that, “internet use by itself was clearly not transforming inactive people into participators with regards to real world politics”, but given its strong appeal among the younger age group, the internet clearly has mileage as a useful means to target apathy and cynicism among our newer citizens. They are however quick to add that, one should not rule out the internet as a means of political mobilisation and engagement.

Also, contributing to the role of the internet in political mobilisation and participation, Bimber (2001) reflecting on a USA national election survey in 1998 pointed out that, the level of voter participation is not influenced or dependent on access to the internet. He found out that behaviourally, those with internet access did not differ from those not using internet in seeking political information except that it increased the probability of respondents contributing financially to political campaigns. The study is, however, limited to a mid-term election.
More so, Tolbert & McNeal (2003) studied the role of the internet in political participation. They underscored the relative importance of the internet (modern communication technology) in political mobilization and participation and argued that, though not a cure for the gap in political participation among citizens, “the internet may nevertheless represent an important new avenue for the political information and communication, and counter civic engagement in America” (Tolbert & McNeal, 2003: 184). They further argue that the use of the internet for political participation may only increase voter turnout among already active internet users thereby increasing “existing demographic disparities in the composition of the electorate”.

More so, one cannot underestimate the role and impact of the political and economic system on citizens’ political participation in a given country. Bergström (2006) studied the impact of systems on political participation in Hong Kong and concluded that system change slightly affects the “participation of citizens in Hong Kong”. She argued that the political system of Hong “to a certain extent prevents the respondents from participating politically, thus the political system in Hong Kong slightly shapes the political participation” of its citizens as the Hong Kong’s Chief Executive (Governor) and other governing positions are appointed and not subject to general elections (Bergström, 2006: 46). She further points out a link between political participation and citizens’ rights and argued that “If citizens in Hong Kong do not exercise their rights as citizens and participate politically it might be difficult for them to realise and maintain their democratic rights” (Bergström, 2006: 47). She also identified a symbiotic relationship between the state of the economy and political participation and established that citizens are content with limited or no political participation when the economy is good. However, her study was limited to 6 respondents through a survey interview and cannot be generalised to represent Hong Kong’s total population.
2.2.2 Studies on Political Party Mobilization and Participation in Africa

Literature is reviewed on political participation in Africa to help us truly understand political participation in the context of Ghana. The literature on political participation in Africa will be reviewed starting from the 1980’s to the most recent ones.

Resnick & Casale (2011) studied the factors influencing political participation of the African youth. They are of the view that the African youth constitute an important mobilising force in the context of African politics. They further argue that the African youth “in comparison with their older compatriots… vote less and are more likely to demonstrate no partisanship or an attachment to opposition parties rather than any affinity to incumbent parties”. They also pointed out that, while the African youth “are less engaged in elections and party politics, they are not necessarily channelling their discontent into extra-institutional modes of participation in large proportions” (Resnick & Casale, 2011: 2). Resnick & Casale indicates that other mediums of youth participation exist and sometimes most effective especially when institutional barriers hinders their participation (voting) or prevent them from voting. They also pointed out that, African youth dissatisfied with their countries political system often resort to withdrawal from political participation. Though with some traces of aligning themselves with opposition parties, they are less likely to explore other forms of political participation such as demonstrations among others.

More so, using Round 4 Survey of Afrobarometer, Resnick & Casale (2011) established that “older individuals are more likely to vote”, have strong political party attachment as compared to the youth. He further points out that, citizens dissatisfied with the state of democracy in a country, as well as urban dwellers are more likely to abstain from voting. He also argued that the youth and urban dwellers are more likely to be attached
to a party. But he argues that, the youth exposure to media increases their likelihood of voting, largely because “the news media provides important information on where and how to vote for first-time voters, whereas the non-youth group are less reliant on the media for logistical information regarding voting” as well as having strong political party attachment especially to incumbent governments.

On the impact of the state of a country’s economy on youth participation, they argue that “poor incumbent performance on job creation, compared with other socio-economic issues” serves as a disincentive for the youth in participating politically or joining a political party (Resnick & Casale, 2011: 2). Similarly, like Bergstrom (2006) and Nathan (2016), Resnick & Casale (2011: 5) are of the view that, the economic status of electorates have a significant influence on their level of political participation. He therefore argues “income and education as important predictors of voter participation”.

Mielke (2011) also touches on growing youth disengagement in politics but he relates it to declining membership of political parties. He argues that the lack of interest or youth disengagement in politics paves way for domination by the older folks who are in minority, leading to political party membership decline.

Also, on factors leading to low political participation of the African youth, Nie, Verba & Kim (1974) are of the view that, rural-urban migration and long-term residency in an area plays an important role. They posit that youth who might have registered in their migrated rural communities to the cities or urban areas have little or no incentive of going back to vote due to distance during the period of elections.

Yankem (2015), also studied the role of the media (radio) as a political mobilising tool in Kenya’s 2013 national elections. He established in his findings that, radio plays an important role in mobilising voters to vote for a particular candidate. Yankem further
argued in his conclusion that the “categories of the radio, radio stations ownership (public and private) and type of political advertisement has a significant impact on the radio as a political mobilising tool.

Chatora (2012) studies focused on the significant role of social media in political participation in Africa. He established in his study that, social media has the potential to facilitate the active citizen political engagement required to bring about political change in Africa taking into consideration the Arab Spring in North Africa. He however argue that, in harnessing the importance of social media in promoting political participation, one is confronted with some challenges such as “the increasing distrust of social media by some African government” who employ both covert and overt means to either block, censor or threaten to block or intercept the use of social media platforms (Chatora, 2012: 1). This is shared by Manacorda & Tesei (2016: 2) who also believe that the full benefit of ICT (mobile phone) in promoting political participation and mobilisation might not be realised automatically because it “has the potential to increase government accountability via information spread and greater transparency”, a phenomenon not welcomed in autocratic regimes. According to him, political participation can be defined as “citizen acts to influence the selection of and/or the actions taken by political representatives” and described voting as common among various political participation forms.

He also opined that participating in politics is expensive, demanding and time-consuming. He holds the view that, considering Africa with 50.9% of its population living on less than $1.25 a day according to the World Bank in 2005, there is great a likelihood of many Africans not attending party meetings, rallies or participating politically. They are therefore likely to spend their time on activities that will earn them a living than participation in politics. Citizen participation is therefore compromised.
As an antidote to the economic and financial barriers to citizen participation, Karp & Banducci (2007: 220) argue that to enhance and promote citizen political participation, “Parties may reduce the costs of voting by supplying information about candidates or even arranging transportation to the polls. Party contact may also make citizens aware of the importance of their votes”. They premised their argument on the rational choice model and argued that citizens or individuals will participate taking into consideration the perceived benefit. Chatora (2012) identified in addition to poverty, lack of or limited access to information as an obstacle to citizen political participation. He further opines that obtaining reliable information in many African countries is faced with a lot of challenges and sometimes government deliberately restrict access to information by the public. He therefore argue that information is key to enhancing citizen participation. Therefore “for citizens to fully exercise their political rights, the political context has to allow access to information”. He also argued that, social media when accessible provides an opportunity for citizens to “interact more directly and actively with their political system” as well as offering opportunity and platform for diaspora citizen to engage the political system of their country. (Chatora, 2012: 4). Chatora further argue that, though people are less likely to participate in politics due to economic conditions and lack of space to participate in politics among others, he holds the view that social media platforms are beginning to change this trend and are being used to encourage young people to vote or engage in other forms of electoral participation. He also underscores the importance and role of social media in other forms of political participation such as “engaging in civil protest, signing petitions and joining interest groups that engage in lobbying or political advocacy” and cites as an example the “Arab Spring” and the “Tunisian Revolution” which was largely supporting and given life through Facebook, Twitter and Blogs (Chatora, 2012: 5). On challenges facing social
media in promoting political participation, he opines that “the primary challenge facing social-media-mediated participation is the increasing distrust of these platforms by various autocratic regimes” (Chatora, 2012: 6). Chatora ignored the country and individual low level of education and access to the internet in many African countries as a hindrance to the new opportunity social media provides as an alternative to the orthodox means of political participation and engagement.

Manacorda & Tesei (2016) also studied the impact of communication technology (mobile phone) on political participation and mobilisation in Africa. Making reference to Castells (2011), Diamond (2010) and Shirky (2011), they argue that, mobile phones and internet, thanks to the opportunity they offer for two-way, multi-way and mass communication, and their low cost, decentralized, open-access nature, have the potential to foster citizens’ political activism and even lead to mass political mobilization, especially when civic forms of political participation are de facto or lawfully prevented. (Manacorda & Tesei, 2016: 1).

They further argue that mobile phone has brought about improvement in communication and have provided an opportunity for people to take collective action due to increase information sharing. On the role of the mobile phone in promoting political participation, they identified two ways in which mobile phone aid in citizen political participation especially “during economic downturns: on the one hand, they appear to make individuals more informed about the state of the economy. On the other, they also appear to make people more responsive to changes in others’ participation”. They also posit that the role of mobile phone and social media in promoting political mobilisation and participation is much feasible and effective particularly “in autocratic regimes and where traditional media are captured”. They further argue that in this way,
mobile phone “may play a key role in fostering political freedom” (Manacorda & Tesei, 2016: 1). They also wade into the argument on the cost of participation and its impact on the level of citizen participation. Like Karp & Banducci (2007), Manacorda & Tesei (2016), argued that, when the cost of participation is low, it triggers more citizen participation and vice versa. More so, they indicated that, the mobile phone has the potential to promote mass citizen mobilisation through its coordinating role.

Like Karp & Banducci (2007), Simon (2002) is of the view that poverty and economic conditions or the state of the economic wellbeing of citizens in a state has an influence on their level of political participation. He opines that the higher the cost of participation, the less likely citizens will participate. He further argues that citizens in poor or less developed democracies are more likely to abstain from voting when the associated cost of participation or voting is high especially when such resources and time could have been used/spent in providing for domestic needs. According to Simon, citizen participation and commitment to politics in new democracies is dependent on their assessment of the economic performance of government among others and are less likely to participate when their development expectations are not met by the government. Therefore, it is safe to assume that, the economic performance of government can be a disincentive to people’s political participation.

He also affirms that “negative economic effects may engender political withdrawal” and “in the long term undermine the ability of the populace to hold its government accountable” (Simon, 2002: 40). He further established that economically improved districts had an increase in their voter turnout as compared to districts that had gained less economic development. Simon pointed out that, between the periods of 1991 to 1996, political participation in Zambia fell due to declined economic performance.
which also saw a decline in eligible voters’ participation from 58% in the 1996 elections to 30% and 27% subsequently.

However, Simon’s argument is weakened by his concentration of the cost of participation to only material things. However, “psychological cost associated with voting is more likely to be shared equally between the poor and the affluent” (Asiamah, 2015: 48).

2.2.3 Studies on Political Party Mobilization and Participation in Ghana

Ghana’s Political Parties Act 2000, Act 574 requires all political parties to be organised at the national level. It also requires of them to be organised at the regional, district and constituency level. Even though Article 9 (c) of the Ghana Political Parties Law states political parties be organised with branches in all ten (10) regions and …in addition organised in not less than two-thirds of the district in each region, political parties in Ghana have suffered to organise well at the constituency level rather than at the district level. Ninsin describes this as “a strategic choice compelled by the need for effective mobilisation of voters than the district level” (Ninsin, 2006: 14). One can, therefore, describe this as an instrument of broadening political participation as well as party management.

Ninsin studied political parties and their role in promoting political participation in Ghana. He argues that democratic society is premised or benchmarked by the presence of a multi-party democratic political system and free and fair elections. He further makes the argument that political parties are “the embodiment of the basic freedoms that are core to democratic political parties” (Ninsin, 2006: 4). Making reference to the Constitution of Ghana and the Ghana Political Parties Act 2000, Act 574 “every citizen of voting age has the right to participate in political activity intended to influence the
composition and policies of the government” (Political Parties Act, 2000, Act 574 Article 2 [11]). Ninsin (2006) however argue that, illiteracy and ignorance which remains primary human development indices, answers “the problem of poverty which afflicts about 40% of Ghanaians” and “widespread political culture of patrimonialism” exploited by political parties when in government act as intervening variables empowering ruling political parties to determine “the choice of the electorate”. Ninsin, therefore, describes elections in Ghana and other African countries and political participation by extension as “choiceless democracies” (Ninsin, 2006: 9-10).

Bebelleh & Nobabumah (2013) also studied people’s participation in district assembly’s activities in the Upper West Region of Ghana using three selected districts. They argue that decentralisation is one of the cardinal governance forms in promoting greater citizen participation in a democratic political system. They define participation to mean “introducing or strengthening of mechanisms to encourage the direct involvement of those who do not find it easy to participate in state structures and processes” (Bebelleh & Nobabumah, 2013: 14). Core to this study is the establishment of a relationship between institutional provisions evident under the 1992 constitution of Ghana, aimed at promoting citizen participation at the local level against financial constraints which militate against the effort of assemblymen/women in engaging their constituents. Even though Chapter 20 Article 242 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana elaborates on the composition of district assemblies in Ghana and enjoins them to promote citizen/local participation, Bebelleh & Nobabumah (2013) are of the strong view that, the appointment of 30% to the district assembly and appointment of DCE by the president defeats the intended purpose of promoting political participation at the local level. They also pointed out that, citizen participation at the local level continue to be low even though citizen participation in decentralised governance is key in
promoting local development. Of the forty (40) respondents (assemblymen/women) interviewed, they established that only one (1) person was able to meet his constituents beyond the required three (3) times a year meeting set for assemblymen/women, nine (9) % met with their constituents two (2) times a year with 75% meeting their constituents one (1) to two (2) times a year. On factors inhibiting citizen participation at the local level, they attributed it to lack of financial resources or support for assemblymen/women as well as the 30% appointment to the district assembly and the non-election of district chief executives.

However, the study is weakened by its overemphasis on the institutional factors hindering citizen participation in local government politics to the neglect of individual decision and choice affecting their participation as well as the expected benefit relative to their participation as argued by the rational choice theory.

Sackey (2014) studied (PWD’s) participation in Ghana’s decentralised political system. He defines political participation as “the active or direct involvement, engagement in politics or public affairs as contestants vying or seeking to be elected as representatives of a particular constituency” (Sackey, 2014: 368). He is of the view that, low rate of PWD’s participation is not limited to Ghana but is also present in advanced democracies like the USA, Canada, Europe among others. He also opines that multiple, factors such as stigmatisation, discrimination against PWD’s as well as the element of isolation and limited resources culminate in diminishing PWD’s participation in politics. On factors militating against PWD’s engagement or participation in politics. Sackey (2014) further identified traditional cultural values as impediments to PWD’s participation in politics and cites as an example the appointment of Dr. Henry Seidu Daanaa as Minister for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs by former President Mahama with its accompanying reactions from some traditional rulers. Despite the opportunities offered
by our current dispensation, Sackey is of the opinion that, PWD’s still remain politically marginalised. He further established through a March 3rd, 2013 interview with the Director of Ghana Federation of the Disabled (GFD) that, of the approximate 9720 assemblymen/women (Assembly members) nationwide, “less than 20 PWD’s… serve in various district assemblies. He attributed the low participation and representation in Ghana’s local governance to the high level of stigmatisation and relative access to campaign resources” among others (Sackey, 2014: 367). He further avows that,

in the case of Ghana, state and civil society interventions aimed at promoting the political participation of PWD’s in the country often focus on the traditional assumption of creating enabling environment and assistive devices that could enable PWD’s to register and cast their votes and rarely targets initiatives that could promote the participation of PWD’s as political aspirants. (Sackey, 2014: 369).

Of the four assemblies studied (New Juabeng, Akuapim North, Sunyani East and Tano North), He established that out of a total of 220 assemblymen and women, including those elected (164) and appointed by government (56), PWD’s constituted less than 2% with 3 as elected and one (1) appointed by the government. He however, ignored individual differences, ambitions and people’s desire to participate in politics at the local level as a contributing factor to PWD’s participation politically.

Sossou (2011) also studied women perception about their participation in politics and militating factors hindering their participation from the point of view of gender inequality. She argues that Ghanaian women faces challenges of competing with men when it comes to taken decision and political participation. She also points out that, Ghanaian women are not well represented at all levels of government when it comes to
holding political offices as well as participating in politics. Bob-milliar (2014) affirms this argument and also points out that, the exclusion or limited participation of women in Ghanaian politics has its roots from colonial politics. She argues that, “women were conspicuously missing in the candidate list of all the competing parties, as none were nominated to stand for election in the historic polls” of the 1951 general elections. She is however of the view that, “processes of democratisation, changes in institutional rules and change to the culture of politics and political parties that encourage inclusion and equality are necessary for women’s effective political participation” (Sossou, 2011: 1). She identified long-standing patriarchal, traditional, cultural practices as factors acting against women’s quest to participate in Ghanaian politics. For example, she argues “women were taught to accept their position through the socialisation process, including their initiation rites… were taught to be obedient wives and respect their elders” among other reinforcing factors such as religion, social practices and widow inheritance. She further identified two factors explaining the inadequate political representation and participation of the Ghanaian women. Firstly, she argued that politics is seen as the preserve of men (no go area). Secondly, women mostly engaged in politics actively belong to the elite class, are wealthy and “these women often pursue a political agenda that reflects their class rather that their gender interest” (Sossou, 2011: 2). She identified in her findings that, Ghanaian women both in rural and urban cities as well as those with high, low or without educational background are relegated to the background due to traditional, cultural, religious, financial, educational and “structural barriers of male domination of the political bureaucracy, institutional sexism, and the patriarchal system that imposed limitations on women” as militating factors impeding or inhibiting their participation and involvement politically (Sossou, 2011: 6). Among other things, she further identified “lack of political training and
education, poor access to financial resources and preparation for working in the political arena were also discussed as other barriers to women’s political involvement and participation in Ghana” (Sossou, 2011: 7). The relevance of the study lies in its ability in bringing to light the institutional, cultural and structural as well as behavioural attitude of women towards each other in entrenching gender equality which relegates women to the background and inhibits their participation and involvement in the Ghanaian society politically.

Nathan (2016) studied the impact of Ghana’s growing middle class and economic growth on political participation. That is class differences with respect to political participation. He is of the view that, policy demands of the middle class in Ghana’s politics has led to disincentive on the part of the political class who are more prone towards patronage politics to ignore them in mobilising and engaging potential voters. He asserts that, “as result, voters who want major public policies rather than patronage differentially refrain from participation allowing the electorate and party organisations to be dominated by power voters” (Nathan, 2016: 1). He, however, argues that this leads to lack of confidence on the part of these “wealthier urban voters” in the political class delivering on their policy request than “narrow particularistic request benefits”, thereby leading to their non-participation (Nathan, 2016: 1-2). Similarly, Croke, Grossman, Horacio & Marshall (2014) sharing similar view also posit that there exist more likelihood of Zimbabwean educated voters not participating politically. Nathan, therefore argue that,

the urban residence who want these policies are less likely to turn out to vote and more likely to refrain from other forms of participation, allowing politicians to continue winning elections without addressing these policy demands (2016: 2).
Nathan further avows that, the abstention of the middle class from political participation has the tendency of the political class engaging in non-issue based politics. On why people abstain from political participation, Nathan pointed out that, these “wealthier urban voters” or middle class reluctantly engages or abstain from participation for two stated reasons. Firstly,

they are less likely to be mobilised to turn out by politicians that do not believe they can credibly convince middle class voters to support them, and because voters who want universalistic policies are especially unlikely to believe that politicians can deliver on their campaign promises. (Nathan, 2016: 2).

Nathan (2016) therefore argue that, the economic status of electorates have some degree of influence on their level of political participation and competition in a country. Nathan pointed out that, there are difference factors and variables that influence or engages poor voters on one hand and the wealthy and middle class on the other hand. He established that poor voter are mostly engaged through patronage and clientelistic means. “Because poor voters more acutely need private goods like food, housing or jobs, as well as… goods, such as running water and paved roads, they are more susceptible to electoral appeals that strategically target these goods” (Nathan, 2016: 4).

Rosenstone and Hansen, (1993), Ansolabehere & Hersh (2012), hold a contrary view and posits that there exist greater likelihood of the wealthy and middle class participating in politics more than the poor in advanced or developed democracies. Similarly, Mattes (2015) also indicates that there exist greater likelihood of wealthy Black South Africans engaging and participating in politics compared to poor Black South Africans.
Nathan argued further that, political parties in Ghana (NPP & NDC) deliberately ignore the wealthy and middle-class voters in their “main pre-election turnout mobilisation efforts because these politicians do not believe they can credibly engage with these voters. As a result, politicians describe campaigns as remaining focus on mobilising poorer voter through selective distribution of private and club goods” (Nathan, 2016: 23). An action or attempt I describe as having the tendency to disengage the wealthy and the middle class deliberately because they live outside the patronage and clientele bracket, a reason for an in-depth study into the management of party and party membership in order to aid parties identify how to incorporate the various categories of members with respect to their economic status rather than ignoring or not actively engaging them. Notwithstanding this study, I believe education and improved technology provide an important medium for middle-class engagement and participation in politics aside the conventional mediums of political participation and engagement such as attending party rallies, attending party meeting and representing the party at functions as well as fixing candidate and party posters.

In fine, though all studies reviewed on political participation in Ghana analysed political participation from a different point of view, they all share a common view/opinion that, there exist structural, institutional as well as cultural influence on individuals participation politically. Again, studies on political participation seem to have taken a narrow trend with almost all studies focusing on or narrowing down on issues of elections and voting.
2.3 POLITICAL PARTY AND DEMOCRACY

Burnell (2004), Biezen & Katz (2005), Stokes (1999), Geyikçi (2004) and Ayee et al. (2007: 2) argue the relevance and place of political parties in a modern democracy. They posit that modern democracy cannot be realised without the existence of political parties.

2.3.1 General Studies on Political Party and Democracy

Political parties role and place in organising “modern politics and governance is not a recent phenomenon of contemporary societies. Political parties have been part and parcel of the political organisation since the creation of the nation state”. He further makes the case that, “the general consensus in comparative political thought and among policy makers is that political parties play a central role in deepening and fostering democracy in both established as well as emerging democratic polities” (Maiyo, 2008: 13). Schattschneider (1942: 1) therefore avows that, “political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the political parties”.

Biezen & Katz (2005) recounting the relative importance of political parties in modern democratic states also argued that modern democracy cannot survive without political parties. They further opine that political parties “have acquired relevance in more recently established democracies, to the point that they are widely seen as a sine qua non for the organization of the modern democratic polity and for the expression of political pluralism” (Biezen & Katz, 2005: 1). This argument is supported by Mielke (2011: 1) who opines that “parties are the backbone of German politics… Their vital role in the political process is even laid down in the basic law, the German constitution”. Biezen & Katz (2005) further points out that, despite the general acceptability of
political parties in contemporary democracies, there has been disagreement over the very importance of political parties to the survival of democratic states. This hinges on the disappointment with the ways in which parties operate and with what is seen as their increasing failure to perform many of the functions that have been assumed both to be essential to the healthy performance of democracy and to be uniquely the responsibility of political parties. (Biezen & Katz, 2005: 1).

Similarly, Matlosa (2007) writing on the state of political parties in Southern Africa holds a similar opinion and argue that, though political party is key to the very survival of democracy, they also have the potential to run-down a democracy especially when political patronage becomes an instrument in its management.

Like Biezen & Katz (2005), Schmitter (2001) also point out that, political parties today have lost some significance due to their inadequacy in serving as mediums of representation which has open debates on the decline or failure of political parties. Admitting to the inadequacy of political parties as representative institutions, Biezen & Katz (2005: 5) pointed out that “as institutions positioned between citizens and the state… they are often seen as distorting the popular will”. Biezen & Katz (2005:2) further indicate that, though political parties have lost significant importance in the modern democratic system in the areas of mobilisation, interest aggregation and as mediums of articulation as well as representative institutions, “they have retained more exclusive control over candidate recruitment and organisation of parliaments and government”. They also further argue that though political parties are considered pivotal in modern democratic systems, they are however seen as not delivering on the very core functions of its establishment. According to them, “while support for
democracy continues to be high today, citizens have lost faith in the agents of representative democracy” (Biezen & Katz, 2005: 4).

Burnell (2004) writes on the need and relevance of political parties in emerging democracies. He argues that modern democracy is unthinkable without political parties and points out that strong and vibrant political party and party system is essential and a pre-condition for building effective democracy. This position is shared by Biezen & Katz (2005). He further makes a strong case that, for effective democracy, support for political parties needs to be given a phase-lift and points out that this support constitutes an important part in Central European democracies. Stokes (1999) holds a similar view and argues that political parties and modern democracies are inextricably interwoven and that modern democracy cannot do without political parties.

Recounting the growth and development of political parties, He also points out that, years back political parties, have been neglected by those working in the developing world who have preferred instead to concentrate on human rights and civil society as ways to deepen democracy… This view is beginning to change, and it is now more widely accepted that to make democracy promotion more effective, political parties need a higher profile. (Burnell, 2004: 1-5)

He also discusses the roles played by political parties and points out interest aggregation and representation, providing a link between society and the state, serving as training ground for future political leaders, providing alternatives to the electorates and information dissemination among others as roles played by political parties in a democratic setup. He is however of the opinion that, though political parties are seen
as often not working for the very people they claim to represent, but it will be suicidal to write off political parties in any democracy be it developed or developing.

Following Burnell (2004), Stokes (1999: 244) argue that “parties are the link between citizen interests and government actions” and identified the following as functions of political parties; “inducing government to be responsive to citizens”, providing alternative policy proposals for citizens, providing mediums for citizens to hold governments accountable as well as aggregating citizen interest. Salih (2003: 7) reinforcing the relevance and significance of political parties in political democratic system argue that political parties “provide the connection between the party system and government on the one hand, and between government and society on the other”. Similarly, touching on the relevance of political parties in promoting stability in “democratic political system”, the 2007-2010 annual report of the Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (NIMD) highlights the following as functions of political parties towards the sustenance of democratic systems.

In any democracy, political parties are expected to act as negotiators in debates and discussions about policy options and changes. They are needed to establish a consensus among diverse interests and to create coalitions necessary to govern or to form an opposition. They are also essential in selecting politicians and in accounting for policies implemented or still to be enacted. Institutionalised political parties are, as it were, the breeding grounds of the political system. (Democracy, 2010: 2).

In contrast to Biezen & Katz (2005) and Burnell (2004), Hehner (2013) writing on the reasons why political parties should be abolished argues that political parties do not constitute the lifeblood of modern democracies. He is of the strong opinion that, for
democracy to thrive as expected, political parties must be abolished. He posits that “in principle, a political party is a coalition of like-minded people who seek to advance their agenda, or platform” (Hehner, 2013: 1). He further points out that these like-minded people (political parties) limit political participation and indicate that “a candidate who was not chosen by one of the major parties has almost no chance of being elected”. But Hehner failed to acknowledge the place of independent candidates in democratic political systems. He also argues that political parties cloud the judgement of the elected representatives of the people as parliamentarians have always had to toe their party line when voting on issues in parliament even when it is not in the best interest of the state. According to him, political parties and party system is an affront to representative democracy. Consequently, he questions the extent to which political parties are considered as the only medium for candidate selection and representation, with the right and privilege of the platform on which candidates can contest elections to represent the people and strongly argue against.

2.3.2 Studies on Political Party and Democracy in Africa

Historically, African political parties developed as a nationalist movement with the sole aim or goal of attaining independence from colonial rule. Mesfin (2008) points out that, these nationalist movements, political parties and leaders that led their respective countries to independence metamorphosed the political regimes into a one party state which according to Gentili (2005:4) “accepted and justified as the best solution by the international community and by academia, since the priority was to protect the political order against the risk of disorderly mobilisation of grievances”. Maliyamkono and Kanyongolo (2003:41) therefore argued, “a political party is an organised association
of people working together to compete for political office and to promote agreed-upon policies”.

Mesfin (2008) studied the place of political parties in a democratic system with emphasis on Africa. He argues that, democracy in most Africa countries has been reduced to periodic elections. He, therefore, opines that in any democratic regime, whether “established or fragile”, election appears to be the medium through which citizens can change or choose their political leaders peacefully. Bunwaree & Kasenally (2005) sharing similarly view is however of the opinion that, democracy cannot be limited to free and fair elections and peaceful change of power from one government (political party) to the other, but also how political parties respond to people’s quest and their involvement in decision making that affect their lives. Mesfin (2008) further avows that, there is growing discontent and pessimism among most Africans on the expectations of democracy. Similarly, Bratton (2007: 5) is of the view that “many African citizens are beginning to perceive that democracy has destructive shortcomings including unruly political discourse, a poor record of service delivery, and new opportunities for corruption”. Regardless, Mesfin (2008) is of the belief that, the existence of well-functioning political parties serves as the lifeline to any democracy or democratic regime. Political party therefore according to Ware (1995: 5), is seen as “an institution that seeks influence in a state, often by attempting to occupy positions of more than a single interest in the society and so to some degree attempts to aggregate interest”.

On the functions of political party in a democratic regime, while Mesfin (2008) is of the belief that, political parties serves as interest aggregating institutions, Shively (2011) is of the view that political parties perform the function of serving as training grounds for future political leaders to take up the mantle of political leadership.
Matlosa (2007) studied the role of political parties in institutionalising democracy in Southern Africa. He disagrees with Hehner (2013) on abolishing political parties and strongly argues in support of the argument that democracy cannot exist in the absence of a “vibrant and well-functioning political parties”. He vehemently opposes the idea of a democracy without political parties and sites two reasons why Uganda cannot be described as democratic.

First, democracy cannot exist where open competition for ideas and state power tends to be constricted by deliberate state policies. Second, democracy cannot exist in a situation where the participation and political choice of citizens in the democratic process are curtailed either by force or by fiat. (Matlosa, 2007: 7).

He also identified in his findings the following variables as determinants of the performance and roles of political parties in a democratic system: “the nature of the party system in place in a country; the nature of the electoral system in place in a country; and equally important, the effectiveness of the legislative in a given country” (Matlosa, 2007: 37). He further opines that political parties provide the platform for citizen engagement in a political system, providing alternative policy directions, aggregating their interest as well as creating a platform for democracy to thrive. Matlosa argues that political system without vibrant and effective political parties stands the chance of degenerating into an authoritarian regime like Museveni of Uganda. He therefore identified funding as a hindrance to political parties in performing their primary functions within a democratic system. He also points out that, most political parties rely on membership dues, donations and sometimes public or state funding. But he was quick to add that, where public funding existed, opposition parties lamented incumbents benefitted unduly at the expense of opposition parties. According to him,
“sustainable democracy is heavily dependent upon vibrant and well-functioning political parties (Matlosa, 2007: 7)”.

Omilusi, Adu, Polytechnic, & Ekiti (2016: 43) also studied political parties’ role, nature and character in promoting democratic governance in Nigeria. They argue that, fundamentally, political parties’ role in establishing and nurturing growing democracies as well as its consolidation cannot be taken for granted. They therefore argue that successful democracies owe it all to the presence of well-functioning political parties as well as other vital democratic institutions like an independent electoral commission, independent judiciary and the freedom of the press among others. They however posit that, the important roles played by political parties in a democracy is influenced or dependent on their level of financial fluidity or how well they are financed, the presence or absence of internal party democracy as well as their level of transparency, accountability, the “organisational and administrative structures” present (Omilusi, et al., 2016). Gyimah-Boadi (2004) and Bratton (2012) therefore calls for internal democracy within African political parties. Indeed, Debrah (2014: 62) has also “argued that in contemporary politics where policymaking takes place within the ruling party rather than in the public, democracy within parties is needed in order to ensure that ordinary party members take active part in the setting of their parties’ programs and agenda”.

Like Ninsin (2006), Matlosa (2007), Mesfin (2008) and Okumas (2008), Omilusi et al. (2016: 38) argue that “the existence of political parties in the country is taken to mean the backbone of democracy; its success or failure, and its survival or downfall”.

They further opine that in the colonial periods of Nigeria,
political parties were created as an instrument to facilitate either the transfer of power from colonial regimes to the local political elite; or they were formed by the local political leadership to fight colonialism. Once the colonial state was driven out, political parties degenerated into ethnic and regional groups, acting in most cases as the vanguard of local hegemonic forces to meet their narrow interests. (Omilusi et al 2016: 41).

On functions or roles of political parties, Omilusi et al (2016), indicated that, though political parties are formed to perform key roles such as political recruitment, interest articulation and aggregation, providing voters with vast options to choose from, political education and capacity building of political leadership, most political parties in the south of Nigeria are unable to live up to this in their contribution to democratic society, largely due to historical colonial developments when it comes to party formation. Likewise, Carswell (2016) holds a similar view and argues that political parties as institutions set to provide a broad range of options for voters to expand their options for choices is now seen rather diminishing voters choices. He further opines that politicians whether democrats, republicans, liberals, socialist, labour, left or right across the globe look similar with no sharp differences. He cites the United Kingdom as an example and argues that “in the United Kingdom, different parties’ candidates for Parliament are virtually indistinguishable from each other. In terms of their backgrounds, their education, and their professional history, they are almost identical. Fifty years ago, Labour candidates were predominantly ex-industrial workers” (Carswell, 2016: 36).

Omilusi et al (2016: 43), therefore argue that the formation and operations of political parties in Nigeria are mostly by rich political entrepreneurs “who possess or have access to the enormous funds required to comply” with political party formation requirements.
He further opines that this development often leads to the creation of political parties intended to serve the self-interest of these rich political entrepreneurs as compared to political parties formed on the basis of its “ideology or political platforms”.

They further indicate that, “Parties and candidates finance their activities and campaigns from funds provided by party bosses and political entrepreneurs in absolute secrecy”. This type of political party financing other than membership dues or state funding and other legitimate sources contributes to unaccountable government as party leaders and candidates will be seen focusing on rendering accounts to their financier/financiers other than to the electorates.

On the role of opposition political parties in a democracy, they opine that in Nigeria, opposition parties with the responsibility of keeping an incumbent government in check, through constructive criticisms, offering alternative policy proposals, pressing for accountability and embarking on citizen political education among others have failed to live up to the task. One significant contribution of this paper to the study of political party and democracy is its highlight on the role of constitutional structures and political regime of a country. They posit that, though political parties tend to be the lifeblood of modern democracy, “the constitution of a country and a number of relevant laws and by-laws, such as those regulating political parties and elections, provide the legal framework for the operation of political parties” (Omilusi et al, 2016: 42).

The perception that political parties are a pre-condition for the development and growth of democracy raises “further concern among students of democratisation in Africa” (Randall & Svåsand, 2002: 9). They argue that, among the various components that sum to establish a good democratic state, political parties are the weakest. For instance, in studying the problems of African political parties, Monga (1997), identified eight
problems and out of the eight with African politics, the first two problems identified with political parties as well as problems involved in the electoral process whiles De Walle & Butler (1999) studying political parties in tropical Africa argue that “African political parties are plagued by weak organisations, low levels of institutionalisation, and weak links to the society that they are supposed to represent”.

Randall & Svåsand (2002) studied the role of political parties in promoting democratic consolidation in Africa. They posit that political parties’ and the multi-party system in a state creates the necessary condition and platform for the citizens to exercise their democratic rights, such as, right to vote, freedom of association and free speech which are seen as indices of democracy practically. Just like Gyampo (2015) and Ayee et al. (2007), they also argue that democratic political system remains lifeless without the existence of well-functioning and competitive political parties. In the lead up to democratic consolidation, they argue that political parties perform five important functions namely, representation, conflict resolution, making government accountable, institutionalising democracy and regime legitimacy. They further opined that political parties ability to perform those stated functions is dependent on the “characteristics of the parties and party systems” as well as the extent of politics in a state (Randall & Svåsand, 2002: 7). They however hold a similar view with Omilusi et al (2016) in arguing that African political parties are not able to deliver on this functions. More so, Randall & Svåsand (2002: 8) citing Crotty (1994) pines that, “the party system should be independent of state control and that the electoral procedures should be reasonable, fair and inclusive”.

They also pointed out the inter-dependent relationship between the economic systems of a country, relative to political parties’ effort in consolidating democracies. On this, they established that “a stabilised party system is more likely to emerge under improved
economic conditions”. They also posited that improved economic conditions born out of development, urbanisation and improved infrastructure help improves political party communication with its members both internally and externally (Randall & Svåsand, 2002: 14). On the part of party members, they argue that citizens are more capacitated to contribute to or donate to their respective parties when improved economically. Membership dues constitute an important source of party financing, without which political parties suffocate and lead to their inability to participate competitively as compared to an incumbent with access to state resources. They also espouse that, in many Africa countries characterised by limited infrastructure, opposition political parties with limited financial resources mostly, are unable to perform their watchdog roles and other functions as a party as well as strengthening their organisational structure, while incumbent parties with easy access to state resources take advantage to build a national party. This they argue militate against a well-functioning political party system and democracy.

Lipset, Seong & Torres (1993) are however pessimistic about the prospects of consolidating democracy in Africa taking into consideration the absence of or limited economic development that characterises most African states. He therefore argues that there is the need for considerable caution about the long-term prospects for multi-party structures in many of the newer systems.

It can therefore be argued that political parties play an envious role in any democracy even though, there is a host of other factors such as the political system or regime of a country, independence judiciary, independent free and vibrant media among others that make this possible. Political parties are not gods unto themselves in promoting democracy. More so, African democracy has been reduced to multi-party elections with
no regard as to whether political parties as institutions of democracy offer real choices to citizens and as well as promoting their participation politically.

2.3.3 Studies on Political Party and Democracy in Ghana

Political parties have long been relegated to the background in Africa (Ghana) in the study of democracy with rather much focus on civil society and their role in promoting democracy especially in the 1990’s. Ghana politically since independence, have seen political parties taking a centre stage in its democratic development as well providing a platform for citizen engagement politically. A governance system deemed democratic has in it three key components or conditions. Firstly, there must exist healthy political competition on the one hand among citizens and organised groups. Secondly, citizens must have a say in the selection of leaders and policies that affect their lives in a free, fair and competitive manner. More so, there must be laws governing political participation as well as ensuring the integrity of the system. Democracy as a theoretical concept is given life practically through political party and party systems. In Ghana, political parties continue to be the medium through which citizens engage the state politically as well as the platform of electing its political leaders (Norris, 2001). According to Agyepong (2017: 47-78), “the importance of political parties to the political scene in Ghana is demonstrated by the fact that all candidate hitherto elected as president as well as the majority of those elected as members of parliament (MPs) have run on a political party’s ticket”. Political is therefore seen as central to the development of any democracy (Mair, 2003; Ayee, 2007; Schattschneider, 1942).

Ayee et al. (2007: 2) studying public funding of political parties in Ghana argue that “representative democracy cannot operate effectively without strong and healthy political parties”. They go on to posit that, in spite of the very important role of political
parties in modern democratic systems, “political parties are nearing critical condition in terms of their resources (especially opposition political parties) to perform the tasks we expect them to perform”. (Osei, 2013: 545).

Osei (2013) studied political parties’ contribution and place in Ghana’s democracy. She states that “political parties are generally thought of as agents of democracy that fulfil a range of functions, such as policy formulation, interest aggregation and articulation, social integration, and elite recruitment”. Notwithstanding this, she posits that generally political parties in Africa are functionally weak with unstable membership as a result of their weak mobilisation. Osei (2013: 543) also describe political parties in Ghana as not representative of the masses but rather “projects of political entrepreneurs” who fund political parties to advance their self-interest agendas. She however questions the relationship between political parties and democracies and questions which pave the way for the other. She therefore argue that,

The relationship between political parties and democratic quality seems to be – at least in Africa and possibly in other new democracies – a chicken-and-egg problem: parties should enhance and improve democracy, but at the same time, the hybrid environment of authoritarian and democratic practices undermines the very organisational capacities of political parties. (Osei, 2013: 544).

She further argues that in the wake of transition to democratic rule and its success, several factors and institutions are involved, but political parties “are generally among the institutions which are thought to fulfil functions that are indispensable for democracy” (Osei, 2013: 545).

Similarly Mansfield and Snyder (2005) sharing the position of (Omilusi et al., 2016: 41) also opine that there exist institutions such as the constitution of a country, rule of
law, the media (both print and electronic) in addition to political parties in the functioning of a democracy.

Okumah (2008) wrote on political party’s role in Ghana’s democracy. Okumah (2008) opine that political parties in Ghana have played an enviable and significant role in Ghana’s democracy since independence and describes it as the “heart beat of the political system”. He opines that political party’s role in a democratic society cannot be taken for granted. He is of the view that, political parties constitute the pillars of modern democracy not only when in government but also when in opposition as a check on government thereby keeping government on its toes. Okumah (2008) further argue that political “parties are providing a fertile ground for the advancement of the new political experiment and giving impetus to the promotion of rule of law, good governance and national development”. Therefore, one cannot talk of democracy without the undeniable contribution of political parties. He further attributed the state of Ghana’s democracy to its “rich background of political parties… unlike some other African countries”, as he rightly put it.

Citing Walter Bagehot, Okumah (2008) established that, “Party organisation is the vital principle of a responsible government. There has never been an election without party”.

Similarly, like Hofmeister & Grabow (2011), Burnell (2004), Mesfin (2008) and Shively (2011), Okumah (2008) also argue that “political parties have been a major vehicle for the recruitment of political leadership, providing electoral choice and peaceful political competition and framing of alternative policies”.

Debrah (2014) studied the implication or impact of internal party democracy on political parties as agents promoting democracy in Ghana. He opines that, among the institutions significant in shaping Ghana’s democracy, political parties stand tall. He
argues that political parties in Ghana has not only provided alternatives for the Ghanaian voter, but they have also been the medium or platform through which the membership of parliament is constituted as well as educating voters politically since the inception of Ghana’s Fourth Republic. He opines that “despite these, there is growing cynicism against political parties” (Debrah, 2014: 57).

He is of the view that “patrimonial practices have been entrenched in the parties’ organisations to the extent that they have shaped the course of decision making”. He therefore argues that patrimonialism is inimical to the quality of democracy in a country and opines that “parties internal functioning must conform to democratic practices because the quality of democracy in a state mirrors internal behaviour of parties” (Debrah, 2014: 58). This argument is supported by Mainwaring & Scully (1995: 11) who argues 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 quality of elections in a country”.

Debrah (2014) established in an interview with Kofi Brew (NPP activist Kwadaso, June 2014) that, though both the NPP and NDC pride themselves as democratic internally, backed by their party’s constitutions which stipulate guidelines for membership involvement in party decision-making both at the local and national level through its adjoining rank and file from polling station/ward to national, in practice, Debrah in his study identified patronage politics as characterising the internal party democracy of the two parties which he argue is inimical to the democracy of a country because the “quality of democracy in a state mirrors internal behaviour of parties” (Debrah, 2014: 58). As a measure to control political patronage in these parties, and promoting international party democracy, he posited that “the enforcement and vertical
accountability within the parties will be a bold step to shifting power from the top elite to the bottom (ordinary members/supports)” (Debrah, 2014: 73).

There are however institutions such as the judiciary and its independence, freedom of the press which came to light through the abolishment of the criminal libel law, the electoral commission among a host of other institutions and constitution of a country (Ghana) which I strongly believe, regardless of the quality of the internal democracy in a party, places limit on the powers of government (party in power), provide guidelines towards the realisation of the democratic aspirations and citizen participation in a country.

2.4 STUDIES ON DECLINING MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL PARTIES

As party membership declines globally, political parties as membership organisations have become concerned as membership is key to their very survival, legitimacy and their ultimate aim of attaining government power. Political parties are also seen as central to the modern democratic system.

Biezen et al. (2012), Mielke (2011), Melorose, Perroy, & Careas (2015: 7), Gyampo (2015) and Seyd & Whiteley (2004) argue there has been a global decline in political party membership. Biezen et al. (2012) on declining party membership in contemporary Europe argue that the last quarter of the 20th century saw political party membership dwindling in Europe. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, political parties in European democracies have clearly lost the capacity to engage citizens in the way they once did. On this, they argue that on the average only around 4.7% per cent of the national electorates are members of a political party today. Again, with the exception of Austria and Cyprus having around 17% of electorates affiliated to a political party, Latvia and Poland have membership levels not reaching 1%. They further assert that even political parties in newly established democracies such as post-communist Central
and Eastern Europe have lost a significant number of members and argue that the decline in party membership that started in the last quarter of the previous century is not peculiar to newly established democracies but old democracies as well. It is worth noting that, in the United Kingdom, France and Italy, parties have lost 1 to 1.5 million members in the last three decades, which corresponds to a total loss of about one to two-thirds of their original supporters. Similarly, the Nordic countries have also suffered heavy losses, with the raw numbers of members about 50 to 60 percent lower than before (Biezen et al., 2012). More so, Cross & Gauja (2014) argue that this decline in political party membership is not peculiar to European democracies but in Australia as well and point out that membership of the Australian Liberal Party fell from 156,000 to 78,000 from the 1940’s to date whereas the Australian Labor Party suffering the greatest membership decline, had membership numbers fallen from approximately 370,000 to 44,000 between the 1940’s and 2014.

Like its European counterparts, Kenig, Philippov, & Rahat (2013) argue that political party membership in (Kadima, Likud and Labour Parties) Israel have been on the decline for the past three decades with membership numbers fallen from 423,495 to 251,942 between the years of the 1970s and 2000 respectively. More so, Biezen et al., (2012) further argue that the relative newness of these democracies, the absence of traditional stratification in society, access to modern means of communication and government support at an early stage, militate against efforts to build mass organisations, even in the longer term.

Mielke (2011) on his part, studying political party membership mobilisation and empowerment in Germany also argues that in Germany, the Social Democratic Party has experienced a steady decline in party membership from over one million members to 500,000 members starting from the 1970s. Gyampo (2015) also focused on the public
funding of political parties but hints on membership disengagement and the possible impact of declining party membership on political party financing. He argues that this decline in membership “deprived parties of an important source of revenue by reducing significantly the amount of income derived from membership subscriptions”.

Conversely, Scarrow & Gezgor (2010) is of the view that this decline in party membership has rather occasioned political parties to expand democracy within, aimed at empowering party members as well as shifting the party closer to the people. While Biezen et al. (2012) focus much on the statistical figures of political party membership decline, little or no attention was given to the factors leading to decline in party membership.

Conversely, Melorose, Perroy, & Careas (2015) contributing to the issue of party membership decline argue that, though there has been a global decline in party membership,

It is… misleading to assume that this decline has affected all political parties equally. The German and Belgian Greens are two examples of political parties that have managed to stabilise, if not increase their membership. Smaller political parties, regional parties (the SNP and the Regionalists in Belgium), parties of the extreme right (UKIP), and newer political parties (such as DF and EL in Denmark) have experienced membership increases in recent years. Perhaps indicating changing patterns of support and citizen engagement with parties, it is the traditional ‘mass parties’, such as the social democrats and the Christian democrats, which are suffering from the most pervasive membership declines. (Melorose, Perroy, & Careas, 2015: 7).

On the issue of disengagement, Rogers (2005) looking at recent development and future of political parties, is of the view that, this decline in party engagement is largely due
to the emergence of extra-party mediums of engagement, which has affected political parties as a platform for democratic engagement but has not relegated political parties to the background.

He identifies two major trends in modern western democracies namely decline in political party membership and the growing significance of political parties in modern democratic systems. According to him, though there has been a global decline in party membership, there are variations in the degree of membership decline and argue that “in France it fell by a third” and “in Norway by 40%” (Roger, 2005: 600). Though Roger subscribes to the global decline in party membership, he is optimistic and argues that this decline has not eroded the significance of political parties.

This argument is supported by Seyd & Whiteley (2004: 356-357) in their study of British political party membership. They categorised the factors leading to party membership decline into two (2), namely “the supply-side and demand-side”. On the “supply-side”, they argue that party “membership is drying up because the political market place is becoming more competitive” due to the emergence of other alternative mediums of engagement such as single-issue political groups among others. On the demand-side, they argue that the reliance on political parties on members for financial and voter mobilisation has reduced due to advancement in technology leading to “the development of mass communication and marketing… and so a major impetus for membership recruitment has now largely disappeared”. Whiles Seyd & Whiteley (2004: 356-357), arguing from the demand-side relates reduced political parties reliance on members for both financial and mobilisation purposes to improved technology and its resultant effect on membership recruitment, Young (2013) is also of the opinion that, political parties relying on state funding are less likely to depend on
members for both financial and electoral support thereby viewing vibrant membership as a burden. Seyd & Whiteley (2004) also point out the impact of busy lifestyle of the modern man or woman on the membership of political parties and argue that it competes with political parties for people’s time.

Similarly, Heidar (2007) explores party membership in European democracies. According to him, though party membership is on the decline, he is of the strong opinion that political parties are not made weak by declining membership; neither does it erode their importance in a modern democratic system. But he is quick to add that this may affect the legitimacy of candidates and system. However, Hopkin & Paolucci (1999: 307) writing on the notion of “The business firm model of party organisation” in European democracy (like Forza Italia and UCD in Spain) posits that vibrant membership is not essential for winning government power but was quick to add that “business firm parties are likely to be electorally unstable and politically incoherent, and also prone to serving particularistic interest”. Heidar also identified factors leading to membership decline in Western European democracies and argue that traditional modes of party membership engagement have given way to new modes of citizen engagement such as “signing petitions and supporting political actions”. According to him, economic, environmental, technological and social change are contributing factors to political party membership decline in Western Europe and posits that “the media, post-industrialist work habit, new family structures, the volatile voters, the new issues and EU political system” are key among the factors creating incentives for change in party membership (Heidar, 2007: 1).

Much like Heidar, Matlosa (2007: 23) studying political parties in Southern Africa attributes in part, declining membership of political parties to declining public trust. He further indicates that this phenomenon is much prevalent among European and Latin
American democracies than to “East Asian and African democracies”. On the other hand, Merten and Mofokeng (2012) holds contrarian view and argues that, unlike Europe where political party membership is on the decline, party membership in South Africa is on the increase and can be attributed to low/cheap membership affiliation dues. He however opines that, though party membership is on the increase in South Africa, citizen trust in political parties is on a serious decline. Similarly, Kumba (2007) posits that party membership is on the decline in many African states due to lack of trust by the electorates in African political parties.

Gyampo (2015) however is of the strong view that, this disengagement has led to a decline in membership of political parties and has deprived parties of an important source of revenue by reducing significantly the amount of income derived from membership subscription. He however, attributed this growing significance and endurance of political parties in modern democratic systems to “state funding of political parties” (Roger, 2005: 601). More so, according to Scarrow & Gezgor (2010: 840), this decline in party membership has affected political parties representatively and financially largely because parties relied on their members to provide a pool “of local and regional government candidates” as well as financing party activities from membership dues.

Similarly, Mielke (2011), studying German political parties attributed membership disagreement to certain policy directions of their party’s and particularly lack of interest and disengagement of the younger population in politics leading to greater influence by the older population, as a key reason for the decline in party membership particularly among the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Union. He further attributed the membership problems in German political parties to clash of political culture with the first dating back to “German post-war era” that thrived with little
participation in contrast to the modern political culture in which members are “calling for active participation and fairly critical attitude towards decisions from above” especially among the younger population, a phenomenon parties are grappling with. Throwing more light on the factors leading to party membership decline in German political parties, Mielke (2011: 3) argue that “the decline is generally not based on a growing tendency of party members to formally relinquish their membership status”, but that there has been growing disinterest of the youth in becoming party members. Therefore, “the ration between old and young members is completely out of balance” (Mielke, 2011: 3). However, Stojarová et al., (2007) studying Central and Eastern European political parties identified reduced political party activities (intra-party) between elections in many countries as haven the potential of breeding membership disengagement.

More so, Kenig, Philippov, & Rahat (2013) studied party membership in Israel. They argue that political party membership in Israel is not stable largely because most people join or are recruited into parties to only participate in the election of party candidates during primaries which normally shores up a party’s membership after which their membership is taken for granted leading to membership decline and apathy. They also attributed the decline in party membership to the unattractiveness of modern political parties to the modern day youth who constitute a good percentage of our population leading to low voter turnout. They are however of the opinion that, though not a good phenomenon, this membership fluctuation has the added advantage of greater political involvement and participation of citizens on issues affecting their lives.

Similarly, like Heidar (2007), Whiteley (2011) mainly focused on the factors leading to disengagement and decline in European political party membership. He identified among other reasons, “the rise of internet participation, which involves activities like
political forums and chat rooms, as well as signing electronic petitions and reading and writing political blogs” (Whiteley, 2011: 23). Whiteley (2011: 22) also touched on the importance of membership dues in promoting party membership engagement. He opines that “given money to a political party or an interest group instead of actively working for it allows individuals to feel psychologically engaged, even though they are not actively involved”.

He however, argue that these modern mediums of communication have greatly reduced party members’ role as agents of campaigning and mobilisation in their respective constituents. How then will political parties be much interested in membership recruitment especially when members are seen as having a limited role in voter mobilisation and communication?

Došek (2014) discusses party membership and role of the militantes in Latin America. He argues that there has been a downward trend in political party membership in Latin America and cites Venezuela and Costa Rica as the countries experiencing this downward trend, particularly within the traditional political parties. He however, argues that there are exceptions to this membership decline in Latin America and posits that there has been an increase in party membership in Argentina between the years of 1983 and 1999 estimating 30% but, Szusterman (2007) takes a different position and argue that this increase is overestimated and looks fictitious.

An emerging trend is that, declining membership numbers threatens political parties as viable campaigning organizations, removing resources and reducing the potential pool of parliamentary candidates, but also as representative institution, fewer members are purported to weaken links to local communities and diminish the ability of political parties to effectively aggregate interests (Katz and Mair, 1995; Bartolini and Mair, 2001; Whiteley, 2011; Krouwel, 2012).
These and several others set the stage for citizens’ disengagement from political parties leading to membership decline.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter reviewed literature on the management of political party membership, political party mobilisation and participation, political party and democracy and declining membership of political parties. The literature reviewed in this study point to the fact that, management of political party and party membership is key to the growth and survival of political parties as key agents in democratic political systems. I therefore, agree with Hofmeister & Grabow (2011: 33) who argues that “the members are the fundamental part of any party and its most important connecting link to the society”.

The study also reveals that, limited literature exist on the management of political party and party membership globally and in the case of Ghana, looks scanty with limited or no emphasis on the management of political party membership. This has, therefore, occasioned the need for an in-depth study into the management of political party membership in Ghana.
CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework that explains the philosophical context of the phenomenon under study. Adopting a theoretical framework within which this work will be situated is eminent in social science research. Edberg (2007) defines a theory as “propositions that have meaning, validity, and truth within a specific context, such as a historical context, a social context, or a cultural context”. Glanz & Bishop (2010) indicate that a theory is a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that explain or predict events or situations by specifying relations among variables. Also, Glanz, & Saelens (2010) views a theory as “a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that explain or predict events or situations”.

This study employs the voter relationship management theory as a benchmark for comparing the membership management practices of the two dominant political parties in Ghana: the NDC and NPP.

3.1 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT/VOTER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Evidence from the literature depicts that customer relationship management is often modified to voter/constituent relationship management to enhance the management of the membership of political parties (Madden, 2008). The basic assumption underlying “customer relationship management is its focus on a cooperative and collaborative relationship between the firm and its customer and other marketing actors” (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2001: 4). The theory holds that building a network of interactive (maintaining
up to date database of customers) and a continuous long term relationship with individual customers has the potential benefit of customer retention and organisational growth as opposed to a transactional relationship. Similarly, “It involves the strategic and tactical management tasks to achieve positive communications and long term customer relationships” (Cheruiyot, 2014: 8).

Brown (2000) notes that CRM is defined in varying ways depending on the working environment. “Voter Relationship Management (VRM) keeps track of databases of voters, donors, fund-raisers, volunteers and other persons who support the efforts of a party and its candidates to gain and hold public office” (Madden, 2008). In the context of management of the members of political parties, this study adopts the definition of Koskei (2014) as follows: “a strategic approach that enables organization (Political parties) to use internal resources (i.e. Technology, People and Process) to manage the relationship with customers (its members) for the whole of their lives cycle, in order to create a competitive advantage and improve organizations performance”. By extension, VRM seeks to utilise political party’s membership (donors, sympathiser, volunteers) available data such as religion, home address, dues payment/contribution to build “personalised voter communication” to strengthen their membership/voter base and to increase their chances of winning political power.

Madden (2008) identified six indices of VRM namely “databases, call centres, canvassers, marketing, technical support and field service”. With an ever increasing competitive and uncertain business environment, organisations have had to shift attention and now focus on customer relationship management to survive. With this, Koskei (2014) argues CRM has the potential to promote customer/voter retention and satisfaction.
Chen & Povich (2003) contends that managing a successful CRM implementation requires an integrated and balanced approach to technology, process and people.

### 3.1.1 People

Chakravorti (2006) explains that collaboration between people is the key to successful customer relationship management. This is so because in maintaining a cordial relationship with voters the greatest challenge is aligning the people in the organisation with the customer strategy and process (Dickinson, Ferguson, and Sircar, 2005). Similarly, Regis (1991) points to a more vital view by placing the customer/voter first and moving the customer from the manipulative role of marketing to a more involving one. To ensure that the organisation is customer centric (focuses on the voter) management must demonstrate its commitment through periodic education and training program. Chen & Popovich (2003) emphasises that it is the individual employees who are the building blocks of customer/voter relationships. To this end, the human resource of every organisation is very cardinal to the management of its members.

### 3.1.2 Process

Couldwell (1998) explains that CRM combines organisational processes and technology to understand the customers/voters from the perspective of who they are, what they do, and what they are like. By deduction, a voter relationship management strategy should not only involve using technology to enhance a political party’s relationship with its voters but should also involve an alteration of the day to day activities of a political party to enhance building and managing a strong relationship with the voter. Goldenberg (2000) caution that, failure is eminent if
organisations/political parties believe that Customer/Voter Relationship Management is only a technology solution.

3.1.3 Technology

Information technology (IT) is known to enhance the restructuring of business processes in order to achieve spectacular improvements in organisational performance (Davenport and Short, 1990). Eckerson and Watson (2000) explains that technology can be used efficiently to “optimize interactions” with customers/voters. The explosive growth of the internet, for instance, has brought new meaning to building/customer voter relationships (Chen & Popovich, 2003).

With increasing globalisation and advancement in technology, one can quickly sense similarities between political parties’ manifestos and programs. Therefore, “the quality and relationship experience become one of the greatest competitive aspects” for a party’s existence and wellbeing (Berfenfeldt, 2010).

3.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE USE OF THE CUSTOMER/VOTER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT THEORY IN EXPLAINING THE STUDY

As previously stated, Customer Relationship Management theory has been employed by political scientist to enhance the management of the relationship between political parties and their voters/members. Customer relationship management basically deals with how organisations utilise three core assets (People, Process and Technology) to establish a profitable relationship with their customers (Koskei, 2014). This theory is employed in this research to delve into how the two main political parties (NDC and NPP) utilise these assets to build and maintain a profitable relationship with their
members/voters. Hence, in line with literature, this study adopts and modifies Customer Relationship Management to Voter/Membership Relationship Management.

Delving into the management of the membership of the two main political parties, the study considers three thematic areas in line with the VRM theoretical framework. First, the study examines how the two main political parties position their human resource to maintain member-centered-strategies (People). Second, the study also delves into the day to day activities of the two political parties to ascertain whether or not they are designed with their members in mind (Process). Finally, the study delves into how the two political parties use technology to enhance the management of their members (Technology). This includes how the parties use the media (both print and electronic) to establish regular contact with its members. Different Scholars have noted that a changing media landscape offers new opportunities, allowing organisations to bypass established media and communicate directly with important publics (Kent & Taylor, 1998; Negrine & Papathanassopoulou, 2011). Iyengar, Norpoth, & Hahn (2004) asserts that the need to utilise the media is particularly essential in the political sphere where it is suggested that the internet and social media help political actors to rely less on sound bites and news media.

3.3 WEAKNESSES OF THE CUSTOMER/VOTER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT THEORY

The following weaknesses were identified in this study using the Voter/Customer Relationship Management Theory.

1. It is not prudent to simply assume that, results can simply be produced by just purchasing and fixing/installing fancy software’s. Therefore, it will not be politically beneficial for political parties (organisations) to bang their hopes on
acquiring electronic voter relationship management software’s but should rather work for a balance between people and software.

2. Maintaining day to day communicative and interactive relationship with members, be it electronic or personal may not be within the reach (strength) of some political parties. This might even be worse with political parties experiencing a decline in membership and whose sustenance (finances) to a large extent depends on membership dues.

3.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research is grounded on the following questions:

1. How does the administrative processes of the two parties aid the management of their membership?

2. How does the two political parties employ technology to enhance the management of their membership?

3. How does the two parties train their staff to enhance the management of their membership?
CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study. It covers the research approach, research design, sources of data, sampling design which includes the study population, sampling size, sampling technique and ethical considerations guiding the research. The chapter also explains the data collection instruments and data analysis.

4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

Basically, there are two broad approaches to conducting research: quantitative and qualitative (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) and both approaches are widely used in Political science research. Creswell (2014) however, proposes a third approach—mixed methods; and points to the fact that the three approaches are not discrete. These approaches are discussed below:

4.1.1 Qualitative Approach

Bryman (2007) posits that Qualitative research is an approach that studies the social world, and seeks to describe and analyse the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied. Qualitative research basically dwells on seeing the social world from the point of view of the actor and aims at gaining an understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations (Bryman 1984; Malholtra, 2007). Similarly, Strauss & Corbin (2008: 11) argue qualitative research “refer to research about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings as
well as about organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations”.

By deduction, qualitative research is interpretive and its purpose is to understand a particular phenomenon, not to generalise to a population (Farzanfar, 2005). The qualitative technique also allows the researcher to learn more about people’s feelings, thoughts and experiences which may be analysed and shared with others through publications (Rubin & Rubin 1995). More so, a qualitative method has the added advantage of relieving statistically challenged researchers by its narrative and descriptive nature.

Additionally, qualitative methods are powerful in recognising hidden variables which do not lend itself to mathematical calculations (Mack, Woodsong, McQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2011). Similarly, Barada (2013: 5) arguing on the merit of qualitative methods argue that “qualitative data provide insight into cultural activities that might otherwise be missed in structural surveys or experiments”.

More so, qualitative data collection method is employed in answering research questions requiring textural data (Williams, 2007). Ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenological studies, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, content analysis and narratives are some of the methods of inquiry when using qualitative method (Hancock, 2006). Similarly, Leedy and Ormrod (2001) recommends Case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, content analysis, and phenomenological studies as the five methods for conducting qualitative studies. Throwing more light on this, Strauss & Corbin (2008: 12) argue that,

Basically, there are three major components of qualitative research. First, there are the data, which can come from various sources such as interviews,
observations, documents, records, and films. Second, there are the procedures that researchers can use to interpret and organise the data. These usually consist of conceptualising and reducing data, elaborating categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, and relating through a series of prepositional statements… Written and verbal reports make up the third component. (Strauss & Corbin, 2008: 12)

More so, qualitative data collection method follows the open-ended technique with interview, observation, audio and audio-visual recording as instruments of data collection. An important characteristic of qualitative research is the study of the phenomenon from the participant’s perspective (Williams, 2007). Conversely, qualitative research is criticised for its inability to generalise findings due to its small sample size (Hancock, 2006). Osuala (2007) also criticise qualitative method on the grounds of time as more time is needed in data collection and analysis. Arguing in favour of qualitative methods on the differences between qualitative and quantitative studies, Williams (2007: 67) states that “the strong correlation between the observer and the data is a marked difference from quantitative research, where the researcher is strictly outside of the phenomena being investigated”.

Admitting to how confounding the idea Qualitative Research is, Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued on the grounds that it implies diverse thing to various individuals.

This research seeks not to impose a worldview on the respondents but to seek in-depth understanding from the point of view of the key political party actors at the constituency and national level of the NPP and NDC.
4.1.2 Quantitative Approach

Boateng (2014) explains that quantitative research seeks to determine the extent of a problem or the existence of a relationship between aspects of a phenomenon by quantifying variations. Put differently, quantitative research involves assigning numerical values to the phenomenon under study, using mathematically based methods in analysing data collected (Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2013) further posits that quantitative research has to do with quantifying relationships between variables by employing statistical tools like regression, correlation coefficient, and mean difference. Similarly, VanderStoep & Johnston (2008) outlining the differences between qualitative and quantitative research indicates that “in general, quantitative research specifies numerical assignment to the phenomena under study, whereas qualitative research produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomena under study”. In analysing quantitative data, statistical tools are mostly employed. Therefore, “Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generate to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalisations that contribute to theory” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001: 102).

Knowledge development in quantitative research method is built on the post-positivist claim to knowledge and largely employs surveys and experiments in its data collection. In other words, quantitative research method follows the position of the empiricist paradigm (Creswell, 2003). More so, Creswell (2013) argue that in quantitative research, data collection is usually done through a predetermined medium (close-ended questionnaires). Quantitative research can be categorised into two distinct strategic mediums namely experimental research and survey strategy (Creswell, 2013: Babbie, 1990: Keppel, 1991).
The quantitative research method is plaqued with the following weaknesses. Firstly, quantitative research does not lend itself to in-depth findings on a study. More so, hypothesis formulation which is a requirement in quantitative studies cannot be applied to all studies as it is not always possible formulating and generalising hypothesis in some studies.

4.1.3 Mixed Method Approach

This approach to research involves collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study so that the overall quality of a study is greater than either approach alone (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell, 2014). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that,

Mixed methods research is formally defined here as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Mixed methods research also is an attempt to legitimate the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers’ choices (i.e., it rejects dogmatism). It is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research. It is inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary, and it suggests that researchers take an eclectic approach to method selection and the thinking about and conduct of research. (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 17–18).

Similarly, Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) also assert that in mixed method research the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or a
programme of enquiry. Creswell (2009) however pinpoints three types of mixed methods approaches; sequential, concurrent and transformative.

On the basis of the foregoing discussions, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study. This method explored the various means by which the two main political parties manage their members. This approach does not limit the study to rigid definable variables and continues to allow the examination of complex questions that can be impossible with quantitative research.

The approach ensures that the researcher is able to interact with the various heads of the two main political parties (NDC and NPP) to ascertain how they manage their members.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A Research design is basically a framework for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Copper & Schindler, 2001). De Vaus (2006) asserts that the function of a research design is to make sure that the evidence obtained from the study enables the researcher to effectively address research problem logically and unambiguously as possible.

This study adopts an exploratory research design to provide insights into and an understanding of problems confronting the researcher (Malhotra & Dash, 2011: 46). Exploratory research is embraced to investigate a range or an area of study where little is known. Exploratory research, therefore, is the most appropriate research design for projects addressing a subject about which there are high levels of uncertainty and ignorance about the subject, and especially when the problem is not very well understood or known. The researcher’s choice of exploratory research technique in this
study was also influenced by the high degree of flexibility and the informal structure that characterises exploratory research. The various methods employed in conducting exploratory research are the in-depth interview, projective techniques, focus group and literature search (Kothari, 2004). The open-ended questions and probing in exploratory research allow participants enough room to elaborate and give greater detail or information than quantitative fixed responses. Stebbins (2001) argues that exploratory research is of essence especially when “the phenomenon under consideration is still poorly understood, as in the cure for certain cancers and the nature of life on other planets”. Essentially, this approach is deemed most appropriate for the current research because the phenomenon of political party membership management has rarely been studied in Ghana and therefore requires probing for a clearer understanding of the subject matter. Hence, the need for detail and in-depth studies.

4.2.1 The In-Depth Interview

For the purpose of this study and the relative absence of studies on the management of political party membership in Ghana, in-depth interview among other methods of exploratory research is deemed most appropriate for the study.

In-depth interview “is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation” (Boyce & Neale, 2006: 3). Pope and Mays (1995) further explain that in-depth interview is the face-to-face conversation with the purpose of exploring issues or topics in detail. The in-depth interview has the added advantage of helping people to express themselves on sensitive issues which they are unable to do in a group (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2002). In-depth interviews are very effective in giving a human face to research problems… in-
depth interviews offer the opportunity to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them (Mack et al., 2002, p: 29).

More so in-depth interview afforded the researcher the opportunity to interact directly with the heads of the various political parties directly in other to acquire first-hand information regarding how they manage the members of their political parties.

4.3 SOURCE OF DATA AND METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection source can be categorised into two main forms namely primary and secondary data collection. Primary data are data collected for the precise research problem at hand using procedures that best fit the research problem (Hox & Boeije, 2005). On the other hand, Secondary data are data that have already been collected for the purposes other than the problem at hand (Malhotra, 2007). This study adopts primary data collections as the source of data collection method for the study. The purpose is to acquire data at first hand and to obtain an objective response. The primary data was collected through depth interviews.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2012) explains the types of data analysis available to the qualitative researcher: data display and analysis, thematic analysis, template analysis, grounded theory, analytic induction, discourse analysis and narrative analysis. This study, therefore, adopts the thematic analysis approach in analysing the qualitative data. Following Creswell (2007), the detailed descriptions of cases were grouped under different themes. (Administrative processes, technology and staff training).
The respondents from the various constituencies were represented with codes as illustrated in Table 1 to ensure anonymity. This was essential to allay the fears of participants and allow them to provide honest answers.

Table No. 1.0 Codes for respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituencies</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bantama Constituency</td>
<td>Urban stronghold NPP</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>BUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adentan Constituency</td>
<td>Urban swing NPP</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>AUO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bekwai Constituency</td>
<td>Rural stronghold NPP</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>BRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawra constituency</td>
<td>Rural swing NPP</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>LRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP National</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Director of Protocol</td>
<td>NND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Central Constituency</td>
<td>Urban stronghold NDC</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>HUC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adentan Constituency</td>
<td>Urban swing NDC</td>
<td>Organiser</td>
<td>AUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Tongu Constituency</td>
<td>Rural stronghold NDC</td>
<td>Organiser</td>
<td>NRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawra Constituency</td>
<td>Rural swing NDC</td>
<td>Organiser</td>
<td>LRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC National</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
<td>NNG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: researcher’s own creation.

4.5 RELIABILITY

Polit, & Hungler (1985) explain that validity and reliability are justifiable in research although qualitative researchers use different measures to establish validity and reliability. They further explain that internal validity is important in qualitative research, as researchers are able to demonstrate the reality of the participants through detailed description of the discussion.

This study employs triangulation as a way of ensuring validity. Robson (1997) contends that triangulation is the use of multiple referents to draw conclusions. It involves evidence from different sources; different methods of collecting data and different investigators. The use of triangulation allows the researcher to strive to distinguish true information. As a result, the researcher first conducted a literature review to understand the phenomenon under investigation before using in-depth interviews to collect data.
Again, in each constituency, two executives were selected for the study. Among these two, one served as a key informant and the other was later posed the same questions to validate the answers. Furthermore, the researcher interviewed a national executive, one each from both parties as a way of corroborating the information collected.

4.6 SAMPLING DESIGN

This section discusses three important elements of the study: study population, sampling size and sampling technique.

4.6.1 Study Population

The population is often described as the total group from which eligible participants of a study are chosen (Saund er et al., 2007). Bell & Bryman (2007) also explain the study population as a world of units from which the sample size for the research is to be selected from. The Target population for this study comprises the various national, regional and constituency executives of the two main political parties. Respondents were selected amongst the executives (Organiser or Secretary preferably) of the NDC and NPP in the selected constituencies.

4.6.2 Sample Size Determination

According to Kumar and Phrommathed (2005), sampling is the process of selecting a few from a larger population to form the basis of predicting an outcome in the larger group. Similarly, sampling can be defined as the process of selecting a representative unit of the entire population for the purposes of research (Latham, 2007).

For this study, a sample size of eighteen (18) was used. The details are as follows: Nine (9) respondents (one national and eight constituency executives) were selected from the
NPP, two each representing the selected constituency from their respective urban stronghold (2), rural stronghold (2), urban swing (2), rural swing (2) as well one (1) respondent representing the national executives/officers respectively.

Similarly, nine (9) respondents (one national and eight constituency executives) were selected from the NDC, two each representing the constituency executives from their respective urban stronghold (2), rural stronghold (2), urban swing (2), rural swing (2) and one (1) national executive/officer. This brought the respondent of both the NDC and NPP to a total of eighteen (18).

4.6.3 Sampling Technique

This section explains the specific type of sampling procedure used in enumerating respondents for the purposes of the study. Sanders et al. (2007) identify two types of sampling techniques adopted by researchers namely Probability (random) and non-probability (non-random) sampling techniques. For the purpose of this study, non-probability (non-random) sampling was used.

4.6.3.1 Non-Probability Sampling

Non-probability sampling refers to a type of sampling procedure which basically involves human judgment in the selection process of a sample (Bryman and Bell 2007). The main types of non-probability sampling identified in literature are: Snowball sampling, purposive sampling, convenience sampling and Quota sampling.

Snowball sampling is a sampling procedure used in situations where the population of interest cannot be identified. The researcher relies on someone who can identify individuals who have the requisite characteristics to be included in the survey (Struthers, 2002).
Convenience sampling basically involves selecting respondents or participants who are readily available and agree to participate in a study (Frey, Botan, & Kreps 2000). Finally, Quota sampling involves dividing the population into mutually exclusive subgroups and using one’s judgment to select subjects from each group on a specified proportion (Singh & Masuku, 2014).

This study adopted purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling approach which involves selecting participants based on possessed qualities relevant to the study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016) was used in selecting key individuals relevant to the study for an in-depth interview on the management of their membership. Creswell (2009) has argued that purposive sampling is used in qualitative research. Purposive sampling was used to select the various constituencies from which the respondents were selected at the constituency level. To ensure adequate representation, the selection of the constituencies were as follows: one urban constituency stronghold of each of the political parties under study (urban stronghold), one rural stronghold of each of the political parties under study (rural stronghold) as well as one rural and urban swing constituency each. This is summarised in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>NPP</th>
<th>NDC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban stronghold</td>
<td>Bantama</td>
<td>Ho Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban swing</td>
<td>Adenta</td>
<td>Adenta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural stronghold</td>
<td>Bekwai</td>
<td>North Tongu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural swing</td>
<td>Lawra</td>
<td>Lawra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** researcher’s own creation.
The selection of these constituencies as stronghold is based on electoral votes accrued by these parties over successive elections under the 4th Republic of Ghana (Ayee et al., 2007). Qualitative data collection using semi-structured interview where questions and order of presentation are determined and open-ended was also used (Boateng, 2014).

4.6.3.2 Probability Sampling

Probability sampling refers to the sampling technique where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Bryman and Bell. 2007). The main types of probability sampling techniques identified in literature are Simple Random, Stratified, Systematic and Cluster sampling.

Simple random sampling is a sampling procedure where each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Latham, 2007). Lotham (2007) further explains that a random sample is often selected by giving each member in the population a number and using a random table to select the members of the sample. Systematic random sampling, on the other hand, involves choosing a random starting point and then picking every kth element in succession from the sampling frame (Bums and Bush, 2010).

The stratified sampling approach involves dividing the population into subgroups and using random sampling to select from each subgroup (Latham, 2007). Similarly, cluster sampling involves a sampling procedure where the population is divided into subgroups (clusters) each of which could represent the entire population (Bums and Bush, 2010).

Latham (2007) contends that cluster sampling is very similar to systematic sampling because both techniques involve dividing the survey unique groups. However, Henry (1990) explains that the difference between stratified and cluster sampling is that, whereas stratified sample has to do with choosing few members from each stratum,
cluster sampling involves the selection of a few groups and collecting data from each member of the Groups selected.

4.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

This study used an interview guide to collect data. The depth interview offered an opportunity for a face-to-face encounter. The interview guide used had four sections: the introductory section, background data section, the demographic data of respondents and finally the various questions eliciting responses on the management of party membership. The questions in the interview guide were formulated based on the research questions and relevant literature relating to voter relationship management. The researcher used an average of twenty-five minutes for each interview session. The data collection was done in two forms. First, was the recording of the oral interviews and the second was note taking. The researcher took note on very important points the interviewees made during the interview.

4.8 PRE-TESTING OF INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Pilot testing helped to confirm the appropriateness of the questions for the study (Creswell, 2009). Yin (2003) recommends pilot testing to refine data collection procedures and develop an appropriate line of questions. A pilot population size of 3 people purposively chosen from a team of graduate students at the University of Ghana participated in the exercise. It took just one day to carry out the pilot testing.
4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Saunders, & Lewis, & Thornhill (2009) explains that in the process of carrying out research, sensitive and personal data will be collected, analysed and findings reported. It behoves on the researcher to ensure that no participant is negatively affected. Research Ethics are basically norms of conduct that differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (Rogelberg, 2004). Denscombe (2009) proposed three ethical principles that guided this study:

(a) Participants' interests were protected; this study took adequate measures to protect the interest of the respondents. A letter was sent to the various respondents at the constituency, regional and national level ahead of the interview. Again, a sample of the questionnaire was sent to the various executives ahead of time. Participants were also assured that findings would be used for academic purposes only.

(b) The researchers avoided deception or misrepresentation. Adequate steps were taken to inform all participants about the purpose of the research. Again, utmost care was taken during the analysis stage to ensure that the information collected was not distorted.

(c) Participant's provided their informed consent. Participants were also not forced to participate in the interview. All respondents were briefed about the essence of the research and all participants took part voluntarily.

4.10 CONCLUSION

Primary data collection method was used for this study. Bantama, Ho Central, Adenta, Bekwai, North Tongu and Lawra were the six constituencies selected for the study. The selected constituencies were grouped under the following themes: urban strongholds,
urban swing, rural strongholds, and rural swing constituencies. The study employed a sample size of eighteen (18) respondents with nine (9) from the NPP and the other nine (9) from NDC representing the selected constituencies under the four (4) themes mentioned above including one (1) national executive each of both parties using purposive sampling.
CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 INTRODUCTION
This chapter presents the analysis of data collected by the use of in-depth interviews purposely for providing answers to the research questions. Data analysis is presented along the similarities and differences between the selected constituencies of the two parties in their respective categories in relation to how they manage their membership based on the three thematic areas (Administrative process, use of technology and staff development). The analysis presented in the chapter is basically a presentation of the findings from the eight constituencies under study including the National Officers of the NPP and NDC.

5.1 DATA ANALYSIS FROM THE EIGHT CONSTITUENCIES AND THE NATIONAL OFFICERS OF THE NPP AND NDC

5.1.1 Administrative Processes
As noted earlier, this study premised the assessment of the administrative processes of the parties on the following: allowing members to partake in the selection of executives, incorporating the views of members into party decision making, putting in place adequate mechanism to handle complaints, interacting regularly with members and ensuring accountability and transparency to members. There exist certain similarities as well as differences in the way and manner the administration of both parties are run to enhance the smooth management of their membership.
In the first place, both parties have processes aimed at ensuring that their members participate in the election of party executives. This similarity cuts across the categories of constituencies under study (Urban Stronghold, Rural Stronghold, Urban Swing and Rural Swing). In this regard, a respondent from the NDC noted as follows,

*The constitution of the party grants all the nine (9) branch executives the delegate power to elect who becomes a constituency executive. Other NEC members from the constituency are also given the voting power. More so, ministers and deputy ministers residing in the constituency are also qualified to vote in the election of constituency executives. This is how we get them involved.* (HUC- 20th March 2017).

Similarly, a respondent from the NPP contributing to this also noted as follows,

*At the polling station level, all party members come together to elect their five polling station executives. All the polling station executives also come together in an electoral area to elect the electoral area coordinator. The electoral area coordinators and polling station executives will also come together to elect constituency executives. So throughout the process, it is the members that decide who become the executives.* (LRS- 15th March 2017).

This practice is an essential part of intra-party democracy. Maiyo (2008) emphasises that to promote intra-party democracy, political parties must provide opportunities for their party members, activist and leaders to effectively contribute to the parties’ decision-making process. By inference, the practice of allowing the branch executives to participate in deciding who ultimately leads them is a way of enhancing the intra-party democracy of the party.
Again, regarding mechanisms to incorporate the views of members in decision making, the study found that both parties utilise similar mediums to solicit the views of their members. Such mediums include meetings, emails and social media. This is evident in a response given by an NPP respondent as follows,

*It is mandatory for executives to visit the electoral area meetings where polling station executives converge to deliberate on issues affecting the party. We attend this meetings to share ideas and feed them with information from head office as well. More so, when there is a funeral in any electoral area, the executives will join the members there to attend the funeral. This is not limited to funerals alone. We are also invited to naming ceremonies, weddings and sometimes football gala which we do attend and offer donations. (BUS- 21st March 2017).*

On the part of the NDC, to improve regular interaction, the constituency executives have scheduled visits to the various branches. In this regard, a respondent noted as follows,

*We have a scheduled plan that we follow in visiting them. More so, whenever any branch is holding a meeting, they invite the constituency executives and there and then, they are able to interact (HUC- 20th March 2017).*

In the constituencies, though the parties have scheduled meeting times, events in the constituency usually prompt leaders to organise meetings. On the whole, it was found that the NPP meets frequently than the NDC does. Apart from meetings at the constituency level, the other structures of the party at the branches and polling stations usually meet and constituency executives of the parties do attend. Such meetings are held to discuss various party issues and opportunities are given to party members to
bring their views to bear on party issues. Analysis from data the collected also indicates that with respect to urban strongholds and rural strongholds, the NPP meet more frequently than their urban stronghold NDC counterparts.

Schwartzman (1986), suggests that meetings are a microcosm for the organisation itself where the “power, structure, and function of the organisation is exhibited, legitimised, and perpetuated”.

Further, there are similarities and differences regarding how the two parties resolve complaints from party members. Whereas both parties basically follow procedures prescribed by their party’s constitution for handling complaints at the constituency level with little or situational variations, at the national level, both parties have strict and properly laid down protocols of handling membership complaints. For example, an NDC respondent indicated that,

*Individual staff members are not allowed to handle membership complaints. They are only seen as workers of the party. They have no role at all in handling complaints except those that has to do with paper work. If it has to do with the politics and issues of the party, staff are strictly prevented from handling those things* (NNG- 10th March 2017).

Similarly, the NPP respondent also indicated that when it comes to handling membership complaints,

*All complaints are to be directed to the general secretary and he has other officers like the director of administration, finance and protocol. These are officers well trained to handle party membership complaints. It is not just anybody who handles membership complaints. We are seasoned administrators and have the clout to handle membership complaints. For example, I saw all
the battle fought in this office and we managed to solve it (NND- 28th March 2017).

The constituencies of the two parties also have disciplinary committees mandated by the parties to resolve issues and prescribe disciplinary sanctions to members who fall foul to the party’s regulations. The major difference, however, is that the NPP basically endorses the handling of complaints at the basic units (polling station) of the party. For example, polling station executives are encouraged to deal with complaints from members at their level before it is forwarded to the constituency level especially if they are not able to deal with it successfully. This is corroborated in a response by a respondent as follows,

Complaints handling begins with the electoral area coordinators. For example, if there is a problem at a polling station within an electoral area, it is the responsibility of the coordinator to bring the issue to an amicable solution. In the event that they are unable to settle the matter, he then forwards it to the constituency executives. (BRS- 23rd March 2017).

Even though the NDC also believe in this approach, there seem to be some variation in complaints handling in their rural swing constituency. It was therefore found that complaints handling by the party do not necessarily follow a laid down structure especially in their rural swing constituency. This is evident in a response given by an NDC respondent below.

When party members have problems, they normally go to the party chairman or the DCE in the constituency to complain. For example when a party member is involved in an accident, the chairman and DCE come together to offer some help to that individual. (LRO- 27th March 2017).
As mentioned earlier, both parties adopt meetings as a way of interacting with their members. Leach, Rogelberg, Warr & Burnfield (2009) however explains that meetings are used “to accomplish goals such as information sharing, decision making, and problem solving”

The use of bulk SMS, emails, WhatsApp platforms and Facebook as a means of maintaining regular contact with members is adopted mainly by the NPP, though the NDC use these platforms as well.

By way of ensuring accountability and transparency, the parties use meetings to present financial statements to party members. Meetings involving the presentation of financial statements can be called by the executives at will or organised at the request of party members. With respect to party meetings as a platform for ensuring transparency and accountability, an NPP respondent indicated as follows.

> Meetings are held and it is mandatory for the party treasurer to present to us a statement on the party’s sources of income, what we have been spending the party’s money on and why we spent on those things. A paper copy of these spending is therefore presented to each member available for review and questioning. Most importantly, how much money left in the party’s coffers is also made available to party members. (BRS- 23rd March 2017).

The NDC is not different from the NPP in using meetings as platforms for ensuring transparency and accountability. In this regard, a respondent noted as follows,

> We have National Finance committee. The finance committee is made of the General Secretary, National Treasurer and his deputy, Internal Auditor and a chairman who is selected by National Executives Committee. We also have a permanent accountant. They handle the financial affairs of the party. At the first
three months of every year, they prepare our financial statement and audited accounts and as the political Parties law require, we file our audited account at the electoral commission’s office. We also present a statement of account to members at regional conferences and national congress. (NNG- 10th March 2017)

5.1.2 Use of Technology

Discussions with respondents revealed that there are similarities as well as differences in how the two parties utilise technology to enhance the management of their membership. Overall, it is important to note again that, regarding the use of technology to enhance the management of the membership of the parties, the study delved into the following: the specific technology used, how the parties utilises this technology, how the parties utilised social media, whether or not the parties have a database of its members and how the parties disseminate information using technology.

Both parties utilise technology to enhance the dissemination of information to their members. Evidence from the data collected indicates that the predominate technology utilised by the parties are WhatsApp, text messages, Facebook, phone calls and emails. Though both parties utilise these platforms, the study found that the NPP is more robust in the utilisation of these platforms than the NDC. In explaining how technology facilitate information dissemination in their party, an NPP respondent noted;

*It really plays a very dominant role in the management of our membership. For example, text messaging, phone calls and WhatsApp plays a significant role. When we need to attend meetings, attend a member’s funeral, engagement, and others, it serves as an easy medium of communicating our messages to them.*
More so, in case we want to call off a planned meeting, we immediately get members informed using the WhatsApp platform. (BRS- 23rd March 2017).

In addition, a response by an NPP respondent is also indicative and buttress the robustness of the NPP in the utilisation of these technological platforms (WhatsApp, text messages, Facebook, phone calls and emails) in information dissemination to their members. He had this to say,

*I remember some years back when I was the assistant secretary, I will lie on my bed, pick the constituency album and send message to every individual on the album. This was a tedious work and I had no option. But now, with a click of a button one can send message to thousands of people. This is the platform we use now and is helping.* (AUO- 16th March 2017).

The major difficulty that faces the parties in the utilisation of these platforms to disseminate information is that only a hand full of their members utilise these platforms. This phenomenon was found to be common in the rural stronghold constituencies of both parties (Bekwai and North Tongu). In the NDC rural stronghold (North Tongu), this is evident in a response given by a respondent as follows.

*We usually use technology to communicate with our members but is not really good. Because not all members have a phone not to talk of WhatsApp and their ability to use it. We mostly have to do area or community announcement.* (NRO–12th March 2017).

In a related response, the NPP in Bekwai noted that,

*Though technology is of essence in modern age when it comes to communication and information dissemination, most of our people here are not friendly with these technological platforms. Therefore, we often rely on*
personal visits and community information systems to disseminate information to party members. (BRS- 23rd March 2017).

However, the NDC had similar challenge in their rural swing constituency (Lawra) as compared to that of the NPP. Regarding this, an NDC Party Executive as a respondent had this to say.

*We don’t use technology even though it is there. We believe in going to meet them one on one... We have Whatsapp group for the youth and the constituency as well. But we seldom use it. Most of our party members cannot use it.* (LRO- 27th March 2017).

Again, these platforms enable the executives of the parties to receive regular feedback from their members. Another similarity, however, is that the parties have a biometric register of all members who participate in electing executives. More to this, both parties with the exception of NDC in the Lawra constituency have a database of their members which is reviewed periodically. In responding to a question on whether the NDC has database of its members in the Lawra constituency, an NDC respondent indicated that “*We don’t have an electronic version. We only keep the manual version (book)*” (LRO-27th March 2017).

A significant point worth mentioning is that the swing constituencies review their database frequently because of the fact that members usually change their political affiliation.

5.1.3 Staff Training

Boudreau, Boswell, Judge & Bretz (2001) explains that trained employees perform better on the job than untrained employees. By deduction, equipping the staff and
executives of the parties with adequate managerial skills is essential as far as the management of the membership of a party is concerned.

Respondents from both parties were positive about the fact that staff training is crucial in a party’s quest to enhancing the management of its members. As noted earlier, the study delved into the following areas as far as staff training is concerned: training on how to manage members, training on the technology used by the party in the management of their members, and finally training on relating and handling complaints of members.

The study found that both parties provide training for their staff and elected executives in one form or the other. On this, a respondent from the NDC intimated that “We don’t have established protocols of regular training but sometimes we do have ad-hoc training” (NNG- 10th March 2017). Similarly, a respondent from the NPP also intimated that,

Yes we do. We hold seminars and training for them especially the IT section because they produce the biometric cards. We also periodically have training on capacity building for our office administrative team. Front desk officers are trained to be diplomatic when dealing with members even when you are insulted. We train them on communication and inter personal relationship. Last year for example, we held a seminar on administration just for the administrative staff on how to keep head office responding to party members. (NND- 28th March 2017).

Generally, the regional offices of the parties have a programme for training the various constituency executives of the parties. Essentially, both parties train their members either formally or informally on how to handle complaints. Again, both parties train
their staff and elected executives to resort to their constitution as a way of handling complaints. In the same way, the staff members of the two parties are trained on how to handle the WhatsApp, text messages and database applications utilised by the party to enhance the management of their members.

Generally, the study found that both parties do not have elaborate programmes aimed at equipping their staff and elected executives with adequate managerial skills. Training, programmes for both parties are usually meant for regional and national executives other than executives and staff members in the constituencies.
CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and discussions from the data analysed in the previous chapter. The chapter focuses on the major similarities and the differences identified in the analysis of data in the eight constituencies and their respective national officers. The discussions are presented based on the three thematic areas (Administrative process, use of technology and staff development) of this study in line with the research questions and objectives of the researcher.

6.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1.1 Comparative Analysis of the membership management of Urban Stronghold Constituencies (Ho Central - NDC and Bantama - NPP)

Administrative processes

Ikelegbe (2013) explains that a political party is a critical, formal, institutional, organisational and mobilisational actor in the political process especially when it comes to issues involving power, democracy, governance, governments and economy. Owing to the relevance of political parties noted by Ikelegbe (2013), it is therefore imperative that political parties build robust administrative processes premised on best internal democratic practices. Corroborating the views of Ikelegbe (2013), Pogoson (2013) asserts that the very character and tendencies portrayed by political parties have implications for democratic sustenance. Ironically, most political parties in the sub-
region largely profess democracy “outside the gates and resist it within the gates” (Ibeanu, 2013).

The findings from the two constituencies suggest that the two parties believe in establishing a robust administration that ensures effective management of their membership. For this study, the robustness of the party’s administrative processes was measured on four cardinal principles: allowing members to partake in the selection of executives, incorporating the views of members into party decision making, putting in place adequate mechanism to handle complaints, interacting regularly with members and ensuring accountability and transparency to members.

Both parties have mechanisms for ensuring that party members are involved in the election of who ultimately becomes their leader. Again, the administrative processes of both parties ensure that the views of members are inputted into decision making. The only difference perhaps is how regular the executives visit members for meetings. Whereas Ho Central executives meet their members at least twice a month, Bantama constituency executives meet about three times a month. Polling station executives and other grass root members' of both constituencies meet once a week and the constituency executives usually attend these meetings.

Another similarity is that both constituencies make financial presentations during meetings to members and this forms part of their transparency and accountability measures. Again, both constituencies utilise social media in their quest to interact frequently with their members. However, the study found that the Bantama constituency executives are more visible on most social media platforms than their counterparts in the Ho Central constituency.
**Use of technology**

Respondents from the two constituencies (Ho Central constituency and Bantama constituency) were unanimous in their belief that technology plays a crucial role in the management of the membership of political parties. In this regard, parties in both constituencies utilise technology to disseminate information to their members.

Dutta & Bhat (2016) explain that politicians use social media to connect with their members so as to spread their views and disseminate information. In this same vein, WhatsApp, text messages, Facebook and emails are used by both the Ho Central and Bantama constituencies to disseminate information to its members and also to interact with the executives. These same platforms enable the executives to receive regular feedback.

Another similarity is that both parties have a database of their members. Patrick & Martínez, (2011) assert that databases enhances better analysis of data, through automatic calculations and reporting. The study found that the two parties in the constituencies under study have members registered biometrically with a corresponding database saved and renewed periodically. The difference, however, is that the Bantama constituency has a robust biometrically generated database which can be assessed by executives even with their mobile phones.

**Equipping the staff**

On the issue of equipping and training staff members and elected executives, respondents from both constituencies emphatically endorsed the need to provide frequent training for their human resource. The study found that both constituencies provide in-service training for their staff to enable them to relate well with members of
their party. Another similarity is that both parties provide training in respect of how complaints are handled. Training staff members to effectively handle the various technology used by the party is very crucial. For instance, Cushing, Nadkarni, Delcambre, Healy, Maier, & Ordway (2002) emphasises that handling databases requires some level of technical training because of its complex nature. The study found that the difference between the constituencies is the ability of their staff to handle the various technology deployed by the party. Whereas the administrator of the Ho Central constituency is conversant with text messaging, Facebook, WhatsApp and other communication platforms of the party, the administrator of the Bantama constituency is conversant with all communication platforms but fumbles at times with the WhatsApp technology used by the party to enhance communication.

6.1.2 Comparative Analysis of the membership management of Rural Stronghold Constituencies (North Tongu - NDC and Bekwai - NPP)

Administrative processes

As noted earlier, this study assessed the robustness of the party’s administrative processes on five cardinal areas: allowing members to partake in the selection of executives, incorporating the views of members into party decision making, putting in place adequate mechanism to handle complaints, interacting regularly with members and ensuring accountability and transparency to members. Regarding the election of party leaders’, respondents from both constituencies were unanimous in the need to allow members to determine who leads them. In this quest, both parties have procedures to ensure that their members determine who eventually gets to lead them. The similarity
is that for both parties the election of constituency, regional and national executives starts with the election of executives at the branches/polling stations and electoral areas.

Again, both parties use meetings as a way of ensuring that the views of members are incorporated into party decision making. The only difference, however, is that whereas the Bekwai constituency holds meetings at least three times in a month, the North Tongu constituency executives hold meetings twice every month.

Another similarity is how both parties handle customer complaints. In the business arena, service providers are encouraged to welcome customer complaints since they are a great source of feedback (McCole, 2004). Zetocha (2002) indicates that 96 percent of unhappy customers never return to their service providers. Similarly, political parties cannot shy away from this reality. The study found that both parties handle complaints at the branches/polling stations and or electoral areas within which the complaints are lodged. The handling of complaints at both levels is done by the electoral area coordinator or branch executives. These complaints are brought to the constituency level if it is not well dealt with at the branch or electoral area level. There also exist some similarity in the way and manner both parties remain transparent and accountable to its members in the constituency. Both parties meet members and provide them with details of the constituencies finances quarterly.

**Use of technology**

Regarding the role of technology in the management of the membership of the various parties, respondents from both constituents agreed that technology plays a significant role in this regard. There is a vast similarity regarding how the parties utilise technology to manage their membership. Both parties use WhatsApp, text messages and phone calls to disseminate information to their rank and file. Again, both parties have an
Another major similarity is the use of social media (Facebook and WhatsApp). Both parties, however, explained that most of their party members are not on these social media platforms so they usually depend on the community information system as an alternative medium for disseminating information to their members.

Equipping the staff (staff training)

Stone (2002) explains that staff training plays a distinct role in attaining the goals of an organisation by incorporating the interests of organisation and the workforce. Amisano (2010) also establishes that though their performance depends on many factors, there is a relationship between training and performance. To this end, political parties cannot ignore the relevance of staff training. There are certain similarities and differences in the training procedure of the staff and executive members of the two parties. While’s the Bekwai constituency provide training at least three times in a year, their counterparts in the North Tongu constituency provide training usually after constituency meetings. Again, in the Bekwai constituency, resource persons from the national office are invited to train staff members especially on how to manage their private life’s since any misconduct by party staff and executives may affect the party directly.

Regarding training of staff members to handle complaints of members, both parties enlighten members on how to handle complaints. Again the two parties adhere to the provisions of their constitution regarding complaints handling. Similarly, the staff members of the two parties are trained on how to handle the various technology deployed by their party and as a result, their staff members are conversant with the
WhatsApp, text messages and database applications utilised by the party to enhance the management of their members.

6.1.3 Comparative Analysis of the membership management of Urban Swing Constituencies (Adentan - NDC and Adentan - NPP)

Administrative processes

There exist certain similarities as well as differences in the various administrative mechanisms instituted to ensure proper management of the party’s membership. Both parties have processes aimed at ensuring that members are involved in the selection of party executives. Both parties’ elections at the various branches and polling stations of the party within the constituency precede the overall election of executives for the constituency. Again, both parties have a similar mechanism for soliciting the views of members as well as considering those views during party decision making. Both parties hold meetings at the branch/polling station level and at the constituency level in this regard. The difference, however, is that the NDC constituency executives in Adenta mainly solicit views from their branch executives. This is premised on the belief that the views of branch executives are views shared by the party’s grass root since they engage the grass root members on daily basis. On the other hand, the NPP directly solicit views from its grass root on major party issues.

Furthermore, the two parties have similar procedures for dealing with complaints from party members. Both parties follow the dictates of their constitution in respect of complaints handling. Complaints are dealt with at the branch/polling station level and may be carried to the constituency level, regional or even national depending on the magnitude of the complaints. Regarding accountability and transparency, both parties
during their quarterly meetings within their constituency present financial details on receipts and expenditure to members.

*Use of technology*

The use of technology to enhance the management of the membership is another area where the party’s share certain similarities and some major differences. The NDC in the Adentan constituency places little emphasis on the relevance of technology as far as the management of the membership of their party is concerned. This is largely because, in the party’s bid to broaden its electoral college, the party introduced a biometric electoral system which members of the opposition NPP infiltrated. Owing to the negative impact of the biometric electoral system, the party in the constituency has minimal interest in the use of technology to enhance mobilisation and management of their members. On the other hand, the NPP places significant emphasis on the use of technology and continually delves into how technology can be utilised to enhance the management of their membership. The party utilised WhatsApp, Facebook, emails and bulk SMS to disseminate information to its members. It must be noted that their counterparts in the NDC use these platforms occasionally.

Another major similarity noted is that both parties have constituency electoral register. However, a major difference exists in the type and use of this membership data. Whereas the Adentan NDC often rely on manual data (book record) and seldom uses the electronic membership data, the NPP Adentan constituency relies on electronic membership database. Regardless, both party’s do have some reservations about the use of technology in the management of their party membership. Again, both parties utilise social media but as noted earlier, the NDC spends little efforts on social media activities.
**Staff training**

Both parties provide some form of training to its staff and elected party executives. However, the training provided by the NDC to its staff is mainly informal as formal training sections are usually done at the regional and national level. On the other hand, the staff and electoral officers of the NPP undergo some form of formal training. Again, both party staff and executives are conversant with the technology deployed by the party to enhance the management of its membership. Training are also carried out mainly informal to enable the staff of both parties to deal with complaints and relate well with party members in the constituency.

6.1.4 Comparative Analysis of the membership management of Rural Swing Constituencies (Lawra - NDC and Lawra - NPP)

**Administrative processes**

Both parties have various administrative mechanism for managing their members. As noted earlier, a major part of this is how party members are involved in the selection of party executives. For the NPP, party members converge to elect five polling station executives. These polling station executives constitute the Electoral College who then elect electoral area coordinator. Eventually, the polling station executives and the electoral area coordinators come together to elect constituency executives. On the other hand, the NDC allows all party members registered at the polling stations to cast their vote in the election of constituency executives.

Again, both parties have a similar procedure for soliciting the views of the member. Both parties hold meetings at the branch/polling levels and the constituency level. There is a difference in how both parties in the constituency handle complaints. With the
NPP, complaints handling follow a bottom-up approach. Based on the nature of the complaints, it is either handled at the polling station level, the electoral area or the constituency level.

Further, to ensure accountability and transparency, both parties are mandated by their constitution to render accounts to their members during meetings. In the same way, members can petition the party chairman to explain any issue bothering them.

**Use of technology**

Regarding the use of technology to enhance the management of the membership of the two parties in the constituency, the study found certain similarities and differences. The NPP has an electronic database of its members. Through the attendance of meetings, the party is able to determine active and dormant members in its database. On the other hand, the NDC in the Lawra constituency does not have a database of its members.

Another important area is how the two parties make use of technology to disseminate information to its members. The NDC in the constituency is not very active as far as utilising technology is concerned. They usually resort to meetings and regular face to face interactions. On the other hand, the NPP utilises WhatsApp and bulk SMS to disseminate information to its members. The NPP is equally vibrant on social media (Facebook, WhatsApp) whiles their counterparts in the NDC is less active as far as utilising social media is concerned.

**Staff Training**

Shepard & Greene (2003) asserts that training and development increase the overall performance of the organisation. A major part of managing the membership of a party
is to ensure that staff members are abreast with management skills. The staff and executives of the NPP attend training sections at the party’s regional offices at least once a year. On the other hand, the NDC in the Lawra constituency engages their staff in training sections at the constituency level. Again, the staff members of both parties are conversant with the WhatsApp platforms and other technology utilised by the party to enhance the management of their membership particularly the NPP.

Another similarity is that staff members of both parties are trained on how to handle complaints and also how to relate to party members.

6.3 Discussion of Research Questions and Findings

RQ 1: How does the administrative processes of the two parties aid the management of their membership?

This question was intended to examine the administrative processes of the two parties and how these processes enhance the management of their membership. As explained earlier, the study used the following elements to measure the administrative processes of the parties: allowing members to partake in the selection of executives, incorporating the views of members into decision making, putting in place adequate mechanism to handle complaints, interacting regularly with members and ensuring accountability and transparency to members.

**Interview question 1:** How does the party involve its members in the selection of party executives?

This question was essentially to find out how the parties involve its members in the selection of executives either at the branch level or constituency level. The responses
from both parties were that they follow laid down processes in the party’s constitution to ensure their members are involved in elections to elect party executives. For instance, a respondent from the NDC had this to say:

The constitution of the party grants all the nine (9) branch executives the delegate power to elect who becomes a constituency executive. Other NEC members from the constituency are also given the voting power. More so, ministers and deputy ministers residing in the constituency are also qualified to vote in the election of constituency executives. This is how we get them involved. (HUC- 20th March 2017).

Finding: The parties follow laid down processes in their constitution to get their members involved in the selection of party executives.

The findings suggest that the parties recognise the need to get their members involved in the selection of party executives both at the branch and constituency level.

Interview question 2: What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the views of members are inputted into party decision making?

This question was meant to solicit from the respondents the various mechanisms instituted to ensure that the views of members are obtained and factored into decision making. Respondents from both parties espoused the relevance of soliciting the views of party members and inputting those views into decision-making. The study found that both parties organise meetings and also utilise various mediums (social media) to ensure that the views of members are heard and factored into decision making. Meetings play crucial roles in organisations. The overall importance of meetings includes information sharing (McComas, 2003), brainstorming (Reinig and Shin,
2003), problem solving/decision-making (McComa, Tuit, Waks, and Sherman (2003), and socialising (Horan, 2002).

A respondent of the NDC, for instance, had this to say:

> We have a scheduled plan that we follow in visiting them. More so, whenever any branch is holding a meeting, they invite the constituency executives and there and then, they are able to interact (HUC- 20th March 2017).

**Finding:** the two parties utilise different mediums including meetings, telephone and social media to solicit the views of members and consider those views when making decisions.

The various social media platforms utilised include WhatsApp and Facebook mainly in the urban constituencies.

Other questions bothering on administrative processes solicited responses on how the party handles complaints by members. It emerged however that both parties have a structure for handling complaints. Complaints handling from both parties are dealt with first at the branch or polling station level and forwarded to the constituency level if not resolved at the branch level.

**Interview question 5:** How does the party remain accountable and transparent to its members?

This question was meant to ascertain how the party remains accountable and transparent to its members. The study found that both parties use meetings to discuss issues relating to finance and also to avail themselves for members to ask questions bothering them. The response by an NDC respondent below amply captures how the two parties deal with issues of accountability and transparency.
The constituency executives particularly the secretary and treasurer inform party members on how much we have and have been spent. We normally discuss in a constituency executive meeting to agree on what to do before money is withdrawn for a project. But sometimes we withdraw all leaving nothing in the account. (LRO- 27th March 2017)

Finding: The two parties use meetings to explain financial issues to the members and also to address questions that may arise.

RQ2: How does the two political parties employ technology to enhance the management of their membership?

This question was meant to solicit how the parties utilise technology to enhance the management of their membership.

Interview question 6: Does technology play a role in the management of membership in your party?

Respondents of both parties attested to the importance of technology in the management of their membership. Both parties make use of technology in one way or the other. Overall, the most striking difference is that, the NPP has a robust technology and utilises technology more frequently than the NDC. This is amply evidence in the responses given by the respondents of both parties regarding how technology is utilised in the management of their membership. For example an NDC respondent has this to say,

_We don’t use technology even though it is there. We believe in going to meet them one on one. I don’t know what technology can do to manage party
members when members need money to motivate them to work. We have WhatsApp group for the youth and the constituency as well. But we seldom use it. Most of our party members cannot use it. (LRO- 27th March 2017).

As already emphasised, the NPP utilises technology more frequently than the NDC. This found space in a response given by a respondent from the NPP as follows:

Just as said, we have database of our members. As and when we review the list of our members in the constituency, we are able to electronically determine by attendance who is dormant and we follow with a visit. We also get members informed through various electronic mediums like WhatsApp, Facebook, text messaging. (LRS 15th March 2017).

Findings 1: The NDC places minimal emphasis on technology as a way of enhancing the management of their membership.

Findings 2: The NPP is focused on maximising the use of technology as a way of enhancing the management of their membership.

Interview question 7: How does the party utilise technology to disseminate information to its members?

This question was meant to uncover how the parties utilise technology to disseminate information to its members. The question also brought to light the various mediums the parties use to disseminate information. As noted earlier, both parties use technology in one way or the other. The study found that both parties use similar forms of technology when it comes to information dissemination. The various forms are WhatsApp, bulk SMS, phone calls and other social media platforms like Facebook. In this regard, an NPP respondent noted as follows:
“We try as much as possible to reap the benefit of technology in our daily activities as a party. We disseminate information using technological platforms like the WhatsApp, Facebook, bulk SMS and emails to speed up our operations”

(AUO- 16th March 2017).

Collaborating this an NDC respondent equally noted as follows:

“I know of WhatsApp, text messaging and others but we mostly don’t use it”.

It must be noted that as stated earlier, the NDC does not prioritise the use of these platforms.

Finding: Both parties makes use of almost the same technological platform to disseminate information to their members.

Interview question 8: Does the party have a database of its members?

The import of the question was basically to find out if the parties keep records of their members electronically. Information gathered during the interview session with respondents of the parties revealed that both parties have a database of their members. This evidence is amply captured in a response given by an NPP respondent as follows:

Yes, we do. Because in our constituency, we have two mediums. That’s the constituency album made up of all delegates. Now we also have the electronic data of our members through our biometric registration and this provides us much details about them. Their names, contacts, residence etc. Even as we sit, I can just log on to my phone and get you the electronic details of all polling station, delegates, patrons, the council of elder and constituency executives.

(BRS- 23rd March 2017).
The only exception is the NDC Lawra constituency, which does not have an electronic database of its members. This featured in a response by an NDC respondent as follows:

“We don’t have an electronic version. We only keep the manual version (book)”


This may fit into earlier conclusions made by the study to the effect that the NDC does not prioritise the utilisation of technology. Overall, it is fair to conclude that both parties have an electronic database or some form of information about their members within their constituency.

Finding: Both parties have a database of their members

RQ3: How does the two parties train their staff to enhance the management of their membership?

This question was intended to examine how the two parties train their staff and its impact on the management of their membership. It must be noted that staff, as used by the study, encapsulates the elected executives and the non-elected officials of the party’s within the constituencies.

Interview question 9: Are your staff given regular training on how to handle and relate to your party members?

Interview question 10: How conversant is your operation staff with the various technologies instituted to maintain a cordial relationship with the membership of your political party?

Interview question 11: How are individual staff members trained to handle membership complaints?
The questions above were meant to enquire into training programmes given to staff of the party in relation to complaints handling, human relations and application of the various technologies utilised by the parties. The study, however, found that both parties offer some form of training for their staff. This was made manifest in a response by a respondent of the NDC in the following words:

Yes, we have been training them. We do in-service training for them. The training normally is designed on how to respond to people when they approach you with questions especially our constituency administrator who is always in the office (HUC- 20th March 2017).

Generally, the study found that both parties do not have deliberate programmes aimed at equipping their staff with adequate managerial, technical and human relation skills. Training programmes for both parties are usually meant for regional and national executives other than staff members in the constituencies.

**Finding:** The two parties do not have deliberate training programmes to equip their staff with the needed technical, managerial and human relation skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>NDC</th>
<th>NPP</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative processes</td>
<td>The party adheres to administrative processes in its constitution to enhance the management of its membership.</td>
<td>The party adheres to administrative processes in its constitution to enhance the management of its membership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Technology</strong></td>
<td>The party does not prioritise the use of technology to enhance the management of its membership at the constituency level.</td>
<td>The party places a high premium on the use of technology as a way of enhancing the management of its members.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff Training</strong></td>
<td>The party usually engages in informal training sessions for its officers. The party has no deliberate programme to provide the needed managerial, technical and human relation skills to its staff at the constituency level.</td>
<td>Though the party engages its staff in informal training sessions, the party lacks a structured programme aimed at providing its staff with the needed human relation, technical and managerial skills at the constituency level.</td>
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**Source:** Researchers own creation

### 6.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented the findings and discussions of the study. It can be concluded from the discussions that the two main parties have not invested adequate time and effort towards the management of their membership.

The chapter also delved into a comparative analysis of the urban strongholds, the rural strongholds as well as the rural and urban swing constituencies of the two parties. The latter part of the chapter also discussed the research questions of the study and its associated findings.
CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five and six provides an analysis and discussions of the findings of the study. This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study and provides recommendations for political parties as a way of enhancing the management of their membership. The chapter also draws significant conclusions based on the findings of the study. Overall, the study sought to examine the management of political parties in Ghana. As a result, three constructs deduced from the theory of Customer Relationship Management was adapted by the study to measure the management of political party membership by the two parties. The summary of the findings in relation to the objectives of the study is presented below.

7.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Several studies have researched into the subject of political party membership. However, for the first time, this study has applied a Customer Relationship Management concept to examine the management of political party membership in Ghana. Based on the analysis and discussions of the findings in the previous chapters, the study used three themes from the theory of CRM: Administrative processes, use of technology and staff training. After a thorough analysis of the eight constituencies under the study, followed by a cross analysis of the four constituencies each from the NDC and NPP, it can be said there is little to differentiate between the two parties on
the three themes identified. Below is a presentation of the key findings of the study in relation to the research objectives.

The key objective of the study was to examine the management of political party membership at the constituency levels of the two main parties based on an exploratory approach. The findings were that the administrative processes followed by the two parties in the management of their membership are those enshrined in their constitution. Both parties have laid down processes aimed at involving members in the selection of executives both at the polling station/branch and constituency level. These processes are processes enshrined in the constitution of the two parties. Another important revelation is the similarity regarding how the two parties solicit the views of their members for consideration during decision-making at the constituency. Both parties rely on meetings though it was found that generally, the NPP engages its members in meetings frequently than the NDC.

Again, both parties have similar mechanisms for handling complaints. However, complaints handling by the NPP seem to follow a more concise process as complaints are first handled at the branch level, forwarded to the constituency, regional and subsequently to the national if the various ranks within the party are unable to find an amicable solution. Largely, the NDC equally adopts this process sparingly. Further, there are similarities in the processes for ensuring accountability and transparency at the constituency level of the two parties. Meetings are used to resolve issues raised by party members and also the executives use meetings to make financial issues known to the members.

The second objective of the study sought to ascertain how the parties utilise technology to enhance the management of their membership. In this regard, the study found that
though both parties were unanimous about the relevance of technology to enhance the management of their membership. Both parties utilise technology at least for disseminating information. Again, the party’s ensured presence on social media and also have a database of their members in one form or the other. The predominant technology utilised by the parties are WhatsApp, text messages, Facebook, phone calls and emails.

The final objective was in relation to how the parties trained their staff to enhance the management of their membership. In this regard, the study delved into the following areas as far as staff training is concerned: training on how to manage members, training on the technology used by the party in the management of their members, and finally training on relating and handling complaints of members. The study found that both parties provided some form of training mainly informal for their staff in the areas of complaint handling and use of the various technology utilised by the party.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS

The study sought to examine the management of political party membership in Ghana. In doing so, the study examined the management of the membership of the two parties based on the three constructs of Customer Relationship Management: Administrative processes, use of technology and staff training. The study concludes that there is no significant difference between the two parties regarding how they utilise technology, train their staff and implement certain administrative activities as a way of enhancing the management of their membership. The only significant difference worth mentioning has to do with how the two parties utilise technology to enhance the management of their membership. As noted earlier, the study points out the fact that the NPP prioritises
the utilisation of technology than the NDC as far as the management of political party membership is concerned.

First, with regards to the administrative processes of the two parties, it is important for the parties to recognise the need to encourage members to participate in the selection of party executives. This bestow on the members a sense of ownership as they feel they are an important part of the administration of the party. Again, apart from meetings, the political parties do not have deliberate processes to solicit the complaints of members. Managing complaints of members is critical as complaints not handled properly can escalate into monstrous proportions. Another area worth looking at is issues involving accountability and transparency. Where the party gives up this responsibility, the members may be compelled to take to speculations and this may not augur well for the parties.

Second, the study concludes that utilising technology to enhance the management of the membership of political party is key. Fundamentally, findings from the study depict that in respect of the usage of technology, the parties “are not there” yet. However, technology is currently the toast of the world. Utilising technology to disseminate information is key in the management of any people centred organisations in the 21st century.

Lastly, the study concludes that the parties do not have well thought out programmes to equip their staff to acquire managerial, technical and human relations skills. Training staff members to handle complaints and to become conversant with the technology utilised by the party is essential to the effective management of political party and party membership.
7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered in line with the findings of the study.

- Political parties must embark on more innovative ways of soliciting the views of members to be inputted in party decision-making. The over-reliance on party meetings as a way of soliciting the views of party members achieves minimal results in the face of poor attendance of meetings by members. For example, regular visits to party members in the constituency by branch/polling station executives can address this problem effectively.

- Political parties should also invest in building a proper, reliable and workable membership database. This membership database should not only comprise of the name and contact of party members. This membership database should be comprised of the name, contact, date of birth, residential address, occupation, marital status, gender and as well as the religious affiliation of members. By so doing, political parties will be able to establish a long-term personal relationship (other than transactional relationship) with their party members by sending them birthday messages on their birthday as Banks, Telco’s and other organisations have recently been engaging in (a phenomenon not known to them decades ago), knowing the type of messages to send taking into consideration their religious affiliation and other related variables/factors. Transactional relationships tend to be more costly as parties’ will have to spend more resources in contacting and building relationship with party members a short while to elections. This relationship is often not trusting and does not breed membership loyalty to a party.

- Furthermore, political parties must equally find more innovative ways of receiving complaints from party members. Complaints from party members can
serve as great feedbacks for the party. For example, the parties can institute a toll-free telephone access where party members can call to lodge complaints without incurring any cost. This will motivate as many party members as possible to call and lodge complaints at their convenience. That is, the cost of participation must be reduced for party members (voters) which have the potential of promoting the activeness of membership as argued by Wielhouwer and Lockerbie (1994) who opined that, the higher the cost of participation, the less likely citizens will participate. They, therefore, make the case that political parties must take good steps in reducing the cost of citizen and party member’s participation.

- Again, it is important for political parties to have specified schedules for meetings both at the branch/polling station and constituency level. The current situation where political parties organise meetings according to the dictate of political events is unsustainable. Where there are stipulated meeting schedules, the executives are bound to hold meetings based on pre-determined schedules and not at will.

- The party at the constituency level ought to break away from the practice of providing clarity on finances mainly at meetings as a way of promoting accountability and transparency. There should be statutory directives detailing how the parties will promote utmost transparency and accountability. For example, monthly financial revenues and expenditure details can be designed and sent to members via WhatsApp or other technological platforms.

- The limited activity regarding the pursuit of technology to enhance the management of political party membership is undesirable in this golden age of technology. The study recommends that political parties should institute
mechanisms aimed at utilising technology aggressively to enhance the management of their membership. For instance, the parties should improve their social media presence, especially on Facebook and WhatsApp as a way of reaching out to their members.

Finally, the lack of comprehensive training programmes to equip the staff of the various parties with adequate managerial, technical and human relation skills leaves much to be desired. The study recommends that political parties should engage management experts to design management programmes for their staff at the branch/polling station and constituency levels.
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APPENDICES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

APPENDIX

This study focused the Management of Political Party Membership in Ghana. The interviews were captioned under four main sections. Section one of the interview comprises six (6) question that captures the demographics of the respondents. The section two also comprises of five (5) questions aimed at soliciting the views of the respondents on how their party’s administrative processes aid their membership mobilisation. Section three (3) also comprises of five (5) questions which sort to solicit from the respondents their views on how the use of technology enhances the management of their party’s membership. Finally, section four had four (4) questions as a guide in understanding the views on how their (respondents) respective political parties equip their administrative staff towards the effective management of their membership.

SECTION ONE

Background Data

Name of Constituency………………………..

Name of Electoral area………………………..

Date and Time of interview…………………..

Language used in the interview……………….

Demographic Data of Respondents

Please tick the appropriate response to the questions

1. Name: ........................................................................................................
2. Gender (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]

3. Age (1) 18-28 [ ] (2) 29-39 [ ] (3) 40-50 [ ] (4) 51-60 [ ] (5) 61-70 [ ] (6) 71—[ ]

4. Educational level of respondent (1) Primary level [ ] (2) Middle school/ JSS [ ] (3) Secondary level [ ] (4) Tertiary level [ ] (5) No level [ ]

5. Occupation of respondents. (1) Trader [ ] (2) Teacher [ ] (3) Farmer (4) Blacksmith [ ] (5) Public/civil Servant [ ] (6) Student [ ] (7) Unemployed [ ]

6. Which religious denomination do you belong? (1) Islamic [ ] (2) Christianity [ ] (3) Traditional [ ]

SECTION TWO

How the Parties administrative processes aid their membership mobilisation.

7. How does the party involve its members in the selection of party executives?

8. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the views of members are inputted into party decision making?

9. What mechanisms are instituted to handle membership complaints?

10. Are there deliberate processes to ensure that party executives interact regularly with members?

11. How does the party remain accountable and transparent to its members?

SECTION THREE

The use of technology to enhance the management of the party’s membership.

12. What specific technology is employed to enhance the management of the membership of your party?
13. How does the party utilise technology to disseminate information to its members?

14. Does the party have a database of its members? Explain your answer..................

15. Which electronic mechanisms ensure that your members are able to provide you with regular feedback?

16. How does the party utilise social media in the management of its membership?

SECTION FOUR

Equipping the staff of the political parties towards the effective management of their membership.

17. Are your staff given regular training programmes on how to manage your membership? If yes explain…………………………………………………………………………………

18. How conversant is your operation staff with the various technologies instituted to maintain a cordial relationship with the membership of your political party.

19. How are individual staff members trained to handle membership complaints?

20. How are individual staff members trained to relate to members of the party?