

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH (ISSER)

MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE OF WALANTU
COMMUNITY OF KASOA IN THE AWUTU SENYA EAST MUNICIPALITY**

BY

CHARLES SENIOR AGYARKO

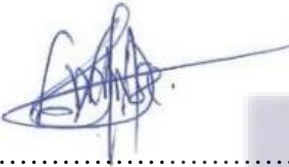
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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND
ECONOMIC RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

OCTOBER, 2023

DECLARATION

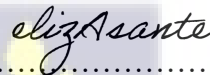
I hereby declare that except for the references to other people's work, which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the result of my own research work carried out in the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth Asiedua Asante.



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DEDICATION

I sincerely dedicate this work to Dr. Eleanor Hancock, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, Canberra, Australia, for her immense contributions towards my educational journey.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely thank many people who have contributed to this academic work in various ways. Firstly, I am very grateful to Dr. Elizabeth Asiedua Asante for her expertise, and constructive criticisms in producing this scholarly work.

In addition, I would like to thank my mum, Madam Gladys Awuku, and siblings Mr. Samuel Agyarko Larbi, Francis Agyarko, Charles Junior Agyarko and Nicholas Agyemang-Duah for their support and encouragements.

Again, I am grateful to the officers and staff of Awutu-Senya East Municipal Assembly for their help in this work. It is also important to thank all research participants of Awutu-Senya East Municipality especially, the households and members of National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) for taking time from their busy schedules to respond to all my questionnaire and interview guide.

I extend appreciation also to all faculty and staff members at the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana, Legon, for their support during my Master of Arts in Development Studies programme. Finally, I sincerely thank all colleagues in the 2021/2022 cohort of Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research Class of University of Ghana, Legon, for their cooperation throughout the programme. God bless you all.



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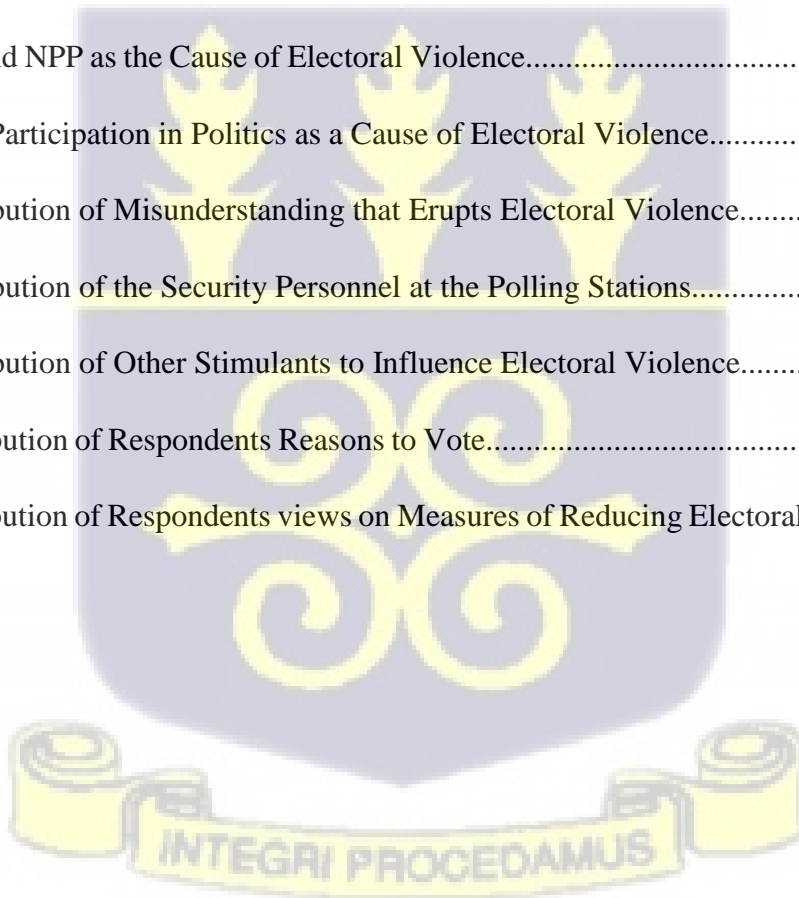
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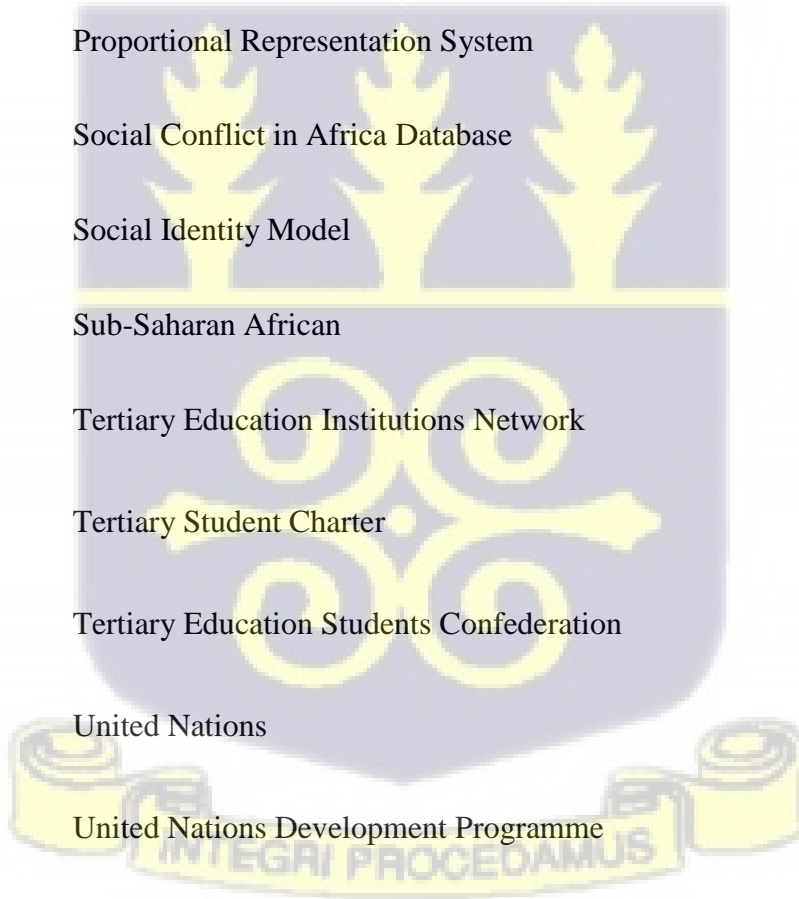


LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ASEM	Awutu-Senya East Municipality
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CDD	Centre for democratic Development
CI	Constitutional Instruments
CODEO	Coalition of Domestic Electoral Observer
EC	Electoral Commission
EMB	Electoral Management Board
FOV	Fanon's On Violence
FP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ICC	International Criminal Court
IPAC	Inter-Party Advisory Committee
LI	Legislative Instrument
MP	Member of Parliament
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education



NCRB	National Crimes Records Bureau
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NELDA	National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy
NEST	National Elections Security Taskforce
NPP	New Patriotic Party
OECD	Organisation for Economic Community and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PRS	Proportional Representation System
SCAD	Social Conflict in Africa Database
SIM	Social Identity Model
SSA	Sub-Saharan African
TEIN	Tertiary Education Institutions Network
TESCHART	Tertiary Student Charter
TESCON	Tertiary Education Students Confederation
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



ABSTRACT

From the late 1980's, countries on the African continent saw competitive multi-party democracy after several decades of military rule. Within this political process, elections were embraced as a core feature of modern governance and adopted as a medium of democratic practices. However, over the years, a number of countries including the developed peripheries have experiences of electoral violence. Despite its successful transfer of power, Ghana, a beacon of democracy is not exempted from this surging phenomenon despite. This study examined the effects of electoral violence in the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya East Municipality in 2016 and 2020 election years. The study adopts a mixed approach with a sample size of 110, through a simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The study observed that electoral violence is caused by physical, psychological and structural variables. Furthermore, the study found that intimidations, insults, threats, verbal exchanges, burning of motorbikes were the main types of electoral violence in the Walantu Community, and this threatens individual's participation and the country's consolidation of democratic activities at large. The study makes a clarion call by recommending state's economy be broadened through tax incentives or rebates to young entrepreneurs to serve as motivation to vigorously pursue job creation. Again, the study recommends that the government through partnerships with the private sector liaises with the ministry in charge of youth affairs through the National Youth Authority to provide skills development and vocational trainings, and entrepreneurial promotions to boost creation of jobs for the teeming youth. Again, the study recognized the role stakeholders play to curb electoral violence. Based on that, the study makes a clarion call by drawing the attention of all election stakeholders, including the National Peace Council to be strengthened to liaise with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), and other state institutions to re-educate the public especially the party foot soldiers on peace campaigns.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

General elections in multi-party democracies are now characterized by violence, a pervasive feature undermining democracy. This phenomenon is common in both emerging and developed democracies, and renders democratic practices unstable and antithetical with both democratic regions, and those that are yet to adopt the practices. This study examines electoral violence, which has become rampant especially in emerging and fragile democracies. The study looks at a period of electoral violence in the 2016 and 2020 elections years in the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu- Senya-East Municipality of Central Region of Ghana. Ghana continues to rank high on governance levels, measuring its performance on the rule of law, media freedom, and other indicators of democratic consolidation, including electoral participation making Ghana to pride itself as gateway of democracy Africa. Recognizing these accolades and democratic successes, this study discusses the core effects of electoral violence on Ghana's democracy. It looks at how this phenomenon is gaining grounds in Ghana's politics by focusing on the experience of Awutu Senya East Municipality (ASEM) in the 2016 and 2020 election years.

1.1 Background of the Study

Elections are a form of political participation that demonstrates a revelatory foundation entry into democracy. Citizens cast their ballots through voting, and through voting, citizens are seen as given the means of influencing decision-making process in governments. However, in recent times, there has been growing experiences of election violence around the globe. Both developed and developing countries are susceptible to election violence: intimidations, threats, attacks, fighting, shooting, group riots, and clashes between opposing supporters (Birch, 2020). This has prevailed due to the

competitive acceptance of multi-party system embraced by countries around the world. Kleinfled (2021) maintains that electoral violence has sprung up around the world's competitive democracy.

In the 2020 United States of America for instance, during presidential elections, supporters of former US President, Donald Trump, unofficially declared victory for their candidate, which had not been declared by the Election Commission. Therefore, when the announced declaration turned out to be different, the supporters engaged in violent protests on the street emboldened President Trump to concede defeat (Hessen, 2022). Ware (2022) observed that violence during the election season undermines democracy in the United States of America.

In a similar situation of competitiveness, Kleinfled (2021) observed electoral violence in Indonesia, transitioning to democracy after years of authoritarian military rule under Suharto administration. The country transitioned to democracy in 1998, and began engaging in electoral processes. According to Mambor (2019), Indonesia began witnessing electoral riots and protest among the competing candidates and their political parties.

Orji (2017) categorized electoral violence into external and internal. The internal category is attributable to Olawale et al. (1995) work which presented work on communal clashes, and how this has affected inter-group community relations in Africa. The internal category of electoral-related violence threatens inter-group relations. On the other hand, the external category involves high rates of illiteracy, unemployment, and chronic poverty resulting in under-development. For instance, 'winner takes-all' system compels one sided political party, to be in charge of all national resources, including states assets. Moreover, Orji (2017) maintains that certain sections of the citizenry are denied access to opportunities and resources to either study or work to better their lives. In Orji's (2017) view, the internal factors relate to a situation that facilitates electoral violence.

In Africa, the phenomenon is observed to be much worse in Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Congo, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Zimbabwe and many other countries (see Norris, 2012; Daxecker, 2014; Shenga & Pereira, 2019; Fielding, 2018; Birch & Muchlinski, 2017; Goldsmith, 2015 and Onapajo, 2017). According to Gyimah-Boadi (2009), the trend of such violence places a dent on Africa's democracy, and makes citizens trust and aspirations with democracy falling short as electoral violence has displaced many from their countries and rendering some families homeless and refugees. Records indicate that Ghana has staged eight consecutive general elections: 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020, with smooth transfer of power from one government to the other.

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In Agreement with Orji (2017), and Aryee (2017), Election Management Board (EMB), in some countries also called Electoral Commission (EC) is the organizer of all elections in contemporary democracies, and the claim that the organizer of the election is manipulative of elections result is a mere perception. Nevertheless, the EC's perceptual failure to organize free and fair elections triggers

electoral violence. Furthermore, Orji's (2017) identifies that electoral violence erodes the people's trust in the judicial system. Orji (2017) further contends that the injustices which the court system demonstrates during settlement of electoral disputes offend the people, especially if the ruling party does not favour of the party-complainant.

Hence, elections are held in various democratic states in nearly all countries around the world and electoral violence takes place at all levels of the electioneering process. Elections characterized by violence has the tendency to result in casualty, coerce and harm human life, properties and infrastructures. Aning and Danso (2012) state that Africa has registered electoral violence in varied ways, which according to Höglund & Jarstad (2010), constitutes a threat to democratic practice in Africa in two major ways. Firstly, electoral violence undermines the practice and quality of the outcome of elections in many ways. Secondly, its intensity erodes unity that may have existed among communal groups, which at a larger extent may generate civil wars.

Ghana continues to rank high on governance levels, measuring its performance on the rule of law, media freedom, and other indicators of democratic consolidation, including electoral participation making Ghana to pride itself as gateway of democracy Africa. Recognizing these accolades and democratic successes, this study discusses the core effects of electoral violence on Ghana's democracy. This study details how this phenomenon is gaining a space in Ghana's politics by focusing on the experience of Awutu Senya East Municipality (ASEM) in the 2016 and 2020 election years.

1.2 Research Problem

This study examines electoral violence which has become rampant especially in emerging and fragile democracies. Hence, the study looks at a period of electoral violence in the 2016 and 2020 elections

years in the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya-East Municipality of Central Region of Ghana. The Mo Ibrahim Index on African Governance (IIAG), measures and monitors governance performance in African countries to keep track on their democratic practices. One of these democratic practices is election. Ghana began embracing elections in her democratic and good governance principles with the aim of meeting citizenry socio-economic needs. However, incidences of electoral violence have accompanied elections ever since Ghana embraced democratic practices. A number of studies have been conducted on electoral violence and vigilantism in Ghana (see Danso & Lartey, 2012; Gyampo et al. 2017; Amankwah, 2013; Kumah-Abiwu, 2017; Bjarnesen, 2021; Aning et al. 2016), making electoral violence a relevant subject-matter for discussion as its continuous occurrence could threaten Ghana's consolidation of democracy (Gyampo et al. 2017).

In recognition of the up surging occurrences of electoral violence, the Ghana Police Service in 2020 declared Awutu Senya-East Municipality as one of the hotspots of electoral violence. Therefore, it is worthwhile to interrogate the nature and effects of electoral violence on free and fair elections by focusing on the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya-East Municipality in the 2016 and 2020 election years. Research such as by Adzimah-Alade *et al.* (2020) examined electoral violence and vigilantism in Ghana through content analysis and archival technique, and found that criminal behaviour and activities are born-out of the influence of intimidations, threats, fighting and coercion. The scholars' findings show that aggrieved party supporters resorted to vigilantism and violence as tool to redress grievances. This study also seeks to examine the manifestation of electoral violence in the recently declared hotspot - Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya-East Municipality. The Walantu Community is a minority establishment of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya-East Municipality. A detailed investigation of the community will provide the nexus of factors determining violence during election. The experiences of electoral violence in this minority

community within Kasoa will be useful information for policy and planning by the Electoral Commission and Ghana Security in subsequent election years.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study was to examine the nature and effects of electoral violence on free and fair elections in Ghana through a study of the experiences of the Walantu Community in the Awutu Senya East Municipality in the 2016 and 2020 elections. The study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

- (i) To understand the nature and types of electoral violence in Walantu Community.
- (ii) To investigate the elements that influence the risks of electoral violence in Walantu Community.
- (iii) To investigate the effects of electoral violence in Walantu Community.
- (iv) To examine the role of pragmatic intensions in reducing the incidence of electoral violence at Walantu Community.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to address the following questions:

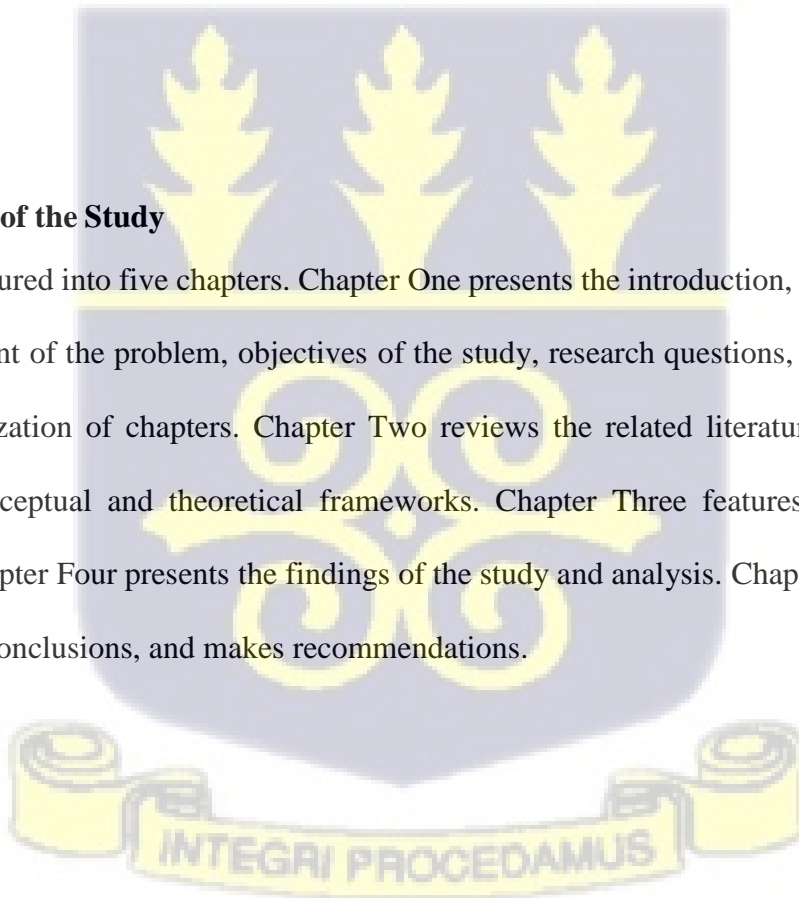
- (i). What are the nature and types of electoral violence in Walantu Community?
- (ii). What are the potential elements influencing electoral violence in Walantu Community?
- (iii). What are the effects of electoral violence in Walantu Community?
- (iv). What are the pragmatic interventions adopted in reducing electoral violence in Walantu Community?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study seeks to examine violence in Ghanaian politics and other emerging democracies and throw more light by deepening understanding and prescribing solutions to issues affecting Ghana's electoral system. The study provides valuable information on the causes and effects of electoral violence in Ghanaian politics. This information is important to election management, policy, planning and intervention by the Electoral Commission of Ghana, the Coalition of Domestic Electoral Observers (CODEO), political parties, political researchers, and other key stakeholders on elections such as the National Peace Council, peace negotiators, development practitioners, and civil societies. The study findings of the study will serve as a guide to future scholars writing on political violence.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The study is structured into five chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction, background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and organization of chapters. Chapter Two reviews the related literature on the subject, including the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Chapter Three features the method and methodology. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study and analysis. Chapter Five provides a summary, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter Two presents the literature review of the study. The chapter focuses on theoretical review, followed by conceptual framework, and the empirical review. Other thematic areas of the subject-matter were also reviewed.

2.1 Theory of Clientelism

Generally, using elections to select leaders is a mechanism that allows citizens greater say over how they are governed, and provides a nonviolent alternative to the use of force to arbitrate between rival claims to rule. However, in practice, these expectations often fail to conform to reality of election. Outside the Western world perspectives, theories such as clientelism, vote-buying, and intimidation have been employed by many authors to explain the subversion of electoral processes through violence (Birch et al, 2020). The theory of clientelism is utilized in this chapter to explain the causes and dynamics of electoral violence. According to Lemarchand (1972) and van de Walle (2007), Africa is often described as a continent in which politics is structured by clientelism. On the governance landscape, voting is considered a key factor in a functioning democracy as governments are expected to provide basic amenities to the citizenry. However, in most developing countries, many forms of clientelism exist between patron and clients, and accepted forms of service performed by politicians are expected from constituencies to be favoured during voting (Kitschelt & Altamirano, 2015).

Clientelism describes the distribution of selective benefits to individuals or defined groups in exchange for political support (Hopkin, 2006). According to Scott clientelism is defined “as an instruments friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his own

influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (clients) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including services, to the patron” (1972:92). For Hopkin (2006), the term is a form of personal, dyadic exchange usually characterized by a sense of obligation, and often, by an unequal balance of power between those involved. These relationships involved ‘the patron providing clients with access to the basic means subsistence, and the clients reciprocating with a consideration of economic goods and services, and social acts of deference and loyalty (Muno, 2010).

Muno (2010) identified core concepts of clientelism. Key characteristics of clientelism include the following elements: (a). the relationship is dyadic; (b). the relationship is asymmetrical; (c). the relationship is personal and enduring; (d). the relationship is reciprocal, and (e). the relationship is voluntary. Two of the key concepts - the relationship is dyadic, and the relationship is reciprocal were given prominence in this section.

The relationship of dyadic. Under this concept of clientelism, there exist a social relationship between two persons – patron and client, which is paramount (Landé, 1977). The two, patron and client engage in direct face-to-face interactions and transactions between them. This view made Kitschelt and Wilkinson (2007) observe clientelism as a principal-agent-relation, where electoral constituencies are principals and politicians are agents. In Tambe & Monyake (2023) studies, the authors concluded that clientelism tends to increase voter turnout. The co-authors further argued on a country’s material impact of personal clientelism. This is because voters who had declared having received material benefit, gifts, money in exchange for their vote are more likely to live in poorer African countries. A recent growing literature by the World Bank (The World Bank, 2017) demonstrate the increasing acceptance of political clientelism as a viable tool of profitable electoral

mobilizations, by tracing its origin from economic development, weak legal environment and violence (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015). The increasing attempts by political parties both the incumbent and the opposition parties to engage in violence is conditioned with the aim to increase voters turnout (Sarkar & Sinha, 2018). According to Chatterjee (2004), parties seeking electoral mobilization often face incentive to cultivate and exploit the vulnerability of political society, illustrating a classical feature of political clientelism.

The second key concept of clientelism that this study considers is the reciprocal relationship. In reciprocal relationship, exchange of material or immaterial of goods is an essential feature of clientelism. Numerous studies and evidence show that political clientelism and violence have a strong relationship. A study in Oyo State Nigeria from 2007 to 2015 by Abebeyi (2021) found that political clientelism is a significant factor behind political violence. In Latin American, countries struggle resemble similar features of political clientelism and violence. Gay (2012) enumerated the length politics of clientelism and violence in recent experiences in Brazil.

Further, Berenhot (2019) revealed how political competition from India and Indonesia incentivizes politicians to foment religion and ethnic violence. In a cross-national analysis of clientelism and voter intimidation in seven African countries, Rauchenbach et al. (2019) found that voters living in incumbent strongholds are mostly likely to receive clientelism benefits before elections, whereas, those living in opposition strongholds are most vulnerable to violent intimidation. Similarly, in an empirical study conducted by Forsberg (2018) on some selected African countries, the author found consistent positive and statistical relationship of political violence with post-election violence. The theory the author offered indicated that clientelism increases the risk of electoral violence.

It is to be mentioned that inadequate necessities life including food, water, fuel to cook food, and medical supplies are heightened by clientelistic practices, making foot soldiers to ‘die’ at all cost for their patrons during elections Kitschelt & Altamirano (2015). Rachenbach et al. (2019) modelled the assumptions of clientelism and the empirical finding that incumbent party supporters aggressively offer support to their patrons when seeking reelection to office. They maintained that election regulates the allocation of resources, as supporters give out all their best to retain their patrons into power to fulfil the promises made to them. Thus, as Transparency International (2019) and Lodge (2019) observed, clientelism has revealed itself as a problem in governance, worsening in many poor democracies, especially in the Africa.

2.2 Conceptual Framework of Electoral Violence

Electoral violence raises doubt about the acceptance of elections as a democratic practice. In the diagrammatical expression of the conceptual framework below (Figure 2), electoral violence is the dependent variable, which is impacted by variables such as roles of Electoral Management Boards (EMB), the presence of political vigilantism, and the issue of ‘winner takes-all.’

Activities of Electoral Management Boards (EMB) form a basic igniting factor of electoral violence. The EMB, which in certain democracies, are known as Electoral Commission (EC), is an institution with high level of variation on the quality of electoral management (Norris, 2016). The EMB performs various roles, which are recognized by the constitutions of the states as conventions and principles that uphold the practice of democratic governance. Problems, including mistrust in the electoral system by political parties with competing candidates, delays in ballot count, severe electoral mismanagement, inaccurate or incomplete voter registers, flawed ballot paper design, and faulty equipment affect the smooth running of the election process, its quality and electoral behavior,

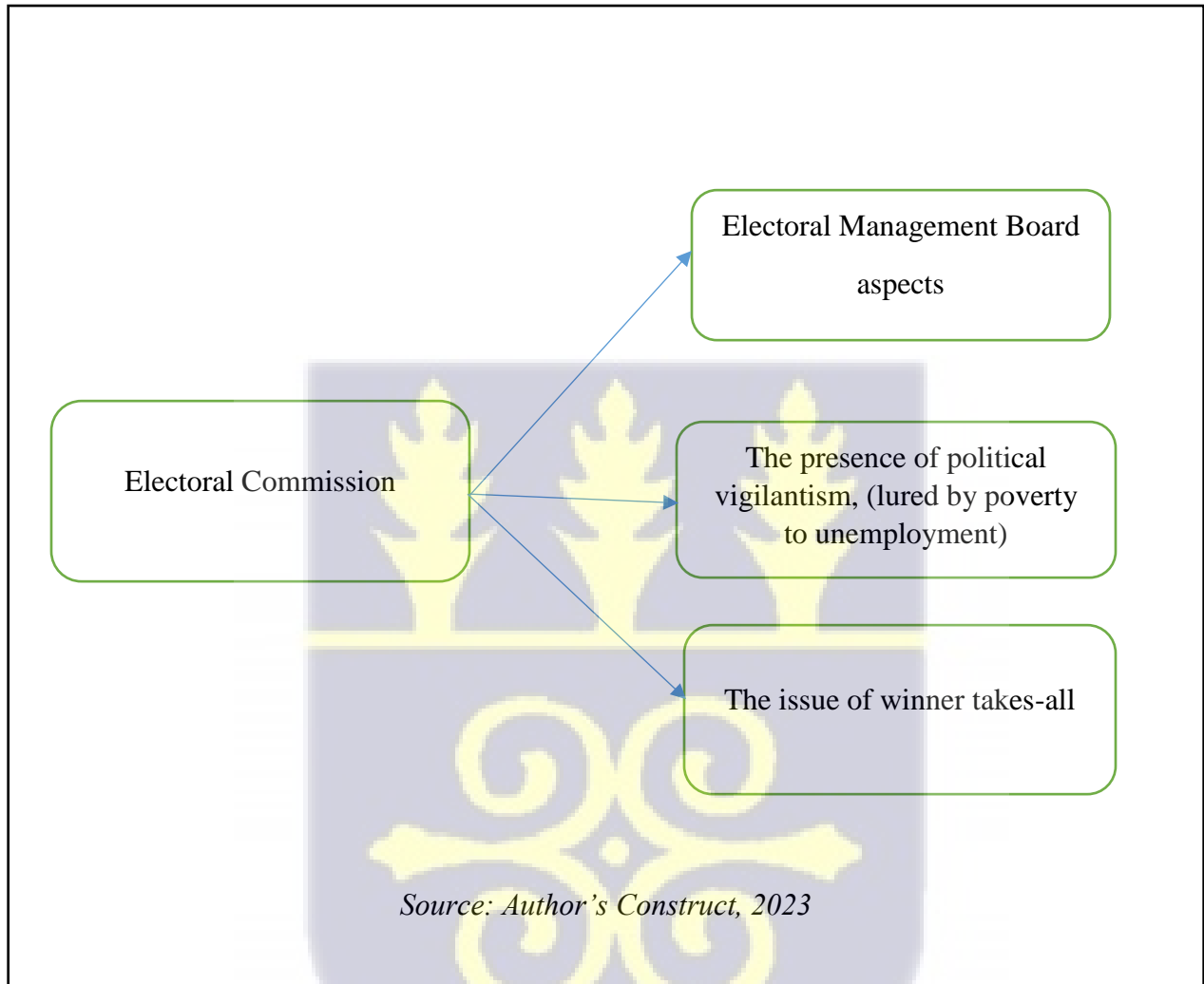
undermining its integrity. Electoral integrity fosters participation in elections, whereas electoral malpractices reduces it. Electoral integrity, according to Carroll and Davis-Roberts, “refers as international standards and global norms governing the appropriate conduct of the elections” (2013, p.5) These are outlined standards endorsed in authoritative protocols and guidelines notably prescribed by the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly, and by regional bodies such as the African Union (AU).

Democracies that sees elections as free and fair tend to be well participated on election’s day by voters, and during election campaigns; those who trust Election Management Board (EMB) are more likely to vote (Shenga & Pereira, 2019). However, those who view the opposition as being denied of inclusion by the EMB including denying them access to the national voter’s register or even prevented them from running fairly in an election are less likely to cast a vote. This resonates the issue of trust resulting in distortions and distractions influencing the transparency of the electioneering process (Shenga & Pereira, 2019). Political parties and their competing candidates would experience mistrust during electioneering processes that are not transparent, and which could favour one competitor. This breeds tensions, charging the environment to breed violence, conflict, and other acts that put peace into disarray (Classen et al., 2012).

The second dimension in the diagram is vigilantism, created when people are lured into vigilante groups from poverty and unemployment. Ghana’s electoral processes is characterized by political vigilantism. Gyampo et al., describe political vigilantism as a “violent display of brute force to protect the interest of a group that one belongs to. It consists of acts or threats of coercion in violation of the formal boundaries of an established socio-political order, which, however, are intended by the violators to defend that order from some form of subversion” (2017, p. 14). Raleigh maintains elites

resort to vigilante as violent tools to deliberately “undermine political opposition, promote ideologies, counter multiparty democracy, and gain political initiative” (2014, p. 291). Vigilantism is a motivator to electoral violence.

Figure 2.1: A diagrammatical expression of factors stimulating electoral violence



The chances of the violence being orchestrated is high when the foundation for violent protests is laid to register the displeasure of each political party's vigilante group at supposed compromise of the electoral processes. The action of vigilante groups and their violent reaction to other competing candidates or political party's opponents becomes perceived as a normal participation in party

management, political campaigns and elections. This process automatically creates conditions for large-scale political violence to destabilize democracy (CDD-Ghana, 2015).

Third variable is the ‘winner takes-all’ syndrome, which is seen as unavoidable in most developing democracies. The ‘winner takes-all’ syndrome is the practice where after the declaration of elections results, the elected political party takes charge and manages all state resources without considering the expertise of the opponent parties. This syndrome encourages vigilantism as supporters, sympathizers, and party foot soldiers to dominantly claim ownership of state resources.

In sum, key variables for shaping the quality of elections include Electoral Management Board (EMB), vigilantism and winner takes all syndrome. Aspects of poor management capacity and handling of electoral processes include intentional and unintentional errors, logistical difficulties, all leading to mistrust in the electoral system by the competing political parties and candidates (Clark, 2015; James, 2013; van Ham and Lindberg, 2015). Political vigilantism – political party’s brutal “militias” groups and ‘winner takes-all’ power dominance by winning political party are central to this framework. The above variables demonstrate evidence of the validity of the conceptual framework supporting this study.

2.3 Electoral Violence

In an attempt to enhance the understanding of electoral violence, specific definitions have been developed by many scholars. Electoral violence is “a subset of activities within a larger political conflict, part of the trajectory of violent ethnic or communal disturbances clustering around the electoral events” (Homolkova, 2017). For Straus and Taylor (2012) electoral violence is a “physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced

electoral result” (cited in Birch and Muchlinski, 2017, p. 219). Fischer (2008) defines electoral violence as, “any random or organized act that seeks to determine delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, physical assault, ‘forced protection’, blackmail destruction of property or assassination’ (cited in Birch and Muchlinski, 2017, p. 219). Another definition is by Sisk (2008) who describes the term as, acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process. Electoral violence may be employed to influence the process of elections– such as efforts to delay, disrupts, or derail a poll and to influence the outcomes, “the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions” (cited in Birch and Muchlinski, 2017, p. 219). Birch and Muchlinski (2019) raise two key components of Sisk’s definition, the temporal link, and the casual link. While the temporal link falls between the violence and elections, the casual link is found between the two. Electoral violence as “an act or threat that is of coercion, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arise in the competition” (UNDP, 2011: p.16). This means that various nature of violence such as insults, fighting, intimidations are applied to hurt other members for the competing parties to deter or discourage members of the opposing parties to restrain from voting. Electoral violence is a “physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced result” (Straus & Taylor, 2012, p. 5).

Kumah-Abiwu (2017) suggests two approaches to electoral violence - the first approach focuses on conflict-prone conditions at the national (macro) and local (micro) levels, and the second approach focuses on issues of framing and reframing created by political elites. He agrees with Galtung (2011) that electoral violence focuses on three dimensions – the physical, psychological, and structural. These dimensions aim to intimidate, harm, and distort the election process. Physical electoral violence relates to bodily attacks on politicians or, by ardent supporters during the electioneering

processes, and when results are announced, lead to fatalities (Albert, 2007). Physiological electoral violence manifests in a manner during the climate of the electioneering process. In essence, electoral-related violence is employed as a tool by or against political opponents to destabilize the electoral process. Electoral violence is used to intimidate potential opposition voters, and opponent may use it to threaten as well as prevent voters from taking part in the voting process (Fielding, 2018). Election violence should be seen as an effective intimidating tool with the objective of dissuading the masses from participating in a political process.

2.3.1 Pre-election Violence

Bekoe (2012) and Höglund (2009), identifies electoral cycles into three phases namely (i). pre-electoral violence, (ii). election day violence, and (iii). post-electoral violence. Fischer (2002) expanded on Bekoe's (2012) and Höglund (2009) point that election violence takes place at every level of an electoral activity: i. during the registration process (identify conflict), ii. During campaign period (campaign conflict), iii. during election day (ballot conflict), iv. after election results and determined (results conflict), and v. after establishment of government (representation conflict). Höglund outlines the commencement of the first phase to be “the day a voter or party registration begins, or the day initiating the campaign period, a period leading up to the inauguration of the newly elected body” (2009, p. 415).

In the pre-elections season, influencing elections aims to “shape voting behaviour, preferences and patterns, or the day initiating the campaign period” followed by election day, and concluded by a “period leading up to inaugurate of the newly elected body” (Straus and Taylor, 2012, p. 20). The pre-election season recognizes activities of electoral violence in ‘coercion, vandalism, arbitrary arrests and other physical or psychological abuse’ (Clae, 2019, p.3). Thus pre-election violence comprise

direct physical violence, “assaults, threats and political violence assassinations (Höglund, 2009, p. 413). It includes intimidations (Fischer, 2002) and “hostage-taking, kidnapping and extortion, clashes between various groups of supporters, attacks and bomb scares” (UNDP, 2009, p. 20). It is important to also reveal that pre-electoral violence activities could emerge from multi-perpetrators which includes “political parties and candidates, citizens, the state security (police, army units, special security services (rebel, factions, militias, and vigilantes’ groups), and civil societies (politically mobilize youth groups martial arts clubs)” (UNDP, 2009, p. 13).

In Höglund (2009) study, the author conceptualizing electoral violence, and argues that electoral processes relate to motives, timing, actors, activities and target and identifies that the nature of politics, elections, and electoral institutions acts based on the intensity and forms of electoral violence. Many studies on election violence have concentrated on a number of cases with extreme levels of election violence including Cote d’Ivoire, Nigeria and Kenya have observed that electoral violence result from varied and distinct forms of manipulations. According to Pagat (2019), events including political campaigns during the political process often become a direct personal communication to market party policies and programmes to party supporters. During this stage, campaigns become highly participative and the pre-election phase witnesses intimidations, aggressive and reviling speeches against competitors attacks on opponents (Birch et al., 2000, p. 5). Straus and Taylor assert that the motive behind employing election violence to influence the electioneering process is to “shape voting behavior preferences and pattern” (2012, p. 5). This implies that the disaggregated objective of pre-election violence is to disrupt the electoral campaigns and eliminate or weaken strategies of political contenders or even intra-party colleagues and their supporters to establish one’s own domineering position (Birch et al., 2020; Höglund, 2009). Another

motiveinfluencing pre-election violence is to “influence the actual participation in the voting turn-out” generating electioneering insecurity (Fischer, 2002, p. 13). Complementing this view, Birch et al. (2020) argue that such occurrences take place primarily to halt the flow and provision of information to other competing opponents.

Pagat (2018) reports that political parties prepare during electioneering periods to campaign for votes has the tendency to trigger dominant political parties to engage in violence, but could also motivate the aim of perpetrating the violence (Wahman and Goldring, 2020). Pre-election violence could also occur from the period where the electoral management board (EMB) decides to enroll illegible voters onto the national voters’ register. But shortcomings during the registration exercise could result in inaccuracies of data is the beginning point of registering the violence. Another feature that associates with pre-election violence is the unequitable offering of the mediacoverage to the political parties. This de facto by a section of the state-owned and a number of private broadcasting houses monopolize by the incumbent does not allow for equitability in mediacoverage of other parties (Höglund, 2009). This prevents opposition parties from being heard on their programmes being campaigned by the voting populace. Therefore, pre-election could occur and exacerbated when the election processes are not clear, intending to favour one candidate or political opponents, neglecting the involvement of other key election actors, aiming to influence the entire electoral processes (Toby, 2022). Importantly, it is therefore worthy bearing in mind thatbecause electoral contests are seen as struggle for political power as pre-election violence distort smooth running of election, and continuous occurrence of pre-election will culminate in communal tensions.

2.3.2 Post-Election Violence

The issue of elections degenerating into chaos and conflicts has become one of the main tproblems

of democratic societies. Elections in most liberal democracies are typically characterized by irregularities, which in turn fuel violent expression of dissatisfaction during and after the voting processes. By definition, post-election violence is “any random or organized acts to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail or abuse a political stakeholder in seeking to determine, delay or to otherwise influence an electoral process” (Fischer, 2002, p.3). Post-election violence takes place after voting, delay, and disrupt outcome of the polls and derail the entire society. Goldsmith (2015) asserts that post-election violence seems a preference of the opposition, perhaps due to quixotic intentions to overturn the unwanted results, or to demonstrate through force the losing side’s resolve to do better in next time’s elections.

Bayne (2008) identifies four broad forms of post-election violence: spontaneous violence which breaks out at party’s stronghold, normally after the declarations of election results; organized attacks, organized retaliatory attacks by the political party’s members, especially the youth; excessive use of force by on security agencies; and, the main opposition party’s members and other civilians in particular. As an attempt, post-election violence is often used in response to election outcomes to suppress protests by supporters of the losing political party.

In a post-election violence Commission of Inquire hearing set-up in Kenya, it was reported that within communities, households turned against each other, businesses were looted and livelihoods shattered, and unity among the local folks was segmented (Mott, 2008,. In a study by Onyancha (2015) of post-election violence, the author observed that women and girls were subjected to sexual violence due to outbreak of violence, many of which were motivated by ethnicity. Additionally, female genital mutilation became prevalent as there was no recognition of formal laws. Again, Onyancha reports instances where families including children were compelled to witness sexual

violation of parents, siblings, and relatives. Those responsible for these acts were identified as ordinary citizens, members of criminal organizations, and individuals from the security forces.

In his study, Teshome (2009) examined the 2005 post- electoral violence that killed more than 40, 000 people. He observes that, Kenya's pre-election up to that day of voting was remarkably peaceful. However, post-elections were marred by the most horrific violence in the country's history. Similar studies by Ouma (2011) reports in his findings that numerous individuals perished in the violence that ensued after the elections, majority of victims being innocent civilians. Widespread massacres associated with post-election violence saw huge number of casualties and extensive damage to property amounting to millions in losses. As a result of the post-election turmoil, Ouma reports that 1333 Kenya's citizens lost their lives and approximately 600,000 were forced to flee their homes. This created a huge number of displaced citizens, and as a result caused social trauma as people sought shelter makeshift settlements scattered throughout their nation.

In this light, post-election violence threatens the security and economic wellbeing of societies. It infringes on the individual's right and freedom to vote, valued as the opportunity to affect political decision-making. The consequence of post-election elections is that any "feeling of being involved, having political influence" and "inclusion identity, and self-determination" is completely erased from citizens (Hickman, 2011, p. 29).

2.4 Electoral Violence in the Global Context

In both developed and emerging democracies, elections are a core tenet of rule of law and governance processes. Elections enable citizens to choose leaders to manage state resources. However, during electioneering processes, several violent acts are recorded. This sub-section

discusses the occurrences of electoral violence in the global, African, and Ghanaian settings. As indicated earlier, violence is also found in developed democracies as well as in developing countries. Scholars argue that electoral violence, even incidents that occur with some irregularity, indicates more widespread systematic complaints (Höglund, 2018).

In the United States of America, electoral violence has become common in the last half decade (Kleinfield, 2021). Kleinfield postulates that political violence has a long history, and indicates that electoral violence phenomenon emerged in 1960 led by strong, clandestine ideological groups. The 1960- 1970 period witnessed violence, and since inception, political violence has shifted to the right with the rise of militias. The situation appears to be up surging even as the US, which claims to be the champions of global democracy. In the 2020 elections, the country has recorded more levels of political violence, marring the voting process and its aftermath.

According to the 2016 elections reports former President Trump (then Presidential Candidate of the Republican Party) met with hate crimes targeted at minority communities. The Southern Poverty Law Center nine hundred reports of “harassment and intimidation” in the next ten days after the elections (Hesson, 2022). Ware (2022) observes that political violence leading up to the 2020 US elections could not only prevent citizens from voting, but could the propensity to undermine the US democracy, and its democratic stability in many ways. Recent polls violence could undermine national and citizen confidence in the US democracy. For example, as the 2020 United States Presidential elections drew nearer, suspects were arrested by the military for plotting to kidnap democratic Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer (Hesson, 2022). Similarly, the phenomenon undermines the confidence of America’s and its ability to promote liberal democracy.

Chowdhury (2019) reports that the Indian states of Bihar, Andhar, Pradesh, Raastham, Uttar, and

West Bengal had more than 150, 000 people arrested before the 2014 national elections because the people were identified as violent. Coercion use in India's politics is meant to support the aim a political party wants to execute in exercising superiority over its opponents. Vaishnar (2017), in a survey of voters, reports about politicians who agree to use violence as a form of coercion in elections. Wambua (2017) observes that, since the restoration of populist politics in 1991, Kenya has experienced periodic electoral violence. Analysis such conflicts, however, Wambua (2017) observes a consistent tendency to view causes as the only, or primary, manifestation of evil race. In other words, the author acknowledges a desire on the part of the state and non-state actors to deliberately 'realize' the ethnic conflict that has caused the country to remain in the wounds of electoral conflicts and pains.

2.5 Nature of Electoral Violence in Africa

In the wake of transitioning from frequent military coup d'états to democratic regimes, elections have been identified as core tenet of good governance. Through elections, Africa has recorded a significant incidents of electoral violence in the past decades. The North African region, democratic regimes are more vulnerable to electoral violence. In the Northern African bloc, the political diffusion faced by those countries made them experience varied electoral violence. Countries within Arab States constitute the 'Arab Spring' movement, which includes Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. Kraetzschmar and Cavatorta (2009) report electoral violence in the African 'Mehgrebian' countries of Egypt in 2005 and Morocco 2007 elections in a case study, to demonstrate viable alternatives including fraud and knowledge and support, built from Muslim Brotherhood. According to the authors, violence employed in these countries during electioneering periods was both rational and effective.

Kraetzschmar and Cavatorta see vote-buying as greatly experienced in the Moroccan 2007 election. Dwelling on the empirical literature, though electoral violence does happen; however, they are not severe when compared to the other non-‘Maghrebian’ African countries. Electoral violence is minimal, as elections are less conducted. In this, authoritarian regimes are commonly seen among these countries where elections do not usually offer with credence. Another example from the same scholars is the state of other electoral manipulation that takes place as a result of the electoral system itself. Greffrath and Duvenhage work focused on Egypt, as unfavourable electoral system with competing competitors in the political systems.

The Southern African countries have embraced multi-partism practice, but relatively not a quite long ago. Some of the countries in the Southern Africa countries includes Lesotho Zanzibar, Swaziland, Seychelles, Mauritius and host of others. Pottie (2010) points that electoral violence experienced by these countries are not different from what its colleagues within the Sub-Saharan African experience. However, recognising that elections are marred by violence. Onwueghuchulam (2021) reports recent killings in the Kwazulu-Natal (KZN) province of South Africa during electoral violence, and made the Southern bloc fragile. Onwueghuchulam (2021) further builds on growing literature and asserts that South Africa with the political violence in Kwazulu-Natal is not disjointed from the concept of political socialization, indicating how electoral violence is so much ubiquitous in the African soil. The author utilizes Fanon’s *On Violence* (FOV) and builds on the subject-matter, stating that the Southern African bloc is volatile. For example, Onwueghuchulam (2021) contends how violence in South Africa have become eminent that two leading political parties – Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and African National Congress (ANC) – are the brain behind such violence due to political struggle dynamics as apartheid supported the political structural regime.

In Central Africa, election violence has led into series of political violence and electoral conflicts, including coup d'états. Central African countries have recorded military interventions in their electoral processes, fragile and weak state institutions, high internal ethnic tensions, and armed insurgencies which mete out atrocities to the citizenry. Historical records show that Central African Republic (CAR) in post-independence period is recognized by cycles of violence and non-democratic transfers of power. It is reported that the upsurge in cases of political turmoil has resulted in the formation and deepening of rebel groups and about 3 million cases of homelessness (Bertlesmann Transformation Index, 2022).

In West African, countries such as Nigeria experienced political violence during their 2023 general elections. Ikeji (2015) observed biased military involvement in elections including (i). serving as members of the elections monitoring team; (ii). standing for elections as political candidates; (iii). providing administrative assistance or support for elections; (v). voters' registration and (vi). securing sensitive electoral materials or providing security against violence or electoral crimes before, during, and after elections. However, Ikeji (2015) holds that the fifth aspect has caused a major controversy over the need of the law, and the need to deploy the military for electoral purpose.

According to Nigeria's Election Violence Tracker (2022), the country faced violence from jihadist groups, criminals, and other armed groups engaging in attacks against the local communities and voters (Nwolise, 2007). Bardall asserts that occurring from the date of voter registration to the date of inauguration of a new government, election violence may take place in public or in private, including in the family, the general community, online and via media, or be perpetrated or condoned by the state" (2015, p. 5-6). Electoral contest posits the idea of struggling for political power to manage state resources when elections are won. This is a situation required by the laws of most African

countries compelling them to practice multiparty system, which permits all qualified candidates and political parties for political power. Hence, electoral violence has become a phenomenon commonly witnessed where there is the struggle for political power.

2.6 The Nature of Electoral Violence in Ghana

In spatial mapping of conflict zones study by Kendie et al. (2014), a number of factors triggered violence in Ghana. According to the authors, varied causes ranging from religious differences to land, chieftaincy and ethnic differences, political and economic marginalization. For the purposes of the study, political dimension of the violence or conflict is more relevant in that it is mapped to contribute to the phenomenon. For Seine & Tsikata (2004) political violence between supporters of the differing political parties started independence and had become part of the political scene predating from anti-colonial struggle.

As is in many emerging democracies, elections in Ghana are not conducted in vacuum, rather they are based on prescribed rules and legislations. For example, in 2016 and 2020, the Constitutional Instruments (CI. 91), and (CI. 126) respectively were the legislations that controlled the elections. Since the inception of multi-party democracy, successive elections in Ghana have been accompanied by a certain degree of electoral violence (Gyampo et al. 2017). They are triggered mainly by contesting political parties, in particular, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and New Patriotic Party (NPP) (Danso & Lartey, 2012; Amankwah, 2013).

Kendie, Osei-Kuffour & Boakye (2014) mentioned, taking part in democratic processes are a fundamental right of all citizens. However, the right to participate has turned to be chaotic, suppressive and intimidating, threatening the electoral processes. A number of electoral violence have been

experienced. The Electoral Commission provided a list of 81 constituencies with the potential for electoral violence. Notably among them are Ayawaso West Wuogon, Atiwa, Odododiodio, Wenchi, Talensi and many other constituencies. Several other civil society organizations also listed and monitored activities in areas they designated as hotspots for electoral violence (Kendie and Bukari, 2012).

These violence activities were executed by the youth. According Aning, Danso, & Salihu (2016), and Kumah-Abiwu (2017) maintained that youth represented a greater proportion of political party membership in Ghana. The involvement of youth groups emerged when Ghana embraced multi-politics in 1992. The authors reiterated that political party's youth wings were structured, and became operational to serve as a supporting base to the political parties. To marshal strong supporting base, Aning and Danso further reiterated that the youth wings were integrated, thereby involving them in the political party's activities. The political parties in particular, the NDC and NPP, have created student and youth wings at the various campuses. The Tertiary Education Students Confederation (TESCON) of the NPP, Tertiary Education Institutions Network (TEIN) of the NDC, and the Tertiary Student Charter (TESCHART) of CPP, have been designated as breeding grounds for young politicians. However, youth involvement breeds violence due to their youthful exuberance, leading to the formation of many vigilante groups between the two leading political parties in Ghana, the NDC and NPP.

It is relevant to point that most youth groups serve as party foot soldiers. Bob-Milliar (2014), maintained that most party foot soldiers engage in non-violent political campaigning and behave like activists elsewhere in advanced democracies. Nonetheless, Bjarnesen (2021) pointed out that NDC and NPP foot soldiers have increasingly being trained to operate as agents for their political parties

during election periods. In most cases, these foot soldiers are body-builders who are ‘machomen’ Bjarnesen, 2021; and (Utas, 2021). Debrah (2014) recognize machomen live in imaginary world of Ghanaian politics. They engage in fighting and protecting their candidates and political parties.

Other violence engaged in by the foot soldiers include verbal intimidation, shootings, protests, threats, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced protection, blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination (Fischer, 2002). As Straus and Taylor (2012) mentioned, electoral violence is a physical violence and coercive that threatens consolidation of democracy. It is relevant to state that electoral system of Ghana is marred by plethora of these unrecognised political groups. These networks formed by political party’s big men are used to execute political activities for party’s interest or gains. Would the passage of the Vigilantism and Related Offences Act, 2019 (Act 999) deter party foot soldiers at the existence of these groups?

In Awutu Senya East Municipality, the 2020 electioneering period witnessed several violent acts. Such communities as Walantu, Church of Christ, Ofaakor, Nklu, and Nkwanta were reported to be hotspots, and recorded clashes between the NDC and the NPP. Violent activities included voter harassment, firing of warning shots, vigilantism, and many unacceptable behaviours that threatened the peaceful flow of the electioneering processes. In the 2020 electioneering period, two people were shot dead at the Church of Christ polling station at Kasoa (www.graphiconline.com). During the voter registration exercise, the Member of Parliament (MP) of the area, Hawa Koomson, fired a warning shot at a registration centre when chaos erupted (www.ghanaiantimes.com). In the incident, three motor cycles were burnt and the Election Commission officials bolted from the centre after gun-wielding men disrupted the registration process. Additionally, if elections outcomes do not favour certain political parties, supporters register their displeasure through street protests and

demonstrations.

Table 2:1 showing the various vigilantism groups of NDC and NPP in Ghana

No.	Groups Name	Location	Political Affiliation
1.	Azorka Boys	Tamale	NDC
2.	Al Jazeera	Tamale	NDC
3.	Task Force	Asawase	NDC
4.	Burma Camp	Yendi	NPP
5.	Bolga Bull Dogs	Bolgatanga	NPP
6.	Dazota (Don't Fear)	Bolgatanga	NPP
7.	Invincible Forces	Bolgatanga, Asawase	NPP
8.	The Hawks	Bolgatanga, Asawase	NDC
9.	Aluta Boys	Bolgatanga	NDC
10	No Weapon	Sankore	NDC
11	Salifu 11	Goaso	NDC
12	Cyborg Killers	Asawase	NDC
13	Kandahar Boys	Asawase	NDC
14	Delta Forces	Asawase	NPP
15	Bamba Boys	Asawase	NPP
16	Alidu Mafia's	Asawase, Oforikrom	NPP
17	Maxwell Boys	Asawase	NPP

Source: Compiled from the literature by the Author, 2023

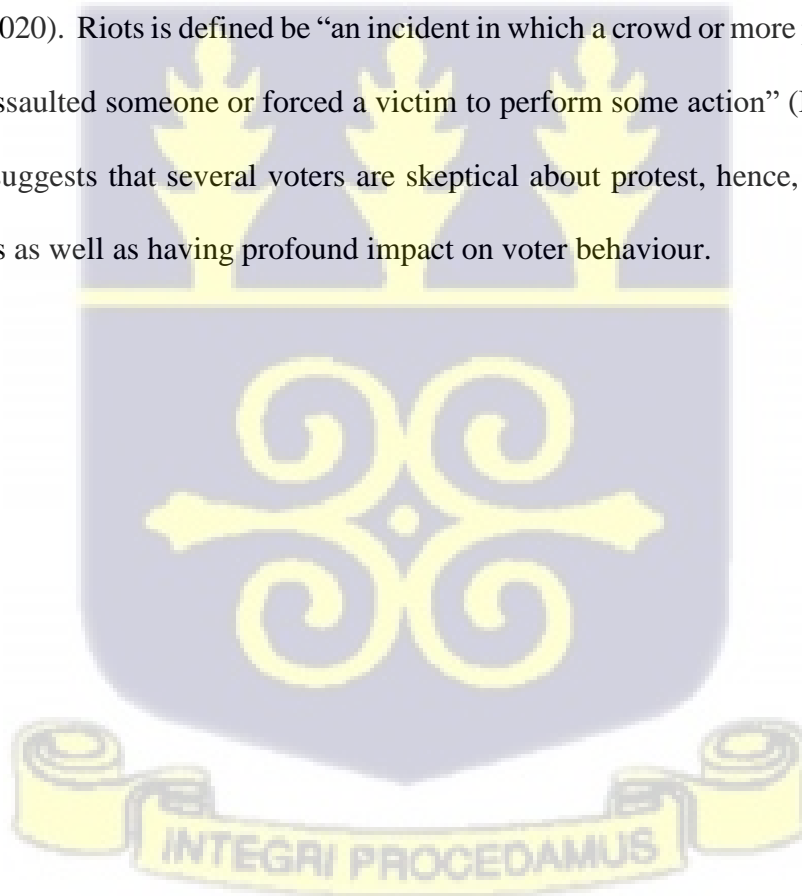
2.7 Typologies of Electoral Violence

The adoption of electioneering processes has enlightened societies in democratic states. The adoption of the processes and the subsequent acceptance of multi-party politics demonstrates the quest of countries to strive for democratic processes. Although politics has become a common phenomenon, politics and elections have been fraught with conflicts, and in recent decades, marred by violence,

which in recent times have been an integral process in many states, especially in developing democracies (Birch, 2020). Birch (2020) argues that the means by which power is organized in a society largely explains which elections are characterized by violence to some extent. This includes the ‘winner-takes-all’ syndrome in most democracies, especially in developing countries. This subsection presented a number of electoral-related typologies, including threats, riots, intimidations and harassment, and protests and demonstrations.

2.7.1 The Issue of Riots

Elections are held around the world, and celebrated for long, arduous, and continuing democratic practices (Rajah, 2020). Riots is defined be “an incident in which a crowd or more people damaged or seized property, assaulted someone or forced a victim to perform some action” (Bohstedt, 1983, p. 5). Soule (2018) suggests that several voters are skeptical about protest, hence, having effects on electoral outcomes as well as having profound impact on voter behaviour.



Iyers (2015) studies the trends or trajectory of riots since India's independence in 1947 until 2015, and finds that riots are mostly featured in religion. For example, in India, the causes of riots and the role of political competition play a role in influencing elections. Jha (2014) finds a correlation between periods of unrest and increase vote share does not attempt to establish a causal relationship. Wilkinson (2013) observes that violence is less likely to enter states with a very high number of political parties and where the ruling party is based on a minor vote. Iyers (2015) demonstrates how religious riots have complete underpinnings in social, economic, and political factors, and reveals how riots could be used as a tool to influence voter behaviour in party politics.

Utilizing data on Hindu-Muslim riots in over 21 years, combined with electoral and demographic data, Iyers' (2015) findings show a causal link between electoral politics and communal riots, and convey the extent to which violence could distort electoral processes. While Iyers' (2015) findings are based on a robust check on the economic analysis performed in the author's interpretation, the result does imply that such riots are caused by electoral factors. Nevertheless, Iyers' (2015) study could be that most riots are as a result of political calculations employed to frighten opponents during electioneering. This systematically shows that political parties could set riot for electoral benefits.

Newburn (2021) reveals the various conditions that contribute to outbreak of social tensions, together with social and psychological interpretations of the macro- and micro-level interactions that may distort social identity, and translate anger about governance into violence. Borch (2012) contributes to the discourse and observes that one of the consequences of the backlash against the traditional, psychological, and sociological portrayals of crowd is to minimize interest in studying riots. Newburn (2021) recognizes the limitations on crowd and classifies riots into three groups. Newburn (2015, 2016a) mentions the extent of the approaches and focuses on the attention of not

only the economic, social, and political approaches. Newburn (2016a) focuses on the elements of Waddington's flashpoints model together with the Social Identity Model (SIM) to demonstrate the rate at which contextualized and interactional levels minimize the propensity of violent clashes.

2.7.2 The Issue of Threats as a Crime to Electoral Process

The electoral process is a complex combination of interrelated participation processes, including voter registration, candidate selection, and electioneering. As a true democratic practice, elections can attract threats from various groups whose motivations may not be related to national issues raised in the wake of the elections (ACE, 2002). Mitra and Shajahan (2022) examine how crime and threats are employed to influence elections. Analysing India's National Crimes Records Bureau's (NCRB) dataset from 1981 to 2007 with disaggregated category, the authors establish the rate of threats and crime and suggest that threats are crimes used for intimidation. The authors maintained that in an election year, violent crimes increase by about 61% when compared with other non-violent crimes. The authors use violence during elections with 26 years of the district-level data on reported crime cases. Furthermore to that, the authors find that there is an upsurge in cases of violence during election years when compared with non-election years. Moreover, the authors relate to criminalization in politics in most developing countries in general and, India in particular.



2.7.3 The Issue of Protests and Demonstrations

Over the years, states have recorded several protests and demonstrations during electioneering, notably in post-elections periods. Asante and Helbrecht (2018) observe the effects of protests and demonstrations on history, especially in Africa, compared to the West. However, this misconception depicts some level of understanding. In Asante and Helbrecht (2018), the authors recent works have shown that Africa has witnessed four waves of protests. The first wave is believed to have occurred during the struggle for independence in many African countries; the second wave is associated with the difficulties of structural adjustment programmes that have involved most African countries; the third is the democratic or political revolution that swept through many parts of Africa in the 1990s; and the fourth (the most recent) wave is understood as a 'global apologetic that is broadly defined as anti-capitalist' (Seddin & Zeiling, 2005). Protests and demonstrations for political reasons are common in modern democracies as crowds and mobs use these violent acts to register their displeasure. Asante and Helbrecht (2018) use protest logic theoretical model to focus on a Ghanaian experience of protest. Asante and Helbrecht (2018) utilise secondary data in a study on protests in Ghana and other African countries through desk reviews.

The authors focus on key concepts in Ghana, including urban protests, during the analysis of the online database. Asante and Helbrecht (2018) further review more than sixty published papers on protests in Ghana and Africa and reveal a historical development of three revolutions – Proletarian, Republican, and Corporatist. The authors observe two remaining arguments of appeal – independence and partiality. More so, protests involving liberal themes are common in the Ghanaian context, and issues such as gender, disability, and homosexuality were recorded. Similarly, the authors indicate that while political parties and politicians have been involved in many protests in Ghana, the parties and

politicians are often led to proletarian or proletarian movements. Another finding is that more youth are involved in violent protests due to unemployment. Therefore, protests and demonstrations are often an upsurging phenomenon pervading in cultures that have maturely recognized democracy, and as well as emerging geographies. This shows that threats and demonstrations influence voter participation during voting.

2.7.4 The Issue of Intimidations and Harassment

Most elections around the globe are characterized by electoral intimidations and violence. The intimidations, threats, or coerce, could be used by any other person or persons to interfere with other persons' right to vote. Globally, increasing number of elections remain vulnerable to electoral intimidations and harassment. In qualitative desk review, using theories such as social movement and conflict and conflict resolution on electoral violence have taken a paradigm shift as intimidation and harassment manifest in many ways (Claes, 2015). According to Claes (2015), the chaos includes insults, hate speeches, attacks on people's character and ethnicity, physical attacks, arson, theft of ballot boxes, and murder. Political parties and their candidates can undermine the electoral process through such illegal activities as vote buying, attacks, threats to the opposition party, defamation, trial speeches, and hatred. Claes (2015) reports on the intimidations and harassment in Nigeria's 2011 elections, which showed some democratic qualities at the ballot, but recorded as the worst in the country.



2.8 Factors Influencing Electoral Violence

Birch, Daxecker, and Höglund (2020) report that there are four main global factors that increase the risk of electoral-related violence; whether perpetrated directly by a political party, or through state

security or the youth wings of armed parties outsourced to militias and gangs, or marshalled by ordinary citizens. The four forces are (i). a highly competitive election that could change the balance of power; (ii). partisan divisions based on identity; (iii). electoral rules that make it possible to win by exploiting identity divisions; and (iv). weak institutional constraints on violence, particularly the bias of the security sector towards a group leading the perpetrators to believe that they will not be responsible for the violence. A careful review of the literature reveals that, scholars have categorized causes of electoral violence into institutional, structural, and international.

2.8.1 Institutional Factors

Records show that electoral violence remains a challenge in electoral processes, especially in Africa, even where elections remain the dominant mechanism for accessing political power. Institutions contribute to worsening violence associated with elections. In the literature, two prominent institutions are found - formal and informal institutions. Hanne and Höglund (2016) study electoral institutions and electoral violence in sub-Saharan Africa, and indicate that institutions' final framework on elections have the propensity to influence the risk of physical violence and coercive intimidation in respect to electioneering processes. To evaluate the study, Hanne and Höglund (2016) analyse datasets on monthly observations, including all countries holding executive or legislative elections in the sub-Saharan origins from 1990 to 2010.

Similarly, data on electoral violence from 1990 to was obtained from the Social Conflict in Africa Database (SCAD, Version 3.0), by concentrating on regimes or practicing National Elections across Democracy and Autocracy (NELDA) dataset by following the method of Huber. The authors discover

that electoral institutions are important in shaping government and opposition forces to engage in electoral violence when ruling party candidates do not meet the expectations of the competing parties.

Again, Höglund (2016) reveal EMBs are independent, but focus on Proportional Representation System (PRS) and assert that with a greater number of legislative seats per each constituency, there is a significant reduction in political actors engaging in and encouraging violent electoral strategies. However, the authors do not rely on primary data for arrive at such findings. Arriola and Johnson (2012) postulate that in every five elections around the globe, it is marred by physical violence since the inception of Third Wave of Democratisation.

In an attempt to establish the relationship between patronage politics and electoral violence in an unconsolidated way, the authors dwell on an original cross-national dataset of electoral violence in Africa from 1985 to 2005 and reveal electoral violence is linked to the abilities of support systems, such as informal institutions, to respond to elite demands of resources, as evidence depicts redistribution process through competition. Also, the study finds that institutional structure is a negative predictor of post-electoral violence when the incidence or intensity of pre-election violence is considered. Thus, the study indicates that democracies with equal representation are less likely to engage in such violence, and countries that use electoral systems no longer exist. Further, Arriola and Johnson (2012) conduct a log arithmetic and argue that institutions that impact the likelihood of electoral violence are electoral administrative bodies. Unfortunately, Arriola and Johnson's (2012) work is criticised for solely relying on primary data.

Considering the informal institution, literature states the informal institution is associated with the belief that electoral violence is common among multi-ethnic societies, stemming from the polarisation

of ethnicity (Hanne & Höglund, 2016). The authors estimate log odds for the Fearon Index (FI) and convey that ethnic groups with greater fractionalization are associated with a lower likelihood of pre-election violence. Dixon (2009) asserts that ethnicity yields differences to increase the likelihood of conflicts while ethnic differences reduces it. Politics based on ethnicity is the default rule only in countries with weak political institutions (McVeigh, 2006; Hironaka, 2005). Qualitative studies on political violence has focused on cross-border, intra-group and identity building processes that can lead to political violence (Wimmer, 2013). Political scholars assert that electoral violence is associated with the exaggeration of differences within groups, the devaluation of members, and the restriction of group affiliation.

2.8.2 Structural Violence

Structural violence is indirectly embedded in social structures, but could be worse than physical violence in leading to death or causing people to lead miserable lives for being politically repressed, economically exploited, or deprived of the freedom to be close to loved ones (Alert, 2003). According to Ali (2011), structural violence manifests in the form of exclusionary or discretionary policies against certain groups. Galding (1991) describes structural violence as a living term accumulation of policies; and the exclusion of policies or discrimination, ethnic, religious, and regional segregation. In areas where social distancing is deeply rooted, angry people can find ways to deal with the problems. One of the methods employed in such situations is weaponry (as a means of violence against social injustice). Violence is a system of domination, exploitation, and humiliation to force victims into subjugation (Galding, 1991).

Morgan, Sunar, Fry, Carter, Leckman, Keverne and Old (2014) emphasise structural violence as a systemic act which is often subtle, invisible, and taken for granted, even more difficult to find out

that it is to make a guilty because violent actors are almost impossible to detect, hidden behind anonymous institutions or long ago the violence continued. Lee (2019) lists examples of structural violence in health, economics, gender, and radical disparities. These variables are fought over, hence, creating distortions. In the same vein, structural violence denies certain people the opportunity to exercise their franchise due to structural differences. Galtung Institute (2016) distinguishes between structural-specific and cultural violence, and groups it into physical and verbal violence. For Galtung (2016), cultural violence includes the beliefs and attitudes of groups that define their heritage; cultural elements such as religion, art, thought, language, science; and other social examples used to combine these beliefs to support or justify direct or cultural violence. In all, political parties have common structural problems of tension that relate elites' preferences for a dominant role in their party financiers who, together with the political 'godfathers', control the structures of the party at every level (Aryee, 2008).

In a study by Morgan et al., (2014) and Galtung, (1996), it was found that violence takes place when formal structures and administrative rules or regulations are employed as a technique to manipulate election to favour one entity. It is non-formal when it does not assume with formal features. Non-formal violence is experienced in health and economic (Sandler & Keith, 1995); cultural (Galtung, 1990, and Toffler, 1990); political symbols (Galding, 1991); party ideologies and affiliations, and party's interest (Galtung, 1996).



2.8.3 Health

Health concerns have become serious issues when discussing electoral violence since it causes injury and deaths for humanity. During violence activities in electoral processes, people become victims leading to injury, indicating that where violence persists health is compromised, making more people fall victimised to violence or lose their lives due to violent acts. Since electoral processes involve voters, they are attacked by their opponents through physical means including fighting, beating and insulting, resulting in injuries. It is also to be stated that violence attacks the well-being of voters, minimising their extent of happiness. Thus, in all violent activities threaten the life, happiness and democracy in both developed and emerging democracies.

2.8.4 Economic

Economic violence, according to Galtung (1967) is noted and created by unjust economic power conditioned due to certain existing social structures or groups who possess more capital, wealth or power or resources than other groups, making them more powerful. This group is also materially rich utilising their privilege status to exploit other groups. The political elites use the political power in their means to control such minor groups, especially the youth with the hope of meeting their wishes. Activities pushed by the politicians to be engaged in by the youth include violence, protest, demonstration and riots, with a promise that they will be repaid contingent on winning political power to satisfy their economic woes. Galtung further elaborates that the unjust economic structures created by the political elites are seen as the state's inability or failure to provide basic needs to the disadvantaged. Such poor people suffer poverty, hunger, and malnutrition while the rich political elites live in relative luxury. More so, poverty, healthcare, joblessness worsens the economic violence. All these unfair conditions lead individuals to believe that they have not received a fair share of the benefits and resources available in society. Hence, the inequalities created in wealth

orchestrated economic violence.

2.8.5 Culture

According to Galtung (1962, p. 6; and Galtung, 1996), ‘the legitimisation of the culture aspects, which justifies the direct or structural violence, is known as cultural violence.’ Further, Galtung defined culture ‘as the totality of values, norms, attitudes, beliefs, gender relations, child-rearing practices, governance.’ He posits cultural violence as violence where those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of man’s existence-exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art. Attitudes, assumptions, emotional impulsivity, and violent tendencies all come from a person’s history based on where one finds himself (Whittington & McGuire, 2020). It has become a culture that in every general election especially in developing democracies, it is characterised by threats, fights, insults, protest, and riots. Violence is unacceptable solution to redress electioneering misunderstanding or problems; as violence clashes between the competing candidates and the political parties during electioneering could distort the process. It is important to highlight that violence is deadly, beginning from anger, intolerance, impatience, unfair treatment and aggressions.

2.8.6 Political Symbols

These are signals of a distant complex referent that evokes “pride, anxieties, remembrances of past glories or humiliations, or promises of future greatness”, (Edelman, 1985, p. 5). According to Mendelberg (2022), political symbols shows social status that evokes-based on emotions such as ‘glories and humiliations’. Symbols connects status, emotions, and objects or acts representing social values. Political symbols signals what kinds of people demonstrating a particular behaviour, which are worthy in the eyes of society as a whole. Symbols differentiate the use of authority for a particular group – ethnic, political, religious, cultural, political or organizations. Symbols, according

to Mendelberg (2022), implicates social status by evoking status-based politics.

Because political parties come together to take initiative- social movement such as political organizations value symbols, and may want to safeguard anytime even during elections to defend it. Such political organizations use it to communicate their status, which are used to demonstrate their superiority, beliefs or status. In the data reported, the study found that political symbols were one of the informal structures that could spark or influence electoral violence (Linklater, 2018). Political parties symbol and beliefs would not tolerate any entity to either dis-image or make inferior as this can generate violence among the competing parties. So, differences in political symbols are necessary because they convey different identities based on the political beliefs, systems, prejudice, structures and norms, and moral values people have assigned themselves to.

2.8.7 Political Ideologies

Political ideology, according to (Gerring, 1997, p. 57) “is a distinction system of normative, semantic and or repeatedly factual ideas, typically shared by members of groups or societies which underpins their understandings of their political behavior.” Violence is enhanced with the belief that political ideologies can be promoted or propagating violence. It can take many forms including religious, philosophical, popular and scientific (Nescolarde-Selva et al, 2017). Often times, it attempts to preserve political ideologies cause intimidation to electorates or voters who shares differing opinion or even values about that party’s ideologies. So, as Webber et al, (2020) put it, party ideologies can serve as a potential vulnerability to exploit structures, systems, individuals, inequities or minorities and largely, to the poor who do not believe in the truism of the originator of those ideologies which can be hostile to democracy. Thus, political ideologies are based on cleavages which may be used by dominant political parties as instruments to polarised political mobilization in the early days when

a country is choosing democracy.

2.8.8 Party's Interest

A number of studies including Allern, Hansen and Witko (2022) explain the intersection between party-interest groups and politics. Political parties pursue interest mainly to either maintain or win political power. This is because parties seek such interest to create opportunities for themselves, jobs, assets or amass wealth. Since political parties are considered to have three main goals: policy, hold office, and win vote (Røed, 2021), (Strøm & Müller, 1999) have argued that votes is as meansto the first two. As political party's interest is to win political power, the followers especially the youth engage in several activities – both acceptable and unacceptable to ensure winning for their party. Through this determination of unity and strength, violence erupts between the competing political parties and candidates, making elections crucial to be contested. It becomes imperative that discussion in relation to informal violence is an act influenced by perpetrators from competing political cleavages.

2.8.9 International Factors

Mochtak (2019) postulates that electoral institutions such as Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), provide a firm understanding of geographies on the value of the significance of international relational role in electoral violence. Elklit (2011) states that the 2010 Afghanistan elections deteriorated into electoral violence as many causes combined to reflect on the root causes. International organizations were assumed to be mild in ensuring peace for the electoral process as well as intervening in a country's elections. Scholars point out that the ICC's role was a perfect response to electoral violence and political conflict. The calmness associated with such international organizations in preventing political violence helps to minimize the associated

challenges and bloodshed that would have happened without the help of the peace body (Kimenyi, 2013; Onyango-Obbo, 2013).

Hénin (2021) argues that interventions of foreign countries in other countries' electoral processes are an important factor. However, the author asserts that such interventions achieve certain specific objectives but with the general purpose of increasing polarization, breaking information security and ultimately, undermining democratic institutions. The author contends that the National Intelligence Council of the United States of America has distinguished between 'election influence', including overt and covert activities that affect election results and 'election interference' such as election influence activities that are limited to the technical aspects of voting processes.

Shulman and Bloom (2011) study the reaction of Ukrainians to Western intervention in the 2014 Russia Presidential elections and find that average Ukrainians do not appreciate the efforts of Western governments and international organizations to shape Ukraine's electoral districts, while Russia-led election interference is largely ignored negatively, perhaps due to common Slavic characteristics. It should be noted that certain Western governments and international organizations are ambitious and ultimately have little impact on the outcome of the elections. Similarly, Ratliff and Beckel (2019) observe five key loopholes international countries use to influence domestic elections. According to the authors, foreign interference works through foreign purchasing digital adverts and social media platforms, including Facebook, Google, and Twitter.

The second factor the authors mention is the extent to which foreigners hack a country's electoral equipment. This unfortunate practice has the tendency to create enmity between competing parties. A case in point is the hacking of the USA 2016 general election and France 2017 presidential election systems by the Russians. Again, Ratliff and Beckel (2019) discuss the foreign infiltration of domestic

electoral system. report that during the 2016. The authors argue that during Presidential elections, foreign hackers attempted to gain access to the voting system in all 50 states, and received warnings from intelligence officials but did not provide enough information to back the claim of the compromised election infrastructure. The authors identified Western power infiltration through local non-profit organizations. Foreigners contribute to dark 'money fund' (funds sources not disclosed and used to influence domestic elections). To interfere in domestic elections, stakeholders misinform and disinform publics. Thus, with the presence of indirect activities in local electoral processes, electoral violence plunges domestic elections into violence.

2.10 Effects of Electoral Violence

A body of growing literature posits that electoral violence is a broad sub-category of political violence, as it reduces trust in a country's democratic processes. Scholars such as Höglund (2018) state that elections are essential to democracy. However, elections are marred by violence and riots if the process does not meet the expectations of competing parties and candidates. Höglund (2018) examined the causes and consequences of electoral violence. Höglund findings indicated that elections result in conflict if the processes leading to the elections does not involve all the key stakeholders including the political parties. Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski (2021) review 1322 articles on violence between 1950 and 2010 and find a positive correlation between the use of violence and electoral victory for governments.

The authors reveal that violence leads to higher votes and more votes for governments that encourage violence. In Hafner-Burton et al. (2021), this violent is often short lived. Thus, if violence happens during electioneering, the authors establish that the violence favours the incumbent

government or party by creating many opportunities. Both Höglund (2018) and Hafner-Burton et al. (2014) question the reason incumbents rely on violence during elections. Hafner- Burton et al. (2014) do not provide a definitive answer to the question. Nevertheless, the authors believe that workers put more importance on the short-term goal, that is, to win the elections on the long-term plan. Uncertainty also seems to be a factor that makes the choice of this diabolic difficulty. For example, the authors assert that if political leaders are not sure of their popularity and electoral chances, people could underestimate the opportunities for mobilizing the people and the results.

On the contrary, Hafner-Burton et al. (2021) show that pre-election violence turns to favour the party in power. However, the authors, Hafner-Burton et al. (2021) and Höglund (2018) agree that the complexity of electoral violence remains unexplored, and, therefore, recommend more future studies. The authors fail to use primary data which would have deepened the understanding of the core and substantive issues. Additionally, the authors' reliance on secondary dataset denied them of the opportunity to employ a sampling technique which would have ensured the accuracy of the studies.

2.11 Approaches in Reducing Electoral Violence

According to the United Nations Development Programme Elections and Conflict Guide, free, fair, and transparent elections are less likely to result in violence than elections fraught with allegations of mismanagement and fraudulent practices. Nonetheless, in a study of electoral violence in Africa, Lisa Laakso finds that violence has influenced a number of elections than be declared free and fair (UNDP, 2011). A 2010 report by Philip Alston, the then United Nations Special Representative on extra-judicial killings, heightened the difference between violence perpetrated by security forces and parts of it being as a result of poor training. Alston (2010) argues that, firstly, the reduction of violence

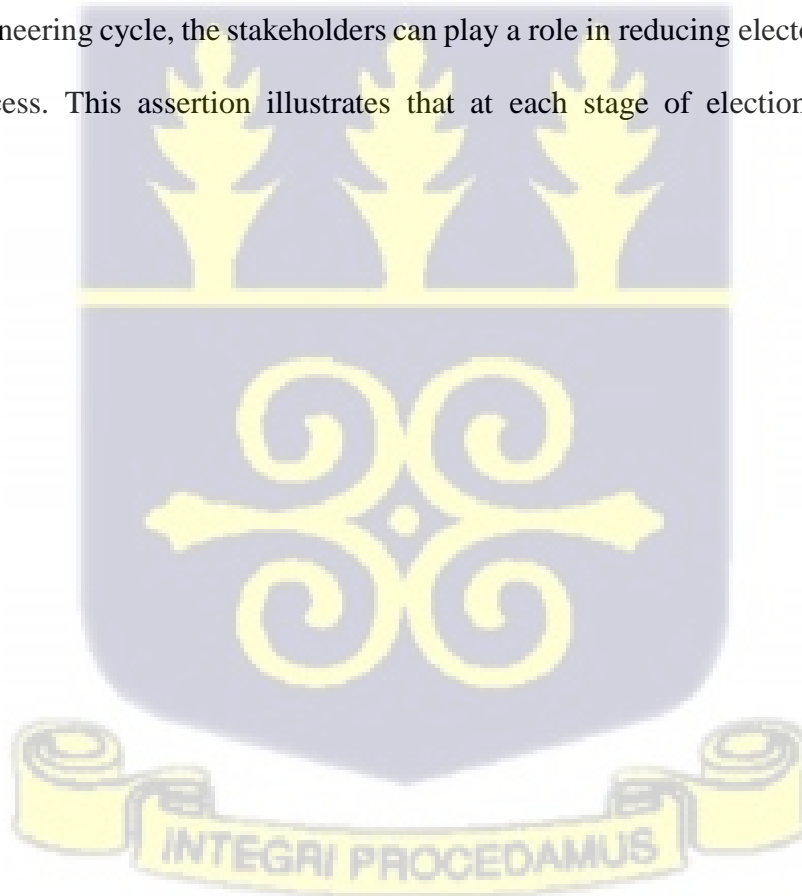
depends entirely on actors, including the United Nations (UN) regional government or bloc government; international community or internal stakeholders (leaders of opposition, public independent judges, and civil societies can effectively influence leaders), (Alston, 2010; UN, 2022).

A 2013 USAID guide on Election Security which seeks to prevent electoral violence points out that with the community, the media, women empowerment and the activities of the security sector, democracy support tool, focusing on prevention of electoral violence in its forms is possible. These are, of course, different motivations of any kind. This is partly because the political parties and candidates are motivated to retain power or win elections at all costs (Muyomba, 2015). Weaknesses and violence can be linked to corrupt electoral practices, lack of proper legislative framework, technical problems, long-term intra- and inter-political conflicts, lack of trust and company and electoral systems and barriers due to the ability to alleviate poverty and improve economic development in certain countries (Hafner-Burton, Hyde & Jablonski, 2014).

Scholars point out that the barriers for reducing electoral violence are many. Cheeseman & Klass (2019) argue that such scholars are of diverse academic backgrounds, from the political and diplomatic tools to law and order, economic, social, military and security tools. For such scholars, new electoral management schemes are being used. For example, Orji (2017) reports about electoral processes involving election management teams conducting interviews and working with politicians to provide incentive for peaceful elections. Claes (2015) agrees and points out that such preventive initiatives include international peace agreements, supervised or accredited elections, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in monitoring and electoral support.

Akwei (2018) focuses on mitigating electoral violence and intimidation with the use of political

stakeholder engagement approach. Using desk review technique with the adoption of political stakeholder engagement, the author offers seven (7) key steps policymakers adopt to minimize the rate and frequency of violence: the development of a vision and mission; identifying victims; willingness to participate in the organization of groups; building trust; creating sustainable practices; monitoring and evaluation; and documenting implementation progress. The author fails to employ primary data with a suitable sampling design to accomplish the study objectives. However, the author dwells on the use of a stakeholder engagement process to help set the right tone and behaviour; understand and obtain commitment from all stakeholders; promote trust; and emphasise ownership and responsibility of members. Akwei's study (2018) further reiterates that when political stakeholders are engaged throughout the electioneering cycle, the stakeholders can play a role in reducing electoral violence during the electoral process. This assertion illustrates that at each stage of electioneering, violence is preventable.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study. It is categorized into two sections. The first section focuses various research methodologies, sampling procedures and data collection method. The second section gives a general overview of the study area describing the area's demographic and physical characteristics, the economic activities and the social infrastructure.

SECTION I: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Method

The study employs the mixed methods – qualitative and quantitative approaches. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used in the research to back up research findings with different methods. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), mixed method involves the collection of qualitative and quantitative data, and analysis of the data integrates both forms.

3.2 Methodology

This section highlights the target population sampling technique and data collection instruments chosen for the study.

3.2.1 Target Population

The study focuses on voters in Walantu Community in Kasoa of the Awutu Senya East Municipality, and includes dwellers of the community.

3.2.2 Sampling

The study employed random and purposive sampling techniques to primarily sample locals who have

attained an age of 18 years and older, and have lived in the community for more than eight years were considered in the study. The total population in Walantu Community was 305 (Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly - Planning Department, 2023).

For the qualitative data the study used the purposive sampling technique to specially select card-bearing members of National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) within the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya East Municipality of Central Region of Ghana. The purposive approach sampled 20 participants - 10 from the National Democratic Congress members, and 10 from the New Patriotic Party card bearing members of the two major leading political parties – NDC and (NPP). This enabled the study to investigate in detail the specific behaviour and interactions of political party's members in Walantu Community during election periods.

The random sampling technique was employed for the quantitative data collection. The quantitative approach randomly sampled 90 household participants of the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya East Municipality. The questionnaire was administered to a representative of every fifth household within the community. During the sampling process, when a selected household declined to respond to the questionnaire, the next household was considered. The 90 sample size of the household utilized simple random sampling technique for quantitative data collection, while the 20 card bearing members selected from both the NDC and NPP dwelled on the quantitative purposive sampling technique. Hence, the total sample size for both qualitative and quantitative was 110.

Below is the sample formula for the sample determination.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where,

n , is the actual sample size required;

N , is the whole population under study;

e , is the sampling error which is 0.05 (the margin of error 0.05 is used because it will help in arriving at tangible conclusion based on the sample size); and

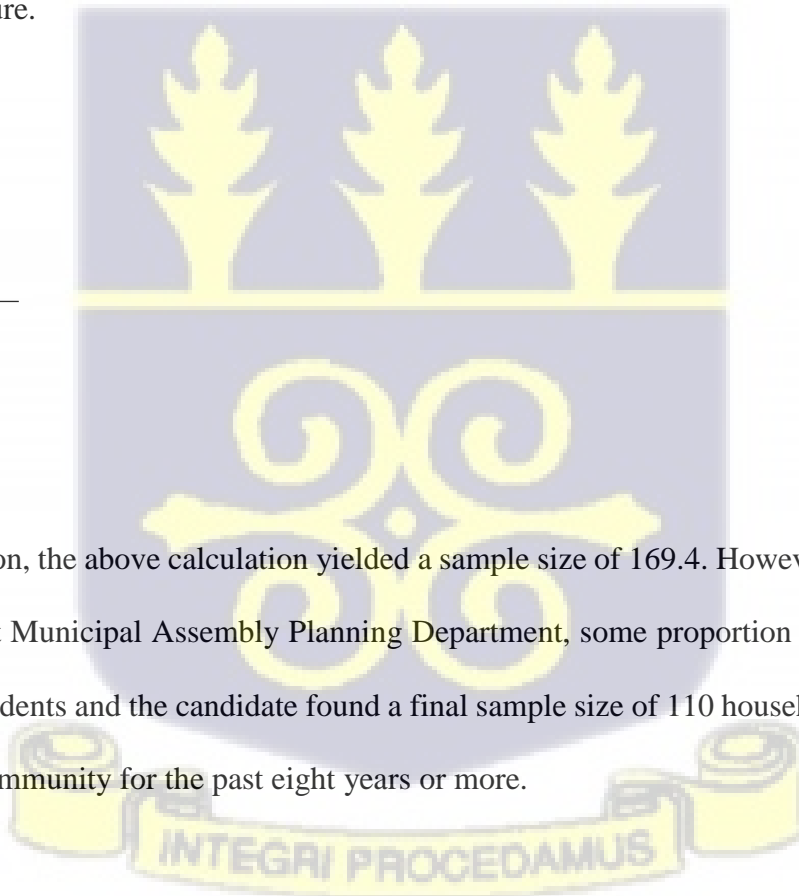
1 is a constant figure.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{305}{1 + 305(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 169.4$$

From the population, the above calculation yielded a sample size of 169.4. However, according to the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly Planning Department, some proportion of the locality were not permanent residents and the candidate found a final sample size of 110 households who had lived in the Walantu Community for the past eight years or more.



3.2.3 Data Collection Tools

Data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data collection in the qualitative approach involved administering a semi-structured interview guide to NDC and

NPP members to collect information on the participants' personal experiences of electoral violence. A semi-structured interview was administered in key informant interviews to collect information from participants in this group who either initiated or were victim of electoral violence in the Walantu Community. Key informant interviews provided the opportunity for participants to provide detailed insight into the experience of violence.

In the quantitative data collection, the candidate administered a questionnaire to the participant households. A Likert scale was employed to measure the degree of the occurrence of electoral violence in Ghana's previous elections and to predict the propensity of subsequent elections to witness violence, the trend, and the nature of violence that takes place in Walantu community. The Likert scale (ranging from 1 – Strongly Disagree; 2- Strongly Disagree; 3 – I Don't Know; 4 - Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree) measured collect data from household participants.

3.2.4 Data Analysis Technique

After data was collected, it was cleansed prior to commencing the analysis. This consists of examining, categorizing, reorganizing the evidence in order to address the initial propositions of the study. Data was then categorized into areas of interests, themes and contents to address the research questions raised. The data was analyzed with the help of STATA software version 16.

3.3 Limitations of Study

The study restricts itself to focusing on Awutu Senya East Municipality in the Central Region. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other areas in the region, and Ghana as a whole. However, inferences to the Ghana populations are made.

SECTION II: PROFILE OF AWUTU SENYA EAST MUNICIPALITY

This section of the literature provides a demography and economic profile of the study location. ASEM was created in 2012 by Legislative Instrument (LI) 2025 after being carved from the then Effutu District. ASEM is populated mainly by Guans, with Awutu as the predominant language (Awutu-Senya East Composite Budget Document, 2018-2021). Kasoa, the Municipal capital, is located at the South-eastern part, about 31km from Accra. The major settlements of the Municipality are Opeikuma, Adam Nana, Kpormertey, Ofaakor, Akweley, Walantu and Zongo. The settler tribes are Ga, Akan, Ewe, Wala/Dagaaba, Moshie, Baasare, and others. The official languages of the area are Akan and English. ASEM has a population of 236, 527. The male is 115, 530 representing (48.1%) males and 120,997 (51.9) females (Population and Housing Census, 2021).

The Municipality covers a total land area of 108,004km². Major economic activities of the area include trading. This composed of petty trading and self-employment with few engaging in formal employment. The Municipality has fourteen electoral areas and one constituency, as the Awutu Senya East Constituency. ASEM has a Presiding Member who chairs General Assembly meetings. The Municipality has six zonal councils, namely Zongo, Ofaakor, Akweley, Opeikuma, Walantu, and Kportmetey. Major economic activities in the Municipality include formal and informal sectors. The formal activities include both governmental official establishments while the informal encompasses trading (wholesale/retail), agro-processing, service sector and commerce. In this Municipality, both NDC and NPP are the dominant political parties whose presence are always felt during every election year.

CHAPTER FOUR PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

Chapter Four presents the finding and analysis of data collected. This chapter is segmented into two parts. The first section presents findings based on the data from the field. The second section analyses findings.

SECTION I: FINDINGS

4.1 Socio-demography Characteristics

This sub-section of the study discusses the socio-demography features of the respondents in Walantu community. It includes age, gender, religion, educational level attained, occupational status, ethnicity and number of years lived in the community.

4.1.1 Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age characteristics in this study indicates the age group of respondents. As Table 1 below shows.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of the Respondents

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Above 40	33	30.0
35-40	26	23.64
30-34	21	19.09
25-29	12	10.91
21-24	10	9.09
18-20	1	0.91
Non-response	7	6.36
TOTAL	110	100

majority of the respondents in the study who were above 40 years, representing 30%. This was followed by those between 35 – 40 years representing (3.64%. Those between 30-34 years of age were 19.09%, while respondents between age bracket of 25–29 years were 10.91%. Respondents between 21 – 24 years represented 9.09%, while those between 18 – 20 years were 0.91%. However, 6.36% of the respondents did not respond to the question. Thus, the data showed that the majority of the respondents who took part in the study was 40 years and above

4.1.2 Distribution of Respondents by Sex

The study also reported on the sex composition of the respondents in Walantu of Awutu SenyaEast Constituency. As Table 2 below indicates, females constituted 50.91% of the respondents while males were represented by 41.82%. However, 7.27% of the respondents did not give any response to that question. This means that female population dominated in the study.

Table 4.2: Gender Composition of Respondents

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Female	56	50.91
Male	46	41.82
Non-responded	8	7.27
TOTAL	110	100

4.1.3 Distribution of Respondents by Religion

The study also examined the religious nature of the respondents. In Table 3 below, Muslims represented 50%, followed by Christians 34.55%, African Traditional religion, and non-religion

were each represented by 5.45%, while those who did not provide any response to the question were 4.55%. This data indicates that Walantu Community is composed of different religious backgrounds but Muslims were predominant respondents of the study.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Muslims	55	50
Christian	38	34.55
African Traditional Religion	6	5.45
Non-religion	6	5.45
Non-response	5	4.55
TOTAL	110	100

4.1.4 Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Table 4 below shows the educational status of the respondents. Interviewees who had attained tertiary (masters’ degree) status were 2.73%, while first degree were 9.09%, and those with tertiary (diploma) education were 10.91%. Respondents with SHS level education were 28.18% and those with JHS education were 19.09%. Primary school educational were 10%. Respondents without education were 12.73%, while no response to the question were 7.27%. This indicated that the majority of respondents in this study have acquired formal education and that they are literate and can follow the democratic processes of Ghana.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents Level of Education

Item	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Tertiary (Masters)	3	2.73
Tertiary (First degree)	10	9.09
Tertiary (Diploma)	12	10.91
SHS	31	28.18
JHS	21	19.09
Primary	11	10.0
Uneducated/None	14	12.73
Non-response	8	7.27
TOTAL	110	100

4.1.5 Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

The study also looked at the occupation of the respondents. This variable categorized the various

Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Item	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Formal	20	18.18
Informal	63	57.27
Unemployed	21	19.08
Non-response	6	5.4
TOTAL	110	100

occupation of the respondents into formal and informal. Table 5 above specifies that respondents who were in the Formal sector was 18.18%. It is to be noted that formal occupation under this

discussion includes public services, and other public officials. Respondents in the informal sector were represented by 57.27%. This included traders, artisans, merchandise dealers and farmers. This was followed by those with unemployed status with 19.08%, while no response reported 5.46%.

4.1.6 Distribution of Respondents by Ethnicity

The ethnic composition of the respondents was also collected in this study. The results in Table 6 below showed that, respondents of the Hausa ethnic group represented 31.82%, followed by the

Table 4.6: Distribution of Ethnic Composition of Respondents

Item	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Hausa	35	31.82
Akan	24	21.82
Ewe	16	14.55
Dagomba	12	10.91
Ga-Dangbe	5	4.55
Krobo	5	4.55
No response	5	3.64
Mamprusi	4	3.64
Grusi	4	3.64
TOTAL	110	100

Akans' with 21.82%, Ewe 14.55% and Dagomba 10.91%. Ga-Dangbe and Krobo were 4.55% each, and Mamprusi and Grusi recorded 3.64% respectively. Only 4.55% represented non-response. This showed that majority of the respondents taking part in the study were those from the Hausa ethnic

group. It demonstrated also that the Walantu Community is diversified in terms of ethnicity.

4.2 The Nature and Types of Electoral Violence in Walantu Community

The study investigated the nature and typologies of violence that characterized the electoral process in Walantu. It found that 45.45% of the respondents engaged in insults, 19 respondents or 17.27% in intimidation, 12 respondents or 10.91% had been beaten before, one or 0.91% had engaged in shooting while 28 or 25.46% interviewees did not give response to the question. On the other hand, majority of the respondents, 80 representing 72.73% revealed that they have not been victimized by electoral violence while a fewer proportion of 22 representing 20.0% had been victimized. Also, eight or 7.27% of the interviewees remained non-responded to the question asked.

In addition, a greater proportion of the respondents representing 74 or 67.27% mentioned that they have not involved themselves or engaged in electoral-related violence before in their polling stations, and only 11 representing 10.0% explained their reasons of involvement. It included political opponents influencing the system of the election activities, mistrust of the electoral system, and unfair treatments exhibited by the Electoral Commission officials. However, 25 representing 22.73% did not give any response to the question.

4.3 Pattern of Voting

The study sought to examine the pattern of voting in Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu-Senya East Municipality of Central Region of Ghana between 2016 and 2020. The data reported that in 2016 and 2020 elections, a significant majority representing 82 or 74.55% respondents participated in the elections. In contrast, one or 0.91% of the respondents did not vote either in 2016 elections. Nevertheless, 27 representing 24.55% kept silent on this question. Similarly, in 2020 under the Fourth Republic, the same percentage was obtained for voting in elections of Walantu community in

the elections. It can therefore, be said that the greater proportion of the respondents have participated in voting process of the community.

4.4 Pattern of Violence around the Stage of the Election Process

The study investigated the stages or phases at which electoral violence are frequently susceptible to distort election process. It was revealed that majority of the respondents, 31.82% maintained violence takes place after elections results have been declared. About 30.0% reported that violence occurred during the registration of voter cards. Sixteen or 14.55% of respondents reported violence on the day of elections, while 23.64% failed to give their views on this question. This demonstrates that most of the violence takes place after elections results have been declared.

4.5 Factors Influencing Electoral Violence

The study also examined potential factors influencing electoral violence. The members of the two major political parties in Ghana - National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) were interviewed.

4.5.1 Political Parties as the Cause of Electoral Violence

The majority of the respondents representing 47 or 42.73% strongly agreed that both NDC and NPP are the major cause of electoral violence. Table 4.8 below indicates that 15 or 13.64% respondents strongly disagreed that NDC and NPP parties themselves are the factors influencing electoral violence. In addition, 14 respondents or 12.73% 'agree' that the political parties including NDC and NPP are the cause while eight or 7.27% held 'I don't know' views. Twenty-six interviewees representing 23.64% failed to give their responses. Thus, both the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) are seen as the two major political parties fomenting

problems and making Walantu Community susceptible to electoral violence. Further to the above data, respondents alluded that the two parties exert influence to distort electoral processes at various polling stations during electioneering periods. Again, respondents interviewed attributed other influencing variables that increases the tendencies of triggering electoral violence. This included verbal exchanges, arguments, desire nature of electorates to bring their political party into power, mistrust of the electoral system, disagreement among electorates, and illegitimate political party members' involvement in the electoral process.

Table 4.8: NDC and NPP as the Cause of Electoral Violence

Item	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	47	42.73
Non-response	26	23.64
Strongly Disagree	15	13.64
Agree	14	12.73
I don't know	8	7.27
Disagree	0	0
TOTAL	110	100

4.5.2 Youth as the Cause of Electoral Violence

Furthermore, the study seeks to examine the participation of the youth (young people) in local politics, and how their presence plays a key role to generate electoral violence. According to the data reported, 38 of 34.55% respondents 'strongly agree' with the assertion that youth participation in political party's activities contribute to violence in elections, followed by respondents who 'agree'

to the assertion represented by 23 of 20.91%, then 20 respondents of 18.18% for those who ‘strongly disagree.’ Next was three or 2.73% respondents who highlighted that they were not in agreement, hence “I don’t know”. However, 26 respondents of 23.64% did not answer the question. This indicated that majority the of respondents believed the youth (young people/adults) are contributors whose involvement in active politics trigger electoral violence.

Table 4.9: Youth Participation in Politics as a Cause of Electoral Violence

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Agree	38	34.55
Non-response	26	23.64
Agree	23	20.91
Strongly Disagree	20	18.18
I don’t Know	3	2.73
Disagree	0	0
TOTAL	110	100

4.5.3 Disagreements as the Cause of Electoral Violence

Misunderstanding was seen as a factor facilitating the occurrence of electoral violence in Ghana’s electoral system. According to Table 4.10 below, 39.09% forming the majority of respondents saying ‘I don’t Know’, indicating that misunderstanding among the electorates erupts into violence. Respondents who ‘disagree’ were 16.36% while 13.64% of respondents ‘strongly disagree’. Respondents who ‘agree’ to this assertion were 6.36% and 0.91% to those ‘strongly agree’ with the statement. The majority of the respondents pointed cumbersome electoral procedures that are within

the electioneering periods, as such stifling electorates interest to take active participation in democratic processes. However, 23.64% kept silent on this statement. The data explains that most of the respondents were not certain whether misunderstanding was a contributory factor to electoral violence.

Table 4.10: Misunderstanding as a Cause of Electoral Violence

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
I don't know	43	39.09
Non-response	26	23.64
Disagree	18	16.36
Strongly Disagree	15	13.64
Agree	7	6.36
Strongly Agree	1	0.91
TOTAL	110	100

4.5.4 Security Personnel at Polling Stations

The absence or unavailability of security officials at polling station has the tendency to trigger violence. In the study, the candidate examined the kind of security personnel deployed in electioneering periods. Table 11 below demonstrates that a significant majority of respondents representing 57% mentioned Police Service (officials) were the dominant personnel used in manning the polling stations. This was followed by the officers of the Fire Service, representing 9.09%. Next was the Prison Wardens, represented by 5.45% and soldiers with 4.55%. However, 23.91% failed to respond to this question. This indicates that the Police personnel are commonly used during elections. Thus, Ghana's police force were the main security personnel at most election station in Ghana during elections.

Table 4.11: Security Personnel at the Polling Stations

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Police	63	57.0
Fire Service	10	9.09
Prisons	6	5.45
Soldier	5	4.55
Non-response	26	23.91
TOTAL	110	100

With respect to atmosphere at the polling station during electioneering periods, twelve or 10.91% of the respondents described their polling stations as ‘peaceful.’ Description of the polling station as tensed or ‘charged’ represented by six or 5.45%. Only one respondent or 0.91% did know’. However, it is significant that 91 or 82.73% of the respondents did not provide a response to this question. This indicated that most of the respondents were reluctant to share their views on the state of security situation at their polling stations during electioneering periods.

4.6 Other Factors Serving as Influencers to Electoral Violence

Other major stimulants of violence were cited by respondents. Table 12 below reveals that according to respondents, ‘party’s big men’ represented by 35 respondents or 31.82% took the lead in most violence characterizing Walantu’s electoral process. This was followed by ‘political party’s leaders’ being represented by 31 or 28.18%, ‘unknown’ representing ten of 9.17%, ‘rich men and women’ was four of 3.64% while three respondents represented by 2.73% for ‘opinion leaders’. However, 26 or

23.99% respondents failed to provide responses to the motivations stimulating election violence.

Table 4.12: Distribution of Other Stimulants to Influence Electoral Violence

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Parties big men	35	31.82
Political Party leaders	31	28.18
Non-response	26	23.99
Unknown people	10	9.09
Rich Men and Women in the Party	6	3.64
Opinion leaders	2	2.73
TOTAL	110	100

4.7 Effects of Electoral Violence on Free and Fair

The study sought to understand the effects of electoral violence on citizenry participation in electoral processes. The data reported that majority of the voters 86 representing 78.28%, identified electoral violence as having the propensity to affect voter turn-out during elections. This was followed by 22 respondents of 19.8% who believed otherwise, while two or 1.82% of the respondents did not respond to the question. The majority of the respondents 77, representing 70.0%, believed electoral violence could have the strength to destabilize Ghana's democracy, while seven or 6.36% of respondents did not think electoral violence had any such effect. Twenty-six or 23.44% of the respondents failed to provide answers to the question.

4.8 Motivation to Vote

The study further investigated potential factors that motivate people to vote. As Table 4.13 below indicates, 28 of the respondents representing 25.45% held that they vote because of ‘developmental projects.’ Twenty-three respondents or 20.91% voted because of ‘party affiliation’, 20 respondents or 18.18% voted for ‘socio-economic’ programmes. Those voting based on ‘party ideology’ were nine or 8.18%. Others voting because of ‘personality of the leader’ were 1.82%. Respondents who

Table 4.13: Respondents Reasons to Vote

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Developmental Projects	28	25.45
Non-response	26	23.64
Party Affiliation	23	20.91
Socio-economic Programme	20	18.18
Party ideology	9	8.18
Personality of the Leader	2	1.82
All the Above	2	1.82
TOTAL	110	100

voted believing in ‘all the above,’ meaning they believed in all the possible options provided were two or 1.82%. Respondents who did not respond to this question represented 23.64%. Thus, as most respondents are literate in the constituency, they knew the purpose of voting during elections, though some respondents were unwilling to express their views on this question, most interviewees vote based on developments.

4.9 Pragmatic Interventions to Reduce Electoral Violence

The study investigated the numerous avenues to be explored in reducing electoral violence in the 21st Century of Ghana, with reference to Walantu Community. As Table 14 below reveals, the majority of respondents 49 or 42.73% mentioned the inclusion of all the key stakeholders in the election process. Next was 24 or 21.82% respondents who believed that openness and transparency on the part of the Electoral Commission during electoral process is a preventable factor. Six or 5.45% respondents opted for the involvement of the National Peace Council (NPC), while ‘other’, indicating possible measures scored was two or 1.82%. However, 29 or 28.18% of the respondents remained silent on the preventable variables employed to curtail election violence in Walantu Community of Awutu Senya East Municipality.

Table 4.14: Distribution of Respondents views on Measures of Reducing Electoral Violence

Item	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Inclusion of all the election stakeholders	49	42.73
Non-response	29	28.18
Transparency	24	21.82
National Peace Council	6	5.45
Other	2	1.82
TOTAL	110	100

4.10 Expectations of Voters on Violence in Future Elections of Walantu Community

Similarly, since Ghana has subscribed to elections as one of the core principles of good governance, the study sought to help understand the expectations of voters on violence in future elections of Walantu Community. The data showed that 71 respondents of 64.55% representing majority affirmed in Walantu's subsequent elections, and believed that electoral-related violence are likely to be occurred in the Walantu community. However, the data also reported that 10 respondents of 9.09% did not have any expectation of witnessing varied violence that normally characterizes Walantu community during electoral activities. Nonetheless, some portion of the population interviewed representing 29 respondents of 26.36% kept silent to this question. It showed that in its subsequent elections, especially general elections (parliamentary and presidential), respondents are not or in expectants to experience similar violence as it had already happened in previous elections.

SECTION II: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This section connects findings of the study to the literature to present an analysis of empirical findings.

4.11 Nature and Types of Violence

One of the objectives driving the study was the nature and types of electoral violence that are frequently experienced in the Walantu community. It was found that electorates from the two major political parties – National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) had either been victims or engaged in any of the electoral violence. There were differences in the nature of violence experienced or engaged by respondents. Frequent intimidation, insulting, physical fighting

and shooting were the major types of electoral violence. This violence was experienced during the electioneering phases as well as during the pre and post elections.

Electoral violence therefore manifests itself as a psychological or physical attacks on individuals. It is important to state that intimidations usually in the form of accusing opponents dominates. This includes voter fraud, violence or threat of violence, aggressive poll watching, and even fighting with the law enforcement agency. In a review on structural violence by the Norwegian sociologist Galtung (1969), describes such violence as mechanisms of other forms of structural violence: exploitation, penetration, segmentation, and fragmentation. Through these perspectives, Galtung argues that violence imposes physical attacks, injury, psychological abuse, and often causes destruction or damage of property. Galtung further points that structural violence confines itself as the range of options individuals have to pursue their diabolical exploitative deeds in fulfilling their desires. Therefore, violence is any physical, verbal, attitude wherein social structures or social institutions can harm people or destroys others preventing them from meeting their needs (Biebricher & Johnson, 2012). Respondents had these to share:

For our part here, fighting, intimidations, insulting, long queues, arguments, verbal exchanges, threats, ballot box snatching, physical confrontation and bloodshed are commonly seen (Informant E, NDC Member, 2023).

I know of beatings, gun shootings, burning of motorbikes. My motorbike got burnt through electoral violence. This just happened to me in the last two previous elections including 2016 and 2020 (Informant C, NDC Member, 2023).

A respondent mentioned that:

Look, I am currently serving as a party's communication officer; but fight, insults, and intimidations are always commonly seen during either voter registration or on the day of the elections (Informant G, Branch Communication Officer, NPP, 2023).

As respondents confirmed, much violence characterizing the Walantu community and for that matter, Ghana's elections, and such violence is usually subtle or physically aggressive in nature.

The finding of this study corresponds with Bekoe (2011) who contended that electoral violence could be classified into physical, psychological or structural. Physical violent causes harm to someone's body or injury inflicted by political opponents, or when officers of competing candidates or political parties or election management bodies come under armed attack (Lee, 2019; Gultung, 1996 & 1969; and Biebricher & Johnson, 2012). Electoral violence is considered psychological when the threat or actual use of violence against political opponents impacts their psychological readiness for and participation in elections.

According to Bekoe (2011), the nature of violence is structural when its involved institutional power including regulatory (legislative and exercise power) manipulating the process to favour a specific aspirant or candidate or party. It should be noted that the literature on structural violence encompasses both formal and informal structures (Lee, 2019; Gultung, 1996; Galding, 1991; Arendt, 1970). This study's findings correlate with the findings from Wahman & Goldring (2020) study which pointed that political parties, especially the incumbent employ violence against its opponents to express the dominance in maintaining their strongholds.

4.12 Factors Influencing Electoral Violence

Various factors were reported as potential factors stimulating electoral violence. One was the mistrust and misunderstanding of the election procedure and process. Some respondents expressed their views as the following:

The issue of mistrust found in our electioneering process does not encourage the adoption of the democratic practice here. Such practice renders our democracy bleak (Informant E, NDC Member, 2023).

Well, I do see several misunderstanding ensued in my polling station, when there is either a registration or voting. This misunderstanding is fomented by the electorate themselves because they do not understand themselves as to who was to be served first or in that order. A simple queue could create a problem since everyone wants to be served early and go back (Informant B, Branch Secretary, NPP, 2023).

Another influencing factor was tension that emerged during the phase of the electioneering. Often competing political parties and candidates each want to be favoured by the electoral system. The study found that most of the violence takes place after the elections results are declared. The second most persistent stage to witness violence was during the registration phase. Respondents indicated that during the electioneering stage when political campaign and rallies take place, often violent language against opponent forms part direct communication to its electorates, and has become a common tool during the electioneering process in Ghana. This finding links with Pagat (2018) study that political parties engage in aggressive rallies and campaigns to propel its party faithful's and foot soldiers for either internal party elections or general elections.

The above statements by the informants suggests youth interest in party politics, and their determination to contribute to the political parties in winning power. The study's findings agree with Collier and Vincente (2010) and Cramer (2002) work which was the foundation for Blattman & Annan (2014) argue that unemployed people have a low opportunity cost, hence, engage in violence and join in the formation of armed groups to threaten social orderliness. Therefore, when there is a high unemployment rate in a nation's population, it becomes a potential motivator for political violence.

Party control of resources may be a motivator of violence. However, a key fundamental of democracy is by participation in electoral processes. Henn (2002) points that if a segment of the population is deprived of the right to vote or is disenfranchised, the representativeness and legitimacy of these processes is undermined. In this sense, when youth or young adult participation in political processes is mainly for livelihood gain, their representation in formal political processes is limited. Their participation in politics is a positive element of the country's political life, especially since 1992 Constitution of Ghana promotes freedom of association and broaden civic participation in the country's development (Government of Ghana, 1992).

However, majority of the respondents agreed that the youth engage in political activities because they constitute a key partisan avenue for gaining resources. This is often why youth engage in negative practices such as rioting, protesting, intimidation, fighting, insulting and threatening. Such electoral violence is perpetrated on the basis of their efforts to mobilize to show their support for political parties and candidates during election periods, who will eventually reward or compensate them upon winning political power.

This study's findings complements with Paolo (2017) study of political party youth wings in Sub-

Saharan Africa denoting that the youth wings and foot soldiers engage in violent activities that breaches the laws of Ghana. By making their grievances known, these ardent followers behaviour goes contrary to the states security protocols, but with the aim of deepening their commitments to engage in acts with aggressive tendencies in order to be acknowledged by their party's leaders for reward upon winning political power. World Bank (2022) data reported that youth of Ghana constitute 36% of its overall population. The study revealed unemployment as an economic informal structure ushering the youth to foment troubles during electioneering campaigns.

The study embraces the notion that unemployment is a strong probable cause or motivating factor which is remarkably pervasive in Ghanaian politics and for that matter, largely, in African politics. Unemployment among the electorates was an influencing factor. According to the data from the field, this ranges from (16-24) years. The youth, that is growing rapidly cannot find jobs to enhance their socio-economic prospects. It is inferred that unemployment makes people idle, and therefore, triggers participation which prompts people especially the young ones to form and join violent gangs such as party vigilantism, and drives people to join extremist non-formal groups.

4.13 Performance of the EC

Based on the field data collected, it was recognized that Ghana's EC was transparent in adjudicating its duties. The EC operates by following due diligence and processes to be independent in adjudicating what the law prescribes. Also, in Ghana, the ECs engagement with the political parties during seasonal Inter-Party Committee (IPAC) meetings opens an avenue to discuss all election related issues. With regards to investigating the performance of the EC, legally, their duty is to operate on the legal frameworks without favour to any political party or contesting candidate.

A respondent's views highlight the issue:

It does happen to Ghana that every party that comes to power turns-out to manipulate the Electoral Commission to be in their favour. I think this is not fair, and it distorts the democracy we have subscribed to practice (Informant F, NPP Member, 2023).

An interviewee mentioned that:

We saw what happened to Ghana in 2012 and 2020, when our Supreme Court sat on a petitioned filed by one Presidential Candidate for more than eight months. It was God that saved this country, else Ghana would have taken-over by violent extremist groups due to the behaviour of the Electoral Commission. I trust in this process, they ought to be fair (Informant H, NDC Member, 2023).

The fairness displayed resulting in EC scoring 'good' in its performance is an indication that they are delivering to expectation despite administrative challenges it faces. This result is in support of van Ham and Garnet (2019) findings demonstrating convincingly that the Electoral Commission or the Electoral Management Board (EMB) independence has a robust and positive impacts on electoral integrity and credibility. Nevertheless, in a formal structure, institutions such as EMB can skew the election process to include only a few people to vote for in favouring the other opponent especially the incumbent. Here, because someone is greedy for political power, rules, procedures, processes and guidelines of the electioneering are not well guided, but oppressed (Woehrle, 2022). Hence, formal structures of violence describe how social arrangements put other individuals and populations in harm's way. Thus, formal structures of election violence are embedded in the spheres of political and economic organizations of human world.

4.14 The Presence of Security Personnel at Polling Stations

The study found that the respondents believed the presence of security, including the police, military, immigration, prison service, fire service, air force and the navy, played an important role to ensure law and order. However, their presence should not be subjective to the control of a specific political party during elections: A respondent stated this:

I personally think the influence by the government in power on the security services must stop. If our security services are partisan, it would end up by favouring one party which may receive a negative reaction by the other party or candidate (Informant I, NPP Member, 2023).

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana Article 190, 200, 205 and 210 (Government of Ghana, 1992) outline the security agencies as the Police, the Military, the Prisons, the Fire Service, the Immigration, the Navy and the Air force services. From the field data reported on the study, the police service is the most deployed personnel to all the polling stations during elections. During elections, these personnel are deployed to all parts of Ghana to safeguard the various polling stations, ballot boxes, and properties.

This finding supports a study by Buba (2013) that the security service is used by the state to supervise security during electoral activities. Police, security agencies in Ghana plays an essential role in ensuring the conduct of a free, fair and credible election and protecting properties. It is also relevant to state how the incumbent politicians especially use the security agencies to gain advantages for themselves during the electioneering process. Buba's study points how election supervision and the involvement of the security agencies in the electoral process is partisan because the security often

serves as potential source of intimidation and harassment, undue influence or compromise with the Election Management Board (EMB) to skew outcomes of elections. From the basis of the above argument, this perception was upheld by Mediayanose (2018) that the security agencies have been accused of always working to favour the incumbent. Thus, the involvement of the security services in electoral process should be seen as providing protection to voters and polling stations.

4.15 Effects of Electoral Violence

The study also investigated the effects of electoral violence in Walantu Community in the Awutu Senya East Municipality. When political violence takes place in a country, it often distorts the electoral process, producing fear in the citizenry/voters and preventing them from full participation of the electoral process. Violence and fear grip various communities especially, during rallies and voting. It compromises the impact of quality of voting and the election's outcome. Some of the informants shared a number of effects on this phenomenon:

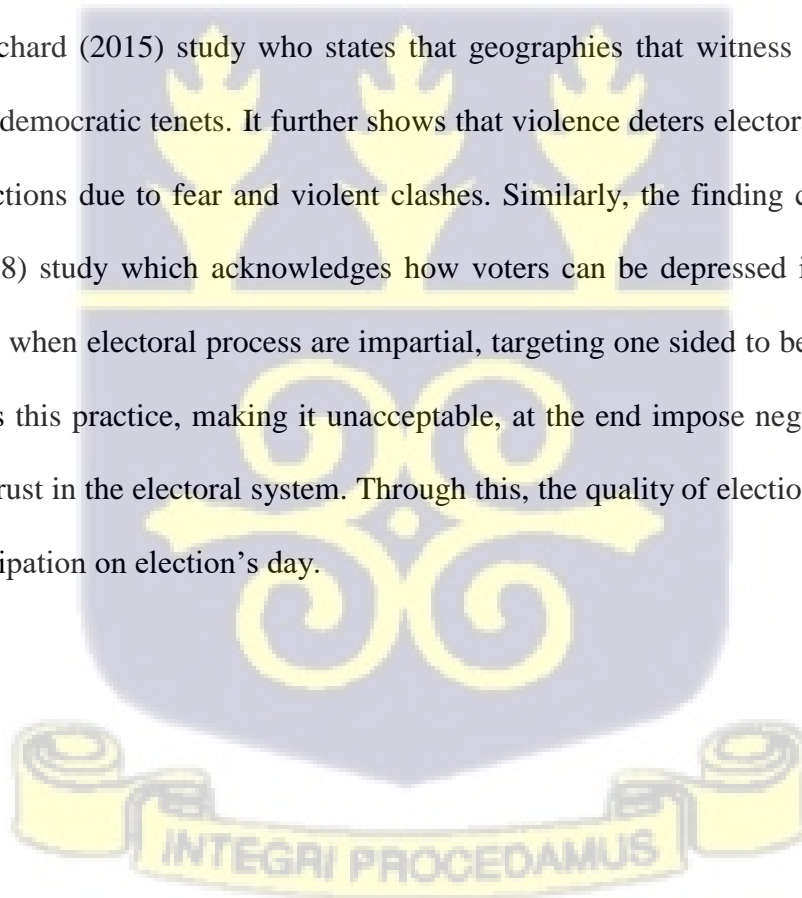
Citizens who are always engaging in violence during electioneering periods prevent people from taking active participation in either present or future elections. Look, me, myself I will not go out to vote if I see that polling stations are tensed or full of violence (Informant K, NDC Member, 2023).

As a voter, I hold the view that if destruction of properties, beatings, insulting, burning of cars and injuries become more common in our electoral activities; it distorts the whole electoral processes, making elections not free and fair, and largely, voters are afraid to take part in future elections (Informant G, Branch Communication Officer, NPP, 2023).

Another respondent:

I have witnessed a number of effects that are borne-out by electoral violence in this constituency. I knew of one voter who experienced beatings and destruction of motorbikes, and have refused to take full participation in national electoral activities (Informant F, Branch Communication Officer, 2023).

This is because voters would perceive fear in future elections, deterring them to exercise their democratic right, which reduces their prospects of active participation in voting. This finding is in contrast with Burchard (2015) study who states that geographies that witness electoral violence compromise their democratic tenets. It further shows that violence deters electorates, restrain from taking part in elections due to fear and violent clashes. Similarly, the finding complements with Condra et al (2018) study which acknowledges how voters can be depressed in participating in electoral activities when electoral process are impartial, targeting one sided to be favoured. Again, democracy frowns this practice, making it unacceptable, at the end impose negative expectations including loss of trust in the electoral system. Through this, the quality of elections is affected, and this reduces participation on election's day.



4.16 Youth, Unemployment and Poverty as a Cause of Electoral Violence

Generally, citizens involvement in Ghanaian politics has been a feature of the country's political development. People are largely unemployed in contemporary Ghana. For these unemployed youth, especially, politics continue to have a potential for employment and becomes a motivator of electoral violence.

A respondent stated that:

I stand in to campaign for my party to win political power to control state resources. I resist anything from either the EC or the security services that will be affront to the interest of my party winning political power (Informant C, NDC Member, 2023).

Another respondent shared this:

As a matter of fact, I love my party, and as such need to protect its interest to win political power. One politician has helped me before to win job as community police assistant, and am in need of more packages of similar nature so I believe that when I help them in their quest of winning political power, I will be rewarded. I pray for them to win. I know of few colleagues from the other side of the political divide who joined armed groups - 'militia' groups popularly known as vigilantes to distort the process whenever there is electioneering, threatening citizenry peace (Informant A, NPP Member, 2023).

The above statements by the informants suggests youth interest in party politics, and their

determination to contribute to the political parties in winning power. The study's findings agree with Collier and Vincente (2010) and Cramer (2002) work which was the foundation for Blattman & Annan (2014) argue that unemployed people have a low opportunity cost, hence, engage in violence and join in the formation of armed groups to threaten social orderliness. Therefore, when there is a high unemployment rate in a nation's population, it becomes a potential motivator for political violence.

Party control of resources may be a motivator of violence. However, a key fundamental of democracy is by participation in electoral processes. Henn (2002) points that if a segment of the population is deprived of the right to vote or is disenfranchised, the representativeness and legitimacy of these processes is undermined. In this sense, when youth or young adult participation in political processes is mainly for livelihood gain, their representation in formal political processes is limited. Their participation in politics is a positive element of the country's political life, especially since 1992 Constitution of Ghana promotes freedom of association and broaden civic participation in the country's development (Government of Ghana, 1992).

Youth involvement and contribution in partisan politics therefore is undoubted. Weiss (2020) argues that by extension, youth wings have become a powerbase for political parties. The youth who belongs to a political party (sometimes joining the youth wings) help their parties by performing these following standing or observing elections at a polling station during elections, pasting of party or campaign posters, taking active participation during campaigns, and make voices heard before, during and after elections. This demonstrates the youth's (young adults) important role in political processes (UNYP, 2016). They facilitate networks and formation of personal and or issue-based alliances which can be a venue to train young members who wish to excel with the party ideologies,

and more importantly, youth wing can extend to voters in a bid of useful resource by creating the appropriate language, platform materials and tone in communicating political messages to younger voting bases during elections and recruitment campaigns (Coe et al, 2016).

However, the majority of the respondents agreed that the youth engage in political activities because they constitute a key partisan avenue for gaining resources. This is often why youth engage in negative practices such as rioting, protesting, intimidation, fighting, insulting and threatening. Such electoral violence is perpetrated on the basis of their efforts to mobilize to show their support for political parties and candidates during election periods, who will eventually reward or compensate them upon winning political power.

This study's findings complement with Paolo (2017) study of political party youth wings in Sub-Saharan Africa denoting that the youth wings and foot soldiers engage in violent activities that breaches the laws of Ghana. By making their grievances known, these ardent followers' behaviour goes contrary to the state's security protocols, but with the aim of deepening their commitments to engage in acts with aggressive tendencies in order to be acknowledged by their party's leaders for reward upon winning political power.

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that is growing rapidly cannot find jobs to enhance their socio-economic prospects. It is inferred that unemployment makes people idle, and therefore, triggers participation which prompts people especially the young ones to form and join violent gangs such as party vigilantism, and drives people to join extremist non-formal groups.

4.17 Performance of the EC

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A respondent's views highlight the issue:

It does happen to Ghana that every party that comes to power turns-out to manipulate the Electoral Commission to be in their favour. I think this is not fair, and it distorts the democracy we have subscribed to practice (Informant F, NPP Member, 2023).

An interviewee mentioned that:

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The fairness displayed resulting in EC scoring ‘good’ in its performance is an indication that they are delivering to expectation despite administrative challenges it faces. This result is in support of van Ham and Garnet (2019) findings demonstrating convincingly that the Electoral Commission or the Electoral Management Board (EMB) independence has a robust and positive impacts on electoral integrity and credibility. Nevertheless, in a formal structure, institutions such as EMB can skew the election process to include only a few people to vote for in favouring the other opponent especially the incumbent. Here, because someone is greedy for political power, rules, procedures, processes and guidelines of the electioneering are not well guided, but oppressed (Woehrle, 2022). Hence, formal structures of violence describe how social arrangements put other individuals and populations in harm’s way. Thus, formal structures of election violence are embedded in the spheres of political and economic organizations of human world.

4.18 The Presence of Security Personnel at Polling Stations

The study found that the respondents believed the security, including the police, military, immigration, prison service, fire service, air force and the navy, played an important role to ensure law, orderliness, and defense of the country. However, their presence should not be subjective to a specific political party during elections:

A respondent stated this:

I personally think the influence by the government in power on the security services must stop. If our security services are partisan, it would end up by favouring one party which may receive a negative reaction by the other party or candidate (Informant I, NPP Member, 2023).

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana Article 190, 200, 205 and 210 (Government of Ghana, 1992) outline the security agencies as the Police, the Military, the Prisons, the Fire Service, the Immigration, the Navy and the Air force services. From the field data reported on the study, the police service is the most deployed personnel to all the polling stations during elections. During elections, these personnel are deployed to all parts of Ghana to safeguard the various polling stations, ballot boxes, and properties. This finding supports a study by Buba (2013) that the security service is used by the state to supervise security during electoral activities. Police, security agencies in Ghana plays an essential role in ensuring the conduct of a free, fair and credible election and protecting properties.

It is also relevant to state how the incumbent politicians especially use the security agencies to gain advantages for themselves during the electioneering process. Buba's study points how election supervision and the involvement of the security agencies in the electoral process is partisan because the security often serves as potential source of intimidation and harassment, undue influence or compromise with the Election Management Board (EMB) to skew outcomes of elections. From the basis of the above argument, this perception was upheld by Mediyanose (2018) that the security agencies have been accused of always working to favour the incumbent. Thus, the involvement of the security services in electoral process should be seen as providing protection to voters and polling stations.

4.19 Effects of Electoral Violence

The study also investigated the effects of electoral violence in Walantu community in the Awutu-Senya East Municipality. When political violence takes place in a country, it often distorts the electoral process, producing fear in the citizenry/voters and preventing them from full participation of the electoral process. Violence and fear grip various communities especially, during rallies and

voting. It compromises the impact of quality of voting and the election's outcome. Some of the informants shared a number of effects on this phenomenon:

Citizens who are always engaging in violence during electioneering periods prevent people from taking active participation in either present or future elections. Look, me, myself I will not go out to vote if I see that polling stations are tensed or full of violence (Informant K, NDC Member, 2023).

As a voter, I hold the view that if destruction of properties, beatings, insulting, burning of cars and injuries become more common in our electoral activities; it distorts the whole electoral processes, making elections not free and fair, and largely, voters are afraid to take part in future elections (Informant G, Branch Communication Officer, NPP, 2023).

Another respondent:

I have witnessed a number of effects that are borne-out by electoral violence in this constituency. I knew of one voter who experienced beatings and destruction of motorbikes, and have refused to take full participation in national electoral activities (Informant F, Branch Communication Officer, 2023).

This is because voters would perceive fear in future elections, deterring them to exercise their democratic right, which reduces their prospects of active participation in voting. This finding is in contrast with Burchard (2015) study who states that geographies that witness electoral violence compromise their democratic tenets. It further shows that violence deters electorates, restrain from taking part in elections due to fear and violent clashes. Similarly, the finding complements with Condra et al (2018) study which acknowledges how voters can be depressed in participating in

electoral activities when electoral process are impartial, targeting one sided to be favoured. Again, democracy frowns upon this practice as at the end it imposes negative expectations including loss of trust in the electoral system. Through this, the quality of elections is affected, and this reduces participation on election's day.

4.20 Pragmatic Interventions to Reduce Electoral Violence

To prevent and mitigate electoral violence ensures peaceful atmosphere to encourage electoral participation. Failure to prevent and mitigate electoral violence by political parties and national security agencies is one of the most pervasive architects that has the potency to lead into conflicts. The literature and respondents of this study provided intervention to curb electoral violence. One was transparency on the part of the Electoral Commission in the inclusion of all the election stakeholders such as the competing political parties, National Peace Council, International Observers, and other civic groups. This would present credible and impartial outcome of the elections, and all political parties would accept the result of election.

Interviewees pointed out the following:

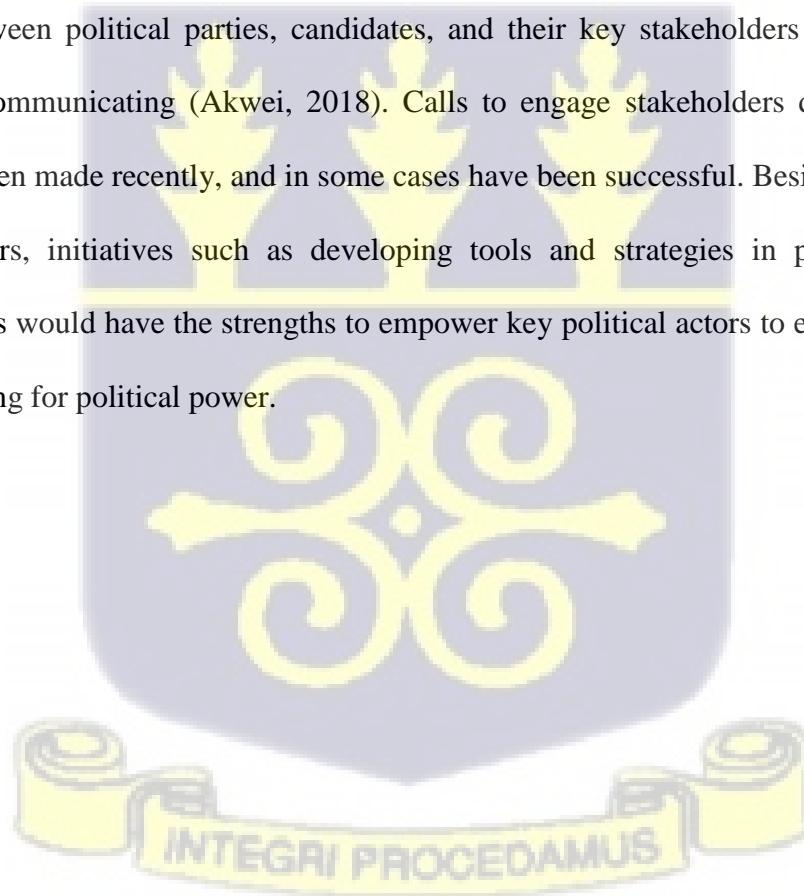
The Electoral Commission and the International Observers, and all stakeholders should engage political parties for genuine process to be done (Informant F, NPP Member, 2023).

Well, I believe the institution in-charge – the EC should involve all the electoral stakeholders in the process during elections (Informant G, NPP Member, 2023).

To me, engaging all the election stakeholders, and the impartiality and transparency

on the part of the EC must be a remedy to arrest or minimize this phenomenon (Informant H, NPP Member, 2023).

Transparency is supported by Bennett (2010) research on how Somaliland's Electoral Commission built consensus and prevented violence amid tense, tight elections from 2002 to 2005. The participation of political stakeholder engagement, therefore, as a central principle of policy development, decision making, social learning, and social capital development cannot be over-emphasized. Working with stakeholders directly presents the opportunity to explore and demonstrate effective engagement with different stakeholder groups, and to learn effective measures to strengthen the interface between political parties, candidates, and their key stakeholders through educating, informing, and communicating (Akwei, 2018). Calls to engage stakeholders during the electoral processes have been made recently, and in some cases have been successful. Besides the inclusion of the political actors, initiatives such as developing tools and strategies in preventing electoral misunderstandings would have the strengths to empower key political actors to embrace non-violent means of contesting for political power.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter of the study presents summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations in relation to electoral violence.

5.1 Summary of Findings

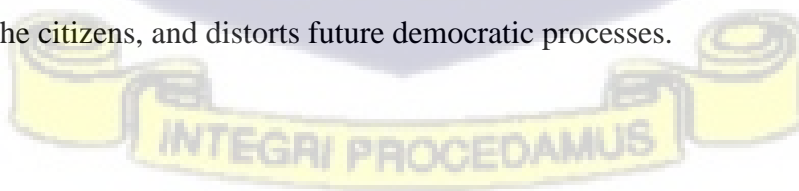
The study was conducted with the aim of investigating the experience and effects of electoral related violence on free and fair elections in the Walantu Community of Kasoa in the Awutu Senya East Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana in the 2016 and 2020 general election years. The objectives that drove the study included the following: (i) to investigate the nature and typologies of electoral violence in Walantu Community, (ii). to examine the potential elements that influence the risk of electoral violence in Walantu Community, (iii). to investigate the effects of electoral violence in Walantu Community, and (iv). to examine the role of pragmatic interventions in reducing incidence of violence. From the data collected and its analysis, this research made some findings based on the objectives it set out to achieve.

The study employed a mixed method – quantitative and qualitative design. The study sampled 110 voters from 305 households in Walantu Community through both a simple random and purposive sampling technique. Members of the two major political parties – NDC and NPP were interviewed through unstructured interview guide. Findings were developed based on themes and areas of interest of the study. Analysis of data was performed with the use of STATA software. Texts or quotations were also used to support the findings of the study, which were also connected to the empirical literature to show how it supported or contrasted previous works of the same phenomenon.

The study found that electoral violence characterizes elections in the Walantu Community and can stifle the existence and practices of democracy. It also found that though Walantu Community is identified as one of the hotspots by Ghana Police Service, voters do not distance themselves from voting, but rather engage in active elections and democratic activities. It was observed that the presence and the surge of violence during electioneering and its occurrence continues to add to the magnitude of violence in Walantu Community. Hence, as observed by Bekoe, 2011 the phases of election cycle constitute risk periods for electoral violence. The study found that the nature and typologies of violence experienced by NDC and NPP followers reduce voter turnout, defeating the purpose of democracy.

The study found that electoral violence in Walantu Community was caused by physical, psychological and structural factors, and that they inflict a gloomy picture on Ghana's credentials to democracy. The study found that intimidations, fighting, insulting, shooting, and threats were driving variables demonstrated by the core supporters of both NDC and NPP in Walantu Community, and have been registered in the book of these two political parties. These are the major violence seen in every election year.

Some negative effects political violence creates is to lead into loss of life and properties, places Ghana's image into disrepute, triggers misunderstanding that threatens the country's democratic growth, disunites the citizens, and distorts future democratic processes.



The study brought to light unemployment as an economic challenge contributing to electoral violence. Absence of jobs to engage the young adult or the youth made them potentials to be lured by political candidates, and party ‘big wings’ to serve as in vigilante groups increasing the risk of political violence. The study observes that surging youth population combined with unemployment and other factors often lead to violence, and threaten the political stability of the country.

Furthermore, the findings explained that despite the country’s democratic success, when electoral violence is experienced, the country becomes vulnerable, exposing the fragility its democratic credentials. Electoral violence brings mistrust of future electoral activities. It has rippling multiple effects including the destruction of individuals’ properties, and drive away investors which could changed the country’s economic fortunes. Electoral violence could plunge Ghana into either civil or ethnic wars.

The study found that during voter registration season, and on the day of elections, security personnel were deployed to all polling stations within Awutu Senya East Municipality to ensure orderliness. The security service includes the Police Service, the Armed Forces, the Air force, the Fire Service, the Immigration Service and the Prison Service. However, the study identified the Police Service as the most predominant security institution that deploys personnel to ensure law and order in various polling stations.

5.2 Conclusion

Electoral violence has been identified as a major challenge constituting a systemic threat to new, emerging and fragile democracies, by undermining the quality of democracy or the outcome of elections in many ways. The study observes that electoral violence is caused by physical,

psychological and structural variables. These varied factors paint a gloomy picture in Ghana's attainment of democratic consolidation. It thus, reflects that despite its pride in democratic adoption, Ghana is still struggling to consolidate its democratic gains on its success after transfer of power in eight consecutive times in the Fourth Republic. The study acknowledges the issues of poverty and high unemployment rate as increasing vigilantism that as a major cause of violence. People especially the youth, in a state of unemployment become vulnerable or susceptible to persuasion, and bow to the dictates of the political heads and party financiers with the hope of being rewarded when they assume political office. Despite the frequent incidences of electoral violence, Ghana's Electoral Commission is adjudicating its mandates as expected. From the data, EC's performance was rated to be 'good' enough which is a sign of strength in Ghana's democracy.

It is relevant to highlight that when a country is not able to consolidate its democratic gains, it erupts into political violence, and that country loses the confidence of the outside world in their economy. Further to that, the research acknowledges that the inclusion or the involvement of all election stakeholders in the electioneering processes must be paramount. This includes the various political parties (NDC and NPP) with its competing candidates, the Electoral Commission through Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC), the National Peace Council (NPC), and the International Election Observers, being identified as some of the approaches in reducing electoral violence. This is because it allows for conclusive participation of all the stakeholders who can express ideas early enough to avoid future violence. However, electoral violence in no doubt constitutes a major source of democratic instability to Ghana's hard earned democratic reputation.

5.3 Recommendations

The study identifies a number of findings and therefore provide the corresponding recommendations.

The findings showed that intimidation, threat, shooting, fighting, and insults are the most dominated violence during most election years. The study therefore recommends that, the EC through National Peace Council and Inter-Party Advisory Committee should continuously engage both the political parties and the competing candidates to eschew violence and liaise together to develop guidelines to show decorum. This could go a long way to involve party faithful's and footsoldiers to tolerate each other during electioneering periods.

The study demonstrates that violence is common also during pre-electioneering phase. Based on that, it recommends to Ghana's EC to utilize the intervention of National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) through frequent civic education to engage and broaden the knowledge of citizens on national issues especially on democratic rights.

The study notes that both the NDC and NPP are the main parties influencing electoral violence. The study therefore, recommends to the EC to strictly apply its electoral rules, guidelines and insist that all political parties, foot soldiers of political parties and party cadres adhere strictly to the protocols governing the elections.

The study recognizes the contribution of Inter-Party Advisory Committee in Ghana. Through agreement of the political parties, the state can similarly institute electoral dispute committee to mediate at early stage disagreements that may arise between the political parties and the competing candidates. This Committee may be composed of the citizens or elites, including traditional leadersto engage in conflict resolution strategies to implement peace-building messages. The Committee

could be effective in reducing conflict caused by disagreements, cheating, insulting, intimidations, threats and burning of individuals' and state properties.

The study found youth unemployment as a stimulant of political violence. The study therefore recommends the state's economy be broadened through tax incentives or rebates to young entrepreneurs to serve as motivation to vigorously pursue job creation. Moreover, it is further recommended that the government through partnerships with the private sector liaises to create jobs for the teeming unemployed youth. More so, the Ministry in charge of Youth affairs in collaboration with the National Youth Authority (NYA) to provide skills development and vocational trainings, and entrepreneurial promotions to boost of youth employment.

In addition, youth development programmes such as youth careers, and youth in politics projects should be developed by the National Youth Authority in collaboration with the Parliament of Ghana to serve as a breeding ground to prepare them fully for future political positions. Again, the young people should be trained to adopt and adhere to the use of non-violent means to track the implementation of electoral promises made to them by the politicians in the course of campaigning season. More importantly, the study recommended to political parties to desist from turning the youth groups into vehicles for perpetrating any form of political violence since peace is always regarded a panacea needed to spearhead the country's development.

The research notes the presence and relevance of the security service in Ghana's electioneering periods in submerging violence. Through this finding, it is recommended that the security service should, without fear or favour, discharge their duties as expected, amongst and prosecute the offenders of the law irrespective of their party affiliation to deter others.

The study recognized the role stakeholders play to curb electoral violence. Based on that, the study makes a clarion call by drawing the attention of all election stakeholders – EC, NDC and NPP national leadership, the National Security Service, National Peace Council and International Election Observers to institute National Election Security Taskforce (NEST). These can liaise with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), and other state institutions to re-educate the public especially the party foot soldiers on peace campaigns. This helps to eliminate the ritual of frequent election violence during every election year with the aim of continuing building democratic reputation to ensure stabilization of Ghana’s democratic gains.



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Appendix A

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

You have been selected to take part in a study titled “examining the effects of electoral-related violence on free and fair elections in Walantu Community of Awutu Senya East Municipality in the 2016 and 2020 election years”. As a participant of this research, your responses will inform the findings of the study. Please, note that this is for academic purpose only, and as such your responses are therefore, anticipated and will be treated with the highest confidentiality. Do I have your permission to proceed with the questionnaire administration?

Please check the boxes and fill with text where necessary.

PART 1: Socio-Demography of Respondents

Please tick the appropriate answer.

1. Age 1. (18-20), 2. (21-24), 3. (25-29), 4. (30-34), 5. (35-40), and 6. (Above 40).
2. Sex 1. Female 2. Male
3. Religion 1. Christian 2. Moslem 3. African Traditional Religion 4. Non-religious
4. Educational background 1. Primary 2. JHS 3. SHS 4. Tertiary (Diploma) 5 Tertiary (Degree) 6. Tertiary (Masters) 7. None 8. Other (Specify) _____
5. Occupation 1. Public Service 2. Private Official 3. Private unofficial 4. Trader 5. Unemployed 6. Farmer 7. Other (specify) _____
6. Which ethnic group do you belong? 1. Akan 2. Ewe 3. Hausa 4. Dagomba 5. Krobos 6. Ga-Dangbe 7. Mamprusi 8. Grusi 8. Others (specify):
7. How many years have you lived in this community? (1). Four years (2). Six years (3). Seven years (4). Eight years and above

PART II: Electoral Violence in Ghana

Objective 1- To Assess the Typologies and Dynamics of Electoral Violence in Walantu.

8. Have you been engaged in electoral violence before? a. Yes b. No
9. What brought about this violence? 1. Unfair treatment by the Electoral Commission officials 2. Mistrust of the electoral system 3. Political opponents influence of the system
10. What was the nature of the violence? 1. Beating 2. Insult 3. Intimidating 4. Shooting
11. Have you been a victim of electoral violence before? 1. Yes 2. No
12. Have you witnessed electoral violence in your polling station before? 1. Yes 2. No
- If yes, what type of violent was that? 1. Beating 2. Insult 3. Fighting 4. Intimidation 5. Other specify
13. At what phase of the electioneering does the violent take place? 1. During registration of voter cards 2. On the day of elections 3. After elections result has been declared
14. In Ghana's 2024 general elections, do you expect violence to be featuring in the general elections? 1. Yes 2. No
- If yes, specify your reason.....
15. How would you describe the polling station atmosphere during electioneering periods? 1. Tensed 2. Peaceful 3. I don't know

Objective 2: To Investigate the Potential Elements that Influences the Risk Electoral-related Violence Walantu Community

16. Have you ever voted in either 2016 or 2020 elections? 1. Yes 2. No
17. Have you ever voted in any elections under the Fourth Republic? 1. Yes 2. No
- 18a. In your view, do you think violence that take place at your polling station influences the election result? 1. Yes 2. No

18b. If *yes*, how many times have you voted? 1. Once 2. Twice 3. Trice 4. Quadruple 5. In all elections

19. What motivated your decision to vote? 1. Party affiliation 2. Party Ideology 3. Party colours 4. Developmental projects 5. Ethnic influence 6. Personality of the leader 7. Socio-economic programmes 8. All the above 9. None of the above 10. Other
(Specify.....
.....

20. In your view, what influenced this electoral violence? (1). Partiality on the part of the EC officials (2). Intimidations from the opponent party supporters (3). Unclear electoral procedures (4). Other (specify)
.....

21. Who are the motivators of the violence? (1). Political Party leaders (2). Parties big men (3). Opinion leaders 4. Rich men and women (5). Unknown people (6). Other(specify)

22. Does the Electoral Commission has any standard set to regulate general elections?

1. Yes 2. No

23. Tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

23a. NPP and NDC are the main cause of tension of Ghanaian elections. 1. Strongly Disagree 2. I Don't Know 3. Disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

23b. Ethnic diversity poses a big threat to the conduct of free and fair elections. 1. Strongly Disagree 2. I Don't Know 3. Disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

23c. Unemployment is a contributing factor to political violence in this constituency. 1. Strongly Disagree 2. I Don't Know 3. Disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

23d. Misunderstanding the aim of elections and democracy is an attributing factor to electoral violence. 1. Strongly Disagree 2. I Don't Know 3. Disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

23e. The youth in this area play a key role in the violence. 1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. I Don't Know [] 3. Disagree [] 4. Agree [] 5. Strongly Agree []

23f. The Electoral Commission is a contributing factor to electoral violence. 1. Strongly Disagree [] 2. I Don't Know [] 3. Disagree [] 4. Agree [] 5. Strongly Agree []

Objective 3: To Explore the Effects of Electoral-Related Violence in Walantu

24. In situations whereby Ghana's electoral system continues to experience violence, what do think will be the long standing outcome? (1). Conflict (2). Fragile democracy (3). Disunity among the citizens (4). Disrepute on its democratic success

25. Do you hold the assertion that frequent electoral violence could stifle citizenry participation in future elections? (1). Yes (2). No

26. Do you agree with democratic advocates that electoral violence has the propensity to destabilise Ghana's democratic success? (1). Yes (2). No

27. How would you rate the performance of Ghana's Electoral Commission? 1. Excellent [] 2. Good [] 3. Fair [] 4. Poor []

Provide brief explanation for your choice

.....

28. What are some of the effects of electoral violence? 1. Distort the electioneering processes []

2. Mistrust of the future electoral activities [] 3. Ghana's pride on democracy is disputed []

4. Loss of life and property

29. Do you think elections organized in 2016 and 2020 in Ghana were violent free?

1. Yes [] 2. No [] 3. I don't know []. If No, explain _____

30. What kind of security personnel were deployed during electioneering periods? 1. Police []

2. Soldiers [] 3. Fired Service [] 4. Prison wardens [] 5. Other (specify) _____

31. Were you pleased about the presence of the security personnel during electioneering period?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I don't know

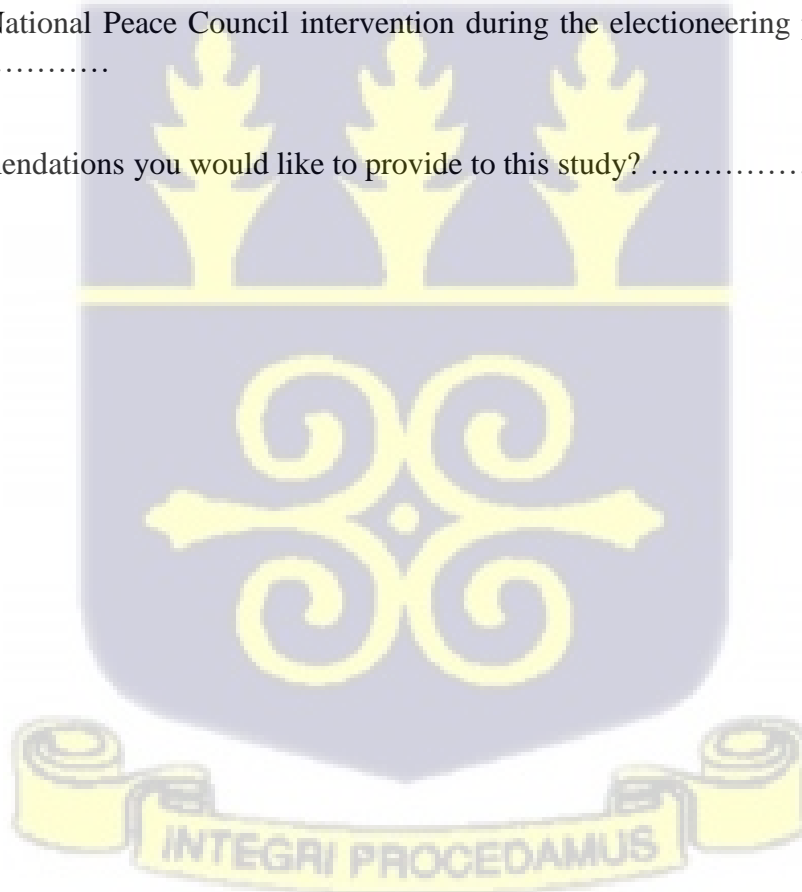
32. Do you expect to see violence in Ghana's next general election² (2024) based on what has previously happened in your polling station? 1. Yes 2. No 3. Somehow 4. I don't know

Objective 4: To Examine the Role of Pragmatic Interventions in Reducing Incidence of Violence.

33. Do you think the conditions that exist in Ghana's elections make the process violence free? 1. Yes 2. No

34. What are those factors that can be employed to prevent electoral violence? (1). Involvement of all the electoral stakeholders during electioneering activities (2). Transparency on the part of the EC (3). National Peace Council intervention during the electioneering period (4) Other, specify

35. Any recommendations you would like to provide to this study?



Appendix B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICAL PARTY MEMBERS

You have been selected to take part in a study titled *“Examining the effects of electoral-related violence on free and fair elections in Walantu Community of Awutu Senya East Municipality Between 2016 and 2020.”* As a participant of this research, your responses will inform the findings of the study. Please, note that this is for academic purpose only, and as such your responses are therefore, anticipated and will be treated with the highest confidentiality. Do I have your permission to proceed with the questionnaire administration?

Please check the boxes and fill with text where necessary.

PART 1- Socio-Demography of Respondents

Please tick the appropriate answer.

1. Age 1. (18-20), 2. (21-24), 3. (25-29), 4. (30-34), 5. (35-40), and 6. (Above 40).
2. Sex 1. Female 2. Male
3. Religion 1. Christian 2. Moslem 3. African Traditional Religion 4. Non-religious
4. Educational background 1. Primary 2. JHS 3. SHS 4. Tertiary (Diploma) 5 Tertiary (Degree) 6. Tertiary (Masters) 7. None 8. Others (please specify) _____
5. Occupation 1. Public Service 2. Private Official 3. Private unofficial 4. Trader 5. Unemployed 6. Farmer Others (please specify) _____
6. Which ethnic group do you belong? 1. Akan 2. Ewe 3. Hausa 4. Dagomba 5. Krobos 6. Ga-Dangbe 7. Mamprusi 8. Grusi Others (specify):
7. What is your party’s name?
8. How many years have you been a member of this political party

9. Political position held.....

10. How many years have you served on this position.....

PART II - Electoral Violence in Ghana

Objective 1- To Assess the Typologies and Dynamics of Electoral Violence in WalantuCommunity.

1. Have you been engaged in electoral violence before? a. Yes b. No

2. What brought about this violence?

3. What was the nature of the violence?

4. Have you been a victim of electoral violence before? 1. Yes 2. No

5. Have you witnessed electoral violence in your polling station before? 1. Yes 2. No

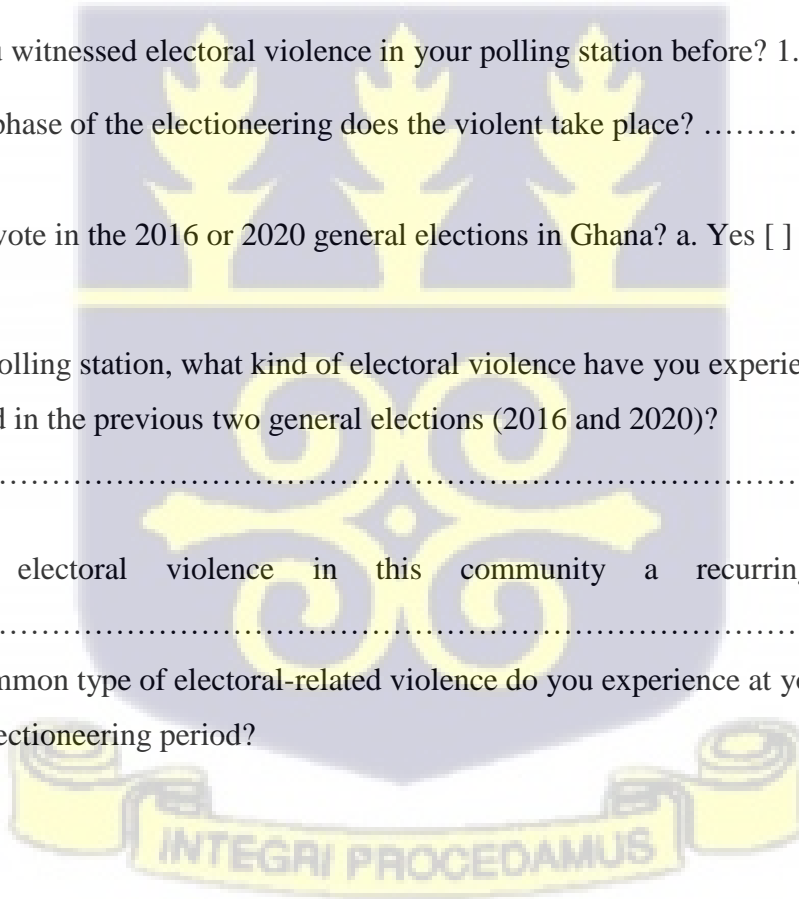
6. At what phase of the electioneering does the violent take place?

7. Did you vote in the 2016 or 2020 general elections in Ghana? a. Yes b. No

8. In your polling station, what kind of electoral violence have you experienced or witnessed in the previous two general elections (2016 and 2020)?
.....

9. Is the electoral violence in this community a recurring phenomenon?
.....

10. What common type of electoral-related violence do you experience at your polling station during electioneering period?



Objective 2: To Investigate the Potential Elements that Influences the Risk Electoral-related Violence Walantu Community

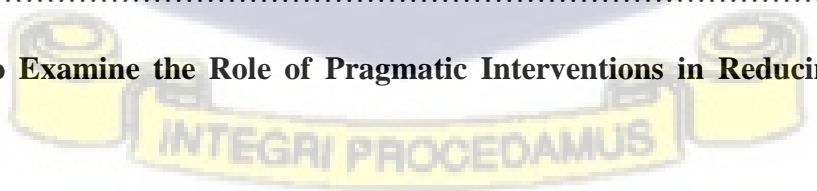
11. What are those factors that make Ghana's elections susceptible to violence?
.....
12. To what extent does unemployment influences electoral violence in Ghana's elections?
.....
13. How does youth participation in democratic process contributes to electoral violence?
.....
14. To what extent does cumbersome and misunderstanding of electoral processes influences electoral violence?
15. Does Ghana's Electoral Commission have any standard set to regulate general elections for all its polling stations in Ghana?
.....
16. do you think violence that take place at your polling station influences the election result?
.....
17. What are those factors that make Ghana's elections susceptible to violence?
.....

Objective 3: To Explore the Effects of Electoral-Related Violence in Walantu

18. Does the persistent recurrence of electoral violence threaten the democratic development in Ghana's fourth republic?
- 19a. Do you anticipate to witness any electoral violence in the subsequent electioneering's?
- 19b. How would you rate the performance of Ghana's Electoral Commission?
1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor

- 19c. Explain this response
20. Does the persistent recurrence of electoral violence threatens the democratic development in Ghana's fourth republic?
21. In your view, what do you think are the factors that influences electoral violence in your polling station?
22. How does frequent electoral violence stifle citizenry participation in future elections?.....
23. Do you agree with democratic advocates that electoral violence has the propensity to destabilise Ghana's democratic success?
24. To what extent can electoral violence affect Ghana's peaceful co-existence?
25. Why has electoral violence in Ghana not degenerated into armed conflicts as witnessed in other African countries like Kenya, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, etc?
26. What roles has the National Peace Council been playing in the conduct of elections in Ghana's fourth republic?
27. Why is it that in spite of the activities of constitutional bodies like NCCE and the security services, there has been the manifestation of electoral violence in all general elections?
28. In your view, what do you think are some of the negative effects of electoral violence?
.....
29. In situations where Ghana's electoral system contributes to experience violence, what do you think will be the long standing effects?
.....

Objective 4: To Examine the Role of Pragmatic Interventions in Reducing Incidence of Violence.



30. What do you think can be done to prevent future electoral violence in Ghana?
31. Any recommendations to improve elections in Ghana.....

32. Any recommendations to avoid electoral violence in Ghana?

.....

