

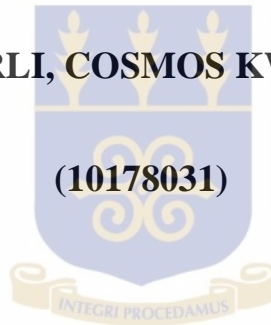
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**THE DISTRICT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN
GHANA'S DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES: THE CASE OF THE LEDZOKUKU-
KROWOR MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY (LEKMA), 2000-2012**

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
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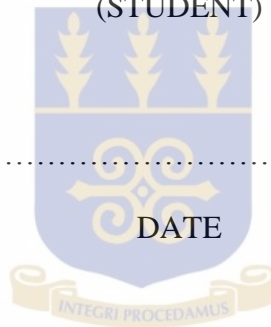
JUNE, 2013

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, apart from the works referred to which have been duly acknowledged, this study is entirely mine. It has not been presented in whole or in part to any institution for the award of any degree. I accordingly take full responsibility for any omission, or commission that may be found in this work. I am therefore solely responsible for any marginal or shortcoming in this work.

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ABSTRACT

For about three decades, Ghana has pursued decentralisation which has led to the transfer of power and resources to the local level with the aim of accelerating local development and democracy. Successful decentralization, however, depends on accountability of the District Chief Executive (DCE) who is the central figure of the District Assembly.

This study which examined the nature of accountability in the Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly (LEKMA) found that, there are several measures that have been put in place to hold the DCE accountable. First, the nomination of the DCE was approved by the District Assembly (DA). Second, all proposals of the DCE were subjected to the approval of the District Assembly. Third, the District Assembly could remove the DCE through a vote of no confidence. It was possible for the DA to investigate suspected acts of malfeasance by the DCE.

Despite these, the study found weaknesses in the accountability measures. The DCE exerts control over the thirty percent members who are appointed by the President. Also, the DCE is manipulated by the ruling party and the President who appointed him to the position. As result, the DCE feels more committed and accountable to the President than to the DA. The study concludes that the appointment of the DCE by the President does not promote accountability in Ghana's District Assemblies.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study first to the ALMIGHTY God for his guidance and protection throughout my gruelling attempts to make this study a reality. Secondly, to my beloved parents, Mr Joseph Akorli and Mrs Georgina Akorli for their unrelenting support which has made this work a success. I will forever remain indebted to you. May God bless you abundantly!



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A-G	Auditor-General
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
BIA	Bureau for Internal Affairs
BNI	Bureau of National Investigation
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development
CEPS	Customs, Excise and Preventive Service
CHRAJ	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPP	Convention People's Party
DA	District Assembly
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
DCDs	District Coordinating Directors
DCEs	District Chief Executives
DFOs	District Finance Officers,
DPO	District Procurement Officers
EOCU	Economic and Organized Crime Unit
EXECO	Executive Committee
FAA	Financial Administration Act
FAR	Financial Administration Regulations
FM	Financial Memoranda
GAAS	Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GUWL	Ghana Urban Water Limited
GWCL	Ghana Water Company Limited
HIPIC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries

IGF	Internally Generated Funds
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KMA	Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly
KYDF	Krobo Youngsters Development Foundations
LEKMA	Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly
LI	Legislative Instrument
MCE	Municipal Chief Executive
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRC	National Redemption Council
NRCD	National Redemption Council Decree
PAA	Public Administration Act
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PDCs	People's Defence Committees
PM	Presiding Member
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PP	Progress Party
PPA	Public Procurement Act
RCCs	Regional Coordination Councils
SAEMA	Shama-Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMCD	Supreme Military Council Decree
T/VDCs	Town /Village Development Committees

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

The unprecedented wave of democratization that swept through the developing world brought far-reaching reforms. The demise of non-democratic regimes was accompanied by a shift from the centralized system of administration in the 1980s to decentralized administration (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006). This paradigm shift from centralization to decentralisation was based on the belief that decentralisation would enhance local input in decision-making and make local public officials answerable to the people for the use of resources. This, it is believed, would be possible because information about government work would be made easily accessible to the people by the local leaders who are closer to the people and can easily answer for choices they make on behalf of the people (Rondinelli, 1981).

Decentralisation was therefore seen to be very critical to the consolidation of democracy in many of the new democracies such as Ghana because of its ability to create the opportunity for communication of local specific needs to elected or appointed officials. In this connection, decentralisation was to facilitate information provision by decision-makers at the periphery to enhance transparency and accountability to the local beneficiaries of services. Diamond (1999) therefore, concludes that the overriding reason for the adoption of decentralisation was because of its potential to promote accountability at the local level and bolster the legitimacy of the state in the eyes of the people. In this regard, it is expected to ensure order and stability as citizens would willingly support the system because resources at the local level are well distributed and accounted for in a transparent manner.

The above benefits notwithstanding, decentralisation, it is cautioned, can suffer some risks. Apart from the fact that local authorities are not equally endowed, in which case decentralisation can result in the under provision of services to the less-endowed areas, there is also the apprehension that, lack of bottom-up mechanisms for accountability may affect the ability to deliver services to the poor. Lack of accountability at the local level is manifested in corruption and siphoning of government funds meant for local development because, often, there is an apparent lack of monitoring and supervision of local government programmes and disregard for financial regulations (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006).

To address the above problem in Ghana, efforts have been made to promote accountability through both international and local instruments. The Draft Decentralization Policy Framework (2010) for instance draws attention to how the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) policy framework, among other things, extols the virtues of accountability and transparency as tools for fighting corruption (NEPAD, 2010). The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana calls for accountability of local government authorities to the people by justifying resource use and service delivery by elected or appointed local officials. This is the only way to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the use of local resources and to promote good governance.

The attainment of this goal, however, requires that local officials see themselves as accountable to the people by making information accessible about public choice. This is necessary in creating a social bond with the people for democratic consolidation. The end result of this is the eventual elimination of corruption and central capture of decentralized institutions. The concern is whether local accountability can be achieved within the constitutional provision that the District

Chief Executive (DCE) should be appointed by the President rather than through a direct election by the local people in Ghana as the DCE is more answerable to the President than to the people.

Though several DCEs have been removed from office by the President at the behest of political 'party foot soldiers' who see their call for the dismissals as the only way to demand political accountability from the DCE, the problem of corruption due to blatant disregard for internal mechanisms for accountability still persists. Twenty-two Municipal and District Chief Executives were dismissed from office in a day in 1997 whilst 13 suffered a similar fate in one day in several districts across the country in 2011 (Local Government Information Digest, 1997). These examples represent just a few cases in the period under review and also indicate the rampant of the dismissals are in the Fourth Republic of Ghana. This situation portends negative political and socio-economic implications for service delivery and indicates Central Government influence on the District Assembly.

In spite of internal and external mechanisms for checking corruption in the Metropolitan and District Assemblies, many believe today, that, corruption is more endemic in DAs than at the national level because the power base of the DCE is strengthened to the detriment of the grassroots due to poor institutional arrangements. Ayee (1999) concludes that the appointment of the DCE has implications for responsiveness in service delivery because of the tendency to adopt a partisan approach to allocating resources with serious ramifications for democratic governance.

It is believed that the DCE as an officer to whom all decentralized departments are accountable in the district assembly, lacks proper effective control mechanisms for making him accountable to the people. This results in waste, inefficiencies, delays, deficient and unfair social services. This state of affairs calls for a proper investigation to ascertain the extent to which the

appointment of the DCE by the central government contributes to the lack of local accountability which is a necessary ingredient for local development.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Ghana adopted the policy of decentralization because, the most fancied centralist approach to development was not only found to be undemocratic and unaccountable, but it also failed to bring the expected development to the local communities. The immediate alternative for the centralist approach was the policy of decentralisation which, apart from promoting the principles of political inclusiveness and citizen empowerment was expected to ensure responsiveness and efficiency in service delivery. It was to allow for easier scrutiny of both elected and appointed public officials in the application of resources in the interest and aspirations of the rural folks because of the proximity of these officials to the people (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006).

To promote the principle of accountability at the local level, many legal regimes have been formulated to guide the conduct of local affairs. The Financial Memoranda for MMDAs, the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462); the Ghana Audit Service Act, 2000 (Act 584); the Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663); the Financial Administration Act 2003 (Act 654), the Internal Audit Agency Act, 2003 (Act 658); the District Assemblies Common Fund Act, 1993 (Act 455) are to ensure accountability, efficiency and fairness in the application of funds in the MMDAs.

The legal framework described above has been lauded, yet the problem of massive corruption in the district assemblies are daily occurrences which is indicative of a noncompliance with these rules and regulations instituted to promote accountability in the MMDAs. According to Scott (2003:130), the 1999 SFO report on the Metropolitan and District Assemblies for instance,

revealed about \$7.5 million dollars (¢24 billion) loss through corruption. The Auditor General's report reveals a misappropriation of GH¢ 1,142,639.00 for 2007 in 52 Assemblies and GH¢ 487,216.48 in 45 assemblies in 2008 alone (Report of the Auditor-General, 2008).

This situation depicts a lack of proper management of local resources and lack of effective political control over the district assembly which is headed by DCE who performs enormous functions as the political and administrative head of the districts. The DCE has oversight responsibility over the award of contracts and remains the key officer to whom all heads of decentralized government departments are answerable under the Local Government Service Act (Act 656), 2003. However, there seems to be a lack of political commitment to ensuring accountable local governance at the district level as the DCE is not punished for flagrant disregard for mechanisms for accountability which is probably due to his appointment by central government (Local Government Information Digest, 1997).

This paints a very gloomy picture for local development because the DCE the success and failure of the DCE has serious implications for local development (ACTIONAID Ghana, 2002). The challenge for local accountability however, is that, though Article 240 (1) (e) of the Constitution of Ghana calls on citizens to demand accountability of local government authorities through effective participation in local governance, the appointment of the DCE by the President after his appointment is ratified by the District Assembly under Article 243 (1) makes the President the purveyor of influence in the District Assembly through the DCE who is always affiliated to the ruling political party and becomes more accountable and amenable to the President than to the people (CDD-Ghana, 2009).

This arrangement has been described as a bane of the realization of accountability in the District Assemblies in Ghana as the people lack effective political control over the DCE. Many stakeholders, as a result, have called for a direct election of the DCE to make him more accountable to the local people rather than to the President in order to make political decentralization a reality in Ghana.

This is because, to Buah (1980), the appointment of local officials by the central government makes the appointee feel secure under the protection of those in power and this may have implication for local accountability of such officials. In the case of a DCE, this situation may be worsened by the central government's reluctance to expose and punish the inefficiencies of the DCE as this "constitutes washing the dirty linen of the ruling party in public (Ayee, 1999). It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to comprehensively investigate how the Central Government's relationship with the District Chief Executive (DCE) promotes or undermines accountability in local governance in the period under review.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis which underlies this study is: central control of the DCE has undermined accountability and transparency in the District Assemblies.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to comprehensively investigate the relationship between the Central Government and the District Chief Executive in order to provide answers to the following pertinent questions:

- What has been the nature of the relationship between the Central Government and the District Chief Executive in Ghana?
- What has been the effect of the relationship between the Central Government and the District Chief Executive on local accountability and transparency?
- What institutional mechanisms exist to ensure the accountability of the District Chief Executive and how effective have the institutional mechanisms been in ensuring the accountability of the DCE?
- How has the appointment of the DCE by the president constrained the ability of local people to demand accountability?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The overarching objective of the study is to systematically investigate how the Central Government's relationship with the District Chief Executive (DCE) promotes or undermines accountability and transparency in local governance. In specific terms, the study sets out to achieve the following:

- Examine the central government influence on the DCE;
- Analyze the growing powers of the DCE on local accountability;
- Assess the effects of central political control on the performance of the functions of the DCE;

1.6 Significance of the Study

This work is relevant to theory and policy makers. Theoretically, this work will expand in no small measure, the existing literature on decentralisation and local governance. Specifically, the

study will provide an opportunity for evaluating the political, financial and administrative accountability of the DCE in the district assemblies to the local people. It is also significant to the extent that it will inform stakeholders on issues of transparency and accountability in the application of resources in the MMDAs under the DCE.

Though accountability in public administration in Ghana has been researched by many scholars, there has not been a specific focus on the central influence of the M/DCE and the implication for accountability and transparency in the use of local resources. In this regard, this work will enhance the debate on whether or not to elect the DCE in order to make him more accountable.

In addition the work is significant in the following regard:

- it will fill a very important gap in the existing literature on accountable and transparent local governance in Ghana;
- it will serve as a very important guide in the current debate about whether to make the position of the DCE elective or to maintain the status quo;
- finally, it will serve as a reference material for students of Ghanaian Politics and Ghana's Local Government.

1.7 Literature Review

The review of the relevant literature for this work is done on thematic basis, namely: decentralisation and local government; and accountability. This is because decentralisation and local governance lead to the creation of local government structures which open the political space for the people to access relevant information with regards to crucial decisions that affect them. Decentralization is also supposed to make it possible for local public officials to provide answers to the people for the decisions they take on behalf of the people. Secondly, lack of

accountability and transparency can engender unauthorized exploitation of one's political or official position for personal gain in public institutions which has been the cause of most chronic ills of public administration in the contemporary world resulting in the lack of economic development to the people. This social, political and economic canker can be remedied with proper mechanisms of accountability.

1.7.1 Decentralisation and Local Government

Padayachee and Elliott (1995) acknowledge that local government is the closest type of government to the community and the corner stone of democracy. They assert that local government is the system which is best placed to provide community based strategies to deal with the numerous socio-economic and development challenges of most communities. They cite how the transformation of local government in South Africa was confronted with the need to make all South Africans stakeholders in local affairs. This, among other things, required processes that ensured that all citizens got involved in the decision-making processes in order to ensure inclusive, transparent and accountable local governance.

Juxtaposing this with the Ghanaian context, the local bodies have increased powers in raising revenue. Even though internal economic arrangement has to be endorsed by the Central government, this research is of the view that the local authorities over rely on the central government for financial resources, thereby deepening the centralization tendencies in the governance system of Ghana.

What is missing is the institutionalization of channels of direct popular participation in public affairs where for instance, popular councils can make inputs in the development of social programmes. Article 29 of the Constitution calls for cooperation of representative associations in

municipal planning. In Ghana we have urban councils and Unit Committees as part of local authority structures. However, this cannot be claimed to be promoting increased representation and accountability as they cannot provide adequate checks on the district, municipal and metropolitan assemblies. The inadequacy of the district structures to guarantee increased popular participation, responsiveness and accountability occasioned the famous People's Assembly programme of the Kufour's Administration which afforded the citizens in various districts and regions to engage with policy makers on issues which bothered on their welfare. A similar system, the Town Hall Meeting was envisioned by the Mills administration.

Decentralisation has been identified as an important element of participatory democracy because it promotes popular participation and a sense of autonomy to citizens as a sine qua non for sustainable economic development which is responsive to local needs and preferences within a stable social order (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006).

The authors further indicate factors that can undermine the objectives of decentralisation. These include the inability of voters to communicate intensities of preference owing to the absence of party policies guiding sub-national elections. In Ghana's situation, the appointment of nearly 30% of district assembly members by the President in consultation with opinion leaders, interest groups and other stakeholders denies the people the opportunity to contribute to the nomination of district level policy makers. The appointment of the DCE by the government in addition to those he nominates for assemblies hinders effective political competition. This situation is further worsened by the application of ruling party ideology that deviates from popular preferences, the absence of free and fair elections, incumbency advantage which are rife in Ghana's decentralisation programme due to its non-partisan nature.

The local people are denied the benefit of accountability and responsiveness because of the unrepresentative nature of the nominated and appointed personnel in Ghana's local level structures. It is difficult for the local people to particularly use legitimate means to sanction government officers who do not perform. This is particularly so in the case of the members of the local community who are in the minority party. Responsiveness requires policies to be tailored to the needs of people of all political inclinations. This in Ghanaian context requires that the decentralisation policy should empower both those against the ruling government to be able to exert some pressure on the government official as those on the side of the government. Our study looks at these issues.

Moosa (1995) wrote extensively on the development of the local government system and efforts to make it even more democratic. He traces the development from when local government was fragmented in South Africa where local authorities existed for different racial groups mostly in urban areas. He indicates the lack of formal local government structures in the rural areas. To him, talks on making the local government system more representatives were launched in September 1992 which culminated in the Local Government Transition Act of 1993. The organization of local elections as part of the process of change was in November 1995 to replace the appointed members of the transitional authorities. The local government negotiation forum organized as part of the restructuring process ensured that minority groups would be represented even if they had no representation.

The import of the discussion on the subject of decentralization in South Africa is to compare these lessons with the Ghanaian situation where the academics are calling for truly representative DAs with elected DCEs

Faguet (2006) in the work “Decentralizing in Bolivia, notes that Bolivia, prior to its decentralisation was characterized by repression and extreme levels of inequality. The years of military regimes combined with the intellectual trends of the 1980s through the 1990s contributed to the centralizing tendency, with no need for municipalities. Local government system in Bolivia’s cities lacked the requisite political and fiscal strength to make any impressive inputs on the politics of the country. Local government institutions existed at best in name as honorary ceremonial institution devoid of administrative and financial capabilities. In fact in some places they did not exist at all (Faguet, 2006).

The combined factors of lack of growth and ethnic-based, populist politics in the 1980s against the secession threat of some regions to Brazil and Argentina was a watershed in the Bolivian decentralisation reform in 1994, with the law of popular participation developed which saw the provision for resource allocation for municipalities doubled to 20 percent of all national tax revenue. Municipalities were given responsibilities for public services, that is, ownership of local infrastructure in education, health, irrigation, roads, sports and culture. Oversight Committees composed of representatives from local or grassroots groups were empowered to propose projects and municipal expenditures, and finally Municipal areas were expanded to include suburbs and surrounding rural areas and more municipalities created.

A revision of Ghana’s local governance structure to ensure that local grass root groups, apart from the district, municipal, and metropolitan assemblies demand accountability from officials meaningfully in the planning and implementation of local development policy, would make decentralisation serve its objectives of ensuring grassroots accountability and responsiveness. A further decentralisation to include Civil Society groups in local policy making beyond the assemblies, town/urban councils and unit committees will bring governance closest to the people.

Ahwoi (2010) in his work “Local Government and Decentralisation in Ghana” notes that the Provisional National Defence Council’s (PNDC) desire to implement the concept of decentralisation in Ghana was informed by local specific needs. He recognizes that decentralisation was to ensure participatory democracy in Ghana and empower the local government Councils at the time to craft, coordinate, manage, and execute their own local initiatives. The work however recognizes that the PNDC Government had the political will to implement the decentralisation policy but lacked the technical capacity to transform the political will into a functioning and effective decentralized system of government. These objectives of the then government were as explained by Ahwoi (2010), within a rather autocratic regime where democracy was at its most embryonic stage and local people had limited political awareness to be able to hold local officials to account..

Ayee (1999) has argued that successive regimes in Ghana have not been able to prescribe solutions to the numerous problems that have attended the implementation of the policy of decentralisation. To him, decentralisation has been used as a tool by politicians to tighten their grip on regional and local institutions even though the country stands assured by successive regimes that the development of the various districts would lead to their participation in the local political and economic institutions created.

According to him, what these regimes failed to envisage was the extent to which the office of the District Chief Executive could promote inequity and division instead of ensuring local participation. This is because the many party foot soldiers (cadres) making demands and even calls for the dismissal of DCEs have brought new dimension to local participation. Indeed, according to (Ayee, 1999), the call normally comes from party rank and file in the locality, while other segments of the society stands as observers. This study investigates these nuances of

local level political participation and makes recommendation to serve future reforms on the concept of decentralisation.

Ayee (2002), writing on the topic “Sub-District Structures and Popular Participation: A Preliminary Assessment”, offers some benefits of participation in local government. These include the ability to mobilize greater resources and accomplish more with the same programme budget. He sees participation as a move to economic efficiency because, it benefits from under-utilization of labour and can also rely upon indigenous expertise which in most cases is under-utilized in a ‘central’ context. In addition, participation can promote better design of local projects.

Sound as these arguments are, the work posits that true participation can be achieved when all the people own the decision of who represents Central Government in the locality. As we have it, the DCE as a political appointee of the majority side makes the minority in the district almost lost in the scheme of things. This is against the backdrop of the winner takes all feature of modern day politics in Ghana. As to whether as a central government appointee, the DCE will be able to exercise his powers fairly in serving the public good remains to be seen (Daily Graphic, 2001).

The critical issue is that democratic maturity in Ghana requires an in-depth participation of all critical actors of society including the grassroots, rural and local folks. Democratic development efforts have been focused on political and cultural development at the national level, to the detriment of the local level (Amponsah and Boafo-Arthur, 2003).

The authors went further to state that the establishment of District Assemblies in Ghana was to ensure political participation which is a sine qua non for effective institutionalization of

democracy nation-wide. They argued that the more inclusive popular participation is attained in local governance, the better the chances of deepening and sustaining the country's democratic experiment. In spite of the fact that we have experienced nearly three decades of District level elections, the authors questioned whether Ghanaians at the local level are effectively participating in the on-going democratic dispensation? What forces impede effective participation in governance at the grassroots? Are the existing institutional structures of governance the best or appropriate with the circumstances?

They further raise issues of equity, accountability and efficiency in the allocation of resources and service delivery which can determine the willingness of the people to participate in governance. The concern is that the district political head is a partisan appointee and whether he can be fair to people of all political persuasions remains to be seen. They noted that if countries in Africa like Botswana have been able to make strides in the democratic development by making governance at the local level the centre piece, then Ghana cannot take the participation of all facets of the political community including civil society groups for granted in her effort at deepening democracy in the country. Our study tries to find answers to the questions these authors have raised.

Ayee and Amponsah (2003) outline the composition of the sub-district structures. They noted that below the District, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies are important consultative bodies with no budgets and taxing powers. They carry out functions delegated by the District Assemblies as contained in LI 1989. The Sub-Metropolitan District Councils are created for settlements above 100,000, urban Councils for above 15,000, Town Councils for settlement of population between 5000 and 15,000, Zonal Councils for population of 3,000 and Unit Committees are established for settlements with a population between 500 and 1,500. Their

functions include day-to-day running of urban area or town, revenue collection, preparation of annual budget and recurrent development budget for the approval of the District Assembly. Some members of these units are appointed by the political heads and others elected.

The authors report of conflict between the DAs and Sub-District structures over roles, functions and resources. They specifically refers to an occasion when in a district they visited, Unit Committee members who were not sworn in protested against the behaviour of an elected DA member who doubles as the District Town and Country Planning Officer over usurpation of functions and unwarranted activities. They bemoan how the 1998 Unit Committee elections were fraught with antagonisms, including the low significance attached to Unit Committees. The lack of patronage and disinterest by the general public local governance create apathy and despondency in Unit Committee meetings.

Apart from the fact that the controversies surrounding the relationship between district, metropolitan assemblies and the Sub-Structures affect popular participation, the tension between District Chief Executives and the Presiding Members (PMs) on one hand and the DCE and Members of Parliament who are also members of the Assembly but with no voting right cannot be ever-emphasized as this is a recurring feature from one regime to the other.

The relationship between the DCE and MP is seriously affected by whether the MP in question is a ruling party MP or an opposition MP. It is to be expected that the desire of the ruling party to dominate the entire district in subsequent election would heighten tension between a DCE and an MP all for the ruling party in a district is expected to be less intense since they are all members of the same political party. However, the aspiration of quite a number of DCEs to become MPs

owing to the security and personal welfare packages in the latter position has rather increased the desire of the DCE to undermine the MPs in order to win the party's nomination.

The report of these authors is at the heart of our studies. We are particularly interested in finding out how these dynamics at the district levels can promote popular participation and political activism in district governance in Ghana.

Again, the authors highlight the debate for and against partisan politics at the local level even though the 1992 Constitution of Ghana proscribes it and whether or not a non-partisan District Assembly could best facilitate the mobilization of the people for development and be more conducive for consensus building which is crucial to the sustainability of development initiatives at the grassroots.

They argue that non-partisan politics at the grassroots promote open disclosure in policy proposals, whilst party politics can deprive the leadership of public ideas and opinions. A great deal of experienced statesmen who cannot stand the savagery associated with partisan elections and campaign may be discouraged from participating in politics at the grassroots and for that matter deprive the district of their rich experience. On the other hand, if politics are done on non-partisan basis even candidates from the same party can run against each other without rancour. Arguing in favour of politicization of local level politics, the authors state among other things, that partisan politics promote the aggregations of interest on party ideology which usually have weight as a result of the members who support instead of organizing opinions on individual levels which may lack the weight needed to command attention.

Local governance can be more effective in Ghana if local structures are formally linked to national politics for parties to compete in local elections. This allows politicians to rise through

the rank of their parties from the local to the national level. Partisan politics sharpens the focus on national political discourse. More competitive political parties emerge to eliminate the unrepresentative parties from the debate. This study which seeks to investigate the position of the DCE will establish the point about whether to elect them or continue to appoint the chief executives and whether or not it is possible and more prudent as others have suggested in the literature, that the position of the DCE be made elective and that of the District Assembly be made partisan. Would this inject more dynamism, activism and promote enhanced popular participation, in local governance? Our study would find answers to these important questions.

Loessner (2001) argues strongly that involving citizens in the work of their government enhances sustainable democracy, fiscal decentralization, the devolution of revenues and expenditure authority to local levels. The objective of involving citizens, he intimates, is to have the work of government reflect the views of the constituents, by ensuring that local government focus on local conditions and needs in the allocation of resources. This, he believes would enhance the involvement of citizens' interest and participation and make government more responsive, efficient and accountable.

He further notes that in a democracy, elected officials meet the needs of local people in order to guarantee their re-election. This we believe could be realized when the local democratic institutions such as the office of the District, Metropolitan and Municipal Chief Executives are made elective. As it stands as an appointive position, there is always the tendency for the DCE to do the biddings of the central governments or the President in order to maintain his position to the detriment of the needs of the locality where he or she is appointed to serve.

Secondly, coming from the ruling party, there is the temptation for the DCE to focus on the demands of his party faithful to the detriment of those in the opposition in the locality. This detracts from the principles of openness, accountability and inclusiveness and affects local democratic governance as a whole.

Nomaindia (1995) opines that there should be a thorough consultative process before decisions are taken by councillors, district representatives to ensure accountability. This, we believe can be done in an atmosphere of inclusiveness, openness and equity, devoid of segregations in terms of party affiliations. We are of the view that Ghana's decentralization process will be better served if the community is allowed to completely own the process without presidential interventions through nominations or appointments.

She notes further that, after elections, society requires a strong leadership. Citing for instance that previously marginalized communities in the new regime particularly have high expectations of local councillors. To put this in the Ghanaian context, the previous opposition party now has the opportunity to steer the affairs of the locality through a chief executive from the winner take all 'card'. The effect is that the kind of leadership which is all inclusive and truly committed is stifled. It is also possible for the popularly elected representative of the community to have serious problems with the bureaucratic development and often strictly divide perceptions of interests at the locality.

Coovadia (1995) strongly believes that, to be able to develop a culture of participation at the local level, there is the need to allow strong government at the national and provincial levels which will build on party interest with clear majority political direction to focus on national policy for development. At the local level where the local people need amenities such as roads,

pipe borne water among others, there is the need for a greater responsibility on electorates to ensure that elected offices at the local level are accountable to the ordinary people.

He opines further that, there is the need to depoliticize development and this requires that local government be depoliticized. Whilst we agree with the suggestions advanced by Coovadia, we see the need to put his prescriptions in the Ghanaian context. In Ghana, local assemblies have both central government appointees and the popularly elected members working with an appointed Chief Executive from the ruling political party who is there to implement the policies of the government. We believe that every layer of local government structure should be completely depoliticized to allow meaningful participation, and prioritization of development projects in line with local peculiarities.

Diamond (1999) arguing in favour of democracy as the best form of government explains that democracy promotes freedom because free and fair elections which are inherent in most liberal democracies requires such political rights as freedom of expression, organization and opposition. It promotes self-determination by which people prefer to live under their own laws. He argues further that more democracy makes the government more responsive to the needs of the citizens.

While we agree to these issues raised by Diamond (1999), we look at these issues in the context of the local democracy and how local government institutions including the DCE can guarantee real freedom and self-determination against the background of a CDD-Ghana 2008 report that DCEs are highly intolerant of dissenting views at the local level.

He further points out that as the best form of government, liberalism which is the foundation of democracy and sovereignty of the people, enhances communication and political consciousness. Citizens expect greater political participation and accountability. Again, he underscores the fact

that the democratic culture is potentially peaceful. In looking at these realities in the context of the political atmosphere here in Ghana, decentralized political administration, the idea of appointing DCE would not promote popular participation and sovereignty as the people have no hand in deciding who becomes a DCE.

We are of the view that electing the DCE will allow local people to have ownership of the choice of the DCE and for that matter support him in their quest for development. This might curtail if not end political party “foot soldier” agitation in seeking to participate in the choice of the DCE or calling for the removal of non-performing DCEs or nomination of their preferred party member to the President.

Johnson (2001) underscores the relationship between local democracy, democratic decentralisation and rural development. He defines democratic decentralisation as “meaningful authority devolved to local units of government that are accessible and accountable to the local citizenry who enjoy full political rights and liberties”. For him, every democratic system must have the element of effective popular control over decision making. This occurs through the pressure of social interests groups. He emphasized that democratization requires more than the word delegation of authority. To him citizens must have the ability to hold local public officials to account through the use of elections, collective actions among others.

If the recommendations given above are anything to go by, then it is reasonable to say that Ghana’s decentralisation programme is yet to be fully democratized. The element of presidential nomination from the ruling party reduces the power of democratic elections to ensure official accountability. Furthermore, the pressure of party foot soldiers in determining the mode of governance at the local level destroys the power of collective action and associated social capital

for sustainable development. These issues form the core of our study. He adds that democratic decentralisation cannot be said to necessarily provide gain for the local poor. The apparent disharmony between democracy and poverty reduction signals that strong performance and sound economic policy require a system of governance. He cites Taiwan, South Korea and other North East Asian economies as evidence of regimes with high growth rates and macro-economic stability, underpinned by a decidedly authoritarian regime.

Ghana's decentralization is yet to overcome political disparities and bias, perpetuated by inequalities and poverty. The winner takes all mentality can hardly promote equitable distribution and 'uproots' local corruption. We are interested in learning whether the position of the DCE is a stumbling block to the objectives of accountability and democracy at the local governments in Ghana, especially when revenues and funds transferred to the MMDAs are misappropriated and misapplied under the watch of the DCE (Report of the Auditor-General 2008).

Vine (1967), writing on the chief executive officer's contribution to efficient management with particular reference to the city of Nottingham Community discusses the role of the chief executive officer in ensuring that there is effectiveness and efficiency in the work of committees. He therefore discusses extensively the coordination of policy and executive action, the grouping of government departments and how officers working are held to ensure the realization of objectives. He emphasizes that the chief executive officer must act as a leader and exercise his authority in his management function which entails leadership, policy coordination at the officer level, coordination of executive action to implement the policy and ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

He reiterated that success in all local government depends on the good working relationship between chief executive officer and the elected representatives, noting that, “if the elected representatives fail on the one hand, or if the officers fail on the other, it is the local community they are serving which suffers”. He is of the view that should there be antagonism between the chief executive officer and the principal officers who are the professionals, then, one of them must go. Again, the chief executive officer must have the experience in dealing with matters of political nature. To Vine, everyone can be a chief executive officer but, he requires some level of legal and management training.

We agree with every recommendation Vine makes except that we will put them in the Ghanaian Context. In this context, the Chief Executive Officer has the singular position to coordinate the activities of the decentralized organization and institutions working in his area of jurisdiction and the management and leadership roles of heads of these institutions such as the Ghana Education Service district officers, the district CEPS director among others and that of the M/DCE must be well coordinated to avoid a disjoint within the government system. At the same time, he should be able to manage the intricate issues of his political appointment and his party faithful seeking his attention and that of the general politic in his locality. The concern in this regard is that there are numerous reportage on lack of proper oversight role of the DCE who is a political appointee in the MMDAs in Ghana. This makes the above matters very critical for our study.

Ayee (2008) argues that, one of the several beneficial outcomes of decentralisation is the greater representation of political, religious, ethnic and tribal groups in the process of formulating and implementing development plans. In this case, it becomes increasingly relevant to not only embrace strategies of administrative decentralisation and the delegation of government responsibility to lower tiers of administration but also with allocating a greater role to

decentralized units to operate on participatory or even democratic principles, often referred to as democratic decentralisation.

There is therefore, the need to understand how local government is made representative and structures legitimized. The author continues to enlighten readers on the legal backing to Ghana's decentralisation programme to enhance the realization of the above objective. He cited the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2003-2005, which encourages that within a decentralized democratic environment, the government aims to create wealth by transforming the nature of the economy to achieve growth, accelerated poverty reduction and the protection of the vulnerable.

Additionally, decentralisation among other things presents an opportunity to involve more people and institutions in development policy formulation and delivery for poverty reduction and growth. It also promotes responsive and accountable governance at the local level that allows effective participation, equity in resource allocation and effective delivery of services especially for the poor.

In fact, earlier legislation such as the PNDC Law 207 was to give power to the people and to bring democracy to the doorstep of the people. Put differently, the government's political philosophy at the time was to inject participatory democracy in the democratic fabric. Again, the 1992 Constitution and the National Decentralisation Action Plan published in September 2003, envisage the promotion of a responsive and the popular participation in the decision-making processes (Ayee, 2008).

We are of the view that, the current nature of Ghana's District Assembly where 70% of members are elected by universal adult suffrage, while the other 30% are appointed by the President in consultation with traditional authorities and interest groups in the district could only serve the

objective of inclusiveness in the decision-making process to a little extent. This is because majority of the individuals do not have the privilege to decide 30% members who have the mandate to legislate on their behalf. Besides, the appointment of the 30% and that of the district Chief Executive defeats the principles of popular participation envisaged in the laws on decentralisation. It is in respect of this that many are of the view that the DCEs should be elected as contained in the 1992 Constitutional Review Committee Report (Daily Graphic, 2010).

Additionally, the objective of equity envisaged in the GPRS 2002/2005 can hardly be achieved when both the DCE and 30% members are appointed by the President. They have come under undue pressure to please both the President and political faithful otherwise called “foot soldiers”. This has the tendency to perpetuate the phenomenon of “winner takes all”, thereby defeating the objective of equity in resource allocation at the local level.

Tötemeyer (2008) is of the view that the government of Namibia has demonstrated its commitment to participatory democracy through its decentralisation policy. He believes that meaningful participation and cooperation is only possible when the general public by and large have good knowledge about the government, its functioning, its processes and challenges.

He stresses on the need for public officials and politicians to have great interest in people’s participation in the governance process. In fact, there should be no obstacle and limitation that prevents the public from participating in sub-local and national governance. Rather, there should be incentives for participation in sub-national governance. Their interest should go beyond periodic general elections.

It is pertinent therefore, to investigate the causes of apathy, particularly post-election governance. He raises issues that could relate to apathy to include how important the public feels

at the national level, what importance is attached to them; are the people adequately consulted in the local decision-making processes; are the people ready to put their destiny into their own hands to address local challenges or they continue to rely on central government for solutions to their problems?

The author then goes further to offer a few suggestions to promote participation in local level governance. They include open dialogue and participation between sub-national governments and civil society as a means of strengthening local capacity and self-reliance of the decision makers. The administrators should consider decentralizing most of their operations to promote the concept of self-help at the grass root level.

The local governance situation in Ghana is not a departure from what the author has brought to the fore. This study, among other things will investigate the relationship between the district, Municipal and Metropolitan Chief executive and their people after the district elections. We shall also investigate the level of political activism after election and whether the position of the DCE promotes or hinders this.

1.7.2 The Principle of Accountability

Ayee and Amponsah (2003), brought to the fore the explicit objectives of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and various legislations in the country on decentralisation including the empowerment of local people, effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness to local needs, and accountability. The legislations on Ghana's decentralization programme, including chapter 8 and 20 of the 1992 Constitution, the Local Government Act 1993 (Act 462), the District Assemblies Common Fund Act (479), the National Development Planning System Act (Act 480) and the Legislative Instruments of 1988/89 which created the District Assemblies, among others, show that Ghana's

decentralisation programme among other things is designed to ensure that local people have unfettered access to communal resources in a transparent and accountable manner.

Looking into the theoretical underpinning or rationale for the establishment of the District Assemblies, the authors discuss further, that the opportunity given to local people themselves to generate, analyse, prioritize, contribute and control decision-making would ultimately lead to accountability. This notion has amply been endorsed by the burgeoning literature on decentralisation.

In fact, the composition of the district, municipal and metropolitan assemblies headed by the District Chief Executive (DCE) with the Member of Parliament whose constituency falls within the district as a non-voting member and the appointment of 30 percent of local membership in consultation with traditional authorities and interest groups is to ensure accountability to the people through their opinion leaders. The representation from various electoral areas within the district is to further ensure that the Assembly account to the entire district.

Additionally, the functions of the Unit Committees which include the monitoring of the implementation of self-help and development projects, the education of the people on their rights, privileges, obligations and responsibilities in consultation with the District branch of the National Commission for Civic Education among other things is to empower the local people to demand accountability from their political leaders especially the MPs and the DCE not to talk about the oversight responsibility of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament.

We are interested in finding out through this work, the extent to which the district assemblies and the people can achieve the objective of accountability when the government representative in the person of the DCE is not elected by the people themselves. We would also find out how the DCE

is able to manage, deal with the demands of the central government and the ruling party on one hand, and on another, the needs and aspirations of the people he oversees in relation to Chapter 6 of the Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1992 Constitution which calls for the pursuit of Ghana's decentralisation policy to be non-discriminatory in order to ensure national cohesion.

Debrah (2009) underscores the enormity of the neglect of the study and reportage on the theme of accountability at local level. He presumes that political accountability works at the level of governance. The author expressed worry about the neglect of what really happens at the sub-national level. It is relevant to state that the neglect of accountability, particularly at the grassroots, endangers the objectives of decentralisation with implication for public funds and services which may be poorly delivered or not delivered at all. This underscores the need to attach importance to a critical investigation to how the DCE who has oversight of all the decentralized departments of the district is accountable to the people for the use of resources meant for development.

The author gave an account of the Pre-1993 local government structure aimed at empowering the people to participate in the decision-making processes at the grassroots. To this end, the Provisional National Defence Council government created the so-called revolutionary organs such as the People's Defence Committees (PDCs) and Workers Defence Committees to make decisions in the workplaces and communities. The PDCs which operated in rural communities were to link the regime to the rural communities. These structures were best placed to ensure grassroots democracy.

It however turned out that those pro-PNDC agents which became the cadres for the implementation of the programmes of the regime abused the rights of the ordinary people, the

elites in society and engaged in extortions and corruptions. Others engaged in personal vendetta, thereby dissipating the enthusiasm and the needed social capital for local development. This scenario would imply that decentralisation at the local level would not necessarily result in greater democracy nor power to the people.

Juxtaposing the Pre-1993 local government structure and the Post 1993 Fourth Republican structure which pivoted local governance on the District Assemblies, Zonal/Urban Councils and Unit Committees, this work seeks to examine the effectiveness of the position of the DCE in working to ensure local accountability within the existing structure.

Fine as the legislations on decentralisation and local government structures seem, this work investigates the extent to which they work to achieve grassroot accountability in the face of the obvious difficulties Debrah (2009) identifies such as the embryonic nature of both national and local democratic institutions. This coupled with high rate of poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, lack of access to information and legal channels in the face of massive reports of financial misappropriation remain a major concern at the district level because of the lack of adequate capacity to carry out effective implementation and monitoring of development.

Stoker (2001) identifies among other things that the seeming decline of faith in mainstream institutions of representative democracy, professional politicians, political parties, elections, is a challenge to local democratic governance. He agrees that local democracy helps to deliver effective accountability since it is the local institutions that have the capacity, interests, and detailed knowledge to oversee services and make recommendations for effective and efficient service delivery. He adds however, that, openness is key in the quest to promote accountable democratic institutions. Leadership at the local and central levels ought to guard against the

creation of a narrow regime of public and private actors who focus on fulfilling their own selfish interest and agenda.

We firmly agree with the points made by Stoker, taking into consideration the divisive tendency of local level politics in contemporary times where some party foot soldiers (party cadres) particularly those of the ruling government see themselves as the privileged few and for that matter must be placed above others within the locality in service delivery. If these requests are not met these party faithful have the audacity to orchestrate the removal of the M/DCE.

There are instances where the Member of Parliament and the M/DCE may have serious disagreements and seek to undo each other in terms of the positions they have in the locality in furtherance of their political ambitions. These tendencies seem to suggest to us that if the appropriate checks are not put in place to warrant openness, the creation of local institutions will serve the politicians rather than the local people.

Smith (1985) opines that decentralized administration paves the way for community development. Decentralization is necessarily “bottom-up and allows the people to hold leaders they vote into office to account for their stewardship. In order to ensure accountable local governance, he suggests external, internal, formal and informal mechanisms including commitment, code of conduct, freedom of information, peer review, media scrutiny, and interest groups to allow citizens to examine the right to complain against insensitive bureaucrats and all public servants. This will promote the concept of the public administrator as the servant of the people.

In Ghana, the freedom of information bill has not been passed into law even though the media is vibrant and aids in parliamentary scrutiny of district assemblies spending. The Public Accounts

Committee sittings, is telecasted nationwide, nevertheless, corruption continues to persist. Additionally, the appointive position of the DCE makes him almost evade the ultimate accountability and legitimacy measures of elections. We intend to find out how the position of the DCE as an appointed official of the Central Government and member of the ruling political party as well as other structures such as Regional, district auditors, the district assembly, are made to ensure accountability to citizens.

Gilson (2000) writes on corporate governance, what constitutes good corporate governance and highlights its likely impact on corporations. To him, good corporate governance characterized by an effective, equity contracts, results in more valuable stock and a good corporate environment. This allows for instance, shareholders to vote to replace the board of directors or sell their stock to an entrepreneur who can replace a poorly performing management and thereby earn the capital gains resulting from improved corporate performance.

On transparency and its institutional supports, he opines that effective corporate governance has as its core element, the monitoring of the corporation's performance. A critical issue, according to him is the delivery of credible information to investors. This can be made possible by creating the necessary institutional framework to aid transparency. The author discusses the need for a legally mandated disclosure mechanism, a good accounting standards and independent auditor and enforcement (Gilson, 2000).

Juxtaposing these prescriptions with our institutional framework within Ghana's decentralization programme, we are eager to find out on one hand, how the district Assembly Members, the District Finance Officers, Presiding Members, Budget Officers are able to provide an effective checks on the DCE and indeed on one another to ensure transparency and accountability in areas

such as the award of contracts, disbursements of the Common Fund, financial reporting on district expenditure among other critical issues and on the other, the extent to which the public Accounts Committee can go to ensure that corrupt offices are punished and funds lost to district are recovered in view of the fact that the problem of massive misappropriation of funds in the MMDAs still persist (Auditor-General's Report, 2010).

CDD-Ghana (2006) has identified two broad dimensions of local government reforms, namely the entrepreneurial organized management and the participatory or good local democracy. The former is geared towards the enhancement of the service delivery functions of local government and the latter, the quality of civic engagement.

The service delivery dimension of local government in which, the citizen is seen as the customer opens up the state to effective check by members of the public on the activities of local officials in order to achieve effective service delivery. Implicit in this notion is the presumption that, we have a citizenry that is fully aware of the rules and regulations and the laws on the operations of local officers and again, that there is freedom and accessibility to both political and bureaucratic information that has a respectable level of public trust for use by citizens in their planning and action.

In Ghana, with a high illiterate population and the fact that public information is not easily accessible due to the absence of the freedom of information law, we consider that the principle of subsidiarity which subsumes these dimensions will likely be unimpeded in comparison with its implementation in developed countries.

The authors opine further, that effective political decentralisation and accountability requires an autonomous local government system. That is local government institutions should be given the

latitude to explore potential partnership with external actors without hindrances from Central Government such as Section 88 of the Local government Act which limits the pursuit of loans to an amount of 20 million cedis (GHc 2000), the control of all bye-laws enacted by the DAs to be approved by the Ministry Local Government, Rural Development and Environment.

What is even more engaging in the pursuit of subsidiarity in Ghana's decentralisation programme is the practice where the President appoints the DCE, which makes the position more loyal to the President and local party supporters. It is argued therefore, that popularly elected DCEs will be more accountable to the people who voted him into office as they represent the source of his or her mandate.

This study will bring to the fore, the extent to which the position of the DCE derails accountability to citizens at the grassroots with a focus on whether the DCE can ensure equity and openness to all when supporters of the ruling party in Ghana believe it is their turn to enjoy the spoils of the district.

Winter (1995) separates services not directly paid for but funded by rates such as libraries, community halls, roads, pavement, traffic, police, fire, professional and recreational facilities from those paid for directly by resident such as electricity, water, and refuse removals. Whereas there is no difficulty in borrowing the capital for the provision of these services as the funds can be provided from tariffs, the capital borrowed for the provision of the second category of electricity, water is usually problematic as the impact of interest charges could prove too much for the tax payer to accept. In this case if governments do not subsidize they end up throwing the locality into chaos.

What we believe can help citizens to go along government austerity measures such as full cost recovery for services provided is to prioritize and ensure openness and accountability to the people for whom the tariffs are managed as well as efforts to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of these services to consumers or citizens. When service provision is less efficient and ineffective, who do we turn to? Is it the public servants or the political appointees in the districts?

It is interesting to note that usually when citizens feel that the management of their local resources deviates from their peculiar needs and aspirations, the DCE, the Assembly Members tend to suffer criticism and verbal attacks than the public servants who provide the services. Our study will digest these matters and make recommendations for effective service delivery for local people as more and more MMDAs record substandard services at the displeasure of the people (The New Crusading Guide, 2012).

Mansfield (1995) writes on strategic management of local councils. He is of the view that strategic planning and management can have beneficial outcomes in local council management. He opines that strategic planning should provide a sense of direction and to be proactive than reactive. In this situation, the management of local community would resort to regular and not annual provision of solutions. He went further to prescribe that strategic management of Local Councils or authorities require the need for a vision, purpose, mission and clear values to guide the action and inactions of officials and indeed the general public (Mansfield, 1995).

He also deals with the need for goals and action plans which will deal with resources to be used and the need to measure and evaluate the outcome of these action plans. Mansfield is emphatic on the need for measurement or evaluation of resources used as a necessary means in promoting

accountability on the part of officials. we are eager to find out how the district assembly members, the district finance directors or officers, Presiding Members, Budget Officers are able to provide an effective checks on the DCE and indeed on one another to ensure transparency and accountability in areas such as the award of contracts, application of the DACF, financial reporting on district expenditure among other critical issues.

Our study will enable us to have a first-hand information on the extent to which action plans, planning and pro-activeness have been applied in the management of districts resources in the context of the increasing lack of monitoring and supervisory responsibilities over the staffs of the MMDAs resulting in a repetitive nature of irregularities. What is most relevant to the study is that the budget also denotes a working document for the management or managers and serves as a means of accountability. In other words, the local government's budget provides the legal authorization needed to enable the local government to take actions in a transparent and accountable manner.

It will further investigate the relationship between the district budget and projects, whether the budgets are followed and what stakeholders can learn from the Auditor-General's reports on budget implementation and challenges it presents in ensuring transparency, effectiveness and efficiency in the application of district budgets in light with many financial malfeasance and the non-compliance with financial regulations reported in many MMDAs in Ghana by the Auditor General's Report.

Solomon (1995) is of the view that the budget of local authorities is a single most important document of local councillors. He consequently describes what must be contained in local council budget as an action plan which mirrors the purpose of the local authority. He thinks a

local government's budget constitutes a plan for the future. All rates, charges, rents among others are all stated clearly in the budget. To him a local government budget must balance the amount of money the council plans to spend and the expected amount to be received. The budget of local government must also contain the policy decisions.

The DCE in Ghana is undoubtedly the most important official in the district assembly, and his role in the successful implementation of the decentralisation programme cannot be overemphasized. This role can however be hampered by his accountability to the President with implications for effectiveness of the MMDAs.

To Armstrong (2006), there is the need for proper human resource planning in order to avoid labour attrition or turnover which makes future activity levels difficult to predict as the working environment becomes very turbulent. He indicates that when attrition rate is high, there is a general destabilization of the environment which affects staff and creates discontent. Labour turnover has further implication for recruitment, induction and training cost. He identifies direct cost of recruiting, replacements, opportunity cost of time spent by managers in introducing new starters, loss of the input from those leaving before they are replaced in terms of contribution and output as some cost of labour turnover.

The scenario presented above is similar to the frequent agitation and the removal of DCEs at the instance of party foot soldiers in the MMDAs which results from the appointment of the DCE by the President. The people capitalize on the direct accountability of the DCE to the President to call for his removal because of the partisan interest of the foot soldiers with serious implication for local development. We intend to explore the likely effects of the frequent removal of DCEs

in the MMDAs because, the actions leading to the removal of the DCE makes the environment within which he operates turbulent.

Bluwey (2011) writes on the DCE and the central control over them. He indicates how DCEs were used to achieve political ends by past regimes, particularly by the PNDC regime when the MMDAs unanimously, set out to resist further advance towards constitutional rule. All the assemblies throughout the country at the time unanimously passed resolutions asking the PNDC to halt the advance to constitutional rule under the guise that the assemblies needed to stabilize and find their feet before the agenda to constitutional rule was advanced. The critical point he makes is that, though it was never independently established that those resolutions were instigated by the government of the PNDC through its appointed Regional and District Secretaries, the fact that they were very consistent with the public addresses of Chairman Rawlings was something that led to the belief that the PNDC adherents worked through the DCEs to have their agenda achieved in the period of transition to democracy (Bluwey, 2011).

This confirms the assertion that the central government always has ulterior political motives such as the intention to strengthen, rather than weaken, the role of the central government in the decentralisation process. With the DCE as a political appointee in the Fourth Republic, the study seek to establish if the DCE works to promote the agenda of the ruling party to the disadvantage of the generality of Ghanaians.

1.8 Research Methodology

The focus of this study is on the accountability of the M/DCE in the District Assemblies of Ghana. The study was carried in Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly, (LEKMA) which has Teshie-Nungua as its capital. It is one of the newly created assemblies established on 1st

November 2007 by an Executive Instrument (LI 1865) and inaugurated on 29th February, 2008 by the then New Patriotic Party administration. LEKMA is the coordinating centre of all the departments of the Assembly and has all the important social amenities of the modern time including a hospital, good road network, market, banks, a military barracks, a university, just to mention a few.

1.8.1 The Rationale for a Case Study

The choice of LEKMA is important for three main reasons. First, LEKMA, as a relatively new district, does not have a lot of damning reports of financial irregularities reported by the Auditor-General on MMDAs. In light of this, this study intends to find out the extent to which LEKMA follows best practices in terms of adherence to internal and external mechanisms for promoting accountability in other that the Assembly does not find itself in the quagmire of corruption just like the rest. Secondary, the Municipality is not far from the capital city of Accra where the student resides. It therefore, makes for easy travel to the municipality to collect data. The third reason is the fact that LEKMA is a municipality with two constituencies (Ledzokuku and Krowor) which have voted for different political parties, NDC and NPP, the two dominant political parties in the country with huge followings in the District as illustrated in Table I below. This makes LEKMA an ideal assembly to gauge transparency and accountability in a balanced manner in the Fourth Republic.

Table 1: Presidential Election Trend for Ledzokuku and Krowor Constituencies

Year	Constituency	Winning political Party	Number of votes	Percentage
1996	Ledzokuku	NDC	29,954	60%
	Krowor	NDC	17,169	53%
2000	Ledzokuku	NPP	22,529	51.60%
	Krowor	NPP	18,155	60.90%
2004	Ledzokuku	NPP	38,100	49.80%
	Krowor	NPP	28,160	51.60%
2008 (RO)	Ledzokuku	NDC	44,652	58.49%
	Krowor	NDC	29,921	55.37%
2012	Ledzokuku	NDC	53,710	56.58%
	Krowor	NDC	35,284	53.37%

1.8.2 The Population

The Assembly is made up of about twelve Electoral Areas represented by (12) Assembly Members out of which two are women. Eight of the Assembly Members are also elected while the remaining four are government appointees. The elected members are from eight electoral areas of Teshie and Nungua. Brekesse, Antweregono, Nkpor, Klowor, Nii Odai, Amrarlo and Nii Larweh make up the electoral areas from Krowor Constituency (Nungua), while Nii Ashiley, Akomfra, Agbleza, Tsui Bleoo, Akromadeokpoo and Sangordjor are the electoral areas from Ledzokuku Constituency (Teshie). Our samples were taken from Agbeliza, Akromdeokpoo, Songordzor and Nii Ashitey Akomfra electoral areas for Ledzokuku (Teshie) and Antweregono and Nkpor electoral areas for Krowor (Nungua). A purposive sampling of staff of all the major departments of the assembly such as the Audit Unit, Account Department, Planning, and District

Coordinator among others of the Assembly, Assemblymen, the MCE, the Presiding Member and some opinion leaders, were done.

1.8.3 Sources of Data

Data was derived from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered using structured interviews, questionnaires, and informal discussions whilst secondary data was from the Dailies, documents such as the A-G's reports on the MMDAs. Relevant references were made from sources like magazines, periodicals, journals and the publications from the national dailies. This included review of Acts of parliament, policy documents, reports, newspapers, journals, Internet sources as well as official enactments on local governance and decentralisation with accent on decentralisation and the District Chief Executives (DCE), Metropolitan, Municipal, and the District Assembly.

A set of fifteen questionnaires were self-administered to members and staff of the district assembly that were purposively sampled. These members and staff of the assembly included, among others, persons from the Audit Unit, Account Department, Planning, and District Coordinator, Assemblymen and the Presiding Member. The obvious advantage of this sampling technique was the fact that it helped capture expert opinion on the issues raised by this study. In addition, questionnaires were administered to a random sample of ninety respondents taken from the Electoral Areas of Agbeliza, Akromdeokpoo, Songordzor and Nii Ashitey Akomfra for Ledzokuku (Teshie) and Antwereggonno and Nkpor electoral areas for Krowor (Nungua).

Data gathered was analysed and presented in the form of tables, graphs, charts, etc. under various themes. To be able to assess the power and control of the M/DCEs in the District Assemblies of Ghana, the study gathered the experiences and views of sitting and ex-DCEs of Ghana. It must

be noted that the study, for most part, employed the qualitative research method to offer insight into their contributions on accountability in local governance.

1.9 Limitations of the Research

The concepts, actors, periods and spatial coverage in tandem with the research philosophy, resources and tools available defined the scope of the study. This piece of research was submitted within a very limited time frame. While going by the calendar, several issues are likely to escape my attention or cannot be comprehensively covered. For instance, it is not possible to interview all sitting and past DCEs and Assembly Members due to cost implications and time constraints. Also, time might not allow for a comprehensive review of all legislations or enactments relating to decentralisation Ghana.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

This section provides explanations of the origin and definitions for the concepts of accountability and transparency that guide this study.

1.10.1 Definition of Accountability

According to Diamond (1999), accountability and transparency are important pillars in the process of democratic consolidation. However attempts at explaining the terms ‘accountability’ and ‘transparency’ and reaching a consensus on them have been difficult in spite of the many clarifications on the concepts.

The genesis of the concept of accountability, many believe, cannot be separated from the introduction of democracy to the world by the Greeks whose public officials were made

answerable to the people. This is evidence in how Aristotle stressed transparency and accountability in his work, *The Politics*. In his view, in order to protect the public purse from being defrauded, all public money must be issued openly in front of the whole city, with copies of the accounts deposited in the various wards. This clearly emphasizes the need for openness and answerability in government business, which incidentally is the focus of this work.

In the Ghanaian context, the mantra of “Power to the People” which heralded the decentralisation programme in the era of the Provisional National Defence Council, was to afford residents of the districts a voice in deciding what was in their interest and demand answers from local officials on the manner in which they carried out the constitutional responsibilities based on the concerns of the people.

Accountability as the ability to determine who in government is responsible for decisions or actions ensures that officials in government are answerable for their actions. Public accountability involves the methods by which a public agency or public officials fulfil their duties and obligations (Jabbara and Dwiveldi, 1988). In the views of Jones (1977), accountability refers to the responsibility for one’s actions to someone else whilst, he defines “responsibility” to mean “the liability to give an account to another of what one has done or not done.

What is clear from the definitions above is the need for justifications for actions from leaders in government through laid down processes that compel the officials to provide answers to the people for their stewardship. What this entails in the views of Mulgan (2000), is the responsibility or obligation for officialdom to provide answers for actions which must be based on accepted standards necessary for safeguarding or preventing abuse of office and power. An important dimension of this argument is the public official must be compelled to explain to

someone who has the authority to assess the account and allocate praise or censure. This makes the existence of an external ‘account-holder’ to whom an account is rendered by an ‘accountor’ very critical in any account giving environment. This scenario permits sanctions and rectification as the account holder can demand answers and use sanctions to elicit compliance.

Another dimension to answerability to stakeholders in public affairs calls for decisions in accordance with lay-down procedure that is known to everyone. This does not only become the benchmark against which the performance of public officials are measured, but it calls for the availability of information from officialdom to promote transparency in how government business is run to enable citizens to demand answers from public officials. Availability of information to the people is crucial in ensuring transparency which is a very strong benchmark for good governance and the promotion of equity, participation, pluralism, accountability and the rule of law, in a manner that is effective, efficient and enduring.

Citizens ability to demand accountability calls for openness in decisions and unimpeded flow of information about activities of public servants and politicians to stakeholders to whom they are accountable based on the principle of the right to know. The concept of *social contract* also obligates local authorities and bureaucrats to explain or justify how effective and efficient resources have been applied to problems. This is considered a sound principle of fiscal policy and important in the management of financial resources and to those who require such information to enable them to evaluate the financial performance of the organization.

In accountability therefore, the account giver’s obligation to render proper account must be counterbalanced by the ability of the account holder, in this case the central government to pass a

judgment and sanction non-compliance. This invariably means that the account-holder must have control over the account-giver.

1.10.2 Political Accountability

In all representative governments, public office holders are either appointed or elected to direct the affairs of the government on behalf of the people. Within the context of the decentralisation policy which results in the transfer of resources, powers, and functions to the peripheries, there is the need for adequate mechanisms to secure accountability of those, who in the views of Marceau (1993) exercise powers at the local levels on behalf of the central government which only steers the affairs of the local institutions from a distance. Political accountability refers to the answerability of these elected and appointed representatives to the people. The constitutional framework provides the necessary checks and balances for achieving accountability because of the existence of adequate mechanisms through which office holders provide answers to the people for actions they take or fail to take.

Political accountability has a dual role of ensuring a sustained pressure on officials to remain focused on meeting the wishes and needs of the people they serve. It must also ensure that policies do not exhibit a deliberate bias in favour of some groups at the expense of other segments of the population. This is very essential in improving constituency relations because agencies of government are made accountable to interests in a particular constituency. In the context of Ghana for instance, the constitution defines the duties of the public official as well as the rights of the governed. This provides the basis for ensuring legitimacy of government action and the right of the citizenry to demand accountability in governance. Political accountability therefore puts a constitutional obligation on elected officials to answer for their political decisions and justifications for their performance in office (Olowu et al 2004).

By implication, political accountability involves a role relationship of stake holders such as the citizenry, politicians, the public, and policy administrators. For the citizenry to demand accountability of the politician there is the need for opportunities for demanding accountability. In this vein, accountability is supposed to ensure that elected officials, who are the trustees of the people's power, answer to the people from time to time for their actions and decisions. In this context, an obligation is placed on the politician to explain, justify, or answer questions about how resources have been used and to what effect. In this connection, elections have remained the most effective and time-tested mechanism for recruiting officials and demanding accountability from them because, periodically the elected officials goes back to the people for a renewal of their mandate. Elections therefore, ensure vertical accountability as it affords the electorates the opportunity to demand answers from public officials during campaigns (Romzek, 2000).

In the case above, elections or ex-post facto mechanisms for accountability help to share and shape citizen preferences and expectations. Voters either reward or punish the political leaders by voting them again or voting them out of office depending on whether their performance met the sovereign will or the expectation of the people. This is the basis of the people's political power which forces public officials to be answerable to the people for their performance hence its ability to ensure legitimacy of the government (Jones, 1997).

Unfortunately, however, Olowu et al, (2004), identify the weakening role of elections as mechanisms for demanding accountability in Africa because of the problem of elite capture and electoral patronage. Yilmaz and Serrano-Berhet (2008) note that, as a result, there is a tendency of local government systems to be built around political leaders and councillors who exercise so much influence in local affairs in Africa. This situation naturally neutralizes citizens' ability to demand accountability with so many implications for public funds or resources.

1.10.3 Legal Accountability

To say something is legal means it is allowed or required by law. Legal accountability as identified by Romzek (2000) is a feature of most democratic states which guides the actions of local government officials especially when the appointing authorities are far in the capitals. Legal accountability in this respect, serves as a check on locally autonomous bodies to be accountable to the people through the law.

The essence of legal accountability, according to Wunsch (2000), therefore, is to compel local government officials to perform their functions in accountable manner because of the existence of legal procedures that guide all actions. In this connection, legal accountability in terms of institutions and established judicial frameworks including the internalized laid down rules and procedures of the administrative setup that guide the decisions and actions of individuals at the work place (Dwiveldi, 1994).

Legal accountability denotes the hierarchy of rules and regulations established in an organization by which the actions of individuals are judged within the administration setup. Proceeding on this premise, accountability can be secured through the adherence to legal and judicial processes in the performance duties by the public office holders. It is further measured or judged according to legislative and judicial processes pursued through the judiciary by way of court rulings or judicial reviews through which the courts through their constitutional power can declare an action of the public office holder unconstitutional.

According to Montesquieu (1970), the need to promote judicial accountability is critical in the new Democracies (such as Ghana) because it boosts the credibility of public commitments to control bankruptcy and increase economic viability of organizations. He was however quick to

add that, there is an inherent difficulty in ensuring judicial accountability in a parliamentary democracy than in a presidential democratic system which respects separation of legislative and executive functions. To him, under a parliamentary democracy, the executive branch can override judicial accountability by amending legislations which can promote the abuse of power.

Under the conditions describe above, a breach of rules of duty would be difficult to punish and local officials to whom public functions are entrusted cannot be punished for non-performance. The DCEs in Ghana's neo-Presidential system are never prosecuted for their misdeeds apart from dismissals in some instances, though the judiciary is quite independent of the executive arm of government. However, it is the president who appoints the DCE as the head of the M/MDAs and the Attorney-General who is the state prosecutor. It remains to be seen if the executive has the political will to tackle corruption and mismanagement in the M/MDAs which is a matter of concern in Ghana.

1.10.4 Deployment of the Concept of Accountability

The principle of accountability in a democratic society must necessarily lead to the application of resources in a manner that promotes equity to the beneficiaries of government services. Ghana's decentralisation has resulted in the relocation of control over service distribution to the peripheries where the bulk of the population live. The demand for accountability can be effective due to the proximity of citizens to the hub of decision-making. It is therefore possible for citizens to be well informed about official actions and decisions and be able to demand answers. The constant demand for answers is to promote accountability, efficient service delivery, and tailor-made solutions to local specific problems since local officials have better knowledge of local conditions.

In all of this, what is of crucial importance is a form of local government which makes local officials accountable or answerable for resources, either internally generated or transferred to the local level by the Central Government.

It is believed that local officials can be held more accountable for their performance, which is why decentralisation has been lauded as a sine qua non for the realization of local development. As is the case in the District Assemblies of Ghana, the DCE is not directly elected by the local people. To this end, we look at the extent to which the district level structures that revolve around the DCE, who is appointed by the President and remains loyal, both to the ruling party and the Central Government, work effectively to ensure accountability at the district level where partisan politics is prohibited.

With the above insight, the concept of transparency and accountability will guide us in determining how the central government control or influence on the appointed DCE promotes accountability and transparency in his actions and in the application of resources in the MMDAs.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The work was organized in four chapters. Chapter one comprises mainly of introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, hypothesis, literature review, research methodology, conceptual framework, limitations of the study, organization of the study and the deployment of concept. Chapter two comprehensively deals with the evolution of accountable local government in Ghana from the pre-colonial period, through to the Fourth Republic. Chapter three is about the discussions and analysis of findings that have been juxtaposed with instances of corruption or lack of accountability in the district assemblies. Chapter four is devoted to summary, conclusions and recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

EVOLUTION OF ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN GHANA

2.1 Introduction

Decentralisation as a policy aimed at transferring administrative and political functions to local levels in Ghana has been pursued by all governments since the colonial era with a varying degree of emphasis. It looks at the various regime efforts at promoting grassroots accountability which to enable local people to check their leaders by demanding answers for their actions. This chapter has established that while local governance from the colonial era up to the period of the Provisional National Defence Councils (PNDC) did not ensure accountability of the local political head to the people at the local levels, the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana ensures some level of accountability of the DCE to the local people only to the extent that his is ratified by the District Assembly (D.A) which is a body of representatives of the people. The DCE is therefore accountable to the people through the D.As.

2.2 Local Government under Colonial Rule

According to Ayee (1999), local governance in Ghana started with the British Colonial system of administration heralded by the promulgation of the Municipal Ordinance of 1859. This led to the establishment of municipalities in the coastal towns of the Gold Coast. The system however failed to ensure accountability to the people because it made the local traditional institution of chieftaincy, which is hereditary, the rallying point for local administration.

Buah (1980), points out that the system as described above was popularly known as “Indirect Rule” pioneered by the British governor, Lord Lugard, first in Uganda and Nigeria under the

framework of the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance in 1878 which was amended in 1883 and 1924. Though it gave the local chiefs powers to control local tribunals and bye-laws in consonance with British conception of law, it did not make local authorities accountable to the people since it excluded them from the governance process.

A real impetus to local governance came in the administration of Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg, with the passage of the Native Administration Ordinance in 1927 which gave authority to the Provincial Councils of Chiefs in the south to serve as the platforms for collecting views of the people for the colonial administration. The traditional institutions remained the conduits for implementing colonial policies and directives (Buah, 1980).

2.3 Decentralisation under the Convention People's Party (CPP)

A key policy decision that imparted greatly on local governance under the regime of the CPP was the passage of the Local Government Act of 1961 (Act 54). It was a major boost to local governance because it divided Ghana into city, municipal local councils. It therefore characterized public administration generally as consisting of both a central government institutions based in the capital with subsidiaries at the peripheries. The central level institutions had oversight roles over local institutions and structures (Buah, 1980).

It also abolished the representation of traditional authorities on the District Councils and called for the election of council members. The councils had a Paramount Chief as the President who was appointed by the Minister of Justice to preside over meetings of the District Council which consisted of the Chairman, the Vice chairman and elected representatives who held office for three years. The implementation of these reforms notwithstanding, local governance continued to be unaccountable and undemocratic (Ahwoi, 2010).

Ayee (2007) points out that the problem the greatest challenge with local governance under the CPP was that though, the 1957 Constitution had provided for an elaborate regional devolution of public administration, this was short-lived because development goals were pursued within the framework of a one-party state and Africanization in line with socialist ideology. As a result, the political space was not open. This situation stifled political pluralism and curtailed political participation and accountability.

Nkrumah (1961) states that by 1964, under the slogan of “Ghana is CPP and CPP is Ghana”, all recruitments to vacant posts were to be filled by suitable indigenes who did not necessarily have the expertise (Nkrumah, 1961). Ahwoi (2010) explains however, that, the central government had a strong control of the local officials in order to control divisive tendencies as the state demanded their total loyalty. Local officials were faced with a threat of dismissal which curtailed their accountability to the people.

To Ayee (2007), local governments in this regard became a tool for the maintenance of law and order and the implementation of the central government policies with dire consequences for accountability to the ordinary citizens except to the Central Government. He further observes that the above scenario increased the power of the district Commissioners (DCs) and the CPP at the expense of the people. The DC who did not see himself as accountable to the people had to defend the Party and Kwame Nkrumah at all times. Local government was as a result, politicized to the extent that all its structures became the appendages of the CPP whose course district political heads promoted.

2.4 Decentralisation under the National Liberation Council (NLC)

The National Liberation Council (NLC) government through the Mills-Odoi Commission made recommendations that sought to eliminate waste in public administration through by emphasising accountability and judicious use of resources by government officials. This was seen as critical to developing viable decentralized government machinery (Ayee, 2007). To Nkrumah (1961), the Mills-Odoi Commission report in April 1967 called for the implementation of the above measures through the four-tier structures of regional Councils, district Councils, Municipal/area/local councils and village/town committees which had wide range of functions and powers with the district as the basic unit of local government.

The NLC regime also took some measures in its bid to depoliticized local governance first, by decreeing that, the Town and Village Development Committees (T/VDCs) which were created in 1951 and made part of the CPP party structures be recreated and allowed to function normally as part of the district structure. It further established a local government structure which relied on the good will and support of the chiefs.

According to Nkrumah (1961), the appointment of District Administrative Officers (DAOs) was made from the civil service to head the District, Urban, Town, and Village Development Committees with the aim of setting local government administration on an even keel before new arrangements for the long term could be instituted. In the views of Olowu (2007), drawing DAOs from the civil service was to prevent partisanship at the local level as the NLC disallowed democratic methods of selecting representatives of the district to secure accountability to the Central Government as these officers were just made to exercise delegated power. This situation in turn, resulted in a partisan local government.

2.5 Decentralisation under the Progress Party

The period of the Progress Party (P.P) saw the implementation of the Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Electoral and Local Government Reform christened the Siriboe Committee which called for a three-tier Regional, District and Area, Town and Local Councils and a fourth tier-Town and Village Development Committees.

Ahwoi (2010) establishes that, there were two dimensions of Accountability at the time. While all the District Councils were to have two elected representatives to the Regional Councils one of whom must be the District Council Chairman, the people were once again denied the opportunity to demand accountability directly from these Regional Council Representatives through direct elections. The Regional Councils which depended on government grants were directly put under the watchful eyes of Parliament which determined estimates for contract as well as powers to dissolve the District Councils.

He further points out how the Busia-led-government in 1969, through the Siriboe Commission of 1968 and the 1969 Constitution enjoined the in-coming civilian government of Dr. Busia to enact a Local Government Law, with the aim of erecting a decentralized machinery of government in the country. A major boost, aimed at promoting this ambition, was the establishment of a separate ministry for rural development to oversee rural health delivery, the supply of electricity, bore-hole water, and a major improvement in the road sector (Ahwoi, 2010).

But the government also reduced the earlier four-tier structure under the Local Administration of Act 1971 (Act 359) to a three-tier structure of local government consisting the bottom-institutions of sub-district and local councils. It further appointed Regional Chief Executives who

controlled the affairs of the District Councils leaving the District Council members with no control over the Local Government.

This situation resulted from the fact that the Local Administration Act 1971 (Act 359) sought to correct the separate identity which existed in a form a sharp distinction between the Local Government and Central Government with the fusion of Central and local Government institutions, which meant that, there was no legitimate political and effective authority at the district level. The Busia regime, among other things, made the ministerial bodies responsible for planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of policy (Ayee, 2007). This situation reinforced central government control of the District Assemblies.

2.6 Decentralisation under the National Redemption Council

Olowu (2007) maintains that, Colonel I.K. Acheampong overthrew the Dr Busia's Progress Party government on 13th January 1972 just at the dawn of the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP), fashioned out by the International Monetary fund (IMF) in response to the economic crisis of the early 1970s. Decentralization was therefore a necessary option for the NRC since the impact of SAP forced many developing states to embrace local governance as the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) made it mandatory for developing countries to make local government the centre of local specific decisions in relation to national guidelines which led to the creation of new structures.

In line with this demand, the National Redemption Council in 1974 introduced the Local Administration (Amendment) Decree (NRCD 258). The Act sought to give more power to the local units. This policy was to be pursued within the Single Hierarchy Local Government

structure aimed at removing the dichotomy between local and central government at the peripheries by instituting monolithic district councils which had the mandate for all local affairs.

This was regarded as a major fillip to decentralisation under the NRC regime in 1974, the policy made the District Councils responsible for the deliberation, consultation on service provision, and evaluation of these projects and programmes, but was accountable to their parent ministries in Accra, though they were allowed to vote for their own Chairmen. Even though the decree gave the District Chief Executive at the local level, wide range of powers in the local government structure, he was obliged to liaise with local Departments and Central Government agencies which were not necessarily integrated into the District (Olowu, 1998).

Ahwoi (2010) explains that the oversight for demanding accountability however rests with the Civil Service which had the responsibility of the political heads while all civil servants in the various departments were made accountable to the District Chief Executive who supervised all government programmes in the district. The District Chief Executive had further powers to coordinate all programmes of Government agencies, boards and corporations in the district since he was the key officer in the nominated councillors and was the Chairman of the Council's statutory committee.

The assessment of Buah (1980) is that the introduction, later in October 1978, of the new Local Government (amendment) Decree-SMCD 174 sought to restore the competitive principles in local government. As part of one-third of the membership reserved for chiefly representation, 2/3 was to be filled through elections. This hope of giving popular control of local leader to the people could not however materialize because of the ₵500.00 stipulated by the decree as the payment to elective positions. This policy dashed the aspirations of the local citizenry. The

problem precluded the less-endowed from participating in local politics since only the rich could afford to contest elections at the time. The resultant lack of accountability and effective monitoring was coupled with recentralization in Accra of the hitherto services performed by District Councils as they were centralized through the Financial Administration Degree that was enacted to centralize all fiscal controls in Accra.

Finally, the move by the NRC to vest the responsibility for execution of functions of the District Councils in a career civil servant rather than a political appointee, though seen as a safeguard against political interference in Council matters was responsible for the heightened sense of alienation of the District Council from the people (Ahwoi, 2010).

2.7 Decentralisation under the Regime of the PNDC

Offei-Aboagye (2009) concurs with Herbst (1993) that when the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) took over the levers of government after its coup in 1981, the two main reasons adduced for the coup, led by Chairman Rawlings was to carry out “a house cleaning” exercise of the corruption which had engulfed the previous regime. Under the slogan, “probity and accountability”, the regime sought to reform the public sector which had become highly centralized, undemocratic, unaccountable, therefore incapable of developing the nation.

In this connection, Baiocchi (2006) agrees with Ahwoi (2010) that the policy of decentralizing the governance and the administrative process was taught to be necessary for improving Ghana’s political environment in order to trigger economic growth in the face of the economic difficulties the country faced. The end result of this policy was to promote efficient policy implementation of government programmes.

In the views of Debrah (2009), decentralisation was pursued in the larger scheme of democratization in order to improve on the political decentralisation which had been started in 1988 with the passage of the PNDC Law 207. Ayee, (1996) notes that the objective of decentralization was to prevent the reoccurrence of the economic difficulties that had resulted in high indebtedness, high inflation, rural urban drift and constrained the country from investment.

This ambition found expression in the May 1982 Policy Guidelines which committed the Government to participatory democracy and decentralisation or local government under the slogan, “power to the people”. Among other things, the policy of decentralisation was to transfer responsibility for implementation of government policies and programmes from the central and regional levels downwards to local institutions. This was necessary in giving expression to the decentralisation policy of the government to democratize and increase accessibility of all to political leaders. It therefore considered vital in promoting information flow, transparency and accountability to the local people.

Ayee (2007) considers the Local Government Law, PNDCL 207, 1988 as unprecedented landmark legislation because it resulted in the immediate creation of 110 district assemblies and twenty-two decentralized departments established as the “action spots” where decision concerning the ordinary people would be made. It had the singular aim of bringing democracy to their doorstep as it sought to promote popular participation and accountability at the local level. According to Ofei-Aboagye (2009), the commitment of the regime to put “the people” at the centre of the governance process encouraged the formation of the then ‘revolutionary’ organs called Peoples’ Defence Committees (PDCs) and Workers Defense Committees (WDCs) around which decision-making revolved at work places and in the communities across the country.

It is however, sad to relate that, the attempt to introduce democracy around these two structures was short-lived because the pro-PNDC agents around whom the ‘peoples’ democracy’ revolved were not accountable to the people. Lack of electoral accountability meant that these party cadres could not be sanctioned or punished for non-performance because of their affiliation to the PNDC. As a result, their involvement in extortion of money and corrupt practices angered the people and led to a disintegration of local democracy (Manor 1995).

As CDD-Ghana (2006) observes, the pursuit of decentralisation from 1980s and 1990s was occasioned by the demand particularly for accountability which was pursued through the policy of decentralisation by the Rawlings’ Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) with the passage of the Local Government Law PNDC Law 207 in 1998 (CDD-Ghana, 2006). However, like many other regimes, the attempt at promoting accountability did not truly materialize since the various local representatives were not accessible to the local population because of the absence of elections as the popular means of demanding accountability from local officials.

2.8 Decentralization under the 1992 Constitution

Nkrumah (2000) declares that the promulgation of the 1992 Constitution was a major fill-up to the policy of decentralization as it became the legal framework for decentralization and local government system. Apart from making Ghana a democratic state based on the principles of freedom and Justice with political sovereignty residing in the people, Article 240 calls for a decentralized government system by way of transfer of resources, tasks, and decision-making from the central government to the peripheries.

The functions, powers and resources which were hitherto controlled by the central government have been ceded to the District Assemblies by the Constitution to encourage local level

participation in the decision-making process. Importantly, the Constitution further identifies functions of the assembly as the formulation of plans, programs and strategies for finding resources for the total development of the local levels. This is a herculean task to be realized under the leadership of the DCE who is not directly accountable to the people against the backdrop that elections have remained the best means of securing accountability from public servants (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006).

The passage, later of the Local Government Establishment Instrument, 1994, LI 1589 made the District Assemblies the highest and the focal points of political authority in the country with deliberative, legislative and executive powers at the local level to make it possible for the people to get closer to decision makers and the destinations for the decentralized functions through the office of the district assemblies which coordinates and implements, maintains and evaluate the activities of all departments and prepare district budgets. Power to ensure accountability at the local level is granted the MMDAs themselves as the Constitution further enjoins them to have a system of mechanisms of accountability to control all local government staff.

It further gives the MMDAs the responsibility for roads, forestry, extension, secondary education, health service delivery, fire prevention, town and country planning transferred from the central government. Responsibility for the resources remains the task of the DCEs, the regional ministers and presiding members (PMs) according to chapter 20 of the Constitution (Jackson, 1958).

Though elections have remained the most effective and a time-tested mechanism for recruiting officials, demanding accountability and conferring legitimacy on elected representatives, rather disappointingly, and incongruent with the democratization process, the Constitution called for

the appointment of the DCEs by the President. This appointment must however be ratified by a two-third majority of the assembly present and voting (The Constitution, 1992).

Appointment of the DCE as the most important local government official in charge of resources at the local levels has two important effects on accountability. First, it ensures vertical control of the DCE by the President, in which case the President can directly demand accountability from the local government appointee. Second, the ratification of the nominee by the District Assemblies implies that the people's representatives can horizontally control the power of the DCE and even remove non-performing DCEs from office through a vote of no confidence.

In effect, however, the appointment of the DCE by the President is said to deny the MMDAs of the democratic principles of representation, and turned the DAs into partisan institutions headed by a DCE who has enormous powers. According to the Regional Development Dialogue, "decentralisation is impossible without democratic local government and governance" What is the likely cost of appointing local government officials? In addressing this question, Jackson notes that the appointment into public offices rather than through elections, apart from resulting in the appointment of political cronies, friends, relatives to public offices, compromises ability of the appointing authority to report and investigate wrong conduct on the part of the appointee (Jackson, 1958).

To this end, local leaders under the Fourth Republican Constitution are likely to be left of the hook when they commit corrupt acts because of the inherent difficulty of checking corrupt local leaders who see themselves as political representatives rather than servants of the citizens or community they serve. This invariably would reduce trust of the local people in local public officials because appointment rather than elections constrains the citizen from securing public

accountability from the local leader who spends public money and power by voting out of office these elected local leaders whose performance may have fallen below expectation.

2.9 Popular Control of the DCE

Accountability at the local levels in Ghana is the responsibility of all stake holders. From the MP who has a stake in the development of the district as far as programmes of the District Assemblies are concerned, the Ministry of Local Government headed by the Minister and the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) headed by the Regional Minister in charge of monitoring the work of the District Assembly and report on the DCE and the District Assembly to the President on behalf of the people. In the views of Marceau, the underlying reason for the development of proper institutional checks and balances is that the central government is managing the local institutions from a distance (the centre) hence the need to secure accountability of these local institutions (Marceau 1993).

The role of the people in ensuring accountability cannot be underestimated. The role of citizen's at the local levels go beyond what Hurwitz sees as mere complaint against insensitive or callous treatment by the local public official on the grounds that each individual has basic human rights regardless of the form of government that may exist (Hurwitz, 1981). Indeed, the people have also been given a limited role to play to ensure accountability of the M/DCE in the decentralisation process to the extent that they exercise some control over the M/DCE even though this does not come through the electoral process.

The nomination of the DCE and his subsequent approval of the by the DAs, a body directly elected by the people under Article 243 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana means the M/DCE derives some powers from the electorate at the district and must therefore be

accountable to the people. The recognition of this fact by the M/DCE would ensure that the he does not become too powerful and abuse his or her powers, but rather work to ensure public satisfaction with services that they provide to the people (Fukuyama et al., 2010).

The constitutional provisions on the nomination and appointment of the M/DCE by the president and the direct election of the President by the people further makes the President and the people a very important countervailing force or checks and balances on the powers of the M/DCE. The president to a greater extent suffers the consequences for the non-performance of the M/DCE. This is very important in ensuring that the M/DCE remains answerable to the people in line with what is very crucial in promoting accountability at the local level. In short, the people as a check on the powers of the DCE take the following forms:

1. The people have the chance to assess the performance of the DCE through his sectional address which he delivers to the DA.
2. The DCE can be removed by the DA through a vote of “no confidence”;
3. Aggrieved members of the DA can resort to court action if they are not satisfied with the performance of the DCE;
4. The DA can cause an investigation into any suspected acts of malfeasance of the District Chief Executive.

Together, these checks must compel the M/DCE to strive to work hard to sustain the confidence of the President to whom he is directly accountable as well as win the trust and confidence of the people whose agitation can cause his removal by the President. It is however interesting to note that even though the District Chief Executive is expected to continuously feature in the good books of the District Assembly in order to avert a possible vote of “no confidence” by the

Assembly, the power to “fire” a non performing M/DCE remains the prerogative of the President even if the people agitate for his removal (Local Government Information Digest,1997) To this extent, the people do not have a direct mechanisms for demanding answers from their M/DCEs, though they remain the closest to the people.

2.10 Fiscal Controls in the District Assemblies

Ghana’s decentralisation programme has seen some infusion of a lot of strategies aimed at protecting government money or public money and taxes at the local level. All these moves give expression to Act 240 (2) of the 1992 Constitution which calls for a sound financial base for each local government unit with adequate and reliable revenue streams in a direct response to funding problems that confronted the local government structures in the 1990s. The commitment to make the DAs financially viable was considered as a major impetus to local authorities in carrying out decentralized functions effectively.

As a result, ten locally generated revenue (IGFs) sources were identified under the Local Government Act of Ghana, Act 462 (1993) in addition to ceded revenues under the PNDCL 207 for the Assemblies which are centrally collected and shared to the DAs. These sources have been augmented by the District Assemblies’ Common Fund (DACF) established under Section 252 (1) of the Constitution which mandates the Parliament of Ghana to make annual provisions for the allocation of not less than five percent (5%) of the total revenues to the District Assemblies for development guided by need, responsiveness, service pressure, and equality factors. The DACF is regarded as a major life line to the less-endowed districts. It has further been lauded because Parliament has oversight over the application of the DACF rather than the executive in Ghana (The Constitution, 1992).

To ensure equity, accountability and transparency in the allocation of the DACF, Section 9 of the Act 455 outlines that:

1. The sharing formula is rigidly followed in the allocation of funds to the District Assemblies.
2. The Auditor-General (A-G) must report in writing to Parliament and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) on how the allocated funds are distributed and utilized according to the principles of fairness and transparency.

2.11 The Role of the Office of the District Assembly

The office of the District Assembly consists of the various departments of the District Assemblies, and it is an integral part of the Offices of the District Assemblies. This is expected to promote easier co-ordination, implementation, evaluation, and maintenance of effective control over budgets and all activities of the departments in the district because all the decentralized departments have been brought under the office of the District Assemblies headed by the M/DCE for effective supervision (Auditor-General report, 2010)

According to the Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDCL 327), and Section 10 (3) of the Local Government Act, (Act 462), the RCCs have a clear mandate for the supervision of the MMDAs because the MMDAs are required to transmit their development programmes to the RCCs for scrutiny to ensure that they do not deviate from national policies or aspirations. The Local government Act 1993, (Act 462) further requires the DCE be accountable to the central government for the performance of the heads of departments of MMDAs which are “answerable to the District Chief Executive who in tend is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of the District Assemblies through the District Coordinating Director (Ahwoi, 2010).

In the district assemblies, the greatest concern is how to ensure the accountability of the DCE because of the enormous powers he wields as the most powerful appointee of the central government. The concern is how to ensure the accountability of the DCE who owes his allegiance first and foremost to the President and remains the most powerful officer in the DA. According to Ayee (1994), the DCE is the head the Executive Committee (EXECO). The DCE exercises executive and coordinating responsibilities. However, the appointment of the DCE has made it difficult for proper checks to be mounted on him in case of any abuse as the PM is not a member of the EXECO of the assembly.

Further institutional mechanisms meant to ensure accountability can be seen in the following. Section 31 of the Civil Service Act does not only call for the responsibility of the DCE in ensuring that the conditions of the local people are improved, it also enjoins the DCE to inter alia:

- see to the implementation of the policies of the District Assemblies;
- ensure effective budgeting;
- observe financial, stores and budgeting rules and guidelines;
- initiate, execute, monitor and evaluate development projects and programmes, among others (Ayee, 2007).

2.12 District Assembly Tender Boards

Accountability is about functioning institutions that regulate the conduct of officials in management positions. In the MMDAs of Ghana, the legal framework has been designed to serve as antidotes to corruption in the District Assemblies. The Local Government Act 1993, Act 462 established District Assembly Tender Boards (L.I 1606) in 1995 and the Public Procurement

Act (Act 663) exist to guide the award of contracts in the DAs by ensuring that procedures are followed and sound judgment is exercised in making procurement decisions.

The District Tender Advisory Board is composed of DA members and selected technical personnel of the assembly and the DCE as the chairman with the responsibility for oversight over the award of contracts and procurement. The composition of the Tender Boards promotes accountability to the extent that the members are supposed to serve as checks on one another. Members are also required to declare their assets and contracts and procurement bids advertised in the media, public notice boards of the District Assembly, major towns of the district and in all beneficiary towns of the projects in order to give enough publicity to the intended tender process.

The mechanisms for accountability are further seen in the following responsibilities of the District Tender Board which is tasked to:

1. advise the Awards of contracts in the district;
2. approve contracts given by Government which does not exceed the stipulated limit determined by the minister;
3. prepare and update procurement and contract estimates;
4. prepare and specify bidding documents for goods and equipment contracts;
5. arrange for advising contract opportunities;
6. prepare procurement and other documents for review by funding agencies and finalizing contract to be signed with suppliers and consultants;
7. open tender bids in the full glare of the public at the stipulated time and location in the bid and under the auspices of the chairman (DCE) of the Tender Board.

2.13 Financial Accountability in the District Assemblies

To Ahwoi (2010), resources of the local authorities have never been enough for the development needs of the local areas. Indeed, the failure of many of the past attempts to decentralize the administration of this country is attributed in part, to the lack of adequate resources and corruption. Provision for funding Ghana's decentralisation programme is intended to give financial autonomy to the local units. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the Act 462 of the Local Government Act mandate the District Assemblies with the authority to mobilize resources for the overall development of the district.

Accountability of the district assemblies in the application of resources is two prone. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana mandates the Auditor-General in Articles 187 and 253, and further in Section 121 (1) of the Local Government Act (Act 462), to audit the accounts of the MMDAs and report back to Parliament on the management and utilization of all statutory funds by the (MMDAs). The district assemblies are under the supervision of the Regional Coordination Councils (RCCs) to which they are tasked to submit their prepared district budgets in accordance with Section 10 (3) (9) (ii) of the Act 462 (Ahwoi, 2010).

It is evident from the above that the concern is to secure accountability for financial resources at the local level within properly designed rules and regulations, because, to Jabbra and Dwivedi (1994), public service accountability involves the methods by which a public agency or a public official fulfils its duties and obligations, and the process by which that agency or the public official is required to account for such actions.

To ensure accountability and transparency in the application of resources, the following rules and regulations have been instituted to guide the actions of the all the local government officials. The

audits by the Auditor-General is guided by Section 13 of the Audit Service Act, 2000 (Act 584); the Financial Administration Act (FAA), 2003 (Act 654); the Financial Administration Regulation (FAR), 2004 (LI 1802); the Financial Memoranda for District Assemblies (FM); the Public Procurement Act (PPA), 2003 (Act 663); Guidelines on the utilization of the District Assemblies' Common Fund; the HIPC Fund and the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) which constitute the host of applicable laws, regulations and guidelines for spending revenues and funds by the district assembly officials and seek to ensure that:

- i. the accounts of the MMDAs are kept properly;
- ii. all public monies collected have been fully accounted for and rules, regulations and procedures are followed;
- iii. monies have been expended for the purposes for which they were appropriated and expenditures made as authorized;
- iv. essential records are maintained and the rules and procedures applied are sufficient to safeguard and control the Assemblies' assets;
- v. programmes and activities of the Assemblies have been undertaken with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the resources utilized and results achieved (Report of the Auditor General on MMDAs, 2010).

All the above internal mechanisms are aimed at ensuring accountability in the application of revenues and statutory funds of the MMDAs. To Schedler and Diamond (1999), the accountability and the judicious use of these resources would depend on the ability of the central government to enforce, monitor, and the compliance of these rules. A there is well developed legal framework for the MMDAs to ensure a proper management of funds in order to ensure accountability at district levels in Ghana as table 2 illustrates.

Table 2: Some Violations of Revenue Laws in the MMDAs

Type of Violations	Governing laws	Officers in control of Revenue	Supervisory Responsibility	Likely causes of violation & effect.
Misappropriation of Revenue	Section 1 & 2 of Part VIII of Financial Memoranda of MMDAs	Revenue Collectors and Revenue Supervisors and District Finance Officers (DFOs) and Coordinating Directors (DCDs)	DFOs, DCDs and FASCs	Ineffective supervision
Unrecovered loans/advances/ imprest and rents	Part I Section 2 (b), Part IX Section 39 & Part VIII Section 43 of the Financial & Memoranda.	F & A Sub-Committees of the Assemblies	Management of the Assemblies	Lack of proper monitoring by the F&A Sub-Committees
Procurement and Contract irregularities	The Public Procurement Act (PPA), 2003 (Act 663)	District Chief Executives, Financial Officers, and Coordinating Directors.	DPOs, DCEs, DCDs and the Accountants	Non-compliance with the Public Procurement Act, 2003: contract overpayment for work done, prepaid for undelivered supplies/services etc

Source: Field data, 2013

Together, these rules and regulations are to guide the application of financial resources in the MMDAs in order to promote financial accountability. It remains to be seen whether the appointment of the DCE and the central government control over him have any effects on these internal regulations. This is because true accountability is secured through direct elections through which officials can be rejected and replaced by preferred alternatives. Other scholars have posited that the lackadaisical posture most MMDAs have shown towards the establishment

of Audit Report Implementation Committee has posed a lot of challenge to financial accountability at the local level despite these regulations (Auditor-General report, 2010).

2.14 Conclusion

Local governance in Ghana has received varied degree of attention since the colonial era with many successes chalked in respect of institutional development aimed at promoting accountability because of the realization that, local government is about the ability of local representatives to make decisions in the interest of the people they represent. Accountability in Ghana's Fourth Republic has been secured mostly through elections, which has remained the only mode of punishing capricious elected leaders.

In the MMDAs, however, apart from the 70% of members who are elected by universal adult suffrage, the remaining 30% per cent and the DCE are appointed by the President with the rationale of getting into the MMDAs, people with professional and technical expertise. This arrangement has not only denied the local people the opportunity to subject the M/DCE to a popular control through direct elections, but these appointments have rather been done based on political considerations instead of the principles above (Ahwoi, 2010). Indeed according to Dwiveldi (1994), accountability to constituencies which is a common feature of all democratic systems is crucial in securing official accountability. But, the appointment of DCEs, it is believed, has contributed to the lack of political will needed to combat accountability as these representatives are often the loyalists of the ruling party who dominate most local institutions such as the Executive Committee.

This arrangement is reminiscent of the post independent public sector in Ghana when appointments of public officials resulted in lack of accountability and corruption owing to the

fact that people in charge of “essential and scarce resources and award of public contracts felt secure under the protection of those in power. The effect of this arrangement is not far-fetched in the Fourth Republic as several reports of the Auditor-General have revealed a recurring internal control weaknesses and managerial ineffectiveness thereby implicating the DCE in several irregularities in the financial administration of the district assemblies (Auditor-General report, 2009).

A further ramification of the appointment of the M/DCE on the MMDAs is the excessive central government control of the MMDAs to satisfy political party cohorts and other party supporters to the neglect of pressing collective development issues such as poverty and unemployment. This politicization of the DAs does not only make the M/DCEs a target for political attacks and the reason for frequent removal of the DCEs, but is also the reasons for frequent changes of staff with the change of government as they are tagged as friends of the former regime.

As a result, the local people do not think the DAs are the legitimate institutions to deal with their problems because of its leaning towards the central government. This has also affected the ability of the DAs to bring on board all local government stakeholders in their policy formulation because of the general apathy on the part of some citizens. Corruption and other issues result from this lack of disinterest in local governance as citizens are often discouraged from attending scrutinizing actions. These issues portend serious implications for accountability which must thoroughly be investigated.

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CHAPTER THREE

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

Based on empirical findings from the field, this chapter analyses, examines, interprets and juxtaposes the findings with instances of lack of accountability in the district assemblies. In line with the objectives of the study, the chapter begins with the evaluation of the appointment and its effects on the performance of the DCE. Secondly, the chapter examines the central and local influences on the DCE and the implications for accountability. The chapter further analyses the growing powers of the DCE and their influence on local accountability. Another priority of this chapter is the assessment of the effects of political control over the DCE on mechanisms for accountability in the DA. The chapter finally examines the overall effects of the appointed DCE on accountability to the local people.

3.2 Hypothesis

The hypothesis which underlies this study is: central control of the DCE has undermined accountability in the District Assemblies.

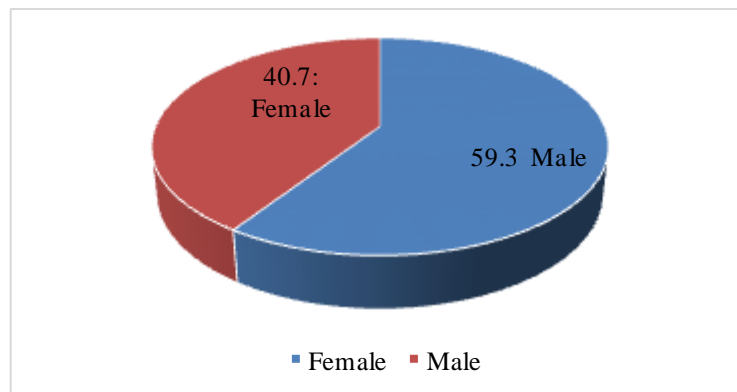
3.3 The Demography of the Sample Population

A total of ninety-two questionnaires were administered out of a possible hundred questionnaires. The study relied on different categories of people, namely the staff and locals of the Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly (LEKMA). The demography included gender, age and educational qualification.

3.3.1 Gender Distribution

The sample was fairly distributed between males and females, 59.3 and 40.7 per cent respectively. Males dominate the work force and the population at the Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly. This is evidently clear from the figure below.

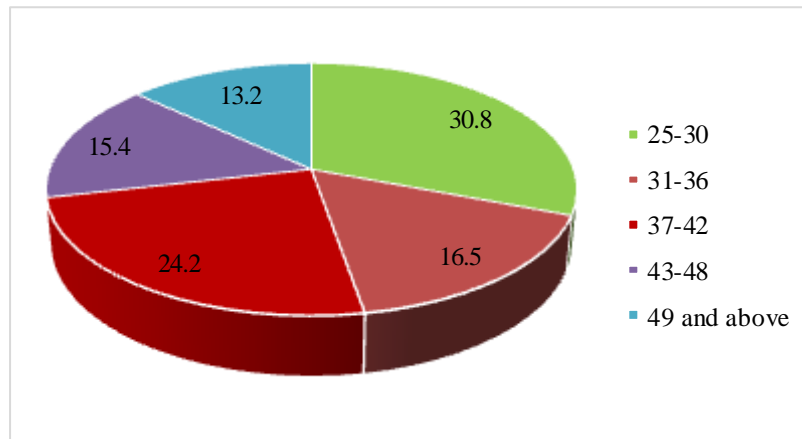
Figure 1: Gender Distribution



Source: Field data, 2013

3.3.2 Age Distribution

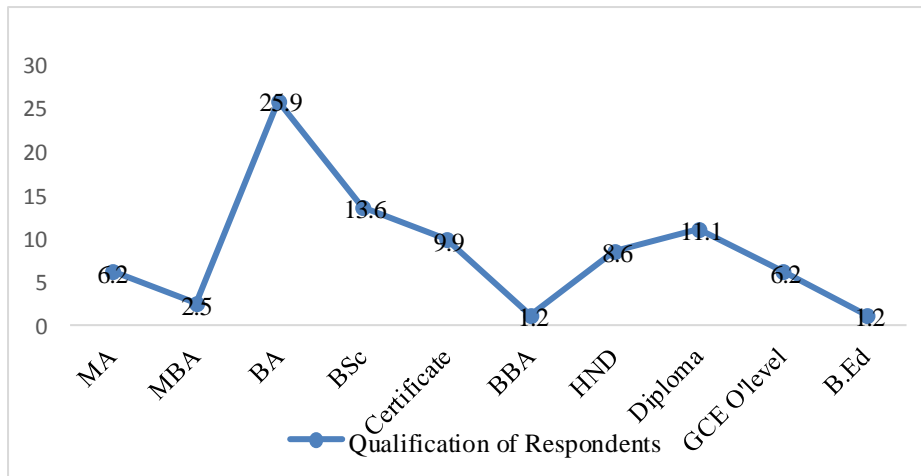
The age of the sample population is fairly distributed. 30.8% of the respondents fell into the age brackets of 25-30 years while 24.2% of the population were within 37-42 years. Another segment, 31-36 years constituted 16.5 per cent of the total sample. Other age ranges follow closely. It is evident that most of the staff and non-staff of the municipality are young from the figure below.

Figure 2: Age distribution of Respondent

Source: Field data, 2013

3.3.3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

Most respondents (25.9%) have had university education with a Bachelor of Arts degree whereas 13.6% have a Bachelor of Science degree. Others representing 11.1% have obtained a diploma. A small section has had the opportunity to finish their secondary education whilst some others have acquired a master's degree. The high educational level of the respondents was very important to the study because, most of the issues that revolve around the DCE are reported in the newspapers and therefore one's ability to read and understand is critical in getting this information.

Figure 3: Qualification of Respondents

Source: Field data, 2013

3.4 The Appointment of the DCE

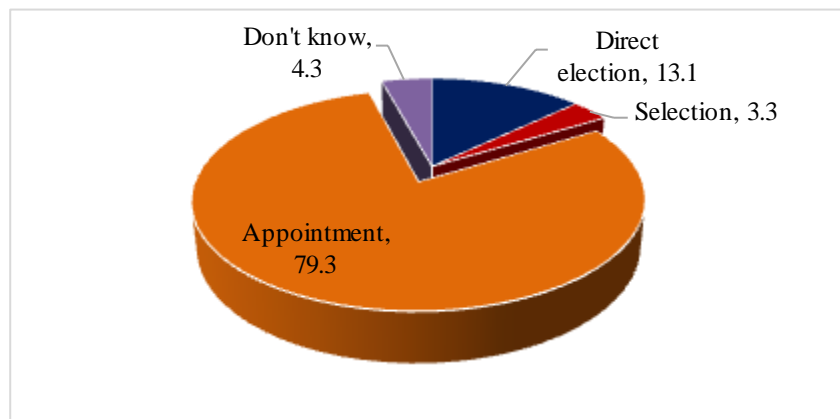
Whether directly elected by the people or appointed by central government, local government officials are responsible for local development. A cardinal objective of this section, therefore, was to test the respondents' knowledge of the appointment process of the DCE, to evaluate the appointment of the DCE and the implications of this practice on local accountability. This section therefore, answers the research questions Q1 to Q7 which sought to ascertain empirically, whether or not the local people are abreast with the nomination and the appointment processes, the key stakeholders involved, the criteria used and the level of participation of the local people at various stages of the process. Varied opinions were solicited.

Evidence gathered from the field indicated that 79.3% of respondents including the staff of the Ledzokuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly knew that the President had the sole prerogative to appoint DCEs. The overwhelming 79.3% was a demonstration of their knowledge of the

constitutional provision of Article 243 (1) of the 1992 Republic Constitution of Ghana which enjoins the President to appoint the DCE for every district in Ghana.

Other respondents (13.1%) gave a contrary view as they maintained that the appointment of DCEs was done through direct elections while some others indicated selection as the process through which the DCE ascended to his office. Interestingly, some respondents did not know how DCEs ascended their current position.

Figure 4: Means by which DCEs ascend to current position



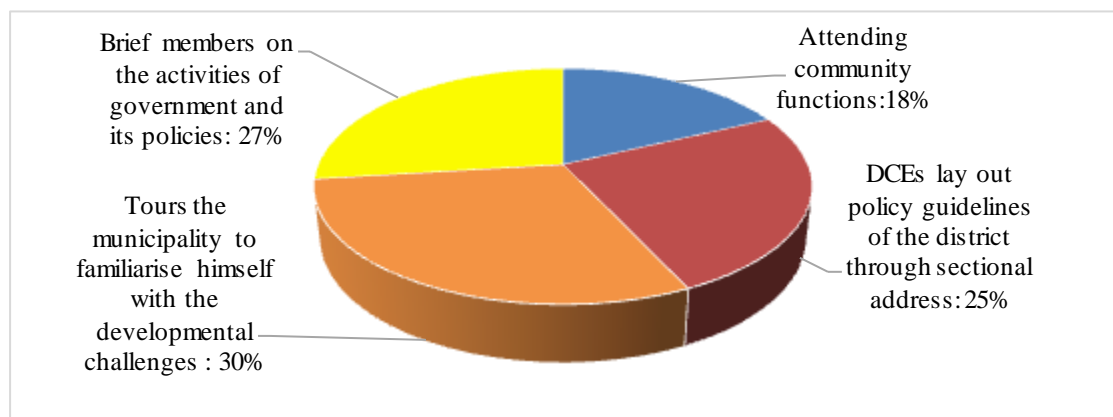
Source: Field data, 2013

3.4.1 Activities of DCEs

DCEs have remained loyal to the ruling party and the Central Government in an arena where partisan politics is prohibited. In line with the rationale for this study, we intended to investigate the effects of the appointed DCE on his constitutionally mandated functions at the local level which include presiding at meeting of the Executive Committee of the Assembly, responsibility for the day-to-day performance of the executive and administrative functions of the District Assembly as well as the chief representative of the Central Government in the district. Respondents were asked about the activities or the functions of DCEs.

From the study, varied opinions were sampled. 30% majority of respondents indicated that the DCE tours the municipality to familiarise himself with the developmental challenges while 27% of the respondents indicated that DCEs brief members on the activities of government and its policies. Another 25% indicated that DCEs lay out the policy guideline of the district through the Sectional Address while another 18% mentioned that DCEs are always attending functions and neglecting their core mandates. It is obvious that the activities of DCEs go beyond just attending functions and briefing the people on the activities of government and its policies from the figure below.

Figure 5: Activities of DCEs



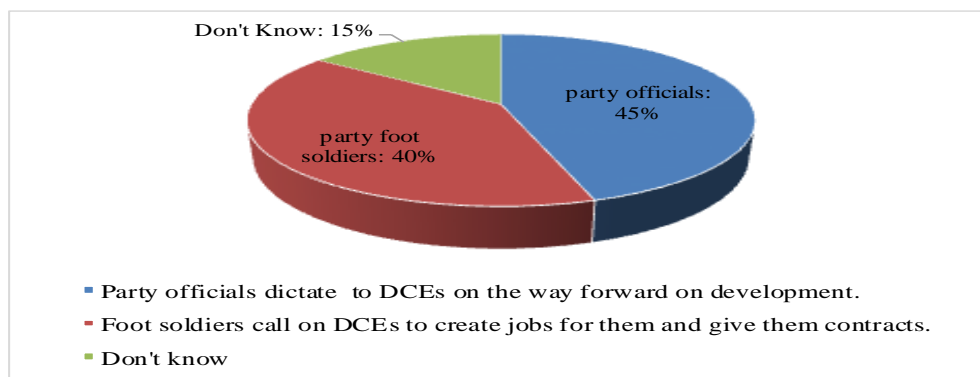
Source: Field data, 2013

3.4.2 National and Local Political Influences on the DCE

In line with the objectives of the study, it is important to establish how the DCE is able fashion out policies and programmes in response to local needs and how the local people are able to demand answers from the DCEs. This section looks at some of the national and the local influences on the DCE and how these influences affect accountability at the district level.

The above is particularly important because, while forty-seven percent (47.3%) of respondents indicated that the DCE did not provide reliable information on issues relating to the municipality, 45% of the respondents stated that party officials have a significant influence on the DCE. Forty per cent (40%) also answered that party foot soldiers (supporters) would often call on the DCE to serve their interests such as provision of jobs and award of contracts. It is evident that party officials and party supporters have now become a force to reckon with at the local level. This is captured in the figure below.

Figure 6: Political Influences on the DCE at the Local Level



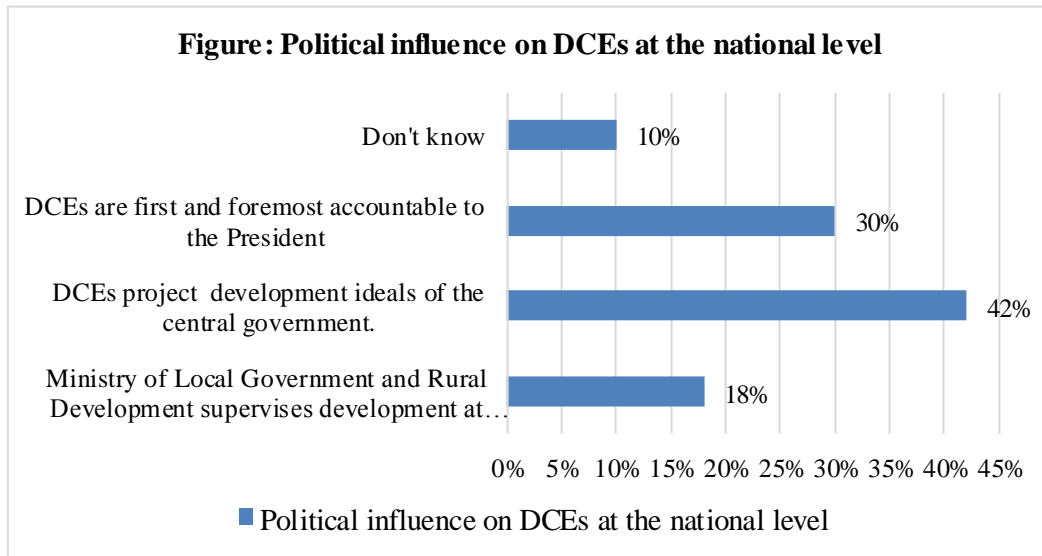
Source: Field data, 2013

The concern of this work is whether the non-elected DCE can be accountable to the local people. To ascertain the extent of the bond between the DCE and the President, we further sought to ascertain if DCEs campaign for the re-election bid of the President. Varied opinions were solicited. An overwhelming majority of 67.8% of respondents answered 'yes' thus, DCEs would always campaign for the election of the President for them to also enjoy a longer stay in office as DCEs. Less than twenty percent of the respondents stated that DCEs did not campaign for the election of the president whereas a few respondents (12.2%) indicated that they did not know whether DCEs campaign or not for the election of the president. From the study, it is evident that

there is the notion that both the president and DCEs complement each other in ensuring their stay in office. This is presented in the pie chart below.

In a follow-up question, respondents were asked about the likely effect of DCEs' campaigns for the President. Respondents gave varying answers. More than half of respondents (57.4%) mentioned that it would lead to the politicization of the District Assembly which has people with different political affiliations. Some sections of the district would witness development at the expense of others. Some of the respondents (25%) indicated that it would lead to disinterest by the opposition to participate in local decision making processes. Decision making, then, would be in the hands of a few people. Others indicated that it would also lead to a lack of consensus on development issues which should be an all-encompassing one. The effect of DCEs' campaigns for the President would be defeating the purpose of local governance and the true meaning of decentralization. This is represented in the figure below.

It is heart-warming to know the people's recognition of the fact that the appointment of DCEs by the President is enough political influence on them. From the study, majority of respondents (42%) indicated that DCEs project the development agenda of the central government as a result of party's campaign message. Other respondents (30%) noted that there was some political influence on DCEs because they were first and foremost accountable to the president before the local citizens. A section of respondents (18%) contended that the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development supervised development projects whereas some few respondents (10%) did not know about any political influence on DCEs at the national level. This is represented in the figure below.

Figure 7: Central Level Influences on the DCE

Source: Field data, 2013

Situating this finding within the context of what pertains in most district assemblies in Ghana, we find that these variables have an enormous impact on the DCE and his functions. Politicization of the DAs (57.4%), especially, has serious implications for the social capital needed for sustainable development. The direct accountability of the DCE to the President brings the influence of the central government and the political party to bear on the performance of the DCE. The people's power to demand accountability from the DCE is directed at the ruling party of which the President is the leader. Failure to act on complaints against the DCE would have dire political consequences for the party. When DCEs fail to meet the demands of the party youth, they are removed from office through all resort of unconventional means.

This is worrying because the decentralisation process on the African Continent was earlier thwarted among other things by political instability which resulted in the frequent abandonment of important policies meant for local development. The problems of the decentralisation program

may not be over even in the Fourth Republic which is characterized by peaceful transfer of power from one democratic government to another, because, in the views of Ahwoi (2010), even peaceful change of government results in the reversal of fundamental modifications of local government structures, systems and programmes. Certainly, the frequent removal of DCEs has adverse effects of local development.

As is the case, most DCEs hardly end the four-year term of office as they are removed from office by the President even though Article 243 (3) states that “the office of District Chief Executive shall become vacant if (a) a vote of no confidence, supported by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the District Assembly is passed against him; or (b) he is removed from office by the President, or he resigns or dies (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

LEKMA has a youthful population. From the sample, about 71.5 % of the respondents are below 43 years. 59.3% are men while 40.7 % are women. The youth are considered the bedrock of Ghana’s democracy and their role in local development cannot be overemphasized. In the recognition of this, the former President Rawlings in an address to party youth in Ho, on March 20, 2010, did not only cast aspersions on the DCEs in the Mills’ administration by describing them as useless, incompetent people who did not know how to do their work and therefore called on President Mills to sack those DCEs, but he also called on the youth to be bold and play a critical role in getting the right caliber of DCEs for their assemblies because the government was in power because of the electorate (GNA, 2010).

This role of the youth constitutes important checks on the DCE in the absence of elections as mechanisms for popular control of DCEs in promoting accountability. The extent to which the local people can control the DCE lies in the fact that he is appointed by the President who in tend

is directly accountable to the people. Often, however, this control has manifested in rancour and threats of blackmail and leads to capricious removal of DCEs from office by the President to satisfy political ends with serious effects on the working environment of the DCE.

Right from his nomination, the DCE is opposed by different stakeholders at the district for various reasons, resulting in the phenomenon of ‘political party foot soldiers who use sporadic attacks, vandalism, ceaseless protests, and abductions of DCEs. These acts of political lawlessness, the destruction of billboards with the pictures of the President constitute a threat to human security and local development as the MMDAs have become very hostile for development under the stewardship of the DCE. Often, not even the condemnation from top hierarchy of the ruling party is able to calm this youth (GTV, 2010).

In April and May, 1997, under the regime of the Rawlings-led-National Democratic Congress (NDC), some twenty-two (22) MMDCEs were fired outright, four (4) of them resigned, two reassigned and three (3) of them reshuffled in what was christened “Monday Evening Massacre” of District Chief Executives (Local Government Information Digest, 1997).

President John Agyekum relieved 13 M/DCEs of their positions in the second term of his administration. They were Mr. Abdul-Rahman Gumah of Bawku Municipality, Mr. Moses Appiah Abaare of Bawku West District and Sabastien Tibil Bisnab of Talensi-Nabdam for Upper East Region; Mr. Ismail Beliwie Madah of Sissala West and Mr. Adams Mahama Issahaku of Wa East District for Upper West Region; Madam Elizabeth Pigit Poyari of Bunkprugu-Yunyo, Alhaji Yakubu of Zabzugu-Tatale and Madam Elizabeth Forgor Salamatu of Bole District for the Northern Region; Bright Addai Munikum of Bosomtwi-Atwima-Kwanwoma, Mr. Kwame Asamoah Boateng of Amansie Central; Dr Gyamfi-Feteng of Asante-Akyem South for the

Ashanti Region; Madam Cynthia Titiriky-Danso of the Sene District of the Brong-Ahafo Region and Mr. Kofi Mensah Demitia of the Krachi West District of the Volta Region (GNA, 2007).

This came after he earlier in 2003, dismissed three District Chief Executives. They were Mr Ketiboa Blay, Jomoro District in the Western Region; Mr Kofi Wilson, Mfatsiman District in the Central Region and Mr Sam Baidu Kelele, in the Jasikan District in the Volta Region and asked their respective Regional Ministers to assume temporary responsibilities until new DCEs were appointed (GNA, 2003).

President Mills in a similar fashion, dismissed 13 Municipal and District Chief Executives across the country in a day in the Ashanti, Central, Eastern and Brong Ahafo regions. Kwadwo Addae (Sekyere East), Victor Amponsah (Offinso South Municipal), Jacob Kofi Dankwah (Sekyere Afram Plains), and Mohammed Boakye Agyemang (Ejisu Juabeng Municipal), all in the Ashanti Region. Mr. Felix Obeng-Forson (Agona West Municipal) and John Oremus Arko (Agona East), in the Central Region. Fleance Danso (Asunafo South) and Dominic Yaw Owusu-Ankomah (Tano North) in the Brong Ahafo region also lost their jobs. Napoleon Amoako Asiamah (Birim North), Godfred Osei Bonsu Twum (Akuapem South), Seth Otchere (West Akim Municipal), Charles Evans Apraku (Kwahu North), and George Agyemang Dua (Kwaebibirem) all in the Eastern region were dismissed (GNA, 2003).

It is obvious from the above cases that the presidential nomination and appointment of DCEs have curtailed the power of the people to directly demand accountability from the DCE through elections. The absence of elections as a means for recruiting M/DCEs does not only limit the popular sovereignty of the local people, but it also denies the conferment of legitimacy and the consent of the people on the MMDAs in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

3.4.3 Reasons for Dismissals of DCEs

Even though the official explanation for the revocation of the appointment of the DCEs has not been forth-coming, the Upper West representative to the Council of State recently hinted that some of the DCEs under the Mills' Administration had been removed for neglecting and showing insensitivity to the concerns of the party youth who played various roles in getting the party into power (Daily Graphic, 2011). This is very revealing.

Mr. Adjei Darko, a former Minister of Local Government under the Kufuor regime, in a response to why four (4) DCEs were sacked from office in 2003, cited among other things, the embezzlement of funds by the M/DCEs who continued to use "their offices to amass wealth" with the potential to cause disaffection for of the ruling government (Daily Guide, 2011). When some members of the New Patriotic party (NPP) held separate demonstrations at Bomma and Yamfo in the Tano North District of the Brong Ahafo Region in 2005 against the nomination and confirmation of Mr. Nicholas Anane-Agyei as the DCE, they (the people) claimed he had been unfair in the distribution of development projects in the district during his first four-year term in office. They therefore warned the President of the disintegration of the ruling party if he did not listen to them (Daily Graphic, 2003).

In the Sekyere East District Assembly for instance, so-called party foot soldiers of the ruling NDC, held the DCE (Mr. Kwadwo Addai) and the Ashanti Regional Minister, (Mr. Kofi Opoku Manu) hostage because "the DCE had side-lined them in the execution of development projects" in the area and therefore, vowed to defect to another political party if the appointing authority failed to sack the DCE (The Daily Graphic, 2005).

It is obvious that the issues that underlie the removals have been politicized and based on the protection of the narrow political interest of the ruling party rather than the general interest of the local people. The central government only avoids any liability of the DCE on the political fortunes of the ruling party by removing the DCE in order to satisfy the demands of the local people. The DCE who is directly accountable to the President must face the wrath of the party people as any move to disregard their concerns could result in the disintegration of the ruling party. But, this knee-jerk reaction to dealing with the non-performing DCE has failed to promote accountability, and has cost implications for the DAs.

3.4.4 Cost of Removing DCEs

In this section, we attempt to explore the effects of the high attrition rate of the DCEs since most DCEs hardly complete the four-year term in Ghana. This level of volatility in the district assemblies results from the frequent removal of the DCEs by the President at the instigation of the ruling party “foot soldiers” because there is no other means of securing accountability of the DCE.

The DCE, apart from presiding at meetings of the Executive Committee of the Assembly, is responsible for the day-to-day performance of the executive and administrative functions of the District Assembly as well as the supervision of the departments of the Assembly. He is also the chief representative of the Central Government in the district (The New Crusading Guide, 2010). But what are the implications of the rate at which DCEs are removed and replaced at the district assemblies on the functions of the DCE?

According to Armstrong, the frequent change and replacement of the human resource of an organization is termed “labour turnover”. To him labour turnover illustrates the turbulence

within an organization which is evident in attrition rate and leads to a general destabilization of the environment as the recruitment, induction and training costs go up (Armstrong, 2006).

The evidence on the ground reveals that it takes too long a time to find a replacement for the dismissed DCEs with a major implication for local development. Recently in Tamale, where sixteen candidates were vetted by the Northern Regional Co-ordinating Council, under the chairmanship of the Regional Minister, Mr. Moses Bukari Mabengba, they were the replacements for Mr Walvice Hudu Adama Mahama for Yendi Municipality, Mr. Abdulai Sandow for Karaga, Hajia Meiliga Mavis Bawa for Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo and Sawla-Tuna-Kalba dismissed by the President John Evans Atta Mills six months earlier, even though the regional minister, Mr Mabengba acted in their stead.

It is obvious that the dismissal of DCEs stalls local development. A further ramification for the removal of DCEs is the hesitation on the part of the DCEs to take measures that are far reaching and radical in solving long-term problems of the Districts.

The implications are in two folds. There is the opportunity cost of time spent by the stakeholders in introducing new starters; direct cost of training in the necessary skills; loss of the input from those leaving before they are replaced in terms of contribution, and loss arising from reduced input from new starters until they are fully trained.

Further implication for this state of affairs is the increased level of corruption at the districts because the DCEs feel insecure. According to Ahwoi, the office of the District Chief Executive has become the most corrupt because it is the most insecure political position in the country. To him, the job insecurity which is evident in the frequent removal of the DCEs forces the DCEs to “grab as much and as quickly as possible when they assume office since they can be removed on

the basis of rumour or just because they have fallen out of favour with party executives (Public Agenda, 2009).

While the removal of DCEs has served as a check on their powers, there is enough evidence that some DCEs act with impunity. From the study, majority of respondents (30%) indicated that some DCEs, as a result of their appointment by the president and the non-existence or weak punitive measures in place, do not factor the views of the local people in their decisions nor do they account to them. As the chairman of the District Tender Committee, they award contracts to party folks without the consent of other members on the Committee. A section of respondents (25%) maintained that some DCEs have distributed the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) without the management body whereas few respondents indicated that they did not know of any growing powers of DCEs.

It is clear that because of the appointment of party members as DCEs and the fear of washing the party's dirty linen in public, some DCEs act as if decision making lies within their purview only. This is captured in the table 4 below.

Table 3: How impunity of the DCE Manifests

<i>Response</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Because of their appointment by the president and the non-existence of punitive measures, they do not take the views of the local people</i>	30%
<i>DCEs distribute funding from the Poverty Alleviation Fund without the management body</i>	25%
<i>Don't know</i>	15%
<i>As the chairman of the District Tender Committee, they award contracts to party folks without involving any of the committee members</i>	30%
<i>Total</i>	100%

Source: Field data, 2013

The responses from LEKMA support the available data that the appointment of the DCE who wields enormous powers contributes to the problem of waste and corruption under his stewardship in a resource constrained country. Waste and corruption have led to the current debate to increase these resources. But one wonders if there is any justification for this call when a cursory look at the financial performance of the district assemblies reveals a fragrant disregard for the rules and regulations that have been laid down to promote transparency and accountability in the application of these resources, leading to a wanton dissipation of available financial resources under the watch or involvement of the DCEs (Auditor-General, 2007).

In a direct response to safeguarding financial resources at the local level, “current monitoring by the central government of the district assemblies is largely focused on expenditure and expenditure controls (Local Government Information Digest, 1997). To achieve this end, rules and regulations have served as the main instruments which make the DCEs liable for their action as well as the action and inactions of other actors in the assembly.

The central government surveillance over the district assemblies is very important in ensuring accountability for local development and particularly fiscal decentralisation which has been a major setback to the on-going decentralisation process. This is also critical in checking the power base of the DCE.

Two important cases best demonstrate the influence of Central Government over public officials. The sacking and the subsequent imprisonment of the sports Minister, (Malam Issa) in 2001 because he had failed to report the loss of \$46,000 meant for paying the winning bonuses of the Black Stars and also because the Sports Minister had reneged on his own undertaking earlier to resign over the issue (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008).

The second was the laudable show of control by the Minister of Water Resources, and Works and Housing for interdicting four officials of the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and Ghana Urban Water Limited (GUWL) over the importation of expired aluminium sulphate. This was to facilitate further investigation into the matter by the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) to establish the level of culpability of the officials in question. According to Bureau of Internal Affairs (BIA, an anti-corruption organization and information gathering centre), “this is what all well-meaning Ghanaians expect from all government appointees and you (Alhaji Dauda) have set the pace for such selfless dedication. It is indeed a laudable effort at protecting lives, property and the integrity of the government (Daily Graphic, 2013).

These examples very important in ensuring accountability for local resources because lack of accountability in public administration has been a major issue in Ghana’s Fourth Republic. Indeed, the first government under the Fourth Republic, the NDC government frequently lamented in the early 1990s about the misappropriation and embezzlement of public funds which

it saw as a “national disgrace. There is recognition that, this has been due to lack of adherence to internal rules and regulations, auditing and monitoring by central government institutions. The central government has solved the problem of inadequate resources for local development by ceding revenue sources to the District Assemblies, but there is the need to confront the lack of compliance with the internal rules which is a threat to financial resources because of its potential to engender corruption and hamper local development as was the case in the 1990s (Local Government Information Digest, 1997).

The DCE is not only bonded with the central government or the ruling party whose bidding he does in order to remain in the good books of the President and feels an ‘obligation to the ruling party to the disadvantage of the opposition, but often compelled to safeguard the interest of the ruling party at the expense of the general interest of the local area he serves. Failure to succeed in this endeavour leads to his removal from office by the President who is the Head of the ruling party in Ghana. As a result, the actions of most DCEs in recent times, according, Gyimah-Boadi (2008), demonstrate a clear case of unchecked powers which pose serious problems for democratic consolidation in Ghana (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008).

There is clearly a general lack of enforcement of mechanisms for accountability and central government oversight over the DCE who has oversight over the affairs of the DAs as the Chairman of the Executive Committee under Article 251 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana to approve major expenditures and perform the executive and coordinating functions of the District Assembly and as the chairman of the District Assembly Tender Board with responsibility for the award of all contracts and procurement matters under the Local Government Act 2003, Act 462 established under L.I 1606 in 1995 under Act 663 (Ahwoi, 2010).

The potential of financial accountability in eliminating corruption lies in what Uhr (1993), believes to be its ability to trace and verify public expenditure in order to control misappropriation of public funds which is critical in the state's ability to deliver on public services. This is because when the institutions of accountability fail to achieve their ends, it affects the ability of the state to deliver on its part of the bargain to provide services to citizens. What have been some of the measures adopted by the various institutions in confronting corruption in the MMDAs?

What many consider a challenge to local accountability is the central control of resources which is responsible for the over reliance of the decentralized local governments on the central government. This state of affairs, coupled with the appointment of the DCE by the central government is feared to further deny the local people, the ability to subject the DCE and other local government actors to measures of accountability.

Though the central control of the DCEs has reflected in their removal from office by the ruling governments in the Fourth Republic as a measure to curtail corruption, it is because corruption is seen as a threat to the political fortunes of the ruling party as evidenced in the statement of Mr. Adjei Darko, a former Minister of Local Government in a response to why four (4) DCEs were sacked from office in 2003. The embezzlement of funds by the M/DCEs who continued to use "their offices to amass wealth" is seen as a potential to cause disaffection for the ruling government. In this vein, District Chief Executives are direct appointees of the President at the local level, and whatever they justifiably or otherwise do is attributed to the national political leadership (Daily Graphic, 2003).

To the extent that, in the few instances that Presidents have revoked the appointment of DCEs from office as part of the measures to curb the canker of corruption, no reason for the dismissals is offered is not just an affront to good governance but gives a lot of credence to this assertion because offering a reason for their dismissals would put the ruling party in the spotlight as corrupt. However, access to this vital information as to why the M/DCE is removed from office would promote transparency which is a benchmark for democratic governance and a good indicator of accountability. When the presidency denies the local citizens who are important stakeholders in the decentralization policy this vital information, it smacks of lack of openness which denies them the right to know if the M/DCE has broken the social contract to render efficient, effective and accountable local development.

The problem of lack of accountability by the DCE has informed the debate to make the position elective as the election of the district political heads will enhance the governance system at the local level and ensure the active participation of the people in the process. Potential concerns for the status quo has been due to the lack of proper oversight which results in blatant disregard for mechanisms meant to promote accountability with implication for the ability of the people to demand from the locally appointed or elected officials, morally defensible actions (Auditor-General, 2008).

The 30% of the response indicated that because of their appointment by the President and the non-existence of punitive measures, they do not take the views of the local people. This has led to a blatant disregard for rules and regulations governing local affairs. The DCE for Hohoe, Mr James Dogbe, recently named a public edifice (“James Dogbe Shopping Center”) after himself as if it was his private property (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008). The question is why the DCE could be that audacious in taking this action without due regard to the General Assembly? This sort of

capricious management of the local affairs has been a source of concern because it results in misapplication of resources at the local level.

3.4.5 Growing Powers of the DCE on District Level Accountability

The MMDAs are responsible for local development. What are some of the effects of the growing powers of the DCE on local development? This section looks at the growing powers of the DCE within the context of contract and procurement management in the Assemblies because the DCE is the Chairman of the District Assembly Tender Board, a body that oversees contract and procurement issues of the MMDAs. We sought to explore the reasons why the Auditor-General has repeatedly recommended the prosecution and reprimand of the DCE, yet to date, no single DCE has been prosecuted save their removals. This situation has resulted in the impunity and the bold manner with which the DCEs have continually disregarded internal rules of the game in the DAs. Thirty per cent (30%) of the respondents indicated that as the chairman of the District Tender Committee, the DCE award contracts to party folks without involving any of the committee members.

Though about 18% of the local population sampled indicated that the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development supervises local development, there are however, a lot of issues with contract and procurement management irregularities in the DAs in spite of the existence of many external mechanisms meant to secure better financial accountability in the MMDAs. As the following cases depict, the Ministry and the central government for that matter have not been effective in controlling the MMDAs or the DCEs, resulting in several instances of financial loss to the State.

The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) recommended to the President in 2000, the termination of the appointment of Nene Osabutey IV, the District Chief Executive (DCE) for Yilo Krobo, for gross mismanagement of the Assembly's finances following the Commission's adverse findings against the DCE following allegations of corruption by the Krobo Youngsters Development Foundations (KYDF) (Daily Graphic). Again, Wenchi District Chief Executive was once summoned by Parliament to explain certain items of expenditure queried by the Auditor-General (GNA, 2001). On the whole, these measures have not been far-reaching enough as the problem still persists.

In a recent report of April 28, 2012, the Audit Service had to indict the West Mamprusi District Assembly in the Northern Region for awarding contracts worth about Gh¢400,000 to contractors who did not possess the requisite requirement to enter the procurement process, as well as for non-preparation and submission of engineer's estimates, among others which could result in high contract values (Local Government Information Digest, 1994).

In July 2006, Contract and procurement issues led to an 'avoidable out-of-court compensation settlement of GH¢35,000.00' in the Offinso South Municipal Assembly which outsourced revenue collection without the approval of the General Assembly (Auditor-General, 2010).

The aggrieved indigenes of Abledu (Odumasi) of Lower Manya Krobo District Assembly, in the Eastern Region made a passionate appeal to President John Evans Atta Mills to order a forensic audit into the activities of the District with particular focus on its Chief Executive, Isaac Agbo-Tetteh for inflating a 'Shed Over Well Project' which could not have cost more than Gh¢1,000.00 but was inflated to a whopping Gh¢6,500.00 after his initial demand of Gh¢7,500 (New Crusading Guide, 2012).

In 2010 for instance, the District Chief Executive of the Tain contravened Part XII, Section 28 of the Financial Memoranda which demands that store items be issued out only after the presentation of a properly authorized requisition, and collected 36 television sets and 24 generators from the store for distribution without providing the relevant requisitions for the items collected and also failed to provide the distribution list of the beneficiary communities to ensure easy verification. The anomaly could lead to theft or diversion of the items (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Though these problems have always caught the attention of the stakeholders, yet, they still persist. The former Vice-President, Alhaji Aliu Maham, in 2001 admonished district chief executives to refrain from personally awarding contracts to their favorites, incompetent contractors and relatives. They should further refrain from using their positions as chairmen of the district tender boards to constitute themselves into a one-man tender board to award contracts (Daily Graphic, 2001). The critical issue is that this problem has the potential to render local institutions redundant and supplanted them with systems of personal rule.

The critical issue is that the DCEs have continued to flout contract and procurement rules and regulations resulting in wanton wastage and misappropriation of revenues. This state of affairs portend serious challenges for local development because of its potential to hamper responsiveness of the district assemblies to local needs and engender citizen apathy in local affairs as the M/DCEs are not prosecuted by the central government. But why has the DCE grown in impunity? The general opinion is that the central government does not seem resolute in its fight against the corrupt district political head. According to the Daily Graphic (2007), the issue with corruption is that the state institutions often fail to deal with it because those whose duty it is often failed to take action even when there is enough evidence and rather cover things

up because they believe that what has been unearthed casts a shadow on their organization or administration.

There are some schools of thought that explain this growing problem. Many authorities on public administration are of the firm belief that DCEs are unaccountable and corrupt because of the tendency over the years to see problems that revolve around them as an intra-party affair which must be solved internally so that it does not amount to washing the dirty linen of the party in public. In this connection, the ruling party often sweeps under the carpet, issues that are considered injurious to the political fortunes of the ruling party. DCEs that are found in blatant violation of internal rules of accountability are often left off the hook after diplomatic and behind the scene advice that, next time they may not get off so lightly (Ayee, 1999).

The appointment of the M/DCEs accounts for lack of accountability which is major problem in decentralisation. To Buah (1980), appointments of public officials tend to breed corruption and a general lack of accountability because these officials feel secure under the protection of those in power resulting in the inflation of contract sums and procurement violations.

It is not surprising that most DCEs have not been prosecuted by the government. This reluctance indicates the complacency of ruling governments in dealing with corruption in Ghana. In March 2003, the Flagbearer of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC), Prof John Atta Mills urged the Kufuor led-government to probe three dismissed DCEs in the spirit of the government's own policy of "zero tolerance for corruption" (Joy News, 2011). His advice was however not taken. They were Mr. Ketiboa Blay of the Jomoro District in the Western Region; Kofi Wilson of the Mfantseman District in the Central Region and Sam Baidu Kelele of the

Jasikan District, in the Volta Region. Latter reports showed they were dismissed on the grounds of acts of corruption.

Rather ironically, in President Mills' own administration exactly eight years later, the dismissed Metropolitan Chief Executive for Sekondi-Takoradi, Kobina Annan Prah, who was among six district and metropolitan chief executives President Mills dismissed had to appeal to the President to stop an intended financial audit into his administration, fearing it would dent his reputation as well as send an indication that he was being "victimized" by the President since the President had not directed any audit into the administration of the other dismissed chief executives (Local Government Information Digest, 1997).

It is evident that, the DCE has not only failed to monitor all decentralized government departments which are answerable to him but he is also the main culprit in the violation of the rules and regulation in the management of local resources in an environment without a mechanism for downward accountability, transparency and participation in the core issues of planning, budgeting and budget execution.

DCEs are said to bypass local institutions, personalize and dominate local affairs with limited checks and balances (Olowu, 1999). The problem is more pronounced in Ghana's MMDAs where direct elections as mechanism for holding the DCE accountable is missing (Public Agenda, 2009). This has caused some level of upbeat about the appointee system. From the foregoing; it is simply difficult to exonerate the DCE from the corruption and the problems that have bedevilled the use of funds and revenues at the local level (Olowu, 2004). The question is what has happened to the district assembly members, the district finance directors or officers,

Presiding Members, Budget Officers who are supposed to provide an effective check on the DCE to ensure accountable local governance?

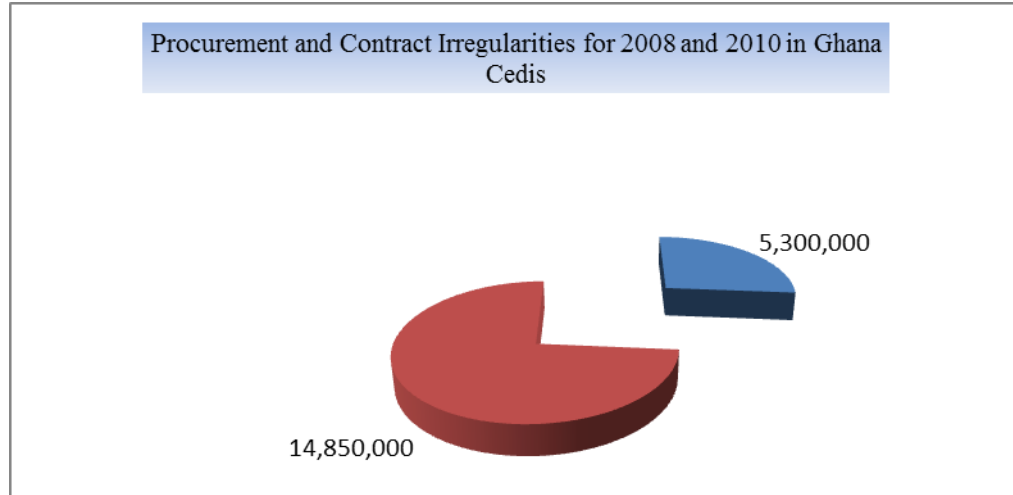
As a result, cash, contract and procurement irregularities have increased from ₵26.87 billion in 2005 to ₵41.42 billion in 2006, a rise of ₵14.55 billion or 54.2%, indicating very weak supervision and lack of control over revenue and blatant failure on the part officers entrusted with the disbursement of funds in MDAs. Cash Irregularities from internally generated revenue for 2005/2006/2007 amounted to GH₵ 8,110,482, GH₵2,782,471.29 for 2008 and GH₵6.3 million from DACF and other Statutory Funds for December 2008.

For 2005 to 2007 financial years, financial values of all irregularities including contract and procurement irregularities were in excess of GH₵10 million and was about 2% of total revenue of (GH₵475,923,590.40) for 112 MMDAs whose accounts had been audited and only excluded revenues collected with over 1,722 revenue collection books which were wrongfully retained by Revenue Collectors and were therefore not accounted for. Procurement and store irregularities was GH₵2.2 million in 2008 in 60 MMDAs and GH₵2.52 million for 2010 (GH₵2,515,149.10) in 88 Assemblies representing about 13% (GH₵32,000) increase over the 2008 figure while the number of MMDAs involved grew from 60 in 2008 to 80 representing a 25% due to non-compliance with procurement and store rules and regulations (Ayee and Amponsah, 2002).

Table 4 Procurement & Contract Irregularities for 2008 & 2010

2008	GH₵ 5.3 million	In 100 MMDAs
2010	GH₵14.85 million	In 88 MMDAs for procurement alone

Source: Field data, 2013

Figure 8: Procurement and Contract Irregularities for 2008 and 2010 in Ghana

Source: Field data, 2013

Procurement and contract irregularities are regulated by the Public Procurement Act (PPA), 2003 (Act 663) which is violated all the time by the DCE in collaboration with the financial officers. The A-G has often called for the reprimand of DCEs by the Ministry of Local Government and the tightening of supervisory controls over the procurement process. This results in over payment for work done, undelivered supplies and services thereby depriving the local people of these essential services (Auditor-General, 2010).

In 2008 and 2010, the total revenues to the assemblies based on their audited accounts was GH¢286,217,437. Out of this figure, there were procurement and contract irregularities of GH¢20.15 million represents 7% for the years. The procurement and Contract Irregularities for 2010 of GH¢ 14,850,000 representing 64% increase over the 2008 figure of GH¢5,300,000. This quantum leap is clearly unacceptable for the MMDAs both for their ability to deliver quality services and because the DCE is the chairman of the District Assembly Tender Board that has

oversight of award of all contract and procurement matters under the Local Government Act 2003, Act 663.

Contract and procurement irregularities which frequently lead to repackaging of contract and loss and funds and abandoned projects which are re-awarded result from overpayment of mobilization, unapproved variation, unauthorized contract, failure to tender, abandoned projects, termination of contracts, contract payments without certificates, contracts not recorded in register, defective bid evaluation, and payment for unexecuted work under the leadership of the DCE as the chairman of the District Assembly Tender Boards which oversees contract and procurement.

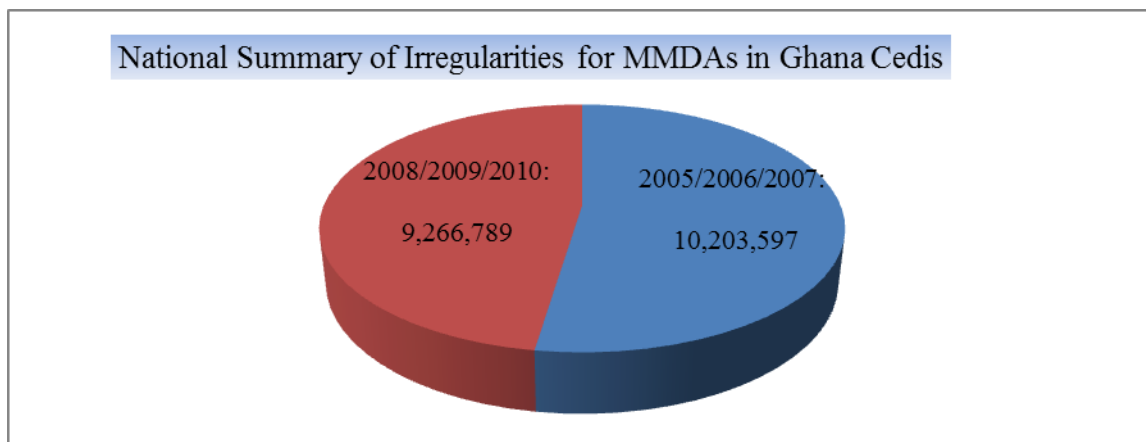
It also implies that local government's budget which provides the legal authorization needed to enable the local government to take actions in a transparent and accountable manner have often been set aside. Punitive actions in the MMDAs have not served as enough deterrent to corrupt DCEs in line with the view of about 30% of the respondent that the appointment by the President and the non-existence of punitive mechanisms and the lack of respect for the views of the local people (30%) has been responsible for impunity in financial management.

In view of the above, we are of the firm belief that there is the need for a proper interrogation of the various forms of other malfeasance in order to ascertain the true culpability of the DCE who has been cited in respect of many of these of violation by the Auditor-General of Ghana.

Table 5: National Summary of Irregularities for MMDAs in Ghana Cedis

Year	Amount	No. of MMDAs
2005/2006/2007	GH¢10,203,597	386
2008/2009/2010	GH¢ 9,266,789	333
Total	19,470,386	719

Source: Field data, 2013

Figure 9: National Summary of Irregularities of MMDAs in Ghana Cedis

Source: Field data, 2013

Even though cumulatively, the 2005/2006/2007 irregularities stood at GH¢10,203,597 in 386 MMDAs representing about 9 % increase over the three succeeding years of 2008 to 2010: GH¢ 2,782,469 in 90 MMDAs, the 2009: GH¢ 2,391,787 in 60 MMDAs and 2010: GH¢ 4,092,533.77 in 183 MMDAs. The figure for 2010 is a quantum leap over the previous year, which is an indication that all stake holders in the fight against corruption in the public sector must rise to the occasion.

All these violations depict a lack of proper supervision of the DCE and the district assemblies in general, resulting in loss of revenue to the district assemblies. This problem calls for a concerted action to ensure financial accountability of the DCE. The state of financial administration at the local level is in a mess and the local levels are at the losing end.

3.4.6 Effects of the Appointed DCE on Equity and Fairness

The work argues in the conceptual framework that political accountability is secured through a sustained pressure on officials to remain focused on meeting the wishes of the people through policies that do not exhibit a deliberate bias in favour of any particular group. The drive to achieve equity at the local levels is informed by the realization that the lack of it has remained a major obstacle to the realization of the noble objectives of the decentralisation programme in Ghana. Ayee & Amponsah (2002) for instance, notes that a real solution to the problem would have to take into account the “ideological orientation of grassroots political actors, which tends to be associated with their party affiliations.

It is a common knowledge that the nature of conflicts between the DCE and the MP is determined by whether the MP is a ruling party MP or an opposition MP. This means that there are partisan political factors that affect relationships at the local level. The argument is that the DCEs are members of the ruling party, some of whom have held positions in the ruling party (Ayee, 1999). This section of the chapter provides answers on the effect of partisan appointment of DCEs which makes them accountable to the central government and to a large extent to the ruling party on equitable distribution of local resources.

Majority of respondents (27.8%) indicated lack of accountability as the main danger inherent in the appointment of the DCE by the President. Other respondents (23.3%) stated that its effect would be unfair distribution of resources for development. Another significant percentage of 18.9% mentioned that it would compel the DCEs to do the bidding of the President to the detriment of others. This is represented in the table below.

Table 6: Effect of Partisan Appointment of DCEs

<i>Response</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Unfair distribution of resources for development</i>	23.3%
<i>Constant attacks from political party foot soldiers</i>	21.1%
<i>DCEs do the bidding of the President</i>	18.9%
<i>Lack of accountability to the local people</i>	27.8%
<i>Don't know</i>	7.8%
<i>Unfair distribution of resources for development, constant attacks from political party foot soldiers and the lack of accountability to the local people</i>	1.1%
<i>Total</i>	100%

Source: Field data, 2013

The revelation that resources are not equitably or fairly distributed at the local level is completely at variant with the Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1992 Constitution which calls for the pursuit of Ghana's decentralisation policy in a non-discriminatory manner for the sake of national cohesion. The decentralized government was envisaged to increase access to public services at the levels to ensure rapid development of the country. However, the overwhelming 23.3 % majority admission that the appointment of the DCE leads to unfair distribution of resources for local development cannot be taken lightly. All efforts must be made

to nib this problem in the bud in order not to skew resource allocation in favour of one group because of strong political differences.

Because of the allegiance of the DCEs to the central President and the ruling party, they are compelled to do the bidding of the president (18.9%). This situation is worsened by the fact that there is a lack of vertical accountability to the local people (27.8%) as he is an appointee of the central government rather than an elected official of the people.

The concern that access may be hampered by ethnic, sectional, clan, family connections or even corruption has been echoed by Ex-President Kufuor in 2007 when he warned DCEs against divisive acts in the District Assemblies as they have the potential to divide their people. The fear for lack of equity in Ghana's decentralisation programme is heightened by the revelation by the APRM (2005) report that "unless one has contact or links in Accra, one will not be attended to. A critical issue that emerged from the Ghana National Programme of Action is to hasten the decentralization process to create opportunities for citizens to participate in local governance in order to promote sustainable local development.

The concern however is Ghana's decentralization is bedevilled with bias, inequalities because the DCE is an appointee of the President who is the leader of the ruling party in a winner takes all environments. The evidence on the ground does suggest that the distribution of resources at the local level is influenced by some political variables. Indeed, a cursory look at the disbursement of the loans at the District assembly level revealed the lack of fairness in local resource distribution as these resources are skewed to favour members of the ruling party.

The disbursement of the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) is expected to promote accountability and transparency as the fund is to be disbursed by a management bank. Prospective beneficiaries

are then required to apply through a committee set up by the Assembly after which approved applications would be sent to the management bank for disbursement. The concern is whether there is equity in the disbursement of the PAF and other resources under the politically appointed DCE?

In March 2007, the Ejura-Sekyedumasi District Assembly released an amount of GH¢ 17,900.00 to the Otuasikan Rural Bank for disbursement as loans under the Poverty alleviation programme. But, instead of the management bank disbursing the funds to the approved beneficiaries, the Assembly rather withdrew the money for disbursement as loans to party supporters because the DCE is a member of the ruling party and an appointee of the government (Auditor-General's Report, 2007). This lack of fairness clearly contradicts the reasons for depoliticized local government system which was believed to promote citizen involvement in local affairs for development.

The DCE for Kwahu South District Assembly, Raymond Osafo Gyan, had to resort to court actions in order to retrieve moneys paid to individuals under the Poverty Alleviation Programme. One however wonders if this would yield any result as the DCE continues to interfere with the disbursement process. There are cases of non-payment of loans which call for proper interrogation of the disbursement process. Any inaction could result in default of payment by the beneficiaries and a loss to the Assemblies involved as it is likely that beneficiaries take this money as gifts from their own political party.

Table 7: Unrecovered loans/advances/unretired imprest for 2005-2007 & 2008/2009

2005/2006/2007	GH¢1.0 million	
2008/2009/2010	GH¢1,964,739	96 MMDAs
Total	GH¢2,964,739	In 85 MMDAs

Source: Field data, 2013

Unrecovered loans/advances/unretired imprest grew from 2005-2007 figure of GH¢1.0 million to the 2008/2009/2010 figure of GH¢1,964,739, which also represents an increase of about 50%. One wonders if the unrecovered loans are owed by genuine defaulters or to people who consider these loans as dole-outs from their party in power. There is the need for a proper interrogation of these figures in order to ascertain whether the right procedures were use in the disbursements to ensure easy collection of these loans for local development.

3.4.7 Accountability Issues from LEKMA

Though about 18% of the local population sampled indicated that the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development supervises local development, though there are a lot of issues with contract and procurement management irregularities which have featured among the irregularities in the DAs. In spite of the many external mechanisms to promote financial accountability in order to ensure better financial performance at the local levels in Ghana, the fact is that the Ministry has not exercised its supervisory role effectively, resulting in several instances of financial malfeasance in the MMDAs.

The Ledzekuku-Krowor Municipal Assembly did not review the contract agreement of three companies engaged to collect an estimated property rate of GH¢2,811,695.60 even though the agreement permitted the Assembly to review the contracts on grounds of low performance. The

Auditor General noted poor performance and accordingly recommended to the management to abrogate the contracts and re-award them to industry operators who have the capacity to undertake the task but the Assembly failed to follow the directive (Auditor-General's report, 2012). The lack of political will to abrogate the contract under such circumstances raise suspicion about whether the companies in question truly underperformed or someone has benefited from the contract.

3.5 Conclusion

The expectation of experts of decentralisation is that the proximity of local officials to the people would promote accountability of resource use which is why decentralisation has been a preferred policy option for dispersing central power and resources. After several decades of its implementation, Ghanaians are generally upbeat about the appointee system at the local level because the appointment of the DCE by the President does not promote local accountability.

Though the central influence over the DCE has manifested in a frequent removal of DCEs across the country, the situation often render the district assembly very hostile. This has serious implications for local development because, according to Ayee (1999), conflict consumes the role of the DAs to the extent that the DCEs tends to forget the people they are serving as well as the loss of confidence in the local government system. The war against the lack of accountability is yet to be won because the people are unable to ensure accountable local management and the laid-down procedures have been ineffective in this regard.

The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the RCCs which have a supervisory role over the MMDAs have not been effective in the monitoring, co-coordinating

and evaluating functions in order to ensure prudent financial management in the District Assemblies.

Violations have been countenanced and offenders often left of the hook. The effect of this state of affairs is the impunity with which rules and regulations governing financial application are flouted by the DCE and other departmental heads under his supervision. The issue of inadequate financial resources at the District Assemblies that afflicted local government finance at its inception still persists not entirely because of lack of revenue mobilization or the failure on the part of the central government to transfer resources, but because of several financial irregularities that have gone unpunished.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This study set out to examine the state of accountability and transparency in the District Assemblies of Ghana under the direction of the DCE within the context of political, financial and administrative mandates of the DCE. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following pertinent questions: Whose interest is best served by the appointed DCE in Ghana? What institutional mechanisms exist at both national and local levels to ensure the accountability of the DCE? What relationship exists between the two? How effective have they been? And finally, how has the position of the DCE constrained the ability of the people to demand accountability?

The thesis of the study is that: the position of the District Chief Executive in Ghana's Decentralization, as a central government appointee has impacted negatively on local accountability and transparency. Following from the above thesis, the study hypothesizes that: the central government control of the DCE has undermined accountability and transparency in the District Assemblies of Ghana in the period under review. This chapter therefore presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study with the view of enhancing local accountability.

4.2 Summary of Findings

The agenda to bring decision-making closer to the people is to better serve them through resources that have been transferred to the peripheries of the country. This is good for democratic consolidation and leads to a stable environment because, as leaders are subjected to proper scrutiny to ensure equitable allocation of resources at the local level, the needs of various

segments of the population are satisfied. This has been the driving force behind this study in order to ascertain the extent to which Ghana's decentralisation promotes this goal at the local level under the DCE who is a central government appointee with influences from the central government as well as the ruling party.

The study has established that LEKMA has quiet a youthful` population that is well educated. These variables have reflected in the quality of responses provided. Based on the above information the study sought to find out the level of awareness about the nomination and appointment as well as the functions of the DCE. Majority of the respondents confirmed that the President had the sole prerogative to appoint DCEs which is a reflection of their level of awareness of Article 243 (1) of the 1992 Republic Constitution of Ghana which enjoins the President to appoint the DCE for every district in Ghana. On the whole, majority of the respondents are familiar with the work of the DCE which includes his development roles, political functions as the representative of the central government.

This level of education and the age of the respondents have made the findings quiet revealing. This section gives the lessons, recommendations and conclusions from the field work and the literature.

First, the study has found that the appointment of the DCE has given rise to the phenomenon party foot soldiers whose modus operandi has serious implication for development at the local level as it makes the MMDAs very volatile for the DCE to perform his functions. The appointment of the DCE extends the influence of the party officials over the DCEs including party foot soldiers (supporters) who would often want the DCEs to serve their interests such as provision of jobs and award of contract. Failure to meet the demands of the youth of the ruling

party has been responsible for the frequent dismissal of the DCEs from office across many regimes in the period under review.

The removal of the DCEs is a function of the central government influence over the DCE because of the school of thought that when the DCE neglects or show insensitivity to the concerns of the party youth who play various roles in getting the party into power, the DCE is given the sack (The New Crusading Guide, Thursday 9th September, 2010 p.3). The frequent dismissal of the DCEs affects both political and administrative roles of the DCE and further has cost implication for replacement. The constitutional provision that a DCE can be removed from office through a vote of no confidence has never been deployed in the study period because of the spontaneous nature of the demand for the dismissal of a DCE. (Article 243 (3) (a)) This is worrying because, according to Armstrong, the frequent change and replacement of the human resource of the MMDAs makes them turbulent and difficult for any meaningful development (Armstrong, 2006).

Second, the study has established that the position of the DCE as an appointee of the central government encourages corruption and the general lack of accountability. The issue is that as a direct consequence of the frequent removal of the DCEs, they have become the most corrupt because it is the most insecure political position in the country. Job insecurity as depicted by the frequent removals of the DCEs forces the DCEs to “grab as much and as quickly as possible when they assume office since they can be removed on the basis of rumour or just because they have fallen out of favour with party executives” (Public Agenda, 2009).

The work has established the following as the reasons for corruption at the local levels:

- the lack of effective punitive mechanisms to check the DCE;

- lack of effective supervision and monitoring by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the RCCs which due to the lack of political will to deal with corruption.

Third, the study has further established that DCEs have grown in power as a result of the lack of political will to deal with them coupled with non-existence of effective countervailing powers on the DCEs. This problem has also been identified by Gyimah-Boadi (2008) who laments of the unchecked powers of the DCEs which have implications for Ghana's democratic. The appointment of the DCE results in the overbearing powers of the DCE and makes it difficult to eliminate corruption, trace and control misappropriation of funds meant for local development. This confirms the apprehension of Buah (1980), which appointments of public officials tend to breed corruption and lead to general lack of accountability because these officials feel secure under the protection of those in power resulting in the inflation of contract sums and procurement violations.

Fourth, the study has revealed that the appointment of the DCEs by the central government has made it difficult for the latter to publicly rebuke and punish them because, doing so would amount to exposing the failings of the ruling party.

Fifth, the work has made the point that, despite the horizontal mechanisms of accountability through A-G's department and CHARAJ among others in ensuring financial and administrative accountability of the DCEs, they have continued to flout contract and procurement rules and regulations resulting wanton wastage and misappropriation of revenues (Daily Graphic, 2001). Contract and procurement irregularities have occurred even under the DCE who is the chairman of the District Assembly Tender Boards, a body that oversees contract and procurement. This means that the DCE who supervises all the decentralized department of the Assembly has been a

failure as the DCE has been cited for prosecution or a reprimand by the A-G. To date however, no DCE has been prosecuted during the period under review. This gives a further credence to the school of thought that the appointment of the DCE has been a bane of local development.

Sixth, the appointment of the DCE by the central government has led to over politicization of the District Assemblies. The appointment of the DCE brings political influences to bear on DCEs and forces the DCE to do the bidding of the President which has manifested in open campaigning by the DCE for the president, the appointing authority.

Seventh, the study has also established that, directly linked to politicization is the problem of lack of equity and fairness in the distribution of local resources. Allocation of resources is done to favour members of the ruling party to the detriment of people who do not support the ruling party. All efforts must be made to nib this problem in the bud especially, when decentralization has been known to have skewed resource allocation in favour of one group because of strong political differences. This situation is clearly at variant with the Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1992 Constitution which calls for the pursuit of Ghana's decentralisation policy in a non-discriminatory manner for the sake of national cohesion. These loans have been difficult to retrieve because they are seen as dole-outs from the ruling party and difficult to determine genuine defaulters.

4.3 Result of Hypothesis

Our conclusions based on the evidence gathered from the study are that the appointment of the DCE by the central government makes the DCE directly accountable to the President and amenable to the interest of the ruling party in general. This practice has also led to the lack of political will on the part of the central government to bring the DCE to book for non-

performance. This study therefore accepts the hypothesis that the central government influence over the DCE has undermined transparency and accountability at the local level.

It is clear that because of the appointment of party members as DCEs and the fear of washing the party's dirty linen in public, some DCEs act as if decision making lies only in their purview.

4.4 General Conclusions

Transparency and accountability have been recognized as mutually reinforcing principles which enable citizens to influence the decision-making and hold those making decisions to account. After a long process of ascertaining the extent to which the central government control on the DCE undermines accountability and transparency, it is apparent that this control over the DCE as occasioned by the appointment of the DCE has not promoted accountable, transparent, and equitable local governance.

The central government control has tied the hands of the President who is always forced to dismiss DCEs who fail to meet the demands of these youth. As a result, the DAs are characterized with a high attrition rate of DCEs, most of who hardly end the four-year term. This phenomenon has serious implications for long term development planning and financial resources because the DCEs siphon local financial resources as they could be removed from office at any time. The President holds close to his chest, the reasons for removing DCEs from office not just to protect the image of the government and the party, but it also affirms the fact that the DCE is only accountable to the central government and not to the people.

As a result, though many DCEs have been cited for prosecution by the A-G, hardly are they indicted and prosecuted, albeit the dismissal of some of the corrupt DCEs who are left of the

hood to enjoy their “booty”. This has resulted in the increased power base of the DCE and led to the cycle of corruption and the lack accountability, loss of huge sums money meant for local development.

4.5 Recommendations

On the basis of the above problem this study will recommend the following options in order to ensure local accountability. This is because, clearly, the potential to have accountable local governance can be made a reality in Ghana which is critical in the quest for democratic consolidation. These recommendations are founded on the considered view of Buah (1980) that appointments give rise to a situation where the agent feels secure under the protection of those in power. The appointment of the DCE has posed a challenge for accountability at the local level though current monitoring by the central government of the district assemblies is largely focused on expenditure and expenditure controls.

First, the study recommends the urgent need to strengthen the horizontal institutions of accountability to live up to their duties in order to ensure the accountability of the DCE. In this respect, study recommends the enhancement of horizontal relationships within the state itself in which case one state actor has the formal authority to demand explanations or impose penalties on another. It is however; clear that, the existing state institutions such the RCCs, CHRAJ, EOCU, the PAC, among others have failed to bring the necessary checks to bear on the performance of the DCE because of the central control of the DCE. The chief aim of this agenda is to boost the interest of the local people in decentralisation.

Second, the position of the DCE as the chairman of the district Assembly Tender Board must be reviewed to prevent the abuse of this position. This is because the evidence against the abuse of this office by the DCE has been overwhelming.

Third, the President must disclose the reasons for the dismissal of DCEs as this would guide all new DCEs to avoid a repetition of same corrupt offences.

Fourth, DCEs found to have siphoned public money must not only be removed and left off the hook. Relevant state institutions must be empowered to indict and investigate these DCEs against whom adverse financial findings have been made.

Fifth, the study further suggests that the media plays a critical role in highlighting the corrupt irregularities, misappropriations among others emanating from the A-G report on MMDAs to whip up public interest in the financial report of the MMDAs.

Sixth, in connection with above, the study calls for the participation of citizens in local affairs can be very useful in curtailing the problem of corruption. Citizens must particularly read the Report of the A-G on the MMDAs.

Finally, this study agrees with the Constitutional Review Commission report that the position of the DCE be made elective. This is because, achieving local accountability will largely depend on easing central government stranglehold on the DCE which undermines the ability of the local people to demand accountability of the local political head. Electing the DCE would constitute a major check on his powers and prevent wanton dissipation of local resources and ensure lack of fairness of these resources. Elections of the DCE which will afford the local people the

opportunity to punish non-performing DCEs at the polls in tandem with the democratic principle to give the power to secure accountability of the DCE to the people.

In making this recommendation, we are aware of reasons that have been advanced in favour of the status quo to have a representative of the President at the local level who would be directly accountable to him. In this regard, the study agrees with the suggestion offered by the Presiding Member of LEKMA who thinks that the:

“Election of MMDCEs is a brilliant idea as it will give them job security but it should not be done such that there will be undue tension between Central Government and its representatives at the grassroots (MMDCEs) because they do not believe in the vision or ideas of the former (central government) to carry out directives or disseminate government policy to the people as objective and accurate as possible” (the Presiding Member of LEKMA).

This is a valuable suggestion in that, the insecurity of the office of the DCE has been linked to corruption. In this vein the election of the DCE will not only enable the DCEs to complete their term of office without any fear of been kicked out at any time, but it will promote a peaceful local development as the DCEs can plan and execute the development agenda on which they are voted into office and give political sovereignty to the local people.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview and Questionnaire Guide used to collect Primary Data for this Study

A1 Questionnaires for the Appointing of the District Chief Executive

1. By what means did your DCE ascend to his position?
2. Which of the following nominates the DCE to the District Assembly?
3. Are local citizens or groups involved in the nomination process?
4. What is the level of grassroots' involvement and scrutiny in the process of appointing a DCE?
5. Which of the following criteria are considered in selecting the DCE?
6. What qualities are considered in the appointment process?
7. Is the information about the particular criterion used in nominating a DCE disclosed to you?

A2 National and Local Influences on the DCE

1. Which of the following do you consider to be the effects of a partisan appointment of the DCE?
2. Does your MM/DCE provide accurate, timely, and reliable information about all decisions and actions taken in Assembly?
3. What are some of the means by which the Assembly criticizes the DCE?
4. Which of the following sanction(s) is often applied to a non-performing DCE?
5. If your answer above is the 'removal from office', which of the following mode of removal is often used?

6. Which of the following groups has been most effective in championing local concerns?
7. In which of the following ways have civil society groups promoted accountability in your DAs?

A3 National and Local Influences on the DCE

1. Is the DCE a person who campaigns for the election of the President?
2. If your answer above is 'Yes', which of the following is the likely effects of this action?
3. Are you able to offer, send ideas and suggestions for consideration in the decisions of the Assembly?
4. Has your MM/DCE declared his assets?
5. Which of the following platforms does the DCE use in providing answers for decisions and actions to the local people?
6. Do the Minister of Local Government and the Regional Coordinating Councils monitor the performance of the DAs?
7. If your answer above is 'Yes', what form does the monitoring take?
8. If your answer above is 'No', which of the following best explains the inability of the Ministry and the RCCs to effectively monitor the DAs?
9. Which of the following mechanisms of accountability have been used by other independent state institutions in promote accountability?

A4: Growing Powers of the DCE

1. Which of the following officers in the DA have often escaped punishment for corruption?
2. Which of the following factors have prevented you from checking corruption and promoting accountability in the DAs?
3. How does the Assembly check a misconduct of the DCE?
4. If your answer above is 'C', which of the following are some of the effects of forceful removal of DCEs from the DAs?
5. What in your view is the main reason why DCEs are not prosecuted for financial impropriety?
6. Which of the following reasons can cause the President to override a legal case against a corrupt DCE?
7. What do you think is the likely effect of lack of accountability on the part of the M/DCEs?
8. What in your opinion are some of the effects of the forceful removal of the DCEs from office?
9. What do of the following do you think would happen when the DCE is elected?

APPENDIX B: BIO-DATA

Gender: () Male () Female

Age: () 25 – 30, () 31 – 36, () 37 – 42, () 43 – 48, () 49 and above

Region.....District.....Status:

Qualification: () MA, () MBA, () B.A, () BSc, () MSc, () Other (please, specify