

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM OF THE PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH
REPUBLIC OF GHANA, 2009-2020: AN ASSESSMENT**

BY

IBRAHIM MURTALA MUHAMMED

(ID: 10050804)

**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF PHD
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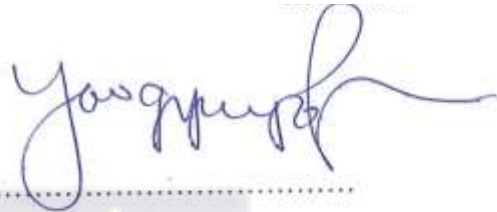
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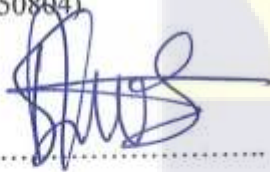
I, **IBRAHIM MURTALA MUHAMMED** hereby declare that except for references to other works which have been duly acknowledged, this thesis is the result of my own original research, and that it has not been presented, either in part or in whole, for another degree elsewhere.



IBRAHIM MURTALA MUHAMMED
(STUDENT)
(ID: 10050804)



PROF. RANSFORD EDWARD VAN GYAMPO
(PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR)



PROF. SEIDU MAHAMA ALIDU
(CO-SUPERVISOR)



PROF. EMMANUEL DEBRAH
(CO-SUPERVISOR)



ABSTRACT

The committee system of parliament has been critical to the functioning of the legislature in jurisdictions in Africa and other parts of the world. This study examined the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic to determine its functionality and how it promoted the legislative, deliberative, oversight and financial functions of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Using the Finance Committee (FC), the Appointments Committee (AC), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Energy and Mines Committee (EMC), and the Health Committee (HC), the study examined the work of the committee system, its decision-making modalities, challenges, and the role of the committee system in the execution of parliamentary business. Furthermore, the study conducted a comparative study of selected committees for case study of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic. Using the qualitative method, the study primarily used document study and interviews to gather primary and secondary data for analysis. A sample size of forty (40) participants was used for the collection of field data. Participants – made up of Members of Parliament (MPs) of the Eighth Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, clerks of Parliament, past ministers who doubled as MPs – were interviewed over a broad layer of issues on parliamentary affairs and the committee system of parliament. Based on thorough analysis of field and textual data, the study found that the committee system was vital to the execution of legislative, deliberative, financial and oversight functions of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic. It also found that the committee system is handicapped by two challenges – inadequate financial resources and executive control of parliament. Furthermore, the study found that clientelism and politics underpinned the work of the committee system of Ghana's fifth, sixth and seventh Parliaments. The study recommended that efforts should be made by the leadership of parliament and interested bodies or parties to consolidate the gains of the committee system in Ghana's Parliament.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife (Mrs. Hadiatou Kindy Murtala), my children (Hamdan Subudoo, Ruhaina Saha, Ahmed Suhuyini and Haajara Mandeiya), the Eighth Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, and my political party – the National Democratic Congress (NDC).



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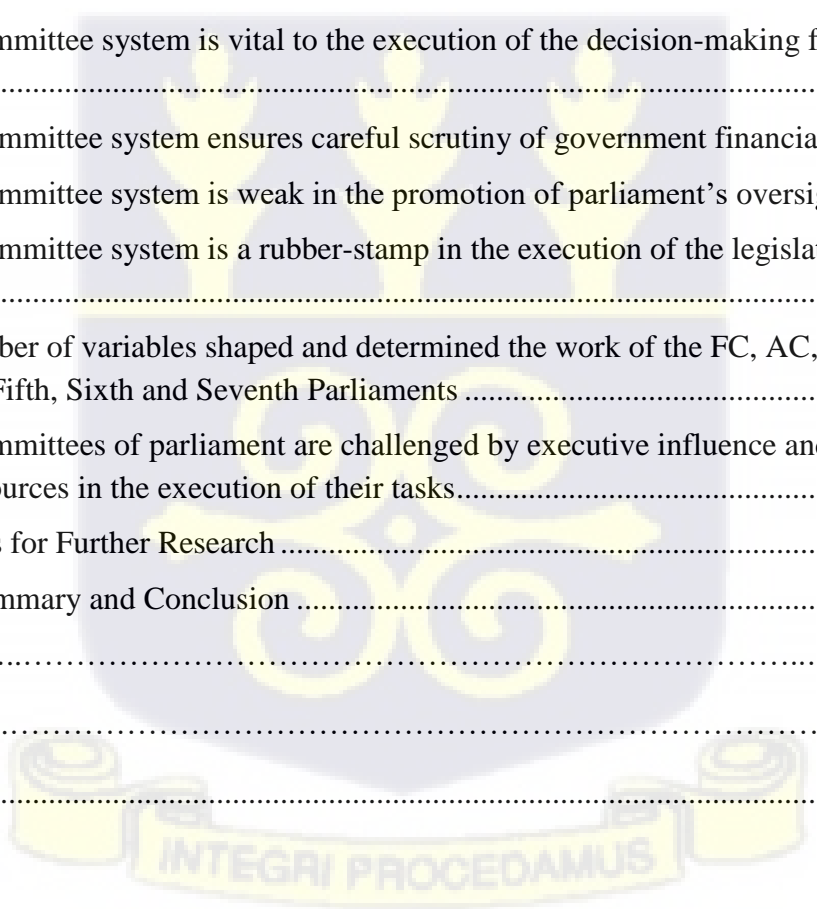
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ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Appointments Committee
AFAG	Alliance for Accountable Governance
ANC	African National Congress
AUTP	Accra Urban Transport Project (AUTP)
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EMC	Energy and Mines Committee
FC	Finance Committee
GINKS	Ghana Information Network for Knowledge Sharing
HC	Health Committee
KBTH	Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital
MP	Member of Parliament
MPs	Members of Parliament
NCCE	National Commission on Civic Education
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHI	New Historical Institutionalism
NI	New Institutionalism
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institute
OI	Old Institutionalism
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PDS	Public Distribution System

PFMPSCSP	Public Financial Management and Private Sector Competitiveness Support Programme
PIC	Public Investment Committee
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
RCI	Rational Choice Institutionalism
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCOPA	Standing Committee on Public Accounts
SI	Sociological Institutionalism



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1992, military rule held sway in Africa, a system of government that weakened the legislature. However, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, there was the re-introduction and re-institutionalisation of democracy in Africa (Barkan, 2008; Rotberg and Salahub, 2013). The re-institutionalisation of democracy in Africa in the 1990s did not only make the legislature (parliament) a relevant institution of government, it also made it a relevant institution of African politics (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013). Known as the “third wave” of democracies in Africa, the re-institutionalisation of democracy in Africa led to the transformation of parliaments across the continent (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013; Barkan, 2009; Manning 2005; Lindberg 2006). The re-introduction of democracy in Africa in the 1990s has attracted attention in scholarship, with themes focusing on the dominant executive power over the legislature (Eagle, 2012; Prempeh, 2008a, 2008b; Isumonah, 2012; Ronning, 2010; Hyden, 2012), the hegemonic powers of presidents within existing legal frameworks that impact negatively on the legislature (Isumonah, 2012; Ronning, 2010; Hyden, 2012), the exercise of parliament’s oversight function and committee system of parliament (Acheampong, 2020; Onyango, 2020; Jensen et al., 2020; McGee, 2002; Hambali et al., 2020; Ambasa, Otele and Onyango, 2022), among others.

It is significant to note that parliament is an important institution of the governance architecture of most sovereign states. Scholars have constructed diverse and varied theories on the origins, types, institutions and functions of government (Hobbes, 1651; Locke, 1823). Social contract theorists such as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau established the basis of government, and though they differ in the systems of government, they all note that governments wield executive, legislative and

judiciary powers (Plamanatz, 1963). For example, while Hobbes advocates the indivisibility of the powers of government into different institutions or bodies, Locke advances an argument for the separation of powers of the arms of governments with ultimate power placed in the legislature (Plamanatz, 1963).

This study does not intend to belabor the already vast treatise or philosophy of the origins of government. This notwithstanding, it is important to underline the fact that parliament, also known as the legislature, is a central institution of the state that works alongside the executive and the judiciary. By the principle of the separation of powers, the executive, legislature and the judiciary – known collectively as the three arms of government – have separate and independent powers, as well as exclusive functions. In the words of Heywood (2007: 336):

The division of government into legislative, executive and judicial institutions has been sustained by the doctrine of separation of powers ... and has been the traditional basis of government since the time of Montesquieu.

The word parliament is etymologically derived from the French word *parler* (to speak), but its definition is problematic. Bemoaning the difficulty of giving an exact definition of parliament, Alabi (1998) preferred to give a description, rather than a definition, of it. According to him, “parliament constitutes a generic term for an institution that goes by many different names ... Definitions of the term are almost as numerous as the specific names employed (Alabi, 1998: 1). Notwithstanding the difficulty of giving a universally acceptable definition of parliament, the general consensus of scholars is that “parliament is the institution in which the citizens participate in the governance of their country through their elected representatives” (Bosley, 2007: 3).

Historically, the origins of parliament go back to political developments in the United Kingdom in the Renaissance period in the 13th century “when knights and burgesses were incorporated into the

king's court" (Heywood, 2007: 337). From such noble beginnings, the Westminster system of parliament in the United Kingdom metamorphosed into the House of Commons and the House of Lords in the 14th century, and by the close of the 17th century, parliament's supremacy over the monarch in the UK was established following the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Overtime, similar parliamentary systems of government did not only develop in other parts of Europe, but were also institutionalized as a form of government in other countries outside Europe. Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016) have given the historicity of parliament and its powers in Europe, and argued that "parliamentary supremacy was a mirage throughout history (p. 338)." The general feature of the parliamentary systems is "a fusion of legislative and executive power: government is parliamentary in that it is drawn from and accountable to the assembly or parliament. The strength of this system is that it supposedly delivers effective but responsible government (Heywood, 2007: 338).

While the parliamentary system crystalized in Europe and other parts of the world, the presidential system evolved in the USA as a form of government. Based on the strict application of the principle of separation of powers, the presidential system "ensures that the assemblies and executives are formally independent from one another and separately elected ...The resulting system therefore incorporated a network of checks and balances" (Heywood, 2007: 339).

In Ghana, multi-party democracy was introduced in 1992 after two decades of military rule. Since the return to multi-party democracy in Ghana in 1992, the country's democratic institutions including parliament have been enhanced tremendously. Parliament has since been entrenched as a critical arm of the governance architecture in Ghana's democratic space (Boafo-Author, 2006; Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). Ghana's parliamentary system of the Fourth Republic is different from both the strict presidential and parliamentary systems. Ghana practices the hybrid political system that

fuses the executive and the legislative arms of government together. By this system, the Members of Parliament (MPs) are appointed as Ministers of State and exercise dual functions – executive and legislative. Scholars have analyzed the hybrid political system and pointed out its negative repercussions and how it stifles the operations of the Parliament of Ghana and parliaments in other African jurisdictions (Prempeh, 2008; Lindberg and Zhou, 2009; Burnell, 2003). Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016) lament the negative impact of the hybrid political system on the work and functions of Ghana’s Parliament and its effects on MPs in parliamentary proceedings, and how it affects their independence and objectivity. According to them:

...the hybrid system is weakening Parliament. Parliament is somewhat completely under the executive. MPs who are ministers hardly participate in the debates of the house, depriving the institution the full complement of its human resources. There is always the tendency for these ministers to give disproportionate share of their time to their ministerial duties and relegate Parliament to the background. The quality of debate is therefore undermined. Pandering to the executive is the norm in the current dispensation as the executive holds the resources and can activate the reward power that is available to it in large doses. Ordinarily, it should be the hope of every MP to catch the speaker’s eye in order to deal with some critical constituency interests, project the party and build individual capacity. Surprisingly most MPs on the majority side of the house work very hard to catch the president’s eye so they can be rewarded with ministerial appointments or membership of certain boards. In an era of excessive reliance on reward power by the executive, coupled with individual MPs activating their natural instinct of being utility maximizers, they lose their independence and objectivity in the process and literally become praise singers of the government of the day (Essuman-Johnson et. Al., 2016: 5).

In short, the hybrid political system negatively affects the work and functions of Ghana’s Parliament in the Fourth Republic. Despite these shortcomings, the Parliament of Ghana continues to work within its remits. Parliaments in general – Ghana’s Parliament is no exception – perform a number of functions. Notable among the functions of parliament are legislation, representation, oversight responsibility, scrutiny, political recruitment and legislation. By far, “the key function

of parliament is legislation “as it is often implied by their common classification as parliament (Heywood, 2007: 340).

Given the functions of parliament, global interests in the work of parliament in relation to governance and democracy have soared over the years in the 21st Century. Opinions on good governance and democracy are varied, but the common overarching opinion is that good governance and democracy are prerequisite variables needed for a country to achieve sustainable development. The smooth and effective functioning of the institutions of government is fundamental to good governance and democracy. It is common knowledge that parliament is a key institution of the democratic system and that it plays critical roles. It is within this context of the critical role of parliament in the democratic system that it is imperative to assess its performance over a certain time frame. This is because the evaluation of the performance of parliament is an integral part of parliamentary strengthening and public oversight of parliament over a period of time. In the words of Bosley (2007: 5):

Parliamentary performance evaluation is an integral component of parliamentary strengthening and public oversight of parliaments. When civil society and media organizations track and report on questions and hearings, voting records, committee meetings, the annual budget cycle, constituency work, and legislation, the public benefits from enhanced understanding of political, economic, and social developments. This process facilitates both public input into and oversight of the democratic process.

When a parliament or donor organization seeks to critically evaluate parliamentary performance in these same areas, parliamentary reform and modernisation programs can be better crafted and monitored to meet the specific needs of a particular parliament. Parliamentary evaluation also serves to communicate the significance of parliaments to the democratic process on both a national and an international scale.

Evaluating parliament as a whole is important and therefore much work has been done in the area both at the global and national levels (Ninsin, 2009; and Essuman-Johnson et. al., 2016). Inadequate attention, however, has been given to assessing the committee system, which is regarded as the “workshop” of parliament where most of the work is done. In the words of Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016: 33) “the committee system is fundamental to the functioning of any democracy. The stronger the committee system, the stronger the parliament”. This thesis is therefore devoted to an assessment of some of the parliamentary committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments (2009 - 2020) of the Fourth Republic.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is burgeoning literature on how parliament works with reference to parliamentary committees. For instance, Gaines et. al. (2019), Strøm (1998), among others, have indicated the inalienability and significance of committees to the work and functionality of parliaments. Contributing to the importance of committees, Gaines et. al. (2019: 331) have noted that:

Committees are ubiquitous, so they must be important. But how important?
And, when, where, and why do they shape policy outcomes substantially?
The answers to those questions are not easily found.

They provided a scissor-cutting importance of the committee system when they argued that “committees promote better deliberation, cooperation, and debate, by solving generic problems of scale. The partitioning of policy into distinct spheres could help to solve collective action problems, by organising a legislative division of labour and making the complex policy world easier to manage.” (Gaines et. al. 2019: 332). There are, however, some negative observations about the committee systems. In South Africa, for example, it was observed that the authority of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) waned considerably overtime (Feinstein, 2009). In the view of Rotberg and Salahub (2013: 16), “the deliberations of SCOPA – and of all

other committees of the House – were excessively influenced by political considerations.” Despite this observation, the importance of parliamentary committees in the legislature cannot be underestimated. In the words of Burrows and Joseph (1990: 306) in their description of the Select Committees in New Zealand, parliamentary committees are and remain “a crucial bastion of democracy in our legislative process.”

Other scholars, including Kim and Loewenberg (2005), Clark and Jurgelevilt (2008), and Mulgan (1994, 77), among others, have painted the partisan picture of debates of parliamentary committees. There are other discourses that portray executive manipulations of parliamentary committees (McRae, 1994).

In Ghana, the discourse on how parliament works is scanty. In his book, *How Parliament Decides: Decision-Making in Ghana's Parliament*, Ninsin (2009) gives insights into how the Parliament of Ghana functions through the committee system. Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016: 33-35) took a cursory look at the committee system in Ghana's Parliament to determine the extent of the effectiveness of parliament. In its assessment of the effectiveness of Ghana's Parliament, the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) (2014) provided an insight into the partisan nature of the committee system of Ghana's Parliament. It noted that “committees also endeavour to reach consensus in their work, but if the issue they are addressing is politically important to the Executive, then debates about the Committee's report become very partisan creating a perception of growing politicization of pertinent issues to the disadvantage of national development” (NCCE, 2014: 3).

Apart from the works of Ninsin (2009) and Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016), there are hardly scholarly works that examined the committee system in Ghana's parliament. This study seeks to

fill the lacuna in the intellectual discourse on the legislature in Ghana. It assesses the performance of the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020, which covers the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of the Fourth Republic. More specifically, the study examines the contribution of the committee system to the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body. Some key committees in the Select, Standing and Ad hoc categories will be selected for study for the period from 2009 to 2020. The period 2009 to 2020 is significant in the history of the legislature in Ghana in the Fourth Republic because it marked the first time that three successive parliaments existed alongside three different executive powers – Fifth Parliament under the Presidency of Atta-Mills, the Sixth Parliament under the Presidency of John Mahama, and the Seventh Parliament under the Presidency of Nana Akufo Addo. The thesis compares the performance of the committees, their effectiveness and why some of them were more effective than others. Effectiveness of the committee system would be based on the following indicators: the quality and quantum of inputs committees received from members and the public; the level of deliberations, discussions and consultations undertaken; consensus-building or otherwise of committee decisions; the extent to which committees met time-lines; the extent to which committees discharged their functions successfully. Based on the findings, some recommendations will be made aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the committee system in Ghana's Parliament.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are overarching and secondary objectives of the study.

1.3.1 Overarching Objective

The overarching objective of the study is to assess the effectiveness of the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic in promoting or contributing

to the realization of the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body.

1.3.2 Secondary Objectives

The following are the secondary objectives:

- Assess the committee system in the execution of the business of Parliament based on some indicators;
- Examine the modes and reasons for the modes of decision-making of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020
- Discuss the ways in which the executive influenced the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments; and
- Examine the implications of the findings for theoretical, comparative and empirical literature.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are based on the research objectives. There are overarching and secondary questions as follows:

1.4.1 Overarching Research Question

In what ways does the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic effective in promoting or contributing to the realization of the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body?

1.4.2 Secondary Research Questions

- How does the committee system execute the business of Parliament based on legislative, financial control, deliberative and oversight functions of Parliament?

- What were the modes of decision-making of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020, and why?
- In what ways did the executive exert influence on the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments? and
- What are the implications of the findings of this study for theoretical, comparative, and empirical literature?

1.5 Significance of the Time Frame of the Study: 2009-2020

Historically, the Fourth Republican Constitution has had the longest existing parliamentary experience in Ghana. From 1993 to January 6, 2020, there have been seven different parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. With a four-year span, the First and the Second parliaments (7th January 1993- 6th January 1997; and 7th January 1997-6th January 2001), and the Third and Fourth parliaments (7th January 2001-6th January 2005; and 7th January 2005- 6th January 2009) existed and operated in the governments of President J.J. Rawlings and President J.A. Kufuor, respectively. The scenarios are different of the three parliaments from 2009 to 2020. The period from 2009 to 2020 was the period of the existence of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh parliaments of Ghana of the Fourth Republic. While the Fifth and Sixth parliaments existed under the government of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the seventh was under the government of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). From the viewpoint of the presidency and executive power of the government within which the three parliaments operated, they are different. Though they existed in the governments of the NDC, the Fifth and Sixth parliaments were different as they operated in the governments of President Atta Mills and President John Dramani Mahama, respectively. On the other hand, the Seventh Parliament existed and operated in the government of the NPP under President Nana Akufo-Addo. These different historical milieus of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh

parliaments of the Fourth Republic are significant because for the first time in the history of Ghana's parliamentary experience in the Fourth Republic three different parliaments under three different governments and presidents operated continuously without an intervening period.

Despite the nuanced picture of the parliamentary phenomenon in Ghana from 2009 to 2020, little scholarly attention has been given to assess the committee system of the three parliaments of this period based on a set of criteria, their similarities and differences. Assessing the committee system is important as it will contribute to the literature on how the committee system has either facilitated or undermined the business of Parliament in the realization of its mandates.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is significant on three grounds. First, it contributes to the empirical literature by building a corpus of knowledge on the performance of the committee system of Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020, which will serve as a reference point for future scholarly works. Second, it complements the comparative literature in its effort in comparing the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh parliaments with emphasis on their contribution to the execution of parliament's legislative, deliberative, oversight and financial functions. Third, the study extends both the theoretical and policy literature in the use of the institutional theory to assess the committee system of Parliament and recommendations made, respectively.

1.7 Definition of terms

Assessment: The term "assessment" is used in this study to mean evaluation, appraisal and examination of issues to establish results, situations and effects in order to make a judgement.

Committee System: This study uses the term “committee system” to mean the practice of breaking or grouping the members of parliament into committees to execute specific task or tasks in fulfillment of or in relation to Parliament’s legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative functions.

Effectiveness: The term “effectiveness” is used in this study to mean the degree or extent to which the committees of parliament were successful in discharging their duties and functions to produce the desired results, impact or success.

Parliament: This study adopts Beetham’s (2006) definition of parliament. It uses parliament to mean “the central institution through which the will of the people is expressed, laws are passed and government is held to account” (Beetham, 2006: ix).

Fourth Republic of Ghana: This refers to the democratic rule in modern Ghana since the promulgation of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana.

Fifth Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana: It refers to the Parliament that was in session in the Republic of Ghana from 7th January 2009 to 6th January 2013.

Sixth Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana: It refers to the Parliament that was in session in the Republic of Ghana from 7th January 2013 to 6th January 2017.

Seventh Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana: It refers to the Parliament that was in session in the Republic of Ghana from 7th January 2017 to 6th January 2021.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into seven chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction provides a background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review reviews existing literature on parliamentary system, the committee system and politics in Ghana. The chapter is divided into the following thematic areas: (i) General Studies on the Legislature; (ii) African Studies on the Legislature; (iii) Ghanaian Studies on Parliament; (iv) General Studies on the Committee System of the Legislature; (v) African Studies on the Committee System of the Legislature; (vi) Ghanaian Studies on the Committee System of Parliament; (vii) Studies on Organisational Performance; and (viii) Studies on Politics in Ghana.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework is based on the institutional theory (both Classical and Neo-Institutional Theories) with its assumptions, features, merits and demerits. The deployment of the theory to the study will also be discussed.

Chapter Four: Research Design and Methodology explains the instruments that was used for the study. It also delineates the population size, sampling method and all other tools that will be used in data collection and synthesis.

Chapter Five: Data Analysis analyzes and interprets fieldwork data laced with textual data, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Chapter Six: Research Findings and Discussions makes a thorough discussion of the findings of the study and provides a juxtaposition of the findings to arguments in the existing literature.

Chapter Seven: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations summarizes the findings of the study and their implications for the theoretical, comparative and empirical literature. It also

provides policy relevant recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness of the committee system in particular and Parliament in general.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on the legislature, institutional evaluation and Ghanaian politics. The literature review is divided into eight thematic sub-headings – global studies on the legislature; studies on the legislature in Africa; studies on the legislature in Ghana; general studies on the parliamentary committee system; studies on the parliamentary committee system in Africa; studies on the parliamentary committee system in Ghana; studies on organisation performance; and studies on politics in Ghana.

2.1 Global Studies on the Legislature

Treatises on parliament, assemblies or the legislature are diverse and multifaceted. It is difficult, if not impossible, to discuss all these treatises in a single study. For the sake of convenience, scholars have tended to discuss them based on thematic categorisations and their relations to a particular study. This study adopts this approach by reviewing segments of the literature on the legislature that are tangential and focused on its performance.

Scholarship on the legislature – its historicity, nature, functions and diversities across democracies – is diverse. This study does not seek to rehash these existing works. Suffice it, however, to say that, as political institutions, “parliaments are diverse collections of individuals with a variety of interests who coalesce around issues as they arise” (Power, 2011: 9). The institutional figures of parliament, their roles and sources of their authority are key factors that provide “a perspective not only on the causes of parliamentary underperformance, but also the prospects for realistic reform” (Power, 2011: 9).

One of the thematic areas of the literature on parliament, assemblies or the legislature focuses on its evolution. Scholarship on the evolution of parliament provides its historicity, indicating its development in scope, structure and functions. Burns and Kamali (2002) traced the evolution of parliaments globally, and argued that there was a “causal heterogeneity in the development of parliaments” (p. 18). The crux of their argument is that diversities exist in the development of modern parliaments and that there are parallels between Western and non-Western developments.

In emerging democracies, parliaments “are frequently ineffective against a powerful executive, and have little public legitimacy and authority” (Power, 2011: 11). According to Power (2011: 11), “the causes for such weaknesses are many and varied, frequently relating to the historical legacy of a particular country and the transition to democracy, as well as the political context in which the parliament operates. But it may also reflect more prosaic factors such as a lack of resources, poor organisation or limited formal power.”

Parliaments perform a number of functions. One of the functions of parliament is oversight responsibility. Friedberg and Hazan (2012) have examined legislative oversight responsibility and argued that parliamentary oversight of the executive can be strong or weak. Premising their argument on the thesis that one of the most important roles of any legislature is to oversee the executive, Friedberg and Hazan (2012: 5) argued that:

parliamentary oversight in its “strongest” sense is by definition *political* oversight; it is built into the parliamentary system and is inseparable from it. The significance of this is that the government emerges from within the legislative body, needs its confidence in order to stay in office, and can fall in a vote of no-confidence should a majority in parliament withdraw its support. “Weak” parliamentary oversight is by definition *administrative* oversight, and it includes all those regular and never-ending actions of investigation, examination, questioning and calls to account from the executive branch through varied parliamentary tools: committees, parliamentary questions, correspondence with ministers and debates.

Friedberg and Hazan (2012) hold the view that legislative oversight has diminished and that this phenomenon has attracted attention in scholarship. This phenomenon is attributed to the failure to gain significant capital from supervision of the executive, and the little time legislatures have to oversee other tasks that bring them political capital (Friedberg and Hazan, 2012). According to Friedberg and Hazan, (2012: 6)

... the most common explanation in the literature for *diminished* legislative oversight is that the legislators do not gain significant political capital from supervision of the executive, and they might even embarrass themselves or their party. This should be coupled with the explanation that legislators have many tasks that do bring political capital, and thus are left with little time to oversee the executive.

Rosen (1982, as cited in Friedberg and Hazan, 2012) has delved into the oversight responsibility of parliament and argued that most do not attach utmost importance to the oversight over the executive in legislation. Similarly, it is proven that legislators relegate oversight responsibility to the background because they hardly regard oversight as a pressing matter (Ogul, 1976, as cited in Friedberg and Hazan, 2011). This may be due to the fact that legislative oversight does not have a significant impact on the chances of the re-election of legislators (Mezey, 1979, as cited in Friedberg and Hazan, 2011). There is also the possibility that politicians or legislators score negligible political points from monitoring government, a situation that makes the oversight of the executive unworthy to legislators and politicians in general (Gray and Jenkins, 1990, as cited in Friedberg and Hazan, 2011).

The main arena where parliament exercises its oversight role is in committees (Friedberg and Hazan, 2011; Hazan, 2001; Lees and Shaw, 1979; Mattson and Strøm 1995). As Friedberg and Hazan have pointed out (2011: 11), “it is in the committees, rather than in the plenary, where more

efficient and serious work is possible, where a type of “political trading” takes place – cross-party cooperation and the exchange of information.”

The literature is replete with discourses on parliament in the context of democratic accountability. However, most of these discourses have focused largely on the legislative oversight of parliament in ensuring democratic accountability (Lindberg, 2009; Stapenhurst, Jacobs and Olaore, 2016, Barkan, 2009). The general conclusions are that parliament’s exercise of its oversight responsibility has been poor due to executive dominance; that parliament has failed to live up to expectation on critical laws that curb executive excesses; and that parliament is efficient in law-making but poor in representation. These conclusions about the laxity of parliament’s exercise of its oversight responsibility over the executive provide a basis for this study to interrogate the exercise of the oversight responsibility of Ghana’s parliament to determine its successes or failure. Furthermore, it provides the parameters for this study to measure the exercise of the oversight responsibility of the committees of Ghana’s parliament from 2009 to 2020 to ascertain the effectiveness or otherwise of its oversight responsibility.

There is a corpus of literature that establishes a correlation between public trust and the performance of parliament. The overriding argument gleaned from these narratives suggests that public trust of parliament is a function of the performance of parliament; that there is the need for strong and overwhelming support for the legislature to succeed in its work; and that public support is critical to the success of parliament’s work (Braithwaite, and Levi, 2003; Patterson et al, 1975; Kim et al, 1984; Hetherington, 1998). Patterson et al (1975: 40) have noted the importance of public support for parliament in relation to the success of its work:

Legislatures require support to persist, to deal effectively with public and organized groups’ demands, and to make necessary political decisions ... [and that] since legislatures, more than most public and private groups and more than the

bureaucratic or judicial branches of the government, are representative political institutions, the generation of public support is an important prerequisite for successful decision making in public policy.

Darfour (2016) has examined the determinants of the declining trust of the legislature, and argued that the decline in legislative trust could be situated in the context of historical, organisational, cultural and institutional performance dimensions, as well as institutional constraints that have created expectations gaps in what the public expects from the legislature and what the legislature can offer” (Darfour, 2016: x). Even though Darfour’s (2016) work does not extend to the parliamentary committee system, it provides cues for this study to interrogate the parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020 to assess its performance and the public trust derived from its performance over the period.

Evaluative works on the performance of parliaments across democracies have been made to appraise the quality of works of parliament, though the task is not an easy one (Arter, 2006). As Arter pointed out, “in seeking to define and measure the strengths and weaknesses of legislatures – and gauge their ‘policy power’ – at least two criteria are discernible in the literature. First, there is the degree of legislative efficiency often referred to as “collective efficiency” and on this basis a strong legislature would be one that is able to act efficiently and decisively to make informed policy decisions (Arter, 2006). Second, there is the extent of legislative autonomy – or, in Joel Barkan’s words, the extent to which ‘the legislature is an institution of countervailing power’” (Arter, 2006: 248). This study seeks to build on the existing literature by examining the collective efficiency of Ghana’s parliament through the committee system to determine the extent to which the decisions of the committees of parliament contributed in shaping informed policies in Ghana. The study also seeks to complement the existing literature on the quality of work of parliament by

subjecting the decisions of the committees of Ghana's Parliament from 2009 to 2020 to critical review to determine the quality of the decisions in relation to government policies, accountability, and the common good and interest of Ghana.

Some scholars have focused on gender relations in legislatures. One of the overarching arguments is that female legislators are more likely to sponsor bills on women issues than their male counterparts (Barnello and Bratton 2007; Boles 2001; Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Burrell 1994). Others have also focused on the gender differences in leadership styles of Members of Parliament (Jewell and Whicker 1994), constituency service (Richardson and Freeman 1995; Thomas 1992) and communication patterns in hearings (Kathlene, 1994). This perspective provides benchmarks for this study to evaluate the contributions of Members of Ghana's Parliament to determine the extent to which gender plays a role in the contributions of committee members, especially in matters about gender.

There is also appreciable scholarship on parliamentary rules (Dion and Huber 1996), parties (Cox and McCubbins, 2005), coalition leaders (Groseclose and Snyder 1996), and other institutional features of legislative structures and practices. Another theme that has attracted attention in the general studies on the legislature is the intricate relationship between the legislature and the executive. Balutis (1974: 54) stressed the need to facilitate relationship-building between the legislature and the executive to promote the smooth execution of their functions, rather than focusing on formal processes. The prevailing discourse on the relationship between the executive and the legislature provides parameters within which to examine the relationship between the Parliament of Ghana and the executive from 2009 to 2020. This study builds on the discourse on the executive-legislature relationship as it seeks to subject the relationship of the legislature and

the executive arms of government in Ghana from 2009 to 2020 to determine the cordiality or otherwise of the relationship and its effects.

2.2 Studies on the Legislature in Africa

Over the years, studies on politics in sub-Saharan Africa have concentrated on the executive arm of government and political parties than the role of parliament or the legislature (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013). This was probably due to the fact that “the executive branch was for many decades omnipotent in the majority of sub-Saharan African polities” (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013: 2). Though many countries in sub-Saharan Africa were bequeathed with colonially-inherited parliaments of some sort, the “legislatures until recently were secondary actors in the national political dramas” (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013: 2). Of the three arms of government – the executive, the legislature and the judiciary – the legislature has a weak history in Africa. Since the era of decolonization in Africa in the 1960s, military regimes had dominated the political landscape in Africa and thereby eliminated the legislature in the governance architecture. Given the longevity of military regimes in postcolonial Africa, democracy on the continent prior to the 21st century was not only generally weak, but also the legislature suffered from institutional growth (Barkan, 2008). As Rotberg and Salahub (2013: 2-3) appropriately put it, “since for so long in Africa democracy was weak, confined for many years mostly to Botswana and Mauritius, legislators elsewhere were often seen as lackeys and well-paid spongers rather than as functioning members of a dynamic, egalitarian, appropriately separated, adequately resourced, political institution.”

The last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century saw the flourishing of democracy in Africa following the end of the Cold War. The institutionalisation of democracy in Africa since the late 1990s made the legislature “more relevant to any careful analyses of African

politics” (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013: 3). Since then, there has been a major change in the political salience of the legislature in Africa with lots of institutional reforms that have strengthened the legislature and improved the work of legislatures. Notwithstanding this marked change of the relevance of the legislature in the governance architecture in Africa in the 21st century, the institution is still undergoing improvements, albeit slowly. Indeed, globally, “the past few years have witnessed numerous efforts across many parliaments to engage more effectively with the public and to improve the way they work: to become more genuinely representative of their electorates, more accessible and accountable to them, more open and transparent in their procedures, and more effective in their key tasks of legislation and oversight of government” (Beetham, 2006: 2).

Scholars have documented the “third wave” of democracies in Africa after the end of the Cold War in the 1990s (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013; Barkan, 2009; Manning 2005; Lindberg 2006). Scholarship on legislatures in Africa since the 1990s has drawn attention to the transformation of parliaments in Africa. Prempeh (2008) portended that the reintroduction of democracy in Africa rather strengthened the presidents to the detriment of parliaments as presidents could make major policy decisions outside parliamentary legislation. There is also the argument of presidential supremacy over the legislature (parliament) as the hybrid system in Anglophone Africa makes it possible for the president or the executive arm of government to dominate and subordinate parliament through ministerial appointments from parliament (Prempeh, 2008; Lindberg and Zhou, 2009; Burnell, 2003; Lindberg and Zhou, 2009).

Reference has also been made to the concentration of power, indeed, excessive power, in the hands of the executive, which makes it difficult for parliament to check executive power and serve as a

counterweight to it (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). Some scholars, however, think that the re-introduction of democracy in Africa since the twilight of the 20th century has made tremendous impact on the transformation of parliament in most jurisdictions on the continent. Barkan (2009), for example, argued that parliaments or legislatures in Africa in recent years are fast becoming powerful and autonomous in the political theatre. Some African parliaments have played crucial roles in the appointments of ministers, fighting executive corruption, and checking executive excesses (Barkan and Matiangi, 2009; Tangri and Mwenda, 2006). In Nigeria, for example, the Senate has shown that it has transformed and matured over the years by strongly rejecting the third bid of President Obasanjo of Nigeria (Lewis, 2009).

The issue of the growth of legislatures in Africa into autonomous and power branch of government has received attention in discourses on the legislature on the continent. Though the literature acknowledges the growth of African legislatures over the years, the issue of their autonomy and power remains a problematic one. Barkan (2009) gave a historical account of democracies in Africa and delineated the “third wave” of democracies on the continent after the end of the Cold War in the 1990s. Measuring African legislatures “in terms of raw power”, Barkan (2009: 2) noted that “most African legislatures, like legislatures worldwide, remain weak in relation to the executive.” Despite the long experience of African governments in democratic practices since the demise of colonialism, legislatures in Africa still lack the “capacity to foster horizontal and vertical accountability. A small number, probably no more than a dozen, have become real players in the policymaking process and thus institutions of countervailing power vis-à-vis the executive” (Barkan, 2009: 2). Generally, most legislatures in Africa remain weak “despite the return to multiparty politics, the holding of presidential and legislative elections at regular intervals, and even the alternation of power between rival political parties (Barkan, 2009: 2). The situation is not

entirely bleak; in few instances, “the legislature has asserted itself more forcefully, both as a check on the executive branch and as a contributor to the policymaking process and/or as a monitor of policy implementation” (Barkan, 2009: 2).

African legislatures are seen as rubber stamps. The legislatures in Africa find it difficult to serve as a counterweight to executive power (Barkan, 2009; Alabi, 2009). In Nigeria, for example, the National Assembly has been described variously as an “‘irrelevant talking shop’, the weakest link in the making of public policy’, ‘an unnecessary luggage that has to be grudgingly carried along’” (Alabi, 2009: 239). The view that there is an institutional dwarfing of the legislature in Africa relative to other arms of government has been given as the reason for the failure of the legislature in Africa to serve as a counterweight to executive power (Babatope, 2001; Alabi, 2009). Some of the reasons for the dwarfing of the legislature in Africa include scarcity of resources and “lack of financial autonomy of the legislature, weak career service in the legislature, and moral crisis of public administration” (Alabi, 2009; 239). In the light of the inability of the legislature to serve as a counterweight to executive power, Salih (2005: 12) has tended to describe legislatures in Africa since decolonisation as “muted at best and oppressive at worst.” This study contributes to the existing arguments about parliaments in Africa. It seeks to subject the parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020 to critical analysis to determine the extent to which it was effective. Utilising the perspectives of earlier scholars on parliaments in Africa, this study assesses the Parliament of Ghana to determine its autonomy, capacity, ability to serve as a counterweight to the executive and the conduct of its duties in line with its powers and mandate to paint a picture of the effectiveness of Ghana’s Parliament from 2009 to 2020.

2.3 Studies on the Legislature in Ghana

Ayensu and Darkwa (2006) have discussed the evolution of parliament in Ghana. Tracing it from the colonial era, Ayensu and Darkwa provided the genesis of Ghana's parliament, indicating its dynamics and tortuous journey that shaped and reshaped it. Though largely narrative, their work gives glimpses into how parliamentary activities are conducted and the extent to which political ambiances of members affect the work of parliament. Their work is useful to this study as it provides it the political context within which to assess and analyze the work of parliament from 2009 to 2020.

Lindberg (2008) provided an analysis of the legislative and oversight functions of Ghana's parliament between 1993 and 2008, and argued that these functions were strengthened during its first two terms under the National Democratic Congress (NDC) but declined when the New Patriotic Party (NPP) won the majority in the House of Parliament and presidency from 2001 to 2008. Lindberg's account does not cover the period of study of this research, but it provides cues for this study to measure the extent to which changes in the patterns of the compositions or complexities of the membership of the Parliament of Ghana along political lines and changes in government affect its legislative and oversight functions.

There is an appreciable number of monographs on the work of parliament. In the monograph, *Legislative Performance in Ghana: An Assessment of the Third Parliament of the Fourth Republic, 2001-2005*, Agyeman-Duah (2005: 2) assessed the Third Parliament of the Fourth Republic. He argues that the Parliament of Ghana has "made significant strides in asserting its authority over non-budgeted related bills, though it was unable to have a substantial impact on the budget process." In another scenario, Ninsin (2009) assessed the decision-making processes in Ghana's

Parliament. He examined the framework within which parliament operates and argues that decision-making in Ghana's Parliament is dictated by the provisions of the Constitution and Standing Orders of Parliament. Similarly, Warren (2005) discussed the legislative performance of the Third Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, 2001-2005. His overarching argument is that:

Overall, Ghana's Parliament has demonstrated improved performance in committee activity and bills amendments and been open to civic input on non-budget related bills. However, Parliament has continued to grapple with issues of independent research, record keeping, and budget oversight. Despite these challenges, these areas have seen some improvement during the Third Parliament (Warren, 2005: 4).

Ghana's parliament has received an avalanche of criticisms from the public over the years for poor performance. Assessing parliament within the purview of the interplay between public trust and the legislature, Oquaye (2014), Aboagye (2010), Dapaah (2015), Bokor (2015), among others, have described it as useless, a rubber-stamp, and used various derogatory epithets and political nomenclatures in their descriptions that painted a picture that the performance of Ghana's parliament has been largely abysmal. In general, these assessments constructed a nuanced but negative perspective of the performance of Ghana's parliament. The assessments do not, however, cover the entire span of the period of study; they are limited to some periods. Nonetheless, they are significant to this study. They provide the scaffold by which this study can construct a critical assessment of the work of Ghana's parliament from 2009 to 2020.

There is also apparent executive influence over the parliaments of the Fourth Republic, a situation which does not auger well for non-partisan decision-making. According to Ninsin (2008) and Lindberg (2008), executive dominance over the legislature in the Fourth Republic is ubiquitous and pronounced. It appears that the parliaments of the Fourth Republic fail to discharge their duties

diligently. As Armah (2017) has pointed out, the Seventh Parliament of the Fourth appeared to be hypocritical. In his own words, “it smacks of hypocrisy for a House of 275 honorable members who debate on prioritizing science and technology over the arts, to peruse printed parliamentary documents (Votes and Proceedings and Order Papers) during proceedings. This is an avoidable expense as Parliament has installed electronic devices to facilitate proceedings in the House.”

The autonomy of the parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana has been questioned. In paragraph 3 of its report in Chapter Five (The Legislature), the Constitution Review Commission lamented the non-autonomy of the parliaments of the Fourth Republic when it said:

... Parliament has in practice not developed into that autonomous, independent and vital institution capable of asserting its authority and discharging its constitutional functions. Its oversight function, for example, has been asserted only in very minimal terms” (Constitution Review Commission, 2011: 136).

The apparent weakness of Ghana’s Parliament has received attention in scholarship. Scholars have attributed the apparent weakness of the Parliament of Ghana to the hybrid system of democracy being practiced in Ghana (Amoateng, 2012; Ninsin, 2008; Sakyi, 2010). Ninsin (2008) portended that the fusion of the Executive and the legislature of Ghana has impacted negatively on Ghana’s Parliament in a number of ways – it reduced the independence of parliament, stifled the growth of parliament and provided avenues and pathways for excessive executive influence over parliament. Similarly, Lindberg and Zhou (2009) argued that the hybridity element of Ghana’s democracy makes it possible for the executive to exert control over parliament. Prempeh (2008) and Lindberg and Zhou (2009) also argued that the hybridity of Ghana’s democracy in the Fourth Republic does not only weaken its democracy, but also accounts for the continued presidential supremacy over parliament. Gyampo and Graham (2014: 145) discuss the hybridity of Ghana’s Constitution and

argue that “the hybrid constitution contains provisions that flout the principle of constitutionalism.” In addition, “the hybrid constitution gives extensive executive powers to the president in a manner that makes the office very powerful” (Gyampo and Graham, 2014: 145). In the view of Gyampo and Graham (2014: 146), the hybrid arrangement requires the president to appoint majority of his ministers from parliament “weakens the oversight role of parliament and leaves the executive unfettered in the sense that parliamentarians who are also ministers cannot question colleague ministers on the floor of parliament as required because they serve in the same government.” In the light of the executive influence over parliament, one of Ghana’s “core institutions of democracy, the parliament in Ghana, does not seem to flourish in the same way as democracy in general” (Lindberg and Zhou, 2009:148). It is for this reason that Odekro (2016: 68) contended that “the Parliament of Ghana is arguably the weakest of the three arms of our democratic governance infrastructure.”

Despite the apparent executive influence over parliament, “the Parliament of Ghana is generally perceived to be performing its oversight functions well, even under severe resource and constitutional restraints” (Stapenhurst and Alandu, n.d.: 22). Hence, the Parliament of Ghana over the years “has witnessed gradual, although sometimes halting, improvement in effectively carrying out its oversight responsibilities” (Stapenhurst and Alandu, n.d.: 22). Lindberg and Zhou (2009) have argued that though Ghana has a more vibrant democratic setting with increased competition, these democratic elements have rather undermined Ghana’s legislature. Lindberg and Zhou (2009: 153) further observed that since 2000, “fewer bills have been substantially altered, and debates both in the chamber and in the committees have been more muted” in the Parliament of Ghana.

Though the above studies did not focus on the committee system of Ghana's Parliament, they provide perspectives to assess the Parliament of Ghana in general from 2009 to 2020. By focusing on the effectiveness of the committee system of Ghana's Parliament from 2009 to 2020, this study contributes to the discourse on Ghana's Parliament from a different dimension. It shifts the attention from the traditional approach to the study of the parliament of Ghana by focusing on the work of parliament through the committee system in relation to constitutional provisions, resources at the disposal of parliament, executive influence and party rivalry.

2.4 General Studies on Parliamentary Committee System

A parliamentary committee can be defined as “a group of members of Parliament appointed by the house in which they sit (or both houses in the case of joint committees) to undertake detailed work on its behalf and report back to the house on completion of investigations (Parliament of Western Australia, *About Parliamentary Committees – Sheet 19*: 36). All over the world, the business on the floor of parliament is largely conducted by committees. As Gaines et al. (2019: 331) rightly put it, “virtually all legislating assemblies of any considerable size employ committees of some kind that specialise topically and to which some significant tasks are delegated. Core roles include policy formulation, deliberation, and oversight activities.” In the view of Strøm (1998), parliamentary committees are one of the most significant features of the legislature of democracies in contemporary times. Martin and Depauw (2009) argued that “under parliamentarism, strong committees can emerge as a structural solution to the need of each party in coalition government to monitor the behaviour and actions of ministers from other parties within the coalition” (Martin and Depauw, 2009: i). In the words of Burrows and Joseph (1990: 306), in their description of the Select Committees in New Zealand, parliamentary committees are and remain “a crucial bastion of democracy in our legislative process”.

The number of Select or Standing Committees of Parliament varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In the USA, for example:

Congress divides its legislative, oversight, and internal administrative tasks among more than 200 committees and subcommittees. Within assigned areas, these functional subunits gather information; compare and evaluate legislative alternatives; identify policy problems and propose solutions; select, determine, and report measures for full chamber consideration; monitor executive branch performance (oversight); and investigate allegations of wrongdoing (Heitshusen, 2017: 1).

In the UK, “as of the end of the 2015-17 Parliament, there were nineteen departmental (*sic*) select committees. These include committees scrutinising the work of the Scotland Office, Wales Office and Northern Ireland Office. In addition to these, there are now also committees that consider issues across a number of government departments: Environmental Audit, European Scrutiny, Liaison, Public Accounts, Public Administration, and an array of Joint Committees” (Atkinson, 2017: 22). Indeed, the Select Committees are a well-established part of the UK’s constitutional landscape. They are recognised for playing a key role in our parliamentary system: scrutinising government departments; influencing government work and decision-making; and, increasingly, serving as forums for public debate (Atkinson, 2017: 6).

One of the earliest studies on the committee system of parliament was conducted by Jameson (1894). Jameson (1894) studied the origin of the standing committee in American legislative system. Providing its historicity, Jameson (1894) characterized the standing committee in American legislative body into five:

The standing-committee system, in its modern form, involves the following particulars: the institution by a legislative body, (i) as a regular practice, of (2) several committees, (3) composed of its own members and (4) continuing in existence throughout the session, each of which (5) has charge of a specific division of the business of the house in such manner that all matters falling within that division are regularly and usually referred to that committee for preparative

consideration previously to final action upon them by the house (Jameson, 1894: 247).

The basis of the structures and powers bestowed on committees in parliament differ from one jurisdiction to the other. Largely, however, the decision-making and opposition strength on a cross-party basis usually serve as the basis of the nature of the structures and powers bestowed upon committees of parliament (Andeweg and Nijzink, 1995). The utilisation of the committees of parliament to advance interests varies. In Germany, for instance, political parties mainly utilise their share of committee chairs as shadow to a ministerial position by a coalition partner (Kim and Loewenberg 2005). Similarly, shadowing coalition partners have been the overriding basis for the appointment committee chairs by political parties in the Lithuanian Parliament (Clark and Jurgelevilt, 2008).

There is a burgeoning literature on the roles and activities of parliamentary committees. Different theories have been used by scholars to explain their compositions, significance and functions. Utilising the information theory, some scholars, including Krehbiel (1991, 1992, 1993 & 2004) and Gilligan and Krehbiel (1990), have argued that the significance of the committee system lies in the fact that the committees serve as avenues for collection and tapping of individual expertise. Yet, other scholars (including Weingast and Marshall, 1988; Shepsle, 1978; and Shepsle and Weingast, 1981) have used the distributive theory to explain the segregation of parliament into committees for decision-making and its associated outcomes. Other scholars such as Sinclair (2007), Aldrich and Rohde (2000), Cox and McCubbins (1993) and Rohde (1991) have also examined the committee system of parliament from the perspective of a partisan theory, highlighting the impact of the committee system on both intra- and inter-party conflict. Some scholars have also tended to examine and classify parliamentary committees in terms of functions,

composition, power, and the dichotomy-comparative basis of the various democratic systems (Martin, 2011; Martin & Vanberg, 2011, 2005, 2004; Strøm, 1998; Mattson & Strøm, 1995).

One prevailing argument is that, though parliamentary committees are important and have the potential to play crucial roles, they have the tendency of reflecting the political inclinations and aspirations of the respective political parties of the members (Mulgan, 1994). According to Mulgan (1994, 77), partisan clashes become a dominant feature when important political issues arise at committee engagements. Contributing to the importance of committees, Gaines et al. (2019: 331) have noted that:

Committees are ubiquitous, so they must be important. But how important?
And, when, where, and why do they shape policy outcomes substantially?
The answers to those questions are not easily found.

Gaines et al. (2019: 332) argued that the parliamentary committee system is significant because it promotes deliberations, debates, cooperation and provides avenues for solution of problems. This is because the practice of parliamentary “committees promote better deliberation, cooperation, and debate, by solving generic problems of scale. The partitioning of policy into distinct spheres could help to solve collective action problems, by organising a legislative division of labour and making the complex policy world easier to manage” (Gaines et al., 2019: 332). This, notwithstanding, Gaines et al. (2019) have noted the negative impact of the parliamentary committee system. According to them, parliamentary “committees tend to be microcosms of the whole, and/or if their decisions are normally subject to approval from the whole body, they might not exert much, if any, discernible influence on policy outcomes” (Gaines et al., 2019: 332). Though the arguments about the significance of the committee system of parliament are based on the committee system of parliament in developed countries, they are significant to this study. They provide benchmarks for

this study to assess the significance of the committee system of Ghana's Parliament to policy making, democracy and government.

The committee system and its effectiveness have featured prominently in recent discourses on parliament. Various variables have been used to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of committees of parliament (Lynch, 2017). As Lynch (2017) clearly put it, "asserting what is 'effective' depends not only on the precise functions of parliamentary committees but also on the perspective one takes on how they operate" (Lynch, 2017: 61). Lynch (2017: 62) categorized the variables that affect and shape the effectiveness and efficiency of parliamentary committees into four – the formal powers of the committees, the rival political spirit that animates the work of the committees, parliamentary procedures that affect the work of committees, and the structure and format of committees. In the words of Lynch (2017: 62):

the capacity of parliament's committees to operate independently of government, at least sometimes in a cross-party or non-party manner, is determined by variables which can be categorised into four headings: the formal powers assigned to committees; the external context in which the parliamentary committees operate, which is shaped by parliamentary tradition and history, executive –legislative relations and the party system; parliamentary procedures (as outlined in Standing Orders) affecting the committee's work and its interaction with the plenary and the government; and the structure and format of committees (including size, resources and number of committees).

This study complements the literature on the effectiveness of committee system of parliament. It seeks to assess the work of the committee system of parliament to determine the extent to which it was effective or not. Though the variables that shape the work of parliamentary committees are varied, they are significant to this study as they provide the basis to examine and measure the effectiveness of the committee system of Ghana's Parliament.

Generally, there are two dominant perspectives on the effectiveness of the parliamentary committee system in the literature – the Universalist and Partisan approaches. The first approach – the Universalist approach – assesses parliamentary committees within the framework of the work of parliament. In other words, this approach holds that the committees work for parliament and in the interest of its functions (Cox and McCubbins, 1993, 2004; Rohde, 1991). As bodies that work for parliament and in the utmost interests of the functions of parliament, the committees either serve as forums for negotiations among members with different goals, interests and political inclinations, or as avenues for the mobilisation of expertise and information to enhance policy formulation (Lynch, 2017: 61).

Lynch (2017: 61) contended that parliamentary committees in the US serve as avenues for negotiations “as parties are relatively weak and committees are the arena where bargaining over different legislative proposals takes place.” It should, however, be pointed out that negotiations at committee levels do not only happen when parties are relatively weak; it occurs in parliamentary democracies where parties are stronger (Mattson & Strom, 2004). As Lynch (2017: 61) aptly put it, “in parliamentary democracies, while a certain amount of bargaining over policy may take place in committees, parties are stronger and even powerful committees may be best viewed as forums that enhance parliament’s informational capacity.” In effect, the parliamentary committee system brings together and coordinates pertinent ideas relevant to an issue (Wang, 2005). Parliamentary committees draw expert ideas from members and provide a forum for the coordination and synthesis of the ideas for policy formulation (Njoroge, 2010). In the words of Njoroge (2010: 5):

Committees are a way to formally draw together people of relevant expertise from different parts of an organization that otherwise would not have a good way to share information and coordinate actions. They may have the advantage of widening viewpoints and sharing out responsibilities. They can also be empanelled with experts to recommend actions by the

appointing authority in matters that require specialized knowledge or technical judgment.

Sartori (1978) underscored the significance of the committee system of parliament, and argues that the parliamentary committee systems “shun majority rule, seek unanimous agreements via internal deferred payments, and adjust to the outer world, or incorporate its demands, via side payments” (Sartori, 1987, 236).

This study seeks to build on the existing arguments about the interactions within the committee structures by focusing on the Parliament of Ghana. It subjects the interactions within the committee systems by committee members and political parties to determine the extent to which they ensure consensus building, scrutinise bills collectively in the interest of the country, and promote the work of the Parliament of Ghana.

The partisan approach emphasized that the parliamentary committee system is a microcosm of the bigger picture of the party rivalry on the floor of parliament (Cox and McCubbins, 1993, 2004). In other words, the committees of parliament are nothing but an extension of the inter-party rivalries that inundate the proceedings of parliament (Cox and McCubbins, 1993, 2004; Rohde, 1991). The thrust of the partisan approach is that the committees reflect the position of the majority political party in parliament, and that since the majority members on committees are remotely controlled by their political parties and leaders, the committees are simply tools in the hands of the majority political parties and leaders (Cox and McCubbins, 1993, 2004; Mattson and Strom, 2004; Rohde, 1991). Some scholars have pointed out that the work of committees is usually shaped by decision-making and opposition strength on a cross-party basis (Andeweg and Nijzink 1995). Yet, other scholars have shown the extent to which the committee system could be appropriated by

political parties to advance the interest of their parties, particularly, the opposition parties (Kim and Loewenberg 2005). The argument about the committee systems of parliament being extensions of inter-party rivalries provides a context within which to assess the committee system of Ghana's Parliament to determine the nature of the interactions – whether they promote consensus building or provide fecundities for political rivalries.

Scholarship on parliamentary affairs has also provided another perspective for the evaluation of the committee system of parliament. By and large, the scholarship constructed the rationale for the composition of committees of parliament, hinging the rationale on local exigencies, purpose, significance and functions of parliamentary committees (Krehbiel, 1992; Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1987, 1990; Krehbiel, 1992; Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1987, 1990; Weingast and Marshall, 1988; Shepsle, 1978, 1979; and Shepsle and Weingast, 1981, 1987). Viewed from the perspective of information theory, some parliamentary scholars posit that the committees of parliament are significant in so far as they serve as an information-gathering avenue (Krehbiel, 1992; Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1987, 1990). Put differently, the parliamentary committees provide the opportunity for parliament to gather quality information from members on specific issues. In this case, members selected to serve on the committees are deemed to be repositories of knowledge or knowledgeable in areas that are tangential to the task of the committees (Weingast and Marshall, 1988; Shepsle, 1978, 1979; and Shepsle and Weingast, 1981, 1987). This study builds on the general argument about the committee system providing an opportunity for parliament to gather quality information from members on specific issues. It seeks to assess the extent to which the committee system of Ghana's Parliament serves as avenues for parliament to tap the competencies of members to advance its functions and roles.

There is a moot point and disequilibrium among scholars over a comparative study of committee systems in democracies across the globe. Whereas some scholars contend that a comparative study of parliamentary committees across democracies is possible and appropriate, others think that local exigencies and differences in democracy make a comparative study of committees across democracies practically a lame exercise, though it is possible within the same democracies and democratic dispensations in the same jurisdiction (Martin, 2011; Martin and Vanberg, 2011, 2005, 2004; Strøm, 1998; Mattson and Strøm, 1995). Arter (2006: 245) argued that a comparative study is possible. According to him, “strong committees, for example, do not in themselves betoken a strong, policy-making legislature. The starting point of this special issue is the need for systematic output analysis in comparative legislative research and, accordingly ... devise a series of indicators with which to make at least a rudimentary cross-national assessment of legislative performance” (Arter, 2006: 245). This study departs from the comparative study of the committee system of parliaments; it focuses on the committee system of the parliament of Ghana to dissect its effectiveness. Though its conclusions can be utilized for comparative analysis in future researches, it focuses solely on the committee system of the parliament of Ghana and studies it within its local exigencies or within the Ghanaian context.

Under the auspices of the Westminster Foundation for Democratization, Power (2011) examined the politics of parliamentary strengthening to understand the political incentives and institutional behaviour in parliamentary support strategies. His account of the committee system of parliament shows that the system is uneven and inconsistent in most parliaments. In his own words, “in most parliaments, committee performance is uneven and inconsistent, with some committees performing far better than others. It is a truism that the effectiveness of a parliamentary committee depends on the quality of its chair. A well-organised and focused chair is likely to run a well-

organised and focused committee, determining which issues to examine and how vigorously to pursue them. Such committees can act as a bulwark in otherwise unimpressive institutions” (Power, 2011: 17).

Derived from parliament’s rules and procedures, parliamentary committees “act on behalf of the parliament, under its authority and according to the responsibilities given to them” (Friedberb and Hazan, 2012: 11). In the view of Lees and Shaw (1979), parliamentary committees perform five major roles: legislation, oversight, inquiry, budgeting, and parliament management. Lees and Shaw (1979) argue that the most important roles of parliamentary committees are decision-making on matters about legislation and oversight. In short, parliamentary committees serve as arenas for specialization. As Gaines et al. (2019: 335) point out, “the key characteristic of committees is that they can serve as arenas where legislators become specialists in a particular area ... Specialisation matters because legislators become knowledgeable and develop expertise useful for the drafting, deliberation, and consensus building around bills. It also provides a continuity that helps in the oversight responsibilities of the committee.” In general, parliamentary committees are significant because they:

facilitate the division of labour, in that more than one committee can meet at a time (except when a house is sitting, unless by leave); provide a more bipartisan forum than the house for addressing issues; provide a more practical forum in which to hear evidence from witnesses; are able to seek advice from experts and travel; and provide an avenue of public communication between the Parliament and the public (Parliament of Western Australia, *About Parliament – Sheet 19*: 36).

It should, however, be pointed out that building the specialisation skills of legislators through the parliamentary committee system is contingent upon the length of the committees (Gaines et al., 2019). Indeed, “a necessary condition for specialisation is the tenure length of committee

members: the longer the tenure on a committee the greater the specialisation in the area” (Gaines et al., 2019: 335).

The strength of parliamentary committees varies. Martin and Depauw (2009: 16) contended that, “historically, committees in the Irish legislature were amongst the weakest of any democratic assembly, being few in number, having no fixed jurisdiction, lacking basic resources, meeting only sporadically and enjoying few if any real powers.” Lees and Shaw (1979) showed that a strong committee system helps the legislature to hold accountable the executive, cabinet ministers, government institutions and civil/public servants. Using the Irish committee system as a case study, Martin and Depauw (2009: 17) argue that:

... committee systems vary in design and importance from legislature to legislature and that, as expected, a significant proportion of this cross-national variation is related to the type of government (single versus multi-party government). As predicted, strong committees tend to exist in multiparty coalition systems while weaker committee systems tend to exist in legislatures than spawn single party governments.

This study builds on the global studies on the committee system. It seeks to measure the strengths and weaknesses of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana. It also examines the committee system of Ghana’s Parliament to determine the impact of its decisions, the atmosphere within which it operated and its contributions to advancing democracy and the functions of the Parliament of Ghana.

2.5 Studies on the Parliamentary Committee System in Africa

Literature on the parliamentary committee system in Africa can be broadly categorised into indirect and direct ones. A considerable number of studies have examined the committee system of parliament in Africa in broader political contexts. Such studies examined parliament and/or its committee system indirectly, situating it within the broader narrative of executive dominance over

the legislature (Eagle, 2012; Prempeh, 2008a, 2008b; Isumonah, 2012; Ronning, 2010; Hyden, 2012). The overarching argument of the executive dominance on the democratic landscape in Africa is that presidents are given unfettered control of the public purse, with a preponderance of power over other state institutions, including the legislature (Eagle, 2012; Prempeh, 2008a, 2008b). There is also the view that the democratic architecture in Africa has created ‘hegemonic presidents’ who wield excessive power over all state institutions (Isumonah, 2012; Ronning, 2010; Hyden, 2012). Despite the fact that the new wave of democratization in Africa in the 1990s has led to the redesigning and engineering of constitutions that put term limits to presidents and also empowered other state institutions such as the legislature, ‘hegemonic presidents continue to wield excessive power through legal means (Isumonah, 2012; Ronning, 2010; Hyden, 2012). Other studies that have indirectly examined the committee system of parliament in Africa focused attention on the behaviours of legislatures. The argument is that ‘sponsors’ of the bills of legislatures directly and indirectly influence their posture in parliament and the committees on which they serve; and that formal and informal structures influence the postures and roles of legislatures in parliament in the exercise of parliament’s oversight function (Acheampong, 2020; Onyango, 2020; Jensen et al., 2020). Despite making indirect reference to the committee system of parliament in Africa, these indirect studies on the committee system of parliament in Africa are significant to this research as they provide clues of executive dominance in the democratic space on the continent.

There is an appreciable number of studies that have directly examined the committee system of parliament in Africa from various perspectives. Critical focus of this category of studies is the execution of the oversight function of parliaments in Africa through the committee system (McGee, 2002; Hambali et al., 2020; Ambasa, 2019). There is a corpus of literature on the narrative on the functionality of the committee system across Africa. In South Africa, for example, it is

known that parliamentary committees are “most powerful mechanisms to ensure that the government is accountable at all times. Ultimately, committees conduct oversight over the executive. In brief, committees scrutinize legislation, oversee government action and interact with the public” (*The Parliamentarian*, 2013: 37). Indeed, the functions of parliamentary committees in Africa are not in doubt. As a result, parliaments in all political jurisdictions in Africa have sought to carry out their duties through the committee system. In the Southern African Development Community (SADC) sub-region, for instance, “many of the SADC region’s national parliaments have set up committee systems to oversee the activities of the Executive and its bureaucrats in the various departments and other agencies of State” (Mataure, 2003: 5). As in other jurisdictions, the parliamentary committees in SADC and other parts of Africa “scrutinize and report on the activities of the State” (Mataure, 2003: 5). There is the hint that parliaments in southern Africa – specifically in South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Namibia – “operate effective committee systems” (Mataure, 2003: 7). Mataure (2003: 8) painted a picture of the functionality of the committee system in Southern Africa, and transformations to the extent that the Committee on Health and Child Welfare went beyond the precincts of parliament to hold “public hearings and seminars on selected topics such as HIV/AIDS”.

The existing literature has given insights into the effectiveness of parliamentary committees in Africa. According to Rotberg and Salahub (2013), a number of factors impact on the effectiveness of the parliamentary committee system in Africa. Rotberg and Salahub (2013) pointed to the financial incapacity of parliamentary committees as one of the key factors that has undermined the effectiveness of parliamentary committees in Africa. In Malawi, for example, it was discovered that, though “key chairpersons and members seek genuinely to fulfill their oversight roles, lack of wherewithal in practice limits the occasions on which committees can summon ministers and other

representatives of the executive to account for their actions” (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013: 7). In other words, competence and willingness are not variables that determine the effectiveness of parliamentary committees in Africa; rather, it is the lack of financial support to the committees. As Rotberg and Salahub (2013) put it about the Malawian Public Accounts Committee and the Budget Committee:

This lack of financial support for their activities and initiatives means that even the Malawian Public Accounts Committee and the Budget Committee – both critical to oversight – barely function. The issue is neither competence nor willingness; rather, tangible and operational support is wanting. As a partial result, the Public Accounts Committee in 2013 was wrestling with audit issues from some years earlier, and was not nearly current in its examination of the workings of Malawi’s government and its executive branch. Likewise, the Budget Committee was meeting very infrequently and was hardly an equal partner with the minister of finance and his staff (p. 7).

Similarly, insufficient funding and the apparent lack of basic infrastructure have been identified as the major factors that have hindered the effectiveness and productivity of parliamentary committees in Tanzania (Biddle et al. 2002). In his graduate thesis, Njoroge (2010) undertook a study of twelve parliamentary committees of the Kenyan National Assembly (one of the novelty academic studies on the parliamentary committee system in Africa on a broader scale) to determine their effectiveness. Some of the twelve committees included the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Public Investment Committee (PIC), Departmental Committee on Administration and National Security, Budget Committee, Departmental Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, Departmental Committee on Health, and Departmental Committee on Defence and Foreign Relations. He concluded that despite the achievements of the parliamentary committee system, there were some factors that inhibited their progress. According to Njoroge (2010: x), leadership and factors relating to processes have conspired to thwart the progress of parliamentary committees in Kenya. In his words, the Kenyan National Assembly (KNA) “has generally provided a

conducive environment for the committees but, the process factors, mainly communication and leadership sharing, have led to low morale/ownership and poor results among most committees” (Njorege, 2010; x). His overarching conclusion is that “the committee processes and focus is (*sic*) equally good, however, poor leadership sharing, communication and morale/ownership have compromised the effectiveness of the parliamentary committees leading to poor results among most of the committees” (Njorege, 2010: x).

The morphology of factors that impact on the work of the committee system in Africa has been given attention in other scholarly works. Wang (2005) underlined the importance of the parliamentary committee system in Tanzania when he notes that, just like the case in South Africa in the work of Mataure (2003), the committees in Tanzania also conduct public hearings. Hence, the parliamentary committee system in Tanzania has generated “more favorable conditions for parliament to act independently in the policy process” (p. 10). Despite these obvious achievements of the parliamentary committee system, Wang (2005) is quick to point out that the committees have not been entirely unsuccessful due to a combination of some factors. Top on the list of the factors that have affected the effectiveness of the committee system in Tanzania are poor information and communication systems, and seeming antagonism between legislators and the executive (Wang, 2005: 11):

... the MPs’ committee work is hindered by poor information and communication systems – bills often do not reach the parliament on time signaling a shortcoming in answerability. Another weakness is the lack of institutionalized possibilities for communicating dissatisfaction with the executive in a manner that entails real political costs and that the membership of the standing committees do (*sic*) not last for more than 2.5 years.

Barkan (2005) has pointed out party influence and executive control over committee decisions in South Africa. His argument feeds into the wider debate that parliamentary committees are an extension of the political rivalry among various political parties on the floor of parliament. According to him, due to the overwhelming majority of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa's National Assembly, the Working Committees in South Africa are utilised by the leadership of the ANC as arenas within which they implemented their will. Though deliberations may appear transparent and inclusive, final decisions are taken by the ANC committee study groups to reflect the interest of their political party. He said:

while meetings of the entire committee exhibit considerable debate between parties, and while the same occurs on the floor of the National Assembly as a whole, the decision making process occurs largely behind closed doors—in the Working Committee, in the ANC parliamentary caucus, and in the ANC committee study groups prior to the meetings involving all parties (Barkan, 2005: 8).

There are indications that parliamentary committees in Africa are weak, lacking the political power to enforce their decisions. As Burnell (2002) has noted of the situation in Zambia, parliamentary committees' "ability to influence policy and administration is found to be severely limited due to the absence of effective mechanisms to enforce their recommendations" (p. 291). It is unlikely that this situation will "alter significantly unless there are wider changes in the party system, the institutional balance of power between executive and legislature, and the political culture more generally" (Burnell, 2002: 291). In other cases, there were instances of waning power of parliamentary committees. In South Africa, for example, it was observed that the authority of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) waned considerably overtime (Feinstein, 2007 & 2009). In the view of Rotberg and Salahub (2013: 16), "the deliberations of SCOPA – and of all other committees of the House – were excessively influenced by political considerations."

This study extends the literature on the committee system of parliament in Africa. It examines the committee system of Ghana's Parliament to underline its successes, achievements, failures and problems. It also contributes to the existing literature on the committee system of parliament in Africa by providing a perspective of the workings of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana within the context of the workings of parliament and politics in Ghana from 2009 to 2020.

2.6 Studies on the Parliamentary Committee System in Ghana

There is scanty literature on the parliamentary committee system in Ghana. The literature on committees of parliament is either included in the general literature on the legislature or made peripheral to trends in the politics of the Fourth Republic. The 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana provides for the establishment of committees of parliament. The number of committees varies depending on the exigencies and time. Article 103, Clause 1 of the 1992 Constitution states that the Parliament of Ghana “shall appoint standing committees and other committees as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions.” The Committees of Parliament are mandated to conduct “investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministries and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals for legislation” (Republic of Ghana, 1992 Constitution of Ghana, 1992, Article 103(3)). All the activities of the committees of the first to the seventh Parliaments of Ghana of the Fourth Republic have been guided by these constitutional provisions.

The committee system in Ghana's Parliament in the Fourth Republic is not a novelty; it was introduced under the Second Republican Constitution of 1969, “although elements of the system were present under the First Republic” (Ghana Information Network for Knowledge Sharing – GINKS, 2015: 10). The objective of the committee system in Ghana's Parliament in the Fourth Republic is to provide a forum through the committee structures for public participation “in the

legislative process and public policy formulation” (GINKS, 2015: 10). This is particularly significant because the Chamber of Parliament excludes the public from participating in its proceedings (GINKS, 2015)

The number and types of parliamentary committees established are contingent on the latitude of parliament’s functions and the issues before it (Longley and Davidson, 1998; Gaines et al., 2019; Mickler, 2017). The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana spells out the modalities, functions and powers of committees of Ghana’s Parliament. Article 103(1) of the Constitution stipulates that:

Parliament shall appoint standing committees and other committees as may be necessary for the effective discharge of its functions. (2) The standing committees shall be appointed at the first meeting of Parliament after the election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers (Republic of Ghana, 1992, Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

Three types of parliamentary committees exist in the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic – Standing, Select and Ad hoc Committees. The Standing Committees are part and parcel of parliamentary structure guaranteed in the Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana (Stiftung, 2011) with Ad hoc Committees being a subservient part, while the Select Committees are linked with government ministries and programmes.

There is no gainsaying that parliamentary committees perform crucial roles that have wider national implications and significance (Sieberer, 2006; Gaines et al., 2019). Article 103(4) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana spells out the crucial functions that committees of parliament perform:

Committees of Parliament shall be charged with such functions, including the investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministries and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals for legislation (Republic of Ghana, 1992, Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

To ensure and reflect diversity of ideas, “the composition of the committees [of the Parliament of Ghana] shall, as much as possible, reflect the different shades of opinion in Parliament” (Republic of Ghana, 1992, Constitution of Ghana, 1992: Article 103(5)). By this provision, the 1992 Constitution seeks to ensure unity of purpose of the Parliament of Ghana, a situation that enhances democracy, outcomes and deliberations of Parliament (Sieberer, 2006).

As is the case in other jurisdictions, the parliamentary committee system in Ghana is significant. This is because “the committee system is fundamental to the functioning of any democracy. The stronger the committee system, the stronger the parliament” (Essuman-Johnson et. al. 2016: 33). Ninsin (2009) has provided insights into how the Parliament of Ghana makes decisions. His work shows the procedures of parliament’s decision-making, the utilisation of the structures of committees and the significance of the partitioning of parliament into committees. In the view of Ninsin (2009), parliamentary committees are the “workshop” of the Parliament of Ghana where most of the work is done. In another scenario, Essuman-Johnson et. al. (2016: 33-35) show the significance of committees of the Parliament of Ghana, “the committee system is fundamental to the functioning of any democracy. The stronger the committee system, the stronger the parliament.”

The NCCE (2014) assessed the significance of the committee system in Ghana’s Parliament. Its assessment gives an indication of the partisan nature of the deliberations in the committees of Ghana’s Parliament, a viewpoint which feeds into the larger discourse that the committees are arenas for political rivalry. It noted that “committees also endeavour to reach consensus in their work, but if the issue they are addressing is politically important to the Executive, then debates about the Committee’s report become very partisan creating a perception of growing politicization

of pertinent issues to the disadvantage of national development” (NCCE, 2014: 3). Lindberg and Zhou (2008) are of the view that the partisanship crept into the work of the committees of parliament in Ghana in the Fourth Republic during the presidency of J.A. Kufuor, 2001-2009.

They argued that:

Cross-partisan agreements was the rule rather than the exception for many years but during President Kufuor’s first term when members were increasingly whipped to toe the line, the work in the committees also started to change. Knowing that in the chamber the party line would prevail, members of the NPP learnt to choose (*sic*) the party line in the committee work as well on contentious issues (p. 13).

The functions of the committees of Ghana’s parliament are – as is the case in other jurisdictions – an extension of the functions of parliament. The functions of the committees of Ghana’s

Parliament in the Fourth Republic include:

... the scrutiny of legislation, executive appointments and oversight of the executive. They are also responsible for conducting investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministries and departments of government (Darfour, n.d., 4)

Ofori-Mensah and Rutherford (2011) have assessed the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Ghana’s Parliament within the framework of Parliament’s oversight responsibility. They painted a picture of the operational activities and the overarching achievements of the PAC of Ghana’s Parliament, eulogising its public hearing meetings across the length and breadth of Ghana. However, Ofori-Mensah and Rutherford (2011) lamented over the lack of political authority of the PAC to enforce its decisions, operational challenges and the lack of commitment of other institutions to enforce stipulated regulations that have hampered the effectiveness of its oversight responsibility. Extending invitations to the public and civil society organizations for inputs was not only limited to the PAC; other committees have done so over the years. As Lindberg and Zhou

(2008: 13) pointed out, “over the years, the committees have learnt to invite civil society and other organizations to an increasing extent to hear them on issues pertaining to their interests so the openness of deliberations have increased.”

Committees hold several meetings as part of their resolve to discharge their mandates and functions. In 2014, for example, it was reported that “Committees of Parliament conducted a total of 131 sittings and issued a total of 34 reports to the Plenary” (GINKS, 2015: 3). Notwithstanding the efforts of the committees of Parliament to discharge their mandates and functions, they suffer from financial and logistics constraints. There are difficulties or lack of facilities that can be utilized to facilitate the work of the committees of parliament, especially in the scrutiny of bills and complex matters outside the Chamber of Parliament (GINKS, 2015: 3).

Agyeman-duah (2005) has provided a template for the assessment of the parliamentary committee system in Ghana. His assessment of the Third Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana showed the extent to which the committee system has been effective. He argues that the Parliament of Ghana was “increasingly active in committee meetings ... Although committee activity generally increased, several committees were exceptionally active while others rarely met other than to fulfill their required duties” (Agyeman-Duah, 2005: 1).

This study extends the literature on the committee system of parliament in Ghana in a number of ways. First, this study provides a longitudinal study of the committee system of parliament of Ghana to show its historicity, nuances and vicissitudes of achievements and failures over a long period of time. Secondly, by assessing the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana, this study provides perspectives on the committee system of parliament in

Ghana, which would invariably complement the existing literature. Thirdly, this study extends on the existing literature on the committee system of parliament in Ghana, as it adds a comparative dimension to the committee system through its comparative study of the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana.

2. 7 Studies on Organisational Performance

The literature on institutional performance has provided the parameters of the meaning of institutional performance, measurement of institutional performance and the impact of institutional performance. This study does not seek to venture into the philosophical discourses on institutional performance *per se*, but to provide pointers of institutional performance and its measurement relative to this study. In the view of Chen et al. (2006), performance is all about the transformation of inputs into outputs to achieve targeted outcomes, a process of interrelated activities that inform the relation between minimal and effective cost; between effective cost and output realised; and between output realised and the outcome. In other words, effectiveness measures all activities and costs and links them to the targeted outcome. As Lindsay (1982: 175) puts it, “the concept of institutional performance can be regarded as embodying components on two dimensions: effectiveness, which is concerned with the congruence between outputs and goals or other criteria; and efficiency, which links outputs with inputs.”

Scholars disagree on the variables that should be used to measure organisational or institutional performance. Hence, there are no generally accepted standards in the existing literature for the measurement of institutional or organizational performance (Bolman and Deal, 2003; Scott and Davis, 2015). Scholars have argued that institutions or organisations are unique with different circumstances that make performance measurement a situational phenomenon (Cameron and

Whetton, 1983). Invariably, the uniqueness of institutions and their peculiar circumstances make it different for the development of a generally and universally accepted model for the measurement of institutional performance (Van de Ven, 1989; Weick, 1989). Similarly, the variables used to measure effectiveness of an institution or organisation vary. As Goldstein and Spiegelhalter (1996: 386) rightly pointed out, “there is a very important debate over the best choice of indicator measures and their validity as measures of effectiveness ... Appropriateness of an indicator will involve practical as well as social and political considerations ...”

Despite the difficulty of establishing a universal model for measuring institutional performance, there exists a number of approaches or variables that have been utilised by scholars. One of the critical variables or approaches widely used in the measurement of institutional performance is leadership. Leadership roles have been seen by some scholars as critical to institutional performance (Van and Field, 1990; Apps, 1994; Jacobs and Jaques, 1990). Leadership and leaders of institutions provide direction, animate commitment through their actions and provide motivation for their subordinates to work and accomplish the goals of the institutions (Conger, 1992). As far as the relationship of an institution and the accomplishment of its goals and outcomes are concerned, leaders are prominent and active persons (Apps, 1994). Hence, in assessing institutional performance, leadership and leaders are intricately linked to the subordinates or individuals involved in all the processes that lead to the realisation of the objectives, goals and outcomes of institutions (Bass, 1990; Jacobs and Jaques, 1990). Leaders show authority and responsibility in the execution of their administrative duties – planning, managing, coordinating, communication, decision-making and evaluation (Combs, Miser and Whitaker, 1999). To some scholars, the leadership variable in the measuring of institutional performance should focus on leadership functions and leadership in particular, rather than on leaders (Chemers, 1997; Cohen,

1990). Searching for the one and only proper and true definition of leadership seems to be fruitless (Bass, 1990). Leadership is an attribute animating the activities and outcomes of institutions (Bass, 1990).

Some scholars have emphasised the measurement of institutional performance with the system-resource approach (Cutler et al., 2003). This approach makes the environment of an institution the core variable for the measurement of institutional performance. According to Cutler et al. (2003), the extent to which an institution or organisation takes effective and efficient advantage of its environment to attain value and make judicious use of its scarce resources in its operations is critical to its overall performance.

There is also the competing values approach, an approach which favours the measurement of institutional performance based on adaptability of institutions to local and external exigencies (Cameron and Quinn, 2006; Cameron et al., 2014)). This approach establishes that institutions are different and require different criteria in measuring their performance. Contributing to the system-resource approach, Cohen and Bradford (2005) have emphasised that the performance of an institution is contingent upon the extent to which there is collaboration and commitment along the chain of productivity among subordinates, management and individuals in an institution.

Closely related to the system-resource approach in the measurement of institutional performance is the constituency approach. This approach ties the effectiveness of the performance of an institution to the extent of control over its resources (Scott and Davis, 2015). The thrust of this approach is that an institution that makes effective control and efficient use of its resources is more likely to increase its performance than one that makes an opposite use of its resources (Scott and

Davis, 2015). Hence, this approach places the effective control and efficient use of scarce resources as the core variable in the measurement of institutional performance (Scott and Davis, 2015).

Reference has also been made to human capacity as the utmost variable for measuring institutional performance. Proponents of this thesis have argued that training serves as a basis for developing efficient human capacity (Nguyen, 2009; Raja, Furqan and Khan, 2011). The thrust of their argument is that training sharpens human capacity, ensures the efficiency of human capacity, adds value to human capital, and enables organizations and institutions to achieve their objectives (Nguyen, 2009; Byrne, 1999; Gunu et al., 2013). In the words of Gunu et al. (2013: 78-79):

Training increases the efficiency and the effectiveness of both employees and the organization. Training is a systematic restructuring of behaviour, attitude and skills through learning - education, instruction and planned experience. Training is designed to change or improve the behaviour of employees in the work place so as to stimulate efficiency. The cardinal purpose of training is to assist the organization achieves its short and long term objectives by adding value to its human capital.

Scholars have pointed out the significance of institutional performance (Armstrong and Baron, 1998; Daud, 2006). According to Armstrong and Baron (1998), institutional performance is significant because it provides an institution the framework and pathways to achieve targets and accomplish its objectives and goals. In the view of Daud (2006, as quoted in Murad and Gill, 2016), institutional performance is significant because it gives an organisation a competitive advantage over others, a situation which helps the organization to achieve its targets, goals and objectives.

This study feeds into the discourses on institutional performance. It interrogates the performance of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana based on a number of variables, including efficiency, decision-making, leadership, judicious use of resources and consensus-building. By

subjecting the work of the committees of the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020 to critical scrutiny, this study provides an institutional perspective of assessing the Parliament of Ghana within the period of study.

2. 8 Studies on Ghanaian Politics in the Fourth Republic

The literature on politics in Ghana is multifaceted. In fact, politics in Ghana in the Fourth Republic has attracted lots of attention from scholars. Therefore, an attempt to engage in the review of all the literature on politics in Ghana is an arduous, if not impossible, one. This sub-section concentrates on some selected literature on politics in Ghana with respect to elections, democracy, political activities and pressures on legislators in the Fourth Republic.

In *Ghana's Transition to Constitutional Rule*, Ninsin and Drah (1993) provided insights into politics in Ghana and the return to democratic rule in the Fourth Republic. Shillington (1992) shows how pressure from the international community compelled the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) under the leadership of J.J. Rawlings to reluctantly return Ghana to a democratic rule. The return to democratic rule in Ghana led to the conduct of elections, beginning with the 1992 elections. Ninsin (1993) has labeled the elections held in 1992 as undemocratic as opposition parties were manipulated and limited in their operations by the PNDC. Similarly, Gyimah-Boadi (1994) described the 1992 elections and the subsequent transition to a civilian government as a transition only in terms of a transition from military to civilian, and that the transition did not change the political operatives that existed in the erstwhile PNDC.

Since 1992, Ghana has held eight presidential and parliamentary elections. The elections and their dynamics have attracted the attention of scholars. According to Gyekye-Jandoh (2010), elections in general are significant because they ensure democratic peace and prevent the possibility of reversals in democratic gains. Elections in Ghana, just like other jurisdictions, link the government

and the governed, and facilitate the distribution of resources (Ayee, 2008; Gyekye-Jandoh, 2014). The conduct of successful elections in Ghana in the Fourth Republic has been commended by the international community (Asante and Asare, 2017; Owusu-Mensah, 2015). Some scholars have pointed out the irregularities in Ghana's elections despite the successful presidential and parliamentary elections held in the Fourth Republic (Danso and Lartey, 2012).

One of the dominant themes in the discourse on politics and elections in Ghana in the Fourth Republic is the consolidation of Ghana's democracy. Mensah (2007) is of the view that democracy in Ghana is yet to be consolidated. Ayee (1999) listed the conditions for the consolidation of democracy – the conduct of political activities based on established democratic principles, the acceptance of established political institutions and opposition political party winning elections. Others including Arthur (2010), Gyimah-Boadi (1999), Abdulai and Crawford (2010), Gyekye-Jandoh (2006) and Haynes (2003) have alluded to the consolidation of Ghana's democracy. In another scenario, some scholars have discussed the roles of civil society in Ghana's democratic consolidation (Gyimah-Boadi and Yakah, 2013; Asante 2013; Gyimah-Boadi, 2010).

Scholars have discussed politics and democracy in Ghana, praised the country for its democratic credentials and argued that Ghana serves as a model for other African countries (Ayee, 1997; Gyimah-Boadi, 2001 and 2015; Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh, 2012). Compared to other African countries, Ghana's democracy in the Fourth Republic is said to be liberal (Diamond, 2008) with relatively robust judiciary and electoral body (Whitfield, 2009; Jockers et al., 2010). Scholars have also painted a transparent picture of the electoral process in Ghana, which lay the foundation for free and fair elections in the country in the Fourth Republic (Ayee, 1996; Gyimah-Boadi, 1999).

Cleavage politics in Ghana has found expression in the discourses on politics in Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Braimah (2020) argues that Ghana political cleavages have determined political decisions by governments and the judiciary, and that the intense polarization along lines of the NDC and the NPP is also manifested in public institutions, including Parliament, arguing that this affects the quality of their work (Braimah, 2020). Alidu (2020) contends that political parties establish structures for party activities and the prosecution of their electoral activities. With the dominance of the NPP and the NDC in politics in Ghana in the Fourth Republic, the tendency for political conflict is high. Oquaye (1995) laments the political conflicts in Ghana, and blames the phenomenon on irresponsible leadership. Reference has been made of the increase in political participation of ‘foot soldiers’, a situation which has triggered political vigilantism in Ghana (Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh 2012). Gyampo et al. (2018) have argued that foot soldiers play important roles to political parties and their electoral fortunes in the political dispensation in Ghana in the Fourth Republic. While Bob-Milliar (2014) acknowledged the active participation of foot soldiers in politics in the Fourth Republic, he bemoans their acts of vandalism and illegalities. These foot soldiers have galvanized themselves into vigilante groups, and have links with the two dominant political parties – the NDC and the NPP (Bob-Milliar 2014). Bob-Milliar (2014: 125) argued that “politics in Ghana functions within a clientelism environment where the party in government uses state authority to dispense patronage. Political parties recruit and use foot soldiers to commit electoral fraud in order to win elections or to maintain their control over state resources.” As Prempeh (2018: 3) has pointed out, “despite these praises from the international observers on the conduct of elections as a major instrument of democracy, the proliferation of political party vigilante groups remains a major setback in the democratization process Ghana. It is on record that, the inception of the Fourth Republic has been marred with the activities of vigilante groups.”

Agomor (2019) has studied the crystallisation of politics in Ghana into a duopoly between the NDC and the NPP. He argues that the phenomenon of the entrenchment of multiparty political system in the Fourth Republic has been stifled by the crystallisation of the country into a two-party system. To him “the fourth republican constitutional entrenchment of a multiparty political system in Ghana has therefore been stifled by the practical institutionalisation of two-party system in the country. This may partly result in voter apathy among citizens, especially those who are dissatisfied with the NPP and the NDC politics and may abstain from exercising their voting rights” (Agomor, 2019: 59).

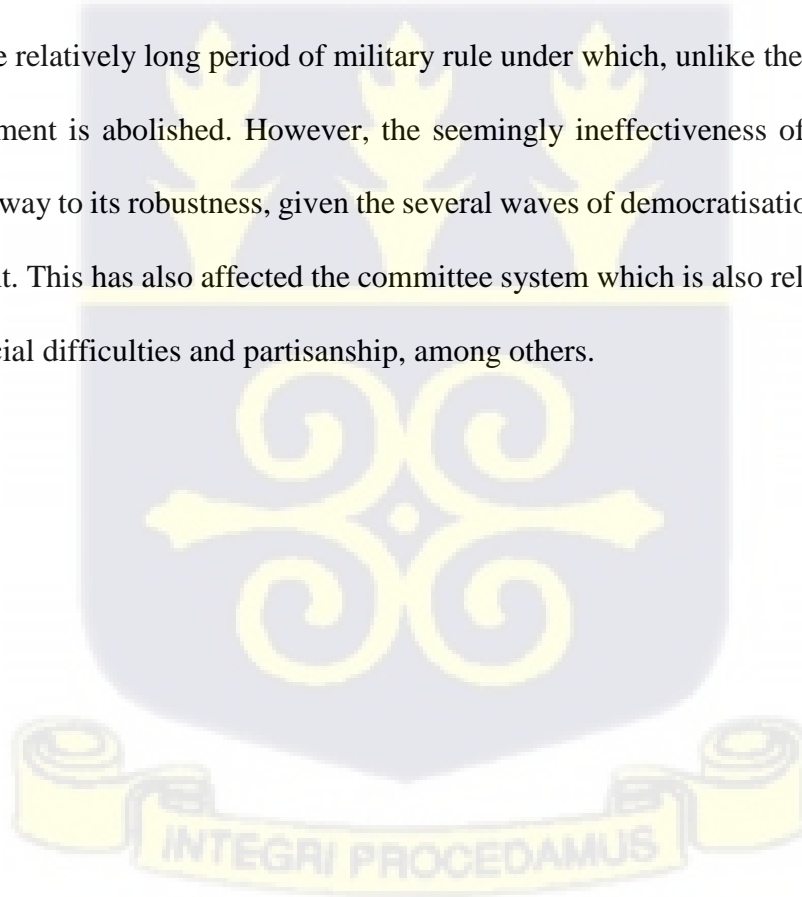
In the paper, “Variation in performance among members of parliament: evidence from Ghana”, Lindberg (2010) identified the pressures that are brought to bear on Members of Parliament (MPs) in their daily activities. He contended that, “in their day-to-day roles, MPs face a variety of formal and informal institutional pressures to supply public, collective, and private goods” (Lindberg, 2010: 1). In the light of this, Lindberg (2010: 1) “suggests a new method for measuring political survival strategies employed by members of legislatures.” In another development, Lindberg (2010: 117) discusses the “daily accountability pressures and the strategies that Members of Parliament (MPs) in Ghana employ in responding to the demands that they face.” He emphasised that “the institution of the office of Member of Parliament in Ghana is strong, but shaped by informal norms in ways that favour the provision of private goods in clientelistic networks (Lindberg, 2010: 117).

This study complements the literature on Ghanaian politics in a number of ways. First, it adds a legislative dimension to the literature on Ghanaian politics from 2009 to 2020. Second, it shifts focus from the traditional discourse on party politics in Ghana to politics in Ghana within the

perspectives of the work of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana. Furthermore, the study extends the literature on Ghanaian politics as it provides a correlation between national politics and politics in the plenary and the committee system of parliament, showing how the former dovetails into the latter.

2.9 Conclusion

The chapter has reviewed the pertinent literature under eight sub-headings. The review shows that dealing with the committee system in Parliament is not only complex but, at the same time, interesting, given the experiences of countries that have legislatures. Even though the legislature is strong in the developed countries it is, however, weak in developing countries including Africa. This is due to the relatively long period of military rule under which, unlike the executive and the judiciary, parliament is abolished. However, the seemingly ineffectiveness of the legislature is currently giving way to its robustness, given the several waves of democratisation that have hit the African continent. This has also affected the committee system which is also relatively doing well in spite of financial difficulties and partisanship, among others.



CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework of this study, which is based on the theory of new or neo institutionalism (NI) and political clientelism. It provides a general understanding of the meaning, scope and approaches of the theory of new institutionalism, as well as its features, strengths and weaknesses. It also provides insights into the meaning and nature of political clientelism. The relevance of these theories to the study and how they have been deployed in explaining the operations of the committee system and progress of Ghana's parliament are also highlighted.

3.1 Institutionalism: Origins, Meanings and Approaches

Even though new institutionalism is the theoretical framework of the study, it will be useful to revisit its evolution from institutionalism for better understanding and appreciation of its assumptions, features, strengths and weaknesses.

3.1.1 *The Origins of Institutionalism*

The historical development of institutionalism dates back to antiquity where “the first systematic thinking about political life, the primary questions asked by scholars tended to concern the nature of the governing institutions that could structure the behavior of individuals - both the governing and the governed - toward better ends” (Peters, 1999: 3). In the 19th and early 20th centuries, old institutionalism had crystalized into a formidable theory in political science, which focused attention on public institutions, particularly, institutions of government within states for comparative and non-comparative analysis (Shepsle, 1989; Easton 1971; Eckstein 1979). Since then, the old institutionalism theory provided a basis for the systematic analysis of institutions to gauge their impact on society (Peters, 1999).

3.1.2 The Meaning of Institutionalism

Institutionalism focuses on the functions of institutions (March and Olsen, 2005; Peters, 1999). It is a theory which studies the operations of formal institutions to determine the extent to which an organization and its productivity are animated, influenced and affected by the interlocking choices of individuals and its formalized procedures. According to March and Olsen (2005: 4), institutionalism is the “general approach to the study of political institutions, a set of theoretical ideas and hypothesis concerning the relations between institutional characteristics and political agency, performance and change. Institutionalism emphasizes the endogenous nature and social constructions of political change.” As a theory, it argues that “structures (institutions) create greater regularity of human behavior than would otherwise exist and therefore enhance the explanatory and predictive capacity of the social sciences” (Peters, 2000: 5).

In the social sciences, institutionalism is a perspective that stresses the function of institutions. Institutional research has a long history. It incorporates findings from prior research in a variety of fields, including economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, and psychology (Barkanov, 2014). In the early 1980s, there was a resurgence of interest in institutions, which followed a similar pattern: it was a reaction to dominant streams of thought that ignored institutions, historical context, and process in favour of universal theorising. As a result, historical attention is typically associated with institutionalism (Adams, 2000).

The institutionalism theory examines how organizations and political institutions operate and obtain legitimacy within social, political, and economic systems. Institutions determine the rules of the game and the options for operation by forbidding, limiting, or supporting specific

behavioural patterns (Marsden, 1996). They influence decision-making by indicating what is acceptable or not, as well as shaping individual socialisation of norms and behaviors in a specific culture. The regulative, normative, and cognitive pillars are upon which societies are built (Debroux, 2010).

The regulative pillar is formal and legally codified, whereas the normative and the cognitive pillars encompass society's non-codified attitudes. Individuals eventually internalise normative expectations and attitudes as they become acknowledged as the norms to which everyone is encouraged to conform when they are widely disseminated in society. Institutions provide the social conduct with predictability and stability. Institutional constituents such as the state, professions, interest groups, public opinion, and family can apply pressures and expectations (Debroux, 2010).

The regulative pillar's logic is based on following the rules and laws, but the normative pillar's logic is based on what is regarded proper. However, depending on the nature and context of the pressures, responses to institutional demands and expectations might range from passive conformity to active resistance (Debroux, 2010).

Just like the normative and regulative pillars, institutionalists also take the cognitive dimension or pillar seriously. The cognitive pillar deals with the extent to which belief systems and cultural patterns filter into the behaviour of individual actors and organisations. According to institutionalists, as people in an institution or organisations interact, meanings arise from such interactions, and that these meanings are adopted, maintained and employed as basis of interactions in an organisation (Berger and Kellner, 1981; D'Andrade, 1984). This then establishes a cognitive frame in an organisation, and this frame impacts on the processing of information in the

organisation (Berger and Kellner, 1981; Douglas, 1982). Hence, in the cognitive paradigm, what a creature does is, in large part, a function of the creature's internal representation of its environment" (D'Andrade, 1984: 88). Given the nature of the cognitive pillar, one can say that "every human institution is, as it were, a sedimentation of meanings or, to vary the image, a crystallization of meanings in objective form" (Berger and Kellner, 1981: 31).

3.1.3 Approaches to Institutionalism

Some scholars have also tended to identify several approaches to institutionalism (March & Olsen, 1989; March & Olsen, 1984, Peters, 2000; Debroux, 2010). Peters (2000), for instance, discussed four approaches (normative, the rational choice, the historical and empirical) to institutionalism.

The normative approach to institutionalism was espoused by March and Olsen and is the first of the primary approaches to institutional analysis (March & Olsen, 1989; March & Olsen, 1984). They claim that the best way to analyse political behavior (apparently both individually and collectively) is to look at it through the lens of a "logic of appropriateness" that people acquire via their participation in institutions. This normative logic is contrasted with the "logic of consequentiality," which is important to rational choice theorists. In other words, March and Olsen believe that people working in institutions act in certain ways because of moral standards rather than a drive to maximize individual utility (March & Olsen, 1989; March & Olsen, 1984). Furthermore, these norms of behavior are acquired by participation in one or more institutions, which are the primary social reservoirs of values (Debroux, 2010).

The rational choice institutionalism (RCI) is the second approach. March and Olsen may find it difficult to embrace the rational choice approach because it sees institutions as arrangements of rules and incentives, and members of institutions behave in response to those essential components

of institutional structure. The desires of the occupants of these structures are not affected by membership in the organisation, unlike individuals under normative institutionalism. Individuals who interact with institutions, on the other hand, have their own well-ordered preferences that are essentially unaffected by any institutional involvement they may have (March and Olsen, 2011).

The third approach is historical institutionalism, which contends that the policy and structural decisions taken at the institution's beginning will have a long-term impact on its behavior (Steinmo, Thelen and Longstreth, 1992). For historical institutionalists, the concept of "path dependency" is the key explanatory premise, while they are also interested in the concepts that help define and sustain policy courses (Hall and Taylor, 1996). This method is plainly well-suited to explaining policy persistence, but it is far less promising when it comes to understanding policy or structure change.

The fourth approach is empirical institutionalism, which refers to a collection of research that examines the deceptively basic topic of whether institutions influence policy decisions or political stability. The definition of institutions stresses official government organisations. This scholarship has concentrated on the distinctions between the presidential and parliamentary systems of government in particular (Mettenheim, 1996; Weaver & Rockman, 1993).

Even though the institutional theory in political science has made tremendous gains, it has a number of theoretical and methodological flaws (Breuning, 2014). Institutional explanations are often seen as static while there is the persistent issue of quantifying institutional variables in terms of simple, nominal categories (Breuning, 2014). These limitations have paved the way for the rise and predominance of neo-institutionalism, also known as new institutionalism (Breuning, 2014).

3.2 New Institutionalism

3.2.1 The Origins of New Institutionalism

New Institutionalism (NI) also referred to as neo institutionalism (NI) is not an entirely new concept; rather, it is a “blending elements of an old institutionalism into the non-institutionalist styles of recent theories of politics” (March and Olsen, 2011: 738). Prior to the 1980s, political scientists predominantly used two theories – behaviouralism and rational choice theories – to explain individual behaviours in public institutions. The underlying assumption of both theories is that “individuals act autonomously as individuals, based on either socio-psychological characteristics or on rational calculation of their personal utility” (Peters, 1999: 1). The thrust of both theories is that individuals are not “constrained by either formal or informal institutions, but would make their own choices; in both views preferences are exogenous to the political process” (Peters, 1999: 1). By the 1980s, the role that institutions in the public – whether formal or informal – play in the behaviour of individuals had gained currency in scholarship. This led to a revival of interest in institutionalism as an explanatory model. It should be pointed out that institutionalism as an explanatory model had been in existence prior to the 1980s, but its usage was popular in policy and governance studies (Peters, 1999).

New institutionalism (NI) is a theory whose origins were associated with Political Science, Sociology and Economics in the United States of America, predominantly in the 1980s. The leading theorists of NI were James March (an American) and Johan Olsen (a Norwegian), whose publications, “The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life” (1984) and “Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics” (1989), provided the blueprints of NI. The thrust of their argument was that institutional analysis is significant to the analysis of individual political actors within political institutions. In the main, they contended that the study

of individual political actors is made meaningful within the perspectives of the institutional constraints on the political actors. Without such perspective, any attempt to study the behaviour of political actors would provide a flawed understanding of the political reality.

The revival of interest in NI was due to a number of reasons. In the first place, by the 1980s, social and political institutions had become larger, more complex and more resourceful than before. Hence, institutions had become more central and important to collective life (March and Olsen, 1984). Secondly, the renewed interest in the state in social and political discourses in some prevailing theories of the time, including Marxism and Statism, rekindled interests of political scientists in institutionalism – new institutionalism – as a political theory (Bell, 1997; Krasner, 1984). Thirdly, in the 1970s and 1980s some countries in the West went through economic crisis. The responses of countries to the economic crisis differed. The differences in the approach to the economic crisis by various states in the West attracted the attention of scholars, who attempted to explain the logic and basis of the different responses to the same economic challenges. In all the explanations, institutional factors were predominant, a situation that led to the renewed interest in institutionalism (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992).

3.2.2 The Meaning of New Institutionalism

New institutionalism (NI), also known as neo-institutionalism or New Economics of Organizations), is an inductive method of approach in the study in disciplines such as Political Science, Sociology, Economics and Organizational behaviour that examines how organisations, their structures and rules of operation determine and/or stimulate the choices and actions of its members (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). The NI “emphasizes the institutional relationships, both formal conventional, that bind the components of state together and structure its relations with society” (Hall, 1986: 19). NI examines how institutions or their structures, cultures, norms and

rules serve as constraints of individual choices, actions and behaviours in political institutions. It focuses on institutionally situated actors. Since “the political universe is not atomistic” (Krasner, 1984: 228), new institutionalists argue that institutions through their cultures, administrative apparatus, norms, legal orders and beliefs place constraints on the preferences of public officials. At the same time, institutions provided public actors a set of behavioural patterns, incentives and normative codes that shape their behaviour. In essence, the NI insists on a more autonomous role of political institutions” (March and Olsen, 2011: 739). This view strengthens the argument that “political institutions are more than simple mirrors of social forces” (March and Olsen, 2011: 739).

3.2.3 Features of the New Institutionalism Theory

The NI has a number of features. First, it “avoids unfeasible assumptions that require too much of political actors, in terms of normative commitments (virtues) cognitive abilities (bounded rationality, and social control (capabilities) and therefore different from Old Institutionalism (OI) (March and Olsen, 2005: 20).

Second, it focuses on the “rules, routines, norms, and identities of “institutions”, rather than [the] micro rational individuals or [the] macro social forces” (March and Olsen, 2005: 20).

Third, it is concerned about institutional capacity and policy networks. The focus is on the capacity of institutions to make and implement their own decisions. It thus measures the extent to which an institution is autonomous, dependent on other institutions, the administrative and professional capacity of its members, and the sufficiency and autonomy of an institution’s budget in the execution of its tasks (Peters, 2000).

Fourth, the NI's focus on the capacity of institutions measures the complexity of institutions – the “capacity of the institution to construct internal structures to fulfill its goals and cope with the environment” (Peters, 2000: 8).

Fifth, NI focuses on institutional capacity through its coherence – the “capacity of the institution to manage its own workload and to develop procedures to process tasks in a timely a (sic) reasonable manner (Peters, 2000: 8). Coherence in an institution also “represents a capacity of the institution to make decisions about its core tasks and beliefs and to filter out diversions ...” (Peters, 2000: 8).

Sixth, apart from the capacity of institutions, the NI focuses on policy networks. It examines institutional policies, their formulation and changes over time. It also analyzes policy actors to determine the extent to which the interactions of individuals impact on public policy (Scharpf, 1999).

Seventh, though the NI sees institutions as political actors, it does not exclude internal and external variables in the examination of the policy networks of institutions (Reich, 2000). In short, the NI sees institutions as political actors formulating policies for the public:

the argument that institutions can be treated as political actors is a claim of institutional coherence and autonomy. The claim of coherence is necessary in order to treat institutions as decision-makers. From such a point of view, the issue is whether we wish to picture the state (or some other political institution) as making choices on the basis of some collective interest or intention (e.g., preferences, goals, purposes), alternatives, and expectations) . . . The pragmatic answer appears to be that the coherence of institutions varies but is sometimes substantial enough to justify viewing a collectivity as acting coherently (March and Olsen, 1984: 739).

Eighth, the NI underscores the dynamism of modern societies, pointing out that the dynamisms of modern society are a function of the struggles between parties. According to new institutionalists,

the struggles in a field (institution) cause intended and unintended spillovers into other fields to cause dynamic trends in a society (Fligstein, 1997: 7-8):

one of the great insights of the "new institutionalisms" is that the uneasy relationships between challenger and incumbent groups, the struggle between incumbent groups within and across fields to set up and maintain fields, and the intended and unintended spillovers caused by these struggles into adjacent fields, are the source of much of the dynamics of modern society.

New institutionalists point out that formal institutions are not neutral since the structures and rules of the institutions do not give all groups and individual equal access (Bache and George, 2006). As Bethani (2011) puts it, "new institutional accounts argued that formal institutions were not neutral arenas, since formal institutional structures and rules biased access to the political process in favour of some societal groups over others." Furthermore, new institutionalists "argue that institutions could be autonomous political actors in their own right" (Bethani, 2011: 5).

Ninth, NI endorsed the rational means of the choice of political institutions based on critical scrutiny of its appropriateness to society. Discussing the application of NI to economics, Ayele (2005: 2) pointed out that "political institutions may be chosen rationally by means of deliberations about which rules are appropriate for the patterns of interactions in society."

Tenth, the NI is different from Old Institutionalism (OI). To dissect the differences between the two, it is important to paint a picture of the character and focus of the OI. The OI focused on the central role of law in government and institutions of government as law was seen to be fundamental to the public sector and governments (Peters, 1999). In the light of this, earlier scholars who applied the OI theory to the study of formal institutions conceived of political institutions as intertwined with law. Hence, "to be concerned with political institutions was (and is) to be concerned with law" (Peters, 1999: 6). In another perspective, OI views human behaviour as a

function of structures or institutions. There is the assumption that political or formal structures are the main elements that stimulate the behaviour of individuals or society. Therefore, an understanding of the behaviour of individuals and society in general is found in the structure of political institutions (Shepsle, 1989; Easton 1971; Eckstein 1979). To old institutionalists, “structure mattered, and indeed that structure determined behavior” (Peters, 1999: 7). The implication of the assumption that human behaviour is tied to the apron strings of institutions is that it rules out individual roles in stimulating institutions and government policies, which is a major criticism of behaviourist scholars against the theory (Peters, 1999).

Eleventh, unlike the OI, the NI moves analysis from focus on organisations to focus on rules. While the OI focuses on an organisational structure, the NI does not equate political institutions with political organisations (Peters, 1999). It studies policy networks to measure how informal policies exist alongside formal rules for policy-making as parallel institutional framework (Lowndes, 1996). In addition, the NI is different from the OI because it shifts focus from the formal to the informal conception of institutions. In contrast to the OI, the NI studies the interplay between formal and informal conventions in institutions. It does not only focus on formal rules as the OI does; it studies both the specified (formal) conventions and unwritten (informal) conventions in decision-making and policies of institutions (Shepsle, 1989; Easton, 1971; Eckstein, 1979; March and Olsen, 1984). Moreover, the NI and OI differ in the conception of institutions. While the OI tended to compare whole systems of government (the holistic approach to the study of institutions), the NI focuses on the component institutions of political life – the disaggregated approach to the study of institutions (Shepsle, 1989; Easton, 1971; Eckstein, 1979; March and Olsen, 1984). The NI sees institutions as different because they are embodying, preserving and imparting some uniqueness in power that ultimately impact on different individuals and groups (Shepsle, 1989;

Easton, 1971; Eckstein, 1979; March and Olsen, 1984). Furthermore, both the OI and NI emphasise the independence of political institutions and that they do not exist independently in time and space. The NI goes beyond this conception to look for the extent to which political institutions are embedded in particular contexts (Shepsle, 1989; Easton, 1971; Eckstein, 1979; March and Olsen, 1984).

3.3 Approaches to New Institutionalism

There are three approaches of NI, namely, the New Historical Institutionalism (NHI), Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) and Sociological Institutionalism (SI). The NHI underscores the application of the inductive method to the study of institutions to establish empirical patterns in behaviour based on historical antecedents to make rational inferences about the behaviour of actors in an institution (Thelen and Steinmo 1992; Hay and Wincott, 1997). On the other hand, the RCI underscores the application of the deductive methodology to make conclusions from the assumptions about motives and behaviours of actors. Its underlying assumption is that all human beings – in this case, political actors – are rational (Shepsle, 1989).

As already indicated, this study uses the NI as its theoretical framework. In terms of the three approaches of the NI, this study will largely rely on the SI due to the sociological importance of the Parliament of Ghana and its committee system in shaping Ghanaian society and its governance mechanism between 2009 and 2021. In this light, it is significant to discuss the SI in detail.

The SI is a new form of the NI. It focuses on institutional culture and the extent to which institutional culture impacts on actors. It does not situate the behaviour of actors in an institution within the “utility maximization” perspective of individuals as the RCI does; it rather situates the behaviour of actors within the ‘logic of appropriateness’ (Koeble, 1995; March and Olsen, 1989).

In other words, SI places a responsibility on actors to determine the appropriate response vis-à-vis their respective positions and the cultural milieu of an institution (Koeble, 1995; March and Olsen, 1989). Hence, it does not only place responsibilities on actors, but also provides an open-ended definition of the appropriateness of an action (March and Olsen, 1989). The underlying thrust of this argument is that, though actors behave within the confines of an institutional environment, actors place premium on interpretation and the choices they make.

The SI is distinctive and significant for a number of reasons. First, the SI tends to “define institutions much more broadly than political scientists do to include, not just formal rules, procedures or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that the ‘frames of meaning’ guiding human action” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 14).

Second, beyond emphasising how political actors have been socialised into a particular institution and how political actors have internalised the norms associated with institutions and roles, the SI “emphasizes the way in which institutions influence behavior by providing the cognitive scripts, categories and models that are indispensable for action, not least because without them the world and the behavior of actors cannot be explained” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 15). It is against this background that “sociological institutionalists emphasise the highly-interactive and mutually-constructive character of the relationship between institutions and individual action” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 15).

Third, the SI provides a distinctive approach to the problem of explaining the origins and changes of institutions. The rational choice theory, for example, explains this problem based on the means-end efficiency of institution – the adoption of a particular institution or its mechanisms as a means in advancing some particular ends. The SI and “sociological institutionalists argue that

organizations often adopt a new institutional practice, not because it advances the means-ends efficiency of the organization but enhances the social legitimacy of the organization or its participants” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 16).

In terms of relevance to this study, the SI provides a framework within which to measure the organizational culture of the committee system in Ghana’s Parliament vis-à-vis the work of committee members. Furthermore, it enables this study to measure the actions and inactions of committee members to determine the extent to which they reflected the culture and positions of their respective political parties.

The SI has some weaknesses. Its major criticism is that it does not provide the exact definition of the appropriateness of the actions of actors, a situation that makes it difficult to have a common template and formula to assess the actions of actors in an institution (Koeble, 1995). To overcome this problem, this study would adopt the standard parliamentary practices as stipulated in the Standing Orders and constitutional provisions for the legislature as spelt out in the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana to measure the level of appropriateness of MPs both at plenary and committee levels.

Furthermore, the SI is criticized for the tendency of mistaking competing interests and roles in organisations for opponents or opposing factions “in the consideration of the efficiency toward an appreciation of for the role that collective processes of interpretation and concerns for social legitimacy play in the process” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 20). It is possible that actors within an institution would have competing interests and roles, but due to the obsession of sociological institutionalists for roles of actors in institutional change, there is the tendency that sociological

institutionalists would mistake competition within an organisation for a common goal for power struggle, opposition or factionalism (Hall and Taylor, 1996). To overcome this dilemma, this study will examine the roles of MPs as political actors with the assumption that both the Majority and the Minority in the Parliament of Ghana work with the interest of enhancing the smooth functioning of the legislature. In other words, the study assumes that the Majority and the Minority in the Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic debate and discuss issues and policies to collaborate and synthesize ideas to pass laws and perform the oversight responsibility of the legislature for the common good of Ghana.

The SI is also criticised because of its fascination for processes of diffusion or change in an institution (Hall and Taylor, 1996). It is argued that its fixation on the processes of diffusion and change in an institution can neglect or fail to appreciate the diverse roles that actors, both within and without an organization, have played in the processes (Hall and Taylor, 1996). Furthermore, “new sociological institutionalists seem so focused on macro-level processes that the actors involved in these processes seem to drop from sight and the results begin to look like ‘action without agents’” (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 21). In an attempt to overcome this problem, this study will focus both on the processes (both macro-level and micro-level processes) and the roles that actors (both MPs in parliament and non-MPs, i.e. individuals and organizations including political parties, development partners and civil society organizations) play in all the processes, debates and final outcome of the decisions of selected committees of the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2021.

3.4 New Institutionalism: Strengths, Weaknesses and Application

The NI theory is a useful theory for the explanation of institutions. One of its strengths is that it makes institutions as significant in the explanation of institutional processes. The NI theory

establishes institutional framework as a basis for understanding political actors. It sees institutions as bodies that “constitute and legitimize political actors and provide them with consistent behavioural rules, conceptions of reality, standards of assessment effective ties, and endowments, and thereby with a capacity for a purposeful action” (March and Olsen, 1994: 17).

Another strength of the NI is that the theory provides a basis to explain the extent of the autonomy of political institutions (Howlett and Ramesh, 1996). Furthermore, the theory has provided the framework to explain the interplay between governmental institutions and state policies, and the relationship between institutions and political behaviour (Howlett and Ramesh, 1996).

Thirdly, the NI is a useful theory for the explanation of politics, policy and administration. The NI is premised on the argument that institutions “structure strategic interactions among self-interested individuals in policymaking” (Menzel and White, 2011: 341), and that “institutions provide strategic actors with the ‘rules of the games’” ((Menzel and White, 2011: 341). These arguments of the NI theory make the NI one of the potent theories for the explanation of the nexus between politics, policy and administration (Menzel and White, 2011).

Despite these strengths, the NI has some weaknesses. One of the criticisms or weaknesses of the NI is the difficulty of determining the components of what constitute transaction cost. The theory makes ‘transaction’ among individuals within an organisation the ultimate basis of analysis (Howlett and Ramesh, 1996). However, the concept of ‘transaction’ is not clearly defined as the composition of ‘transaction’ differ from institution to institution (Coase, 1960). To overcome this weakness, this study will use the term ‘transactions’ to mean the ‘cost of MPs from both divides engaging each other over issues for national and parochial political interests.

The NI also suffers from the problem of measuring the extent to which political actors are influenced by institutions, and vice versa or both. To overcome this challenge, this study will examine the contributions of new and old MPs at the committee levels to determine the extent to which experiences of MPs in parliamentary practices have shaped their conducts and vice versa.

Despite the weaknesses of the NI, it is applicable to this study. The application of the theory of new institutionalism (NI) to this study is significant for four reasons. Firstly, given that NI is used in various studies to measure policy networks, its application to this research is enormous. It will assist to examine the key actors in, and the processes of, policy making in the plenary and committees. To this end, the theory will enable this study to analyze the competing interests and their impact of NDC and NPP committee members on policy-making in the Parliament of Ghana.

Secondly, the theory of NI enables this study to examine leadership roles and how the personality of leaders impacts on actions of MPs and decisions at both the plenary and committee levels of the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2021. As observed by some scholars (Atkinson and Coleman, 1989; and Bell, 1993), the theory of NI enables researchers to examine the influence of leadership and how policy processes and change affect policy formulation and networks within and outside institutions at the macro and micro levels.

Third, the theory of NI has been used it to analyze the institutional foundations of state capacity, the animating force of political leadership in an institution, and the autonomy and authority of institutions of the state (Evans, 1995; Weiss, 1998; Krasner, 1984). Brennan and Buchanan (1981: 161) have also used the theory to examine the paradox of “whether institutions serve to help transform private interests into public interests.” By extension, the application of the theory to this study is to examine the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2021 to

establish the institutional capacities of some selected committees and the formal and informal domestic and international drivers that have influenced the organizational culture of the selected committees and their members in particular and Parliament in general.

Fourth, scholars – particularly political scientists – have shown and continue to show keen interest in political change and how to explain it. Some scholars have used the theory of NI to explain this phenomenon (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992; Krasner, 1984; Cortell and Petersen, 1999). The usefulness of the theory to this study lies in its ability to help in explaining why and how regime change has impacted on the work of the committees and Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2021.

Political Clientelism

As part of measures to overcome the shortcomings of NI, this study used political clientelism as a supporting theoretical framework. Political clientelism has received a lot of attention in scholarship and political discourses in recent times (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007, Hicken and Nathan, 2020; Yildirim and Kitschelt, 2020; Higashijima, 2022). Clientelism as a political theory establishes the relationship between political actors in a political space based on exchanges of favours of some sort. According to Hicken (2011), political clientelism is a relationship between a political actor (known as the patron) in a superior position based on some political, social and economic variables, and a client (in a subordinate position) in which the patron grants to the client in exchange for support for the patron's political career or activities. Political clientelistic relationships are anchored to personal interactions that are expressible in terms of mutual benefits between the patron and the client. Berenschot (2018: 1564), defines political clientelism as “the practice of providing personal favors – jobs, contracts, welfare, support, money, and so forth – in exchange for electoral support.” It is a relationship in which “the patron providing clients with access to the basic means of subsistence and the clients reciprocating with a combination of economic services

... and social acts of deference and loyalty” (Mason, 1986: 489). In short, clientelism establishes obligations between two actors in a political space by which “political behaviour is ... characterized by patterns of exchange” (Hopkin, 2006: 3).

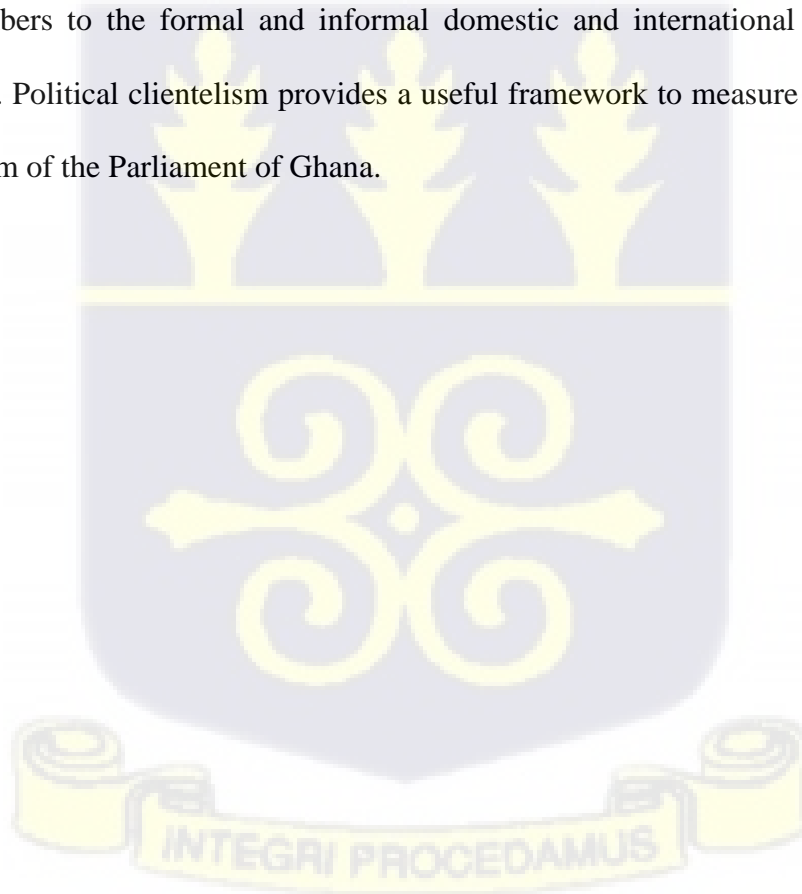
There are a number of variants of political clientelism. One of such variants is relational clientelism. In this type of clientelism, “brokers mediate between patrons and clients in the exchange of benefits and votes. Amid this exchange, brokers’ tight, daily relationships with clients through hierarchical organizations enable patrons to resolve and enforcement problems” (Higashijima and Washida, 2023: 5). The second variant of political clientelism is the electoral or single-shot clientelism, a kind of weak clientelistic relationship between parties in which enforceability and monitoring of the terms of the relationship are not fully effective (Kitschelt, 2000; Hicken et al., 2022). Whatever the variant of clientelism, it is significant to note that clientelism becomes operationally effective based on a monitoring or surveillance mechanism. By the surveillance mechanism, there is the assumption that the patron is resourceful and capable of enforcing the obligations of the client – monitoring to ensure client’s commitment and discharge of his/her obligations to vote or undertake activities that would inure to the political advantage to the patron (Hicken and Nathan, 2020). The long-term relationship is also another mechanism that operates to ensure enforceability of the terms of the relationship in relative to the discharge of the obligations of the patron. With long-term relationships that go beyond one political or electoral cycle, there is the possibility that commitment by both the patron and the client to the terms of the relationship would be credible (Oliveros, 2021).

Scholars have applied the theory of political clientelism to the study of African politics. There are mainly two streams of scholarship on clientelism in African politics. First, there is the school of thought that underscores the pervasiveness of clientelism in African politics (Walle, 2001; Bratton and Walle, 1997; Lindberg, 2006; Lindberg and Morrison, 2008; Wantchekon, 2003). Apart from underscoring the pervasiveness of clientelism in African politics, these scholars have examined its impact on voter behaviour and the electoral landscape in Africa (Walle, 2001; Bratton and Walle, 1997; Lindberg, 2006; Lindberg and Morrison, 2008). On the other hand, some scholars contend that clientelism does not determine voter behaviour and voting patterns in Africa. Rather, the ethnic factor and other non-clientelistic variables serve as the anchors of voter behaviour in elections in Africa (Yong, 2009; Lindberg and Morrison, 2008; Weghorst and Lindberg, 2013). With reference to Ghana, scholars have similarly held divergent views about the operationalisation of clientelism in politics. While some sources admit that clientelism exists in the Ghanaian political space (Anaman and Bikari, 2019; Bukari, 2017), others discount it, giving prominence to social and economic variables (non-clientelistic variables) animating voting patterns (Lindberg and Morrison, 2008).

The use of the theory of political clientelism as a framework for this study is significant for a number of reasons. First, it enables this study to examine the extent to which the behaviour of committee members is influenced by clientelism or non-clientelistic variables. Second, it enables this study analyse the nature of the clientelistic relationships or otherwise in the work of the committee system of Ghana's parliament, 2001, 2017.

3.5 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The theoretical framework used in this study is appropriate for the analysis of the committee system and the Parliaments of Ghana from 2009 to 2021. The study uses the NI and its SI variant, as well as political clientelism as theories to explain the institutional practices of the Parliament of Ghana and the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Even though both the NI and the SI approaches have weaknesses, their strengths outweigh their weaknesses, thus making them very appropriate to be used as the theoretical framework. The NI and its sociological institutional (SI) approach will be useful to examine the work of the committee system and Parliament and link the organizational culture of committee members to the formal and informal domestic and international drivers that have influenced them. Political clientelism provides a useful framework to measure the politics of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana.



CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an insight into the research methodology and design utilised for this study. It explains the basis of the research methodology, the application of the qualitative approach to research to this study, the basis and application of various research instruments to this study, and the ethical considerations underlining the study.

4.1 Research Methodology and Design

In simply terms, research methodology is about the method applied to an enquiry or study. According to Robson (2002: 549), research methodology is “the theoretical, political and philosophical backgrounds to social research and their implications for research practice and for the use of articular research methods.” Research methodologies are generally categorized into qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. However, some scholars have noted that the most common research methodologies in the social sciences and humanities are the qualitative and quantitative methods (Morvaridi, 2005; Sarantakos, 2005). The quantitative method “involves the generation of data in quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion” (Kothari, 2004: 5). It is subdivided into inferential, experimental and simulation approaches to research (Kothari, 2004). On the other hand, “a study is said to be qualitative if the purpose of the study is primarily to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event, that is, if the information is gathered through the use of variables measured on nominal or ordinal scales (qualitative measurement scales); and if the analysis is done to establish the variation in the situation, phenomenon or problem without quantifying it (Kumar, 2014: 16). A qualitative method is “concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour”

(Kothari, 2004: 5). The qualitative method mainly analyzes, examines, describes, explains or observes a social phenomenon or reality in words (Amaratunga et. al., 2002). According to Babbie and Mouton (2002: 270), qualitative research is concerned with “human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves (also referred to by anthropologies as the ‘emic perspective’). It is argued that the utility of the qualitative methodology “is a function of researcher’s insights and impressions. Such an approach to research generates results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis” (Kothari, 2004: 5).

This study adopted the qualitative method in the analysis and interpretation of data. The reliance on qualitative methodology for this study was justified for a number of reasons. First, it helped this study to explain, describe and delineate social phenomenon to establish a cause-effect relationship (Atkinson et al., 2001; Kumar, 2014). In the context of this study, it helped the researcher to dissect and assess the performance of the committee system of Ghana’s Parliament in the Fourth Republic. It is significant to note that qualitative method “stresses on the way of people interpret, and make sense of their experiences to understand the social reality of individuals” (Mohajan, 2018: 24). Hence, the reliance on the qualitative method helped this study to examine and interpret the works of the committees of parliament in relation to a number of variables. Reliance on qualitative method enabled this study to ask the “why”, “how” and “what” questions to understand social phenomenon (Polkinghorne, 2005). By this way, the qualitative method enabled this study to understand the world and human behaviour in context (Polkinghorne, 2005; Tong et al., 2012). This study relied on qualitative method because it facilitates the use of interviews, observations, questionnaires and monographs as mechanisms to obtain, gather, analyze and interpret data (Zohrabi, 2013). Furthermore, qualitative method enabled this study to examine

the complexities, characteristics, distinctions, achievements or failures and dynamisms of the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana, whose context and contents are made more intelligible in a coherent exposition than when it is reduced to numerical values. In addition, as a form of social action that analyses human behaviour and phenomenon, the use of qualitative method in this study enabled the researcher to measure the social reality of individuals, and to use instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, observations, and monographs to analyze the subject of study (Zohrabi, 2013). It was the appropriate research methodology for this study because it has the potential of making a researcher understand people under the reality of the social world (Polkinghorne, 2005), a context which helped this study to understand the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana.

The qualitative method has a number of weaknesses. First, some scholars have argued that the qualitative method has a tendency of leaving out the contextual sensitivities of issues due to its phenomenological approach, that is, focus on the interpretation, description and analysis of issues from the perspective of participants or respondents (Silverman, 2010). To overcome this weakness, this study designed its interview questions in such a way that they did not provide room for participants to provide responses outside the context of parliamentary and committee affairs of the Fourth Republic. Hence, the questions were context-specific. Second, it is argued that smaller sample sizes used in qualitative method create the difficulty of using adequate representation and generalization of the population. As a control measure, the study adopted the purposive, rather than the random, sampling method in order to carefully select respondents knowledgeable on committee system and parliamentary affairs in Ghana's Fourth Republic, whose responses are more likely to be representative of the general situation of the issue under study.

Whatever the weaknesses of the qualitative method and the control methods applied, it is important that the research design is appropriate. According to Creswell and Clark (2007: 58), research design is the “procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies.” It is the overall plan, and it outlines procedures data collection, analysis and interpretation (Grey, 2014). It is a road map adopted in the conduct of research to find answers to specific “research questions as validly, objectively, accurately and economically as possible” (Kumar, 2014: 122). According to Kumar (2014: 13), “a research endeavour can be classified into descriptive, correlational, explanatory or exploratory.” The exploratory study is used to explore or make enquiries into an area of study where little is known, while the descriptive study makes a systematic description of a problem, phenomenon or situation (Kumar, 2014). A correlational study seeks to “discover or establish the existence of a relationship, association or interdependence between two or more aspects of a situation or phenomenon” (Kumar, 2014: 13). The explanatory study seeks to interpret a situation, problem or phenomenon explain, analyze, discuss and examine its relevance, causal agents, significance and effects. It seeks to provide answers to the “why” and “how” questions of a phenomenon (Grey, 2014; Kumar, 2014). It seeks to “clarify why and how there is a relationship between two aspects of a situation or phenomenon” (Kumar, 2014: 13). This study adopted the explanatory study because it enabled the researcher to explain the reasons and ways in which the committees of the Parliament of Ghana have performed between 2009 and 2020. To this end, this research used a number of study designs. These study designs, which basically, were the methods for data collection, are explained below.

Social research is conducted based on some research paradigms – interpretivism or social research, positivism, critical theory or critical rationalism, etc. This study is anchored on two research philosophies, namely, positivism and interpretivism or social constructivism. Positivism upholds

the scientific method of knowledge, and that knowledge should be based on observable and experiential facts. Hence, “experimentation, observation, and reason based on experience should be the foundation for understanding human behavior, and thus the only valid means of expanding knowledge and understanding (Majeed, 2019: 119). The application of positivist philosophy to this study enabled the researcher to examine the phenomena about the committee system of parliament based on observable and experiential facts to be able to establish cause-effect relationships and human behaviour in general.

Interpretivism is a philosophical approach to social research that emphasizes that the facts of social phenomena are nothing but the subjective interpretations of people (Elster, 2007; Walsham, 1995). It posits that knowledge of reality is a social construction based on the subjective meanings arising from people’s experiences that they direct towards certain objects (Eliaeson, 2002; McIntosh, 1997). In other words, interpretivism holds that human behaviour is the subjective interpretation of the environment. The application of interpretivism to this study is significant because it allowed the researcher to subject the meanings, experiences and social constructions of informants or participants in this study about committee system of parliament to critical interpretation and assessment.

4. 2 Methods for Data Collection

There are many methods for data collection used by social scientists, but “the commonly-sued methods are questionnaire, interviewing, direct observation, participant observation, case studies, life histories, the use of documentary evidence ... panel discussion and group discussion” (Twumasi, 1986: 24). Three methods for data collection were used in the collection of data for this study. These are interviews, questionnaires and document study.

4.2.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are crucial to the study of social phenomena. The design of questionnaires is crucial as far as the collection of accurate data for a particular study is concerned (Bulmer, 2004; Creswell, 2003; Sarantakos, 2005). As Bird (2009: 1310) pointed out, “questionnaire format, sequence and wording, the inclusion of classification, behavioural, knowledge and perception questions, and questionnaire length and output, need to be considered to ensure reliability, validity and sustained engagement of the participant.” To allow respondents to transition from one topic to another smoothly, it is necessarily that the questionnaires are arranged in a logical order (Sarantakos, 2005). To this end, the questions were categorized into different sections – the parliament of Ghana, debates at plenaries, activities of committees, committee debates, and committee reports. The questions were mainly open-ended. There were few close-ended questions, which were to elicit precise answers (Sarantakos, 2005). Closed-ended questions were also used because they are “easy to administer, easily coded and analysed, allow comparisons and quantification, and they are more likely to produce fully completed questionnaires while avoiding irrelevant responses” (Bird, 2009: 1310-1311). The closed-ended questions were designed based on the Five-Point Likert scale as it provides options which are convenient to respondents. These were: 1= strongly agree; 2= agree; 3= I am not sure; 4= disagree; and 5= strongly disagree. To widen the scope of answers of participants to pre-empt the tendency of limiting them to predefined answers, a number of caveats were made (McGuirk and O’Neill, 2005; Oppenheim, 1992). Where applicable, options such as “other, please specify” were added (McGuirk and O’Neill, 2005), while options such as “don’t know” or “not applicable” were added in other instances (Oppenheim, 1992). In addition, clear instructions, which described “how participants are expected to answer closed questions”, were given (Bird, 2009: 1311).

The majority of the questionnaire questions were open-ended. The open-ended questions were intended to elicit responses from respondents without any restrictions. The open-ended questions “require respondents to formulate a response in their own words and to express it verbally or in writing. Respondents are not steered in a particular direction by predefined response categories” (Züll, 2016: 1). In addition, the open-ended questions afforded participants freedom to give spontaneous answers (Oppenheim, 1992).

To validate the questionnaires as appropriate instrument for data collection for this study, the questionnaires were given out to peers in parliament for a pilot test. Research has shown that it is important to conduct a pilot test before rolling out research instruments – questionnaires and interviews (Dikko, 2016; Van Wijk and Harrison, 2013). As Shokani et al. (2018: 41) put it, “data collection is a critical stage that requires the researcher to test the instrument of data collection in order to ascertain whether the structure of the questions is appropriate, that they are clear and unambiguous and that they will yield the required information.” Pilot tests are significant because they enable researchers to determine shortfalls in the questions of their instruments to make revisions, amendments and restructuring of the wordings of the questions where appropriate to accomplish the goals of the research project (Dikko, 2016; Barbour, 2014; Kim, 2010). In the case of this study, the pilot test was significant because it enabled participants to point out repetitions and ambiguities in some of the questions for corrections.

4.2.2 Interviews

Another instrument used to collect data for this study is face-to-face interviews. Interviews are usually a kind of conversation between an interviewer and an interviewee with the sole aim of soliciting information from the interviewee about a particular described phenomenon (Kvale,

1996: 174). In the view of Schostak (2006: 54), interviews involve conversations between partners to gain in-depth information about a particular subject or topic in order to bring the perspectives of the interviewees to bear on the interpretation and analysis of the said topic or subject. The most common forms of conducting interviews are the one-on-one interviews and focus groups interviews (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). This study utilised the one-on-one form of interview because of the difficulty and inconvenience of getting interviewees together at a particular time and date for a focus group discussion. In addition, the surge of the new variant of the Coronavirus pandemic made it practically difficult for health reasons to apply the focus group interviews to this study.

Three types of interview questions were formulated for the interviews. These were structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview questions. The structured interview questions involved questions that sought to obtain immediate responses, usually in the form of 'yes' or 'no'. The use of the structured questions was intended to limit the freedom of the interviewees to wander around in their answers, and to limit the tendency of interviewees giving superfluous answers (Berg, 2007).

Some of the interview questions were semi-structured. Though the questions required a "yes" or "no" answer, they provided opportunities for the interviewees to explain their answer, make additional information and/or give examples. By so doing, the semi-structured interview questions "allowed depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005: 88). Due to the nuances of the committee system and the perceptions and perspectives of opinions about the performance of the committees, some of the interview questions were unstructured (open-ended). This is to give the researcher and the interviewees greater flexibility and freedom in the interview process as far as

the planning, implementing and organizing the interview were concerned (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). The unstructured questions provided latitude for interviewees to elaborate on issues; it also enabled the researcher latitude to ask follow-up questions at the spur of the moment, questions which were not originally part of the interview questions (Dörnyei, 2007: 136).

To enhance the interview process, a checklist of all the relevant areas of the study was used. According to Berg (2007: 39), the use of a checklist is significant because it “allows for in-depth probing while permitting the interviewer to keep the interview within the parameters traced out by the aim of the study.” Furthermore, a long period of three months was planned for interviews. This was to ensure that the schedules given by interviewees were adequately factored into the interview process.

Interviews were made with notable ex-committee Members of Parliament (MPs) of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic to obtain information about their activities, experiences, achievements and challenges of the committees. In addition, interviews were held with some heads and members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to gauge their assessment of the performance of selected committees of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic.

4.2.3 Documentary Study

A document is defined as “any written material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to some requests from the investigator” (Guba and Lincoln, 1981: 228). Document study is simply the critical study, review or evaluation of documents—both printed and electronic material – for facts about a particular phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007: 47). According to Atkinson and Coffey (1997), documents are “social facts”, and that they

are produced, distributed and utilised in socially organised ways. To gather data on the committee system of Ghana's Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Parliaments in the Fourth Republic, the researcher studied a number of documents – both primary and secondary documents. The primary documents utilised for this study included the Hansard, reports of parliamentary committees and newspaper reports. The secondary documents, which made commentaries and interpretations on the parliamentary committee systems included monographs and evaluations and assessments by CSOs and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In studying the documents, the researcher was mindful of the fact that document study is more than mere “recording facts”; it involves a reflective process that require the researcher to understand the “moral underpinnings of social inquiry” (Coles, 1997: 6). Furthermore, the researcher was guided by the fact that “documents do not stand alone” (Atkinson and Coffey 1997: 55). As such, the researcher studied the documents “as socially situated products” (Scott, 1990: 34).

The use of documents as research interment to gather data for this study is justified for two reasons. First, as some researchers have opined, institutional memoranda and reports, government pronouncements, census publications, diaries and many other written materials are veritable sources of data for social research (Bailey, 1982; 1994; Polit and Hungler 1991, Treece and Treece, 1982; Webb, Campbell, Schwarz and Sechrest, 1984). As Denscombe (1998: 163) puts it, “government publications and official statistics would seem to be an attractive proposition for the social researcher.” Secondly, the Hansard and reports of parliamentary committees of Ghana's Parliament in the Fourth Republic remain the obvious documents that provide insights into the works of parliamentary committees over the period of study.

The document study, especially the study of monographs, was made at the beginning of the research, and was continued in almost the entire duration of the research. Some of the documents were downloaded on line while others were obtained at the parliamentary research office. Each document was carefully studied to understand its context and content in order to be able to properly situate the data in this study.

4.2.4 Case Study

A case study design selects a case for the “basis of a thorough, holistic and in-depth exploration of the aspect(s)” for an extensive study (Kumar, 2014). It is a type of approach “in which a particular instance or a few carefully selected cases are studied intensively (Gilbert, as quoted in Kumar, 2014: 155). A case study approach “is a very useful design when exploring an area where little is known or where you want to have a holistic understanding of the situation, phenomenon” or the issue under study (Kumar, 2014: 155).

4.3 Committees of Parliament

The evolution of the committee system in Ghana’s Parliament has its origins in British colonial rule, which established committees “to support the work of the legislative councils and assemblies that were in force at the time” (Darfour, 2021: 341). Parliaments of Ghana prior to the Fourth Republic had the committee system with the First Republican Parliament (1961-1966) having five committees, namely, “the House Committee, the Committee of Privileges, the Public Accounts Committee, the Business Committee, and the Standing Order Committee” (Darfour, 2021: 342). Since the inception of the committee system in the First Republican Parliament, the committee system had become entrenched in Ghana’s Parliament.

There are thirty-one committees of Ghana’s Parliament in the Fourth Republic categorized into Standing, Select and Ad hoc committees (Darfour, 2021: 346). In total, there are fourteen Standing Committees, Sixteen Select Committees and one (1) Ad hoc committee of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Membership of committees of parliament are determined solely by the caucuses. Though caucuses may consider the experience and expertise of members in the determination of their membership of committees, they do not ignore the constitutional provision on committee membership. Article 103(4) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stipulates that “every member of Parliament shall be a member of at least one of the standing committees” (Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

4.3.1 Standing Committees

According to the Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana, a Standing Committee is “a select committee appointed under article 103(1) of the Constitution to enquire into and report on such matters as may be referred to it from time to time or on a continuous basis for the duration of Parliament” (Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana, 2000). These committees “deal with matters relating to the conduct and organisation of parliamentary business, privileges and rights of Members and other constitutional obligations” (Darfour, 2021: 346). There are fourteen Standing Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Table 4.1 shows the various Standing Committees, their respective terms of reference, membership and chairs.

Table 4. 1 Standing Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

No.	Name of Committee	Size	Jurisdiction	Chairperson
1	Selection	20	Assignment of Membership of committees	Speaker
2	Standing Orders	20	Draft and codify the rules of procedure of the House	Speaker
3	Business	20	Determination of the business of each Sitting and the order in which they shall be taken	Majority Leader

4	Privileges	30	Enquire into any complaint of contempt of Parliament or breach of privilege	1 st Deputy Speaker
5	Public Accounts	25	Examination of the Auditor General's Report on the Public Accounts of Ghana	Minority
6	Subsidiary Legislation	25	Examination of all subordinate legislation	Minority
7	House	25	Provision of services to Members and Staff including accommodation, catering medical care, library, research, etc.	Majority Leader
8	Finance	25	Financial and economy	Majority
9	Appointments	25	Vetting and approval of presidential appointments	1 st Deputy Speaker
10	Members Holding Office of Profit	25	Advise the Speaker on Ministers and Members who wish to be appointed to hold offices of profit or emolument	2 nd Deputy Speaker
11	Government Assurances	25	Pursue assurances, promises and undertaking given by Ministers from time to time	Majority
12	Gender and Children	25	Gender and Children	Majority
13	Judiciary	21	Judiciary	Majority
14	Special Budget	20	Responsible for the Budgets of the two other arms of government, Parliament and the Judiciary and constitutionally the independent bodies, including, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the National Media Commission (NMC), the Electoral Commission (EC), and the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE)	Majority Leader

Source: Darfour (2021: 346-347).

4.3.2 Select Committees

Select Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic are any “committee of enquiry composed of a number of Members specifically named or selected which proceeds by taking evidence, deliberation and making reports to the House on its findings” (Standing Orders

of the Parliament of Ghana, 2000). In the words of Darfour (2021: 348) “...Select Committees are responsible for conducting investigations and inquiries into the activities and administration of ministries, departments and agencies.” Table 4.2 shows the various Standing Committees, their respective terms of reference, membership and chairs.

Table 4. 2 Select Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

No.	Name of Committee	Size	Jurisdiction	Chairperson
1	Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs		Food, agriculture and cocoa affairs	Majority
2	Lands and Forestry	18	Lands and Forestry	Majority
3	Health	20	Health	Majority
4	Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs	18	Constitutional and Parliamentary Issues	Majority
5	Works and Housing	18	Public works and housing	Majority
6	Local Government and Rural Development	20	Local Government and Rural Development	Majority ⁷
7	Communications	18	Communications	Majority
8	Foreign Affairs	20	Foreign relations	Majority
9	Employment, Social Welfare and State Enterprises	20	State-owned enterprises, employment, labour and social welfare	Majority
10	Defence and Interior	18	Defence and internal affairs	Majority
11	Trade, Industry and Tourism	20	Trade, tourism and industry	Majority
12	Environment, Science and Technology	18	Environment, science, technology, research and development	Majority
13	Education	20	Education	Majority
14	Youth, Sports and Culture	18	Youth, sports and culture	Majority
15	Mines and Energy	18	Mines and energy	Majority
16	Roads and Transport	18	Roads and transport	Majority

Source: Darfour (2021: 348).

4.3.3 Special or Ad Hoc Committees

An Ad hoc Committee is “a select committee appointed to enquire into and report on a particular matter referred to it and thereafter to cease to exist” (Standing Orders of the Parliament of Ghana, 2000).



Table 4. 3 Tabular Representation of Reports of Some of the Ad hoc Committees of the Parliament of Ghana on Various Issues in the Fourth Republic

Date	Scope/Report	Composition		Recommendations	Conclusion
		NPP	NDC		
Jun. 2019 (7 th Parliament)	Appointment of an Auditor to Audit the accounts of the Office of the Auditor General	Hon. Adwoa Sarfo (Chair) Hon. Kofi Okyere Agyakum	Hon. James Klutse Avedzi	Amongst the partners that applied to undertake the Audit, the committee appointed Kwasi and partners (Chartered Accountants) to undertake the audit of the accounts of the Auditor General	The Auditor General is requested to ensure that there would be no frustrating factors that will disrupt the programme of work of the auditors
February 2018 (7 th Parliament)	To investigate the levy and collection of sums of money by the ministry of trade and industry from expatriate businesses and related matters during the Ghana expatriate businesses awards	Hon. Kwasi Ameyaw Kyeremeh (chair) Hon. Mark Assibey Yeboah Hon. Yaw Buabeng Asamoah	Hon. James Klutse Avedzi Hon. Dr. Domini Akurintingaw Awuni	That the Controller and Accountant general and the Ministry of Finance should consider in the formulation of the new regulation of the PFM Act, adequate provision to cater for the public private partnership arrangement and emerging or contemporary issues. The practice of some members of parliament trooping to the media to make allegation against highly placed officials must cease. The committee is of the view that members of parliament who indulge in such acts not to be heard in parliament if they should thereafter bring those parliament for parliament to deliberate on the matter.	The committee, after the hearing and the analysis and evaluation of evidence adduced before it has concluded that is no merit in the allegation levelled against the ministry of trade and industry as contained in the motion and which culminated in the setting up of the special committee
June 2017	To Investigate the effects of	Hon. Frank Annor Domprah	Hon. AlfreOkoe Vanderpuije	The minister of lands should submit to parliament a bill to amend the minerals and mining act, 2006	In order to arrest the current spate of environmental

(7 th Parliament)	sand winning in the country	(chair) Hon. Andy Kwame Appiah Kubi Hon. Samiu Kwadwo Nuamah	Hon. Sophia Karen Ackuaku	(Act 703) to decentralize the acquisition of mining licenses. An amendment of section 5(5) of the minerals and mining act 2006 (Act 703) to exempt all contracts relating to sand winning from parliament ratification. The establishment of a task force at all districts where sand winning operation are prevalent.	degradation emanating from illegal sand winning and achieve sustainable land use such that the needs of the present can be met without comprising the needs of the future generation, the committee strongly suggest for effective implementation of its reports
March 2017 (7 th Parliament)	Bribery allegation made against the chair and some members of the Appointment Committee	Hon. Joe Gharthey Hon. Ben Abudallah Banda Hon. Ama Pooma Boateng	Hon. Magnus Kofi Amoatey Hon. Benson Tongo Baba	The committee concluded that Mon. Mahama Ayariga, the member of parliament for Bawku central is in contempt of parliament in respect of the standing orders of parliament. Having established this, the committee recommends that Hon. Mahama Ayariga be reprimanded by the right Hon speaker in accordance with the standing orders of parliament. The committee further recommends that Hon. Ayariga renders an unqualified apology to the house purging himself of contempt	The committee took notice of the fact that Hon. Mahama Ayariga is to not known to have engage in acts that tend to disrupt the smooth running of business of parliament. Neither does he have the penchant nor reputation of engaging in activity which can bring the image and dignity of parliament into disrepute. Accordingly, the committee adopted the recommendations relating to the sanctions adequate in the circumstance.
Nov. 2014	The code of conduct for	Hon. Paapa Owusu	Hon. A.S.K. Bagbin (Chair)	The compilation of a guide or manual for the house and members of parliament.	The committee calls on members to unanimously

(6th Parliament)	members of parliament	Ankomah Hon. Isaac Osei Hon. Ignatius Baffour Awuah	Hon. Ahmed Ibrahim Hon. Laadi Ayii Ayamba Hon. George Kofi Arthur	The establishment of a standard and ethics committee to enforce code of conduct. The establishment of a register of interest for members to formally declare their financial, financial, business, propriety and other monetary interest in the register	adopt and apply themselves to the rules therein.
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Source: Extracts from the Hansard, Parliament of Ghana, 2014-2021.



4.4 Sample frame and sample design

The research was structured to ensure that a total of seven committees from the Select Committees, Standing Committees and Ad hoc Committees were chosen for a case study. Furthermore, the study was structured to ensure that the experiences and views of some key Members of Parliament who have served in the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic were brought to bear on the analysis of the performance of the parliamentary committee system in Ghana. At the same time, the study sought to ensure that public views as encapsulated in the views of CSOs and NGOs about the performance of parliamentary committees in Ghana were tapped and utilized. Consequently, a sample size of 40 was chosen for the study. The sample was purposively selected for this study. This is because purposive sampling is not only synonymous with qualitative research method, but also it is most effective when a study seeks data from people with expert knowledge on a particular phenomenon (Palys, 2008). Of the 40 participants, twenty-five (25) were selected from five (5) committees – Appointments, Public Accounts, Finance, Health, and Mines and Energy. For each committee, five (5) participants (made up of two (2) NDC MPs, two (2) NPP MPs and one (1) clerk) were selected (Table 5.1). On the part of the leadership of Parliament, five (5) each were selected from the Minority and Majority Caucuses while the remaining five (5) participants were ministers of states of past regimes from 2016 to 2021, who doubled as MPs (Table 5.1). The participants' answers to the interview questions were recorded, and later transcribed. The transcribed data were put on the Excel spreadsheet for analysis.

Table 4. 4 Sample Frame

Item	Profession of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Committee Members	20	50%
2	Clerks of Parliament	5	12.5%
3	Past Ministers of State	5	12.5%
3	Leadership of Parliament	10	25%
	Total	40	100%

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

4.4.1 Committees Selected for Study

This research did not deal with all the committees; it selected five committees for study. The committees selected for study are Finance, Public Accounts, Appointments, Mines and Energy, and Health Committee. In all, three Standing Committees (Finance, Public Accounts and Appointments) and two Select Committees (Mines and Energy, and Health) were selected for this Study.

For each committee, a total of six (6) participants were selected for study based on their experiences as previous and current members of those committees. Of the 20 MPs selected for study, five each were sampled from the 5 committees selected for study, making a total of 25; one (1) minister of state for each committee with previous experiences of the committee system was

surveyed, and one (1) clerk of the five committees were also selected for interviews. Of the leadership participants of the leadership of parliament, five (5) each were selected from the NDC and NPP. Members of the leadership of parliament surveyed were made up of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. The distributions of the MPs selected for study from the various committees are represented in Tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 below.



Table 4. 5 Standing Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic Selected for Study

No.	Name of Committee	Number of Members	Terms of Reference	Reason(s) for Selection
1	Public Accounts	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of the Auditor General’s Report on the Public Accounts of Ghana • Exercise an oversight function over the Executive on public expenditure on behalf of Ghana’s parliament 	Public Accounts Committee was selected because of public interest in its work as well the extent to which it has been able to exercise oversight function over the Executive on public expenditure on behalf of Ghana’s Parliament.
2	Finance	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examines agreements on international loans. • Monitors the foreign exchange receipts and payments or transfers of the Bank of Ghana in and outside Ghana and reports on these to Parliament. • Examines Bills and inquiries relating to finance and the economy. 	Selected due to its cross-cutting mandate as well as the importance of dealing with budget and loan agreements.
3	Appointments	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetting of presidential appointments. • Makes recommendations for the approval or otherwise of presidential appointments. 	<p>Selected for study because of intense public interest in its work in scrutinizing government appointees.</p> <p>Selected for study because of the hullabaloo that engendered the work of the Appointments Committee of the Eighth Parliament.</p>

Source: Darfour (2021).



Table 4. 6 Select Committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic Selected for Study

No.	Name of Committee	Number of Members	Two Key Terms of Reference	Reason(s) for Selection
1	Health	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examines matters relating to Local Government. Examines matters relating to Rural Development issues 	To Examine the issues of local go development in the history of the in the Fourth Republic
2	Mines and Energy	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examines matters relating to mines referred to it. Examines matters relating to energy referred to it 	Examine the energy pacts signed Ghana in a to overcome the energ Examine the anti-gallamsey proje of Ghana from 2017 to 2020.

Source: Darfour (2021).



Table 4. 7 Sample Size and Distribution

Committees	Population	Sample Size and Distribution				
		NPP	NDC	Clerks	Ministers of State	Total
Appointments Committee	5	2	2	1	1	6
Finance Committee	5	2	2	1	1	6
Public Accounts Committee	5	2	2	1	1	6
Health Committee	5	2	2	1	1	6
Energy and Mines Committee	5	2	2	1	1	6
Leadership of Majority & Minority Caucuses	10	5	5	-	-	10
Total	40	15	15	5	5	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

4.5 Data collection

Assembling data is an important component part of research, and attention is usually paid to how data is accumulated and processed (Sekaran, 2003; Fowler, 1990). As indicated above, a number of instruments are utilised to garner data for this study. It is important to note that the use of interviews and questionnaires to collect data involve some ethical issues (Kumar, 2013). To ensure that questionnaires and interviews were properly administered, the researcher used a self-distribution and administration method. At the outset, the researcher started the procedure by

talking to a randomly selected mockup of the population to gauge their views, interest or disinterest in the research study. Before interviews were conducted, consent was first sought from the participants. Thereafter, a set of survey questions were handed over personally to the participants to go through and get their responses ready for scheduled interviews. To ensure that the identities of respondents were not disclosed, the survey questions were designed to capture only general biographic details (age, sex and occupation) without names and other personal data that may disclose the identity of the respondents.

4.6 Data Capturing and Data Editing

Data capturing is concerned with how data in a survey is collected or captured for processing (Lyberg and Kasprzyk, 1997). Data preparation is a critical stage in research as it requires utmost care in handling data to ensure its accuracy is not tinged by extraneous factors. As Shokani et al. (2018: 38) put it, “collection of data is regarded as the core activity in social research. It is essential to specify the methods to be utilised to generate and record data, and to justify why these methods are considered to be the most appropriate.” Data collection times are situational, as data can be collected in a point in time or in a number of points in time (Blaikie, 2010). In this study, data collection was done in phases due to the diverse instruments used. Data from monographs were collected by noting down and extracting points about parliamentary committees on computer in a word document. To complement the data recorded electronically on computer, the researcher made copies of the relevant portions of documents for safekeeping.

In the case of field data, data from interviews were collected by recording the interview conversation. Before conducting interviews, the researcher made a self-introspection to determine his biases, subjectivities and values. This was significant because it helped the researcher to

determine his values that could impinge on the quality of his research and data collection from interviews (Polit and Beck, 2012). It helped the researcher to acknowledge the impact that his values can have on research process and how the data is interpreted (Barbour, 2014). The researcher was mindful of the challenges of conducting interviews in local language and the “use [of] the services of a translator” (Nikander, 2008; Temple and Young, 2004). As a result, all the interviews were conducted in English. After each interview, the researcher took one or two days to listen to the tapes (between 45 minutes and 1 hour, 10 minutes’ durations) to listen to and transcribe each tape.

4.7 Data Analysis

Data used for this study was analysed qualitatively. Content analyses were made of each data to determine the extent of their appropriateness to the study or portions of the study. The essence of the analysis was to determine the extent to which data obtained from research was in line with the criteria of Lincoln and Guba (1985), that is, the credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability of data.

4.8 Ethical Issues

There is no doubt that ethical issues can impinge on the quality of research. Adherence to ethical practices ensures that the quality of research is not affected by commission or omission of ethical issues (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Ethics in research seeks to “protect human dignity, and to promote justice, equality, truth and trust” (Shokani, 2018: 75). To ensure adherence to ethical practices, the research was conducted taking into cognizance the privacy of participants. Participants were informed that the research was for academic purposes and assured them the confidentiality of their identities and responses. Participants were ensured that their identities

would not be disclosed, and that they would not be held liable or suffer any risk from their responses for this study. In addition, participants were informed that they reserved the right to withdraw from the research if they encountered any inconveniences in the course of the research. By adhering to ethical practices, the researcher was able to ensure that the rights, dignity, well-being and safety of participants were protected (Broom, 2006). In addition, the researcher adhered to the ethical practical, as he was mindful that “unethical research may harm the individual, the institution, and the profession as a whole, and impact upon the future willingness of potential participants to engage in research” (Gorman, 2007:13)

4.9 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The methodology and research instrument of this study seemed reasonable and appropriate for the research questions and objectives to be addressed. It used the qualitative approach and a combination of instruments – questionnaires, interviews and documentary sources. Even though there are some weaknesses in them, the researcher was of the view that they are appropriate instruments suitable for this study. Some of the weaknesses would be addressed by the introduction of control mechanisms such as the use of context-specific question, purposive sampling targeting knowledgeable people on the committee system and parliamentary affairs in Ghana’s Fourth Republic, and the use of a combination of structured, semi-structured and unstructured questions rather than relying on one particular structure of questions. Two research philosophies underpinned this study – constructivism and interpretivism or social constructivism. A case study approach was used, and five committees made up of three Standing Committees, and two Select Committees and were selected for in-depth analysis of the committee system of Ghana’s Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Parliaments of the Fourth Republic.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to an analysis of the data collected from field research, which was based on answers of respondents to the interview questions administered and secondary sources. The overarching objective of the thesis is to assess the effectiveness of the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic in promoting or contributing to the realization of the mandates of Parliament. It has the following specific objectives:

- Assess the extent to which the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic promoted or contributed to the realization of the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body;
- Assess the committee system in the execution of the business of Parliament based on evidence and perceptions of some respondents on the mandates of the committees, their outputs and outcomes;
- Compare and contrast some of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020 based on their similarities and differences;
- Discuss the extent of executive influence on the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments; and
- Examine the implications of the findings for the theoretical, comparative and empirical literature.

The chapter is therefore structured on the first four objectives while the fifth objective will be examined in chapter six.

5.1 Collection of Data

As already indicated in Chapter Four, the main research instrument used for data collection was interviews. Forty (40) participants (respondents) were selected for the study (Table 5.1). Of the 40 participants, twenty-five (25) were selected from five (5) committees – Appointments, Public Accounts, Finance, Health, and Mines and Energy. For each committee, six (6) participants (made up of two (2) NDC MPs, two (2) NPP MPs, one (1) clerk) and one past MP-minister were selected (Table 5.1). On the part of the leadership of Parliament, five (5) each were selected from the Minority and Majority Caucuses while the remaining five (5) participants were past ministers who also doubled as MPs (Table 5.1). The participants’ answers to the interview questions were recorded, and later transcribed. The transcribed data were put on the Excel spreadsheet for analysis.

Table 5. 1 The Breakdown of Respondents/Participants

Committees	Population	Sample Size and Distribution				Total
		NPP	NDC	Clerks	CSOs/Media	
Appointments Committee	5	2	2	1	-	5
Finance Committee	5	2	2	1	-	5
Public Accounts Committee	5	2	2	1	-	5
Health Committee	5	2	2	1	-	5
Energy and Mines Committee	5	2	2	1	-	5

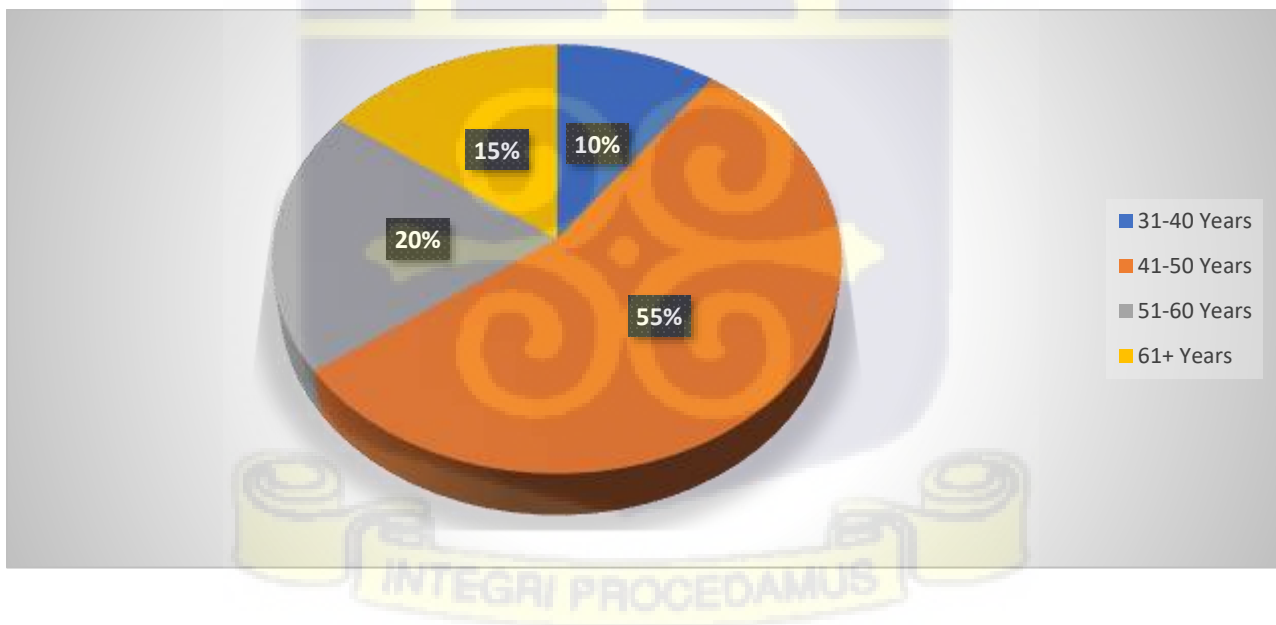
Leadership of Majority & Minority Caucuses	10	5	5	-	-	10
Past Ministers	5	-	-	-	5	5
Total	40	15	15	5	5	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

5.2 Sample Characteristics

Of the forty (40) participants, four (4) of them (10%) were within the age brackets of 31 to 40 years; twenty-two (22), representing (55%) were within the age bracket of 41 to 50 years; eight (8) were between 51 to 60 years; and the remaining six (6), representing 15% were 60 years and above (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5. 1: Percentages of the Age Brackets of Respondents



As part of measures to ensure gender inclusivity in the research, efforts were made to include more female participants. However, due to the male dominance of the leadership of parliament and the

plenary in general, as well as the reluctance of fifteen female MPs to participate in the study, gender parity could not be achieved. In the 6th Parliament, for example, there were 30 female MP out of the 275 MPs (14 female and 16 female MPs from the NDC and NPP respectively). In the 7th Parliament, the number of female MPs rose from 30 to 37, consisting of 13 and 24 female MPs from the NDC and NPP respectively. However, the number of female MPs in the 8th Parliament increased to 40, 20 each from both the NDC and NPP (Nyabor, 2021). These statistics show a gradual increase in the number of female MPs over the years. Of the forty (40) participants, only twelve (12), representing 30%, were females – made up of ten (10) MPs and two (2) CSOs/media personnel. The remaining twenty (28) – twenty-five (25) MPs and three (3) CSOs/media personnel were males.

The tenure of office of the thirty-five (35) MPs selected showed that all of them served for more than two terms as MPs. While one (1) was serving his third term, three (3) were serving their fourth term. Nine (9) MPs were serving their fifth term while the remaining twelve had served for more than five terms in parliament. Given that thirty-one (31) MPs had served five (5) times or more, they had considerable knowledge in parliamentary practice and the committee system.

5.3 Analysis of Data

5.3.1 Contribution of the Committee System of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic to the realization of the mandates of Parliament

To elicit responses from respondents, the researcher posed the question: How does the committee system execute the business of Parliament based on its legislative, financial control, deliberative and oversight functions? However, before delving into the analysis of the responses, it is important to precede it with the functions of the parliamentary committees in the Fourth Republic. According

to Darfour (2021: 345), “parliamentary committees perform oversight and legislative functions ... [though] the monitoring of government agencies and overseeing their adherence to regulations, laws, policies and budgets approved ... [and through] the consideration of Bills at the committee stage of the legislative process.” Article 103(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana spells out their functions as follows:

Committees of Parliament shall be charged with such functions, including the investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministers and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals and legislations (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Order 211 of the Standing Orders of Parliament stipulates that:

The deliberations of a Committee shall be confined to the matter referred to it by the House and any extension or limitation to it made by the House and, in the case of a Committee on a Bill, to the Bill referred to it and relevant amendments. Only Members may vote or move motions at sittings of a Committee (Hansard, 2000).

In addition, Order 210 spells out the urgency with which committees should deal with issues referred to them:

A Committee to which a Bill or other business has been referred shall meet to consider such business on the day and the hour named by the Chairman of the Committee in respect of that business. If the consideration of the business is not completed at that sitting the Committee shall meet further to consider the business on such days of the week as may be appointed by the Committee (Hansard,2000).

The sittings of the committees are held all year round to discuss matters pending (Darfour, 2021).

Largely, committee deliberations are made through consensus-building. As Darfour (2021: 363) pointed out, “the pattern of interactions and deliberations in committees has always been by consensus and a favourable report made to plenary. The committees rarely reject government’s proposals but will adapt and modify them ... More than 90 per cent of decisions have been taken based on consensus.” This notwithstanding, consensus-building was not always the case. In some

few instances, there were disagreements between the Majority and Minority sides (Darfour, 2021). This was particularly the case of the Appointments Committee. For instance, in the Seventh Parliament, the Minority members refused to approved the appointment of “Hon Boakye Agayrko, Minister-designate for Energy, Ms Otiko Afisah Djaba, Minister-designate for Children and Social Protection, and Ms. Evelyn Kumi Richardson, Bono Regional Minister-designate ... because the Members of the Committee disagreed with their nomination” (Darfour, 2021: 263-264). As a result, the approval of the said nominees was done by majority decision (Darfour, 2021). Similarly, the Minority disagreed with the Majority on the Energy Committee on “the motion for rescission on the AMERI deal that was referred to the Committee” (Darfour, 2021: 264). Consequently, the Minority boycotted the consideration of the motion, and the decision by the Committee was made by majority decision (Darfour, 2021).

The field work provided insights into the work of the committee system and its contributions to the deliberative, legislative, oversight, financial control and representative functions of parliament. In terms of parliament’s execution of its financial control function, the Finance Committee (FC) deals with all financial matters and those pertaining to the economy of Ghana (Darfour, 2021). The Committee consists of 25 members “to which shall be referred Bills, inquiries and other matters relating to finance and the economy of Ghana generally” (Parliament of Ghana, 2000).

Chapter 13 of the 1992 Constitution gives Parliament enormous financial control powers. For instance, Article 174(1) states that “no taxation shall be imposed otherwise than by or under the authority of an Act of Parliament.” Similarly, Parliament is given the power to control the public funds of Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 1992: Article 175). Furthermore, Article 178 gives it the power to determine and monitor the expenditure of public funds:

No moneys shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund except (a) to meet expenditure that is charged on that Fund by this Constitution or by an Act of Parliament; or (b) where the issue of those moneys has been authorized – (i) by an Appropriation Act; or (ii) by a supplementary estimate approved by a resolution of Parliament passed for the purpose; or (iii) by an Act of Parliament enacted under article 179 of this Constitution; or (iv) by rules or regulations made under the Act of Parliament in respect of trust moneys paid into the Consolidated Fund (Republic of Ghana, 1992)

Of the 40 respondents, 18 of them (representing 45%) were of the view that the committee system plays a key role in the execution of parliament’s financial control function. According to them, the Finance Committee (FC) of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments was critical in this matrix. According to a respondent, “parliament’s exercise of its financial control function over the executive depends largely on the FC. Without the financial expertise that the Committee brought to bear on government’s financial transactions, it would have been difficult for the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana to exercise any considerable financial control over government” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 5th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). Furthermore, an MP emphasized that:

Whatever the assessment of the opposition and the general public, the FC had, most of the time, discharged its functions judiciously. It scrutinized government loans and all financial dealings carefully to ensure value for money. Even in the 7th Parliament where the NPP had an overwhelming majority, the Finance Committee did everything to disapprove some loans and transactions when it had the cause to do so (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 6, 2022).

The professional expertise that the FC of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments brought to bear on the scrutiny of government’s financial transactions and policies enabled the House to exercise financial control over the government. In the words of a respondent, “the Finance Committee has been largely professional in the discharge of its functions. With the exception of some few transactions such as the Public Distribution System (PDS), Agyapa Gold Royalties deal, among

others, the work of the Committee had been stupendous. Through its work, parliament was able to put the brakes on the Executive to ensure financial discipline” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 7th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022). In fact, “government expenditures and withdrawals from Public Funds established by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and an Act of Parliament were scrutinized by the Finance Committee, which submitted a report to parliament for discussion and approval” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022).

With particular reference to the financial policy of the government, particularly its fiscal policy, the work of the FC enabled parliament to exercise its financial control over the Executive. Of the 18 respondents who held this view, 12 of them (66.67%) argued that the FC’s scrutiny of the budget statements over the years (between 2009 and 2020) aimed at ensuring financial efficiency was an extension of the exercise of parliament’s financial control over the Executive. Respondents did not make reference to any existing documents, whether primary or secondary sources, to support their assertions. Respondents’ rating of the financial control function of parliament through the committee system was not satisfactory. Of the 40 respondents, 28 (representing 70%) asserted that parliament’s exercise of its oversight function through the committee system was weak; 10 respondents (25%) rated the oversight function of parliament to be satisfactory; and remaining 2 respondents (5%) said the oversight function of parliament to be good.

Other committees of parliament, notably the AC, PAC and EC, also played a critical role to exert financial control over the Executive. Of the total 40 respondents, 12 (representing 30%) said the combined work of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments laid the groundwork to exercise financial control functions over the Executive. As an MP argued, “all committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments diligently scrutinized all agreements, government projects

and expenditures brought before them to ensure value for money; it is not only the duty of the Financial Committee. Agreements and projects without good financial justifications were referred back to government for clarifications and rectifications” (NPP MP, Field Work, October 13, 2022).

Article 103(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stipulates the central role that the committee system plays in the execution of parliament’s oversight function. They are “are charged with such functions, including the investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministries and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals for legislations” (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Thirty-five (35) respondents (87.5%) held the view that, though the committee system plays a critical oversight role, the oversight function only exists in theory. In practice, the committee system is a toothless bulldog as far as the exercise of the oversight function of parliament is concerned. According to one respondent, “there are many tools used by parliament to advance its oversight responsibility one of which is inquiries and investigations. However, the exercise of this function is problematic” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022). In essence, the “committees exercise powers that dovetail into the oversight function of parliament. The specific functions of each committee are carried out as an integral part of the oversight functions of parliament. However, the problem is that the exercise of the function is not effective in practice” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). Though the oversight powers of the committees are so comprehensive that no instruction is given to a committee “to do which it is already empowered to do or to deal with a question beyond the scope of a bill or matter” (Republic of Ghana, 1992, Order 192(2)), “it is difficult to exercise the powers in practice. For instance, without the powers of prosecution, the committees of parliament find it practically difficult to fully exercise their

oversight function effectively” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 5th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022).

The remaining 5 respondents (12.5%) expressed doubts about the quality of the oversight functions of the committees. According to them, the politicization of the work of the committees has been prevalent in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments, and that the political lenses applied to their work impeded the execution of their oversight functions. As one respondent put it, “the political rivalry between the NDC and the NPP sometimes filtered into the work of the committees, thus making members to consider matters before a committee from the lenses of their political parties” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 6th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022). There is no empirical data to support this claim. Suffice it, however, to add that the claim is rooted in public perception of the politicization of the work of the committee system of parliament.

There are, however, justifiable basis for the perception that there is Executive control over parliament. First, some of the Members of Parliament (MPs) are included in the Executive. Hence, “as those MPs served as both members of committees and the Executive, they tended to soften their stance or compromise their position in the execution of the functions of their respective committees” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 23, 2022). The situation where MPs serve as board members of state agencies and serve as Executive members of government effectively weakens Parliament’s power to exercise its oversight responsibility over the Executive (Darfour, 2021).

Article 106(2) the 1992 Constitution indicates that “the power of Parliament to make laws shall be exercised by bills passed by Parliament and assented to by the President” (Republic of Ghana,

1992). Besides, Article 109 gives the Parliament the legislative powers to pass laws to regulate professional bodies in Ghana (Republic of Ghana, 1992). However, Article 107 provides the limits of its legislative powers:

Parliament shall have no power to pass any law – (a) to alter the decision or judgement of any court as between the parties subject to that decision or judgment; or (b) which operates retrospectively to impose any limitations on or to adversely affect the personal rights and liberties of any person or to impose a burden, obligation or liability on any person except in the case of a law enacted under articles 178 to 182 of this Constitution (Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

Respondents were asked the question: “In what ways does the committee system contribute to the execution of the legislative function of Parliament? Of the 40 respondents, 7 (17.5%) held the view that parliament works through the committee system to execute its legislative function. Without it, “the legislative function of parliament would be handicapped as it undertakes enormous work to provide a basis for the passage or rejection of bills into law” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 6th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022). Hence, for parliament to be successful in the execution of its legislative functions, “it needs an effective and efficient committee system to do all the ground work” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 12, 2022).

On the other hand, 33 respondents (82.5%) were of the view that the contributions of the committee system to the legislative function of parliament is sometimes debatable. To them, “the committee system is a rubber-stamp as far as the execution of parliament’s legislative function is concerned” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 6th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022). One of the reasons advanced in support of this assertion was the frequency of approval of bills brought before the committee system. As one respondent

argued, “nearly every bill brought before the committees of parliament since the 5th Parliament was approved by the committees of parliament, and eventually passed into law by the plenary. From the point of view of quantitative analysis of the approval of bills brought before the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments, one can validly conclude that the committee system is a rubber-stamp. It merely approves bills without much ado” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 5th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). One other reason for this conclusion was executive influence of the committee system. Citing the perceived influence of the committees by the Executive’s deliberate use of the certificate of urgency by them, respondents argued that the committee system is a rubber-stamp in the exercise of parliament’s legislative function because the committee system lacked power to insulate itself from Executive influence. Furthermore, the respondents averred that there was a deliberate abuse of the mode of the exercise of the legislative powers of parliament by the leadership of some committees, notably the Appointments Committee and the Finance Committee in the discharge of their business. Respondents cited article 106(13) which empowered committees to determine a bill as urgent in support of their argument. Thus, hiding behind article 106(3), some committees acted in ways that did not ensure critical scrutiny of bills at the committee level before their passage into law by parliament.

The committee system plays an important role in the discharge of the deliberative function of parliament. Conventionally, the decisions of the Parliament “are based on consensus, and it is only on some few matters that the House has taken decisions without reaching an agreement” (Darfour, 2021: 108). Thirty-seven (37) respondents (92.5%) argued that the work of parliament is largely executed through the committee system, which uses the

deliberative principle to ensure consensus-building (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022). Consensus-building was used to take most decisions, including the approval and rejection of ministerial nominees of the government as well as the introduction of some bills.

On the other hand, the remaining 3 respondents (7.5%) argued that the committee system did not facilitate the execution of the deliberative function of parliament because of the partisanship that characterized its work. According to these respondents, the political rivalry at the committee level led to situations where the Majority used their numerical advantage to force their decisions on the committees.

5.3.2 The Work of the Committee System in the Execution of the Business of Parliament

Article 113(1) of the 1992 Constitution stipulates that “subject to clause (2) of this article, Parliament shall continue for four years from the date of its first sitting and shall then stand dissolved”. Furthermore, parliamentary sittings consist of sessions, which:

shall be held at such place within Ghana and shall commence at such time as the Speaker may, by constitutional instrument, appoint. A session of Parliament shall be held at least once a year, so that the period between the last sitting of Parliament in one session and the first sitting of parliament in the next session does not amount to twelve months (Republic of Ghana, 1992: Article 112 (1 & 2))

The calendar of the Parliament is prepared by its Business Committee. It consists of a host of activities to be undertaken. Usually, the three key activities that form the core of the business of the Parliament are government business, parliamentary or legislative business, and private members business. Whereas government business is the business that emanates from the government such as budgets, legislative instruments, policy proposals, financial transactions or loans, among others, a private member’s business is made up of statements and questions of MPs,

as well as petitions, motions and bills from MPs (Darfour, 2021). The legislative/parliamentary business falls outside the remits of government business and private member's business (Darfour, 2021). It includes "oversight reports of Committees, Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, Reports of the Government Assurances Committee, Reports of the Committee on Privileges as well as investigations and inquiries undertaken by Committees" (Darfour, 2021: 198).

The overarching conclusion drawn from the responses of participants is that the committee system plays a central role in the execution of government business. On behalf of parliament, the committees subjected government business to critical scrutiny for value for money. Of the 40 respondents, 34 (representing 85%) held the view that the committees applied a culture of critical scrutiny to all government businesses brought before them. Assessing the work of committees of parliament in relation to the scrutiny of government business, a participant averred that "the committees discharged parliamentary business; discussed matters referred to them after a careful scrutiny of the documents, and presented reports to parliament for discussion" (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 12, 2022). Another respondent argued that the committee system is central to the business of the Parliament. According to him, "the committees scrutinized proposed bills and documents of government business brought before parliament. Usually, when a bill is read for the first time, it is referred to the appropriate committee or joint committee for deliberation. As part of the scrutiny of government business, "committees of parliament undertook a number of activities. Some of them include joint stakeholders' meetings, taking inputs from the public, inviting the Minister responsible for the bill, among others, and would submit a report to parliament within three months" (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 18, 2022). According to an NDC MP, a committee may be allowed to exceed the three-month time ultimatum for the sake of financial expediency (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). Another respondent argued that "due to the fact that

the determination of government business was predicated on careful scrutiny of all available documents, the reports of the committees presented to the plenary, if based on consensus, largely determined the position of parliament. The approval of government businesses or their rejection by parliament is contingent upon the work of the committees (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022).

The remaining 6 respondents (15%) argued that the committees of parliament of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were not critical in the scrutiny of government business. According to them, the failure of the committees to be critical in the scrutiny of government business was due to two factors – the numerical advantage of the Majority and the extent to which the whip system was applied. According to these respondents, the whip system often turned committee affairs into inter-party rivalries between the NPP and the NDC. The respondents argued that both the Majority and Minority caucuses usually used the whip system to animate the positions and actions of their members, and that the application of the whip system to the work of the committees tended to make them partisan. Hence, debates at the committee level on any business were appropriated by the Majority and Minority caucuses “to amplify their positions” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 12, 2022). In short, the use of the whip system to animate the position of the caucuses overshadowed national and collective interest of parliament in the discharge of its business. This is likely to continue to be the case due to the duopolistic nature of Ghana’s democracy in the Fourth Republic that pitches the NPP and the NDC against each other.

Another factor that negatively affected the committee system is the numerical strength of the Majority and Minority caucuses. According to 12 respondents (30% of the total respondents), in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana, the numerical differences between the Majority

and the Minority caucuses were tilted in favour of the ruling parties. Consequently, “the decisions of the committees were, by and large, the decisions of the Majority, which also reflected in the aggregate decision of parliament” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 4, 2022). To determine the ‘power of numbers’ in parliamentary affairs, it is important to indicate the strength of the caucuses in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments (Table 5.2).

Table 5. 2 The Strength of the Caucuses in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments

Parliament	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	Independent	Total
Fifth Parliament	116	107	2	1	4	230
Sixth Parliament	148	122	1	1	3	275
Seventh Parliament	106	169	-	-	-	275

Source: Extract from the Parliament of Ghana

From Table 5.2 above, the NDC had the majority Members of Parliament in the 5th and 6th Parliaments. With 116 MPs, as against 114 MPs of the Minority (the combined strength of NPP, PNC, CPP and Independent MPs), NDC had a slight majority. This numerical strength could be further strengthened by lobbying the combined total of PNC, CPP and Independent Minority MPs to the side of the NDC. Similarly, with an obvious majority of 148 out of 275 MPs, the numbers of the NDC MPs in the 6th Parliament was enough to tilt the tables of deliberations in parliament

to its favour. In the same vein, the ‘power of numbers’ worked in favour of the NPP in the 7th Parliament. The party had an overwhelming majority of 169 out of a total of 275 MPs in parliament.

5.3.3 Executive Influence on the Committee System of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana’s Fourth Republic

To discuss the ways in which the executive influenced the committee system of parliament, the researcher asked the following questions: What factors influenced the work of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana to execute their functions or tasks? In what ways does the executive influence the work of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana? The responses of the 40 respondents are shown in Table 5.3.

From Table 5.3 indicates the following four views of respondents on the committees:

- The committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments were independent in theory but, in practice, the executive exerted a lot of influence on them;
- The whip system influenced the membership and work of the committees to the extent that their decisions were based on parochial party interest;
- The work of the committees and parliament in general were undermined by a lack of financial, quality human resources and other exigencies; and
- The work of the committees was influenced by other exigencies such as friendship, ethnicity, regionalism, religion, etc. This is usually the case when it comes to the

appointment of ministers. It should be emphasized that, these are all assertions that lacked empirical proof.

These views were mentioned 10, 8, 7 and 6 times, and were ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, respectively. It is instructive to note that some of the respondents were of the view that the committees did not work independently; rather, the executive exerted influence on them. Ten out of the 40 respondents (25%) were of the view that the work of parliament was affected by executive manipulations. According to one respondent, “the influence comes by way of motivation, for instance, monetary influence.” The executive influenced the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments with monetary inducements, which were sometimes given to members on the blind side of the leadership of the committees” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, September 13, 2022).

There is, however, no unanimity from respondents on the influence of the executive on the committees. Of the total 40 respondents, four (representing 10%) held the view that the executive did not exert control over the committees in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments. In the view of a respondent, despite the interest and influence of the executive in the work of the committees, “it cannot determine what Parliament should do” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 12, 2022). Another respondent was also of the view that the committees carried out their functions devoid of executive influence:

I agree that issues were discussed at the committee level based on merit and not partisan politics. This is because at the level, it is not about a political party; it is about the nation. Hence, the committee members worked together and agreed on certain amendments, if any. Even sometimes, on the floor of Parliament, there was the possibility of some members of the Minority side proposing an amendment which would be supported by a member from the Majority side. In reality, therefore, the committees worked independently for the common good of Ghana devoid of executive influence (NPP MP, Field Work, October 6, 2022).

In another perspective, it would appear that the “so-called” executive influence of the committees is executive-legislative relationship in Ghana’s democracy (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 5, 2022). There is “a symbiotic relationship between the executive and legislative arms of government. What the public sees as executive influence of parliament or its committee system is nothing but the symbiotic relationship between the executive and the legislature. It is a cooperation between the two arms, but not an influence of the executive over the legislature” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022).

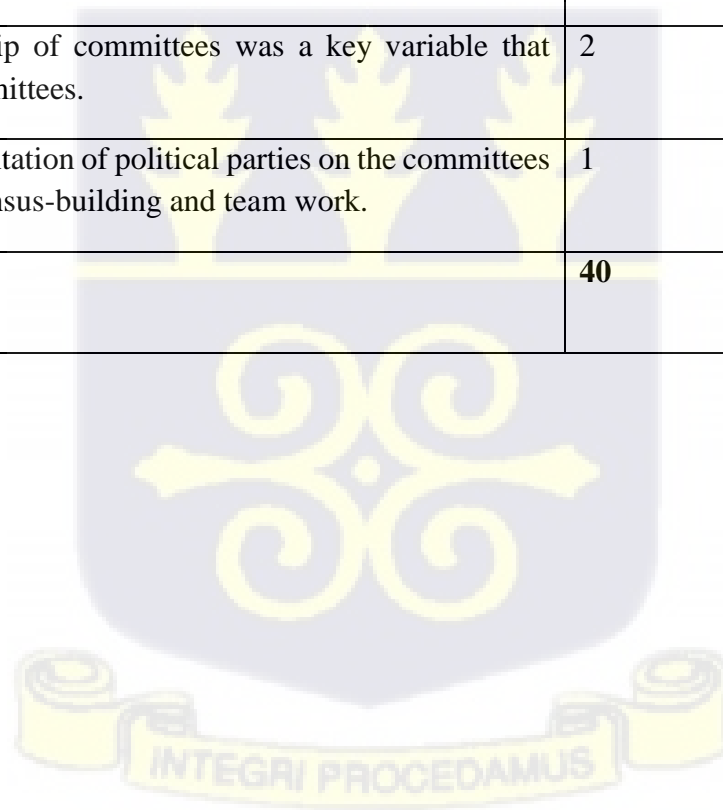
Another variable that influenced the work of the committee system in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments was the lack of resources. From Table 5.3, seven (7) respondents (representing 17.5%) held the view that the lack of resources including finances, quality human resources and other exigencies, influenced the work of the committee system. According to a respondent, “the lack of adequate financial resources weakens the power of the committee system” (Past Minister who doubled as an MP in the 5th Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). The overarching view of respondents was that, without adequate financial resources to meet the overhead costs of operations, it is practically difficult for the committee system to accomplish its tasks efficiently. This is because “no organization or body, be it a private one or public institution can fashion very well it is financially handicapped. Though the members of the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments worked tirelessly to meet their targets, financial constraints thwarted their progress” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 15, 2022).

Table 5. 3 Respondents' Appraisal of the Committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

No.	Respondents' Appraisal of the work of committees of parliament	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ranking
1.	The work of the committees in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments was insulated from external variables.	1	2.5	7 th
2	The work of the committees was influenced by other exigencies such as friendship, ethnicity, regionalism, religion, etc. This was usually the case when ministers were being vetted and approved.	6	15	4 th
3	Debates at the committee level were genuine, though on some occasions, they were driven by partisan interests. The committee system was largely dominated by the Majority. No matter what the Minority presented, if it did not fall within the intention, wishes or bidding of the Majority, it was not approved.	3	7.5	5 th
4	The Committees worked based on the national interest devoid of political inclinations.	1	2.5	7 th
5	The committees were independent in theory but, in practice, the executive exerted a lot of influence on them.	10	25	1 st

6	The whip system influenced the membership and work of the committees to the extent that some decisions were taken based on parochial party interest.	8	20	2 nd
7	The work of the committees and parliament in general were handicapped by lack of financial, quality human resources and other exigencies.	7	17.5	3 rd
8	The committees took decisions based on merit, but not on political influences.	1	2.5	7 th
9	The quality of the leadership of committees was a key variable that shaped the work of the committees.	2	5	6 th
10.	The un-proportional representation of political parties on the committees did not auger well for consensus-building and team work.	1	2.5	7 th
	TOTAL	40	100	

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2022.



Concerning human resources, 7 respondents (17.5%) argued that some of the MPs (mostly the new entrants of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments) on some of the committees (for instance, Health and Energy) lacked skills and knowledge about parliamentary practices and culture. There is also a concern about the quality of some of the members of the committees. Though, in general, 7 respondents (17.5%) thought that the quality of the membership of the committees, especially Finance, Energy, Public Accounts and Committee on Legislature was high, they were of the view that some members did not have the expertise and knowledge on the mandates and scope of the committees. This assertion was based on the fact that some of the MPs did not have the experience, as they were new entrants into parliament. Hence, without experiences gathered from long service, it was difficult for the new entrants to make an instant impact. According to Srem-Sai (2014: 5), one of the key challenges to the Parliament is the problem of long service which “builds experience. There is therefore a great deal of weight in the school of thought that says that political parties should work at retaining some of the experienced MPs in Parliament.” The situation was so dire that “there were instances that some members appeared before the Health Committee, but did not know the difference between public health policy and private health policy, health financing, access to health, etc. These are all technical matters that require capacity building for members” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). As rightly pointed out by Srem-Sai (2014: 5), “there is no doubt that MPs who are versed in a field, particularly the field that relates most to the committee on which they serve, are most likely to perform their oversight functions better than the ones who are not. It is, therefore, desirable that Parliament must have a mix of MPs whose competencies and capacities touch on all the relevant aspects of governance.” Alternatively, training can help to build the capacities and competencies of MPs in governance. Unfortunately, however, “no training workshops were given to MPs to improve their technical

expertise for them to be able to contribute meaningfully in their committees. They were left to their fate to learn on their own. This was a handicap that members of the committees faced” (NPP MP, Field Work, October 21, 2022). As Srem-Sai (2014) argued, the problem of inexperience of MPs, particularly the new entrants, could have been abated if training workshops were organised for them. According to him, “it is imperative that Parliament organizes regular training sessions for MPs. This has the potential of increasing the capacity and competencies of MPs towards ensuring better oversight. Training should not only be aimed at learning new practices. It should necessarily include unlearning bad practices and culture” (Srem-Sai, 2014: 5). Training will help to increase the competencies and capabilities of MPs about governance. In fact, “governance involves an almost-endless range of fields: finance, economics, law, sociology, trade, energy, industry, etc. Ordinarily, MPs need not be versed in all fields. In fact, they need to be masters of any” (Srem-Sai, 2014: 5).

5.3.4 Modes of Decision-Making of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020

This subsection compares and contrasts the Finance Committee (FC), Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Appointments Committee (AC), Health Committee (HC), and the Committee on Mines and Energy (CME) based on the mode of decision-making. In all parliamentary democracies, bargaining and consensus building are used by political parties (Lynch, 2017). According to Darfour (2021: 363), “the pattern of interactions and deliberations in Committees has always been by consensus and a favourable report made to the plenary. The Committees rarely reject government’s proposals but would adapt and modify them.” Indeed, “more than 90 per cent of decisions [of committees] have been taken based on consensus” (Darfour, 2021: 363). Generally,

the mode of decision-making of the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were consensus building or decision-making based on unanimity.

5.3.4.1 Consensus Building

The fieldwork shows that consensus-building is a fulcrum upon which effective parliamentary committees revolve. According to the Clerk of Parliament, due to the imbalances in the membership of the Majority and Minority caucuses on the committees, consensus building appears to be the appropriate mechanism in the making of decisions. This is because “any attempt by the Minority to reject a particular decision can be over-turned by the Majority in a vote” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 14, 2022).

The respondents’ assessment of decision-making of the committees indicate that the principle of consensus-building was always in practice. The responses of the respondents about the FC, AP and PAC are shown in the tables 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11.¹

Table 5. 4 Consensus Building of the Finance Committee 5th, 6th and 7^t Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Finance Committee	Decision-making by Consensus	Decision-making by Voting	Total
Finance Committee of the 5 th Parliament	37 (92.5%)	36 (7.5%)	40 (100%)

¹ Respondents’ assessment of the HC and CME were not complete. As a result, the researcher found it expedient to exclude tables on respondents’ assessment of the extent to which decision-making of the HC and CME of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were done – either by consensus or by majority decision.

Finance Committee of the 6 th Parliament	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	40 (100%)
Finance Committee of the 7 th Parliament	38 (95%)	2 (5%)	40 (100%)

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2022.

Table 5. 5 Consensus Building of the Appointments Committee 5th, 6th and 7^t Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Appointments Committee	Decision-making by Consensus	Decision-making by Voting	Total
Appointments Committee of the 5 th Parliament	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)
Appointments Committee of the 6 th Parliament	36 (90%)	4 (10%)	40 (100%)
Appointments Committee of the 7 th Parliament	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	40 (100%)

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2022.



Table 5. 6 Consensus Building of Public Accounts Committee 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

PAC	Decision-making by Consensus	Decision-making by Voting	Total
PAC of the 5 th Parliament	40 (100%)	0 (0%%)	40 (100%)
PAC of the 6 th Parliament	38 (95%)	2 (5%)	40 (100%)
PAC of the 7 th Parliament	34 (85%)	6 (15%)	40 (100%)

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

Two reasons account for the phenomenon of decision-making by consensus by the committees. First, it is a parliamentary practice “all over the world to use the principle of consensus building to take decisions. In times of disagreement, the leadership of the committees would lobby to overcome their differences in order to take a decision by consensus before submitting their report” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 12, 2022). Second, the high incidence of consensus building in the work of the FC in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments was a function of the nature of the leadership. Generally, the “leadership of both the Majority and the Minority members of the committees were amenable to consensus building. This was particularly the disposition of the chairmen. Consequently, the chairmen would engage the Majority and Minority caucuses to find pathways to deal with their differences in order to take decisions by consensus. This leadership style has ensured that the committees from the 5th to the 7th Parliaments were able to take decisions largely by consensus” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022).

Consensus building in the committee system was, however, not always the case. There were instances that the decisions of the committees were not based on consensus (Darfour, 2021). An example was the report of the AP of the Seventh Parliament that recommended the appointment of some Ministers-designate based on Majority decision, rather than on consensus (Darfour, 2021). In the 5th Parliament, “the approval of some of the ministers-designate in 2009 was done by a majority decision. For instance, the approval of Mr. Fiifi Fiavi Kwetey as a deputy Minister of Finance by the AP in 2009 was done by a majority decision” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 14, 2022).

5.3.5 An assessment of the FC, AC, PAC, HC and EMC of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments

The Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is the committee of parliament that deals with all financial matters and matters pertaining to the economy of Ghana (Darour, 2021). Its composition and functions are spelt out in the Standing Orders of Parliament. The Standing Orders indicate that “the Committee on Finance shall be composed of twenty-five Members, to which shall be referred Bills, inquiries and other matters relating to finance and the economy of Ghana generally” (Standing Orders, Order 166, 2000).

In a number of questions, respondents were asked to assess the work of the Finance Committee of Parliament since the 5th Parliament. Respondents assessed the effectiveness of the committees selected for this study. It should be borne in mind that the term “effectiveness” is subject to different meanings and interpretation. In fact, it is difficult to give a universally accepted conceptualisation of the term. While some authorities use the term to refer to issues about project success ((Ika, Diallo and Thuillier, 2010), others use the term to refer to the longer-term

perspective of a project (Jugdev, Thomas and Delisle, 2001). Yet, there are other more variant accounts and interpretations of the term in different disciplines. This study did not adapt the conceptualisation of the term by earlier scholars. In this study, the term was used to refer to the level of success of the work of the committee system. Four critical variables were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the committee system. These variables were the level of professionalism brought to bear on the work of committees, the quality of work of committees, collaborations among committee members, and the extent to which committees met timelines.

Participants assessed the effectiveness of the FC, AC, HC, PAC and MEC of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliament based on the above indices. The aggregates of the scores are indicated in the Tables 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11 below.

Table 5. 7 Respondents’ Appraisal of the Finance Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Parliament	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Total
Finance Committee of the 5 th Parliament	13	18	4	5	40
Finance Committee of the 6 th Parliament	10	16	6	8	40
Finance Committee of the 7 th Parliament	5	8	12	15	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

From the table above, it is clear that the Finance Committee was effective since the 5th Parliament of the Republic of Ghana except the 7th Parliament. The reasons for this conclusion vary; they range from the expertise of the members to the critical posture of the opposition members.

5.3.5.1 The Appointments Committee

The field research sought to gauge the perspectives of respondents on the Appointments Committee of Parliament since the 5th Parliament of the Fourth Republic. Respondents compared the work of the Appointments Committee in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic, which is summarized in Table 5.8 below.

Table 5. 8 Respondents’ Appraisal of the Appointments Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Parliament	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Total
Appointments Committee of the 5 th Parliament	15	15	6	4	40
Appointments Committee of the 6 th Parliament	14	18	3	5	40
Appointments Committee of the 7 th Parliament	10	16	9	5	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

From the Table above, it can be seen that respondents’ appraisal of the work of the Appointments Committee from the 5th to the 7th Parliament is generally good. The totals of the scores for “very

effective” and “effective” of the appraisal of the work of the Appointments Committee for all the parliaments understudy. Respondents advanced a number of factors that shaped and determined the work of the AC. Some of these factors included adherence to the constitutional stipulations regarding the approval of minister-designates, the performance of the minister-designate during vetting, political affiliations, ethnicity, religion, gender, regionalism and clientelism. The discussion of these factors will be done in Chapter Six of this study.

5.3.5.2 The Public Accounts Committee

To elicit responses about the Public Accounts Committee, respondents were asked the questions: To what extent was the Public Accounts Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of the Fourth Republic effective? Which Public Account Committee from the 5th to the 7th Parliament was the most effective, and why? The appraisals of the effectiveness of the Public Accounts Committee from the 5th to the 8th Parliaments are indicated in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5. 9 Respondents’ Appraisal of the Public Accounts Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Parliament	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Total
Appointments Committee of the 5 th Parliament	16	23	1	0	40
Appointments Committee of the 6 th Parliament	13	22	5	0	40

Appointments Committee of the 7 th Parliament	14	23	3	0	40
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Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2022.

The inputs in the table indicate that the work of the Public Accounts Committee was appreciably good. Its work, particularly its public sittings, recommendations for sanctions against public officers and institutions for financial malfeasance, among others, were indices that respondents used to rate the effectiveness of the PAC. Despite the overwhelming conclusion that the PAC endeared itself to the public, respondents noted some hindrances to the work of PAC. Key among such hindrances was PAC's lack of prosecutorial powers. The indices used to evaluate PAC would be discussed extensively in the next chapter of this study.

5.3.5.3 The Health Committee

Comparatively, participants' assessments of the work of the Health Committee of Parliament from the 5th to the 8th Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic did not show marked differences. The table below provides participants' assessment of the Heal Committee from the 5th to the 7th Parliament. Evaluating the HC, respondents asserted that its work from the 5th to the 7th Parliament was largely devoid of partisanship. In other words, the depoliticization of health issues brought before the HC was the key index responsible for the quality of its work.

Table 5. 10 Respondents’ Appraisal of the Health Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Parliament	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Total
Health Committee of the 5 th Parliament	7	17	11	5	40
Health Committee of the 6 th Parliament	10	16	7	4	40
Health Committee of the 7 th Parliament	6	14	10	10	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

The above table gives a statistical view of participants’ assessment of the Health Committee of Parliament from the 5th to the 7th Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. A summation of the “very effective” and “effective” scores of the work of the Health Committee in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments gives totals of 24 out of 40, 26 out of 40, and 20 out of 40, respectively. The indication is that the works of the Health Committee of the above four parliaments were either average or a little above average.

5.3.5.4 The Mines and Energy Committee

Similar to the appraisal of the previous committees, respondents subjected the Energy Committee from the 5th to the 7th Parliament to appraisal, scrutiny and assessment. A comparative appraisal

of the Energy Committee from the 5th to the 7th committee, which is summarized in Table 5.11 below.

Table 5. 11 Respondents’ Appraisal of the Mines and Energy Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic

Parliament	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Total
Health Committee of the 5 th Parliament	8	17	11	4	40
Health Committee of the 6 th Parliament	9	15	11	5	40
Health Committee of the 7 th Parliament	7	14	13	6	40

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2022.

From the above table, it is evident that each of the Energy Committees from the 5th to the 7th Parliament of the Fourth Republic has performed above average. Of the total of forty respondents, the summation of the scores of “very effective” and “effective” for the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana stood at 25, 24, and 21, respectively. In terms of indices used to evaluate the work of the EMC, respondents predicated the work of the committee on good leadership.

5.4 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The chapter has shown that the committee system was vital to the execution of the functions of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments. This was exemplified by the work of the FC, AP, PAC, HC and CME

in the execution of Parliament's deliberative, legislative, financial and oversight functions. The committees analyzed bills and agreements referred to them and presented reports to plenary for approval or rejection. In addition, the chapter also shows that executive influence on the committees is an assertion based on the country's hybrid governance structure that makes majority of ministers being MPs. Besides, the duopolistic nature of governance in the Fourth Republic exerts pressure on MPs of the political party in power to take decisions at committee level for the benefit of their party. Despite their enormous tasks, the committees were constrained by financial challenges, though there is a progressive increase in budgetary support over the years. Finally, the chapter emphasized that decision-making by consensus was the common practice in the committee system, though in some few instances, their decisions were taken by the majority group.



CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the findings of the study. It explains the findings and contextualizes them within the framework of existing literature. The contextualization of the findings is done in two ways. First, justifications for findings are propped by evidence from written primary data and interview transcripts of the study to provide an original case support to the findings. Second, the findings were contextualized within the arguments in existing literature to determine the extent to which the findings relate to the arguments of authorities, established knowledge and the theoretical framework of this study.

6.1 Discussion of Findings

This section of the chapter subjects the findings of the study to analysis to determine their relations with arguments and perspectives in existing literature. For the sake of convenience, the discussion of the findings of the committee system in parliament is organized along the functions of parliament, namely, decision-making, legislative, financial control and oversight functions of parliament, as well as the challenges of the committee system.

6.1.1 The committee system and the decision-making function of parliament

The study found that the committee system was vital to the execution of the decision-making function of parliament. This was exemplified by the work of the FC, AP, PAC, HC and CME of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic. The study found that, contrary to public perceptions, decision-making of the committee system is largely predicated on unanimity or consensus-building. From the extracts of the interviews, there was clear evidence from the two

caucuses in parliament that decision-making was based on unanimity or consensus-building. In fact, “outside Parliament, it appears to the general public that the MPs, both at committee levels and the plenary, are at daggers end. However, the reality is that, there is more of cooperation from the NDC and the NPP MPs, regardless of which power is power. It will surprise the public to know that most of the decisions of parliament at the committee level, which then translate into the decision of the plenary on the floor of Parliament, are made based on unanimity or consensus” (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October, 20, 2022). An NDC MP provided the moral basis for the committee system’s decision-making by unanimity or consensus when he said:

We are not enemies fighting each other for the sake of political power. We are political watchdogs to each other seeking the common good of Ghana. Therefore, we need to build consensus to chart a path for Ghana. We come to the table with differences and different opinions about issues before us, but we conclude on the issues by making compromises to make a decision that is agreed by both caucuses for the betterment of Ghana. This is usually the case except in few cases where saturated political differences, largely driven by the desire to satisfy the masses of the respective political parties, make consensus-building practically impossible (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 16, 2022).

In essence, “making decisions based on unanimity and consensus-building by the committee system enables parliament to formulate quality policies based on broad-based consultations of the two caucuses” (NPP MP, fieldwork, October 12, 2022). Hence, “the committee system is not appropriated by the Majority to dictate to the Minority and impose inimical policies on the country; rather, the committee system is driven by consensus-building to fuse together different ideas from both caucuses into the fashioning of progressive policies for Ghana. This was what I have observed throughout the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments to which I am a member” (NDC MP, fieldwork, October 16, 2022).

The above justification for consensus-building in decision-making in the committee system is corroborated by other extracts from the interviews. From all indications, “consensus-building is the obvious and appropriate mode of decision-making. It creates room for a synthesis of ideas to make the final decision. Even in instances where the Majority Caucus has overwhelming members of committees as was the case of the 7th Parliament, the committees found consensus- building critical to their decision-making processes” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 10, 2022).

The finding that decision-making of the committee system was based on the principles of unanimity and consensus-building was not only based on evidence from field data; there are copious documentary primary data in the Hansard Division of the Parliament of Ghana to support the finding. For instance, all the reports of the FC of the Fifth Parliament in 2009 and 2010 showed that decisions were made by consensus (Reports of the FC of the Parliament, 2009 & 2010). In fact, from 2017 to 2020, all the decisions of the FC of the 7th Parliament were taken by consensus (Reports of the FC of the Parliament, 2017, 2018, 2019 & 2020). Similarly, an examination of the reports of the PAC of the 5th Parliament between 2009 and 2012 showed that decisions were essentially taken by consensus (Reports of the PAC of the Parliament, 2009, 2010, 2011 & 2012) – a practice replicated in the 6th and 7th Parliaments (Reports of the PAC of the 6th and 7th Parliaments).

Evidence also abounds in primary data in parliament to show that decision-making by the Appointment Committee (AC) was largely based on consensus-building. With the exception of few instances, the appointment of minister-designates by members of the AC was predicated on

consensus-building. Table 6.1 below gives insights into the modes of approval of ministers-designates by the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

Table 6.1 Vetting of Ministerial Nominees and the Method of Approval

5TH PARLIAMENT (2009-2012)			
NAME	PORTFOLIO	MINISTRY DESIGNATE	METHOD OF APPROVAL
Hon Evans Paul Aidoo	Minister	Western Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Stephen Sumani Nayina	Minister	Northern Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Alex Tettey-Enyo	Minister	Ministry of Education	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Cletus Avoka	Minister	Ministry of Interior	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Akua Sena Dansua	Minister	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Juliana Azumah-Mensah	Minster	Ministry of Tourism	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Joseph Yieleh Chireh	Minister	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Joe Gidisu	Minister	Ministry of Roads and Highways	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Collins Dauda	Minister	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources	Unanimous Decision
Mrs. Betty Mould- Iddrisu	Minster	Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General	Committee by Consensus
Dr. Oteng Adjei	Minster	Ministry of Energy	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Mike Hammah	Minster	Ministry of Transport	Unanimous Decision

Dr. Kwabena Duffour	Minister	Ministry of Finance	Unanimous Decision
Hon Abdul-Rashid Pelpuo	Minister	Minister of State	Unanimous Decision
Hon Amadu Seidu (Alhaji)	Minister	Minister of State	Unanimous Decision
Hon Likpalimor, Kwajo Tawiah	Minister	Minister of State	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Seth Tekper	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Finance	Unanimous Decision
Hon Henry Ford Kamel	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources	Unanimous Decision
Ms. Hawawu Boya Gariba	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Eric Opoku	Deputy Minister	Brong Ahafo	Unanimous Decision
Hon Stephen Amanor Kwao	Minister	Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare	Committee by Consensus
Hon Alexander Asum-Ahensah	Minister	Ministry of Chieftaincy and culture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Halutie Dubie Alhassan	Minister	Minister of State in the Office of the President	Unanimous Decision
Dr. George Sipa-Adjah Yankey	Minister	Ministry of Health	Unanimous Decision
Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni	Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration	By Majority decision
Mrs. Sabah Zita Okaikoi	Minister	Ministry of Information	Committee by Consensus
Ms. Hanny-sherry Ayithey	Minister	Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology	Committee by Consensus
Ms. Hannah Tetteh	Minister	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Committee by Consensus
Lt-Gen Joseph Henry Smith (Retd)	Minister	Ministry of Defense	Unanimous Decision
Hon. Haruna Iddrisu	Minister	Ministry of Communication	Committee by Consensus

Hon. Alhaji Mubarak Muntaka	Minister	Ministry of Youth and Sports	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Samuel Ofosu-Ampofo	Minister	Eastern Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
Mr. Kofi Opoku-Manu	Minister	Ashanti Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
Mrs. Ama Benyiwa-Doe	Minister	Central Regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Kwadwo Nyamekye-Marfo	Minister	Brong-Ahafo Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
Mr Mahmud Khalid	Minister	Upper West	Unanimous Decision
Hon Nii Armah Ashietey	Minster	Greater Accra Regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Hon Joseph Zaphenat Amenowode	Minster	Volta Regional Minister	Unanimous Decision
6TH PARLIAMENT (2013-2016)			
NAME	PORTFORLIO	MINISTRY DESIGNATE	MODE OF APPROVAL
Mr. Emmanuel Bombande	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration	Committee by Consensus
Hon. John Oti Kwabena Bless	Deputy Minister	Minister of Local Government and Rural Development	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Joseph Tetteh Agmor	Deputy Regional Minister	Eastern regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Alexander Percival Segbefia	Minister	Ministry for Health	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Peter Anarfi-Mensah	Minister	Ashanti Regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Kwabena Mintah Akandoh	Deputy Minister	Minister for Lands and Natural Resources	Committee by Consensus

Mr. Andrews Osei Okrah	Deputy Minister	Ashanti Regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Dr. Robert Bella Kuganab-Lem	Deputy Minister	Regional Minister for Upper East	Committee by Consensus
Hon. John Alexander Ackon	Minister	Ashanti Regional Minister	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Albert Abongo	Minister	Regional Minister for Upper East	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Edwin Nii Lantey Vanderpuye	Minister	Minister for Youth and Sports	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Kweku Ricketts Hangan	Minister	Regional Minister for Central Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Abdallah Abubakari	Minister	Regional Minister for Northern Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Prosper Douglas Bani	Minister	Minister for interior	Committee by Consensus
Ms. Mavis Ama Frimpong	Minister	Regional Minister for Eastern Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Ekoww Spio-Garbrah	Minister	Minister for Trade and Industry	Committee by Consensus
7th PARLIAMENT (2017-2020)			
NAME	PORTFOLIO	MINISTRY DESIGNATE	MODE OF APPROVAL
Hon. Cathrine Afeku	Minister	Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Osei Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu	Minister	Minister for Parliament Affairs	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Prof. Gyan Baffour	Minister	Minister for Planning	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Isaac Asiamah	Minister	Minister for Youth and Sports	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Awal Ibrahim Mohammed	Minister	Minister for Business Development	Committee by Consensus

Hon. Mavis Hawa Koomson	Minister	Minister for Special Development Initiatives	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Boniface Abu-Bakar Saddique	Minister	Minister for Inner-City and Zongo Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Cecilia Dapaah	Minister	Minister for Aviation	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Kofi Dzamesi	Minister	Minister for Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Elizabeth Afoley Quaye	Minister	Minister for Fisheries and Aquaculture	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid	Minister	Minister for Information	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Sandra Adwoa Safo	Minister	Minister for Public Procurement	Committee by Consensus
Prof. Kwesi Yankah	Minister	Minister of Education - Tertiary Education	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Bryan Acheampong	Minister	Minister of State at the Office of the President	Committee by Consensus
Dr. Gyele Nurah	Minister	Minister for Agriculture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Henry Quartey	Deputy Minister	Minister for Interior	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Abena Osei Asare	Deputy Minister	Minister of Finance	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Kwaku Kwarteng	Deputy Minister	Minister of Finance	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Charles Adu Boahen	Deputy Minister	Minister of Finance	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Joseph Cudjoe	Deputy Minister	Minister for Energy	Committee by Consensus
Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam	Deputy Minister	Minister for Energy	Committee by Consensus

Hon. William Owuraku Aidoo	Deputy Minister	Minister for Energy	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Ursula Owusu-Ekuful	Minister	Minister for Communication	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Joseph Kofi Adda	Minister	Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Kwasi Amoako-Atta	Minister	Minister for Roads and Highways	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Kwaku Ofori Asamah	Minister	Minister for Transport	Committee by Consensus
Prof. Kwabena Frimpong Boateng		Minister for Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation	Committee by consensus
Hon. Joe Ghartey	Minister	Minister for Railways Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. (Dr) Antony Anthony Akoto Osei	Minister	Minister for Monitoring and Evaluation	Committee by Consensus
Ms. Otiko Afisah Djaba	Minister	Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection	Majority Decision
Hon. Dan Kwaku Botwe	Minister	Minister for Regional Reorganization and Development	Committee by Consensus
Mr. John Peter Amewu	Minister	Minister for Lands and Natural Resources	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Ignatius Baffour-Awuah	Minister	Minister for Employment and Labour Relations	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Samuel Atta Akyea	Minister	Minister for Works and Housing	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Andy Appiah-Kubi	Deputy Minister	Railways Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Dr.Yaw Osei Adutwum	Deputy Minister	Education	Committee by Consensus

Hon. Eugene Boakye Antwi	Deputy Minister	Works and Housing	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Barbara Oteng Gyasi	Deputy Minister	Lands and Natural Resources	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Kwasi Boateng Agyei	Deputy Minister	Local Government and Rural Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Vincent Sowah Adotei	Deputy Minister	Communications	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Patrick Yaw Boamah	Deputy Minister	Sanitation and Water Resources	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Maj. Derrick Oduro (Rtd)	Deputy Minister	Defense	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Dr.Sagre Bambangi	Deputy Minister	Agriculture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Paul Essien	Deputy Minister	Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Tina Gifty Naa Ayeley Mensah	Deputy Minister	Health	Committee by Consensus
Hon. (Dr). Ziblim Iddi	Deputy Minister	Tourism, Creative Arts & Culture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Augustine-Collins Ntim	Deputy Minister	Local Government and Rural Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Martin Adjei-Mensah Korsah	Deputy Minister	Regional Reorganization & Development	Committee by Consensus
Hon. William Agyepong Quaitoo	Deputy Minister	Agriculture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Gifty Twum Ampofo	Deputy Minister	Gender, Social & Children Protection	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Pius Enam Hadzide	Deputy Minister	Youth & Sports	Committee by Consensus
Hon. William Kwesi Sabi	Deputy Minister	Monitoring & Evaluation	Committee by Consensus

Hon. Freda Prempeh	Deputy Minister	Works & Housing	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Bright Wireko Brobbay	Deputy Minister	Employment & Social Welfare	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Carlos Kingsley Ahenkorah	Deputy Minister	Trade & Industry	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Francis Kingsley Ato Codjoe	Deputy Minister	Fisheries & Aquaculture	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Solomon Boar	Deputy Minister	Northern Region	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Elizabeth Kwatsoe Tawiah Sackey	Deputy Minister	Greater Accra Region	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Gifty Eugenia Kusi (Mrs.)	Deputy Minister	Western Region	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Elizabeth Agyemang	Deputy Minister	Ashanti Region	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Joseph Tetteh	Deputy Minister	Eastern Region	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Evans Opoku Bobbie	Deputy Minister	Brong Ahafo Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Maxwell Qophy Blagodzi	Deputy Minister	Volta Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Thomas Yaw Adjei-Baffoe	Deputy Minister	Central Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Adongo Frank Fuseini	Deputy Minister	Upper East Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Amidu Chinnia Issahaku	Deputy Minister	Upper West Region	Committee by Consensus
Mr. Yaw Osafo-Marfo	Senior Minister		Majority Decision
Mr. Boakye Agyarko	Minister	Energy	Majority Decision
Hon. (Dr). Matthew Opoku Prempeh	Minister	Education	Committee by Consensus

Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu	Minister	Health	Committee by Consensus
Hon. Dr. Owusu Akoto Afriyie	Minister	Agriculture	Committee by Consensus

Source: Parliament of Ghana Appointment Committee Report on Ministerial Vetting, 20009-2017.

From Table 6.1 above, it is obvious that the methods of approval of the ministerial nominees were either by consensus or unanimous decision. However, there were few exceptions, as some of the nominees were approved based on a majority decision. The reasons for the method of approval by majority decision vary, but the two main reasons were the utterances of the nominees against some members of the opposition political party, and petitions against some nominees. For instance, Ms. Otiko Afisah Djaba, Minister designate for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social was approved by a majority decision by the AP because the Minority accused her of having made some unsubstantiated allegations and insulting statements against the President Mahama in the heat up to the 2016 general elections. In the case of Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni, for instance, his nomination as the Minister-designate for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration was approved by a majority decision because the Minority refused to approved him due to a petition filed against him. The Minority raised concern about receipt of a petition against the nominee from a group known as Alliance for Accountable Governance (AFAG). The petition centred on a report of a forensic audit conducted by a private firm on behalf of the Auditor-General at the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) (Appointment Committee Report, 2009).

In relation to existing literature, this finding is not new; it builds on existing literature on decision-making by parliament and its committee system. Darfour (2021) argues that decision-making by consensus was the common practice of the committee system of the Parliaments of Ghana in the

Fourth Republic. According to him, about 90% of the decisions of the committees of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic were taken by consensus (Darfour, 2021). Beyond the studies on the Ghanaian situation, this finding has buddings that relate to the argument of Lynch (2017: 61) that committees of parliament “are the arena where bargaining over different legislative proposals takes place.” Through consensus-building, the decision-making processes of the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana collaborate the argument of Satori (1978) that the committee system of parliament shuns majority rule in order to seek unanimous agreements for the common good of a country.

Though the committees’ ‘politics of decision-making’ constellated around consensus-building, some of the stimulating reasons share semblances with the theory of political clientelism. Political clientelism provides a pyramidal relationship between political actors (patrons) at the top and clients at the bottom based on favours of mutual benefits (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007, Hicken and Nathan, 2020; Yildirim and Kitschelt, 2020; Higashijima, 2022). By this pyramidal relationship, the patrons provide personal favours to the clients in exchange for electoral support (Berenschot, 2018). There is a direct manifestation of the theory of political clientelism in the ‘politics of committees’ decision-making’, as the data provided evidence that the executive arm of government (patron) gave financial favours to committee members (clients) to induce them to take some key decisions. On the other hand, the data provided another perspective to examine clientelistic relationships. Data from the field study showed that various social factors such as ethnicity, regionality, gender, religion, church membership, among others, were the deciding factors that informed the consensus decisions of committee members in the approval of ministers-designate by the AC. Such decisions amplify the exploitation of social factors for the mutual

benefit of the ministers-designate and the committee members. This kind of relationship is not one between a patron (at the apex of a pyramid) and a client (at the bottom of a pyramidal) as espoused in the theory of political clientelism; it is one between political actors at the same level leveraging on social variables for mutual benefits. This finding makes a useful intervention in the theory of political clientelism by giving another level at which to examine it (the level of equal political actors), rather than from the level of the relationship of unequal political actors exchanging favours.

In conclusion, there is enough empirical evidence from field data and primary documents in the Hansard Division of the Parliament of Ghana to prove that the committees of parliament largely built consensus or generated unanimous agreement among members before arriving at decisions. The implication is that the committee system as practiced in Ghana is progressive but not dictatorial. The committee system in Ghana's parliament is driven by the desire to fuse together different ideas from both the Majority and the Minority to formulate progressive policies; it is not an area for the Majority to dictate their positions to the Minority.

6.1.2: The committee system and the financial control function of Parliament

Evidence from field data and documents in the Parliament of Ghana exists to show that the committee system plays a critical role in the exercise of parliament's financial control function over the executive. However, there were some few unsubstantiated views that the committees of parliament did not engage in rigorous scrutiny of government agreements and loans referred to them. Respondents cited article 106(13) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, which empowered committees to determine a bill as urgent in support of their argument. Thus, hiding behind article 106(3), some committees acted in ways that did not ensure critical scrutiny of bills at the committee

level before their passage into law by parliament. There is no evidence in the reports of the committees to support this assertion. This is probably due to the lack of substantial evidence to support the allegation or that the allegation was a mere perception that lacked any evidence. Besides, documentary evidence from existing monographs does not exist to support the above assertion. Hence, it is difficult to subject the assertion to empirical scrutiny to determine its veracity, causes and effects.

On the whole, field data show that parliament's exercise of its financial control function over the executive was appreciably effective. In fact, "without the committee system to scrutinize all financial agreements, transactions and loans of the executive arm of government, it would be practically difficult, if not impossible, for parliament as a whole to be able to carefully put the financial dealings of the executive to check" (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022). Though subjecting the financial agreements, loans and transactions of the executive to scrutiny was exercised by earlier committees of Parliaments of the Fourth Republic, the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were motivated by other variables to subject government financial documents to critical scrutiny. Overall, the high stakes in political power stimulated a culture of critical scrutiny of government documents by the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments than the previous ones. The following extract from interviews illustrates the argument:

There were high stakes in parliament after the NPP narrowly lost to the NDC in 2008 after the NPP had led the polls in the first round in the presidential elections. However, it narrowly and painfully lost to the NDC in the runoff. This made the NPP MPs in committees of parliament to take the critical scrutiny of government's financial documents brought to parliament for approval by the Mills-led government to a higher level. Similarly, the acrimonies that ensued after the NPP challenged its loss of the 2012 presidential elections in court stimulated a culture of critical scrutiny by the NPP MPs on committees of the financial documents brought by the Mahama-led government to parliament for approval. In the same vein, the painful defeat of NDC's sitting president in the presidential elections in 2016, the first of the kind in Ghana's political history,

pushed the NDC MPs on the committees of parliament to adopt a critical posture to the scrutiny of all financial transactions of the Nana Addo-led government brought before parliament (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October, 18, 2022).

It would appear that the “dynamics of the presidential elections between 2009 and 2016 drastically changed the posture of MPs in general from the view that the committee system was committee business as usual to one that required critical scrutiny of all financial documents of the government of the day” (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022). One other variable responsible for the ‘culture of intense scrutinization phenomenon’ in the committees of parliament was the score of MPs with experience in financial matters elected to parliament in the 2008, 2012 and 2016 parliamentary elections. According to a respondent:

“The high level of scrutiny of government’s financial documents by the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments was due to the gradual addition of MPs with considerable knowledge in financial matters to parliament. The 2008, 2012 and 2016 parliamentary elections brought scores of MPs with considerable training and experience in economics, banking, finance and accounting to the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments whose expertise and experience were brought to bear on the scrutiny of government financial documents sent to parliament for approval. In my candid opinion, since these professionals with solid qualifications and experience in financial matters became MPs of the past three parliaments, the financial control function of parliament has been exercised very well. (Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022).

To appreciate the validity of the field data, it is important to juxtapose it with primary data drawn from Parliamentary Hansard from 2009 to 2020. A glance through the reports in the Hansards shows that no references of the extent of, and reasons for, extensive scrutiny of government financial loan agreements brought to the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were made. Nonetheless, the Hansards provide lists of loans approved by the committees of parliament, and subsequently by the plenary within the time period. From the arguments of respondents indicated above, it would appear that the loan agreements were thoroughly scrutinized. Table 6.2 provides the scores of loans approved by the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

Table 6. 2 Loans Approved by the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana, 2009-2020

S/N	Loan agreement in US Dollars	Loan agreement in Euros	Loan agreement in Pounds	Loan agreement in Ghana Cedis
5TH PARLIAMENT (2009-2013)				
1.	38,100,000 .00	7,000.000	43,784093.97	25,500,00.00
2.	20,100,000.00	10,000,000		
3.	6,4500,000.00	8,210,129.00		
4.	6,000,000.00	7,300,000.00		
5.	12,000,000.00	40,000,000.00		
6.	80,350,000.00	12,900,000.00		
7.	7,000,000.00	8,650,000.00		
8.	500,000.00	1,785,856.00		
9.	50,000,000.00	183,387,500.00		
10.	359,000,000.00	8,000,000.00		
11.	267,000,000.00	34,000,000.00		
12.	105,370,177.09	7,655,164.00		
13.	162,931,563.27	7,600,000.00		
14.	72,040,000.00	80,000,000.00		
15.	40,200,000.00	7405,900.00		
16.	15,000,000.00	8,000,000.00		
17.	12,000,000.00			
18.	170,000,000.00			
19.	30,000,000.00			
20.	135,964,703.17			

21.	28,970,899.38			
22.	8,600,000.00			
23.	538,299,497.00			
24.	125,000,000.00			
25.	55,500,000.00			
26.	10,500,000.00			
27.	32,000,000.00			
28.	180,000,000.00			
TOTAL	<u>2,588,826,839.91</u>	<u>424,901,549.00</u>	<u>43,784,093.97</u>	<u>25,500,00.00</u>
6TH PARLIAMENT (2013-2017)				
1.	45,485,558.00	21,000,000.00		
2.	67,234,000.00	23,000,000.00		
3.	42,900,000.00	1,000,000.00		
4.	29,790,000.00	17,310,000.00		
5.	56,800,000.00	23,500,000.00		
6.	300,000,000.00	3,500,000.00		
7.	3,000,000.00	1,500,000.00		
8.	300,000,000.00	13,000,000.00		
9.	13,869,000.00	6,836,250.00		
10.	83,400,000.00	7,762,500.00		
11.	24,000,000.00	6,836,250.00		
	35,000,000.00	22,816,666.67		
	24,000,000.00			
TOTAL	<u>1,476,078,558.00</u>	<u>209,587,916.67</u>		
7TH PARLIAMENT (2017-2020)				
1.	39,010,000.00	13,000,000.00		

2.	150,000,000.00	1,000,000.00		
3.	56,000,000.00	6,000,000.00		
4.	20,000,000.00	20,022,830.58		
5.	24,000,000.00	12,300,000.00		
6.	7,500,000.00	122,543,352.60		
7.	13,500,000.00	19,690,000.00		
8.	7,000,000.00	32,5060,000.00		
9.	95,375,020.36	147,420,550.51		
10.	95,000,000.00	16,772,474.34		
11.	12,000,000.00	139,339,000.00		
12.		21,000,000.00		
13.		9,983,661.63		
14.		56,574,082.70		
15.		5,071,066.24		
16.		36,966,950.00		
17.		5,700,000.00		
18.		60,257,921.58		
19.		39,596,561.67		
20.		15,301,533.00		
21.		33,000,000.00		
22.		140,814,285.10		
23.		25,117,661.42		
24.		91,375,307.01		
25.		10,384,695.00		
26.		65,000,000.00		
27.		27,651,152.61		

28.		70,733,423.00		
29.		10,500,000.00		
TOTAL	<u>519,385,020.36</u>	<u>1,548,176,508.99</u>		

Source: Extracts from the Hansards, Parliament of Ghana, on Loan/Grant Agreements of the Government of Ghana, 2009-2020.

From the table above, a critical analysis of the loans approved by the committees of parliament, and subsequently the plenary of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments, as shown in the Hansards from 2009 to 2020, shows that many government loans and financial agreements were laid before the committees of parliament for scrutiny for approval. It can be validly concluded that the more loan/financial agreements referred to the committees of parliament for study, the more the time spent on the scrutiny of documents. In some instances, the Hansards provided glimpses into the matters of disagreements that arose between the Majority and Minority caucuses, an illustration of the extent of scrutiny applied to the study of government loan agreements brought before the committees of parliament. For instance, in the case of the FC, the Minority on the committee did not consent to the approval of some loans. Technical reasons were mainly used by the Minority of the 7th Parliament for its rejection of some government loans laid before parliament. Key among them were the Minority's rejections of US\$39.01 million on 9th March, 2018, €14,000,000 on 20th March, 2018, US\$150 million on 12th July, 2018, and €12,300,000.00 on 24th July, 2018 for technical reasons (see Table 6.3). Similarly, in the 6th Parliament, the Minority apposed the approval of €38 million for the construction of a university in Somanya for technical reasons. According to the Minority, the strategic place for the siting of a university in the Eastern Region should be Koforidua; but not Somaya (see Table 6.3). Technical reasons also explained the Minority's opposition of some of the proposed government loans laid before the 5th Parliament. For instance, the Minority opposed the loan agreement of US\$15.00 million to provide a second

additional credit for the Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project (STWSSP) due to the absence of an expiry date for the loan (see Table 6.3). Similarly, the Minority opposed the loan facility of US\$359,000,000.00 for the design, construction, procurement and equipment of a 597-bed university hospital in Legon and additional works on the Ho Regional and Hohoe District Hospitals due to its fears that the cost of the loan facility was too high (see Table 6.3).

Further analysis of the statistical breakdown of the loans contracted by the Parliament of Ghana from 2009 to 2020 shows that the 5th Parliament contracted more loans than the 6th and 7th Parliaments. Between 2009 and 2012, the 5th Parliament contracted a total of US\$2,588,826,839.91, €424,901,549.00, £43,784,093.97 and ₵25,500,000.00. On the other hand, the loans the 6th Parliament contracted between 2013 and 2016 stood at of US\$1,476,078,558.00 and €209,587,916.67 while the amount of loans contracted by the 7th Parliament stood at US\$519,385,020.36 and €1,548,176,508.99. Central to the explanation of the loans contracted by the 5th Parliament was the need for financial capital for the provision of infrastructure by the Mills-Mahama-led NDC government. Provision of social infrastructure stood in the centre of the loans approved by the 5th Parliament. For instance, US\$538,299,497 to finance the Accra Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Drainage Alleviation Project, US\$125,000,000.00 to finance the Accra Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Drainage Alleviation Project; US\$55,500,000 to finance the implementation of the Wa Water Supply System Development were approved by the 5th Parliament on 31st October, 2012 alone, while another US\$180.00 million for the supply and installation of equipment for national rehabilitation of Ghana Water Company Limited Systems in all the ten (10) regions in Ghana was contracted on 17th December, 2012 (Hansard, 2012). These four water projects alone totaled US\$898,799,497, and constituted about 34.72% of the loans in US dollars contracted by the 5th Parliament. These loans excluded other loans in other

denominations approved by the 5th Parliament for the same purpose. For instance, on 14th October, 2012, the 5th Parliament approved a loan of €8,000,000.00 to finance the water supply scheme for Adaklu Anyigbe and North Tongu Districts and the Ho Municipality (Phase II) (Hansard, 2012).

The provision of health facilities and other health-related logistics also stood in the centre of the loans approved by the 5th Parliament. For instance, on 20th April, 2011, the 5th Parliament approved US\$105,370,177.09 for the purchase of one Embrae 190 aircraft, related integrated logistics support and the construction of one Hangar (Hansard, 2011); US\$359,000,000.00 for the design, construction, procurement and equipment of a 597-bed university hospital in Legon and additional works on the Ho Regional and Hohoe District Hospitals approved on 22nd July, 2011 (Hansard, 2011); US\$267,000,000.00 to finance the supply and installation of medical equipment for selected health institutions nationwide approved on 21st July, 2011 (Hansard, 2011); US\$162,931,563.27 for financing of the design, construction and furnishing of seven (7) district hospitals and provision of an integrated IT systems by NMS Infrastructure limited approved on 23rd July, 2011 (Hansard, 2012). Other loans approved for the construction of health facilities and provision of health-related facilities included US\$162,931,563.27 for financing of the design, construction and furnishing of seven (7) district hospitals and provision of an integrated IT systems by NMS Infrastructure limited approved on 14th August, 2012, and GHC 55,000,000.00 for financing of the design, construction and furnishing of seven (7) district hospitals and provision of an integrated IT systems by NMS Infrastructure Limited approved on 23rd July, 2012 (Hansard, 2011).

The 6th Parliament approved the least amount of loans in its four-year tenure. It approved US\$1,476,078,558.00 and €209,587,916.67 made up of 12 and 10 different loan facilities, respectively. As was the case of the 5th Parliament, the loan facilities approved by the 6th

Parliament covered a wide range of issues, but the majority of the loan facilities were intended to be used for the provision of social infrastructure by the Mahama-Amissah Arthur-led NDC government. Some of these loan facilities for the provision of social facilities included US\$45,485,558.00 relating to the financing of the Accra Street Resurfacing Project approved on 2nd October, 2014; US\$13,869,000.00 to finance the supply and erection of electrical materials and equipment for the electrification of 556 communities in the Eastern, Volta and Northern Regions – Phase-2 approved on 22nd December, 2015 (Hansard, 2015); €23,500,000.00 for the construction and Equipping of 10 Polyclinics in the Central Region (Hansard, 2015); US\$83,4000,000.00 for the Accra Urban Transport Project (AUTP) approved on 27th October 2016 (Hansard, 2016). Others include a loan facility of US\$ 24,000,000.00 for the design and construction of the Tamale International Airport – Phase 2 approved on 27th October, 2016 (Hansard, 2016); €6,836,250.00 for the development of the University of Environment and Sustainable Development approved on 28th October, 2016 (Hansard, 2016); €22,816,666.67 to finance the execution of the Renewable Energy Programme (Pilot Photovoltaic System) approved on 1st November, 2016 (Hansard, 2016); €7,762,-500.00 for the development of the Kumasi International Airport approved on 27th October, 2016 (Hansard, 2016); and US\$24.0million to finance the expansion and development of twenty-six (26) Existing Senior High Schools approved on 4th August, 2016 (Hansard, 2016). The economic sector also received a fair share of the loan facilities approved by the 6th Parliament. One the key areas of the economic sector for which loans were approved by the 6th Parliament was the cocoa industry. On July 15, 2015, the 6th Parliament approved a commercial loan facility of US\$300,000,000.00 for the refinancing of cocoa bills (Hansard, 2015). Similarly, on July 21, 2015, the 6th Parliament approved a commercial loan facility of US\$56.80 million to support the Public

Financial Management and Private Sector Competitiveness Support Programme (PFMPSCSP) Phase I (Hansard, 2015).

In the case of the 7th Parliament, a total amount of US\$519,385,020.36 made up of 11 different commercial loan facilities and €1,548,176,508.99 made up of 28 different commercial loan facilities were approved between 2017 and 2020. As was the case of other loan facilities, the loan facilities approved by the 7th Parliament were intended to revamp the social and economic sectors of the Ghanaian society. Some of the loan facilities approved for the provision of social infrastructure included the €122,543,352.60 loan facility for the financing of the modernisation of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital and Associated Buildings in the Ashanti Region of Ghana approved on 12th April, 2019, and a loan facility of US\$95,375,020.36 approved on 20th November, 2019 to finance the supply and erection of electrical materials and equipment for the electrification of 582 communities in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Volta and Western Regions (phase one of the initial 1,033 communities) (Hansard, 2019). Others included a loan facility of €147,420,550.51 approved on 31st March, 2020, to finance the construction and equipping of a new 330-Bed maternity block at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital (KBTH); a loan facility of €139,339,000.00 approved on 31st March, 2020, for the construction of the Tema, Nkoranza and the Dormaa Hospitals and the Central Medical stores and ancillary facilities; a loan facility of €140,814,285.10 approved on 31st March, 2020, to finance the implementation of the Ghana Rural Telephony and Digital Inclusion Project; and a loan facility of €56,574,082.70 approved on 31st March, 2020, to finance the rehabilitation and equipping of La General Hospital (Hansard, 2020).

Some other loan facilities approved for the provision of social infrastructure included a loan facility of US\$95,000,000.00 approved on 1st May, 2020, to finance the construction and completion of Lots 5 and 6 of the Eastern Corridor Road Project; a loan facility of €60,257,921.58) for the upgrading of the Eastern Corridor Road – Lot 1: Tema- Akosombo Junction (63.6kms) approved on 1st May, 2020, and; a loan facility of €91,375,307.01 to finance the design and construction of drainage and ancillary sewage system in Accra (Nima drain from Kaokudi to the Odaw River Basin) approved on 29th July, 2020 (Hansard, 2020).



Table 6. 3 Loan Agreements Rejected by the Minority Caucus on the Finance Committee of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments

7th Parliament

Date	Loan	Presented By	Majority (NPP) Position at Plenary	Minority (NDC) Position at Plenary
20/03/2018	Loan and Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW), Frankfurt am Main for a loan amount of thirteen million euros (€13,000,000.00) and a financial contribution of an amount of one million euros (€1,000,000.00) to co-finance the Establishment of a Deposit Protection Scheme in Ghana	Kwasi Amoako-Attah	The Majority side supported the loan and indicated that its approval would not only increase the confidence of depositors in the financial sector, but also make credit available, which is an engine for economic growth, to those who needed loans to support their activities.	<p>The Minority though supported the loan was concerned the Bank of Ghana would have to strengthen the internal mechanism to be able to apply the new legislation. They added that the Deposit Protection Fund would only be effective if it is complementary to the efforts of the other safety net players.</p> <p>Another concern was the definition of who is a small depositor because of the belief that those with bigger moneys would not save with the bank for the fear of losing their moneys.</p>
09/03/2018	Loan Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the African Development Fund for an amount not exceeding the equivalent	Dr. A.A. Osei	The Majority appealed to the minority to approve the loan	The Minority was concerned about the loan because the commitment fee of 0.5 per cent charged on the undisbursed

	of twenty-seven million, eight hundred and sixty-four thousand, seven hundred and fifty units of accounts (UA27,864,750) [equivalent to US\$39.01 million] to finance the Savannah Zone Agricultural Productivity Project (SAPIP).		as it covered the projects which were feeding on the flagship projects of government: The “Planting for Food and Jobs”; and the “One District One Factory”. They also indicated that the loan also covered issues of irrigation, where villages would have the opportunity to construct dams.	portion of the loan facility was not untenable. The sources of funding were not clear even though the Government of Ghana, together with beneficiaries were expected to fund USD 17.6 million of this project. Out of this almost USD12.6 million of it was to be funded for external services.
12/07/2018	Loan and Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount equivalent to one hundred and ten million, six hundred thousand Special Drawing Rights (SDR110,600,000) [equivalent to US\$150 million] to finance the proposed Transport Sector Improvement Project	Who laid it?	The Majority believed that the facility would give Ghana benefits, including improvement of 370 km of road network. This improvement included the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing roads and additional 200 km of feeder roads which would help the agricultural sector and other sectors of the economy. The loan facility would give the country the opportunity to	The Minority raised concerns with regards to the capacity building component because of its high cost. Cabinet was asked to take a look at the agreement and reallocate up to 50 per cent from US\$16 million downwards. The difference between monitoring consultancy and monitoring consultant was raised? In one breath, the consultant was being are monitored but it was not clear who would monitor the

			build capacity to improve the sectors.	consultancy which was to cost US\$2 million.
24/07/2018	Commercial Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and Deutsche Bank AG, London Branch [as Agent, Arranger, Structuring Bank and Lender] for an amount twelve million, three hundred thousand euros (€12,300,000.00) for Phase II of the Redevelopment and Modernisation of the Kumasi central market and its Associated Infrastructure	Minister for Finance	<p>The Majority indicated that there were some litigations which delayed the project but was resolved by Otumfuo Osei Tutu II.</p> <p>The project was to expand a large number of the economic agents in Kumasi.</p>	<p>The Minority raised issue with the option of on-lending the proceeds which cannot be done from a loan being contracted.</p> <p>The Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly was to respond to the on-lending Agreement for a better assessment of its capacity.</p>
29/07/2020	Term Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana (represented by the Ministry of finance) and Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt Branch (as Arranger and Original Lender) and TMF Global Services (UK) Limited (as facility Agent) for an amount of one hundred and forty-seven million, five hundred and five thousand, seven hundred and thirty-four euros (€147,505,734.00) for the reconstruction of the Bechem-Techimantia-Akumadan (40.4kms) and the Tarkwa-Agona Nkwanta Road Projects	Mr Dominic B.A Nitiwul	<p>The Majority argued that that the construction of road from Bechem through Techimantia to Akumadan would be a durable one which would attract minimal post-construction cost.</p> <p>They further stated that the we need the loan because the nation does not have money to spend on reconstruction of our roads. They encouraged the minority to assist in approving the loan agreement.</p>	The Minority indicated the NDC was accused by the NPP over inflated contract figures, which was never the case with the reduction of the scope of work to make savings.

24/07/2018	Term Loan Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and KfW IPEX-Bank GmbH (as original lender [supported by United Kingdom Export Finance guarantee] for an amount of fifty-six million united states dollars (US\$56,000,000.00) for the construction of the second phase of the Tamale International Airport	Minister for Finance	To promote Hajj, tourism in the North.	The Ghana Civil Aviation Authority recognises that where they took those lands without the payment of compensation to the people of Tamale.
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6TH Parliament

Date	Loan	Presented By	Majority (NDC) Position at Plenary	Minority (NPP) Position at Plenary
21/07/2015	Loan Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the African Development Fund for an amount equivalent to forty million Units of Accounts (UA40,000,000 [equivalent to US\$56.80 million] to support the Public Financial Management and Private Sector Competitiveness Support Programme Phase I (PFMPSCSP)	Minister for Finance	The Majority indicated that the loan agreement was to support the implementation of the government medium-term development agenda aimed at building a strong foundation for inclusive and self-reliant economic growth.	The Minority raised serious concerns about Ghana committing itself to too many loans. They indicated that the country went for the World Bank — International Development Association (IDA) support and there was no need to get another loan from African Development Bank (AfDB). The Minority requested the Government and the Minister

				for Finance to explain how the previous loan was used.
28/10/2016	The Buyer Credit Facility Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and Deutsche Bank S.p.A and its affiliates in the sum of up to thirty-eight million, seven hundred and thirty-eight thousand, seven hundred and fifty euros (€38,738,750.00) for the development of the University of Environment and Sustainable Development.	Chairman of the Committee (Mr James Klutse Avedzi)	The Majority defended the rationale of locating the University at Somanya as it will attract further development into the area.	The loan of €38 million was to develop a university which rather starts from a classroom or an existing facility. The logical location for a university in the Eastern Region should have been Koforidua. However, the location of the university was driven by politics.

5th Parliament

Date	Loan	Presented By	Majority (NDC) Position at Plenary	Minority (NPP) Position at Plenary
17 July, 2009	The Loan Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for an amount of four million and fifty thousand Special Drawing Rights (SDR4,050,000) [equivalent to six million United States	Chairman of the Committee (Mr. J. K. Avedzi)	The facility was to support the implementation of the rural and agricultural finance programme. This was to provide improved and sustainable livelihoods to the rural poor particularly women and the vulnerable groups by improving their access to sustainable financial services.	The loan of US\$41.9 million was substantial and would not benefit the ordinary person in the agricultural sector but rather ARB Apex Bank. .

	Dollars (US\$6,000,000.00)] for the Rural and Agricultural			
17 July, 2009	The Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount of ten million, two hundred thousand Special Drawing Rights (SDR10,200,000) (equivalent to US\$15.00 million) to provide a second additional credit for the Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project (STWSSP)	Chairman of the Finance Committee (Mr. J. K. Avedzi)	To provide additional financing to the Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project being implemented by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency.	There was no expiry date on the loan in addition to past record of cost overrunning similar loans
17 July, 2009	Financing Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the International Development Association (IDA) for an amount of six million, eight hundred thousand Special Drawing Rights (SDR6,800,000) [US\$10.00 million equivalent] to support the implementation of a second Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (NREG) Development Policy Operations	Chairman of the Finance Committee (Mr. J. K. Avedzi)	The NREG programme would enhance Ghana's growth potential by improving policy development for natural resource extraction and use.	A lot of money would be spent over a 5-year period in those sectors where transparency, particularly in the mining sector was needed. Approving contracts for the mining companies with all kinds of clauses was worrisome.
22-07-2011	Loan Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Ghana and the Bank Hapoalim B.M of Isreal for an amount of three hundred and fifty-nine million	Mr. Seth Terkper	The importance Medical Schools having their teaching	The Minority however noted that the cost of the project was a bit high and should be

	United States Dollars (US\$359,000,000.00) for the design, construction, procurement and equipment of a 597-bed university hospital in Legon and additional works on the Ho Regional and Hohoe District Hospitals		hospitals has been the practice across the world. The project will provide modernised and adequate health facilities for the University of Ghana, Legon to function as a tertiary care level hospital with teaching facilities.	renegotiated so that the country was not short-changed.
22-07-2011	Supplemental Credit Agreement between Government of Ghana and Société Générale (Canada) to finance additional works — 132 — Megawatt Combined-Cycle Thermal Power Plant at Aboadze (Takoradi-3 Thermal Power Project)	Chairman of the Committee (Mr James K. Avedzi	The majority were convinced about the project except for the additional earth and civil works which the Committee thought that the Volta River Authority (VRA) technical official, especially the geo-technical engineers did not do very well. They therefore implored on the majority side to approve the loan agreement.	The initial cost was US\$94 million which was varied by an additional US\$75 million based on some scoping matters. The loan was a rip-off which was not in the best interest of the country.

Extracts from the Hansards, Parliament of Ghana, on Loan/Grant Agreements of the Government of Ghana, 2009-2020.



In the context of existing literature, discourses on the committee system of parliament are silent about how the dynamics of politics and how the educational background of MPs contribute to the quality of work of the committee system. Generally, scholarship on the committee system of parliament has focused essentially on the generality of the scope of work of the committee (Barkan, 2005; Burnell, 2002; Feinstein, 2009; Rotberg and Salahub, 2013), resources of committees of parliament (Biddle et al., 2002; Njoroge, 2010; Wang, 2005), and types of parliamentary committees (Mataure, 2003; Burnell, 2002). In Ghana, the existing studies on the committee system focused essentially on the significance of the committee system of parliament (Essuman-Johnson et al., 2016: 33), formal procedures of the operations of committees of parliament (Ninsin, 2008), partisanship of the committees of parliament (Lindberg and Zhou, 2008), and the assessment of the work of the committees of parliament (Ofori-Mensah and Rutherford, 2011). This study has contributed to the literature on the committee system of parliament by adding new variables to the discourse on the committee system. The implication of this finding is that the election of professionals with requisite educational qualifications and considerable experience in their respective professions is likely to improve the quality of work of parliament in general for the general good of Ghana. Similarly, it can be validly implied that competitive party politics of the kind experienced in Ghana since 2009 has the potential to push MPs and other politicians to their limits to give off their best for the betterment of the country.



6.1.3: The committee system and the oversight function of Parliament

Article 103 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana empowers parliament to set up committees with the powers to undertake “investigation and inquiry into the activities and administration of ministers and departments as Parliament may determine; and such investigation and inquiries may extend to proposals and legislations” (Republic of Ghana, 1992). Field data revealed that the committee system in the execution of the oversight function of parliament is problematic. The data showed that parliament’s oversight control of the executive and government agencies and departments is not effective. Indeed, though the 1992 “Constitution of Ghana empowers parliament to exercise oversight control by setting up committees to investigate government departments and agencies, the exercise of the oversight function through the committee system is not effective in practice” (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 15, 2022). Specifically, Article 103(6) spells out the powers of the committees of parliament:

A committee appointed under this article shall have the powers, rights and privileges of the High Court or a Justice of the High Court at a trial for: (a) enforcing the attendance of witnesses and examining them on oath, affirmation or otherwise; (b) compelling the production of documents; and (c) issuing a commission or request to examine witnesses abroad (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Evidence from field data shows that there were practical cases to show that the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments hurled individuals, departments and agencies before them to interrogation or ordered them to furnish the committees with documents. This “observation is obvious to be belaboured in any discussion. This is an obvious situation in most of the sittings of PAC, AC and EMC” (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022). Sometimes, the “committees even open up to CSOs and individuals to submit petitions to them over an issue” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 21, 2022).

Despite the powers of summons exercised by the committees of parliament, parliament's exercise of its oversight function is not effective. Without the power to prosecute individuals, the PAC, for instance, does not have any power to ensure that the executive arm of government implemented its recommendations. The result is that "the committee system is more or less like a walking caricature that has powers in theory, but practically weak when it comes to the implementations recommendations in the *ad hoc* committees in particular" (CSOs worker, Fieldwork, October 12, 2023). In summary, "though the committee system and the plenary in general continue to discharge their duties to ensure accountability, in reality, the committees do not have powers to implement any adverse findings against the executive. Besides, the committees do not have powers to institute any sanctions against government departments and agencies found to have committed any financial malfeasance in their investigations" (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022).

There is paucity of documentary primary data to support the above finding. However, the Report of the Constitutional Review Commission (2011) provides further evidence that corroborates the finding that parliament's exercise of its oversight function is not effective. According to the Commission, the Parliament of Ghana "has in practice not developed into that autonomous, independent and vital institution capable of asserting its authority and discharging its constitutional functions. Its oversight function, for example, has been asserted only in very minimal terms" (Constitution Review Commission, 2011: 136).

Contextualizing the finding in the remits of existing literature, one finds some dichotomies. Studies on Ghana's Parliament have generally appraised parliament in the exercise of its oversight function (Lindberg and Zhou, 2009; Stapenhurst and Alandu, n.d.; Darfour, 2021). According to Darfour

(2021: 345), “parliamentary committees perform oversight and legislative functions ... [though] the monitoring of government agencies and overseeing their adherence to regulations, laws, policies and budgets approved ... [and through] the consideration of Bills at the committee stage of the legislative process.”

6.1.4: The committee system and the legislative function of Parliament

Evidence from field data strongly acknowledged the centrality of the committee system in the execution of parliament’s legislation function. However, opinions varied as to whether the committee system and parliament in general has executed its legislative function satisfactorily. The overwhelming conclusion drawn from the field suggests that parliament is merely a rubber stamp in the hands of the executive as far as parliament’s execution of its legislative function is concerned. The obvious reason for this conclusion is the purported use of the numerical strength of the Majority in committees to push through the agenda of their party in power. Until, the opposition in parliament gains numerical strength over the MPs of the party in power, there is always the tendency for the MPs in power-cum the Majority to use their numerical strength to push through the proposed bills of their government in power to pass them into laws” (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022).

Contextualizing the finding in the remits of existing secondary sources shows some dichotomies. Some secondary sources make conclusions that seemingly showed that the committee system, and by extension, parliament is a rubber-stamp. Without specifically referring to parliament and its committee system as a rubber-stamp, scholars were categorical that parliament and its committee system is weak; they blamed this phenomenon largely on the governance architecture of the Fourth Republic (Amoateng, 2012; Ninsin, 2008; Sakyi, 2010; Lindberg and Zhou, 2009; Gyampo and

Graham, 2014). Odekro (2016: 68) contended that “the Parliament of Ghana is arguably the weakest of the three arms of our democratic governance infrastructure.”

Other secondary sources and data from Parliamentary Hansards do not collaborate the finding from field data that the committee system or parliament in general is a rubber-stamp as far as the execution of parliament’s legislative function is concerned. In fact, evidence shows that the committee system and parliament do not necessarily rubber-stamp all bills brought to parliament. For instance, the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments, having considered the reports of its committees, passed only 73%, 76% and 78% of bills into law, respectively (Darfour, 2021). Evidence further shows that not all bills brought to the committees were approved for passage into law by the plenary. For instance, 12 and 7 bills were withdrawn in the 5th and 6th Parliaments, respectively, while 13 bills were withdrawn in the 7th Parliament (Darfour, 2021). The reasons for the withdrawal of the bills are diverse. They “range from a major defect being identified in the Bill, the need for so many committee amendments that if effected would significantly change the intent of the law, political expediency, public opposition to a measure being introduced and poor timing” (Darfour, 2021: 290). The bills withdrawn from the 5th Parliament were the following: the 2009 Supplementary Appropriations Bill; the Medical Training and Research Bill; the Data Protection Bill; the Fees and Charges (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill (see Table 5.6). In the case of the 6th Parliament, bills such as Right to Information Bill, 2013, Nuclear Regulatory Authority Bill, 2014, Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Bill, 2014 and Public Procurement (Amendment) Bill, 2014 were withdrawn (see Table 6.5) Some of the bills withdrawn from the 7th Parliament included the Earmarked Funds Capping and Re-Alignment Bill, 2017, Energy Sector Levies (Amendment) Bill, 2017, Office of Special

Prosecutor Bill, 2017, Zongo Development Fund Bill, 2017, Luxury Vehicle Levy Bill, 2018, Customs (Amendment) Bill, 2019, among others (see Table 6.5). On the other hand, all three parliaments had bills that relapsed following the dissolution of parliament. A total of 13, 24 and 10 bills relapsed in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments, respectively (see Table 6.4).

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the finding that the committee system or parliament is merely a rubber-stamp used by the executive to pass proposed bills into law is contentious. Given the high rate of bills passed into law, one is likely to make the hasty conclusion that the committee system or the plenary in general is a rubber-stamp as far as the execution of parliament's legislative function is concerned. On the other hand, available documentary evidence to the contrary also prop a valid argument that the committee system is not turning parliament into a rubber-stamp in the execution of its legislative function.

Table 6. 4 The Number of Bills introduced in Parliament, 2009-2020

Description	5 th Parliament	6 th Parliament	7 th Parliament	Total
Total No. of Bills introduced	107	117	159	383
Total No. of Bills passed	82 (77%)	85 (73%)	125 (78%)	292
Total No. of urgent Bills	7	-	19	26
No. of Bills withdrawn	12	7	13	32

No. of Bills that relapsed	13	24	10	47
Total No. of Bills rejected	-	2	-	2
Total No. of Bills that could not pass	25 (23%)	33 (27%)	34 (21%)	92

Source: Darfour (2021: 287)

Table 6. 5 Bills Withdrawn from Parliament, 2009-2020

Parliaments	Bills Laid and Later Withdrawn
Fifth Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2009 Supplementary Appropriations Bill • The Medical Training and Research Bill • The Data Protection Bill • The Fees and Charges (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill
Sixth Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to Information Bill, 2013 • Nuclear Regulatory Authority Bill, 2014 • Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Bill, 2014 • Public Procurement (Amendment) Bill, 2014 • Interception of Postal Packets and Telecommunication Messages Bill, 2016 • Land Use and Spatial Planning Bill, 2016 • Hazardous and Electronic Waste Control and Management Bill, 2016
Seventh Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earmarked Funds Capping and Re-Alignment Bill, 2017 • Energy Sector Levies

	<p>(Amendment) Bill, 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Special Prosecutor Bill, 2017 • Zongo Development Fund Bill, 2017 • Land Bill, 2018 • Right to Information Bill, 2018 • Chartered Institute of Human Resource Management Bill, 2018 • Luxury Vehicle Levy Bill, 2018 • Income Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2018 • Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2018 • National Road Safety Authority Bill, 2019 • Chartered Institute of Marketing Bill, 2019 • Customs (Amendment) Bill, 2019
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Source: Darfour (2021: 289-290)

6.1.5 An assessment of the FC, AC, PAC, HC and EMC of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments

This session undertakes evidence-based assessment of the FC, AC, PAC, HC and EMC using the data from fieldwork. No corresponding data from documentary primary sources from the Hansard Department of Parliament or other existing primary documents were obtained for the analysis in this session. This is largely due to the non-existence of documentary primary sources that subjected the committee system to any critical assessment. For instance, the Hansards only provided reports of the committees devoid of appraisals. Given the unavailability of documentary primary sources that assessed the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana, this session relied solely on field data to pioneer an assessment of the committees.

6.1.5.1 The Appointments Committee

The study found that, apart from determining the approval of minister-designates based on the constitutional imperatives, other exigencies such as ethnicity, gender, religion and regional politics play a critical role in the approval of nominees.

First, the Appointment Committee operated within its remits to ensure that presidential nominees qualified for the positions they were nominated for were vetted and approved. In other words, the Appointments Committee worked within the constitutional imperative or provisions that determine the eligibility and approval of nominees. Respondents applauded the Appointments Committee for determining the approval of presidential nominees within the purview of the constitutional provisions. Advancing this argument, a respondent argued that the Appointments Committee has been “effective because if you look at the constitutional imperative, what it does is to use the constitutional provisions to determine the approval of ministers. To this extent, one would say that the Appointments Committee discharged its functions with distinction” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022). Collaborating this view, an NPP MP intimated:

The Appointments Committee has been effective to the extent that the Appointments Committee operates on terms of reference. Its terms of reference are about the suitability of the candidate. It has been effective to the extent that the eligibility criteria have been applied to the appointment of nominees all the time ... Its vetting process is transparent. Besides, the judgement of the Appointments Committee can only be premised on the eligibility criteria rather than any exigencies or expectations, whims and caprices of a particular political party or variables outside the provisions of the Constitution (NPP MP, personal communication, October 26, 2022).

Apart from the strict application of the constitutional provisions to the determination of the approval of nominees, it would seem that the Appointments Committee carefully scrutinized nominees that appeared before it without fear or favour. Members would always conduct

investigations on nominees, their background, work experiences and other issues. In fact, “it discharged the vetting process in a transparent manner” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 26, 2022). Furthermore, it would appear that:

The Appointments Committee has been somehow effective because it has been able to scrutinize appointees. It has been able to take nominees through the vetting process without prejudice. To the extent that the Committee was able reject some nominees, one is tempted to rate it as very effective. For example, Appointment Committee of the 5th Parliament rejected Hon Osei Kuffour’s nomination (NPP MP, personal communication, October 6, 2022).

Other respondents were of the view that the effectiveness of the Appointments Committee since the 5th Parliament was a function of the critical questions its members posed to the nominees that appeared before it. As a journalist put it:

The effectiveness of the Appointment Committee is not about whether it approved or disapproved some nominees in the interest of the general public; it is about the critical questions it posed to the nominees that appeared before it. Many of the questions were so critical that some of the nominees fumbled with their answers, and others found it difficult to face the Committee with the usual composure associated with them. The critical and probing questions that the Committee posed to nominees that appeared before it brought out many issues about the nominees, which were hitherto unknown to the public (Journalist, personal communication, October 15, 2022).

In short, “the Appointments Committee has been very effective in the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments because some of the questions they put before nominees were very good and they helped to shape their opinions and also helped to test their intelligence and knowledge of those nominees” (NPP MP, personal communication, September 13, 2022). The critical questions that the Appointment Committee posed to nominees that appeared before it, together with the due diligence it conducted on the background of nominees, enabled the committee to approved the right calibre of people for ministerial appointments. A respondent put it aptly when he said:

The Appointment Committee has been very effective even though it may have its challenges. The Committee has been very effective to the point that the kind of the precision of the type of questions that its members posed to nominees and the research work they conducted about nominees were always accurate. People were saying some ministers in the 8th Parliament should not have been approved based on their own observations and idiosyncrasies. Take Hon. Hawa Koomson, for example. Some people's idiosyncrasies persuaded them to clamour for her rejection, but the Appointments Committee approved her. Public idiosyncrasies against her were largely driven by her inability to express herself fluently in English. But public administration is far more than the impeccability with which a person expressed himself or herself in English Language. Today, you can see the fantastic work she is doing in her ministry. People are trumpeting her achievements. This was a fantastic minister who could have been rejected if the Committee allowed the idiosyncrasies of the people to cloud its judgement (NPP MP, personal communication, October 28, 2022).

The positive appraisal of the Appointments Committee was not unanimous. Some respondents were inclined to discount its positive performance. To some respondents, the work of the Appointments Committee was not appreciable. In the view of one respondent, the work of the Appointments Committee was shambolic. He said:

If you look at the expectation of the general public and how the Appointments Committee in other jurisdictions discharged their functions, you would say that a lot of factors are brought to bear on the approval of a nominee. Some of the factors include public interest, and the quality and capacity of the nominees for the positions they were nominated. In Ghana, the Appointment Committee, over the years, has not been very effective because its members narrow themselves to only the constitutional mandate without having in mind the expectation of the general public. In fact, the general public expected the Appointments Committee to go beyond the constitutional provision to approve nominees based on their abilities and capabilities (NPP MP, personal communication, October 6, 2022).

Another reason that respondents have cited for the ineffectiveness of the Appointments Committee was the wholesale approval of nominees that appeared before it. In the words of a respondent, the “ineffectiveness of the Appointments Committee of the Fourth Republic was linked to the wholesale approval of nominees, though some of them lacked the required capabilities for the jobs for which they were approved. For the 8th Parliament, in particular, the Appointments Committee

failed the public miserably. Members treated the approval of ministers as business as usual” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 22, 2022).

Apart from the appraisal of the Appointments Committee, one noticeable phenomenon about the Appointments Committee was the astronomical rates of approval of nominees that appeared before it. A majority of the respondents explained the phenomenon in the context of the constitutional provisions of eligibility of nominees which goaded the decisions of the committee, and that the approvals had nothing to do with their performance during the vetting. Beyond this conventional explanation, respondents have pointed to unconventional reasons. One of such unconventional reasons was ethnicity. Some of the participants (mostly MPs) intimated that ethnicity plays a role in the Appointments Committee’s approval of nominees. As “the NPP and the NDC have same ethnic groups in parliament, these ethnic groups lobby for the approval of their tribesmen (NDC MP, personal communication, September 5, 2022). In fact, “without mentioning names, some of the ethnic groups created common WhatsApp platforms for MPs from both divides (NPP and NDC) aimed at marshaling ethnicity as a resource to advance the approval of their kinsmen that appeared before the Appointments Committees. This phenomenon of using ethnicity as a ‘lobbying tool’ reached its crescendo in the heated temperature prior to the approval of ministerial nominees by the 8th Parliament” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022). Hence, “without the ethnicity factor that permeated parliament, some nominees would have probably been rejected” (NPP MP, personal communication, September 13, 2022). Indeed, “there are biological brothers, cousins, other relatives and friends across both political divides – NPP and NDC. Such relations smothered any political differences between the MPs that belonged the NPP and NDCs, and took precedence over political directives. This phenomenon therefore makes the whip system by the political parties utterly ineffective” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022).

Another exigency that crept into the ‘politics of the approval of nominees’ by the Appointments Committee was regionalism and religion. Some NPP and NDC MPs concurred that regionality and religious affiliation determined the decisions of the Appointments Committee. In some instances, “NPP and NDC MPs from the same region are bound by the “politics of regionality” to lobby for the approval of nominees from their region, irrespective of their political differences. Other times, MPs from both divides are persuaded by religious idiosyncrasies to lobby for the approval of a nominee of the same religion and denomination. These are matters that are not known to the general public” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 28, 2022). An NDC MP, highlighting the influence of the non-conventional factors in the approval of nominees by the Appointments Committee, said:

Relationship, including tribal, ethnicity, religious, schoolmates, chamber relationship, played a critical role in the approval of nominees by the Appointments Committee. I have never hidden that, though I am NDC, the regional factor would have influenced me to vote in a secret ballot for the approval of some nominees from my region by the 8th Parliament if their approval was brought before the floor of parliament. The only thing that would prevent me from doing so is if there is clear evidence that any of the nominees from my region breached the constitution (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022).

Collaborating the above argument, an NDC MP added dimensions, including gender, as the non-conventional factors that influence the decisions of the Appointments Committee. He said:

You see the complexities of decision-making in politics. There are always multiple interests that are always conflicting, sometimes overriding and superseding even party decisions, even when the three-line whip has been enforced. You see what happened with the selection of the Speaker and then when it came to ministers and all of that. So, if you reduce the decision-making considerations to just partisanship or just expertise, you would be wrong. Sometimes, social relationships are overriding factors – it could be ethnic, “old-schoolism”, or religious factors. Sometimes, too, it could even be personal considerations. I think that there were other considerations beyond just expertise. I think that there were some of the claims of ethnicity or tribe but these are to be verified and proved. Even sometimes, there are gender considerations. You

see, for example, that people were surprised that of all the ministers, Hawa Koomson topped. Meanwhile, she did not do well in terms of her performance when she appeared before the Appointments Committee. Religion and gender, you cannot rule them out (NDC MP, personal communication, October 18, 2022).

In short, to “dissect and fully understand the logic of the approval of nominees by the Appointments Committee, one must go beyond the conventional reasons proffered by the Appointments Committee to understand the weight that the non-conventional reasons exerted” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 28, 2022). In conclusion, it is significant to note that the finding and the reasons articulated for its prevalence in the work of the AC are only grounded in field data; there is no documented primary data to support the finding.

6.1.5.2 The Finance Committee

The study found that, though the FC has been instrumental in parliament’s scrutiny of government financial/loan agreements, it grappled with a lot of difficulties over the years. Without any evidence from primary documentary source to provide further analysis, the study found from the field data that the FC was instrumental in parliament’s scrutiny of government’s financial transactions and in the exercise of parliament’s financial control function. There are a number of reasons for this conclusion. In the view of an NDC MP, the Finance Committee has been one of the most effective committees of parliament. He argued:

The Finance Committee has been one of the most effective committees of parliament. In the 5th, 6th and 8th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic, the works of the Finance Committee always stood out. Comparatively, the Finance Committee of the 8th parliament is more effective than the others because of the hung parliament (NDC MP, personal communication, September 22, 2022).

Collaborating the view that the Finance Committee was one of the effective committees of parliament since the 5th Parliament, an NPP MP argued that, irrespective of the numbers of

Majority and the Minority on the Finance Committee, the committee always discharged its work efficiently and prudently. According to him:

Whatever the opinions and assessment of the opposition and the general public, the Finance Committee had, most of the time, discharged its functions judiciously. It scrutinized government loans and all financial dealings carefully to ensure value for money. Even in the 7th Parliament where the NPP had an overwhelming majority, the Finance Committee did everything to disapprove some loans and transactions when it had the course to do so (NPP MP, personal communication, October 6, 2022).

On the whole, “the Finance Committee has been largely professional in the discharge of its functions. With the exception of some few transactions that raised eyebrows and public outcry such as the PDS, Agyapa deal, among others, the work of the Finance Committee of parliament since the 5th Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic had been stupendous” (CSOs Worker, personal communication, October 17, 2022). The overriding reason for this phenomenon was the background of the members of the committees. As an NDC respondent put it:

The Finance Committee in the 8th parliament is more effective simply because members in the government side are not as strong as those in the opposition. You know Ato Forson is very good (former deputy minister and chartered accountant), Isaac Adongo is very good (former auditor and member of the audit committee even in the UN and the World Bank) and John Jinapor is also very good (former deputy minister for power with about four different types of masters). Therefore, they are able to hold government to account (NDC MP, personal communication, September 22, 2022).

Expositions of the Finance Committee were also extended to the scandals associated with it and executive influence in its work. According to respondents, the work of the Finance Committee since the 5th Parliament was not entirely pristine; there were some scandalous or questionable approvals associated with it. All respondents were unanimous of the fact that the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament was the most scandalized of all. One reason for such controversies was the opaqueness of some of the transactions and the lack of engagement with parliament by the

executive arm of government about some transactions. Elaborating on this view, an NPP MP argued:

One can point to a number of transactions that were approved by the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament that raised eyebrows both within and outside parliament. Key ones were the controversial ‘Agyapa’ and PDS deals. The reason for these controversies was that some of the issues were very opaque and therefore people had not appreciated the need for them. I do not even believe that they [executive] gave this parliament due courtesy of having what I might call ‘stakeholder engagement’ to download the realities about these transactions. So, if there is always the tendency for the executive to ride over the thinking of Members of Parliament, it could generate controversy (NPP MP, personal communication, October 6, 2022).

Another reason responsible for this phenomenon was the overwhelming number the Majority commandeered in the membership of the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament. Consequently, the Majority most often used its sheer numbers to get transactions approved for political interests. Hence, the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament soon became a rubber stamp, as it most often approved transactions without diligence. Explaining the reasons for the high number of scandalous approvals of the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament, an NDC MP intimated:

Due to the overwhelming majority of the NPP on the Finance Committee, approval of some transactions brought before it was tinged by political interests. The NPP used their sheer numbers on the Finance Committee to ‘torpedo’ any red flags raised by the NDC members. Hence, some transactions were approved without due diligence. A clear case was the PDS. Latter events showed that the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament approved for political expediency without due diligence. There were also the tax exemptions for Kasepreko Company, and the Minority really made a very important argument, and yet, because of the sheer numbers of the Majority, the Minority’s position was turned down (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022).

Mention should also be made of the fact that some of the transactions generated a lot of controversies that triggered public interests and uproar. In fact, it is difficult to explain the controversies that surrounded the approvals of some of the transactions of the government by the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament without reference to public interest and uproar. This was

because some of the transactions such as “CNTC, PDS, Agyapa deal generated a lot of controversy because apparently it turned out that they were vested interest who were supposed to be representative of the people teaming up with outsiders and ensuring that the agreements were tailored along lines which inured to their benefit and not the benefit people of Ghana” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022). There were others such as the Atuabo Inland Port and the Eurobond, which generated controversies in the 7th Parliament, and by extension, scandalized the work of the Finance Committee” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 20, 2022).

It should be emphasized that the controversies surrounding transactions in relation to the work of the Finance Committee were not limited to the Finance Committee of the 7th Parliament alone; there were some noticeable controversies in the 5th and 7th Parliaments. In the case of the 5th Parliament, for instance, “there was the STS loan. The Finance Committee did not agree, but it was approved at the plenary by the Majority. However, the loan did not see the light of day. There was also the CDB loan, and though the Finance Committee expressed reservations, it was approved. Eventually, however, Ghana could not utilize all the money” (NDC MP, personal communication, September 22, 2022).

6.1.5.3 Public Accounts Committee

The study found that, though the PAC has endeared itself to the public due to its public sittings, it is weak due to its lack of power to implement its recommendations. Extracts from interviews provide illustrations for this finding. One reason responsible for the PAC endearing itself to the general public was its transparency and nature of its leadership. According to respondents, making

an opposition the chair of PAC and telecasting its activities tended to make PAC more effective than all other committees of parliament. As one respondent put it:

Comparatively, the PAC is the most effective committee of all the committees of parliament from the 5th to the 8th Parliament of Ghana. Its effectiveness is intricately tied to two mutually distinctive factors, namely, the fact that it is chaired by the opposition and the fact that its sittings are telecast live. Having an opposition as its chair, makes the PAC implacable foe to the gestures of the government. In addition, telecasting its sittings creates an aura of its transparency in the eyes of the public. It is these two variables that conspire to create a favourable impression of the work of PAC in the minds of the general public (A Journalist, personal communication, October 30, 2022).

The above view is collaborated by other respondents. As an MP argued that “the Public Accounts Committee has been effective in terms of its work because it is telecasted live and headed by the opposition. Other committees must emulate the example of the Public Accounts Committee to make them transparent and effective” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 5, 2022).

Similarly, another respondent argued:

The Public Accounts Committee has been able to resist the interest of the executive because its live hearings. In addition, it is headed by the minority, so, the government can hardly influence the chair to skew proceedings to shield any culprits caught in financial malfeasance (Clerk of Parliament, personal communication, October 21, 2022).

From the preceding quotation, it is clear that “the chairman of PAC is a very important part in the whole equation of the effectiveness of the committee, and so, the kind of chairperson or leader of the PAC determines its effectiveness” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 20, 2022). Indeed, “if the leadership of the PAC is defenestrated from the hands of the opposition, and if its activities are not brought to the public domain through live telecasts, its effectiveness could be as minimal or small as a muster seed” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 14, 2022).

Another reason that explains the effectiveness of the PAC from the 5th to the 7 Parliaments was the view that the committee made meticulous scrutiny of the Auditor General's Report. There is no doubt that "scrutinizing the Auditor General's Report is PAC's constitutional mandate. Hence, its effectiveness is not about the scrutiny of the Auditor General's Report; it is about how it subjected heads of institutions to interrogation to establish financial malfeasances and other financial anomalies in a fiscal year (Clerk of Parliament, personal communication, October 27, 2022). Respondents are of the view that, due to the fact that the PAC uncompromisingly subjected heads of public institutions to scrutiny, it built an aura of fear around itself in the minds of the public. As one respondent recounted:

I think the Public Accounts Committee is feared and respected by the general public than all the committees of parliament. I have heard some public officers who had been invited by the Public Accounts Committee and with the way they talked about it, the fear pushes them to do the right thing because they feel that when they appear before PAC, things are not going to be easy for them (NPP MP, personal communication, October 20, 2022).

In other words, by inviting institutional heads to scrutinize their financial expenditures in a fiscal year, the PAC has virtually turned itself into a 'monster that terrorized' institutional heads to be accountable" (CSOs Worker, personal communication, October 28, 2022). It was therefore not surprising that:

When people appeared before PAC, which I happened to be a member for some short time, and I could see that the mere fact that the Public Accounts Committee at that time was doing its work very well, you could see people jittering because all the sittings were telecast live and therefore people were holding government money with some kind of circumspection (NPP MP, personal communication, October 20, 2022).

Respondents have also explained the effectiveness of the PAC with reference to the financial impact of its report. According to some respondents, the recommendations of the PAC for the retrieval of state funds squandered by institutional heads through financial malfeasances created a

positive image of the quality of its work in the eyes of parliament and the general public as a whole. As an MP put it, “the Public Accounts Committee has been effective in all the parliaments of Ghana since the 5th Parliament because I have seen and heard them talk of retrieving money, giving suggestions and making sure that public officials come to account to it and to explain the reasons for any financial malfeasance” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 6, 2022). Its reports “give parliament and the general public insights and the extent of economic malfeasances in a fiscal year. Furthermore, its bold recommendations for the retrieval of state funds squandered by institutional heads are clear indications of its effectiveness (A Journalist, personal communication, October 30, 2022).

The assessment of the quality of work of the PAC is not entirely pristine; it had challenges and limitations. One of the challenges that impeded the effectiveness of the work of PAC that respondents identified was lack of financial clout. According to respondents, the limited budget with which PAC worked makes it difficult for it to discharge its functions efficiently. Illustrating this view, a respondent argued:

In terms of personnel, PAC has the best caliber of MPs, but in terms of resources, PAC is deprived. Even in parliament, sometimes the Speaker has to come in before money was released to parliament. Once the money was not released, it means PAC could have difficulty embarking a number of public sittings across the country. That was the very reason why the speaker was saying, ‘give us the money to make our committees independent rather than we falling on MDAs to give us money’ (NPP MP, personal communication, October 4, 2022).

Apart from the financial challenges, the work of PAC also suffered a setback of non-implementation of its recommendations. Its recommendations “usually sit on shelves and gathered dust, as authorities to implement its recommendations either lack the political will or are reluctant

to act for inexplicable reasons” (Journalist, personal communication, October 30, 2022).

Commenting on this scenario, an MP noted:

In my view, the Public Accounts Committee has been effective. They execute their mandate, and make recommendations to the House [Parliament]. It is for the House to take it up from there. If you are looking at the effectiveness of the House, the fact that the House itself has not been able to establish mechanisms as required under the constitution to follow up the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee and give effect to it, that is a deficit. To that extent, I would say that Parliament has not lived to its responsibility (Clerk of Parliament, personal communication, October 19, 2022).

From the above quotation, PAC is powerless in the implementation of its recommendations; the implementation of its recommendations to complete the whole cycle of the work of PAC to make it more effective is at the behest of parliament. Thus, “without the power to implement its recommendations, and with parliament apparently renegeing on its duties, the recommendations of PAC were hardly implemented” (CSOs Worker, personal communication, October 28, 2022).

Finally, the effectiveness and quality of work of the PAC was sometimes thwarted by the disproportional representation of the Majority and the Minority on it. Respondents lamented that the Majority and the Minority Caucuses in Parliament do not have equal representations on PAC, and that in a game of numbers where decisions have to be taken, the Majority would always use their numbers in matters of decision-taking to influence to certain key decisions Clerk of Parliament, personal communication, October 19, 2022). An NDC MP bemoaned this situation when he said:

The Public Accounts Committee has been most effective in the 5th and 6th parliaments. In the 7th parliament, because of the difference in numbers, PAC could not achieve much. In this one and half years of the 8th Parliament, however, PAC is beginning to re-exert itself again. The quality of leadership matters, but remember, I keep adding, no matter the quality, if the difference in membership on PAC is so big, the opposition head of PAC can practically achieve nothing. For instance, in the 7th Parliament, yes,

you have the Minority chairing the committee, but it had only 10 members as against 15 from the Majority. So, no matter what the chair did, the Majority would always bamboozle their way through. Even in the 8th Parliament that is a hung parliament, the Majority has 13 members on PAC as against 12 from the side of the Minority. Clearly, in terms of numbers, the Majority can always use their numbers to ‘torpedo’ certain decisions of PAC in order to achieve a political interest. This is a matter of concern, a debilitating factor that conspires to erode off the effectiveness of PAC.

Hence, in situations where the Majority used the whip system, it was mostly likely that they would vote *en bloc* to approve or disapprove certain decisions of PAC for political expediency. Such a situation would invariably impede the effectiveness of PAC Clerk of Parliament, personal communication, October 19, 2022).

6.1.5.4 The Health Committee

Generally, participants’ assessments of the Health Committee of Parliament since the 5th Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic were mixed; the assessments were interlaced with positive and negative scores, but there was a preponderance of the positive scores. The study found that good leadership, non-partisanship of health issues, among others, are the fulcrum upon which the work of the HC was based. First, its effectiveness was a function of the apolitical nature of the issues it handled. According to respondents, health issues are less politicized – hence, there is mostly a congruence of the views of the Majority and the Minority on the issues brought before the Health Committee. In the words of an NPP member of the committee:

The Health Committee is the committee with less disagreements between the Majority and the Minority. This is largely due to the fact that health issues are hardly politicized. This therefore makes it possible for a relatively easy ‘confluence of the views of the Majority and the Minority Caucuses on the committee. Except in cases that were vitiated with scandals and perceived corruption that took political dimensions, all other issues brought before the committee hardly divided members along the political lines of the two dominant parties – NPP and NDC (NPP MP, personal communication, October 13, 2022).

Second, if the non-politicization of matters that were brought before the Health Committee determined the effectiveness of the committee, leadership factor also played a significant role. In the words of an NDC member of the committee:

In terms of committee, the Finance Committee has been effective. I think Health Committee is doing fantastic and then Public Accounts Committee. I will associate their effectiveness to the kind of leaders heading these committees and sometimes the volume the volume of work (NDC MP, personal communication, October 13, 2022).

From the 5th to the 8th Parliament, leadership of the Health Committee had been able to build consensus, and to conduct the discharge of the duties of the committee devoid of executive control and manipulations. An NDC member of the committee made this point vividly when he said:

I think the Health Committee has been able to resist executive influence not because I am a ranking member but because of the posture of the chairman himself. If the chairman was looking in the direction of the president, the work would have been more difficult for me because I would say I am going to resist executive attempts to influence the work of the committee. Even if it is the right direction but not in the interest of government, the chairman would, most of the time, resist it. In addition, the leaders of the committee since the 5th Parliament have generally tended to build consensus between the Majority and the Minority. The relative ease in consensus building was due to the understanding of both caucuses to de-politicize health matters, though the good leadership qualities of the various chairpersons of the committee cannot be discounted (NDC MP, personal communication, October 14, 2022).

Third, it would appear that the effectiveness of the Health Committee since the 5th Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana was due to the generally non-controversial or few controversial issues it handled. With less controversy of the cases handled by the Health Committee, “party colourization did not determine the position of the committee’s members. Hence, disagreements hardly arose to warrant the utilization of the whip system to achieve a political score” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 14, 2022). Consequently,

“the convergence of views is usually the norm between the NPP and the NDC members of the committee on most of the cases handled by the committee” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 13, 2022).

Despite the fact that the Health Committee since the 5th Parliament of Ghana was said to be effective, there were some key controversial issues that divided members along political lines. Respondents limited their responses to the Sputnik V Vaccine contract that the Government of Ghana signed in 2020. Though the contract was not brought before the Health Committee for scrutiny and for parliamentary approval, its execution raised eyebrows – leading to the Minority Leader (Honourable Harina Iddrisu) and the Ranking Member on the Health Committee (Honourable Kwabena Mintah Akandoh) to file a motion for the setting up of a bi-partisan committee to investigate the agreement, as “there were fears that it was tainted with corruption” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 13, 2022). It was the contention of respondents that the contract would have divided the members of the Health Committee along political lines if it had been brought before it for scrutiny and approval. As an NDC MP argued:

You see the Sputnik V contract. It was scandalous and vitiated with corruption. The debate it generated among MPs in and outside parliament was intense, and the debates were often along political lines. Even in the hearings of the parliamentary committee that investigated the contract, you saw palpable signs of the politicization of the issue. Definitely, the politicization of the issue in and outside parliament, as well as during the committee’s sitting, would have been the same issues that would have occurred if the contract was brought before the Health Committee (NDC MP, personal communication, October 13, 2022).

In short, controversial issues of the nature of the contract of the Sputnik V contain the potential to divide the Health Committee members along political lines. In fact, in any controversial issue that lends itself to politicization, “made consensus building problematic, no matter the good leadership

skills of the chair” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 14, 2022). In other words, some issues brought before the Health Committee or on the floor of parliament defied “the logic of consensus building, depoliticization and good leadership acumen if they were controversial” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 14, 2022).

6.1.5.5 Mines and Energy Committee

The study found that good leadership and careful scrutiny of documents brought before the MEC animated its work of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments. First, the chairs of the committee exhibited good leadership skills. In the 6th and 7th Parliaments in particular, the chairs of the Mines and Energy Committee did not allow executive influence to cloud the decisions of the committee. A majority of the respondents held the view that the chairs of the committee allowed the principle of value for money to determine the decisions of the committee made about any energy agreement referred to it. Illustrating this point, a respondent argued:

If you have a Chair who would listen to the Minority because the arguments they made were logical, and to the extent that the chair would lead the committee to shoot down an agreement of the government because it did not bode well for the nation, I would say it is a demonstration of good leadership. This was particularly the case in the 7th Parliament when the Chair of the committee listened to the arguments of the Minority which led the committee to reject the controversial Ameri deal (NDC MP, personal communication, October 12, 2022).

Contributing to the argument that the leadership exhibited by the Chairs of the Mines and Energy from the 5 to 7th Parliament ensured the committee’s effectiveness, an NPP MP pointed out that “the quality of leaders of the committee was decidedly critical to the effectiveness of the committee. The leadership of the committee were generally intellectually, professionally and politically experienced, and they brought these qualities to bear on the work of the committee to improve its quality” (NPP MP, personal communication, October 26, 2022). Indeed, “the Mines and Energy Committee took a very bold decision on the ‘Ameri’ deal in the 7th parliament to stop

government from paying the Ameri deal. Together with the Minority and the Ranking member on Mines and Energy, the committee took the decision to reject the Ameri deal because of the controversy that surrounded it. This bold decision came at a cost, as the Ranking on Mines and Energy Committee together with this chairman of the Finance Committee who led this were all removed in the next elections. They took a very effective decision that led to the resignation of the Minister of the Ministry of Energy (NDC MP, personal communication, October 12, 2022).

Second, the Mines and Energy Committee since the 5th Parliament carefully scrutinized agreements referred to it to ensure value for money of all government contractual agreements. Perhaps, this was due to the realization that energy is critical to the economy of the country. As a respondent argued:

One of the committees that always took time to scrutinize all documents of government agreements brought before it is the Mines and Energy Committee. For me, in most of the government energy agreements brought before the Committee on Mines and Energy, the members put the nation first. Consequently, they scrutinized documents to ensure value for money, though political idiosyncrasies cannot be ruled out. By placing the interest of the nation above political interest, I would say the Mines and Energy Committee of Parliament since the 5th Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic is the most effective committee of parliament so far (CSOs Worker, personal communication, October 21, 2022).

In other words, “political differences were compromised in the interest of the common good of the country. Members of the committee worked to get best deals for the country without reference to any political scores” (NDC MP, personal communication, October 12, 2022).

6.1.6: The challenges of the committee system in the execution of its functions

From the analysis of field data, two main issues emerged as the critical challenges that the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana faces. Field data revealed that one of such critical challenges is executive control of parliament in general and the committee system in particular.

As one informant argued, “the committee system in Ghana’s Parliament is an extension of the inter-party rivalry between the NDC and the NPP. Hence, there is always the tendency for the members of committee whose party is in power to be manipulated by the executive for political reasons” (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022). In fact, “it is impossible to suggest that parliament or its committee system is immune from executive control. So long as parliament is not financially independent and so long as some of the legislators double as executive members of government, it will be a misnomer to conclude that the executive arm of government does not exert control over parliament” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022). Thus, “the executive influence on the committee system is a reality that cannot be ignored because, due to the nature of the country’s democracy, some sitting members of the committees continue to be members of the executive as well” (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 11, 2022).

There is no substantial empirical data in parliamentary circles to support the assertion. Nonetheless, there is evidence from existing primary and secondary sources that lends credence to the assertion that the executive arm of government exerts control over parliament and its committee system. The evidence blames the apparent executive influence over parliament on the hybrid system of governance that makes majority of ministers MPs. Srem-Sai (2014: 5) has drawn attention to “the ... important challenge, which perhaps needs no further elaboration, ... the threat posed by corruption and conflict of interests. The perception of corruption and the allegations of MPs putting themselves in positions of compromise do not only destroy oversight, it also destroys Parliament as a whole”. The Constitutional Review Commission [CRC] of Ghana (2011) was emphatic about executive influence of the Parliament of Ghana. It provided three reasons of executive of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. First, there is an overwhelming executive dominance over parliament (CRC of Ghana, 2011). “For example, Parliament has

virtually no real financial power. Under the current constitutional arrangement, Parliament is denied the power to influence its own institutional budget” (CRC of Ghana, 2011: 136). Secondly, Article 108 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana “virtually makes the President the real holder of the ‘power of the purse’ in Ghana”; not the Parliament of Ghana (CRC of Ghana, 2011: 137). Finally, “the constitutional injunction on the President, under Article 78, to appoint the majority of his ministers from Parliament appears to render Parliament less effective in holding the Executive to account. It has been argued, for example, that members of Parliament are constantly beholden to the President for ministerial appointments, instead of putting their energies to working for the advancement of Parliament as an institution” (CRC of Ghana, 2011: 137).

The finding of this study that the executive arm of government exerts control over parliament and its committee system builds on the arguments in existing literature on parliamentary studies in Ghana and other jurisdictions. Existing discourses on legislatures in Africa have underlined one key argument: the view that the autonomy of legislatures in Africa is problematic (Barkan, 2009). The finding collaborates Barkan’s (2009: 2) argument that “most African legislatures, like legislatures worldwide, remain weak in relation to the executive.” In the Ghanaian context, the finding collaborates the arguments of earlier scholars. Ninsin (2008) argued that Ghana’s politics in the Fourth Republic is one of ultra-majoritarianism. Hence, anytime a contentious issue arose, the executive “used the majority party in parliament to shield itself from parliamentary scrutiny” (Ninsin, 2008: 62). According to Brierley (2012), the competitive electoral environment and the hybridity system of Ghana’s democracy has compelled the Executive arm of government to co-opt parliament (Brierley, 2012). It was this intense electoral competition between the NDC and the NPP that “motivated President Kufuor to use the party to control the legislature” (Brierley, 2012: 425).

The significance of the study's finding is its imperativeness to the consolidation of democracy in Ghana in the Fourth Republic. It provides further illustration that the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic is only independent in theory. Though Ghana has achieved "democratic consolidation, Ghana's Parliament is weak in relation to the executive arm of government" (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022). Despite the justification that the alleged executive control over parliament is a misinterpretation of the symbiotic executive-legislature relationship, one cannot deny the reality that the executive controls parliament in a number of ways – lobbying parliament and committee members, giving financial incentives to committee members and MPs, promising MPs and committee members executive positions in order to influence them, etc. This is the reality since the inception of the Fourth Republic" (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022). Primary documentary data also provides support for this study's conclusion that the Parliament of Ghana and its committee system are only independent in theory. This conclusion is evident in the report of the Constitutional Review Commission, 2011. According to the Commission's report, "although it is recognised that the formal authority of Parliament is relatively strong, Parliament has in practice not developed into that autonomous, independent and vital institution capable of asserting its authority and discharging its constitutional functions. Its oversight functions, for example, have been asserted only in very minimal terms." (Constitution Review Commission of Ghana, 2011: 136). In practice, the Parliament of Ghana and, by extension, its committee system, is influenced by executive control. The implication of this finding is obvious – the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic is weak relative to executive power. Though there is democratic consolidation and separation of powers of the executive and legislative arms of government, the Parliament of Ghana cannot be said to be independent in practice. Executive influence of

parliament is likely to remain in force especially given the duopolistic nature of the political landscape in Ghana in the Fourth Republic.

The second challenge that the committee system of Ghana's 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments faced that stood out from the field data is financial challenge. The generality of the field data showed that the committee system lacked considerable financial muscle to prosecute its numerous tasks. As one informant put it, "the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments lacked adequate financial resources to support their operations. Sometimes, committees had to depend on some organizations, philanthropists, donor partners and individuals for financial assistance to prosecute their functions" (NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022). Though the challenge of lack of adequate financial resources was a prevalent situation since the inception of the Fourth Republic, the "enormity of the financial challenge increases or worsens as we move from one parliament to the next due to the perennial depreciation of the local currency (cedi) against the US dollar" (NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022). Given this financial challenge, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) sometimes resorted to demanding that organizations, agencies and individuals hauled before it for questioning should pay for its administrative expenditures occurred in such sittings. This raises a serious fundamental moral issue, as the organizations, agencies, departments or individuals may interpret the payments for such administrative expenditure as bribes paid to PAC to influence its reports" (CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 15, 2022).

It is difficult to assess this view since respondents did not give any financial figures to support their assertions. However, data from Parliament showed the contrary as appreciable amounts of money have been allocated to the committee since 2010. Table 6.6 below, for instance, shows a progressive increase in budgetary support to the committees. For instance, the Finance Committee

was allocated GH¢130, 000 and GH¢3,517,988 in 2010 and 2022 respectively. Similarly, the PAC was allocated GH¢130, 000 and GH¢5,952,588 in 2010 and 2022 respectively. A similar trend was found in the allocations to the Health, Appointments, and Mines and Energy committees. Interactions with members of the Finance Committee showed that the nominal increases did not suggest that the work of the committees improved. Instead, the increases were dictated by macro-economic indicators such as the depreciation of the Ghana Cedi and inflation. Hence, the increases were intended to maintain the real value of the Ghana Cedi in relation to the budget allocated to the committees.

Table 6. 6 Trends in Budget Allocations to Selected Committees of Parliament, 2010 - 2023

Details	2008*	2009*	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Parliament and the Parliamentary Service	2,070,367,627	2,970,703,152	3,400,534,509	53,222,034	48,006,292	130,467,256	178,540,891	185,194,573	255,868,17	308,565,44	406,210,90	360,097,17	400,705,85	752,509,07	687,991,21	645,868,45,70
Finance	-	-	1	24	40	600	2,2	3,5	4,1	3,7	3,6	4,0	3,7	2,7	3,5	3,6

Com mitt ee			3 0 0 0	8,1 24	0,0 00	,00 0	00, 000	91, 513	47, 986	33, 187	34, 519	17, 058	43, 326	46, 703	17, 988	65, 928
Publ ic Acc ount s Com mitt ee	-	-	1 3 0 , 0 0	39 9,7 76	70 0,0 00	675 ,00 0	2,5 4,0 000	4,0 81, 265	4,7 13, 621	4,2 42, 259	4,1 30, 136	4,4 24, 586	3,9 89, 784	2,9 40, 588	5,9 52, 588	3,8 06, 188
Heal th Com mitt ee	-	-	1 2 5 , 0 0	12 4,7 04	23 0,0 00	327 ,00 0	900 ,00 0	1,4 69, 255	1,6 96, 903	1,5 27, 213	1,4 86, 849	1,6 01, 001	1,4 94, 398	1,4 13, 744	1,6 24, 084	1,5 98, 899
App oint men ts Com mitt ee			1 3 0 , 0 0	12 6,0 00	15 0,0 00	225 ,00 0	659 ,54 1	653 ,00 2	754 ,17 9	186 ,46 7	165 ,20 5	721 ,90 6	464 ,01 9	1,4 86, 451	1,0 92, 468	
Com mitt ee of Min es & Ene rgy	-	-	1 2 5 , 0	21 0,6 87	25 0,0 00	375 ,00 0	1,0 00, 000	1,6 32, 506	1,8 85, 448	1,6 96, 903	1,6 52, 054	1,8 04, 765	1,5 25, 205	1,4 54, 137	1,6 52, 125	1,6 28, 120

			0														
			0														

*Budget Allocations to Committees started in 2010.

Source: Extracts from the Hansard, Parliament of Ghana

In the context of existing literature, the finding that the committee system or parliament in general lacked sufficient financial clout to execute its task is not new. Earlier scholars have discussed this toxicity of lack of sufficient financial resources on the work of parliament and its committee system in Africa and other jurisdictions (Rotberg and Salahub, 2013; Biddle et al., 2002; Njoroge, 2010; Power, 2011). In the specific context of scholarship on parliamentary studies in Ghana, the finding of this study further collaborates the work of Alabi (2009) who blamed the weakness of the legislature in Ghana on a mosaic of factors including lack of financial autonomy.

From the contextualization above, it is evident that the challenge of lack of financial resources and its concomitant effect on the work of parliament and its committee system is a common phenomenon that had already received attention in scholarship. However, the narratives in existing literature have not shown any evidence of the lack of the effectiveness of parliament or its committee system in instances where financial and logistical resources were readily available and adequate. The inductive inference that can be made from the evidence in existing literature is that parliament or its committee system would be effective and efficient if parliament and its committees are given sufficient financial and logistical resources to operate. Given the evidence available, it can logically be inferred, without any shred of ambiguity, that the Parliament of Ghana

and its committee system from the 5th to the 7th Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana would have performed appreciably better than they did if adequate financial and logistical resources were readily provided to them.

6.2 Significance of the Findings

The findings of this study are significant for a number of reasons. First, the findings provide perspectives on the committee system by providing insights into the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana from the 5th to the 7th Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Second, the findings build on existing literature on the committee system of parliament. From a Ghanaian perspective, the findings give new parameters within which to examine the committee system of parliament in relation to the discharge of parliament's functions. This new pioneering Ghanaian dimension that this study brought to bear on the committee system of parliament can be utilized by academics and scholars for further studies. Third, the findings serve as a basis for policy making for police administrations and policy makers in Ghana to further strengthen the committee system of parliament. Solutions to the problems of the committee system of parliament identified in this study, namely, executive control and lack of sufficient financial resources, can go a long way to strengthen the committee system of Ghana's Parliament.

6.3 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

The study examined the findings of the study in the context of arguments in existing literature. With the exception of the exercise of the oversight function of parliament, the study found that the committee system was particularly played a significant role in the exercise of the functions of parliament. The study found that the committee system of Ghana's Parliament, as evidenced by the work of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments is strong in the exercise of its functions. Its decision-

making by consensus or unanimity, scrutiny of government financial agreements, and the discharge of its legislative functions were appreciable good. The chapter found overwhelming evidence from field data and existing documentary primary data to support its findings. Furthermore, the chapter found expressions of its findings in existing literature. The correlations between the findings with the literature on parliamentary affairs shows the contextualization of the study in the literature on parliamentary studies was multifaceted. There were correlations of the findings with arguments in existing literature on parliamentary studies in Ghana, Africa and the world. In effect, the findings either built on existing scholarship or provided new perspectives to situate the study of the committee system of parliament.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This chapter is a summary of the study on the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. The chapter summarizes the preceding chapters, and it reinforces the key conclusions of the study. Finally, the chapter makes key recommendations that could be useful to policymakers, researchers, academia and others interested in broadening their knowledge on the committee system of parliament.

7.1 Realization of the Objectives of the Study

This study was predicated on a number of objectives. These were:

- Assess the effectiveness of the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic in promoting or contributing to the realization of the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body.

To realize this objective, the study examined copious of primary data, both from the field and documentary sources, as well as secondary sources. The findings revealed that the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments enabled parliament to perform its legislative, control, deliberative and financial control functions satisfactorily. However, the execution of parliament's oversight function through the committee system is weak.

- Assess the committee system in the execution of the business of Parliament based on some indicators.

In the attempt to meet the rigours of this objective, the study examined the business of parliament based largely on data from the Hansard Department of Parliament. Upon a careful

scrutiny, the study found that parliament's execution of its business is a function of the work of the committee system.

- Examine the modes and reasons for the modes of decision-making of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020

To realize this objective, the study examined the modes of decision-making utilized by the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments. It concluded that decision-making by consensus and unanimity are the prevalent modes of decision-making adopted by the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

- Discuss ways by which the executive influences the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments.

Based on a careful analysis of both primary and secondary data, the study found that executive influence over the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments was in vogue, and the manifestation of it took various forms – lobbying, influencing the members of the party in power, and influencing the committee system through the MPs that serve as executive members of government.

- Examine the implications of the findings for theoretical, comparative and empirical literature.

In realizing this objective, the study analyzed the findings and contextualized them to determine their relations to theoretical, comparative and empirical literature.

As part of the general measures to realize the above objectives, the study formulated research questions based on the objectives of the study. The interrogation of the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic was based on five critical research questions. These were the following:

- In what ways does the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic contribute or promote the realization of the mandates of Parliament as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body?
- How does the committee system execute the business of Parliament based on legislative, financial control, deliberative and oversight functions of Parliament?
- What were the modes of decision-making of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments from 2009 to 2020, and why?
- In what ways does the executive exert influence on the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments? and
- What are the implications of the findings of this study for theoretical, comparative, and empirical literature?

Based on the above questions, textual and field data were gathered and analyzed. Upon rigorous analysis of the data, key conclusions and findings were made.

7.2 Summary of the Study

The overriding purpose of this PhD thesis was to interrogate the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic to determine its feasibility, usefulness, and operationalization within the conventional structures of parliament. In line with this purpose, the study examined the committee system of the 5th, 6th and the 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic that existed from 2009 to 2020. These three parliaments are significant in the history of the legislature in Ghana in the Fourth Republic because they marked the first time that three successive parliaments existed alongside three different executive powers – Fifth Parliament under the presidency of Atta-Mills, the Sixth Parliament under the presidency of John Mahama, and the

Seventh Parliament under the presidency of Nana Akufo Addo. Given that the committees of the above-mentioned parliaments were too many, the study selected five of the committees for study. These were the Finance Committee (FC), the Appointments Committee (AC), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Health Committee (HC) and Energy and Mines Committee (EMC). These committees were selected for a case study because they are some of the vibrant committees of parliament from 2009 to 2020. The study made some standout findings of each of the committees, which are stated in the next section of this chapter.

As a foundation for the examination of field data on the execution of the functions of the committees of the case study, the study examined evidence and interrogated literature on the performance of committees, the dynamics, politics, and operations of the committee system. The study also examined the ways by which the committee system enhanced the decision-making, legislative, deliberative, financial control, and oversight functions of parliament. Furthermore, the study examined the committee system in the execution of the business of parliament. In addition, the study examined executive influence on the committee system, as well as discussed other variables that impeded the smooth execution functions of the committee system. Finally, the study examined the modes of decision-making of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

As an academic work of this magnitude required to be placed within an existing literature, the study undertook an extensive literature review in Chapter Two. The study reviewed extensive literature on the legislature and the committee system. The review revealed that the committee system of parliament was complex, historical, and useful in the execution of parliament's functions. Furthermore, the review showed that the legislature is strong in developed countries, but the reverse in the case in developing countries due to a number of variables. However, in recent

times, parliaments in developing countries and the committee system are improving and doing well despite financial difficulties and partisanship, among others, that they faced.

In order to place the study within an existing theoretical framework, the study examined the theory of institutionalism, and used New Institutionalism (NI) and its Sociological Institutionalism (SI) as theories to explain the institutional practices of the Parliament of Ghana and the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Despite the inherent weaknesses associated with both the NI and the SI, the researcher found them as appropriate theories for the study on the evidence that their strengths far-outweighed their weaknesses. In addition, the approaches of the NI and the SI provided useful frameworks within which a thorough examination of the work of the committee system and Parliament could be made.

In terms of methods, the study employed a qualitative research method. Though for the purposes of illustrations, the explanation and the interpretation of data was laced with few descriptive statistics, tables and pie charts, the study was essentially qualitative. The usage of the qualitative method enabled the researcher to explain the committee system of parliament based on the views and interpretations of researchers and participants. Furthermore, the utilization of the qualitative method enabled the researcher to undertake a thorough analysis of issues that encapsulated divergent perspectives into a coherent exposition. To collect textual and field data for the study, the researcher used a number of research instruments. Key research instruments used in data collection were document studies, questionnaires and interviews. To gather field data, the researcher interviewed forty (40) participants, made up of thirty (30) members of parliament (MPs), five (5) Clerks of Parliament, and five (5) personnel of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media. The use of a small sample size of forty (40) enabled the researcher to manage small

data entries to allow for meaningful and rigorous analysis. Interview questions formulated were open-minded, but few of them were semi-structured and close-ended. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed and coded for analysis. In terms of research philosophy, the researcher applied two main philosophies to the study. These were positivism (applied to the study to enable the researcher to utilize the scientific means of data collection and analysis) and interpretivism (applied to the study to enable the researcher to subject textual and field data to rigorous analysis driven by human interpretations, views, reasons, and inclinations).

7.3 Key Conclusions and Findings of the Study

7.3.1 The committee system and the decision-making function of parliament

A careful analysis of the primary data laced with documentary primary and secondary data revealed that the committee system was vital to the execution of the decision-making function of parliament. Field data from respondents provided a strong basis for this conclusion. Besides, the records in the Hansard Department of Parliament did not only illustrate that the work of the FC, AP, PAC, HC and CME of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic was vital to parliament's execution of its decision-making function, but also demonstrated that parliament was able to build consensus and unanimity of its decision-making through the committee system.

7.3.2: The committee system and the financial control function of Parliament

In determining the committee system in the execution of the financial control function of parliament, the study assembled filed data and data from documentary primary and secondary sources. Upon a careful analysis of the corpus of data, the study found that the committee system promoted parliament's execution of its financial control function. The committees selected for study demonstrated critical scrutiny of government proposed financial loans, agreements and reports to ensure value for money. Between 2009 and 2020, the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th

Parliaments approved lots of government loan agreements and made their verdicts on financial reports of the government after exercising parliament's financial control function by subjecting the agreements and financial reports to careful scrutiny.

7.3.3: The committee system and the oversight function of Parliament

Upon a thorough analysis of both primary and secondary data, the study found that the committee system in the execution of the oversight function of parliament was problematic. The study found that parliament's exercise of its oversight function was weak. Parliament exercised oversight function in theory; in practice, parliament's exercise of its oversight function through the committee system was weak. Though the committees undertake the tasks assigned them in order to enable parliament execute its oversight function, the lack of power by the committees or the plenary to enforce its decisions or impose sanctions on government agencies, departments and individuals makes it difficult for the committee system to effectively promote parliament's exercise of its oversight function.

7.3.4: The committee system and the legislative function of Parliament

The study established a mixed conclusion about the committee system in promoting the execution of parliament's legislative function. The conclusion from field data showed that parliament or its committee system is a rubber stamp as far as the execution of parliament's legislative function is concerned. This finding was predicated on the purported usage of the numerical strength of the Majority in committees to push through the agenda of their party in power. However, the documentary data did not completely acquiesce to the view that the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments were rubber stamps in the hands of the executive as some bills were rejected by the committees or modified before their passage into law.

7.3.5: An assessment of the FC, AC, PAC, HC and MEC of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments

There were a number of standout findings of the committees selected for study. In the case of the AC, the study found that, apart from determining the approval of minister-designates based on the constitutional imperatives, other exigencies such as ethnicity, gender, religion and regional politics play a critical role in the approval of nominees. In respect to the FC, the study found that the FC has been instrumental in parliament's scrutiny of government financial/loan agreements. The study found that, though the PAC has endeared itself to the public due to its public sittings, it is weak due to its lack of power to implement its recommendations. In the case of the HC, the study found that good leadership, non-partisanship of health issues, among others, are the fulcrum upon which the work of the HC was based. Finally, in the case of the EMC, the study found that good leadership and careful scrutiny of documents brought before it animated its work of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

7.3.6 The challenges of the committee system in the execution of its functions

The study found that the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliament faced two key challenges. First, the committee system suffered from executive control. Executive dominance or influence of the committee system was due to a number of factors, namely, executive influence of the members of its party on the committees, executive influence of MPs that occupied executive positions in government, lobbying and use of financial inducements.

The second challenge that the committee system of Ghana's 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments faced that stood out from the field data is financial challenge. The study found that, there were appreciable increases in the budgets of the committees of parliament over the years, the committees still grapple with financial challenges. Lack of sufficient financial resources have conspired to thwart the efficient operations of the committees of parliament.

7. 4 Recommendations

7.4.1 The committee system is vital to the execution of the decision-making function of parliament

Since the committee system is vital to the promotion of the decision-making function of parliament, it is imperative that efforts should be made to ensure that healthy decision-making processes are adopted by the committees. The study found that consensus-building and unanimity were the modes of decision-making by the committees of parliament. To safeguard the positive decision-making process, it is imperative that the leadership of the Parliament, as well as the Majority and Minority caucuses on the committees of parliament should endeavour to promote consensus-building in decision-making. This will ensure that the committees take decisions based on a synthesis of ideas from both divides to avoid tendencies where the Majority caucus monopolizes the committees to dictate their positions to the Minority caucus.

7.4.2: The committee system ensures careful scrutiny of government financial Transactions

To improve or strengthen the committee's role in promoting the execution of parliament's financial control function, it is imperative that MPs are given aides to provide special services to ease up the burden of the MPs. These special aides must have research experience or possess analytical qualities to enable them scrutinize documents for their respective MPs. Where application, the aides in the offices of the MPs should have experience and qualifications in finance-related disciplines such as economics, finance, accounting, banking, among others. This will go a long way in sustaining and improving the work of the committee system in promoting the execution of parliament's financial control function.

7.4.3: The committee system is weak in the promotion of parliament's oversight function

Parliament exercised oversight function in theory; in practice, parliament's exercise of its oversight function through the committee system was weak. The main reason for this phenomenon is parliament's general lack of powers to sanction or implement the recommendations of its reports. To overcome this challenge, there is the need for a constitutional review to give parliament or its committees powers to sanction and/or implement its recommendations relating to the financial transactions of government agencies and departments. This would undoubtedly enhance and promote the execution of parliament's oversight function.

7.4.4: The committee system is a rubber-stamp in the execution of the legislative function of Parliament

For a country that has been applauded by the international community for its democratic credentials, it is worrying that its parliament is a rubber-stamp used by the executive to advance its policies and interests. The implication of this finding is that parliament is weak in relation to the executive arm of government, a situation which does not bode well for democratic consolidation in the country. To overcome this challenge, there is the urgent need for a constitutional review to vest more power in the legislature. Since the hybrid system of Ghana's governance architecture makes it possible for the executive to infiltrate parliament by appointing fifty percent of ministers from parliament, a review of the constitution should bare the executive from appointing its ministers from parliament. Furthermore, a provision should be put in place that would require MPs appointed by government of Ghana as ministers and deputy ministers should be required by law to resign as MPs. This development would go a long way to defenestrate parliament from the manipulations of the executive.

7.4.5: A number of variables shaped and determined the work of the FC, AC, PAC, HC and MEC of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments

Given the pivotal role the committee system plays in the execution of the parliament's functions, it is imperative that the gains of the committee system of parliament are protected. Leadership of parliament should ensure that the committee system is enhanced to continue to work effectively and efficiently for the advancement of the execution of parliament's functions. Furthermore, civil society organisations, development partners and other relevant bodies, both locally and internationally, should continue to exert more pressure on the Parliament of Ghana to ensure that the committee system of parliament is enhanced. This would go a long way to ensure the general efficiency of parliament, a situation that would contribute to democratic consolidation in Ghana.

7.4.6 The committees of parliament are challenged by executive influence and inadequate financial resources in the execution of their tasks

The study found that, despite the pivotal role the committee system plays in the execution of parliament's functions, the work of the committees of parliament were constrained by financial challenges. It was evident from the study that there have been gradient increases of the budgetary allocations to the committees of parliament. However, these increases were smothered by the perennial depreciation of the cedi; hence, the nominal increases did not lead to increases in the real value of the budgetary allocations. To ensure realistic increases in the budgetary allocations to the committees of parliament, government should benchmark the allocations against the US dollar or other international currencies such as the Euro or British Pounds, which are stable in value. This would ensure that increases in the nominal value of the budgetary allocations would correspondently lead to increases in the real value of the budgetary allocations.

Furthermore, the study found that executive influence on parliament and its committee system is real, but not a fiction. Executive influence on the committee system was intended for the political gain of the executive, but not to advance or strengthen the executive-legislature symbiotic relationship. This development, if unchecked, can derail or weaken the committee system and parliament as a whole or turn them into a manipulative tool in the hands of the executive. The study found that the key reason responsible for executive influence of the committee system of parliament is the architecture of the governance system of the Fourth Republic Constitution that required that fifty percent of ministers should be appointed from parliament. This arrangement tends to make the MP-ministers seem to have dual mandates to both the executive and parliament. Eventually, the MP-ministers tended to compromise legislative interests for executive interests. To overcome this quagmire, it is expedient that the constitutional provision requiring government to appoint fifty percent of ministers from parliament is amended. The amendment should ensure a zero appointment of MPs as ministers. This would go a long way in defenestrating executive control over parliament and its committee system. Furthermore, the study found that the lack of financial independence of parliament makes it possible for the executive to exert control over it. This is because parliamentary budgets are determined and approved by the executive. To overcome this challenge, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana should be amended to give parliament financial independence to determine its budget and financial appropriations without any influence or approval from the executive.

7.5 Suggestions for Further Research

This study examined the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Using the FC, AP, PAC, HC and EC, it examined the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana. It discussed these committees in terms of their role in executing

parliament's functions, executive influence, discharge of functions, among others. It also examined the modes of decision-making of parliament, and challenges of the committees of parliament. The study did not extend to other Standing Committees of parliament such as Standing Orders Committee, Business Committee, Privileges Committee, Subsidiary and Legislative Committee, among others. Similarly, the study was not extended to other Select Committees such as Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs Committee, Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, Lands and Forestry Committee, Housing Committee, Environment, Science and Technology Committee, Youth, Sports, and Culture Committee, among others. Neither did the study encapsulated any of the Ad hoc committees of the 5th, 6th, and 7th Parliaments. For the purpose of providing data that can make it possible for holistic comparisons of the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments to be made, future research should focus on the other committees of parliament. This would provide composite data, findings and conclusions that can inform the meaning of academic discourses and comparisons. Alternatively, future research should broaden the scope of the committees selected for study. Conclusions and findings from such a broadened scope of the case study can be used to validate or critique the conclusions and findings of this study.

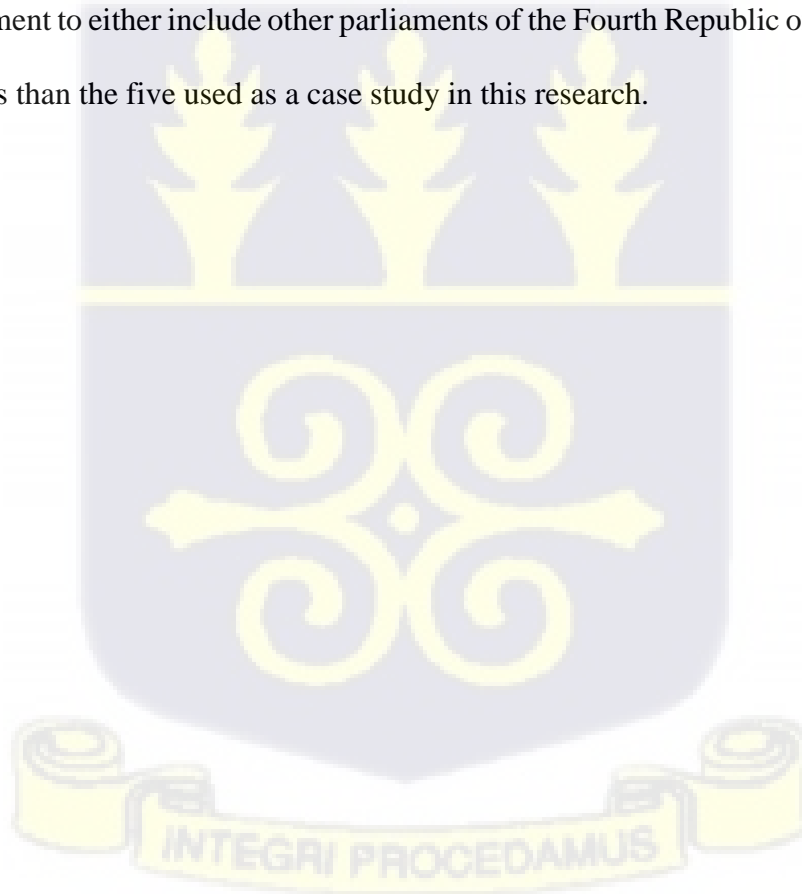
Secondly, this study extended to the previous four parliaments of the Fourth Republic – 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Parliaments. Furthermore, the study excluded the current 8th Parliament of the Fourth Republic in its analysis. Future research should examine the committee system of these parliaments in order to provide an exhaustive and composite literature on the committee system of the parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic for intellectual and non-intellectual consumption.

In the study of the committee system of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic, the researcher adopted the qualitative research method. Field and textual data were examined in their natural setting within specific social settings to explain the issues under study from human points of view. By so doing, the study did not apply the quantitative method to the interpretation of the data; neither did it not apply the mixed method to the evaluation and interpretation of data. The study's usage of the qualitative method limited the sample size to a small number – only forty (40) respondents. Furthermore, researchers should seek to apply the quantitative and the mixed methods to the study of the committee system of the parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic. Given that the quantitative and the mixed methods allow for the use of a large sample size, it is likely conclusions and findings therefrom are likely to be varied and contrary to the findings of this study. The availability of findings on the committee system based on the application of the three methods of research – qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods – would provide a bigger platform for meaningful discussions on the committee system of the Parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic.

Finally, future research should delve into the leadership and gender factors in the committee system of parliament. Two references were made to the leadership and gender factors in this study, there was no composite discussion of these. Future research should contextualize the study of the committee system of parliament within the purview of leadership, gender and other critical social variables. Such studies would build a corpus of literature that would provide a different texture and a social perspective of the committee system of parliament of Ghana in the Fourth Republic.

7.6 Chapter Summary and Conclusion

This chapter summarized the previous six chapters of this study. It summarized the structure, focus, key elements and key conclusions and findings of the study. For each of the key findings of the study, this chapter provided recommendations intended to sustain and strengthen the positive findings, as well as recommendations intended to overcome the negative findings. The chapter also provided recommendations for future research. These recommendations were intended to fill the lacuna in this study. First, it recommended the use of the quantitative or mixed methods to the study of the committee system to augment the qualitative method used in this study. Second it recommended that future researchers should expand the scope of the research on the committee system of parliament to either include other parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana or include more committees than the five used as a case study in this research.



APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTION

I am conducting a research titled “**The Committee System of the Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana: An Assessment.**” I request some few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Please, be assured that your responses would be used for **ACADEMIC STUDY ONLY**

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and would not be divulged to any third-party. Data obtained will be used purposely for evidenced-based academic study on the Committee System of the Fifth, Sixth and the Seventh Parliaments of Ghana’s Fourth Republic.

TIME

This short survey will not take more than thirty (30) to forty (40) minutes of your time to respond to the interview questions.

PART I (Bio-data)

1. Gender (Tick)
Male
Female
2. Age Group (Tick)
20-30 years
31-40 years
41-50 years
51-60 years
Above 61 years
3. Educational standard (Tick)
Not educated at all.
Basic Education (BECE)
Middle School Leaving Certificate (MLSC)
Secondary Education (WASSCE/SSCE/O Level/A Level)
Vocational/Technical Education
Training College/Nursing College (Certificate/Diploma)
University Education (Degree – Undergraduate, Graduate and PhD)
4. What is your profession?

Part II: The Committee System

This section seeks to collect data on the ways in which the committee system of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh executed its tasks, promoted parliament's legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative functions. It also assesses the work of the Finance, Health, Public Accounts, Appointments and Energy and Health Committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments.

5. For how long have you followed parliamentary debates and proceedings of the Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana?
6. The committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments in Ghana's Fourth Republic were effective in enabling parliament to institute financial controls on the Executive (Tick)
I Strongly Agree
I Agree
I Disagree
I Strongly Disagree
I don't know
7. State the reason(s) for your answer in question 6 above.
8. The committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments in Ghana's Fourth Republic were effective in enabling parliament to carry out its oversight function (Tick)
I Strongly Agree
I Agree
I Disagree
I Strongly Disagree
I don't know
9. State the reason(s) for your answer in question 8 above.
10. The committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments in Ghana's Fourth Republic were effective in enabling parliament to carry out its deliberative function (Tick)
I Strongly Agree
I Agree
I Disagree
I Strongly Disagree

I don't know

11. State the reason(s) for your answer in question 10 above.
12. The committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments in Ghana's Fourth Republic were effective in enabling parliament to carry out its legislative function (Tick ✓)
I Strongly Agree
I Agree
I Disagree
I Strongly Disagree
I don't know
13. State the reason(s) for your answer in question 12 above.
14. State any decisions that any Parliamentary Committee in the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic took that you think were effective in enabling parliament carry out its legislative, oversight and financial control functions.
15. How will you assess or rate the works of the following committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic?
 - a. Energy and Mines Committee
 - b. Appointments Committee
 - c. Public Accounts Committee
 - d. Finance Committee
 - e. Health Committee
16. Do you think members of the committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments carefully scrutinized, analysed and approved government business brought before them on merit but not based on political inclinations? Explain your answer.
17. State any government business that were brought before the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic that have generated lots of debate/controversies among members. Why did those businesses generate debates/controversies?
18. In what ways do you think the composition of committees based on the numerical strength of political parties in Parliament affected the effectiveness of the committees in the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic in getting Parliament work as a legislative, financial control, oversight, representative and deliberative body?

19. To what extent do you think debates on the floor of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic were effective or less effective?
20. What are the modes of decision-making of the committees of parliament?
21. Explain the reasons for the modes of decision-making utilized by the committees of parliament.
22. Which of the committees in the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic do you consider to be more effective, and why?
23. How effective was the Finance Committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, and why?
24. In your view, have the Appointment Committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic been effective or less effective, and why?
25. In your view, have the Energy and Mines Committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic been effective or less effective, and why?
26. In your view, have the Finance Committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic been effective or less effective, and why?
27. In your view, have the Health Committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic been effective or less effective, and why?
28. In your view, have the Public Accounts Committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic been effective or less effective, and why?
29. Of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments, which committee(s) do you consider most effective or less effective, and why?
30. Which committees of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of the Fourth Republic were less effective in executing Parliament's business, and why?

31. Compare the effectiveness of the following parliamentary committees of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Parliaments of Ghana in the 4th Republic using the following indicators – level of professionalism of committee members, timely execution of assignments, collaborations among members & quality of work:
- Energy and Mines Committee
 - Appointments Committee
 - Public Accounts Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Health Committee
32. How successful were the following committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments?
- Energy and Mines Committee
 - Appointments Committee
 - Public Accounts Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Health Committee
33. Mention and explain the factors that accounted for the successful/failure of the following committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments:
- Energy and Mines Committee
 - Appointments Committee
 - Public Accounts Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Health Committee
34. Mention and explain the challenges that the following committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments faced in the conduct of their duties/functions:
- Energy and Mines Committee
 - Appointments Committee
 - Public Accounts Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Health Committee
35. How did the whip system work in the committees of the 5th, 6th and 7th Parliaments of Ghana in the Fourth Republic?

Part IV: Executive Influence on Committees

36. How did think the Executive exert influences on the committees of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh and Eighth Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic, and why?

37. Which committee(s) of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments of Ghana's Fourth Republic was/were most influenced by the Executive, and why?
38. Which of the committee(s) of the Fifth, Sixth & Seventh Parliaments was/were resilient in resisting the influence of the Executive, and why?
39. What was the posturing of the Majority and Minority caucuses about executive influence of parliament?
40. State and explain any other view/point relevant to this study.



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Interviews Conducted

NPP MP, Fieldwork, September 13, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 11, 2022

NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 6, 2022

NPP MP, Field Work, October 13, 2022

CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 14, 2022

CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 18, 2022

NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 20, 2022

NPP MP, Field Work, October 21, 2022

Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 23, 2022

NPP MP, Fieldwork, September 10, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 11, 2022

NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 6, 2022

NPP MP, Field Work, October 13, 2022

CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022

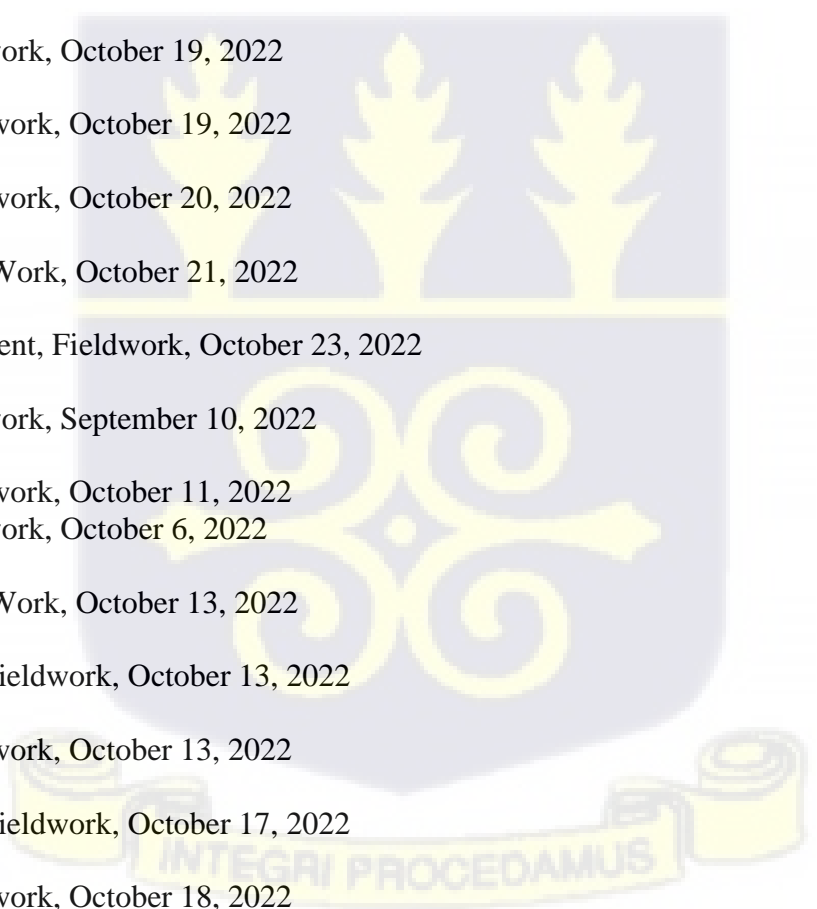
NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 13, 2022

CSOs Worker, Fieldwork, October 17, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 18, 2022

NPP MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022

NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 19, 2022



NDC MP, Fieldwork, October 21, 2022

NPP MP, Field Work, October 21, 2022

Clerk of Parliament, Fieldwork, October 22, 2022



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES (ECH)

P. O. Box LG 74, Legon, Accra, Ghana

My Ref. No...ECH 072/ 22-23

January 19, 2023

Ibrahim Murtala Mohammed
Department of Political Science
University of Ghana
Legon.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE
(ECH 072/ 22-23)

The Ethics Committee for the Humanities (ECH) conducted a full board review and approved your protocol titled:

**THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM OF THE PARLIAMENT OF GHANA'S FOURTH
REPUBLIC: AN ASSESSMENT**

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: IBRAHIM MURTALA MOHAMMED

Please note that the final review report must be submitted to the Committee at the completion of the study. Your research records may be audited at any time during or after the implementation. Any modification of this research project must be submitted to ECH for review and approval prior to implementation.

Please report all serious adverse events related to this study to ECH within seven (7) days verbally and in writing within fourteen (14) days.