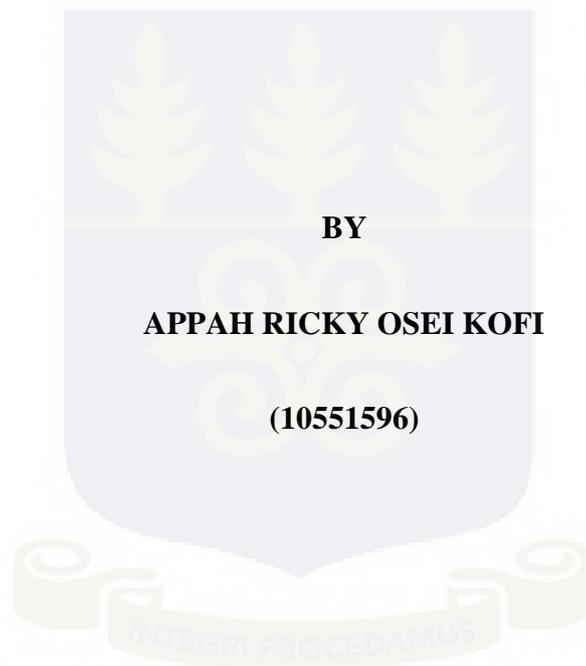


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

**VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN ELECTIONS IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC:
A STUDY OF THE MANHYIA SOUTH, HO WEST AND AYAWASO WEST
WUOGON CONSTITUENCIES**



BY

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DECLARATION

I, **APPAH RICKY OSEI KOFI**, hereby declare that this thesis is an independent and personal work produced under the supervision of **PROFESSOR RANSFORD E.V. GYAMPO** and **DR BOSSMAN E. ASARE** towards the award of a Master of Philosophy in Political Science in the Department of Political Science, University of Ghana. Secondary materials used for this study have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Voting in Ghana, just like that of many other African countries, has often been described as ethnic-based. For that matter, ethnicity has been regarded by many scholars as the leading factor that shapes the electoral choices of voters on the African continent. In Ghana, the Ashanti and Volta Regions have been cited as areas where ethnic-based voting appears dominant. This is evidenced by the massive support that accrues to the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress in the above-mentioned regions. On the other hand, ethnicity does not seem to determine voter behaviour in cosmopolitan areas like Greater Accra where voting patterns remain swinging and unpredictable.

Using qualitative research design, the study aimed at ascertaining the accuracy of the description of voting behaviour among Ghanaians as ethnic-based. Three constituencies were selected from three administrative regions of the country. These are the Manhyia South, Ho West, and Ayawaso West Wuogon constituencies. Whereas Manhyia South and Ho West constituencies (from Ashanti and Volta Regions) are perceived as areas that vote under ethnic influences, the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency in the Greater Accra Region is seen as an area where ethnicity plays virtually no role in shaping voter behaviour.

Empirical data from the three case studies show that it is inaccurate to describe the current voting behaviour of Ghana as ethnic-based. Indeed, the impact of ethnicity on voting choices of Ghanaians continue to wane. As a matter of fact, contrary to the popular notion of ethnicity being the most dominant factor that shapes the voting behaviour of Ghanaians, it is rather party identification that stands out as the most dominant determinant of voting among Ghanaian voters.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the LORD GOD Almighty for such a great opportunity to begin and successfully complete this study.

It is also dedicated to my mother: Ms Elizabeth Appah, to my sister: Ms Peggy Serwaa, also to Mr Sydney Narh and my entire family for their love, sacrifices, encouragement and support.



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This work has been successful simply because of the keen interest that was shown by my supervisors. Their critique and suggestions have shaped this work beautifully. I, therefore, say a big thank you to Professor Ransford E.V. Gyampo and Dr Bossman Asare for their assistance.

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May God's grace and peace continue to abound in everything you do.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACEP:	Africa Center for Energy Policy
AMA:	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
AWWC:	Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency
CA:	Consultative Assembly
CDD:	Center for Democratic Development
CP:	Communist Party
CPP:	Convention People's Party
ECG:	Electoral Commission of Ghana
ECOMOG:	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EU:	European Union
GSS:	Ghana Statistical Service
HMA:	Ho Municipal Assembly
HWC:	Ho West Constituency
IDEG:	Institute of Democratic Governance
IDEA:	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IEA:	Institute of Economic Affairs
KMA:	Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly
MSC:	Manhyia South Constituency
NCD:	National Commission for Democracy
NDC:	National Democratic Congress
NLM:	National Liberation Council
NPP:	New Patriotic Party
NRC:	National Redemption Council
PNC:	People's National Convention
PNDC:	Provisional National Defence Council
SMC:	Supreme Military Council
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
IMF:	International Monetary Fund

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Ghanaian voters are lightheaded about their electoral choices and its consequences. Although Ghana got introduced to democratic governance on 6th March 1957 when it gained independence from colonial rule, it was deficient as far as the needed consistency in democratic practice was concerned. This was largely due to the frequent military interjections it experienced. In fact, until democracy was restored in 1992, the country had spent more years under military rule (a total of twenty-one years) than under democratic governance (a total of fourteen years). It would also be imperative to point out that until 1992, Ghana had experienced as many as four (4) military takeovers just within 35 years.

Since 1992, however, Ghana seemed to have found its feet back on democratic practice partly due to the new (third) wave of democratization that had hit the African continent in the late 80s and early 90s (Huntington 1991; Young 1996). It must be emphasized that after almost a decade of quasi-military rule under the control of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), the junta was left with little option as strong internal and external demands resulted in the declaration and pronouncement of a multipolar democratic setup in 1992 that introduced Ghana into its Fourth Republic (Ayee 1996; Ninsin 1998; Gyimah-Boadi 2008; Abdulai 2009).

After setting up the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) and the Consultative Assembly (CA) which were respectively charged with the right to oversee the transition process and the drafting a new constitution for the country between 1981 and 1992, all was set for the birth of a Fourth Republican Constitution (Ayee 1996, p. 434-437).

Although the fairness and transparency of the premier election of 1992 was in serious contention, it can be argued fairly that elections from 1996 up until 2012 had been conducted in an atmosphere of free, fair, peaceful and somewhat transparent manner (Linz & Stepan 1996; Potter, Goldblatt, Kiloh & Lewis 1997; Ninsin 1998; Gyekye-Jandoh 2006, 2014).

In fact, up until now, substantial justifications can be made to the political liberalization that permits Ghanaians to benefit from an array of privileges and liberties in addition to the emergence of a vibrant civil society and a free and independent media that constantly hold governments responsible on behalf of the citizens. These substantial developments have characterized Ghana's democracy to be one of the political success stories in Africa (Ninsin 1998; Gyimah-Boadi 2008).

Often times, an election is seen as the primal criterion of a democratic system. As such, most countries' democratic statuses are judged by whether or not they hold elections, as well as the level of quality of those elections. To Bratton (1999) cited in Gyekye-Gyandoh (2014, p. 185) "while elections are not the be all and end all of a democracy, they provide a major blueprint for the existence of democracy." By extension, the implication is that elections are the defining component of a nation's democracy and thus constitute an important part of the democratization process. Lindberg (2006, p. 2) sought to justify the significance of elections to a democratic system by asserting that elections "are an institutionalized attempt to actualize the essence of democracy: rule of the people and by the people."

Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) cited in Lindberg (2006) argued that although elections in themselves are not adequate enough to make up a democracy there is, however, no other institution that precedes participatory, competitive, and legitimate

elections as an important instrument for self-government. These lessons seem to have fairly fallen upon the good ears of Ghanaians as they can be demonstrated in the successive electoral competitions that have been held in the country from 1992 till date.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Over the years, several scholars have described elections in Ghana as ethnic-based. These scholars have argued that voting behaviour in Ghana and in Africa to a large extent, have been influenced by factors such as ethnicity, personal linkages, and clientelism (Hyden & Leys 1972; Barkan 1979; Bratton & Van de Walle 1997; Scarritt & Mozzafar 1999; Van de Walle 2003; Mozzafar et al. 2003; Erdmann 2004; Posner 2005). In addition, it has been emphasized that ethnicity as a form of social cleavage is seen to be the most dominant feature that has made stronger inroads when it comes to understanding politics in Africa (Berman et al. 2004). Fridy (2007, p. 286) further asserts that ethnicity appears to be an “extremely significant although not a deciding factor in Ghanaian elections” and that its implication to the electoral outcome is of immense importance.

The justification for the above-made claims are based on the argument that electoral choices are made by voters along ethnic lines rather than on the basis of consideration of policy alternatives. In addition, the incidence of ethnicity appears to be of much interest, especially to politicians because most of the constituencies in Ghana are often dominated by a particular ethnic group and that “the appeal of common ethnic ties can generate unified support where other issues would be divisive” (Bates 1974: p. 470, cited in Arthur, 2009).

A quick glance at Ghana's political history also brings to light a basic and a clearer picture of how much ethnicity has functioned significantly in Ghanaian politics. Since the independence of 1957 (before the inception of the Fourth Republic), Ghana has witnessed as many as seven (7) different political regimes all of which had varying ethnic dispositions right until the beginning days of the Fourth Republic. Running of state machinery has moved on from southern Akan groups during the Nkrumah era; through the Ga-Ewe alliance under the National Liberation Council (NLC); the central Akan (Asante-Brong) alliance of Busia; the fairly balanced ethnic government of the National Redemption Council (NRC)-Supreme Military Council (SMC) assemblage; a minority accumulation with uneven northern representation within the Limann administration; and finally to a profoundly Ewe-based ruling faction within the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) (Chazan 1982; p. 461).

In seeking to elucidate the ethnopolitical distribution within the Ghanaian electoral system, Amoah (2003) sought to expose the ethnonational patterns that emerged from the 2000 elections. His analysis came out with the findings that in the 2000 elections, there were stronger suggestions that each vice-presidential candidate from the four leading political parties (the National Democratic Congress, the New Patriotic Party, the Convention People's Party and the Peoples National Convention) should be one whose nativity originated from either of the three northern regions. His work uncovered the 'ethnonationalistic' sentiments that had beclouded the majority of Ghanaians as a rational choice which demonstrated solidarity towards their respective ethnonational identity groups instead of a political nationalism whose patriotism is towards the state institution.

Scholars have also sought to draw a broad distinction between the rationale and even the quality of voting between voters from more advanced and institutionalized democracies and others from less advanced democracies. Arthur (2009, p46) points out that “for many established and institutionalized democracies, especially in the Western world, the issue of electoral choices according to various writers has centered on the ideologies, philosophies, and policies advanced by the major political parties.”

In making a case for the less advanced democracies on the other side and most especially those on the African continent, several pool of literature point out that ethnicity is the most imperative element that shapes the decision and electoral choice of the citizens (Barkan 1998; Bates 1974; Bratton & Van de Walle 1997; Erdmann 2004, 2008; Horowitz 1985; Hyden & Leys 1972; Mozzafar et al. 2003; Posner 2004; Scarritt & Mozzafar 1999; Van de Walle 2003; Young 1986).

These studies that have depicted Ghanaian elections as ethnic-based however important, appear to be dated and there seems to be no fresh studies reappraising ethnicity preferences in Ghanaian elections. The voting and electoral dynamics in the Fourth Republic as it progresses seems to be getting more complex, drifting away from the incidence of ethnicity as the main determinant of voting in the electoral outcomes of Ghanaian politics. Lindberg and Morrison (2008, p. 96) posit that “the core institution of modern liberal democracy whereby the right of the people to self-government can be exercised is competitive and participatory elections.” It is noteworthy to point out that the degree to which elections accomplish this task is immensely hooked on to the rationale that the electorates have which in turn shape up their behaviour at the polls (Lindberg & Morrison, 2008).

One can argue that the Ghana of today appears to be quite distinct from that of two or three decades ago when Horowitz (1985) depicted elections in Ghana as nothing more than “ethnic consensus”. In fact, Ghana has been but one of two countries in Africa (Mauritius being the other) that have made progress in the consolidation of its democratic principles as far as Huntington’s (1991) two turn-over test is concerned. As such, power has been transferred between opposing governments in the Fourth Republic through democratic means on three different occasions (2000, 2008 and 2016).

More important has been the rise and growth of strong civil society organizations such as the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), IMANI Africa, and the Africa Center for Energy Policy (ACEP), the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Center For Democratic Development (CDD), among others, whose core mandate have been to inform and enlighten Ghanaians about their civic rights and responsibilities which in effect, have helped in raising the democratic maturity of Ghanaians as far as the making of electoral choices are concerned. The IEA, for example, has over the years organized presidential debates that have sought to bring the flagbearers of various political parties closer to the electorates who seek to offer alternative policies as solutions to the developmental pitfalls that befall the nation all in an attempt to improve the quality of Ghanaian voter’s decision making. To Gyimah-Boadi (2008), Ghana has been regarded as a beacon of hope of democratic practice in Africa evidenced in the level of political tolerance among opposition groups, a growing and vibrant civil society and a constantly held free and fair elections.

In view of the above-made facts it will, therefore, be inappropriate to continue to describe Ghana's elections as ethnic-based without conducting a fresh study to ascertain whether or not there are other factors that shape the voting choice of Ghanaian electorates.

It is also important to point out that provisions in the Fourth Republic Constitution do not permit the practice of party politics based on ethnic lines. In fact, Article 55 points out that "every political party shall have a national character, and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional division." The constitution further adds that each political party is supposed to have "branches in all regions of Ghana and in addition organized in not less than two-thirds of the districts in each region, and the party's name, emblem, colour, motto or any other symbol has no ethnic, religious or other sectional connotation that gives the appearance that its activities are confined only to a part of Ghana."

Notwithstanding these provisions made in the constitution, it would be extremely deceptive to ignore the ethnic connotations in elections of Ghana's Fourth Republic as it progressed. As a matter of fact, the two leading political parties, that is the NPP and the NDC, are perceived to be Asante/ Akan and Ewe-based respectively (Gyimah-Boadi and Asante 2006, p. 248). A careful scrutiny of results from 1992 to 2012 shows that whereas the NDC gets massive votes in the Volta Region and lesser votes in the Ashanti Region the NPP, on the other hand, performs incredibly well in the Ashanti Region but very poorly in the Volta Region. These findings have fuelled the researcher's inquisition to conduct a study in the Ho West Constituency (from the Volta Region) and the Manhyia South Constituency (from the Ashanti Region). The study also adds a third area which is the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency; a cosmopolitan community located in the Greater Accra Region. Since the Greater Accra

Region is often perceived as a swing region with the implication that the election results from this region do not always go in favour of a particular political party. It will, therefore, be appropriate to discover the rationale behind the voting pattern in a constituency that is regarded as cosmopolitan as opposed to voting patterns in areas considered to be influenced by ethnicity.

The central question that guides this study is, as Ghana's democracy continues to grow, can we still describe voting patterns as ethnic-based? The study examines the claim that voting behaviour and patterns in Ghana are influenced by ethnicity using the constituencies of Manhyia South, Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon as comparative case studies.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To know what ethnic-based voting is.
2. To know how ethnic-based voting has shaped voting patterns in Ghana's elections since 1992.
3. To ascertain the rate of increase or decrease in ethnic-based voting.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is ethnic-based voting?
2. How has ethnic-based voting shaped voting patterns in Ghana's elections since 1992?
3. Is ethnic-based voting on the rise or on the decrease?

1.5 Theoretical Framework

A theory is often stated as “a set of interrelated constructs, (variables) definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining natural phenomena” (Kirlinger 1979, p64). Theories essentially are the core set of ideas and principles that explain the happenings and actions of people in a society. Theories are used by both physical and social scientists to identify or detect the source of human action and the subsequent effects of those actions. In fact, the relevance of theories cannot be underestimated even to the extent that “the research project would be meaningless” (Theodoulou and O'Brien, 1999:2) without them.

There are basically three schools of thought that are prominent when it comes to the scientific study of voting behaviour. There is the sociological model which is very so often classified as School of Columbia whose work began with the publication of the book *The People's Choice* (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944) and emphasises the effects of social factors; the psychosocial model, also known as the School of Michigan which presupposes that party identification is the foremost factor of influence when it comes to voter behaviour; and the rational choice theory which is also known as the model of economic voting or the School of Rochester, whose emphasis is on variables such as rationality, choice, uncertainty and information that determine the behaviour of voters (Antunes, 2010).

In most instances, a fourth school is overlooked. The dominant ideology, which is often considered as the bedrock for most of the studies conducted within the frame of sociological knowledge, was espoused by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in their work ‘*The German Ideology*’ which sought to explain that within most social groups, there

are sets of beliefs and value preferences that largely serves the interest of a dominant class (Abercrombie & Turner, 1978).

Based on the objectives of this work, the Sociological Model of voting behaviour is adopted as the main theoretical assumption of the study, complimented by the other models of voting behaviour. The discussion of these frameworks will thereby highlight the continuity and hypothetical correspondence that connects the psychosocial model to sociological model, the rational choice theory as well as the dominant ideology.

1.5.1 The Sociological Model of Voting Behaviour

The sociological model of voting behaviour is often identified as the School of Columbia with its principal benchmark coming from the Applied Bureau of Social Research of Columbia University. Although this institution's breakthrough came from the work (*The People's Choice*) published by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1944) whose main emphasis was on the influence of social factors on the individual's voting choice, there are fundamentally three works that sought to establish the theoretical assumptions of the sociological model of voting behaviour. They are *The People's Choice by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1944)*, *Voting by Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee (1954)* and *Personal Influence by Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955)*.

In their work entitled '*The People's Choice*', Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) used questionnaire as a tool for the first time in collecting data on the U.S. presidential election which was contested between Franklin Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie in 1940, which until then was not the orthodox methodological approach used for collecting data on the study of voting behaviour (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). In his previous work, Lazarsfeld sought to direct his attention to the psychological mechanisms that are involved in the processes

of choice as well as the effects of publicity, advertising and mass media on consumer behaviour. His research had two main aims and they were to study the effects of exposure to the media (to know how voters arrive at their decisions and the role of the media in this process) and to test a new methodology of successive interviews with a panel of subjects and a control group (Rossi, 1964 cited in Antunes, 2010). The study captioned under the title “The People’s Choice” (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944) commenced by characterizing the supporters of the two main political parties in the U.S elections using a panel of 600 respondents who were interviewed seven times over the seven months of national campaigning. The outcome of the study exposed the character of voters that were grouped into three contrasting categories; those who had made up their minds about their electoral choices before the campaign commenced, those whose choices were made during the party convention and finally, those whose decisions were made only at the latter part of the campaign period (Antunes, 2010).

The central premises of the work of Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) was that the act of voting is an individual undertaking, affected mainly by the personality of the voter and his/her exposure to the media. It is however interesting to point out that the outcome of their study refuted the main thesis, pointing out that the impact of the media in electoral decisions was insignificant but rather, what counted most was the social groups to which the electorates belonged (Antunes, 2010, p. 147). In sum, it can be stated that the relationship between social groups to which members belong, their political preferences and the pivotal role of personal contacts in the definition of electoral choices points to the fact that the decision of voters are processes of group cohesion, rather than individual acts (Antunes, 2010).

The theoretical underpinnings of the sociological model of voting behaviour were further strengthened through the enterprising endeavours of Lipset (1960) in his book entitled “Political Man” and Lipset & Rokkan (1967) in their book entitled “Party Systems and Voter Alignment: Cross-National Perspectives.” The core motivation of these theses centred on the development of the party system in Western Europe. Contrary to Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) and Berelson et al. (1954), Lipset and Rokkan (1967) proceeded their work with historical and macro-sociological perspectives that sought to draw insights from the party system in Western European states which had a reflection of historical dissection relating to the origins in national revolution — divisions between centre and periphery and state/church — and industrial revolution — cleavages between urban/rural and capital/labour (Antunes, 2010 p. 152) which turn out to be vital political cleavages when social groups breed perceptions of these differences and in consequence, it becomes institutionalized in the political system (Manza & Brooks, 1999).

The connection between social cleavages and political systems are exposed when social divisions are experienced in three diverse stages: as empirical components rooted in the social structure, as regulatory components that result in conflicting forms of social consciousness, and as institutional components that are expressed in individual interactions or in interactions between organizations and/or institutions (Bartolini & Mair, 1990).

The sociological model of voting behaviour notwithstanding the enormous revelations it made pertaining to the understanding of the rationale or motivations behind voter choice had certain shortcomings. In the first place, the sociological model was deficient in expounding the variations that take place in voting as a result of certain economic factors that are specific to each election. Although social factors may attempt to explain

the long-term constancy of voting behaviour, they do not explicate the disparities that arise in the behaviour of voters in different elections, in a similar vein that they do not explain why persons who have affinity with certain social groups vote in a manner that is expected of people belonging to different social groups (Antunes, 2010).

It also failed to acknowledge the importance of individual policy preferences and the appraisal of government performance on voting. By extension, this model is implying that voting choice is impacted based on the individual's personality as well as on how the media influenced that person. Other equally important factors such as gender, regional integration, race, religion, occupational status and urban/rural socioeconomic status were all overlooked. Even though efforts have been made to rise above the complexities that exist within the sociological approach, for example studies that contend that the study of voting behaviour should not be done from the voter's perspective but rather valuing contextual factors as the political programs of parties, the role of media, the countries' economic structure and the context in which the relationship between voters and parties become stronger (Curtice, 2002; Glasgow & Alvarez, 2005; Van der Eijk, Franklin & Oppenhuis, 1996; Van der Eijk, 2002; Wright, 1977).

These drawbacks have resulted in the identification of the Michigan psychosocial model as a model that bids to overcome these challenges by imploring the concept of partisanship, by which it attempts to establish a linkage between the influence of sociological and historical long-term factors that were highlighted in the sociological model, as well as social and political short-term factors that characterize each election (Antunes, 2010).

1.5.2 The Psychosocial Model of Voting Behaviour

The psychosocial model of voting behaviour has its foundation from inquiries conducted by the Survey Research Centre at the University of Michigan in a period when the 1948 U.S. presidential elections were running. The Psychosocial Model also known as the School of Michigan stems out of a series of research conducted by Campbell and Kahn (1952) in 'The People Elect a President; The Elections of 1952 and Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954) in The Voter Decides. The combination of these studies were finally compiled into a complete book by Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960) with the title 'The American Voter' (Antunes, 2010).

The core idea that drives this model is partisanship, which although denotes a relationship with a political party, does not necessarily imply registering with a particular political party or even voting time after time for a specific political party. As espoused by Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960, p121),

"In characterizing the relation of individual to party as a psychological identification we invoke a concept that has played an important if somewhat varied role in psychological theories of the relation of individual to individual or of individual to group. We use the concept here to characterize the individual's affective orientation to an important group-object in his environment. Both reference group theory and small-group studies of influence have converged upon the attracting or repelling quality of the group as the generalized dimension most critical in defining the individual-group relationship, and it is this dimension that we will call identification."

The concept of partisanship by Campbell et al. (1960) has strong resemblance with the idea of anticipatory socialization recognized in the work of Merton and Kitt (1950) as what "define the situations in which individuals choose a reference group to which they do not belong and begin to act according to what they perceive as the rules of that group" (cited in Antunes, 2010 p. 154). To the authors, partisanship is attained by a

process of socialization where morals, ethics, ideals and opinions of family, colleagues and peers have strong influence. These strong values that associate the followers to their political parties are often accomplished through diverse degrees of participation in a process that is quite similar to what takes place when an individual is drawn into a religion. Within this context, partisanship is viewed as a valid mode of social identification whereby “citizens have an enduring sense of what sorts of people belong to various parties and whether they identify with these social groups” (Green, Palmquist, & Schickler, 2002, p. ix).

The model also attempts to give explanations to the relationships that exist between variables (the series of events that contribute to the vote of electorates) that are involved in the description of the general electoral behaviour. These variables can be categorized into two broad factors which are, distal factors (socio-economic and historical factors, values and attitudes and membership groups), and proximal factors (issues, candidates, election campaign, political and economic situation, the government action, influence of friends). Although this model incorporates all these factors it, however, places a much greater importance on the interrelationship that exist between partisanship, candidates and issues and for that matter, it gives less recognition to social factors and communication systems (Niemi, Weisberg, & Kimball 2001).

It is also noteworthy to point out that this model does not link partisanship with the choice of the voter, highlighting the severance between the psychological disposition of partisanship and the purposive nature of voting behaviour is often replicated in the option of not measuring the variable from the actual voting of the follower, but rather through their personal decisions. The above-stated claims clearly identify partisanship not as a variable that informs us clearly and candidly about the voting choice and preference of voters. Campbell et al. (1960), however, depicted partisanship as a

perceptual filter that becomes a basis for which the electorate recognizes the salient values that are essential to the growth and progress of his/her party and gives no attention to incidents and issues that are unfavourable for the growth and progress of the party. Putting into perspective the nature of political life under democratic societies only brings out the fact that such societies are primarily fixated on parties and also taking into account that the evaluation of policy proposals requires, in most cases, the awareness and information that citizens do not have, partisanship then becomes a fundamental variable in the political experience of the followers functioning as an instrument of “reading” of the election and the candidates’ proposals (Antunes, 2010 p155).

The relevance of partisanship since its formulation in the 1960s nonetheless has been challenged not just because of the prevailing difficulty it has in application to most electoral systems that are not largely bi-partisan in their orientation, as is the case in most Western European countries (Budge, Crewe, & Farlie, 1976), but also because of the contention of an increasingly fading away of the connection of individuals to political parties in the U.S. (Nie, Verba, & Petrocik, 1976, Stanley & Niemi, 1991; Stanley & Niemi, 2000) and in Europe (Crewe & Denver 1985; Dalton, 1984; Dalton, 2000; Dalton, Flanagan, & Beck, 1984). This further raises questions about the theory of the stability of partisanship which also points to a gradual misplacement of voters in relation to political parties.

Further arguments have been made by scholars against the manner in which the model envisions the connection that exists between psychosocial factors and partisanship (Dalton, Flanagan, & Beck, 1984; Dalton, 2000, Fiorina 1981; Franklin, Mackie & Valen, 1992; Wattenberg, 1994). These scholars believe that the Michigan model overemphasises the importance of long-term partisan allegiance. They also concede

that it is rather the proximal factors that play a crucial role in the misplacement of the voters and the resultant volatility that depicts the Western democracies since the early 1960s. From this standpoint, voters amend their relationship with political parties based on the assessments they make, in every election, of economic conditions and how the parties and their leaders deal with them.

These critiques are, in a general view, expounded by authors who make a case for the fact that the explanation of changes in voting choices of voters should be approached not through the use of a psychosocial variable but by taking into account factors that are associated with information processing and the rationality of voters and the political and electoral system (Antunes, 2010).

1.5.3 The Rational Choice Theory

The Rational Choice Theory, often regarded as a model for the economic explanation of voting behaviour is credited to the work of Anthony Downs (1957) in his work entitled “*An Economic Theory of Democracy.*” His work is an extension of the studies done by Arrow (1951) that sought to draw a correlation between economic factors, resources, as well as goods and technology to political outcomes. Arrow (1951) hypothesised that “if the assumptions of rational choice are able to explain the market, then they can explain the political functioning” (cited in Antunes, 2010 p. 157). It, therefore, ascertains an absolute equivalence between consumers and voters and also between companies and political parties. That is to say, “If companies seek to maximize profits and consumers act to maximize the utility, we can, then, theorize in the sense that voters seek to maximize the utility of their votes as the parties act to maximize electoral gains obtained from their political proposals” (Antunes, 2010: p. 157).

The operation of the Rational Choice Theory which is also known as the School of Rochester is premised under three foundational propositions and these are: (a) all decisions – those that are made by voters and political parties – are rational, that is to say they must be driven or influenced by self-interest and conformed to the rule of maximization of action's utility; (b) a democratic political system indicates a level of dependability that aids forecasting pertaining to resultant effects of decisions made by voters and political groups. That is to say, the agents – voters, parties and government – are dependable and by extension, create the provision to make forecasts on the consequences emanating from diverse choices, and (c) the democratic system presupposes — notwithstanding the relative consistency stated in the previous point — a level of indecision, relevant enough to give room for the consideration of other diverse options (Antunes, 2010).

Rationality as a model is of great essence when one is seeking to understand the theory of rational choice and it is noteworthy to shed light on the fact that rationality, based on Down's economic theory, hypothesises that voters and political parties to a large extent behave in a similar manner, at least based on their wishes, values and interests. Therefore, rationality as a term is applied based on the inference that the methods or mediums employed are suitable to the objectives and by extension, elections function as a medium used for selecting a government and for that matter, rational behaviour in an electoral period is aimed towards this objective and nothing else.

The Rational Choice Theory also takes into account that what voters essentially prioritize is not ideology but rather the tangible or material actions governments undertake. This, however, does not imply that voters are entirely abreast with or well-informed about all government proceedings and decisions as it takes a great deal of effort to completely comprehend and assess the outcome of all government policies.

Regardless of the fact that what voters prioritize are not the ideologies of political parties, which are the aims and philosophies that form the heartbeat of these parties, but rather the tangible actions of political parties, the rational choice theory therefore contends that the contrast of ideologies are only adopted when a voter has a prior knowledge about the tangible indicators that pertain to actions that have been accomplished by the political party. On the other side, if the voter possesses no information about the tangible accomplishments of the political parties but is only able to differentiate these parties by their ideologies, then the ideology becomes equivalent to the values or interests of the voter.

The rational choice theory further posits that the prospect of going to the polls to vote will be higher if what they are hopeful for in relation to the significance of their vote and the anticipated profit of their voting are greater than the loss. Having to decide between a number of candidates, "...the voter must determine what the difference to their interests, resulting in victory (or loss) of candidate A, B or C. If this analysis does not expect significant differences associated with victory or defeat of any candidates, the potential benefit of voting is zero and the higher the probability of not participating in the elections" (Antunes, 2010 p. 162). In a similar vein, if the voters recognize that the impact of their votes will not be significant to the electoral outcome, the likelihood of not voting will escalate.

The work of Blais (2000) provides a critique to the rational choice theory by stating that, "unfortunately for the theory, many people do vote. In fact, a clear majority vote in the most important elections, where the number of voters is extremely large and the probability of casting a decisive vote is minuscule" (cited in Antunes, 2010). His work came out with findings that the rational choice theory is weak in explaining voting behaviour. As a matter of fact, the outcome of his research reveals that about half of the

electorates vote without even taking into consideration the potential profits and losses of their decisions but rather, they vote out of a sense of obligation. More so, among those who vote not out of a sense of duty, the variables that pertain to the profits and losses of voting do not carry the weight to influence electoral outcomes as the rational choice theory forecasts. With regards to preliminary assumptions of the model, Blais (2000) noted that voters will have a stronger urge to vote if they perceive that their vote can influence the electoral outcome, nonetheless, they overrate its importance. What appears successful is not what is based on the view that one vote can make a difference, but that the outcome may be very close:

“Some people may reason that they decide not to vote, that decision would imply that others with similar political attitudes will also abstain ... that is each citizen may regard his or her single vote as diagnostic of millions of votes, which would substantially inflate the subjective probability of one’s vote making a difference” (Blais, 2000, p. 139, cited in Antunes, 2010).

In addition, the premise that voters have precise and comprehensive information about their values or interests and parties’ proposals that features as the core assumption of the rational choice theory is also the primary flaw and weak link of the thesis and although advocates of this model attempt to cover up this shortfall by adopting the notion of heuristics and cognitive commands to expound how voters can effectively make choices with the little information they may acquire (Lupia, McCubbins, & Popkin, 2000; Popkin, 1994; Sniderman, Brody, & Tetlock, 1991), the debate is that voters who are incapable of handling the complicatedly dense information rather resort to the use of pointers such as leadership roles they had taken in relation to their preferred candidates as well as electoral matters as espoused by specific media groups, public figures, organizations or entities.

A deficit in knowledge about issues and electoral proposals will imply that voters will believe that the position of a candidate will be positive or negative to their aspirations or intentions, at least based on the level of confidence they may have from the information put out by the mass media, or from an identifiable group, an entity or a public figure. In a nutshell, voters decide as a matter of fact on the basis of trust and not on the basis of the information they may acquire.

1.5.4 The Dominant Ideology

Most studies conducted within the sphere of sociological knowledge are birthed out of the Dominant Ideology Thesis and the same can be said of those theories that were formed within the domain of sociological knowledge. The theory posits that among most cultures or communities, there is “a set of beliefs which dominates all others and which, through its incorporation in the consciousness of subordinate classes, tends to inhibit the development of radical political dissent” (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978). Dominant ideology also implies the views, thoughts, ideas, beliefs, morals and values common to the greater percentage of people within a given society, and as a mechanism of social control, this ideology depicts how the majority of people in a given social order are cognizant about the nature of their society, their position in the society as well as their affiliation to a social class (The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought p. 236).

Although the point that religion or to a large extent, cultural values common to many can be controlled for the political gain of the dominant group (class) can be tracked through the rational criticism of the Enlightenment Philosophies to Plato’s ‘golden lie’ (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978). Nonetheless, the present day analysis of dominant

ideologies is credited to Marx and Engels in their work 'The German Ideology' which is in part influenced by Marxism in the area of sociology of knowledge. In the German Ideology, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1845) expressed that "the ideas of the ruling class are, in any age, the ruling ideas" and that this be inferred to all social classes, having the sole aim of strengthening the interests of the ruling class.

The basic premise of the dominant ideology is that "there is in most class societies a pervasive set of beliefs that broadly serves the interest of the dominant class. This dominant ideology is then adopted by subordinate classes which are thereby prevented from formulating any effective opposition." (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978). Hence, in the revolutionary practice, the slogan: "The dominant ideology is the ideology of the dominant class" summarises its function as a revolutionary basis (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978).

Within the capitalist societies, the bourgeois, as espoused by Marxist revolutionary praxis will attempt to attain a political and social status quo that will condense the ruling class into a state of politically illegitimate and for that matter, that will become the mandatory and indispensable condition for the successful overthrow of the capitalist system of production. By this shall the ideology of the working class achieve and institute a social, political and economic dominance which will allow the urban working class and peasants (the proletariat) to ultimately take up the political and economic power as the dominant class of the society (Abercrombie and Turner, 1978). Among non-Marxist theories, the dominant ideology connotes morals, values, and beliefs shared by the vast social majority which in turn depicts how most people view their societies. Abercrombie and Turner (1978) expressed that the extent to which values and beliefs shape the perception most people have about their societies only reflects the wishes and interests of the ruling class.

Marx propounded two models that formed the core features of the social functions of the dominant ideology and these are the intentional and spontaneous models.

1.5.4.1 Intentional

Marx suggested that ideology is a calculated and premeditated construction by the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois intellectuals, which is then disseminated by the mass media. He explained that because the mass media is owned by the bourgeoisie, they have the power to decide, choose, and publish the social, economic, and cultural impressions that comprise the establishment of the status quo, which are the formal policies or ideologies that serve the interests of the ruling class of that society. In addition, based on the fact that the working class (proletariat) do not own or have direct control of the mass media, they are browbeaten by the cultural supremacy and domination of the bourgeoisie and also because they do not have enough intellectuals of their own, they embrace the bourgeoisie way of understanding and doing things, which thus forms a false consciousness about their own economic abuse by the echelon of the upper class. With this false consciousness of the working class, they misplace their own economic and cultural, political and social self-sufficiency and individualism as a social class.

1.5.4.2 Spontaneous

More often, ideology is seen to spontaneously emerge from within every class of society as a representation of the prevailing substantial arrangements of that society. Dependent on the daily occurrences or routines of life, the men and women from each category or status of life (lower, middle and upper class) develop their rational understanding of their communities and also based on the fact that their communal experiences are basically from a capitalist social relations, the common (dominant) ideology is likely to replicate the customs of a capitalist society. For that matter, the

subject matter of a newspaper, for example, will be influenced not by the socio-economic and political preconceptions of the chief editor, but rather by the general and existing state of affairs that have been accepted by both the publisher and the readers of the newspaper.

However, in organizing themselves into trade coalitions, the working class encounter and communicate a distinct kind of social relation that challenges the principles that underlie the generally acceptable standards of capitalism within the capitalist society, thus challenging the rationality of how societies are organized and how they function. The long-term effect will be a successful creation of a working-class ideology that portrays a collective methodology that recognizes and solves the political, socio-economic, and cultural setbacks of people within the working class. Conclusively, the nascent class consciousness will then lead to a new order of organization within the capitalist society that will become the centre of a new ideology that successfully conveys the views and interests of workers and which is contrary to the status quo of the bourgeois cultural hegemony planned and developed by the dominant ideology of the capitalist ruling class.

This succinct presentation of the main descriptive theories of voting behaviour permits us to ascertain the harmony and balance that exist between them. The sociological model emphasizes the influence of social and historical perspectives that aided the development of political parties, which to a large extent validates the division of political parties and the resulting behaviour of voters. The rational choice model of voting behaviour deliberates the strong position of evaluation of political and economic elements within the context of each election in shaping the voting behaviour of electorates; the psychosocial model stresses the relationship that exists between the two basic types of factors (distal and proximal), a connection that is orchestrated and

facilitated by the psychological link determined between political parties and voters (partisanship); and finally, the dominant ideology which is the bedrock of all sociological studies.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is intended to come out with the findings to ascertain whether voting in Ghana should still be described as ethnic-based as Ghana's democracy continues to grow. The study will therefore seek to expose how ethnic-based voting has shaped voting patterns in Ghana's elections in the Fourth Republic and also come out with concrete evidence to ascertain whether this form of voting behaviour is fast losing its ground among Ghanaian voters or that as Ghana's democracy continues to deepen, there still seem to be no significant change in the conventional trend of voting. The study will also seek to fill the gap in the literature by coming out with the voting behaviour determinant that best explains the rationale of voting among voters within these constituencies.

1.7 Rationale and Justification of the Study

Since the inception of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic in 1992, Ghana has steadily progressed its democratic credentials and is also regarded as an inspiration to other African countries, evidenced by the high level of political tolerance among opposing groups, a growing and vibrant civil society as well as constantly held free and fair elections. Notwithstanding these, elections in Ghana, as well as that of many African countries, have been labelled as nothing more than "ethnic consensus". The obvious question to ask is, how is it that as Ghana's democracy deepens, its voting

choice by the electorates is labelled as ethnic-based? The study places greater emphasis on the rationale of voting among voters in the Ho-West, the Manhyia South and the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituencies to ascertain whether the nature of voting behaviour among electorates in these constituencies.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study is confined within the context of voting behaviour in the Ho-west, Manhyia South and the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituencies. Although the study covers elections in the Fourth Republic, a greater emphasis will be placed on the 2016 general elections as well as voters who at least voted in the 2016 elections.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

The research study is organized into five (5) chapters.

Chapter one of the study comprises the introduction of the study, statement of the research problem and the objective of the study. The chapter also focuses on the theoretical framework; which captures voting behaviour theories as well as the research questions and research hypothesis that are birthed out of the research theory, the significance and scope of the study.

Chapter two which is the literature review seeks to analyse and review the position of other related and relevant literature in connection to my study and which is organized in thematic areas including the following; the general review of elections, politics and democracy in Africa, elections in Ghana's Fourth Republic and the voting trends/pattern in Ghanaian elections.

Chapter three focuses on the research methodology which serves as a guide for the researcher to collect answers to the research questions raised in chapter three of the study. Most precisely, the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, administration of the instruments and data analysis will be discussed.

Chapter four focuses on data presentation, analysis and discussion of empirical results

Lastly, chapter five discusses the summary of major findings, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the review of literature that is relevant to the study. The question of rationality behind voting in Ghana's politics is something that is considered to be pretty new. As such, not many people have written on the subject. This is not to say however that no literature exists in the area of elections and the trend of voting. It is definitely not the first ever research to be conducted on the subject. However, this study is very significant because it will contribute immensely to building literature in the area. In order to lay a proper foundation for the research, the literature was reviewed under certain key themes that are as follows:

- Studies on the general concept of elections.
- Studies on the politics and elections in Africa.
- Studies on voting behaviour and elections in Ghana.

2.2 Concept of Elections

Elections exist as the most widely accepted mechanism for the selection of officials among the contemporary states of the world. Bratton (1999) is of the view that "while elections are not the be all and end all of a democracy, they provide a major blueprint for the existence of democracy." Gyekye-Jandoh (2014, p. 185) reasons further that "elections, particularly, free and fair elections, are a key criterion of the democratic system, alongside the freedom and independence of the media and the protection of civil rights and liberties." As such, election and democracy are viewed as complements

of one another, and in a similar vein, there is no hesitation to the point that “elections remained central to broader strategies for promoting democracy, and genuine democracy definitely requires substantially more than democratic elections” (Ongwen, 2013 p. 74). Gyekye-Jandoh (2014, p. 185) agrees with this line of thought as she argues that elections aid “democratic peace and reduce the likelihood of a democratic reversal.”

Elections are very much considered as the fundamental and essential feature for having a sustainable democratic culture (Fawole, 2005). The relevance of the conduct of elections cannot be underemphasized basically due to the fact that elections are essentially accepted as a key component of establishing and maintaining state legitimacy, an important step on the path to forging an inclusive and stable political settlement. Schumpeter (1947, p. 150) also argues that "democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them" which implies that democracy, among other reasons, is chiefly centred on elections and choosing leaders. Schumpeter's argument is in direct sync with the views of Nohlen (1996) when he reasoned that “elections are a process through which citizens choose who will represent them in government or what will be done about a particular issue.” In a similar line of thought, Hayward (1987, p.5) also argues that “choices are not preordained, and involve discussion, consultation and decision by the participants”.

The view that the selection of public officials are not preordained but rather, it is through the process of deliberation that the choice is made has strongly been disagreed by some scholars like Schatzberg (1993) who argues that within the erstwhile tradition setup, chiefs were chosen from a specific royal lineage that makes the result of the selection preordained. Although scholars like Schatzberg attempt to make a case for the prearrangement of leaders, one can argue that such selections are undemocratic and do

not fit into the modern day political system of governance as the ambition to govern was not open to all citizens. By implication, a larger percentage of the masses are also denied the right to determine who governs them. In a broader sense, the legitimacy of choice in elections must be based on the grounds that there must be a group of people (community/organization) that wants to select its leaders, contending parties or candidates who wish to be selected into leadership offices and then a laid-down structure that must be followed to select these leaders. Nohlen (1996) explains that one of the cardinal principles that underlie the conduct of elections is that the person who receives a majority or plurality of votes is the person elected. In a more general sense, a plurality of the votes of the electors present is sufficient; but in some states, a majority of all the votes is required. Each elector has one vote.

The relevance of elections has been strengthened more by the institutionalization of the universal adult suffrage as a suitable scheme for popular participation. The universal adult suffrage advocates that every eligible adult (i.e., those who are eighteen years and above and are of sound mind) has the right to exercise his or her franchise in an election (Universal Adult Suffrage, 1948). This by extension implies that the citizens are empowered to decide or determine what sort of persons or leaders should govern them as well the form of political system they want to experience.

Blais and Carty (1990) outlined that there are basically two broad forms of electoral systems. There is the proportional representation whereby seats are apportioned according to the percentage of the vote and there is also the direct election where elections are conducted by a majority or plurality of votes. However, some scholars have argued that the forms of electoral systems are not that simple and that there are many variations on these systems, and some countries even use both systems for their elections (Austen-Smith & Banks, 1988; Balinski, and Young, 1982; Benoit &

Kornhauser, 1994; Brams & Fishburn, 1993). In addition to the above, each system raises certain complex questions. For example, should a voter turnout of less than 50 percent be considered as a valid expression of the people's will? Should a plurality or majority vote be needed for election? Should there be a threshold to enter parliament? Such fundamental questions cannot be answered in just simple terms. More often, the solutions depend on a country's political history and culture (Democracy Web, 2013).

It is also of equal importance to emphasize that the election process should be free and uninfluenced either by hope or fear. They are, therefore, generally made by ballot. And to render this freedom as perfect as possible, electors are generally exempted from arrest in all cases (except on the grounds of treason, felony, or breach of the peace) during their attendance on election, and in going to and returning from them. In addition, provisions are often made by law by many countries that prevent the interference or appearance of the military on the election ground as a means of intimidating electorates before, during and after they vote (online law Dictionary, 2013). In seeking to define electoral and representative systems, there seem to be no precise or concise definitions for regular, free, and fair elections. The International Human Rights Conventions, for instance, have established a basic consensus, most importantly Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that elections must be periodic, genuine, organized according to universal suffrage, and by secret ballot (Universal Adult Suffrage, 1948).

It is noteworthy to also highlight that the significance of elections as the key indicator to the establishment of democracy as a system of governance has been debated among scholars. Whereas scholars like Schumpeter (1947) have argued that elections are viewed as the democratic method of choosing representatives of the people, and by implication, eligible citizens are given the opportunity to select their leaders, others do

not accept that election is the prime indicator of democracy and that other features like the freedom and independence of the media and the protection of civil rights and liberties among others are equally important (Gyekye-Jandoh, 2014). The fact is, elections may fairly cohabit with systematic exploitation of human rights and the marginalization of some of the citizenry. The researcher's position in this discourse is in direct sync with the views of Lindberg (2006) who argues that notwithstanding the form of political system that exists among the nations of the world, elections appear to take place in all types of countries including those where no democracy exists. One can also argue that election can be seen as a technique for forming representative bodies and or, for delegating authority and on that basis, an election can be used instead of other techniques (designating representatives by succession, ex officio or by appointment) without having any democratic substance. In other words, elections are not confined exclusively to democracies and so it cannot be regarded as a key catalyst to democratic practice (Freund & Jaud, 2013, and Nohlen, 1996).

One can argue further based on the evidence that even among most Western democracies, elections had been held long before universal suffrage had been achieved. Hence, the use of elections as a technique preceded by far the emergence of modern democracies. The fact of the matter is that elections are held even in political systems which do not have a democratic structure. Examples are the former Soviet Bloc Countries where the domination of one party (Communist Party) was written into their constitutions. The representative organs in the former USSR, Socialist Hungary and Romania for example, were re-appointed at regular intervals by means of elections, in authoritarian regimes where the exercise of power by the ruling group is not questioned. Other examples are Portugal under Salazar and the Philippines under Marcos, Brazil under the military regime (Nohlen, 1996; and Mulligan, Gil & Sala-i-Martin, 2004).

The fact that elections are held in democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian political systems, therefore, directs us to the following conclusion: The concept of elections varies in accordance with the type of political systems (Lindberg, 2006 and Nohlen, 1996). One can agree with this point because the way and manner elections, a technique for selecting representatives for leadership offices, are conducted in a particular political system, will inversely be different from how it will be carried about in another political system. Also, from the above-mentioned statement, the significance of elections will doubtlessly differ from political system to political system (Nohlen, 1996). For instance, the conduction of elections in a democratic political state will have a serious amount of significance attached to it since it will determine which political party/ ideology will come to power, compared with an election taking place in an autocratic or totalitarian state where only one party exists (if any).

The researcher argues to the fact that elections which take place in different political systems have to be distinguished conceptually from each other, considering the fact that among a number of countries the voting public may choose from among several parties and reach their decision freely, while in other countries, voters can only give their votes to a single party since no other parties are allowed to put up candidates. Nohlen (1996) argues that as far as the running of elections are concerned, “the notion in its proper sense implies competitiveness as well as freedom of choice”. In other words, in order for suffrage to actualized, the voter must be allowed to choose between two different candidates or political parties, between different ideologies and policy programs. Therefore, suffrage is in practice only when voters have a choice between at least two options. Additionally, voters must be able to decide freely between the options or else they are elections without choice. “Therefore, the opportunity and freedom to choose must be embodied in the law” (online law Dictionary, 2013). For that matter, elections

for which these preconditions exist are called competitive elections (Lindberg, 2006). If voters are fundamentally denied the opportunity and freedom to vote, we speak of non-competitive elections. But there is a third. Where there are restrictions of various kinds which limit the opportunity and freedom to vote, we speak of semi-competitive elections (Nohlen, 1996). So it is not simply “elections which are demanded, but rather free elections which guarantee citizens” (Nohlen, 1996) freedom to choose among political alternatives that are presented without restrictions.

Nohlen (1996) argues that “the election process; the election functions and the behaviour of the individual voter are determined by class, social stratification, ethnic structures, religion, lobbies and interest groups and the patterns and depth of social antagonisms”. In a similar line of thought, Aliyu (2009) has attempted to explain that what elections seek to achieve, how voting trends/ pattern (voter behaviour) will be, does not exist in abstract, but rather, it is underpinned by a number of factors which include the various social classes that exist in a community, how fortified or weakened ethnicity is in the community as well as religion among other things. These factors are also influenced by the structure of the political system.

Butler (1981) makes a case for the fact that the functions of elections will be different in a parliamentary system or presidential system of government. In a parliamentary system of government, for instance, one has to take into account the internal distribution of power in the government, and whether the centre of political power rests with the parliament, the cabinet or the chancellor/ prime minister. In addition to the above, the election functions, as well as individual voting behaviour, will also vary respectively in unitary and federal states, and both are then affected by the political cultures, patterns of decision-making and modes of conflict resolution prevalent in a given country. The election process, functions and behaviour of the individual voter are determined by the

number of parliamentary representation, their relative strength, the ideological dimensions and ideological distances existing between parties, among other factors (Nohlen, 1996).

Elections have both the elector and the elected as its main stakeholders. This means that elections concern voters as much as they are a concern to governments. Elections are about freedom and choice; they are also about control and constraint. “Election is a formal expression of preferences by the governed, which are then aggregated and transformed into a collective decision about who will govern, who will stay in office, who should be thrown out, who should replace those who have been thrown out and so on”(Rokkans, 1970).

2.3 Democracy and Elections in Africa

Election and Democracy complements one another. In essence, election retains itself as central to the broader strategies for advancing democracy, and genuine democracy definitely requires substantially more than democratic elections (Aliyu, 2009). Boafo-Arthur (2006) has argued that elections are highly significant to both the growth and development of a nation and also to its citizens (electorates) as it performs the function of a litmus test for assessing some democratic institutions. Conversely, electorates make use of elections to ascertain the success or failure of governments in all aspects of national life. Within the African context, Chazan (1987) argues that elections formed an essential part of the African political setting within the pre-colonial and post-colonial political setup. In a similar line of thought, Hayward (1987) argues that the electoral institution of the post-colonial era is not something new or an unfamiliar establishment among the African people but rather, elections are underpinned by the cultural past of

the African people. The African community allowed the institutionalization of an electoral organ for choosing leaders even before colonization took shape within the African continent.

Some scholars however, do not agree with this assertion. Adejumobi (2000, p62) for instance argues that “although the pre-colonial political systems in Africa had some shades of democratic principles and practices embedded in them, the concept of voting and the notion of a political majority and minority were not part of the African political tradition.” Jinadu (1995) adds that the conduct of elections within the African context were a colonial scheme that developed as an ingredient of the institutional transmission of the liberal democratic framework. One can therefore argue that we could draw a contrast between the erstwhile pre-colonial African political system and the post-colonial setup. Whilst the pre-colonial system emphasized consensus, discourse and political collectivity, colonial and the post-colonial setup have demonstrated more of “...individualism, atomization and the majoritarianism of the western capitalist political system” (Adejumobi, 2000 p. 62).

Adejumobi (2000) points out that the establishment of the electoral order under the colonial rule had a grave and severe impact on post-colonial electoral politics as it generated three abrupt paradoxes predominantly in leadership. Most importantly, the general outlook of colonialism depicted a contrasting view that was contrary to the lucidity, ideas and thinking of democracy but was rather inclined to the rudiments and foundations of authoritarianism and domination. This therefore implied that the administration of the electoral process that would be devoid of partiality and would thereby be free and fair was doubtful because the erstwhile colonial setup was also immensely involved in the politics of how power should be handed over in a very complex and challenging setting. Secondly, whilst the blueprint of the decolonization

process was framed with the view of the democratic tenets at hand as well as the essentials of self-rule, free will and social justice, the leading politicians that surfaced, were of those who had been trained and socialized under a highly centralized authoritarian order (Chazan, 1993). In the end, the post-colonial behaviour was affected by this predicament. Finally, the structure and the general state outlook of colonial domination which survived the period was ultimately going to be a key determining factor as far as competition within the electoral environment was concerned.

In essence, one could confidently agree with the argument presented by Adejumobi (2000) that the “demeaning politics of de-participation and the shrinking of the electoral arena which characterized the post-colonial era in Africa had its roots in earlier colonial history.” In a parallel line of consideration, Adejumobi (1998, p. 125-145) argues that the politics of post-colonial era was built “on the logic of neo-patrimonialism, in which state offices and rents were appropriated, with the state serving as the focus of capital accumulation and the fulcrum of social control.” The manner in which politics was conducted was for politicians to see how best they could take advantage of the situation rather than coming in to see how best they could offer their best to the growth and progress of statehood (Ibrahim, 1994). Consequently, elections conducted within this setting implied a confined and limited opportunity for citizens to choose leaders. The evidence could be seen in the number of one-party states and military regimes that were scattered throughout the African political landscape. In the view of Adejumobi (2000, p.63), “African leaders generally had a lethargic disdain for open and competitive elections which might threaten the bases of their power and authority.” Instances could be drawn from Ghana where Kwame Nkrumah turned the state from a democratically elected state into a one-party de jure in 1964 before he was overthrown in 1966 (Chazan, 1993).

Similarly, Milton Obote who was the former president of Uganda was supposedly to have said that elections were a means of restraining people rather than being a mechanism by which he could be controlled (Cohen, 1983 cited in Adejumobi, 2000). In the same manner, Mohammed Momoh, who was a former Sierra Leonean president had professed “that multiparty competitive elections often lead to anarchy, thereby justifying one-party rule as a panacea to inter-ethnic and inter-party conflicts and as an aid to the promotion of national cohesion” (Kpundeh & Reiley, 1992: p. 266 cited in Adejumobi, 2000).

In a more definite term, one can argue that the complexion of elections in the immediate post-colonial within the African continent was more inclined towards an authoritarian and a state-controlled non-competitive framework. As such, states such as Angola, Benin, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia all had a de jure one party government where elections were only conducted to justify and make valid the existing political order. Adejumobi (2000) posits that “in countries like Gambia, Botswana, Mauritius, Zimbabwe and post-1976 Senegal although periodic multiparty elections were held a de facto one-party rule existed in which elections altered neither the leadership, the administration or the regime.” Mauritius can be singled out as the only country (in such a political setting) where the political factions replaced themselves in government through elections.

Open and competitive multiparty elections however, did occur among some countries in some circumstances but then they typically occurred in seasons where there was military withdrawal or military extrication from the politics of the day, as was the case in Nigeria (1979), Ghana (1969, 1979) and Uganda (1980) (Adejumobi, 2000). Some scholars have argued that the political systems and even the sort of elections organized and the manner in which they organized within the African space could not be justified

on the grounds that vibrant civil societies were in existent or even if they existed, were very few, rather these existed because of the broader international political outlook. What happened in Africa only mirrored what existed in the world at that time as could be evidenced in Eastern Europe, Asia and South America. In other words, the ideological order that prevailed in the post- World War Two as well as the Cold War between the USSR and America largely influenced the preference and style of political leadership among most African elites as the two super powers sought for support and political allies in their ideological mind game. Consequently, autocrats were continued in Africa and mass protests for multiparty elections were brutally suppressed by the active sponsoring of the two power factions. It will therefore be mistaken to presuppose that Africans by no means desired to practice democracy as African were largely prevented from practicing democracy by a joining together of both international and domestic factors.

2.3.1 Multiparty Elections in Africa since the End of the Cold War

The late 1980s and early 1990s depicted a widespread tendency and yearn to practice multiparty democracy within the African continent. The prevalent outcry among the African people were "elections," "multipartyism," "civil society," and "democracy" (Adejumobi, 2000). In fact, between 1985 and 1991, as many as twenty-eight authoritarian regimes were # compelled to relax the political setting whilst as many as eight multiparty elections took place among eight countries. To Diamond (1992), the end of the Cold War in 1991 signalled the initiation of Africa's "second liberation." Gyekye-Jandoh (2006) also holds the view that the second liberation offers more assurance for democratization and stable democracy. The reason is that, the second liberation is marked and moulded by the previous or historical occurrence of the drawbacks and ineptitude of the military and authoritarian civilian rule. History points

out that Benin took the lead in the practice of multiparty elections in 1991, when Matthieu Kerekou, who was the incumbent president, lost to Nicephore Soglo. In Malawi and Zambia multiparty elections in 1991 also witnessed the defeat of incumbent presidents (Banda and Kaunda respectively).

Within the Ghanaian context, series of increased attempts to open the political space and the democratization process resulted to the conducting of the 1992 multiparty elections which although were fraught with irregularities showed a lot of elasticity. By 2005 however, Ghana had convened four successive multiparty elections that were increasingly free and fair (Gyekye-Jandoh, 2014). More important, by the end of 2000, multiparty elections had been conducted in all but five of the forty-eight states in the Sub-Saharan Africa (that is, Comoros, Congo-Kinshasa, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Somalia) (Barkan 2003 cited in Gyekye-Jandoh, 2014)). By 2003, as many as thirty-three African countries had held not only their first but second elections, twenty had held third elections, and seven countries had held at least four successive elections (Lindberg 2006).

Adejumobi (2000) points out that the incidence of multiparty elections and democratization can be underscored by two broad views. He argued that the inability of authoritarian and one-party regimes to salvage the continuous decline of the economic fortunes and harsh material insufficiency among the African people resulted in the weakening of the political legitimacy of these leaders. There were calls for the need for alternative political choices through competitive multiparty elections and consequently, democratic politics became a reality. The second view is that the switch in the international political economic setting merged to create an alteration in the selection of political systems in Africa as the supremacy and domination of the global

space by the liberal capitalist ideology steered the “internationalization” of issues pertaining to market reforms and liberal democracy.

By implication, liberal democracy consequently became the major issue of discussion among both bilateral and multilateral development collaborations especially between Africa and the West. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Commonwealth, the European Union (EU) and the United Nations as well as other multinational organization began to prioritize the rule of law, human rights causes and democracy as their leading issues of concern which also became conditions for lending their support to governments in Africa. Leading donor countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, and France also made issues relating to democracy and human rights as requirements for the continued release of reliefs and economic support. Instance can be drawn from when western donors in 1991 resolved to halt \$350 million (out of about \$1 billion) in a rapid-pay out aid to the country, forcing Arap Moi, the president of Kenya, to reluctantly concede to constitutional alterations that permitted multiparty elections in December 1992 (Hempstone, 1996). In Ghana also, Rawlings consented to send back the country to constitutional rule primarily with the aim of curry favour with and preserving the goodwill of the donor community, announcing the transition programme on 10 May 1991, which was just within four days before the important donors' conference in Paris (Oquaye, 1995 cited in Adejumobi, 2000).

Adejumobi (2000) also emphasized that the road as well as the format to attaining democratic status among most African countries, especially those of the Sub-Saharan differed and by extension, the landscape and the characteristics of elections and their consequences also differed. He identified four different patterns that emerged basically due to the manner in which the political transition process was negotiated. The first type

emerged among countries where their existing civil society was well-structured, very vocal and enthusiastic. These groups by their activities and inventiveness proposed political reforms and also actively contended the respective military and authoritarian regimes in intense political battles especially through demonstrations and boycotts with the sole aim of exerting their will on the course for political transformation. By this way, the frontrunners of the political landscape saw to it that the needed changes in the electoral laws that will permit free and fair electoral contest was made so that the official establishments such as the electoral body, the media, security, and the judiciary were detached from or less accessible to for the control of the ruling government. As a matter of fact and in some instances, the various opposition groups obtained an implicit backing and commitment from some of these organizations. The ultimate outcome was that these opposition groups were capable of overthrowing the incumbent from office through elections. Instances can be drawn from states like Cape Verde, Congo, Malawi, the republic of Benin and Zambia.

The second pattern talks about countries the civil society groups were enterprising enough to embark on political reforms that were sabotaged by the incumbent government. The outcome was that either the prevailing enclosed and confined electoral regulations were unaltered or that these were completely changed. In instance where the authoritarian control of the electoral process by the regime remained firm, elections were either cancelled or the outcome of the elections produced foreseeable results. There were instances in Kenya, Togo and Zaire (now DR Congo).

The third pattern is the one where the state led the campaign in introducing some political reforms, and advancing a "guided" form of democracy through which it deliberately supervised, controlled, and influenced the electoral process with the aim of forcing its interest, priorities, and will on the process. In the end, there was only a

diminutive achievement in terms of the conduct of meaningful elections. This condition existed in countries like Algeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia and Nigeria. In the Algerian and Nigerian instances, the election results were invalidated by the military in 1992 and 1993 respectively. Zaleza et al (1995) rightly refer to such regimes as "bullies in uniform."

There is also finally instances or situations where the political transition process could not reach a consensus among the opposing factions and therefore ended up in very serious and cruel political conflicts and civil wars. Examples are Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, and Sudan. In Liberia for instance, after about almost a decade of a prolonged civil war, elections were finally organized by the support and backing of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and also supervised by the ECOMOG, which is the military organ of the ECOWAS in July 1997. Charles Taylor, the main rebel leader, emerged winner of the presidential elections.

2.3.2 The Renaissance of Political Parties in Post-Cold War Era in Africa

The last decade of the twentieth century was characterized by a resurgence of multiparty democracy in Africa. After what seemed to be a fall of military rule and authoritarian regimes, the last of the twentieth century saw the emergence of multiparty democracy and elections among many African countries. It also saw the restoration of political parties to the fore of politics in Africa, entreating a need to discontinue and redirect the main argument of political discourse on the African continent. Although the wave of democratization that has hit the shores of Africa since the early 1990s has produced mixed results with regards to the quality of democracy among the 48 countries south of the Sahara, what can hardly be disputed against however, is the role of political parties that has transformed dramatically the political culture of the African continent. With the exception of very few countries such as Eritrea, Swaziland and Somalia, in almost all sub-Saharan countries regimes

legally allow multi-party politics. To Basedau (2005), “this is in stark contrast to the single-party regimes and military oligarchies that prevailed before 1990.”

To Erdmann (2004) the discourse about the existence and activities of political parties in Africa can be viewed from four different compartments which are; how parties in Africa can be described; the party type known as the ethnic congress party; the causes of its predominance in Africa; and the future prospects for the development of political parties.

According to Erdmann (2004), most but not all political parties manifest the following features. In the first instance, he argued that it is quite difficult to identify certain unique characteristics that distinguishes one political party from the other on the African continent or among political parties that exist in just a single country as most of them are characterized by the running of meaningless programs. They also do have very weak bureaucratic or administrative setups that unable to reliably capture the data of its members as well as a weakened funding base. Political parties in Africa are also dominated by so many informal relations like ‘patronage’ and ‘clientelism’ as well as strong ‘personalism’. Erdmann (2004) further argues that among political parties in Africa, there is an absence or non-existent of internal democracy and even if it does exist, it is grossly deficiency; factionalism appears dominant and there are feeble formal connections that links political parties to the civil society. Decisively, African political parties according to Erdmann (2004), “are predominantly regional or ethnic-based in relation to membership and the electorate.”

With the predominant type of political parties in Africa, Erdmann (2004) drew on a global typology that was expounded by Diamond and Gunther (2001) who identified five different (main) types of political parties. Their studies identified the elite-based, the mass-based, the ethnicity-based, the electoralist and the movement parties. In his

study, Erdmann (2004), discovered that the ethnicity-based party system appears to be most prominent among countries in Africa, while the other four types, although they may not be completely missing, do not apply to Africa because they require the existence of a high levelled bureaucratic system, as well as having professional electoral campaigns or distinct ideological standpoints.

Although often used, the usage of the phrase “ethnicity-based” must not be understood as a support base in just a single ethnic group, rather it implies a league of diverse ethnic groups. Erdmann (2004), argues that the consequence of the pervasion of this party type can be explained because of the specific political and social cleavage structure that exist among most African states. The classical European cleavages (urban-rural, church-state, capital-labour) are relatively weak or inexistent among the African people, rather, what exists is a frequently multi-ethnic structure that shapes the African political landscape. Since one group rarely makes up the majority of the population, party leaders therefore have to build multi-ethnic coalitions in order to be successful in elections.

To Mozaffar (2005), the history of African political parties may appear to be a relatively “long one” that is, if one chooses to look at the origins of the first party on the continent which is the True Whig Party that was set up in Liberia in 1860. By 1945, however, in a region that was still largely under the control of colonialism, less than a dozen parties had been “established by small groups of African elites as the organized expression of their political demands for reforming the colonial system, gaining access to colonial governments and influencing colonial policy” (Mozaffar, 2005). It was only after the attainment of independence of African countries, and during the period that immediately preceded it, that parties began to grow and multiply in the Sub-Saharan context. Between 1945 and 1968, as many as 143 new political parties emerged on the continent that became the elemental vehicles “for the mobilization of national

electorates that were eventually being given the suffrage and for the formation of the first independent governments” (Mozaffar, 2005).

In the views of Leiserson (1955), “in democratic societies, political parties are therefore indispensable voluntary and informal associations of society, where people share commonly understood values, customs and attitudes to their role in politics.” This implies that political parties are the result of and function within economic arrangements, and in a context of interests that are impacted by and react to the accretion and dissemination of goodwill and assets, including the wealth of society. One can agree with Leiserson’s view because, as channels of collective action, political parties are the conception of the political elite in an attempt to regulate the resources and officials of government in order to execute a philosophy or a political agenda. In a similar line of thought, Weiner (1967) argues that “in competitive political systems, parties are organized by politicians to win elections; in authoritarian systems, parties are organized to affect the attitudes and behavior of the population. In both instances, an organizational structure must be forged, money must be raised, cadres recruited, officers elected or selected, and procedures for internal governing established and agreed upon”.

Salih and Nordlund (2007) further expounded that, in spite of the fact that political parties are part of the informal composition of the society, in the instance where they have competed in legally sanctioned elections, they acquire power and formally, under the precinct and formal ‘constitution’ of the state, they acquire legitimacy and control the administrators and the resources of the state. The rulers and political officials who came out as victors in free and fair elections then make up the governing political party (or coalition of parties), which are bequeathed with the legitimacy to assume the authority. The reasonable conclusion one can make will be that there will now be a

separation and consequential relations between the rulers and ruled in a politically organized society. To Weiner (1967, p1-2)

” political party is a strategically critical concept for understanding, in any developed political system, not only the institutions and practices that permit and justify the exercise of political authority, regulate the effective choice and removal of political rulers, and prescribe and delimit the authority of the government in power, but also the ways in which public policy-makers are guided by the subject of the broad movements of popular sentiment and inter-group feelings as instances.”

Salih and Nordlund (2007) however argue that the actions of political parties overlap the intervals and the extent of connection between citizens and government, between a collection of private, market-based, civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the general public. To Salih and Nordlund (2007) the actions of political parties also traverse at least four principal processes of government: the electoral, the legislative, the executive and the administrative. Aside traversing government procedures, political parties also mould public strategies of action and plans that intersect party politics and government programs, and even the state’s response to transnational public policy issues where the party in power holds sway in implementing policies informed by its electoral pledges.

Salih and Nordlund (2007) argue that political parties in a broader sense, are said to be representative institutions that confers governments with legitimacy. They also act within sets of ideologies and philosophies that epitomizes the social, economic and political interests. Political parties also produce leaders who on the basis of their selection through democratic means make up the execution arm of government (from parliament to the political executive) or even provides the avenue for an all-inclusive government that combines all the three organs of government. Political parties in a more advanced scenario, act as mediators, and creating occasions for upward social and

political mobility for the creation of alliances and associations that strongly attracts the attention of governments and the sustenance of governance. To Salih and Nordlund (2007, p.54), “all these functions have a major influence on politics and the way in which parties carry them out in as indicator of whether a particular democratic system is institutionalized or fragile.”

In most cases, when a political party wins the bulk of the seats in parliament, the party’s plan and agenda also inform the government’s policies and programs. Within the African context, some political parties have been vigorous not just in terms of political mobilization but have also been active in mobilization for support activities, conflict management, among others. Some scholars have argued that the relevance of political parties come to bear when the discourse of democratic consolidation comes to mind. They argue that the consolidation of democracy can barely be accomplished if political parties do not stand to function fully not just through debating but by practically engaging the beliefs and policies they uphold. In addition to the above is the existence of a global alliance of interests among political parties with relatively parallel ideological slant as well as regional and sub-regional parliamentary groups, with special agenda of enlarging their responsibilities. Within this context, one can easily catch sight of the fact that political parties do not nurse any serious ambition of canvassing for support from among the minds and hearts of citizens living across the length and breadth of the globe.

It is quite obvious that, in a context of external pressures, the existence of global party-to-party networks, and philanthropic and party development institutions, not to mention development aid conditionality, the democratic content of African political parties is still fragile and the prospects of genuine democratic consolidation vary from country to country.

The work outlines a number of factors that supports this proposition.

1. The majority of African governing political parties are still heavily dependent on the direct or indirect (the embezzlement of public funds to finance elections) use or abuse of government resources. This assertion is based on the palpable fact that the party in power is hardly autonomous from government influence and it is difficult to draw the line where the influence of government begins and that of political party ends. The relationship between party and government is so blurred that the governing party tends to rely on the state resources to exact patronage in order to maintain the party organization and management.

2. The African private sector is too small to support the establishment of strong and vibrant civil society organizations and a non-political middle class that are autonomous of the state. The issue at stake is, if interest groups, which seem to be the backbone of civil society anywhere, are absorbed by the state, what leverage can they have to make demands both on the state and on the party where the relationship between these three supposedly autonomous entities is so blurred and entangled?

3. Another interesting factor is the fragility of the private sector. The weakness of the private sector is not only detrimental to civil society's ability to press claims on the state and protect the interests of its membership; it also means that civil society is incapable of creating coalitions of interests with the political parties. The latter are often controlled by the business sector and the relationship develops into one between patron and client rather than creating a transparent platform for the negotiation of interests.

4. Political parties also in most cases perceive the state's capture for the control of the resources and personnel of the state as a source of elite enrichment. For this reason,

politics itself becomes a means to an end, which is devoid of any idea of protecting public interests vis-à-vis private gains.

5. The strength of African political parties are sustainable only at the elite level because the elite depend on them to access the resources of the state. It is hard to maintain that the political parties are sustainable because the moral beliefs of party politics have also been internalized by the party membership, often because of ethnic and regional loyalties rather than ideology or party programs. However, the researcher believes that there have been alterations to party political systems. The conclusion of African party politics being “ethnic-based” should be put in perspective in the light of an expanding urban population which in some cases has lost touch with its ethnic base and devoted more energy to secular party politics.

In spite of the critique and counter-critique that could be levied against and for African political parties, they are the main democratic institutions capable of impacting on the continent’s polity and society. However, for African political parties to play their positive role, the researcher stands on the view that they have to build on what is uniquely African and seek bold alternatives informed by African reality. In the absence of such a vision based on what African societies could offer to promote democracy, externally-driven blueprints will always result in the status quo being maintained. Moreover, in the absence of African alternatives, the long-term prospects would be the creation of democracies without democrats at best and civil dictatorships at worst.

In sum, this work reflects these important issues and outlines the architecture which informs the nexus between African political parties and African democracies.

2.3.3 The Prospects of Elections in Africa

Gyekye-Jandoh (2014) has argued that an encouraging development in the African political context since 1991 has been that the quality of multiparty elections, especially within the frame of free and fair elections, has enhanced greatly among some African countries, with Kenya and Zimbabwe the most recent exceptions. The foremost indication has been the falling-off of intimidation and persecution of opposition groups by the incumbent governments. For that matter, opposition leaders, parties, and supporters have had more and more liberty and freewill to campaign and adequately organize themselves for elections. Barkan (2003) further argues that both domestic and international observers are now considered to be cardinal elements of the electoral process. In the third instance, Bratton (1998) has also argued that voting attendance has been relatively high during elections, pitching at almost two-thirds of registered voters, and even higher in some instances. Probably, a most significant indication has been a logical and organized and a widely held support across Africa for democracy and elections, and a general agreement that authoritarian government and military rule should be a thing of the past (Gyekye-Jandoh, 2014). General popular opinion surveys conducted among twelve African countries between 1999 and 2001 have brought to light that on average, sixty-nine percent of respondents considered democracy as “preferable to any other kind of government,” while only twelve percent thought that “in certain situations, a non-democratic government can be preferable” (Afrobarometer 2001; Barkan 2003).

Notwithstanding the encouraging prospects that coming from the records the conduct of multiparty elections in Africa, some scholars hold contrary views (Herbst 2001; Levitsky and Way 2001; 2002; Ottaway 1997). To Herbst (2001: p. 363), the African democratization process can be expanded into a four-fold category which is based on

the number of times a country experiences an electoral turnover or the number of times power is transferred from one political party to the other. That is multiparty democracies with two transfers of power through elections, one transfer of power through elections, no transfer of power, and regimes with no elections. His studies revealed that a greater percentage of countries in Africa (twenty-two out of the forty-eight) fell into the category of “multiparty elections but no transfer of power.”

As at 2005, only Benin, Madagascar, Mali, and Mauritius had had two transfers of power (where incumbents lost) via multiparty elections (Gyekye-Jandoh 2006; 2014) and countries such as Uganda, Eritrea, and Somalia had not conducted multiparty elections at all (Herbst 2001: p. 366). Comoros on the other hand, regressed after it organized one substantial election and then experienced a coup in April 1999 (Herbst 2001: p. 364). The same could be said of Ivory Coast after a successful coup that led to the overthrow of the ruling government in 1999 by Robert Guei. In the Liberian context, Herbst (2001) argues that the electorates voted for Charles Taylor as president in 1997 largely because they were terrified that he would throw the country into civil war if he had lost. Gyekye-Jandoh (2014) however, argues that the largely free and fair elections that were conducted in November 2005 to elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president have raised hopefulness for elections, however cautious, as exemplifying the democratic optimism for Liberia and African countries to a large extent.

The contended Kenyan elections in December 2007, and the Zimbabwean catastrophe that started with the general election that took place March 29, 2008, have also given the chance for some scholars to assume pessimistic appraisals of modest multiparty elections in Africa as voting without selecting has led to “choice-less democracies” (Mkandawire 1999), renascent “illiberalism” (Zakaria 1997; Gyimah-Boadi 2001), or “liberalized autocracies” (Joseph 1998). Yet some African countries (Botswana, Ghana,

Benin, for example) continue to provide the empirical proof of free and fair competitive elections as the democratic hope for the continent.

2.4 Voting Behaviour and Elections in Ghana

A number of scholars have argued that understanding the voting pattern in Ghana and even Africa to a large extent, can essentially be done by taking into consideration certain vital factors that includes ethnicity, personal linkages, and clientelism (Barkan 1979; Bratton & Van de Walle 1997; Erdmann 2004; 2007; Fridy 2007; Hyden & Leys 1972; Mozzafar et al. 2003; 2005; Posner 2005; Scarritt & Mozzafar 1999; Van de Walle 2003). Putting things in a much clearer perspective, Berman et al. (2004) have argued that ethnicity (a form of social cleavage) is the single and most protruding and noticeable factor that influences and shapes the conceptualization of politics on the African front and that ethnicity persists as the chief principal factor that characterizes ethnicity in Africa. Arthur (2009) is of the opinion that African ethnicity and its subsequent relations to politics is quite new and it exists as a retort to capitalist modernity that are framed by certain dynamics similar to what Berman (1998) argues to be the development of ethnic nationalism among Europeans in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Within the African context, however, Arthur (2009) argues that these dynamics have existed among the African people chiefly due to the infiltration of colonialism and that from the aftermath, ethnicity “has come to play a prominent role in many Africans’ lives.” He argued further that it is not quite surprising that “with the emergence and introduction of electoral politics in African countries after independence, it has come to be perceived as the main criterion by which some groups have formed political parties.” To Vail (1989), ethnicity has become the vehicle by which the intelligentsia and leaders of national discourse among several African communities have adopted as

an active and influential means to canvass for the support of groups. Instances can be cited in Ghana during the early periods of the post-independence era where parties such as the Northern People's Party, The Ga Stand-Fast Party, the Ewe Irredentist Group and the National Liberation Movement were formed (Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah, 2008).

One could argue however that this has been the large cause to the construction of an artificial sense of realization among the general populace. Kohli (1993) adds that ethnicity in most cases functions as the drive of mobilization; by which ethnic affiliations in a splintered society supplies a feeling of security, certainty, mutual assistance, and trust and also serves as a defence against the neglect of one's interests by those whom to Horowitz (1985) are labelled as the strangers and outsiders.

In a similar line of thought, Beissinger and Young (2002) argue that although affiliates from a particular ethnic group are likely to manifest and share common racial traits, what rather strongly binds them together are their economic and rent-seeking interests placed at the core of their economic harmony. To Arthur (2009, p53), "this rather circumscribed identification process is shaped by the fear of inequitable distribution of resources among various social groups" and for that matter, it is ethnicity that becomes the means by which people try to influence the state and gain access to state resources."

One could therefore deduce that the central motivation among ethnic groups is to congregate in order to exert pressure on political kingpins who in turn, will apportion their lots and revenues to them so as to advance their collective interests (Beissinger & Young 2002).

Norris and Mattes (2003, p. 4) also posit that "structural theories predict that the cues of social identity, particularly ethnicity, should exert a strong influence upon voting choices and party support in traditional agrarian societies, characterized by low levels

of education and minimal access to the news media.” To them, this occurrence is significant not only because it aids in conceptualizing the basis of electoral behaviour but more because of the possible impact it can have on the democratization process. One can argue that in the instance where the attributed ethnic allegiances are resilient enough, there could be the breeding of party structures that strongly mirrors stiff group frontiers. In a similar line of thought, Horowitz (1985) argues that “societies that are deeply driven along a preponderant ethnic cleavage – as in many Asian and African states – tend to throw up party systems that exacerbate ethnic conflict.” To Norris and Mattes (2003), not many scholars can contend against the fact that ethnicity wields some sort of control over multiparty politics in Africa, especially in Ghana; however, the most relevant interrogation one can make is “how much influence can be attributed to ethnic cues when compared with other structural factors such as urbanization, age and education, and compared with political attitudes, such as evaluations of government performance.”

In fact, Chabal and Daloz (1999, p. 17-30) have argued that it is not shocking to label ethnicity as the most vital variable that shapes the politics of Africa especially when identity politics and ethnicity seem to be on their ascendancy. Their argument is in direct tandem with the position of Horowitz (1985, p. 319-324) that the conduct of elections among African countries are nothing more than ethnic “consensus” where the people who vote only do so on the path of ethnic appeals rather than on the basis of policy inclinations. It is against this backdrop that Arthur (2009, p. 56) has argued that “It is unsurprising that the issue of ethnicity has dominated the politics of democratization and nation building in many African countries.”

Chazan (1982, p. 461-485) agrees to this assertion when she also postulated that “ethnic politics, despite severe vacillations in regime types and ideological predilections, have come to play an increasingly prominent role in Ghanaian politics since independence in 1957.” Horowitz (1985) & Salih and Markakis (1998) are quick to justify this position based on the fact that among African countries in the Sub-Saharan have long since been bound by ethnic ties that are founded on family and kinship, dialect, tribal conventions and values as well as communal religious beliefs. These ties according to Horowitz (1985), go a long way to influence and entrench partisan politics. To Chazan (1982), “ethnicity has been put to manifold uses (and misuses) in the Ghanaian political context.” To Fitch and Oppenheimer (1996) the ethnic phenomenon cannot be easily ignored or overlooked as the conceptualization of ethnicity generates certain unique features that can be acknowledged as the essential rule of the Ghanaian collective life. To Chazan (1982) the dissection of the chief ethnic categories manifests these realities as the main Akan structure (segmented into Asante, Fante, Akim, Brong, Kwahu, Nzima, and other minor groups) comprises 44.1 percent of the population. The Mole-Dagbani group constitutes 15.9 percent, the Ewe 13 percent, the Ga-Adangbe 8.3 percent, the Guan 3.7 percent, the Gurma 3.5 percent, and other additional minor groups who make up 11.4 percent of the population.

Arthur (2009) argues that although “some of these groups share cultural and linguistic traits,” there are however certain “variations within them, and they are spread across the country.” Oelbaum (2004) also adds that whereas the administrative regions of Ghana portray the domination of some specific ethnic groups by which they are taken proxies for ethnic groups, there is however not a single region that is ethnically homogeneous. Evidence can be seen in table 1, where the Akan which is made up of a variety of ethnic groups that includes Asante, Fanti, Bono, Kwahu, Akyem, Akwapim,

Denkyira, Nzema, and others control the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Western and Central regions as well as some portions of the Volta Region. In a similar vein, the Mole-Dagbani who comprise Dagomba, Dagarti, Frafra, Mamprusi and Nanumba who although are largely condensed in the Northern, Upper West and Upper East regions could also be found throughout the various sections of the country. Additionally, the Ewe are mostly predominant in the Volta Region although they can be found in smaller portions across the country (Frempong 2001 & Arthur 2009).

Lentz and Nugent (2000, p. 22) argue that the influence of ethnicity on Ghana's politics since the actualization of its independence has been dangling and as a result, at "certain times ethnic tensions have manifested themselves overtly, only to be followed by long periods when the importance of ethnicity is denied by virtually all sides". It is noteworthy to point out that despite the fact that provisions of the constitution of the Fourth Republic debar the formation of political parties on ethnic, regional and religious lines as well as the regional ethnic heterogeneity of the Ghanaian state, some scholars still persist with the view that "it would be disingenuous to ignore the ethnic undercurrents in the electoral politics of Ghana's Fourth Republic" (Arthur, 2009).

As a matter of fact, to Gyimah-Boadi and Asante (2006: p. 248) the two leading political parties, that is the NPP and the NDC, are ostensibly regarded as Asante/Akan and Ewe-based respectively and for that matter Arthur (2009) argues that it is often insinuated that the dread that the Asante have about the political control of Ewe justifies the support that the Asante confer to the Danquah-Busia tradition, and by extension the NPP. He reasons further that although it will be hard to carry a similar assertion to the Ewe control especially under the PNDC regime, such observations cannot be discredited. This is based on the evidence that the larger portion of Ghanaians accept as true the fact that the officials of the PNDC, which was later metamorphosed into the

NDC were largely Ewe people. Arthur (2009) emphasized that “the perception of Ewe dominance has created the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the NDC belongs to the Ewe ethnic group, and this perception has remained strong, especially among Akan people.”

One can fairly deduce from the incidence of alliance voting basically due to the fear of political domination of a particular ethnic group. To Awoonor (1984, p. 57), “Ewes see themselves in opposition to all governments in Ghana which inevitably became Akan (Asante) dominated.” For that matter, the competition for power has been lowered down to nothing but a ferocious challenge between the Akan (Asante) and Ewe. Awoonor (1984, p57) argues further that “the large Ewe presence in the civil service, military and institutions of learning is seen as an effective check on Asante’s efforts at hegemony.” Arthur (2009) therefore postulates that “It is in this vein that ethnicity is sometimes both overtly and covertly invoked during elections. It explains occasional ethnic propaganda, pushed especially between the Asantes and Ewes.” He proceeds to make his case that regardless of the provisions in Ghana’s constitution that is intended to weaken and debase the ethnic undercurrents that form the heart of electoral activities, evidence shown in Table 2.1 points out that ethnicity maintains its dominance in Ghanaian politics.

Table 2.1: Household heads in regions by major ethnic groups.

Ethnic Group	Ashanti	Brong Ahafo	Central	Eastern	Greater Accra	Volta	Western	Northern	Upper East	Upper West	Total
Asante	76.4	13.7	2.7	7.9	6.8	0.2	4.1	0.6	-	-	100
Fanti	5.1	1.7	66.3	5.4	7.7	0.5	20.5	-	-	-	100
Other Akan	4.7	57.4	23.3	46.2	1.7	0.9	45.1	0.3	0.4	-	100
Ga-Adangbe	0.8	0.7	1.0	16.8	48.3	0.9	4.5	0.8	-	-	100
Ewe	2.5	2.2	1.4	11.8	12.0	71.7	3.3	5.0	-	-	100
Guan	-	3.5	2.9	5.9	1.5	13.0	1.6	-	-	-	100
Hausa	0.8	2.0	0.4	1.3	2.8	1.7	-	1.7	1.5	-	100
Dagbani	1.3	0.6	0.3	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	47.5	1.9	0.8	100
Frafra	1.2	1.7	-	0.4	0.9	-	0.8	2.2	25.8	-	100
Dagarti	0.5	1.9	-	0.4	-	-	0.5	5.3	0.4	99.2	100
Other	6.6	14.6	1.7	3.0	3.6	10.3	18.6	-	70.0	-	100
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Ghana Statistical Service 2000. Ghana Living Standard Survey: Report of the Fourth Round. October 2000:6, cited in Peter Arthur 2009:52.

In a similar line of thought, Debrah (2005) argues that despite the fact that the formation of political parties in Ghana strongly put thoughts in regional and ethnic balance as well as adopting certain collective programs in the selection of presidential and parliamentary candidates, these issues only serve as cover up to the “specific pro-ethnic sentiments.” Arthur (2009: p. 49) is of the view that “Ghanaian voters are ethnically cleaved along lines represented by the informal description of the NDC as Ewe and NPP as Akan parties.” As such, the end result of this incidence is that electoral

competition only fuels anxiety and friction between Ewe and the Asante (Oelbaum 2004 p250).

Scholars like Lindberg and Morrison (2007) on the other hand, have come out with opposing views about the influence of ethnicity on voting behaviour in Ghana. They argue that much of the studies conducted about the nature of African politics was done during the immediate post-independence era where authoritarian regimes appeared dominant and these regimes have been the cause for the branding of certain conventional concepts like “clientelism”, “personalism”, “prebendalism” and the like. For that matter, “many lessons on voters’ behavior and alignments were produced under conditions of limited competition in one-party systems” that did not commit to voters the right to choose whom to rule as well as enabling them to have a say in the policy directions of their nations.

A study conducted by Lindberg and Morrison (2007) however, paints a different picture of Ghanaian voters as the findings of their studies showed that it is only one out of ten voters who unwaveringly are swayed by ethnic or family relations in deciding whom to vote for, whereas as many as 85 to 90 percent of the electorates conduct themselves as “mature” democratic citizens. Lindberg and Morrison (2007: p. 13) argue that although ethnicity is a determining factor in the voter decision and choice of voters, it is however not the sole decisive factor and in addition, “recognizing the significance of ethnicity in politics does not allow us simply to assume it matters also for voters at the polls. To the contrary, our evidence indicates that playing the ethnic card in Ghanaian politics is greatly overrated as very few voters actually seems to think in terms of tribal loyalties when they go to cast their vote.” Their study that covered the 1996 and 2000 elections also came out with the findings that there is a growing trend

of voting among Ghanaians that is based more on evaluative and non-evaluative reasoning that is not necessarily ethnic based.

These notwithstanding, Arthur (2009) believes that “the assertion that voting along ethnic lines or ethnic considerations directly influences electoral decisions in Ghanaian politics finds support in the presidential electoral results from 1992 to 2008, which document that the NPP does exceptionally well in the Ashanti Region, and the NDC does exceptionally well in the Volta Region.” He sought to justify his position by providing the evidence (shown in table 2.2) that in the 1992 election, Rawlings, whose mother hails from the Volta Region won by 93.2 percent of the valid vote cast in comparison with the 3.6 percentage of votes accrued by Albert Adu Boahen who represented the NPP. In the Ashanti Region however, Rawlings could only secure 32.9 percent of the votes whereas Adu Boahen secured 60.5 percent of votes. Arthur (2009) further sought to strengthen his position by analysing the 1996 elections.

To Arthur (2009), regardless of the fact that the NPP presented a different presidential candidate either than the one who contested the 1992 elections in the person of John Kufuor, the voting trend did not differ significantly from that of 1992. He argued that John Kufuor who originates from the Ashanti Region secured 65.8 percent of the valid vote cast whilst Rawlings could only secure 32.8 percent. In a similar vein, whilst the Volta Region was won by Rawlings with 94.5 percent of the votes (as can be seen in table 2.3), Kufuor could only secure 4.7 percent. After the successful completion of Jerry Rawlings’ constitutional mandate as a president, the NDC in the 2000 elections presented a new candidate in the person of John Atta Mills who hailed from the Central Region and Arthur (2009) points out that the trend of elections in 2000 was no different from that of the previous ones as the NDC maintained its control of the Volta Region. As can be seen in table 2.4, the NDC represented by Atta Mills obtained 86.81 percent

vote in the Volta Region and Kufuor came up with only 6.64 percent. In the Ashanti Region however, Atta Mills secured only 22.73 percent of votes while Kufuor obtained 75.56 percent of the votes.

To Frempong (2001 p. 149), the gravity of influence that ethnicity has on Ghana's elections could be seen in the 2000 elections where billboards and posters the beard the images of Atta Mills in the Central Region included slogans like *Adze wo fie a oye*, a Fanti phrase that meant "It is better to have your own." One could infer from this expression that Atta Mills was admonishing the electorates from that region to vote for him basically due to the fact that he hailed from that ethnic lineage. Additionally, Arthur (2009) outlines that after the NDC lost the first round of the 2000 elections, vehicles bearing NDC symbols were found in places perceived to be dominated by Accra indigenes cautioning them that voting for the NPP meant that doors would be opened for the Asante and other non-indigenes to come and take over Accra lands. One could make a case to emphasize that regardless of the intimidating and manipulative schemes deployed by the NDC, they could not win the majority of votes in these two regions (Central and Greater Accra Regions). Arthur (2009) nonetheless outlines that the NDC in that election "won the Volta, Upper East, Upper West, and Northern regions." To that he argues further that the voting trends in the three northern regions, in addition to that of the Volta Region could be inferred as having to be presented as deliberate vote against Akan domination.

The views of Lindberg and Morrison (2008) however, is in direct contradiction to the views of Arthur (2009). They argue that although the election results appear to confirm the conventional Ashanti-Ewe cleavage, it is unable to explicate voting behaviour and the consequence of the election in a broader perspective and that "it is also corroborated by the fact that the flag bearer of the alleged Ewe-party NDC in 2000 professor John

A. Mills, is an ethnic Fanti which is a tribe among the Akan peoples dominated by the Ashanti but the Ewe still voted as heavily as before for the NDC” (Lindberg and Morrison 2008). Conclusively, “in a survey of over three thousand voters after the 2000 elections none said they voted for the winning President John A. Kufuor because he was Ashanti” but rather because they wanted to throw out the NDC government who had been in authority for nearly 20 years.

The above argument notwithstanding, Arthur (2009) reasons that it should not come as a wonder that “the 2004 results of the presidential election in the Volta, Ashanti, and the three northern regions did not deviate from previous patterns.” As can be seen in table 2.5, while Kufuor secured 74.6 percent and Atta Mills obtained 24 percent in the Ashanti Region, Kufuor could only come out with 14.2 percent in the Volta Region whilst Atta Mills secured 83.3 percent of the votes.

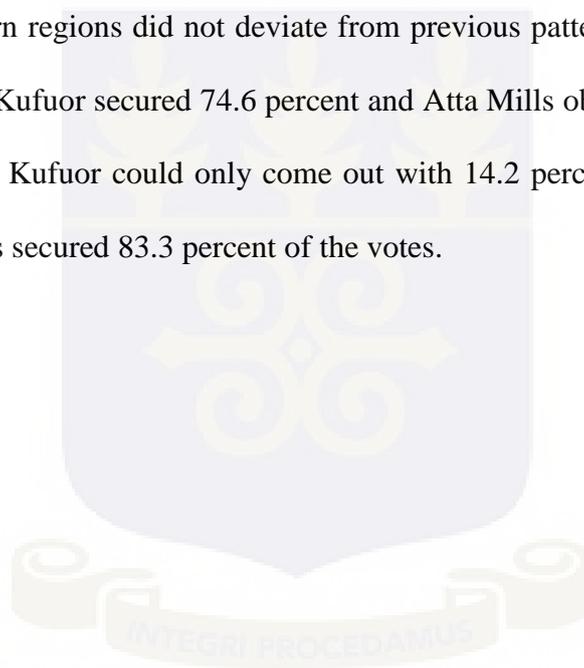


Table 2.2: Results of the 1992 presidential election by region

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Rawlings (NDC) Vote (%)	Adu-Boahen (NPP) Vote (%)	Limann (PNC) vote (%)	Darko (NIP) vote (%)	Erskine (PHP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	50.05	732,990	32.9	60.5	2.5	3.6	0.6
Brong Ahafo	46.0	407,189	61.9	29.5	5.3	2.0	1.0
Central	47.4	349,751	66.5	26.0	1.9	3.5	2.2
Western	47.8	410,266	60.7	22.8	8.6	5.6	2.4
Volta	62.4	491,551	93.2	3.6	1.6	0.7	0.9
Eastern	51.0	517,733	57.3	37.7	1.9	2.3	0.7
Gt. Accra	46.0	516,853	53.4	37.0	4.3	4.1	1.2
Northern	50.7	344,008	63.0	61.3	11.0	1.5	8.3
Upper west	51.5	138,752	51.0	8.9	37.1	1.8	1.2
Upper East	51.2	218,783	54.0	10.5	32.5	1.4	1.7
Total	50.2	4,127,876	58.4	30.3	6.7	2.9	1.8

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, Accra; cited in Aye (2008, 204)

Table 2.3: Results of 1996 presidential election by region

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Rawlings (NDC) Vote (%)	Kufuor (NPP) Vote (%)	Mahama (PNC) vote (%)
Ashanti	79.8	1,258,032	32.8	65.8	1.4
Brong Ahafo	71.8	640,474	61.7	36.0	2.3
Central	74.3	562,923	55.7	42.9	1.4
Western	74.5	708,589	57.3	40.9	1.8
Volta	81.8	730,251	94.5	4.7	0.8
Eastern	81.1	853,938	53.8	45.0	1.2
Gt. Accra	78.4	1,219,833	54.0	43.3	2.4
Northern	73.7	596,269	62.1	32.0	5.9
Upper west	75.8	195,437	74.6	11.2	14.2
Upper East	79.8	334,528	69.0	17.44	13.7
Total	77.9	7,225,161	57.4	39.6	3

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, Accra; cited in Ayee (2008:204).

Table 2.4: Results of the 2000 presidential election by region

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Atta Mills (NDC) Vote (%)	Kufuor (NPP) Vote (%)	Mahama (PNC) vote (%)	Aggudey (CPP) votes (%)
Ashanti	88.7	1,655,760	24.0	74.6	0.8	0.4
Brong Ahafo	83.0	763,005	46.0	51.9	1.2	0.7
Central	84.4	707,471	39.2	58.5	0.8	1.4
Western	83.6	819,162	40.8	56.6	0.8	1.6
Volta	87.6	705,827	83.8	14.2	0.9	0.9
Eastern	82.2	920,672	38.3	60.2	0.6	0.7
Gt. Accra	84.4	1,750,707	46.3	51.9	0.9	0.7
Northern	88.0	756,661	56.9	36.2	5.0	1.7
Upper west	81.2	211,735	56.6	32.2	9.5	1.5
Upper East	81.6	334,785	53.9	31.6	12.6	1.7
Total	85.1	8,625,785	44.6	52.4	1.9	1.0

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, Accra; cited in Aye (2008:205).

Table 2.5: Results of the 2004 presidential election by region

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Atta Mills (NDC) Vote (%)	Kufuor (NPP) Vote (%)	Mahama (PNC) vote (%)	Aggudey (CPP) votes (%)
Ashanti	88.7	1,655,760	24.0	74.6	0.8	0.7
Brong Ahafo	83.0	763,005	46.0	51.9	1.2	0.4
Central	84.4	707,471	39.2	58.5	0.8	1.4
Western	83.6	819,162	40.8	56.6	0.8	1.6
Volta	87.6	705,827	83.8	14.2	0.9	0.9
Eastern	82.2	920,672	38.3	60.2	0.6	0.7
Gt. Accra	84.4	1,750,707	46.3	51.9	0.9	0.7
Northern	88.0	756,661	56.9	36.2	5.0	1.7
Upper west	81.2	211,735	56.6	32.2	9.5	1.5
Upper East	81.6	334,785	53.9	31.6	12.6	1.7
Total	85.1	8,625,785	44.6	52.4	1.9	1.0

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, Accra, cited in Aye (2008:207).

Table 2.6: Results of the 2008 presidential elections by region

Region	Nana Akufo-Ado (NPP)	Edward Mahama (PNC)	John Atta-Mills (NDC)	Emmanuel Antwi (DFP)	T.N. Ward Brew (DPP)	Papa Kwesi Ndoum (CPP)	Kwabena Adjei (RDP)	Kwesi Amofa-Yeboah (INDP)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Western	47.55	0.41	47.06	0.37	0.13	4.07	0.11	0.16
Central	45.97	0.39	50.58	0.39	0.14	2.26	0.07	0.20
Gt Accra	46.03	0.38	52.11	0.16	0.04	1.24	0.01	0.03
Volta	14.98	0.49	82.88	0.51	0.10	0.72	0.05	0.26
Eastern	57.14	0.34	41.10	0.20	0.08	0.94	0.04	0.15
Ashanti	72.40	0.33	26.13	0.19	0.04	0.71	0.05	0.15
B Ahafo	50.56	0.52	47.70	0.31	0.12	0.51	0.05	0.22
Northern	38.27	2.10	56.84	0.58	0.19	1.37	0.26	0.40
Upper East	35.25	6.06	56.06	0.62	0.22	0.83	0.19	0.76
Upper West	37.72	4.01	54.36	1.02	0.32	0.75	0.33	1.50
National Total	49.13	0.87	47.92	0.33	0.10	1.34	0.08	0.23

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2008.

Table 2.7: Results of 2008 presidential runoff election by regions

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Atta Mills (NDC) Vote (%)	Akufo-Addo (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	83.31	1,930,828	25.0	75.5
Brong Ahafo	68.83	801,313	51.5	48.5
Central	70.03	714,788	53.8	46.2
Western	66.48	807,210	51.9	48.1
Volta	73.11	739,996	86.1	13.9
Eastern	72.16	943,023	42.5	57.5
Gt. Accra	70.02	1,760,808	54.4	45.6
Northern	75.34	826,888	61.6	38.4
Upper west	70.26	348,386	65.6	34.4
Upper East	67.24	221,124	62.3	37.7
Total	72.9	909,436	50.2	49.7

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2008.

The dynamics of voting in the 2008 election towed the same line based on the evidence that Nana Akufo-Addo, the new presidential candidate of the NPP won just 14.8 percent of the votes in the Volta Region but Atta Mills managed to secure 82.88 percent of votes in the same region. In the Ashanti Region however, Akufo-Addo secured 72.4 percent of the votes whilst Atta Mills secured just 26.1 percent (Arthur 2009). According to Arthur (2009), the indication of ethnic voting is further heightened with the proof of fact from the Eastern Region where Akufo-Addo who hails from this region, obtained 57.14 percent of votes (see table 2.7). This fact makes no sense until it is compared with the performance of the NPP represented by Kufuor in the 2000 and

2004 elections where the NPP enjoyed a better political goodwill than in 2008. Yet, the NPP's performance in the Eastern Region in the 2008 elections was far better than that of the 2000 and 2004 elections. One can argue fairly that this result is an indication of ethnic voting. The results of the presidential runoff was no different as the voting pattern remained the same. Akufo-Addo obtained 75 percent in the Ashanti Region while Atta Mills got 25 percent and in the Volta Region, Akufo-Addo got 13.9 percent while Atta Mills obtained 86.12 percent of the votes.

One can argue that one of the major cause of decline in ethnic-based voting as the electoral years go by is the decline of the influence of Rawlings who is the founder of the NDC. Scholars like Frempong (2001); Gyimah-Boadi and Asante (2006); and Arthur (2009) have argued that Rawlings whose lineage hails from the Volta Region is the main reason why the Ewe predominantly vote for the NDC. However, it has been well over eight years since Rawlings relinquished power and has also barely been in the limelight, as far as politics in Ghana is concerned and the NDC from that time has fielded two (Atta Mills and John Mahama) presidential candidates who do not hail from the Volta Region. A similar argument can be made about the NPP and the Ashanti Region. After Kufuor (who hails from the Ashanti Region) exhausted all his constitutional mandate as president, the NPP elected Nana Akufo-Addo (who comes from the Eastern Region) as their presidential candidate for the 2008 elections, and subsequently for the 2012 and 2016 elections. For these reasons, one can argue that there are no longer strong motivations for people in these two regions to vote based on ethnic sentiments.

Other justifications one can make about the reasons for a decline in ethnic-based voting could be the ethnic inter-marriages that have been on its rise as the years go by, in addition to increased rural-urban migration and increased level of literacy (Lindberg

and Morrison, 2007) that have assisted electorates to be more objective, tolerable and critical in thinking as far as the choice of public officials are concerned. By far, one can also not downplay the role and efforts of some civil society organizations. The rise and growth of some civil society organizations like the IEA, IMANI Africa, ACEP, CDD, and IDEA among others, whose core duties have been to inform and raise public awareness among the Ghanaians especially about governance. The IEA for example have over the years organized presidential debates that have sought to bring the flagbearers of various political parties closer to the electorates who seek to offer alternative policies as solutions to the developmental pitfalls that befall the nation all in an attempt to improve the quality of Ghanaian voter's decision making. Against this backdrop, it will be reasonable to agree with the views of Gyimah-Boadi (2008) that, Ghana is regarded as a beacon of hope of democratic practice in Africa which among other things, can be proven by the level of political tolerance between opposition groups, a growing and vibrant civil society and a constantly held free and fair elections.

In conclusion, it can be argued based on the literature discussed above, that as Ghana continues to grow in its democratic consolidation especially through the holding of continuous periodic elections, the nature and dynamics of voter decision and choice appears to be getting more complex than it was at the inception of the Fourth Republic in 1992. As a matter of fact, a critical analysis of the previously held elections especially from 1996 to 2008 (see tables 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7) show that Whereas the NPP has been reducing votes in the Ashanti Region, the NDC has been steadily improving its votes in that same region. The same conclusion can be made on the influence the NDC has on the people of the Volta Region.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research technique and the general procedure that guided the study. The methodology was devised thoroughly with details reflecting the researcher's mode of data collection (Gill and Johnson, 1997). The chapter, therefore comprises the research design, types of data, population, sample size and technique, methods and instruments for data collection, data presentation and analysis that was used by the researcher to carry out the research (Dawson, 2002).

3.2 Research Design

The research design reflects how the researcher intended to carry out his work. It entailed all the strategies and procedures that were needed to enhance the completion of the empirical study (Biggam, 2008). Dawson (2002) is of the view that the research strategy is the philosophy or the overall rules that drive the research. It can also be defined as “the overall approach to studying your topic and includes issues you need to think about such as the constraints, dilemmas and ethical choices within your research” (Dawson 2002, p14). The research design is often categorized into two broad groups by scholars and they include the quantitative and qualitative research designs. It is noteworthy to point out that a third view of how research can be carried out in recent times has gained much prominence among social scientists. This research approach which merges the two orthodox views of research methodology is known as the mixed method.

The mixed method emerged as a result of the persistent debate among scholars as to which research strategy is the most convenient and accurate for the conduct of research. Jick (1979) argues that the purpose for the coming into being of the mixed method was to serve as a third force to the already existing methodologies used in the organization of research. The mixed method employs both the qualitative and quantitative research methods in the collection of data to which in the views of Creswell and Clark (2007) offers a superior advantage in a research study.

The quantitative research design, on the other hand, is the type that relies heavily on the measurement of quantities (Mustafa, 2010). Kalof, Dan, & Dietz (2008) in a similar vein argue that the name quantitative is adopted because this approach “uses numbers to try to understand the social world.” They further advanced their claim that with the quantitative approach, “data are collected by conducting surveys in which everyone is asked the same set of questions...or by otherwise gathering information in a form that allows what is observed to be captured by numbers.” Standing contrary to the quantitative research design, the qualitative research methodology resorts to the use of words rather than figures, focusing on “in-depth interviews where each respondent is asked questions as they are in a survey, but as the interview proceeds, questions are tailored to what the respondent has already said” (Kalof, Dan, & Dietz, 2008 p. 35)

For the purpose of what this research is intended to achieve, this work employed the qualitative approach and also adopted the case study outlook. By qualitative, the research was intended to give a descriptive analysis of data so as to make the presentation of whether ethnic-based voting in Ghanaian elections is on its rise or decline to be much more understandable. Blaxter, Hughes & Tight (2006, p. 63) are of the view that qualitative research “is concerned with collecting and analysing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible.” Shank (2002, p. 3)

also adds that in qualitative research methodology, “researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” Qualitative research by implication seeks to concentrate on investigating, in as much detail as possible, focusing on smaller figures of illustration which is intended to focus on the ‘depth’ rather than ‘breadth’ of the phenomena. Creswell (2009, p. 5) posits that qualitative research is “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.” His definition of qualitative research, therefore, implies that one would resort to the use of inquiry and certain laid down rules to collect data in order to fairly grasp the reasons that underlie an existing phenomenon.

Qualitative research is often categorized into ethnographic, case study research, and grounded theory research (Mustafa 2010, p. 52). To Yin (2003) cited in Blaxter, Hughes & Tight (2006, p. 71) “the case study is the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context”. It also seeks to investigate into a particular case through an empirical means of inquiry so that generalizations can be made (Yin, 2003). The researcher adopted the case study because the work intended to understand the depth of the case under study, which is the prevalence of ethnic-based voting in Ghanaian elections, to identify its complexity, circumstances and whether this phenomenon is on ascendancy or decline. Case studies are also very useful when researchers want to employ multiple sources of data collection.

Qualitative research as a mode of academic inquiry is of enormous importance because it enables researchers to be more abreast with the prevailing activities on the ground. This research design also helps researchers to observe and have a first-hand information on certain vital and unique occurrences on the ground which most quantitative researchers might lose sight of. Additionally, this research method is enclosed in a more

chronicled and descriptive manner that in turn lessens the problem of complexities of conceptualizing key findings by other readers. Creswell (2009) and Tewksbury (2009) also argue that the qualitative approach is very relevant because scholars who make use of this design are enabled to keep in touch with their respondents and become more familiar with the activities on the ground. Denzin (1989) is also of the view that this methodology leads to an in-depth description of the feelings, views and experiences of participants as well as assisting in interpreting the consequence of their actions. Additionally, Denzin and Lincoln (2002) have argued that the qualitative research methodology helps paint a holistic picture of the human experience in particular settings. By far, this research approach makes it possible for researchers to witness for themselves some prominent and relevant events or phenomena on the field which quantitative researchers will fail to catch.

Notwithstanding the benefits that can be drawn from adopting the qualitative research approach, there are some difficulties that come along with it. To Osuala (2007), the qualitative approach requires so much time and effort in collecting and analysing data. Osuala (2007) argues that "there is a critical need for the researcher to spend a considerable amount of time in the research setting in order to examine, holistically and aggregately, the interactions, reactions and activities of subject." Silverman (2010) also argues that this design often omits contextual sensitivities and only concentrate on experiences and meanings, thereby not painting a full picture of the prevailing phenomenon under study. Rahman (2016) is of the view that policy-makers often "give low credibility to results from qualitative approach." The studies of Sallee & Flood (2012) point out that when demands are made for the conduct of research, stakeholders often have a preference for quantitative research. Finally, scholars like Lam (2015); and

Harry & Lipsky (2014) are of the view that it is quite contentious to adopt a smaller sample size to make wider generalizations of the entire population of the research.

The choice of qualitative research to this study was primarily based on the motivation that the researcher intended to have an in-depth information about the reasons for the existence of ethnic-based voting, why it is either on its ascendancy or decline from the participants who are within the grass root system. Additionally, resorting to the use of this approach makes it easier to quickly revise the direction and framework of the research as soon as fresh information and findings emerge that may stand contrary to the previously established objectives. Nonetheless, it might be difficult to make quantitative predictions and generalize the findings across settings with this choice of research design.

3.3 Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data was used for this study. The primary data was solicited with the use of questions and an interview guide that the researcher prepared himself. The researcher also resorted to the use of secondary data in the form of reports based on relevant library research, books and articles from journals that provides some vital answers to questions that were very relevant to this study. These information were acquired from the Department of Political Science library, the Institute of African Studies Library, the Balme Library, the library for the Institute of Democratic Governance, and the Electoral Commission. Additionally, electronic sources such as jstor, sage, among others were used and also formed part of the data collection for the empirical study. Both the secondary and primary data (questionnaires and interviews) assisted in providing a better perception of the empirical study.

3.4 Population of the Study

The target population for the study comprised all the people who were 18 years and above as at the time the 2016 general elections was organized. It is estimated that the target population for the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency was around sixty-five thousand, that of the Ho West Constituency was sixty-two thousand and that of the Manhyia South Constituency was sixty-eight thousand (Electoral Commission, 2016). The population for the research therefore, comprised eligible voters in the Ayawaso West Wuogon, Ho West and the Manhyia South constituencies. The researcher chose these study areas because the Manhyia south Constituency for instance, is situated at the heart of the Kumasi metropolis; which is the capital of the Ashanti Region where the electorates have consistently voted massively for the New Patriotic party. The population size of the constituency made it a bit easier for the researcher to draw up a sample size that best reflected the population so as to ascertain whether or not ethnicity is the leading motivation for voting among the electorates in Ghanaian elections. The Ho west constituency was also selected for similar reasons as this constituency is also located in the capital of the Volta Region with a population size moderate enough to draw out a convenient sample size. Just like the Manhyia South Constituency, the Ho West Constituency has voted on one particular trend since the inception of the Fourth Republic. The constituency is therefore regarded as a stronghold of the National Democratic Congress.

The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency, unlike the Ho West and the Manhyia South Constituencies cannot be labelled as a stronghold of neither of the two leading political parties as both parties have won seats in this constituency before and although the NPP has been quite successful within this constituency for some time now, they do not do so with an overwhelming majority of over 70 percent of total vote cast. Elections in this

constituency is very competitive, unlike the other two constituencies under study. The primary objective for the selection of the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency was based on the fact that it is situated in the Greater Accra Region (a region whose voters always swing to the side of the presidential candidate who emerges victorious in each general election rather than being a stronghold region for either of the two dominant political parties) and also because the constituency is recognized as a cosmopolitan community with people with diverse ethnic, educational, religious and economic backgrounds and it will therefore be necessary to comparatively analyse the voting rational among the electorates of this constituency to those of the Ho west and the Manhyia South constituencies who appear to vote overwhelmingly for one particular political group.

3.5 Profile of the Three Constituencies

To have a better understanding of the politics and voting dynamics of the three constituencies, it is imperative to position the study within the profile of these constituencies. Features such as geographical location, ethnic dynamics, educational background, economic activities and the political and administrative history of these constituencies will be vital in answering the question of whether ethnic-based voting is on the rise or decline.

3.5.1 The Manhyia South constituency

The Manhyia South Constituency is found within the Manhyia Sub-Metropolitan District Council and it is one of the nine sub-metropolitan councils in the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly. As part of the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, the Manhyia South Constituency is situated between Latitude 6.35oN and 6.40oS and Longitude

1.30oW and 1.35oE and elevated 250 to 300 meters above sea level, lying within the plateau of the South-West physical region which ranges from 250-300 meters above sea level (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). It is also bounded in the north by Kwabre East and Afigya Kwabre Districts, in the west by Atwima Kwanwoma and Atwima Nwabiagya Districts, in the east by Asokore Mampong and Ejisu-Juaben Municipalities and in the south by the Bosomtwe District. It has an approximation of 270km north of the national capital, Accra (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The constituency finds itself within the wet sub-equatorial, having a minimum mean temperature of about 21.5 degrees centigrade and a maximum mean temperature of about 30.7 degrees centigrade. The constituency also falls within the transitional forest zone precisely within the moist semi-deciduous South-East Ecological Zone and the most notable species of trees that one can come across are Ceiba, Triplochlon, Celtis and other exotic species (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Although the soil in this location is very rich in nutrients for the cultivation of crops, the sub-metro has in recent times lost a substantial amount of its vegetative cover to human activities primarily due to urbanization, as well as certain profound developments like the Manhyia Gardens, Kumasi Zoological Gardens and so on (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Manhyia Constituency which forms part of the Kumasi metropolis is the capital of the Asante Kingdom which stretches from the Ashanti Region through some parts of the Brong Ahafo Region and the Volta Region (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The Asante Kingdom was recognised as a state in 1701 after it defeated the Denkyira State. In recent times, the Kingdom is now recognized as a Traditional Council known as the Asanteman Traditional Council “under the oversight of the Asantehene (Asante King) who also acts as Kumasihene or the Paramount Chief of Kumasi. He is the personification of the culture of the people and presides over 45 “Amanhene”

(paramount chiefs) in the kingdom” (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The most predominant ethnic collection within the Manhyia South Constituency is the Asante with 81 percent of the population, followed by the Mole Dagbon with 8.5 percent, the Ewe make up 3 percent and other splinter ethnic groups also make up 7.5 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Although there exists an ethnic and cultural diversity in the constituency, the population is densely interwoven together basically due to the existence of a very strong traditional administrative establishment that attempts to promote unity and consistency among the diverse ethnic groups (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Manhyia South Constituency has notable infrastructure that supplies social services to its dwellers in the form of healthcare deliveries, water supply, electricity, teaching and learning, security as well as transport services. Within the metropolis are 1,156,647 persons aged 15 years and older who in turn make up the working age group and about two-thirds of this number are economically active and about nine in every ten of these economically active persons are employed. These persons are employed in a wide range of economic activities (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). In addition to the above, about 38.4 percent of the working population are involved in wholesale and retail trade especially that of vehicles and motorcycles repair. The manufacturing industry also employs as many as 13.6 percent of the working population, consisting of multinational companies, medium scale and micro small scale industries. The metropolis is also noted for its tourist attraction embedded in rich African culture and traditions. Some notable sites include the Manhyia Palace and museum, which is the seat of the Asante Kingdom, the Centre for National Culture and the Kumasi Central Market (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The electoral history of the Manhyia South Constituency (especially in the Fourth Republic) points out that it is a stronghold of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). As can be seen in table 4.1, since the creation of the constituency, the electorates have voted consistently for the NPP with votes exceeding over 75 percent in each election period. The sitting member of parliament is in the person of Dr Matthew Opoku Prempeh.

Table3.1: Historical performance between NDC and NPP in Manhyia South

Party	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
NPP	79.9%	85.7%	79.0%	77%	80.8%	86.22%
NDC	18.7%	12.0%	20.0%	21.9%	18.8%	13.43%

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana

3.5.2 The Ho West Constituency

The Ho West Constituency is located within the Ho West District and it is one of the 25 district in the Volta Region. The district that was set up by the Legislative Instrument (L.I.) 2083 of 2012 was created out of the Ho Municipal (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The Ho West Constituency is situated between latitudes 6.33o 32” N and 6.93o 63” N and longitudes 0.17o 45” E and 0.53o 39” E and is bounded in the south by the Adaklu District, the north by Afadjato South District, in the east by the Ho Municipality and the Republic of Togo and in the west by the South Dayi District. Its land area entirely amounts to 1,002.79 square kilometres and also have a population density of 94.3 based on a population of 94,600 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The average temperature of the constituency ranges from 22 Degrees Celsius to 32 degrees Celsius and by implication, the temperature largely high throughout the year. The Ho West Constituency is also constricted within two principal vegetation zones and they are the moist deciduous forest which most often shrouds the hills in the District and savannah woodland (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). As such, the constituency is bestowed with quite a number of tree species for construction and business-related purposes uses that includes wawa and mahogany. In addition, the overall relief of the constituency can be divided into two parts and they are the mountainous areas and the lowland areas. The mountain stretch which are a part of the Togo Ranges are largely found in the north and north-east and have heights ranging from 183 metres to 853 metres (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Prominent areas include the Awudome Stretch which is located in the south-west to Avatime and Ashanti Kpoeta also in the north-east. The lowland areas on the other hand, are located in the south of the constituency with heights that ranges between 60 metres and 152 metres. The general landscape is therefore deemed to be moderately steep imposing rapid run-offs during the rainy seasons (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Ho West Constituency which makes up the Ho West District comprises three Traditional Councils and sixteen traditional areas who work together with the principal aim of the prospects of development within the district. The traditional areas are also gifted with some notable cultural practices and festival that include the Yam Festival often attributed to the people of Awudome and Hokpe customary areas and the Adabatram, Zig, Borborbor and Zagada traditional dances (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The district is dominated by people who affiliate themselves with the Christian Religion, followed by other religions like Islam and Animism who fall in the minority although quite a proportion of the citizens practice dual worship (Ghana Statistical

Service, 2014). It is a constituency that is largely dominated by the Ewe, making up about 94 percent of the population thereby making the ethnic distribution more of homogeneous than heterogeneous (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Ho West District can boast of 20 health amenities of diverse classifications of which only one is owned by a private individual. The level of literacy in the constituency is moderate with majority of the population having at least Junior High School Certificate with very few going beyond the Senior High School (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Additionally, agriculture appears to be the predominant occupation among the people of the Ho West Constituency. Agriculture engages as many as 95 percent of the working population although farming is done in small-scale. The main crops that are grown are maize, cassava, rice and beans.

The political and electoral history of the inhabitants of the Ho West Constituency points out that they strongly affiliated to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) since the inception of the Fourth Republic as it can be seen in Table 4.2. The parliamentary seat for this constituency is currently held by the NDC's Emmanuel Kwasi Bedzra.

Table3.2: Historical performance between NDC and NPP in Ho West

Party	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
NPP	2.3%	5.0%	10.1%	7.9%	7.4%	10.3%
NDC	97.4%	89.9%	89.1%	90.3%	91.8%	88.56%

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana

3.5.3 The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency

The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency is situated in the Ayawaso West Sub-metropolitan Council which is one of the ten Sub-Metropolitan Councils in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. The Ayawaso West Sub-Metro starts from the Nswan road of the N1 Highway to East Legon, through to the Tetteh Quarshie Roundabout all the way to the 37 Military Hospital roundabout and then follows the Obasanjo Highway (www.accrametropolitanassembly.com). As part of the broader picture of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, the Ayawaso West Sub-Metro is bounded in the north by the Ga West municipal, in the West by Ga South Municipal, in the east by La Dadekotopon and in the south by the Gulf of Guinea (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency is positioned in the dry equatorial climatic zone and also goes through two rainy seasons, of which the first commences in May and halts in mid-July and the latter season commences in August and ends in October. It is noteworthy to point that a little disparity appear to exist in the average temperature within this area as the average monthly temperature ranges between 24.7 degrees Celsius in August (which is the coolest) to 33 Degrees Celsius in March; which is the hottest (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Due to the fact that the area is closer to the equator, the daytime periods are essentially uniform during the course of the year. The vegetative cover in this area can be grouped into three broad vegetative zones and they are the shrub land, grassland and coastal land. However, the shrub appears to be the most predominant vegetation within the sub-metro (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Ayawaso West Sub-Metro which although has an expansive geographical area is deemed to be the least densely populated area with an estimated 70,000 people as compared to the other sub-metros within the Accra metropolis (The World Bank Report, 2010). Larger portions of the area is primarily reserved for residential use with

the most luxurious homes in Ghana located in areas such as East Legon, Airport West, Abelenkpe, Dzorwulu, Roman Ridge, and South Legon. However, there appear to be a growing number of slums developing in certain portions of this constituency, especially in areas such as the Gulf House (Shiashe), Bawaleshie and areas along the Tema Motorway (The World Bank Report, 2010). The community is regarded as cosmopolitan and comprises of people with diverse ethnic backgrounds, diverse educational background as well as economic and religious backgrounds (Accra Metropolitan Assembly, 2016). The level of literacy in this constituency is quite high with 89 percent of the population from 11 years and above able to read and write in either English, French or any Ghanaian language and high as 7 out of every 10 people can read and write in English and Ghanaian language (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency is one of the 34 constituencies situated in the Greater Accra Region and one of the long-existed constituencies prior to the conception of the Fourth Republic Constitution. From a political perspective, the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency has been a fluctuating and unstable ground for the two leading political parties although the New Patriotic Party appears to have enjoyed some leverage in terms of winning the greater part of both the presidential and parliamentary seats in this constituency, especially since the 2000 elections. However, before the 2016 elections, the NPP had been gradually reducing votes as the subsequent elections went by as it can be seen in Table 4.3. As a matter of fact, the 2012 elections result show that the NDC won the presidential race with 31,537 to NPP's 31,023 but narrowly lost the parliamentary seat to the NPP by 31,807- 30,116. (Electoral Commission, 2012). In the 2016 elections however, probably due to the national wind of change, the NPP convincingly won both the presidential and parliamentary seats in the constituency.

Table3.3: Historical performance between NDC and NPP in Ayawaso West Wuogon

Party	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016
NPP	48.4%	58.0%	54.8%	48.7%	49.1%	56.45%
NDC	48.6%	37.6%	43.4%	48.6%	49.9%	42.05%

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana

3.6 Sample Size and Sampling Method

Because this study is primarily concerned with what ethnic-based voting is and why it has been predominant among Ghanaian voters and whether it is on a rise or decline as Ghana's democracy continues to grow, the study for that matter resorted to the use of the convenient sampling technique. This work therefore adopted the purposive sampling method as a form of non-probability sampling technique that relies a great deal on the discretion of the researcher. In throwing more light on the non-probability sampling technique, Mustafa (2010, p. 139) explains that "... a desired number of sampling units are selected deliberately or purposely depending on the object of the enquiry so that only the important items representing the true characteristics of the population are included in the sample." Other examples of non-probability sampling include snowballing, quota sampling and convenience sampling. The researcher adopted the interview guide as the sampling tool for the collection of data. This method was convenient because it made it possible for the researcher to get to the targeted respondents who had the requisite knowledge in the field of study. The work therefore

interviewed participants who are card-bearing members of both the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress as well as respondents who may not necessarily be affiliated to a political party but had voted at least in the 2012 and 2016 elections.

With the use of the purposive sampling technique, the researcher selected forty (40) respondents from the Manhyia South Constituency of which twenty (20) were card-bearing members of the New Patriotic Party and the other twenty (20) comprised voters who are not necessarily supporters of the NPP. The reason for this selection was that the researcher desired to know whether there existed any difference in the voting pattern between card-bearing members (supporters) of the NPP and those who do not have evidence of support to the NPP within the constituency. Additionally, twenty (20) out of the forty (40) respondents were men and the other twenty (20) were women. This was chosen because the study wanted to establish whether any difference existed in the pattern of voting among the genders.

In the Ho West Constituency also, forty (40) participants were interviewed of which twenty (20) were card-bearing members of the National Democratic Congress and the other twenty (20) comprised voters who are not necessarily supporters of the NDC. The reason for this selection was that the researcher desired to know whether there existed any difference in the voting pattern between card-bearing members of the NDC and those who do not have evidence of support to the NDC within the constituency. In addition, twenty (20) out of the forty (40) respondents were men and the other twenty (20) were women. This was chosen because the study wanted to establish whether any difference existed in the pattern of voting among the genders.

Finally, in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency, thirty (30) respondents were interviewed of which ten (10) were card-bearing members of the New Patriotic Party, ten (10) card-bearing members of the National Democratic Congress and the other ten (10) respondents were neutral, as far as no evidence of affiliation to a political party were provided. The justification for this choice of sampling was because the study sought to identify any difference in the voting pattern among these groups of respondents. Additionally, fifteen (15) out of the thirty (30) respondents were males and the other fifteen (15) were females simply because the study intended to establish whether there existed any difference in the pattern of voting among the genders. In total, one hundred and ten (110) respondents were interviewed.

3.7 Instrument for Data Collection

The researcher used planned set of questions that took a form of semi structured or open-ended questions. This form of qualitative approach created the avenue for the researcher to plan questions that helped to collect the needed information. This was useful because it provided the grounds for respondents to express their views about other issues without any undue restrictions (Dawson, 2002).

3.8 Procedure for Data Analysis

The data was presented and analysed using the qualitative method that was derived from the survey in the form of interviews. Results from recorded interviews were transcribed to capture the pertinent issues raised by respondents. The findings from the field notes gathered were reduced to themes and sub-themes according to the objectives of the study. This made room for the use of direct words from the study's respondents.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses and discusses the data obtained from the respondents. Three propositions were adopted in line with the aims of the study. The main objective of the study was to explore whether ethnic-based voting is on the rise or decline. The study also examined the incidence of ethnic-based voting in Ghanaian elections since the commencement of the Fourth Republic and how it has shaped elections in Ghana. Out of a total voter population of sixty-eight thousand (68,000) from the Manhyia South, sixty-two thousand (62,000) from the Ho West and sixty-five thousand (65,000) from the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituencies, an interview guide was used to solicit the views of respondents from a sample size of one hundred and ten (110). Forty (40) of the respondents were drawn from Manhyia South, another forty (40) from Ho West and thirty (30) from Ayawaso West Wuogon constituencies who were willing to participate in the study. Interviews were subsequently held with the 110 voters. The thematic analysis approach was adopted to analyse the data obtained from the interviewees and were presented with regards to the specific research objectives. This was done to ensure that all the research objectives were addressed systematically.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the gender, age gap and the educational status attained by the respondents. It also discusses the number of times the respondents have voted since the commencement of the fourth republic, as well as what category of voters they are in relation to political party membership.

4.2.1 Gender

Table 4.1 below reveals that out of the total sample size of 110 voters from the three constituencies (Manhyia South, Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon), fifty-five (55) of the respondents representing 50% were males, while the remaining were females implying that the choice of respondents were evenly distributed among both males and females.

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency			Percentage		
	Manhyia south	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Manhyia South	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon
Male	20	20	15	50	50	50
Female	20	20	15	50	50	50

Source: Field data (2017)

4.2.2 Age

With regards to the age distribution, the researcher chose participants who were from the ages of 18 and above with the principal aim of targeting the voting population. This was done to assist the study to solicit the views of voters who had in-depth knowledge about the nature of electoral politics in their respective constituencies as well as those with moderately young experience on the nature and dynamics of electoral politics for

a holistic analysis. In terms of age distribution, majority of the respondents from the three constituencies were between the ages of 26 and 30. A greater number of the interviewees from Manhyia South for instance, were between 26-30 years representing 25% (10 respondents). It is followed by both respondents between 31-40 years and those between ages 51 and above with 9 respondents each representing 22.5%, which is also followed by 20% and 10% of the respondents representing the 18-25 years and 41-50 years respectively (see table 4.2).

The age distribution of interviewees in the Ho West Constituency followed a similar trend to that of the Manhyia South (see table 4.2) as a greater fraction of interviewees were found between 26-30 years (13 respondents) representing 32.5%. This is then followed by those between 31-40 years (9 respondents) representing 22.5%, then those between 51 years and above (7 respondents) representing 17.5%, 20% and 12.5% representing 18-25 years and 41-50 years respectively. Lastly, the age distribution of respondents between 26-30 years in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency recorded the highest (11 respondents) with 36.7%, followed by those between 31-40 years (9 respondents) with 30%. This is followed by those between 51 years and above, and 18-25 years representing 16.7% and 13.3% respectively. Finally, interviewees within the age bracket of 41-50 years was represented by 3.3%.

Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents by Age

Age Distribution	Frequency			Percentage		
	Manhyia south	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Manhyia South	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon
18 – 25	8	6	4	20	15	12.5
26 – 30	10	13	11	25	32.5	27.5
31 – 40	9	9	9	22.5	22.5	22.5
41 – 50	4	5	1	10	10	2.5
51 and above	9	7	5	22.5	17.5	12.5

Source: Field data (2017)

4.2.3 Education

Erdmann (2007) is of the view that there is a considerable amount of connection between the level of education and the quality of voter choice in elections. By implication, societies with high literacy rates are more likely to take into deeper consideration the consequences of their motive for the choice of a candidate than societies with lower literacy levels. For that matter, the educational status of the respondents was of immense importance to this study as it provided grounds to ascertain whether this claim is applicative to the constituencies under study. Among the interviewees from the Manhyia South Constituency (MSC), 35% (14 respondents) had obtained a basic education and this is followed by 30% (12 respondents) with secondary level education. It is important to note that 17.5% (7 people) of the respondents interviewed did not have any formal education, 15% (6 people) had a university or polytechnic education and 2.5% (1 person) with teacher training or a related certificate (see table 4.3).

In the Ho West Constituency (HWC), majority of the respondents representing 30.5% (12 respondents) had obtained secondary education. Those with basic level education came second with 25.5% (11 respondents), and it was followed by those with no formal education with 25% (10 respondents). Those with university or polytechnic education had a representation of 12.5% (6 respondents) and finally, those with teacher training education or a related certificate represented 5% (1 person). In the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency (AWWC) also, majority of the respondents representing 43.3% (13 respondents) had acquired secondary education, and it was followed by those who have basic education representing 23.3% (7 respondents). Those with university or polytechnic education made up 16.7% (5 people) of the respondents and those with teacher training education or a related qualification represented 10% (3 respondents). Lastly, 6.7% (2 people) of the respondents did not have any formal education (see table 4.3).

In summary, the findings of the study revealed that whereas respondents in Manhyia South were dominated by those with a basic level of education (14 respondents), the Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituencies on the other hand were dominated by those with secondary education (12 and 13 respondents respectively).

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency			Percentage		
	Manhyia south	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Manhyia South	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon
None	7	10	2	17.5	25	6.7
Basic Education	14	11	7	35	25.5	23.3
Secondary Education	12	12	13	30	30.5	43.3
Teacher Training	1	2	3	2.5	5	10
University/ Polytechnic	6	5	5	15	12.5	16.7

Source: Field data (2017)

4.2.4 Voting

The results of table 4.4 below show that in the MSC, majority of the respondents (11 voters) who were interviewed had voted five times since the commencement of the Fourth Republic representing 27.5%. This was followed by those who had voted twice (8 people) representing 20% and then those who had voted three times (7 people) and seven times (6 people) representing 17.5% and 15% respectively. Both category of respondents who had voted once and those who had six times (3 participants each) had a representation of 7.5%, and then those who had voted four times (2 people) represented 5%. In the HWC, majority of the respondents had voted three times (10 people) representing 25%, and it was followed by 22.5% representing those who had voted twice (9 people). This was followed by the group of respondents who had voted five times (7 people) and six times (5 people) representing 17.5% and 12.5% respectively. Those who had voted seven times (4 people) represented 10%, those who

had voted four times (3 people) represented 7.5% and lastly, those who had voted once (2 people) represented 5%. Finally, in AWWC, respondents who had voted three times (9 people) constituted the majority with 30%, and it was followed by those who had voted twice (8 people) representing 26.7%. This was followed by respondents who had voted four times (4 people) representing 13.3% and those who had voted once and five times (3 people) were represented by 10% each. Respondents who had voted seven times (2 people) represented 6.7% and those who had voted six times (1 person) represented 3.3% (see table 4.4).

In summary, the findings of the study revealed that respondents who had voted five times (11 respondents) formed the majority in the Manhyia South Constituency, whereas in the Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituencies, respondents who had voted three times (10 and 9 respondents respectively) formed the majority.

Table 4.4: Distribution of respondents by number of times voted

Number of times voted	Frequency			Percentage		
	Manhyia south	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Manhyia South	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon
Once	3	2	3	7.5	5	10
Two times	8	9	8	20	22.5	26.7
Three times	7	10	9	17.5	25	30
Four times	2	3	4	5	7.5	13.3
Five times	11	7	3	27.5	17.5	10
Six times	3	5	1	7.5	12.5	3.3
Seven times	6	4	2	15	10	6.7

Source: Field data (2017)

4.2.5 Party Affiliation

The study also came out with the findings that 20 respondents who were interviewed in the Manhyia South Constituency were party supporters with evidence of membership card representing 50% and those who had no party affiliation whatsoever represented 50% (see table4.5). The same outcome can be said of the Ho West Constituency where 20 respondents who were interviewed were party supporters with evidence of party membership card representing 50% and those with no political party affiliation whatsoever represented 50%. Lastly, in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency, 15 respondents who were interviewed had political party membership representing 50% and those with no party affiliation represented whatsoever 50% (see table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Distribution of respondents by their affiliation with a political party

Type of voter	Frequency			Percentage		
	Manhyia south	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon	Manhyia South	Ho West	Ayawaso West Wuogon
Party member	20	20	15	50	50	50
Not a party member	20	20	15	50	50	50

Source: Field data (2017)

4.3 Discussion of Findings with Regards to the Research Objectives

This section deals with the discussion of the results of the study in view of the objectives of the research and existing literature. The principal objectives of the study were to:

1. To know what ethnic-based voting is.
2. To know how ethnic-based voting has shaped voting patterns in Ghana's elections since 1992.
3. To ascertain whether ethnic-based voting is on its ascendancy or decline.

4.3.1 Objective 1: Ethnic-Based Voting and Clientelism

The first objective of the study was aimed at bringing to light what ethnic-based voting is and whether the respondents had any information or a general idea about the existence of the phenomenon in Ghana's politics. The study further sought to draw a distinction between ethnic-based voting and clientelism; which is also a form of voter motivation under the sociological model of voting behaviour.

4.3.1.1 Objective 1a: Ethnic-Based Voting

Information gathered from the sampled voters revealed that majority of the respondents (84%) from MSC had knowledge about what ethnic-based voting is or at least, they had an idea of the incidence of ethnic-based voting. Similarly, majority of the interviewees (91%) from HWC had knowledge about the incidence of ethnic-based voting. In AWWC also, all 30 respondents were aware of ethnic-based voting as a phenomenon that exists in Ghana's politics. Findings from the study also revealed that most of the respondents who had knowledge about the incidence of ethnic-based accepted that it is a form of voting where the voter's decision to vote is influenced by his or her ethnic

affinity with the candidate rather than it being based on the policy considerations or competency of the candidate. One respondent from MSC for example, stated that ethnic-based voting:

[...] is when people vote for politicians because they share a common ethnic background.

Another participant from HWC stated that:

Ethnic-based voting occurs when a person's desire to vote is influenced by the ethnic relations s/he shares with the contestant vying for political power.

It is, therefore, safe to establish that the conceptual phrase of ethnic-based voting equally implies voting by reason of the ethnic background of the candidate and voting in view of the ethnic connotation of the political party (in the case where the topmost ranks of the party are controlled by a particular ethnic faction). In a more precise term, ethnic-based voting “is defined relative to both party flagbearer and the party itself” (Arthur, 2009 p. 47).

4.3.1.2 Objective 1b: Clientelism

The findings of the study also revealed that a minority of the respondents who claimed knowledge of ethnic-based voting often confused clientelism with ethnic-based voting where a contract or a deal of somewhat exists between political figures and the electorates wherein material benefits are offered in exchange for votes during elections. Wantchekon (2003, p. 400) affirms that clientelism refers to the “transactions (that exist) between politicians and citizens whereby material favors are offered in return for political support at the polls.” Andrews and Inman (2009) also add that clientelism can be defined “as a relationship in which one is offered a payment in exchange for one’s vote.” Ethnic-based voting, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with voting that

is influenced by a voter's ethnic connection with the politician. One respondent from AWWC in an attempt to define ethnic-based voting, for instance, stated that:

[...] is when politicians offer money to people in exchange for their votes during elections.

Another interviewee from HWC stated that:

Ethnic-based voting refers to the situation where people who are seeking for political power attempt to influence voters' decision by presenting them with lucrative offers which may include money and goods such as cutlasses, motorbikes, mobile phones and cooking utensils.

The findings of the study however revealed that although the concepts of ethnic-based voting and clientelism may appear to be related and that clientelism can be subsumed of somewhat into ethnic-based voting, there exist nonetheless, gross distinction between the two as clientelism is chiefly concerned with the giving of favours by politicians in exchange for political support notwithstanding the ethnic background of the voter (Andrews & Inman, 2009). Ethnic-based voting, on the other hand, is a voting practice that seems to draw strength from the ethnic connection that exists between politicians and voters (Lindberg & Morrison, 2008). The findings of the study further revealed that ethnic-based voting as a form of social cleavage model (Sociological Model) is often fuelled by ethnic connections that are based on family and kinship, language and dialect, ethnic traditions and indigenous societies in addition to the common religious beliefs that exist among the people (Arthur 2009; Daddieh & Fair 2002; Horowitz 1985; Norris & Mattes 2003; Palmberg 1999; Salih & Markakis 1998).

4.3.2 Objective 2: How Ethnic-Based Voting has Shaped Voting Patterns in Ghana's Elections since 1992.

The second objective of the study sought to ascertain the extent to which ethnic-based voting has shaped or influenced voting patterns in Ghana's elections since 1992. Information gathered from the study revealed that out of the 40 respondents who were interviewed in MSC, eleven (11) of the interviewees consented that sociological factors which include ethnic attachments had influenced their decision or choice of voting in past elections (from 1992-2012). The majority of the respondents (24) asserted that they voted because of the love they have for their parties. The remaining participants also said that it was actually the performance of the government of the day as well as the promises and accomplishments of the candidates that influenced their votes over the years. One respondent expressly said:

[...] when elections in the Fourth Republic commenced, I used to vote for the NPP because I am an Ashanti and I felt more comfortable voting for the party because I perceived it to be a party for only Asante. As times went by, I realised that the New Patriotic Party was not made up of only the Akan or Asante but rather, people from all sort of ethnic backgrounds and that I was misled by the political propaganda of the day. In addition, the Ashanti Region is now seen to be infiltrated by people from all the regions of the country who equally support the NPP strongly. I, therefore, had to realign my intentions for voting so as to help the democratic development of the nation.

In a similar vein (although a slight difference in figures), the findings of the study revealed that out of 40 respondents who were interviewed in HWC, fourteen (14) of the interviewees consented that sociological factors which include ethnic attachments had influenced their decision or choice of voting in past elections (from 1992-2012). As many as 22 participants stated that they voted because of the love they have for their parties. Additionally, only four (4) respondents stated that it was the competence,

capability and the track record of governments that informed their decision to vote in past elections.

Findings from the study also revealed that in AWWC, only two (2) of the respondents consented that it was ethnic preferences that had influenced their decision to vote in previous elections. On the other hand, as many as eighteen (18) participants stated that the performance of the government of the day, as well as the accomplishments or track record of candidates, were the key determinants of their voting behaviour. One respondent explicitly stated that:

When I started voting, the direction of my vote was influenced by my family, but after a while when I became more independent, I began to look at the capabilities of the candidates before I decided on where my vote should go [...]

The study also revealed that ten (10) participants stated that their voting in the past had been influenced by the beliefs and principles of governance that shape up the political parties.

The above-mentioned statements confirm that ethnicity may have influenced voting in the past but on only a minor fraction of Ghanaian voters. Additional information also reveals that the position of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics since the actualization of independence has been unpredictable and inconsistent (Arthur, 2009) although ethnicity has largely been perceived to play a major role in elections in Ghana's Fourth Republic. Arthur (2009) is of the view that the influence of ethnicity in Ghana's politics has largely stayed as a perception merely because it has taken just a few studies to be conducted to ascertain and validate this perception. The studies conducted by Arthur (2009) covered the electoral results acquired between 1992 and 2008 from all ten administrative regions of the country. Arthur (2009) is of the view that the perceived ethnic undercurrents in Ghana's politics is nothing new as far as elections in the Fourth

Republic are concerned rather, right from Ghana's attainment of independence in 1957, ethnicity has always influenced politics in the country evidenced in some political parties being formed along ethnic lines such as the Northern Peoples Party, the Ga Stand-Fast Party, the Ewe Irredentist Group, among others.

That nonetheless, in the Fourth Republic, the ethnic undercurrents in politics have been fuelled by the Asante/Akan support to the NPP and the Ewe support to the NDC (Gyimah-Boadi & Asante, 2006). Some scholars have attempted to trace the support of the Asante to the NPP through the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC); whose membership was mostly made up of merchants, businessmen and intellectuals who mirrored the liberal-Western class (Arthur, 2009), through the Progress Party (PP), and then the Popular Front Party (PFP).

The New Patriotic Party is often regarded as the Danquah-Busia faction. The NDC on the other hand, cannot boast of a strong historic link with political parties of the previous republics. It, however, rides on the bedrock of military revolution where ordinary citizens and people within the lower class in the society could identify themselves by. Although it is abstruse to historically trace the NDC to a particular ethnic group, "many Ghanaians believe that the leaders of the PNDC, which became the NDC and ruled Ghana for nineteen years, were predominantly Ewe people. The perception of Ewe dominance has created the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the NDC belongs to the Ewe ethnic group, and this perception has remained strong, especially among Akan people" (Arthur, 2009 p. 51).

Arthur (2009) is also of the view that voting along ethnic lines somehow did have an influence in the electoral of Ghana's politics as presidential electoral results from 1992 to 2012 show that the NPP performs quite impressive in the Ashanti Region while the

NDC's performance in the Volta Region is equally impressive. The electoral outcome of the 1992 presidential race does show that while the NDC in the Volta Region led by J.J. Rawlings (whose mother also hailed from the Volta Region) acquired 93.2% of the votes, the NPP whose frontrunner was Adu Boahen only obtained 3.6% of the valid vote cast and the reverse was the case in the Ashanti Region. Whereas the leader of the NPP Albert Adu Boahen came up with 60.5% of the votes cast, Rawlings got 32.9% (see Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Results of the 1992 presidential election

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Rawlings (NDC) Vote (%)	Adu-Boahen (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	50.05	732,990	32.9	60.5
Volta	62.4	491,551	93.2	3.6

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 1992

The findings in the 1996 election was no different from that of the 1992 as Rawlings gained 94.5% of the valid vote cast in the Volta Region and John Kufuor (the leader of the NPP) also got 4.7%. In the Ashanti Region on the other hand, Kufuor came up with 65.8% of the votes, whilst Rawlings obtained 32.8% of the votes (see Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Results of the 1996 presidential election

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Rawlings (NDC) Vote (%)	Kufuor (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	79.8	1,258,032	32.8	65.8
Volta	81.8	730,251	94.5	4.7

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 1996

The findings from the study further revealed that the voting trends in the 2000 and 2004 elections were no different from that of the previous ones, although the founder and leader of the National Democratic Congress had retired after successfully serving his constitutionally mandated two terms as president of Ghana and therefore was replaced by John Atta Mills who was vice to Rawlings. Table 4.8 shows that in the 2000 elections, Atta Mills whose lineage hailed from the Central Region maintained a firm control of the Volta Region (although the percentage of votes dropped from 94.5% in 1996 to 86.81% in 2000) with 86.81% of votes whilst Kufuor came up with only 6.64% of the valid vote cast. In the Ashanti Region on the other hand, while Kufuor obtained 75.56% of the valid votes cast, Atta Mills came up with 22.73%.

Table 4.8: Results of the 2000 presidential election

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Atta Mills (NDC) Vote (%)	Kufuor (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	88.7	1,655,760	24.0	74.6
Volta	87.6	705,827	83.8	14.2

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2000

To Arthur (2009), the relevance of ethnicity in the Ghanaian electoral politics played out clearly in the 2000 elections where billboards and posters of Atta Mills erected in the Central Region bore the inscription “adze wo fie a oye,” an Akan phrase that implies “it is better to have your own.” By inference, the then NDC presidential candidate was exhorting voters from that region to vote for him for the only reason that he hailed from that ethnic group.

Further findings from the study revealed that after NDC lost the first round of the 2000 presidential election, the leaders of the party went about scolding traditional rulers and the people of both the Central and Western Region for their refusal to vote for a “native son” and implored them to do so in the runoff. At the end of the elections, it was found out that the NDC won the majority of votes in the Volta, Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions which could be interpreted as having to be a calculated vote against Akan dominance. The findings in the studies conducted by Nugent (2001) supports this claim as he reveals that the NPP only made a small amount of progress in non-Akan regions. It is therefore seen as no coincidence that the 2004 elections followed a similar trend of the previous elections as Kufuor won in the Ashanti Region by 74.6% of the valid votes cast and Atta Mills came up with 24%. In the Volta Region, on the other hand, Atta Mills won by 83.3% and Kufuor got 14.2% of the votes (see Table 4.8).

With time, both parties (NDC and NPP) had cemented their influence by creating a political climate in their respective dominant regions to an extent that it no longer comes as a surprise in terms of the number of votes they accrue to themselves in their respective regions. In the 2008 general elections, the NPP presented a new candidate in the person of Nana Akufo-Addo as a successor to Kufuor who had successfully completed his two-term constitutional mandate as president of the Republic of Ghana. The NDC, on the other hand, maintained their presidential candidate who had run both the 2000 and 2004 elections. In the end, Atta Mills won the Volta Region with 82.88% while Akufo-Addo had 14.98% of the votes. In the Ashanti Region, on the other hand, Akufo-Addo won by 72.4% while Atta Mills got 26.1% of the vote (see table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Results of the 2008 presidential election

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	Atta Mills (NDC) Vote (%)	Akufo-Addo (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	79.7	1,270,844	26.1	72.4
Volta	81.8	733,938	82.28	14.98

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2008

The nature of electoral politics after the 2008 general elections to Hoffman and Long (2013), appeared to be more complex than just a mere consideration of ethnic-based election as the dynamics of voting and politics, in general, began to change. By 2012, two presidents had fully served out their constitutionally mandated terms, and a third sitting president had passed on for a new leader of the country to be installed in the person of John Mahama. Going into the 2012 elections, the NPP maintained their presidential candidate of 2008 whilst the NDC presented John Mahama as their candidate. That notwithstanding, the pattern of voting between the two regions was not altered. Whereas Akufo-Addo won with 70.86% of the total valid vote cast in the Ashanti Region, Mahama secured 28.35% of the votes. In the Volta Region, on the other hand, Mahama won with 85.47% of the votes, Akufo-Addo could manage just 12.93% of the votes (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.10: Results of the 2012 presidential election

Region	Turnout (%)	Total Votes Cast	John Mahama (NDC) Vote (%)	Akufo-Addo (NPP) Vote (%)
Ashanti	80.3	1,572,361	28.35	70.86
Volta	82.4	1,090,007	85.47	12.93

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2012

It is noteworthy to also highlight that although the administrative regions in most cases have been concluded as probable ethnic components, the analysis of the election results holistically presents a dichotomy between the “nucleus” of a region and its fringes. Consequently, a greater number of immigrants, mostly comprising inhabitants hailing from the northern part of the country who have found shelter in areas like Kintampo in the Brong Ahafo and have their main occupation as farming, have since 1992 often thrown their support for the NDC in presidential and parliamentary elections (Arthur 2009). In the 2004 presidential election in the Kintampo North for example, in Kufuor secured 36.9% of the votes, whereas Atta-Mills won by 59.6%; in Kintampo South, Atta-Mills again secured a victory with 55.9% of the vote while Kufuor managed 41.5% (Electoral Commission 2005). In the 2008 presidential elections also, Atta-Mills obtained 57.2% in Kintampo North, while Akuffo-Addo obtained 40.8% of the votes; and in Kintampo South, Atta-Mills secured 53.4% of the votes while Akuffo-Addo obtained 44.4% (Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2008).

The situation is much similar in constituencies in the Ashanti Region where people from the three northern regions have moved into. A typical example is the Asawase Constituency, where political support is very strong for the NDC in both the presidential and parliamentary elections (Arthur, 2009). The 2004 presidential election, for example, shows that whereas Kufuor obtained 42.3% of the votes, Atta Mills won with 54.9% of the votes in the Asawase Constituency (Electoral Commission, 2005). Additionally, in a constituency like Ejura-Sekyeredumase where the larger population is made up of non-Akan settlers, the NDC has often received enormous support. The situation, however, is quite different in places like Mampong and Effiduase/Asokore where the larger proportion of the population comprises indigenous Asante or other Akan congregates (Asante, 2006 cited in Arthur, 2009). Correlated voting trends

occurred in the 2008 general elections in other parts of the Ashanti Region where the population is mostly dominated by people from other regions other than from Akan communities where the NDC have dominated the polls.

Also, in communities such as Nima and Mamobi in the Ayawaso East Constituency and also with the Ashiaman Constituency (from the Greater Accra Region) where the migrants have dominated the population, the NDC has received strong support during elections since 1992 (Arthur, 2009). In the case of the Fantekwa Constituency which is deemed pluralistic in its ethnic composition, election campaigns and as a matter of fact, voting has been frequently instigated by conflicts between “citizens” and “strangers” (Ofosu, 2008 cited in Arthur, 2009). The findings of the study reveal that the NPP largely wins elections in this constituency because of the friction that results from disagreements about traditional control between people from Krobo and those from Akim and other Akan groups.

The findings revealed that the NDC since 1992 have won elections in electoral areas where people from Krobo have dominated as well as other non-Akan speaking groups. It, therefore, comes as no surprise that among other areas in the Eastern Region that are largely dominated by Krobos and other non-Akans, the NDC has fairly been in charge of the polls (Arthur, 2009). For instance, in the 2004 elections, whereas Kufuor obtained 37.4% of votes in Yilo Krobo, Atta Mills won with 60.7%; in Lower Manya Krobo, while Kufuor obtained 36.9% of the votes, Atta Mills won with 61.6% (Electoral Commission 2005). Also in the 2008 presidential election, while Atta-Mills obtained 64.3% of the votes in Yilo Krobo, Akuffo-Addo received 32.9% and in Lower Manya Krobo, whereas Akuffo-Addo obtained 33.4% of the votes, Atta-Mills won with 65% (Electoral Commission, 2008).

The findings of the study also revealed that electoral politics among the three northern regions are heavily linked with inter-ethnic conflicts. Instances can be cited from clashes between the Mamprusi and Kusasi in Bawku in the Upper East Region which during the 2000 elections resulted in the death of fifty people (CDD, 2008) and also the conflict between the Dagonba and Konkomba in the Northern Region (Arthur, 2009). The Dagbon incident, which was an intra-ethnic conflict between the Abudu and Andani Royal kin that led to the murdering of the Dagbon King (the Ya-Na) in 2002 is perceived to nurse partisan political undertone can also be mentioned where the Andani group is perceived to be supporters of the NDC, while the Abudu faction is perceived to be sided with the NPP (Arthur, 2009). The findings of the study reveal the fact that the NPP was indicted by the Andani group to have collaborated in the murdering of the Ya-Na gives evidence to the fact that even very strong ethnic groups can be severely divided between political parties. Consequently, it comes as no surprise that the linking of the death of the Ya-Na to the NPP resulted in the party's poor performance in the Northern Region in the 2004 general elections as well as that of 2008 (Arthur, 2009).

The above-mentioned electoral outcomes and ethnic upheavals have been the pretext behind the assertion made by some scholars (Gyimah-Boadi 2001; Haynes 2003; Horowitz 1985) that the voting trend in the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana discloses a noticeable ethno-regional pattern (Arthur, 2009). It thereby aids in elucidating the reasons behind why advocates and supporters of the NDC have often been quick to point fingers at the NPP as an anti-Ewe and anti-Northern political group (Oelbaum, 2004 cited in Arthur, 2009). Nonetheless, the fact that ethnicity has an influence in the electoral process of Ghana's politics cannot be understated however, these claims are not weighty enough to reach an overwhelming conclusion that ethnicity is the key or foremost motivation for voting among Ghanaians.

In the first place, a thorough analysis of the election results from 1992 to 2012 (see Tables 4.6 to 4.10) do show that the strength of both political parties in their strongholds are marginally diminishing as elections have gone by. Secondly, the fact that a particular region or constituency vote massively for a particular political party does not automatically conclude that those electorates were motivated by ethnic ties. Contrarily, the data collected from the field illustrates that ethnicity is only minor consideration for voting and rather, it is the party identification model (which denotes that people vote for a particular political party because of the common beliefs and principles they share with that political party, as well as the affection they do have for the party) that dominates the motive of voting among voters. In addition, the findings of the study revealed that it could be one thing for politicians to play the ethnic card during campaigning (as was clearly seen in the 2000 elections when the NDC sought to use the ethnic lineage of Atta Mills as a bargaining chip for people from the Central Region to vote for them but could not materialise as they lost in that same region) and another thing for voters to vote on ethnic lines during election. Lastly, it can be stated that what most studies have done have been to analyse the trend of electoral results over the years and speculated that those elections may have been influenced (perception) by ethnicity but most of such studies have not solicited the views of the voters in such areas to ascertain what influenced their decision to vote and so ethnic undercurrents in Ghana's politics continued to remain as a perception.

4.3.3 Objective 3: Ethnic-Based Voting and the Remedies for curbing it

The third objective of the study sought to ascertain whether ethnic-based voting is on its rise or decline as the foremost motivation for voting among Ghanaian voters whilst the nation's democratic maturity continues to rise. The study also sought to solicit the views of the interviewees as to whether they think ethnic-based voting is good for Ghana's democracy and if no, what suggestions do they offer to curtail or minimize this phenomenon in our electoral politics.

4.3.3.1 Objective 3a: Is Ethnic-Based Voting on the Rise or Decline?

The findings of the study revealed that out of the 40 respondents who voted in the 2016 general elections in MSC, only three (3) consented that their voting was influenced by their ethnic attachments with the candidate. One respondent stated that:

My decision to vote for the NPP was because of how Rawlings and his military officials treated those of us from Ashanti Region both during and after the revolution days. We were constantly oppressed because we are Akan anytime we travelled to do business. So from that time, I have always harboured resentment for people with Ewe lineage because of how they treated us when their leader was in power.

Another respondent also disclosed that:

[...] during the 1992 elections, I was beaten in Takoradi where I was working at the time just because I was an Asante and I was perceived to be a supporter of the NPP. From that day, I vowed never to support or vote for the NDC because they expressed resentment against people from Ashanti Region.

It is, however, noteworthy to point out that the findings of the study revealed that majority (22) of the respondents stated that their decision to vote was influenced by their fondness for the principles, policies and style that governs the NPP. Most of the respondents sought to justify their decision by giving explanations such as their general

love for the party as their primary motive for voting. Others also said they have been impressed with the style of administration of the NPP in the past that has prompted their choice of voting. One respondent explicitly stated that:

I support the NPP because the principles that guide the party have not changed since Ghana's attainment of independence and that the traditions of Danquah/Busia have been held high by the New Patriotic Party. I have actually been voting since the 70s and the beliefs of the Busia government in 1969-1972 have been an attraction to me and so when I realised that the NPP follows the same trend, I did not struggle to follow the party [...].

Another interviewee sought to debunk the notion of ethnic-based voting in the 2016 elections by stating that:

[...] I am not an Ashanti, I am not even an Akan but I hail from the Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region but I support the NPP because of their style of governance in addition to their philosophy of how the nation should be governed.

Findings from the study in MSC also revealed that the voting decision of a good number of respondents (15) said that their choice of the presidential candidate was influenced by evaluative rationale as most of them cited the influx of corruption, bad governance, economic mismanagement and high cost of living as their reasons for voting against the NDC government. Others also disclosed that they voted for the NPP because of their past achievements in governance. One respondent stated that:

I did not hesitate to vote for Nana Addo because of the achievements Kufuor made when he was in office and so I knew that if Kufuor did a good job, then Nana can do same since they are from the same stock.

Another interviewee also said:

The economy was getting tougher and tougher for me. I could no longer afford to pay my utility bills and the cost of transportation was getting higher and

higher so I felt I needed to vote for a change of government so that my life would ease up a bit [...].

A respondent added:

[...] when I look at the manifesto that the NPP presented during the 2016 elections, it was obvious that the promises they made were very impressive and that there was no way I was going to have refused it. I am therefore not surprised that majority of Ghanaians also voted for them.

Conclusively, the findings of the study in MSC do clearly show that the number of people who voted before the 2016 elections had varied their motives for voting in the 2016 general elections. For example, the findings from the previous elections showed that eleven (11) people voted because of ethnic motivations, 24 others voted because of their fondness for the party and the remaining 5 voted based on the evaluation of the candidates. In the 2016 elections, however, the number of people whose votes were influenced by ethnicity had dropped to three (3), people whose votes were influenced by their relationship with the party was still the same (24) and those who voted based on their evaluation of the candidates had moved from 5 to 15. This, therefore, shows that whereas ethnic ties (the sociological model) in voting has reduced massively, party identification remains a solid motivation among voters in Ashanti Region.

Table 4.11: Voting Pattern in Manhyia South Constituency

Type of Voting Behaviour	Previous Elections	2016 Election
Ethnicity	11	3
Party Identification	24	24
Rational Choice	5	15

Source: Field Data, 2017

Findings from the study in HWC revealed that out of the 40 respondents who voted in the 2016 general elections, only a minority of the respondents (7) voted on the basis of ethnic undercurrents. One respondent sought to justify his rationale for voting by stating that:

[...] for me, I see the NDC to be a party for those of us from the Volta Region especially because of the founder of the party and I will not cease to vote in that manner [...]

Another respondent also disclosed that:

[...] people from the Volta Region Vote for the NDC as a reaction against the influence of the Ashanti in our politics.

The findings of the study, however, revealed that majority of the respondents (26) had their attachment or fondness to a political party as their rationale for voting in the 2016 general elections. The study further revealed that among the participants who cited party identification as their rationale, a common justification for the adoption of this voting behaviour is the beliefs of the NDC as a party to bring up policies and strategies to assist the less privileged in the society. The position of the NDC as a socialist party resonates well among the respondents from the Volta Region.

One respondent stated that:

I just love the party and all that it stands for. I cannot help but keep supporting the party.” Another also emphasised that “the principles and practices of the party just excite me. I always get excited when I see the flag of the party or hear their name.

Still, in the Volta Region, only 7 revealed that what actually informed their decision to vote was the achievements of the government of the day. Eight (8) of the respondents unanimously said that the ability of the government to construct their roads which were in deplorable state impressed them enough to vote for them. One respondent stated that:

[...] I have practically benefited from this government in terms of getting a job so I felt the government needed more opportunity to bring more development to the people of Ghana.

Another respondent also stated that:

I voted for the NDC in the 2016 general elections because those of us from this part of the country (Volta Region) end up benefiting more anytime the NDC comes to office as compared to when the NPP comes to office. For that matter, I felt I should continue to vote for them so we keep benefiting.

In summary, the findings from the study in HWC show that the number of people who voted before the 2016 elections because of their ethnic ties with a political party or candidate had dropped from 14 to 7 respondents in the 2016 elections. People who voted because of their affections for the party or their identity with the beliefs of the party had moved from 22 before the 2016 elections to 26 after the 2016 elections and lastly, the number of people who voted based on the evaluations of the candidates was the same (7 people). This, therefore, shows that whereas ethnic ties (the sociological model) in voting had reduced, political party identification has grown as a strong motivation among voters in Volta Region.

Table 4.12: Voting Pattern in Ho West Constituency

Type of Voting Behaviour	Previous Elections	2016 Election
Ethnicity	14	7
Party Identification	22	26
Rational Choice	7	7

Source: Field Data, 2017

The Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency (AWWC) was selected to be part of the study because of its perceived cosmopolitan nature and also because of its electoral history that shows that any candidate who wins the elections does so only marginally, which stands in grand contrast to both the MSC and HWC where the winners win by a landslide margin. The findings from the study revealed that a most probable reason could be that the voters in this constituency are more objective and rational in their thinking which could be evidenced in 17 of the respondents out of 30 who admitted that what informed their decision to vote in the 2016 general elections was the achievements or performance of the government as well as the capability or promises made by the New Patriotic Party.

Majority of these interviewees unanimously said they just wanted change in governance. One respondent stated that:

I was just tired of the inefficiency of the ruling government and I wanted a change [...].

Another respondent also expressed the view that:

[...] the influx of corruption and the inability of the systems to function efficiently was of great concern to me.

One respondent also added that:

The manifesto of the NPP was impressive and Nana Addo's messages provided a source of hope to me [...]

Out of the 30 respondents who were interviewed in this constituency, 12 of those respondents cited their affiliation to a political party as their motivation for voting in the 2016 general elections. A number of these interviewees explained that what the respective parties stood for reflected their beliefs and principles as to how governance

should go about. It is noteworthy to point out that only one (1) respondent from this constituency stated that his decision to vote was influenced by ethnic undercurrents.

This respondent argued that:

For me, I see Ghana's politics to have always been about which ethnic group controls the affairs of state and it is an obligation for me to ensure that my people stay in office.

Conclusively, the findings from AWWC show that the number of people who voted before the 2016 elections had varied their motives for voting in the 2016 general elections. For example, the findings from the previous elections showed that two (2) people voted because of ethnic motivations, 18 others voted because of their fondness for the party and the remaining 10 voted based on an evaluation of the candidates. In the 2016 elections, however, the number of people whose votes were influenced by ethnicity had dropped to one (1), people whose votes were influenced by their relationship with the party had also dropped from 18 to 12 respondents and those who voted based on their evaluation of the candidates had moved from 10 to 17. This, therefore, shows that ethnicity is scarcely a consideration for voting among voters from this constituency and although political party identification may be an influential determinant of voting, it is rather the rational choice model that is fast gaining grounds in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency.

Table 4.13: Voting Pattern in Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency

Type of Voting Behaviour	1992-2012 Elections	2016 Election
Ethnicity	2	1
Party Identification	18	12
Rational Choice	10	17

Source: Field Data, 2017

The findings from the study further revealed that in MSC, as many as 31 interviewees had already decided on how they were going to vote even before the political party brought out their manifestos in their campaigns. They unanimously stated that the direction in which the nation (the national economic strength) was moving had been the reason to determine how they would cast their votes in the forthcoming general elections. An additional explanation was that there was no other choice than to vote against the NDC government no matter how much they had achieved. The study also revealed that the other 9 respondents finally made their decision on whom they were going to vote for after all the candidates had outlined what they were going to govern the economy.

In HWC, the findings of the study revealed that as many as 33 participants had already made up their minds as to whom they were going to vote for even before the prospective candidates outlined their visions or manifestos as to how they were going to govern the nation. Among the reasons for this were that they had already assessed the government a year before the general elections and they felt the government needed more time. A number of these respondents also explained beside the NDC, there was no need to consider any other party. The findings of the study also revealed that the remaining

participants made up their minds to vote after all the political parties had come out with their visions and plans as to how they would like to govern.

The outcome of the findings of the study from AWWC was no different from that of the MSC and HWC as 23 respondents stated that they had already concluded on whom they were going to vote for even before official campaigns were launched by the respective political parties. The majority of these respondents (15) explained that they just wanted a change with reference to how the economy was being governed. The findings of the study also showed that the remaining 7 participants stated that they made up their minds as to whom they were going to vote for after all the contestants had outlined their proposed policies as to how the state should be run.

4.3.3.2 Objective 3b: Curbing Ethnic-Based in Ghana's Politics

On the question of whether ethnic-based voting is good for Ghana's democracy, only 3 participants interviewed in the MSC said they do not see anything wrong with ethnic-based voting. One participant stated that:

[...] it has always been part of our politics and that nothing bad would happen as a result of that.

However, as many as 37 of the respondents interviewed suggested that ethnic-based voting is not healthy for Ghana's political and democratic credentials. One respondent expressly stated that:

[...] the elimination of this perception of ethnicity in our politics will save the country from the unnecessary tensions and violence that are associated with our politics.

Among the suggestions as to how ethnic-based voting can be curtailed or minimized in Ghana's politics included a general encouragement for every Ghanaian to have access to formal education which will become a means of empowering people to be more critical and objective in perception about issues of national and even of global concern. Others also requested that civic education programs on the rights and duties of citizens should be introduced while others cited the promotion of inter-ethnic marriages and an encouragement of inter-regional migration so as to demystify the perception of inter-ethnic clashes and its associated violence and resentment.

In HWC, the findings of the study revealed that only 7 respondents said that they found nothing wrong with ethnic-based voting, however, none of these interviewees could give any justification to this position. On the other hand, the findings of the study revealed that 33 of the respondents interviewed saw ethnic-based voting as one of the major threats to the peace, security, and stability of the country as people try to take advantage of the ethnic and political tensions to engage in vices. For that matter, ethnic-based voting can be minimized when the government embarks on educative programs that are aimed at enlightening Ghanaians about the negative consequences of promoting one's ethnic group instead of a promotion for nationalism. One respondent also stated that:

For me, I think the main reason why the NPP, as well as the other parties other than the NDC, do not perform well in the Volta Region is because they already accept defeat even before the election is undertaken and so if the NPP can be confident enough and invest more time and resources in the Volta Region during elections, they can make a difference. People do not vote for them here because they do not know them enough. Political parties should, therefore, make themselves known in this region so as to curb ethnic perceptions in our politics [...].

Other suggestions on how ethnic-based voting can be curtailed or minimized include increasing literacy level among Ghanaians as well as promoting civic education.

The situation was no different in AWWC as the findings of the study revealed that only one (1) person saw nothing wrong with ethnic-based voting stating that ethnic undercurrents in Ghanaian politics has always been there from inception and nothing bad has happened to Ghanaians as a result of that. The majority of the respondents, on the other hand, suggested that ethnic-based voting has been the major cause of conflicts associated with elections and politics in general in Ghana as it creates a “we against them” them attitude. All 29 respondents agreed that education or literacy is the major key in battling ethnicity in our politics and that the more academically enlightened Ghanaians become, the more they see the implications of promoting ethnicity in our politics. Other suggestions also included a mass civic education by the National Centre for Civic Education and the role of the media in raising the awareness of the negative impacts of playing the ethnic card by politicians.

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter has empirically assessed the incidence of ethnic-based voting in the Manhyia South, Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon constituencies under Ghana’s Fourth Republic. It has also assessed the rationale behind the voting behaviour among voters within these three constituencies. The facts collected have been thoroughly evaluated, interpreted and deliberated by the researcher in an attempt to come out with answers to the strenuous assignment of the work.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter completes the entire study. It presents the summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study that sought to examine whether ethnicity is still the most dominant determinant of voting among Ghanaian voters even after over two decades of democratic practice in the Fourth Republic. The study was confined to the two administrative regions of Ghana where ethnic-based voting is perceived to be high and these are the Ashanti and Volta Regions. The Manhyia South and Ho West constituencies were then circled out as the areas of interest. The work also adopted a third study area from the Greater Accra Region whose voting behaviour, unlike the above-mentioned constituencies is least perceived to be influenced by ethnicity. The summary brings to light the key findings while logical presuppositions and directions are outlined in the conclusion. The chapter also entails the study recommendations which outlines guiding principles and implications for political practice, suggestions for further studies and study limitations.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study was aimed at bringing to light what is meant by ethnic-based voting and how the phenomenon has shaped voting patterns in Ghana's elections especially in the Fourth Republic. The centre of the study nonetheless, focused on ascertaining whether ethnicity still influences voting pattern in Ghana. The researcher adopted the qualitative research methodology to assist the study in order to have a better understanding of the depth of the subject. The purposive and convenient sampling techniques were also adopted to draw a total sample size of 110 voters from three constituencies across three administrative regions of the country and these comprised the Manhyia South Constituency from the Ashanti Region, the Ho West Constituency from the Volta Region and the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency from the Greater Accra Region. In all, three study objectives were presented and appraised using the thematic and descriptive analysis. The analysis arrived at the following findings:

The findings suggest that most Ghanaians in the Manhyia South, Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituencies are well informed about the incidence of ethnic-based voting as a form of voting behaviour where voter decisions are shaped by ethnic affinity with candidates contesting an election. The study, therefore, confirmed that ethnic-based voting is not a new phenomenon in Ghanaian politics.

The findings also suggest that although the trend of voting in the 2016 General Elections in both the Manhyia South and Ho West Constituencies did not differ greatly from past elections, the most dominant determinant of voting among voters from these constituencies was however not ethnicity (a form of sociological model of voting behaviour) as the perception has been. On the contrary, what appears to be the most dominant determinant of voting was party identification; as most of the respondents

cited the principles, beliefs and philosophies that drive political parties, as well as their affection for their parties as the variables that appealed to their votes.

The rational choice model of voting behaviour (evaluative rationale) was the second most dominant voting behaviour among voters as participants cited the performance of the previous government (in the case of Former President Kufuor) as the key indicator that his successor (Akufo-Addo) will also do a good job when given the nod to be president based on the background that both personalities come from the same political camp. Additionally, the ability/inability of the NDC government to deal with certain difficulties that confronted the nation was also weighed to consider whether it would have done better should they have been given another opportunity.

Findings also indicate that voters in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency are mostly influenced by evaluative rationales with regards to choosing whom to vote for. For that matter, a ruling government would only get the nod to continue to run the affairs of the country if it had performed very well else, their votes would go to a candidate who appears to be capable of delivering on his promises when given the chance.

The findings also suggest that most voters had already made up their minds as to whom they would be voting for long before the official electoral campaigns were launched by the respective political parties. For the ardent supporters of the respective political parties, there was no need to evaluate the performance of their leaders in office in order to come to a conclusion with regards to whom they would vote for since there was no room for considering the capabilities of any another political party or candidate. For these voters, the capability and achievements of their party flag bearers are not the main

issues of consideration as their passion and obsession to see their party in office far outweighs any other thought.

For voters who are more rational in their decision pertaining to whom should be voted for (rational choice model), they reasoned that they did not need the last hours of party campaigns and rallies to decide whom to vote for as there had been enough time (over three years of the government in office) to know whether the performance of the government of the day merited a second chance or not. It is also noteworthy to point out that even among some ardent supporters of the respective political parties, they were ready to give up (at a certain point) on their parties of choice if the parties continued to displease them especially when it comes to the government's inability to address or deal with the unending issues of corruption that befalls the country.

Interestingly, most voters (which includes both party supporters and rational voters) will quickly vote out a government whose leaders are perceived to be arrogant and fail to wear a meek countenance when dealing with people notwithstanding whether that government had performed well or not. For most Ghanaians, having an appearance that portrays meekness is of immense value than competence.

In addition, voters are fairly informed about what ethnic-based voting is or how ethnicity influences voting in Ghanaian elections. Most of them, however, argue that the influence of ethnicity in politics is often exaggerated and it is also often used by politicians as a bargaining chip to propagate their agenda for electoral conquest. In reality, however, most voters appear not to be swayed by the ethnicity card played by politicians (although a few are) especially when it is their turn to exercise their franchise. Ethnic influence in politics is considered as a negative influence that thrives mostly among the uninformed and uneducated and can, therefore, be curtailed or

reduced significantly when more people acquire formal education; which will equip people with the ability to be more critical, objective and rational in the voter decisions. Suggestion from the findings also indicate that in an age where information thrives on the mass media, the media is therefore seen as a key player in equipping voters with information about current affairs and matters of national concern that will influence the quality of their voting decisions.

Moreover, the findings purport that ethnic influences in elections reside more with the elderly than with younger voters for a number of reasons; in the first instance, the young prioritize earning income to make a living more than voting just because s/he shares the same ethnic ties with a politician and would therefore take decisions that could yield positive results in that vein. In addition to the above, education is seen as a key factor in shaping the voting behaviour of Ghanaians. The findings revealed that because some of the older voters were unable to access formal education during their prime years, it had an impact on their ability to make independent decisions and therefore depended on family connections as a basis for their electoral decisions. For that matter, the more people are exposed to information or have access to formal education, the more likely they are to shift from ethnic and cultural attachments as well as other related stereotyped ways of viewing the world, to a more objective or rational way of judging matters.

Lastly, the findings suggest that one of the reasons why political parties do not perform well in constituencies or regions that are not regarded as their strongholds is that they do not put much effort into the campaigns in such areas probably because they perceive that no matter what they do and how well they do it, they would not get much out of such areas.

5.3 Conclusion

From the time democracy was restored in 1992, Ghana has organized as many as seven consecutive elections that have been touted as free and fair in the process of time. However, what appears to be a dent on Ghana's democratic credentials has been the perception of high ethnic influence in its elections of which some scholars have labelled the nation's elections as nothing more than an "ethnic consensus" (Horowitz, 1985). It has therefore been the aim of this study to assess the influence and veracity of ethnicity in the electoral decisions and choices of Ghanaians from the time democracy was restored in the Fourth Republic.

In view of the fact that the perception of ethnic predisposition has been prevalent, the research sought to investigate the extent to which ethnic undercurrents have induced and influenced the electoral choices of Ghanaians since the 1992 elections. Chiefly, the study sought to investigate whether ethnic considerations in voting was still the main determinant of voting in the recent elections held in 2016.

Although the voting trends in the 2016 General Elections in the Manhyia South and Ho West constituencies in the Ashanti Region and Volta Region respectively were lopsided and appeared not to have changed from past elections, the primary motivation behind voting in these regions have been because voters identify themselves with the beliefs and practices of the political parties rather than because of the perceived ethnic considerations. For that matter, just as states like Illinois and New York have remained a stronghold of the Democrat Party and states like Texas and Utah, on the other hand, have also maintained the Republican Party by identifying with the party beliefs of these political parties in the United States of America, the same can be said of areas like the Ashanti and the Volta Regions who have come to accept the party beliefs and

philosophies of the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress respectively.

It is also important to emphasize that there is a growing amount of people whose voting choices are influenced by their assessment of the performance of governments in power. This is very evident in the 2016 elections where the sitting government lost to the leading opposition group by a landslide margin of 44.40% to 53.85% (Electoral Commission, 2016) in addition to losing in as many as six regions out of ten; which includes the Greater Accra, Central and Brong Ahafo Regions that are all considered as swing regions. The electoral outcome of the 2016 elections could not possibly have just been because of ethnicity preferences of voters.

The study, therefore, concludes that it is quite challenging to ascertain the tangible influence of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics (Morrison 2004, cited in Arthur 2009), and for that matter, the widespread acclamation and scholarly “tribal” elucidation of voting in Ghana are overstated (Oelbaum 2004 & Arthur 2009). Elections in Ghana therefore exceed and outweigh the notion of “ethnic censuses” advocated by Horowitz (1985), since relevant and pertinent matters of the political life comprise a core aspect of the electoral process.

5.4 Recommendations

From the findings, the following recommendations are outlined:

First of all, citizens must be continually encouraged to get educated. Since ethnic influences in elections and politics in general thrives strongly among the uninformed and uneducated, people should be encouraged and given incentives to acquire formal education that will empower them with the ability to reason objectively and also make judgement on political issues that are devoid of ethnic biases. The elderly should also be encouraged to attend non-formal education programmes that will enable them to be able to become updated with current issues as well as the evolution of Ghanaian political order that is becoming more issue-based than being based on emotional attachments or even ethnic obligations.

Political parties must also be discouraged from playing ethnic cards during their campaigns. Since the Constitution of Ghana prohibits the formation of political parties on the basis of ethnic lines and other cultural considerations, consensus must be reached by political party elites to avoid the use of ethnicity to achieve scurvy and base political advantage. Party campaigns should be founded on issues that are relevant and that will aid the nation's development. Anything besides this should be opposed in order to promote smooth democratic development. Additionally, political parties should be educated on the negative implications of employing ethnicity to obtain votes as it is evident that countries who have politicized ethnicity have witnessed in many cases electoral uneasiness and conflicts that have halted democracy in those countries.

In addition, the state must make more room for civic education on democracy and elections. The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) that is tasked by Ghana's constitution to offer civic education for Ghanaians must be reinforced through

the allocation of logistics and funds for them to offer proficient and effective civic education on elections and democracy to the citizens in order to maintain tranquillity, coordination and tolerance. Education on civil rights and responsibilities should also be deepened in order to enhance the political maturity of Ghanaians as well as the organization of seminars that will create the awareness of every individual's right to make his or her decision without undue external influence.

The mass media doubtlessly also have a strong role to play in improving the quality of voter decision in Ghanaian elections. In the first instance, the mass media must do its best to desist from promoting programmes that have ethnic sentiments and must also ensure that provocative and inflammatory conversations are avoided on their platforms. Rather, the mass media in Ghana must be urged to render their duties fairly without discrimination or giving preference to any specific ethnic group. The mass media can also play the role of educating Ghanaians on relevant issues that will keep people informed about the current affairs of the country.

Furthermore, antagonism among inter-ethnic groups should be discouraged by various stakeholders and rather, the promotion of national unity and harmony should be preached at all platforms so that Ghanaians will come to terms with the fact that we are all one people and therefore our ethnic backgrounds should not be the medium that breeds division. Inter-ethnic marriages must also be encouraged in order to ease down ethnic tensions in the country. Additionally, the government can also adopt policies that will promote intra-migration that will end up fostering integration and a sense of belonging among Ghanaians. More so, the distribution of state resources and developmental projects should be fairly allocated to all communities and societies without side-lining others so as to promote the spirit of equality among Ghanaians.

5.5 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

Notwithstanding the achievements, a number of inevitable challenges were encountered during the study period.

A study that is aimed at exploring the influence and impact of ethnicity in Ghana's electoral process as the nation's democracy continues to grow should adopt a national outlook but due to financial constraints in executing the research most especially in the field work, the researcher could only concentrate on 3 constituencies out of the 275 constituencies. For the same financial reasons, the sample was restricted to 110 respondents whereas there are about 15,000,000 registered voters for the 2016 general elections. Additionally, due to the duration of the academic program, the researcher could not afford to expand his study areas to capture a larger scope of respondents from all the 275 constituencies in the country in order to come out with a more holistic finding. The research was also confronted with the challenge of having access to some vital information, documents and books from libraries and some state authorities that could have aided the research.

Future studies may, therefore, consider the veracity of the influence of ethnicity on the voting decisions and choices of voters in other areas of the country where ethnic tensions are perceived to determine electoral outcomes.

Since the findings of the study revealed that it is actually party identification that stands as the most dominant motivation for voting among Ghanaian voters, further studies may also consider exploring why Ghanaian voters are more partisan in their electoral decisions and not rational or sociological, for example.

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LIST OF APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Interview Guide

Department of Political Science

University of Ghana

Topic: Voting behaviour in elections in Ghana's Fourth Republic. A study of the Manhyia South, Ho West and Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituencies.

Part 1: Demographic Data

Please select the appropriate answer.

1. Sex a. Male [] b. Female []
2. Age a. 18-25 [] b. 26-30 [] c. 31-40 [] d. 41-50 [] e. 51 and above []
3. Educational background a. None [] b. Primary [] c. Secondary [] d. teacher Training [] e. University/Polytechnic []

Part 2: Issues on Elections

4. Have you ever voted in any elections under the Fourth Republic?
a. Yes [] b. No []
5. If you have ever voted, how many times have voted?
6. What motivated your decision?
a. Party affiliation [] b. Party Ideology [] c. Ethnic influence [] d. Personality of the leader [] e. Accomplishments of the leader [] f. Socio-economic programmes [] g. All the above []
7. Please give reasons to why you chose any of the above.
8. Did you vote in the 2016 general elections in Ghana? A. Yes [] b. No []

9. If you did, who did you vote for?
a. NPP [] b. NDC [] c. CPP [] d. PNC [] e. others _____
10. What motivated your decision?
a. Party affiliation [] b. Party Ideology [] c. Ethnic influence [] d. Personality of the leader [] e. Accomplishments of the leader [] f. Socio-economic programmes [] g. All the above []
11. Please give reasons to why you chose any of the above.
12. When did you make up your mind to vote for the candidate of your choice in the 2016 General Elections? Was it
a. before launch of official campaign [] b. during campaign season [] c. the latter periods of campaigning []
13. Please give reasons to why you selected any of the above?

To be answered by political party supporters

14. Are you a card-bearing member of any political party? a. Yes [] b. No []
15. If yes, what will you say is/ are your reason(s) for supporting your political party?
a. Ethnic/ religious or any other sociological affiliation with the candidate/party
b. The principles/beliefs that makes up the party (ideology)
c. The policy implementation/ the style of governance
d. A general liking/attraction for the party
e. Other
16. Could there be a possible reason for which you would quit or stop voting for your party? a. Yes [] b. No []
17. If yes, what could be that reason?

Part 3: Issues about Ethnic-based Voting

18. What in your view is ethnic-based voting?
19. Is ethnic-based voting good for Ghana's democracy? Yes [] No []
20. Please justify your position
21. How can voting on ethnic lines be curtailed?

