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The Political Economy of Party Primaries in Ghana:

The cost and impact of all-pay vote-buying auctions on
parliamentary candidate selection primaries

By

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A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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July, 2022

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Abstract

Ghana's democracy is dominated by two political parties—the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Like most parties in emerging democracies, these parties are continuously striving to improve their internal democracy by adopting primaries to select candidates to contest general elections. These primaries are important in consolidating Ghana's democratic gains, but at the same time, they are understudied.

There are a few studies on the quality of candidates selected by party primaries and their significance for general election outcomes. However, analysis of the selectorates who form the foundation upon which intra-party democracy is built, candidate motivations, the role primary contests play in gender representation, voter expectations in relation to candidates that selectorates present, and why certain candidates win these primaries are underexplored in the literature. This thesis will show how primary contests have become all-pay vote-buying auctions and discuss how this relates to clientelism within political parties.

Vote buying in itself has been studied extensively in the context of general elections, but less so in primaries, where they play a significant role in influencing how selectorates in the electoral colleges vote. To address this gap, this thesis sought to test the impact of vote buying on selectorates, gender representation, the increasing costs of primaries, and their effectiveness as a campaign strategy in Ghana and within the NPP and NDC.

This research design was an extensive case study—including a within-case comparison—that developed a qualitative and exploratory research process to conduct in-depth interviews in Ghana and analyzed documentary sources during the 2020 parliamentary primaries in the Adentan, Ketu South, and New Juaben South constituencies as the data collection point for analysis. The research sampled candidate and voter behavior in stronghold constituencies where the primaries effectively determine election outcomes and in swing constituencies where primaries and main elections are competitive. The aim was to investigate the efficacy of vote buying in closed primary settings, accounting for all significant variables, and to test whether parliamentary candidate selection primaries are won by candidates who spend more on buying votes.

The study finds that almost all candidates in the study constituencies make vote-buying attempts as part of their political strategy. Money is significant in contesting and winning primaries, but so are perceptions of who, when and how that money is given. Candidates cannot always win primaries by giving money, but at the same time, a candidate may not be able to win an election without giving money – in this sense, they can be thought of as the price of playing the game, but a price that is not determinant of its outcome.

I conclude that candidates use vote buying as a campaign strategy to develop and sustain relationships with selectorates in expectation that they will translate into political advantage. Vote buying is only fully effective through a relationship-building strategy that requires continuous engagement over many years to build expected relationships that are mutually beneficial and rewarding. Because vote buying impacts are diminished by an existing all-pay vote-buying auction, candidates who win tend to be those who provide gifts on the day of voting, but winning candidates also must have engaged in the delivery of patronage goods and services over time within a moral and social economy, even if they pay relatively less than their opponents.

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to my supervisors, Professor Nic Cheeseman and Dr. Kate Skinner, for the immense support, advise, and mentoring during this process. I have been fortunate to have supervisors who pushed and encouraged me, destroyed my arguments and made them better. I could not have asked for more.

I would like to thank the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation (GNPC) Foundation for providing the funding that enabled me to undertake my PhD study. To the good people at the foundation, I am eternally grateful for all the support.

I also thank Novi, Kayta and the rest of my family for their unconditional support. To all the people who allowed me to interview them to get the insights and feedback that has made the project a success, I am forever grateful. In particular, I thank the Chief of Staff at the Office of the President in Ghana, Hon. Akosua Frema Osei-Opare, who encouraged and motivated me to get a PhD.

Finally, I thank Jeremy Rehwaldt of Introspection Editing for editing this work for spelling and grammar, repetitions, and consistency of language.

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List of Abbreviations

ACP: Action Congress Party
ADA: Avoidance of Discrimination Act
AFRC: Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APRP: All People's Republican Party
ARPS: Aborigines Rights Protection Society
AU: African Union
AYO: Anlo Youth Organization
BEAR: University of Birmingham research data storage system
CDR: Committees for the Defense of the Revolution
CCM: Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CSO: Civil society organizations
CPP: Convention People's Party
DCE: District Chief Executive
DFP: Democratic Freedom Party
DPP: Democratic People's Party
EC: Electoral Commission
EGLE: Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere
ERP: Economic Recovery Program
FPTP: First-past-the-post system
FYO: Federated Youth Organization
GAC: Ghana Action Party
GCLP: Gold Coast Labour Party
GCP: Ghana Congress Party
GCPP: Great Consolidated Peoples Party
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GFP: Ghana Freedom Party
GNP: Ghana National Party
HIPC: Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
ICT: Information and communication technology
IMF: International Monetary Fund
IPAC: Inter-party advisory committee
IP: Independence Party
IP: Independent Peoples Party,
JP: Justice Party
LEAP: Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty Program
LP: Liberal Party
MAP: Muslim Association Party
MASLOC: Microfinance and Small Loans Program
MCA: Millennium Challenge Account
MP: Member of Parliament
NABCO: Nation Builders Corps
NAL: National Alliance of Liberals

NCP: National Convention Party
NDC: National Democratic Congress
NDP: National Democratic Party
NHIS: National Health Insurance Scheme
NLC: National Liberation Council
NLM: National Liberation Movement
NPP: New Patriotic Party
NPP: Northern Peoples Party
NRC: National Redemption Council
NRP: National Reform Party
PAP: People's Action Party
PDA: Preventive Detention Act
PDC: People's Defense Committee
PDP: People Democratic Party
PFP: Popular Front Party
PHP: People's Heritage Party
PMFJ: Popular Movement for Freedom and Justice
PNC: People's National Convention
PNDC: Provisional National Defense Council
PNP: People's National Party
PP: Progress Party
PPP: Progressive Peoples Party
RPD: Reform Patriotic Democrats
SAP: Structural adjustment program
SDF: Social Democratic Front
SMC: Supreme Military Council
TC: Togoland Congress
TFP: Third Force Party
TINAGOV: Transitional Interim National Government
TUC: Trade Union Congress
UFP: United Freedom Party
UGCC: United Gold Coast Convention
UGM: United Ghana Movement
UNC: United National Convention
UNIGOV: Union Government
UNP: United Nationalist Party
UP: United Party
URP: United Renaissance Party
WAY: Wassaw Youth Association
WDC: Workers' Defense Committee
YPP: Yes Peoples Party

Chapter One

Introduction

Eric Amankwah Blay contested the 2020 New Patriotic Party (NPP) primaries in the Assin North constituency anticipating that he would win. He distributed 250 bicycles to some selectorates in expectation of their support. Unfortunately, he was heavily defeated when he secured only 44 votes against the 389 polled by his contender, Abena Duruwa Mensah, who distributed gifts of her own. In reaction, Eric Blay together with his supporters stormed the homes of the selectorates to whom he had gifted the bicycles to forcibly retrieve his gifts because they did not fulfil their end of the bargain.¹ In the Ajumako Enyan Essiam constituency, another NPP parliamentary aspirant, Elisha Odoom, went to the voting center on Election Day with 11 cars branded with his campaign posters. One was to be distributed to each of the 10 electoral areas in the constituency and the remaining car to the constituency office to ensure the effective running of party activities. Like Blay, Odoom was defeated, polling 76 votes against the 411 of the winner, Rashid Etuaful. In reaction, Odoom

¹ Evans Effah, 'NPP Primaries: Eric Amankwa Blay takes back 250 bicycles he donated to delegates, party executives after defeat', *Pulse Ghana*, June 21, 2020, <https://www.pulse.com.gh/news/politics/npp-primaries-eric-amankwa-blay-takes-back-250-bicycles-he-donated-to-delegates-party/9mck2lp> (accessed June 25, 2020).

towed away all 11 cars because the intended recipients did not reciprocate the intended gesture by voting for him.²

Such actions are not unique to the NPP or these constituencies but archetypical of candidate selection primaries across Ghana. In the 2019 National Democratic Congress (NDC) primaries, two aspirants, Victoria Hammah and Ras Mubarak, among many who contested and lost, attributed their loss to ‘moneyocracy’—that is, a system of politics where aspirants spread a large amount of resources to gain advantage. In response to these allegations, NDC Deputy General Secretary Peter Otokunor responded that the defeated aspirants ‘were not prepared’ for the elections.³

These illustrations above indicate the importance of candidate selection primaries and the significance of material and cash inducements that play a significant role in determining primary outcomes. Ghana’s democracy is dominated by two political parties—the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Like most parties in emerging democracies, these parties are continuously attempting to improve their internal democracy by adopting primaries to select candidates who contest general elections on their party tickets. Candidate selection primaries are important in

² ‘My cars meant to empower party members economically - Debrah Odoom’, GhanaWeb, September 30, 2019, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/My-cars-meant-to-empower-party-members-economically-Debrah-Odoom-784972> (accessed July 25, 2020).

³ ‘Ras Mubarak, Vicky Hammah, others were “not prepared” - Otokunor’, GhanaWeb, August 29, 2019, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ras-Mubarak-Vicky-Hammah-others-were-not-prepared-Otokunor-776375> (accessed July 25, 2020).

consolidating Ghana's democratic gains, but at the same time, they are understudied.

There are a few studies on the quality of candidates selected by party primaries and their significance to general election outcomes but few studies on the selectorates who form the foundation upon which intra-party democracy is built, candidate motivations, the role primary contests play in gender representation, voter expectations in relation to what selectorates present, and why certain candidates win. This thesis will show how primary contests have become all-pay vote-buying auctions as part of campaign strategy and discuss how this relates to clientelism within political parties.

Vote buying has been studied extensively in the context of general elections, but less so in the context of candidate selection primaries where they play a significant role in determining outcomes. To address this gap, this thesis sought to test the impact of vote buying on selectorates, gender representation, the increasing costs of primaries, and their effectiveness as a campaign strategy in Ghana and within the NPP and NDC.

This chapter begins with a brief on the study country, Ghana. It reviews its political systems and dynamics with a contextual analysis of the politics in Ghana within the larger politics of the African continent. The chapter continues by defining vote buying in the context of primary elections and ends with the research design and questions, methodological approach, case selection, and data collection. The chapter concludes by presenting a general plan of this thesis.

Ghana: A Brief Introduction to the Political System

Ghana (formerly Gold Coast) was the first former British colony in sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence, which it acquired on March 6, 1957. The country, with a current population of 30.8 million (2021 census), shares its borders to the north with Burkina Faso, to the east with Togo, to the west with Côte d'Ivoire, and to the south with the Atlantic Ocean.

Ghana runs a constitutional democracy with political institutions set up according to the 1992 Fourth Republican constitution, which has been amended over time. Democracy in the Ghanaian context has intended political inclusion of all citizens to participate in the political process by freely contesting fair elections and voting in elections without inducements and intimidation. Democracy in Ghana has allowed for robust competition for power and peaceful handovers between opposing political parties.

Ghana is presently divided into 16 regions and 261 districts that overlap with 275 constituencies.⁴ These numbers have evolved since 1992 as the country embarked on decentralization to bring development to the grassroots. The regions are headed by politically appointed regional ministers. There are also district assemblies, some of whose members are chosen in local, nonpartisan elections to represent various communities and some of whom are appointed by the government. An appointed district chief executive (DCE) provides local governance. A

⁴ As of December 31, 2021.

Council of State with deliberative and advisory functions, established by the 1992 constitution of Ghana, is constituted by a mix of elected and appointed officials. In addition, provisions are made for the president to appoint a cabinet of between 20 and 25 government ministers.

Under Ghana's 1992 constitution, presidential and parliamentary elections must be held every four years. The president is limited to two terms, but there are no term limits on parliamentarians. The electoral law permits candidates to run as independent candidates or on the ticket of political parties. Consequently, the two main political parties serve as gatekeepers by holding primaries to select viable candidates. This serves as the first step in a two-step process: candidates are first selected by their party either through voting or by nomination and then compete with candidates from other parties for an elected office. According to Schattschneider (1942) and Ranney (1981), candidate selection is one of the core functions of political parties and has become an important test of the internal democratic strength of party organizations (Ichino and Nathan, 2017). Primary elections ensure openness and party organization; they also promote internal party democracy (Carey and Polga-Hecimovich, 2006) and a sense of involvement from the grassroots.

A parliamentary candidate requires only a plurality of the valid votes cast in a first-past-the-post system to be elected (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012). Formal processes also exist for the selection of selectorates, or delegates who form the electoral colleges. Interested party members are supposed to complete forms expressing an interest in becoming a party leader in a polling station, then polling station

members are to choose party leaders by voting. These party leaders become selectorates in an electoral college among many other functions. However, the composition of selectorates has been restricted to an average of 600 party polling station leaders who form electoral colleges and control the process, which has often been criticized as unfair and opaque. The selectorates stay in power, receiving personal benefits, and potential candidates support them to get themselves into power or keep staying in power.

Political structures are organized in a pyramidal model from the polling stations at the base of the pyramid through constituency, regional, and national levels. These structures, which are male dominated, have a few women who mostly occupy specially created positions as women organizers, and are heavily controlled by political party leaders in arrangements that cascade down in influence from the top to the bottom.⁵ Candidate selection primaries are organized in a bottom-up process and by constituency. Elected party leaders of each polling station, together with appointed party members, form the electoral colleges to elect parliamentary and presidential candidates.

The consolidation of Ghana's democracy has occurred despite the increasing prevalence of vote buying during parliamentary and presidential candidate selections and leadership elections. Research by the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD, 2016) showed that

⁵ A small group of relatively powerful Ghanaians control the political processes at their level of the political pyramid by making decisions from the top with their wealth and networks. So whilst a polling station chairperson is a leader at that level, that person becomes a foot soldier to the leader at the level above, in this case the constituency chairperson, who has the power to determine his/her political tenure.

84% of Ghanaians voted for personal gain; most of the electorate did not understand the concept of vote buying and were not aware that it was punishable by law (the Political Parties Law 2000, ACT 574, and the Representation of the People Law, 1992, PNDC Law 284). A survey by Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2016b) showed that 43% of Ghanaians did not believe that bribing voters was wrong, and 76% felt it should not be punishable by law. Widely conducted investigations by Corruption Watch Ghana before, during, and after the NPP candidate selection primaries in 2020 to identify vote buying, political corruption, and electoral impropriety found that all candidates in the constituencies they investigated attempted to induce selectorates with money, food items, machinery, and appliances across seven regions they monitored.

Vote buying therefore remains a threat to Ghana's democracy, as it undermines the electoral process. It has become an open secret that selectorates demand and expect gifts from parliamentary aspirants, who have responded in equal measure. Credible evidence over the years has verified electoral gift giving. Among the gifts are personal items such as cash, T-shirts, farming boots, cutlasses, food, and fertilizer (Brusco et al., 2004), as well as communal gifts such as the construction of new roads, schools, streetlights, boreholes, public toilets, connection to the electricity supply, health screening, and other public goods to develop patron-client relationships. Indeed, vote-buying attempts seem to have been institutionalized in intra-party elections at all levels, culminating in parliamentary and presidential primaries, especially in the dominant NPP and NDC.

Vote buying in Ghana can be direct, with the provision of cash for votes, or indirect, with the provision of public goods and support through surrogate nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and foundations. Though all political parties are complicit, the NPP and NDC have increasingly made it a part of all intra-party elections, and their supporters have become more resourceful in ‘displaying opulence in distributive politics’, especially in years when their parties are in government (Paalo and Gyampo, 2019). Within the smaller parties, vote buying manifests more often in national executive and presidential candidate selections rather than in parliamentary primaries, as smaller parties have been unable historically to win parliamentary seats.

Vote buying intensifies in the weeks before primary elections, and the deliberate attempts to give gifts on the night before or on the day of voting reinforces popular perceptions that the gifts are intended to buy votes (Stokes et al., 2013; Gyampo, 2018). The phenomenon can be explained by the candidates’ desire to win in the absence of clear differences in policy or ideology (Lindberg, 2008) and by the composition of selectorates, most of whom are not gainfully employed and depend on their position as selectorates to provide for their welfare in the absence of adequate formal government support (see also Schaffer and Schedler, 2005). Yet, it is important to note that the candidate that spends the most does not always win—money is important, but candidates need to know how to spend it. As we have already seen, many candidates who spent large sums seeking election failed. In some cases the problem was not that they did not spend enough, but in other instances their

candidacy itself was flawed in other ways that were not supported by the existing moral and social economies (Cheeseman et al., 2019).

The general consensus among losing candidates, journalists, academics, civil society groups, and general voters is that vote buying has become a dominant feature in candidate selection in Ghana, and there is ample evidence to support the vote-buying claims (Ichino and Nathan, 2013a; Cheeseman, 2015; Paalo and Gyampo, 2019). The democratic institutions in Ghana have at various times warned of this existential threat to Ghana's consolidating democracy.

1.1 Defining and Understanding Vote Buying

Vote buying is not a recent occurrence; the phenomenon has a long history dating back to the late Roman Empire (Yakobson, 1995). It was a dominant campaign strategy in 18th- and 19th-century politics of Britain and the United States (Bensel, 2004), and vote buying is a recurring feature in the history of democracies across the world. It has been defined variably, mainly because of the difficulty in understanding the phenomenon and the varying contexts under which it occurs. In the broader context, Schaffer and Schedler (2005) define vote buying as a simple economic exchange where candidates 'buy' and citizens 'sell' votes in the same way as they buy and sell apples, shoes, or television sets through a form of contract or possible auction where the highest bidder wins. This definition was developed in the context of general elections but is relevant to this study as well.

However, this study, unlike other studies on vote buying, principally focuses on vote buying in the context of candidate selection

primaries in Ghana, not in the context of general elections. Primary elections are conducted with a small number of voters who are known, can be reached and accessed, and can possibly be targeted with potential vote-buying propositions. In that context, this study defines vote buying as the direct use of cash, other material resources, and favors to develop anticipated beneficial and mutually reciprocal relationships with potential voters over time to induce, influence, and secure electoral advantage in elections (see Schaffer, 2007; Nichter, 2008; Gonzalez et al., 2014; Etzioni-Halevy, 1989).

In spite of the varying definitions, there is a consensus in the literature on two common elements of vote buying: first, that it enhances political clientelism, which involves two sets of actors—office seekers who need political power and voters who need communal and personal benefits (Piattoni, 2001); second, that it attempts to influence and induce vote choices with direct exchange of articles of benefit to voters for electoral advantage.

The existence of vote buying is well documented and understood; the third wave of Afrobarometer surveys in Africa, for example, showed that 69% of the 25,086 people polled reported that politicians offer articles of inducement during elections. These demands and expectations take a major chunk of campaign budgets. When coupled with weak campaign fundraising, especially in the developing world, requiring that candidates finance campaigns from their personal wealth, campaigns become the preserve of people with financial resources. This alienates well-qualified prospective candidates—especially women—from elections

based on cost. According to the Westminster Foundation (2018), the cost of running in a parliamentary election in Ghana increased 56% between 2012 and 2016, when it cost on average \$85,000 to engage in a successful primary contest. This is a huge amount in a country where average salaries are less than \$2,500 per year (Asante and Oduro, 2016).

Vote buyers are usually the candidates or campaign staffers who target individuals or groups (vote sellers) with direct personal exchange of an article of inducement. Whilst groups are targeted with public goods for the community such as churches, mosques, schools, and public boreholes and toilets among others, individuals are targeted directly with cash, school fees, funds to pay hospital bills, funeral donations, or gifts in the form of food, mobile phones, television sets, radios, and even cars. In other cases, candidates promise a particular plan of action or payment in exchange for a promise of a vote (Dekel et al., 2004). Sometimes vote buying is indirect or disguised, as when voters are offered favors such as jobs, academic scholarships, access to government loans, bailing offenders from police cells, or supporting ethnic factions in chieftaincy or land disputes, or when voters are offered campaign jobs as a way of developing relationships to secure their votes (see Lindberg, 2003; Nathan, 2016).

Resources for vote buying are generated from candidates' savings; from fundraising and donations from friends, family, and supporters; or, more rarely, from their political parties (Asante and Oduro, 2016). In other instances, candidates with government appointments use their

offices to direct government programs for constituents in attempts to generate political support.

Conditions are rarely attached to vote buying except where voters' reciprocity is doubted because of their past unwillingness to vote as directed. Due to the lack of monitoring to ensure that voters who receive gifts vote for the candidates who proffered the gifts, vote buyers have improvised mechanisms by which voters are required to comply with the agreement. For example, voters may be required to prove that they voted for the agreed candidates by bringing a photo of their ballot taken with a phone camera or making an identifiable action on the ballot to signify compliance. In other cases, voters are made to swear oaths to deities to ensure the recipients' sense of moral obligation to deliver their part of the bargain. However, the secrecy of ballots has made it difficult for vote buyers and effectively introduced an all-pay vote-buying auction where voters tend to receive and accept gifts from numerous candidates, including those they do not intend to vote for.

As a political strategy, vote buying is prevalent in democracies where the political and social frameworks enjoin candidates to adopt it as part of campaign strategy with no legal repercussions. Vote buying is engaged in by both incumbents and opposition. As a practice, it is illegal across countries and international bodies. The Compendium of International Standards for Elections, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) condemn electoral manipulations. Despite its

illegality, however, vote buying remains a key feature in elections in emerging democracies (see literature review in chapter 2).

This PhD thesis examines the impact of vote buying in the democratic process of candidate selection in Ghana. Ghana's 1992 constitution (Article 55(5) emphasizes the importance of internal democracy, and political parties in Ghana are increasingly enhancing their internal democracy in selecting parliamentary candidates. Doing so has implications for intra-party conflict as well as the composition of parliaments and emerging governments (Norris, 2004).

This research employed a qualitative approach, given the complexity of researching such a delicate issue. This allowed contextual insights and careful interpretation to be developed. This entailed conducting in-depth one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions in Ghana, and analyzing documentary sources gathered from journals, newspapers, and books, as well as the internet. The 2020 parliamentary primaries in three focus constituencies—New Juaben South, Adentan, and Ketu South—were analyzed. The research sampled voter behavior in the strongholds of the NPP and NDC where the primary contest effectively determines the election outcomes, as primary winners subsequently win the seat, and in swing constituencies, where both primary elections and main elections are competitive. This helped provide a contextual analysis identifying whether vote-buying exists in primary elections and, if it does, whether it is more prevalent in strongholds or swing constituencies. Direct observations of Ghanaian elections during the 2020 primaries

provided first-hand information about whether exchanges were made to secure votes and, if so, the enforcement mechanisms and inducements.

1.2 Case Selection

To limit the scope of inquiry, the case selection was two-layered—first, with the selection of Ghana amongst other countries and, second, the selection of specific areas within Ghana and with a focus on the 2020 parliamentary candidate selection primaries. Ghana, like most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, went through a democratic transition in the early 1990s. In contrast to many other states in the region, however, Ghana’s democracy has seemingly been so far successful. Elections after 1992 in Ghana increased the political space and have been contested by numerous political parties. Ghana is considered largely to be a consolidating democracy with three smooth political transitions between opposing parties in 2000, 2008, and 2016. In 2020, as many as 11 political parties contested in largely free and fair elections as endorsed by the Ghanaian media, civil society organizations (CSOs), and domestic and foreign observers. When the 2012 and 2020 results were disputed by the losing opposition candidates, for example, the results were upheld by the Supreme Court of Ghana. This has cemented Ghana’s political legacy as an epitome of political reform in Africa and a stable democracy.

1.2.1 Ghanaian Politics in the Context of African Politics

As the first country to gain independence from colonial rule in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana has experienced socio-political dynamics both similar and different to those in other countries across the continent.

Therefore, Ghana presents opportunities for a good study on politics and democracy in Africa.

In the late 1940s, when liberation movements across the continent began the push for independence, Ghana's political struggle was indicative of the story of the larger African continent, where the numerous steps in the independence process were dominated by the elites and intelligentsia and later saw an important shift to 'mass politics' with the formation of numerous political parties that overtook the older forms of political mobilization (Austin, 1964). As in other countries, multi-party elections in Ghana were transitional and administered by the departing colonialists (Ellis, 2003).

At independence, Ghana, like the majority of African states, was equipped with a liberal democratic constitution bequeathed by the departing colonialists (Hyden, 1983). After independence, in the early 1960s, as in other African countries,⁶ the independence constitution was modified, and the 1960 Republican constitution (Article 55), which banned multi-party elections, was enacted. Elections were held but were used to alter the constitution and secure the power of Kwame Nkrumah, who became prime minister at independence as leader of the CPP. Political opposition was seen at the time as a threat to national coherence, political stability, and development (Austin, 1964, p. 67). While most African countries introduced one-party states, a few, such as Botswana, Mauritius, and Gambia (until 1994), did not do so.

⁶ Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia, among others, introduced one-party states after independence.

The One-Party Era

Ghana's one-party state was characterized by intimidation, a ban on opposition parties, and the introduction of restricted elections with intra-party competition (Austin, 1964, p. 98). The sole party became increasingly authoritarian with one-man rule. Ghana and many others, such as Benin, Togo, Tanzania, Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal, Somalia, and Zambia, introduced non-competitive elections where sitting presidents were, in effect, the only candidates offered for election (Ellis, 2003). Election outcomes were guaranteed for Kwame Nkrumah during his nine-year rule, in an attempt to cement his international and domestic political legitimacy through cosmetic, inconsequential presidential elections.

Parliamentary elections during the immediate post-independence era were restrictive. In that time, opposition members were forced into exile or co-opted into the ruling party (Austin, 1964). Single-member constituencies were offered with official candidates approved by the ruling party in a first-past-the-post system similar to that in Benin, Burundi, Gabon, and Guinea, among others. Ghana, unlike those countries, however, never practiced multi-member constituency elections. Instead, Ghana's elections were conducted as general referendums on members of Parliament to test government popularity, but not to alternate presidents (Hyden and Leys, 1972). As a result, there were fierce contests among those within the ruling party to be selected as candidates in strongholds where electoral victory was guaranteed.

Parliamentary elections were used as a vehicle to fill seats for

parliamentarians who, because of the enormous powers of the executive, had only modest significance in policymaking (Ayee, 1996). This was similar to other African countries where highly restrictive elections were held in two- and three-party systems. In Zambia and Kenya, for instance, multi-party elections were held between independence and the early 1990s, but they were restrictive and only semi-competitive (Nuscheler and Ziemer, 1980).

In some countries, such as Zambia (Kenneth Kaunda, 1964-1991) and Malawi (Hastings Banda, 1964-1994), the political leaders after the constitutional changes were able to rule until multi-party elections began in the 1990s. Other leaders faced varying fates: Houphouet Boigny in Côte d'Ivoire (1993), for example, became a multi-party leader; Leopold Senghor (1981) in Senegal resigned voluntarily; and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya died in power in 1978. In Ghana and some other countries, however, the military staged coups, and their leaders advanced every conceivable argument, including the need for liberation, to justify their overthrow of civilian governments (Ocquaye, 2004).⁷ Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown by such a coup in 1966. Other one-party governments in Burundi, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan, and Togo, among others, also experienced military coups, setting in motion a pendulum between coups and elections until the 'third wave' of democracy in the early 1990s.

⁷ In Ghana, the first coup leaders described Nkrumah as a dictator who had reduced Ghanaians to slaves, arguing that, as a result, military intervention had to be used to remove the president who could not be removed by constitutional means.

The Reintroduction of Multi-party Politics

Ghana's re-introduction of multi-party elections in 1992 was similar to the rest of the continent. They resulted from domestic and international pressure, managing them required overcoming logistical and technical challenges, and the political playing field was uneven. As a result, election results were disputed by the opposition parties, which ushered in domestic and international electoral observers for subsequent elections. In Ghana, the outcome of the presidential election raised significant concerns of vote rigging from the opposition and led to the boycott of the parliamentary elections of 1992. Ghana undertook several electoral reforms, and, as a result, electoral standards improved. Ghana's subsequent elections from 1996 to 2020 have been highly competitive and led to three peaceful political transitions in 2000, 2008, and 2016. This was significantly different from other African countries like Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, where post-election disputes have been settled with street violence and deaths.

Ghana's electoral system has changed over time since independence. After inheriting the plurality system in single-member constituencies from the British, the 1960 constitution abolished the position of prime minister, created an executive president, and created nominated members of Parliament in addition to elected members. Ghana, like the rest of Africa under British rule, used the first-past-the-post system in single-member constituencies in all its parliamentary elections; it has never introduced multi-member constituencies or proportional representation.

Direct presidential elections have been held in most of Ghana's elections except the 1951, 1954, 1956, and 1969 elections, in which prime ministers emerged from the majority party in Parliament. The 1964 presidential election was more of a plebiscite that allowed voters to vote yes or no to make Ghana a one-party state and Kwame Nkrumah president for life. As in other African countries, a system of rule by the majority has dominated all of Ghana's electoral reforms since independence. Winning an election requires 50% of the valid vote cast plus one additional vote. If no candidate wins an absolute majority, a second round of voting takes place. As a result, Ghana has had two run-offs, in 2000 and 2008, in which the opposition won.

The limit of two, four-year presidential terms in Ghana is strictly enforced, and incumbents have not machinated to subvert them. In contrast, countries such as Rwanda, DR Congo, Togo, Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea have altered their constitutions to permit incumbents to extend their terms.

Political power remains in the hands of political party leaders who control the political process by employing clientelism to exchange for votes during competitive elections, just like the rest of Africa (Stokes, 2007). Characteristically, men and a very few women with at least a secondary education have dominated politics. Most are middle- or upper-class salaried professionals or businesspeople. This situation has been compounded by the increasing cost of elections, which further restricts electoral contests to the rich.

In all, Ghana's elections have largely been competitive. In the pre-independence elections, they tended to focus on the timing of independence—'self-government now or in the shortest possible time'—and whether Ghana should be a unitary or federal state. The competitors were mostly regional and tribal-based political parties, like the National Liberation Movement (NLM) and the Northern Peoples Party (NPP), and religious parties; the Convention People's Party (CPP) was an exception (Allman, 1993; Skinner, 2015). In the post-independence elections, the core issue was creating a united Ghana, and the elections were contested by competitive opposition parties until the declaration of a one-party state in 1964. In the post-1966 era, elections in Ghana after military coups have centered on political and economic development, and competitive elections have been won by parties that demonstrated promise. This has continued since 1992, when elections in Ghana have been dominated by a de-facto two-party system. The NPP and NDC are organized and institutionalized with the capacity to alternate power peacefully in elections that have been fought on issues such as fighting corruption, economic development, and infrastructural expansion. The strong two-party system in Ghana is quite distinct from most African countries, where political parties have served as 'election machines of a convenient grouping of elites' (Hyden and Leys, 1972), based mostly on ethnic and religious alliances that do not survive between elections. This can be seen in Nigeria and Kenya, for example, where political parties seldom operate on ideological differences but on ethnic consensus to propel electoral victory.

The elections after 1992 in Ghana increased the political space and have been contested by numerous political parties. In the 2016 elections, as many as eight political parties contested in free and fair elections in which an incumbent government and sitting president lost to the opposition. In the 2020 elections, a sitting president was contested by a former president together with candidates from 10 other political parties; the incumbent won, but the opposition candidates were treated fairly and did not face harassment or intimidation, as they often do in countries like Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Ghana has strong institutions, including an electoral commission, judiciary, and critical media, as well as a strong political party culture that is helping consolidate its democracy. For instance, whereas presidents in some countries have attempted to subvert term limits, Ghana's political leaders have never tried such an enterprise because Ghana's organized political parties have demonstrated the capacity to regroup and capture political power when they lose. The political networks behind Ghana's political parties have structured political competition to ensure that individuals do not lose too much when they lose power (Cheeseman et al., 2019). Also, the Electoral Commission of Ghana has been quite fair and competent in the discharge of its duties by supervising free and fair elections. The dynamic media in Ghana has, in its watchdog role, actively monitored the democratic journey, and the citizens of Ghana have largely demonstrated a preference for multi-party democracy. Even in closely contested elections, Ghanaian citizens have followed the rules and used existing institutions to resolve differences.

They turn out to vote, and have supported an inter-party advisory committee (IPAC) through which the political parties agree on the general direction of election conduct. This is similar to countries like Senegal and different to countries like Cameroun, for example.

Ghana makes a good case for this research into vote buying for several reasons. First, Ghana is an open democracy in which a de facto two-party system has emerged. Presidential and parliamentary power alternates between the NPP and the NDC who act as gatekeepers to Ghana's parliament. These parties have dominated the political space with strong political structures and programs. Second, it is one of a small number of sub-Saharan countries in Africa—mainly Anglophone and operating first-past-the-post legislative models—that have candidate selection primaries, and in Ghana's case, the two dominant political parties have well-developed candidate selection processes. Third, Ghana's democratic developments provide the ingredients to test whether democratic consolidation reduces the impact of vote-buying on elections. Fourth, Ghana's strong political parties provide a framework for determining voter choices and the importance of vote buying in determining these choices. Last, my familiarity with the country's dynamics provides an opportunity for detailed research.

Ghana as a case study presents useful lessons for emerging democracies. This is because despite having similar democratic challenges with other African countries—such as the absence of membership data, strong party affiliation, elite dominance, and other conditions that do not promote democratic consolidation, intra-party

democracy has been promoted and sustained over the years. In this case, Ghana represents what is possible in the absence of what structures must exist for democracy to consolidate in theory. The existence of elite consensus with ‘big men’ politics means that patronage networks will dominate any political arrangements which is not unique to Ghana but representative of the larger politics in Africa. As such, intra-party democracy tends to be the only tool in the hands of grassroots supporters to demand accountability from party leaders, yet it is understudied.

Therefore, lessons from this study can be applied to countries where political parties attempt some form of candidate selection primaries in an electoral college—given that the socio-political dynamics in most cases are similar (see concluding chapter on conditions precedent).

1.3 Research Design

The research was designed to appropriately address the key questions for the study, methodological approach, case selection, and expected outcomes by carefully studying candidate selection in Ghana in order to further refine and enhance the existing literature. The aim was to contribute to a theory development that explains why candidates engage in gift giving over time to build relationships with selectorates and participate in the all-pay vote-buying auctions in attempts to win primaries.

1.3.1 Research Questions

The research focuses on three main questions:

1. Does vote buying significantly affect candidate selection elections in electoral colleges after accounting for other factors?
2. Does vote buying encourage selectorates to choose candidates who will meet their own needs and ambitions, rather than choosing candidates whom they believe will most appeal to the generality of voters in the constituency?
3. Does vote buying in the parliamentary primaries contribute to the domination of Parliament by men?

These questions were formulated based on existing gaps that emerged from the literature review and were answered with an extensive case study, including a within-case comparison on candidate selection primaries in Ghana. The aim is to investigate the efficacy of vote buying in closed primary settings and, accounting for all other significant variables, to test whether parliamentary candidate selection primaries are won by candidates who spend more on buying votes. This will help understand the implications of vote buying for democracy, gender representation and parity, political legitimacy, increasing costs of primaries, and parliamentary effectiveness for democratic reforms.

1.3.2 Constituency Selection

The research was designed as a case study on candidate selection primaries in Ghana. Three constituencies were selected to provide a contextual analysis on whether vote buying exists in primary elections and, if it does, whether it is more significant in strongholds or swing constituencies. Also, these constituencies had unique characteristics and electoral dynamics that were relevant to answering the stated research questions.

1.3.2.1 The Three Constituencies

To answer the key research questions, the research focused on three main constituencies. The constituencies were the New Juaben South constituency, an urban seat and NPP stronghold; the Ketu South constituency, a mixed rural-urban seat and NDC stronghold; and the Adentan constituency, an urban constituency that swings between the NPP and NDC. These constituencies, even though are all based in the southern half of Ghana, were selected based, firstly, on their distinctive local electoral dynamics that are relevant in answering the research questions and, secondly, on the common patterns they exhibit during primary elections that are typical of constituencies in Ghana because of the how these primaries are organized and the selectorates who tend to have similar characteristics across the country, this mix of constituencies that reflect rural and urban areas which will be relevant to test for internal and external validity across constituencies in Ghana regardless of geographic location.

Results from this study can be reliably applied to any constituency in Ghana. However, the quantum of vote buying will vary based on the type of candidates contesting a primary and the resources available to them. In a case where for instance, two political heavyweights are contesting a seat, regardless of the regional location of the constituency, significant amounts of cash may be expended within the moral and social economies that govern the all-pay vote-buying auctions. That notwithstanding, it will be important for future research on vote buying

to select constituencies in the northern half of Ghana to further enhance the emerging literature.

Table1: Key political features of selected constituencies.

Constituency	New Juaben South	Ketu South	Adentan
Year created	1992	1992	2004
Type of constituency*	Urban	Urban and Rural mix	Urban
Voter population	90,627	139,215	151,003
Dominant Ethnicity**	Yes	Yes	No
Swing between parties	No	No	Yes
Parties in power since creation	NPP***	NDC from 1992–2020	NPP, NDC****
Competitive primaries	Yes	Yes	Yes
Competitive elections	No	No	Yes
Incumbent contesting	Yes	No	Yes
Longest MPs have served*****	Two terms	Two terms	One term*****

* Data based on constituency location. Whilst the New Juaben and Adentan constituencies are located in capital cities, Ketu South is a mixed constituency of urban and rural voters.

** Based on the 2010 population census, the New Juaben South constituency is dominated 75% by the Akyem, and the Ketu South constituency is dominated 93% by the Ewe ethnic group.

*** The NDC won in 1992 because the opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary elections after alleged malpractice with the presidential vote.

**** The constituency has, interestingly, always elected an MP whose party tended to win the presidential elections, except in the 2020 elections when the party of the MP elected to Parliament lost the presidential elections.

***** The longest any MP has served in New Juaben South and Ketu South is two terms.

***** None of the candidates representing the NDC or NPP has been successful at re-election. Whereas the two sitting MPs from the NDC lost at the candidate selection primaries, the sitting MPs from the NPP have been successful at the primaries but go on to lose the elections.

New Juaben South

The New Juaben South constituency, formerly known as the Koforidua constituency, was created in 1992 as part of the first 200 constituencies in Ghana's Fourth Republic. It is the capital of the Eastern region and is therefore an urban constituency. It has a voter population of 90,627 with 34 electoral areas and 104 polling stations.

As one of the dominant Akan regions in Ghana, it has always been a bedrock of the NPP, having presented two of the three presidential candidates to represent the NPP. Prof. Albert Adu-Boahen, who contested Jerry Rawlings in 1992, was from the region. In the 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 elections, Nana Akufo-Addo, who represented the NPP, came from the region as well.

For this and for other historic reasons, presidential and parliamentary elections have been dominated by the NPP. In the 1992 elections, the NPP won the presidential vote in New Juaben South with the NDC winning the parliamentary seat, largely due to the boycott of the parliamentary elections by what was then the opposition NPP. Since 1996, the NPP has won both the presidential vote and parliamentary seat. In 1996, it won the presidential vote with 54%; in 2000 it received 63% in the main election, which increased to 68% in the run-off. It won again in 2004 with 64%, but in 2008 its vote was reduced to 58.7% in the presidential election and 58.6% in the run-off. It won the presidential vote with 60% in 2012, 66% in 2016, and 66% in 2020.

Because New Juaben South is a stronghold, its seat has always attracted competitive primaries, apart from the 1996 and 2000 elections when Yaw Barimah, a lawyer, was nominated without a primary contest. Formal parliamentary primaries have been organized beginning in 2004. In the 2004 primaries, Yaw Barimah defeated Madam Beatrice Boateng, an education administrator, polling 58 votes against 35 votes. In 2008, Madam Beatrice Boateng polled 54 votes to beat incumbent Yaw Barimah, who had 47 votes in the primaries, and she went on to win the seat for the NPP.

In the 2012 primary,⁸ Beatrice Boateng lost to Mark Asibey-Yeboah. He obtained 240 votes to Boateng's 161 votes and Oteng Adu's 110. In the 2016 primaries, Mark Asibey-Yeboah triumphed in a competitive primary by polling 295 votes against the 216 votes received by Michael Okyere-Baafi. The 2020 primaries, which were a repeat of the 2016 primaries between Asibey-Yeboah and Okyere-Baafi, saw Okyere-Baafi defeating the incumbent Asibey-Yeboah with 372 votes against 200; Okyere-Baafi went on to win the main election for the NPP.

Candidate selection in the NDC has also been competitive, with two or three candidates competing in each election since 2004. In 1996, David Boateng was nominated, and George Boateng was nominated in 2000. The 2004 election saw Kwasi Gyan Tutu winning the primaries against George Boateng. In 2008 Ransford Boakye won the primaries. Although he lost the candidate selection primaries to Kwaku Owusu

⁸ In 2012, there were reforms, and selectorates were expanded to include all polling station executives. In the previous primaries of 2004 and 2008, only polling station chairmen were eligible to vote.

Acheampong in 2012, Boakye came back to win the 2016 primaries. In 2020, Martin Offei won the NDC primaries against Joshua Ayerakwa-Kumordzi.

The New Juaben South constituency makes an interesting case study due to its highly competitive primaries since 2004. Candidates that have won the constituency have had postgraduate training. For example, Yaw Barimah was a lawyer; Beatrice Boateng was an educationist; Mark Asibey-Yeboah held a PhD in economics; and Okyere-Baafi earned an MBA.

The dynamics of the constituency present an interesting window for understanding why selectorates chose candidates. New Juaben South is in the heart of one of the areas with the greatest NPP support and draws a lot of attention to its polling station primaries, which determine parliamentary primary outcomes (polling station primaries are addressed in-depth in chapter 5). As such, it provides all the ingredients needed to study candidate selection primary elections. Every election, from polling station elections through constituency elections, are keenly contested because of the role they play in selecting candidates. Due to this, my assumption was that patron-client relationships would be a strong feature of the politics, thus helping answer my research questions. Also, it presents an interesting case in which the two main contenders in the 2016 primaries contested again in 2020.

Adentan

Adentan was created in 2004 out of the Ashaiman constituency. It is an urban swing constituency in the Greater Accra Region that has

alternated between the dominant NPP and NDC. The constituency, which has 12 electoral areas and 304 polling stations, is the seventh largest in terms of voter population with 151,003 registered voters (2020).

Since its creation in 2004, the constituency has always elected an MP whose party has won the national elections, except for the 2020 elections.⁹ In 2004, the NDC presidential candidate, John E. Atta-Mills, won the presidential vote in the constituency with 18,860 votes against John Kufuor, the NPP candidate and sitting president, who gained 18,714 votes. In the parliamentary elections, however, the NPP candidate won. Subsequently, the NDC won the presidential and parliamentary votes in 2008 and 2012, but lost the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections to the NPP. In the 2020 elections, the NDC won the parliamentary and presidential votes.

Parliamentary primaries and the general elections in the constituency are tightly contested. In the 2004 elections, the NPP nominated Kwadjo Opare Hammond, who polled 17,964 votes against the NDC nominee, Joseph Kabu Davies, who polled 17,020, leading Opare Hammond to victory by 944 votes. In 2008, the incumbent, Opare Hammond, was nominated unopposed after his contender was disqualified from the primaries.¹⁰ He was challenged by the NDC's Kojo Adu Asare, who won the NDC primaries by polling 52 votes to defeat

⁹ Adentan was carved out of the Ashaiman constituency in 2004 when the Electoral Commission, in exercise of its constitutional mandate, decided to increase the number of constituencies from 200 to 230.

¹⁰ Stephen Delarbi, the only contestant, was disqualified on the grounds of presenting fictitious secondary school testimonials to support his document and for also having a dual citizenship.

Alhaji Adam Mahama, who polled 25 votes. Adu Asare subsequently won the parliamentary election by a 3,584 margin, polling 20,230 votes against 16,646 votes received by the incumbent NPP MP.

In 2012, Kojo Adu Asare, the incumbent MP, lost the NDC candidate selection primaries to Emmanuel Nii Ashie Moore. Ashie Moore polled 77 votes out of the 158 delegates to beat the incumbent MP, who managed only 17 votes. Emmanuel Nii Ashie Moore subsequently won the seat by polling 35,409 votes against the NPP's Madam Frances Assiam, who won a competitive primary by polling 324 votes against Yaw Buaben Asamoah's 207. Frances Assiam garnered 30,805 votes in the main elections.

In 2016, incumbent Nii Ashie Moore lost the NDC primaries to Mohammed Adamu Ramadan, who garnered 2,286 against Ashie Moore's 1,130.¹¹ In the NPP, Yaw Buaben Asamoah won the parliamentary primary by polling 238 votes while his competitors, Rashid Bawa and Morgan Newman, who polled 198 and 179 votes respectively. In the ensuing elections, Yaw Buaben Asamoah polled 33,952 to defeat Ramadan, who polled 32,588.

In 2020, Adamu Ramadan, the NDC's losing candidate in the main 2016 elections, won the primaries again when he polled 730 votes against 559 by his closest challenger, Nana Oye Lithur. In the NPP primaries, incumbent Yaw Buaben Asamoah won with 422 votes against

¹¹ After the 2012 elections, the NDC reformed its primary process, changing it to a semi-open primary where all card holders of the party could vote after a biometric registration. This was, however, reverted to the NPP restricted primary with polling station executives.

Emmanuel Mantey with 217 votes, Rahman Zak with 83 votes, Alfred Kumi with 10 votes, and Freda Sarpong with 7 votes. The 2020 elections were a repeat of the 2016 elections between Mohammed Ramadan and Yaw Buaben Asamoah, the incumbent who defeated him in 2016. The result was that Adamu Ramadan defeated Yaw Buaben Asamoah, 63,436 votes against 49,255.

The Adentan constituency makes for an interesting case study on primaries in Ghana because of its dynamics. Adentan rarely retains its MPs for a second term. Since its creation, the NPP have won twice. The NPP incumbents have gone on to win the NPP primaries only to be defeated in the general election against the NDC candidate. The NDC, on the other hand, have won thrice, but the incumbent MPs have always been defeated in the subsequent primaries.

Ketu South

The Ketu South constituency is located within the Ketu South Municipality of the Volta Region of Ghana. It is a rural-urban constituency that shares its northeast border with the Republic of Togo. The constituency is a stronghold of the NDC; since 1992, the party has consistently won almost 90% of votes in every presidential election. However, competitive parliamentary primaries have often resulted in independent candidates running for MP. These candidates often receive many votes, but not enough to win the seat or toss the seat to the opposition NPP. The constituency has a voter population of 139,215 with 39 electoral areas and 279 polling stations.

In 1992, Wisdom Seyena-Susu was nominated as the NDC candidate without a primary and won the general election. Charles Agbenaza was subsequently nominated without a primary in 1996 and 2000 and won both elections for the NDC. In 2004, however, primaries were formally organized, and after a competitive and acrimonious primary contest, Albert Zigah edged out the favorite, Nypson Agbagedy, by 9 votes when he polled 95 votes out of a total of about 267 votes against Agbagedy's 86. Also, Francis Dzineku, Desky Ahedor, and Cyril Necku polled 38, 27, and 21 votes, respectively. Nypson Agbagedy subsequently ran as an independent in the main election and polled 23% against Albert Zigah's 68%.¹²

In 2008, Albert Zigah was retained as NDC's parliamentary candidate when he polled 234 of the 303 votes cast, defeating two others, Desky Ahedor, who gained 45 votes, and Elizabeth Kuenyefu, who polled 20 votes. Albert Zigah went on to win the general election with 90% of votes cast.

In the 2012 elections, Albert Zigah lost the primaries to Fifi Kwetey, who polled 403 votes against Albert Zigah's 60 votes, Raphael Alorwu's 82, Nypson Agbagedey's 30, Nicholas Woclachie's 6, Elizabeth Kuenyefu's 3, and Frederick Alipui's 1 vote. In the ensuing elections, Fifi Kwetey won 89% (77,837) of the votes against Albert Zigah, who had run as an independent and polled only 660 votes. In the 2016 primaries, Fifi

¹² 'NDC in Trouble in Ketu South,' GhanaWeb, June 24, 2004, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/politics/NDC-In-Trouble-In-Ketu-South-60355> (accessed January 10, 2022).

Kwetey polled 14,610 total votes to beat Sylvanus Amedorme and Famous Kuadegah, who polled 1,375 and 637 votes, respectively. In the general elections, Fifi Kwetey won with 48,723 (65%) votes, lower than the usual 90% threshold because two defectors, Jim Morti (18,643) and Albert Zigah (2,545, the former MP), together polled 28% (21,803) of the votes. In 2020, the incumbent opted out of the primaries, and Madam Dzifa Gomashie won a tight primary contest by 30 votes after polling 585 votes to beat Foga Nukunu with 555 votes, Joseph Nyavi with 294, Nicholas Worklatsi with 302, and Carolyn Kudah-Pakar with 109. Dzifa Gomashie went on to win the general election with 84,664 votes.

In the NPP, Thomas Seshie was the lone candidate from 1996 to 2004 but was defeated by Kodjo Mida Dje in the 2008 primaries. Godwin Yayra Nkuawu won the 2012 primaries, and Maxwell Lugudor won the 2016 primaries. In a hotly contested primary in 2020, David Quarshie defeated Elliot Agbenorwu and Ruth Ayivie.

The Ketu South constituency presents an interesting contest for research because it is a rural-urban mix constituency in the stronghold of the NDC with primaries that have always included incumbents except in 2020. The candidate selection primaries are competitive and in most cases acrimonious, in some cases with elite defectors who run as independents. Even in the NPP, where a win in the primary contest does not provide a realistic chance of winning, primaries are equally competitive for reasons that are detailed in chapter 6.

These three constituencies present an appropriate setting to study parliamentary candidate selection primaries in Ghana. In these

constituencies, and emerging across Ghana, primaries are closely fought, and, as a result, candidates use inducements and bidding wars to be considered by delegates and to influence vote outcomes. The constituencies have been carefully selected based on their dynamics: New Juaben is an urban constituency with an incumbent-contested primary, Adentan is a swing constituency that had incumbent-contested primaries in both the NPP and NDC, and Ketu South had a primary that was not contested by an incumbent. Both New Juaben South and Ketu South provide an opportunity for a comparative study of ‘weakhold’ or opposition-area candidate selection contests where candidates have little chance of winning. These scenarios collectively present an appropriate setting to study intra-party elections within the two dominant parties and parliamentary candidate selection.

1.3.2.2 Methodology

In each constituency, a similar approach was taken to data collection. Given the complexity of researching the delicate issue of vote buying (Creswell, 2014), the research employed a qualitative approach with semi-structured face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. This allowed in-depth and contextual insights to be developed through careful interpretation (Bryman, 2015). It further permitted me to identify issues from the perspective of study participants and to understand how they interpreted their own behaviors (Hennink et al, 2011).

It was important to use a method that captured the theoretical and objective understanding of vote-buying through direct interviews with the

active participants, the selectorates (voters in the primaries [at constituency or polling station level]), and the parliamentary aspirants who attempt to buy votes. This was against the background that studies on vote buying are often impacted by ‘social desirability bias’, which occurs when study participants provide answers that are socially acceptable rather than truthful responses (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p.5). This was a challenge for experimental studies on vote buying in Kenya (Kramon, 2013) and in Nicaragua and Lebanon where ‘social desirability bias’ underestimated the impact of vote buying on elections by over 22 percentage points (Gonzalez-Ocantos et al. 2012; Corstage, 2010).

Because of these potential challenges, I sought a methodology that enabled me to collect data that reflected the thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants by engaging them on their experiences and personal choices. The data feasibility was unclear and therefore talking directly with participants was the best way to generate the needed data and information. As such, the semi-structured interviews were employed because the relatively small sample size of this study made face-to-face interviews possible, it enabled me to develop open, personal, and flexible two-way communications to probe participant responses, follow up with further questions, and develop unpredictable themes alongside the interviews. It also allowed for a thematic analysis of the qualitative data that was collected (Drever, 1995; Flick, 2002).

The semi-structured interviews allowed me to engage in frank discussions and provided detailed information on why selectorates vote for

candidates after accepting gifts from all participants. It allowed for the amendment of questions while maintaining the focus of the research. In essence, it allowed for detailed and robust findings, as well as original quotes that enriched this thesis. In contrast, structured questionnaires, and list experiments with limited set of questions could not have provided the flexibility needed in understanding vote buying in the detail I sought.

With vote buying having divergent contexts, the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions brought responses into context by allowing participants to express their opinions in public and debate issues in focus groups, which allowed for follow-up questions for clarity (Creswell and Clark, 2007). It therefore helped to reduce or control response bias as certain epistemological assumptions during the interviews could be accounted for. The in-depth analysis required a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities of who the selectorates were, how primaries worked, how selectorates got selected and how vote buying happen.

Despite these strengths, the semi-structured interviews had a possible weakness of subjectivity or biases with the interviewer and interviewees. There was the possibility of the interviewer or interviewee having preconceptions or judgements, but the open deliberations ensured free-minded responses to address existing preconceptions. Secondly, the validity and reliability of responses created ethical issues where the identity of respondents had to be concealed. Also, because the interviews were face-to-face, the consistency of interviews was challenging due to conflicting availability of participants.

Nevertheless, the face-to-face interviews were used against other proven methods, such as structured questionnaires, list experiments or the item-count technique, which assigns participants in a treatment and control group with non-sensitive and sensitive questions to help address anticipated response bias and generate more truthful answers. I decided on this approach mainly because of the cost of doing so and because the approach I chose had demonstrated similar outcomes.

While list experiments have been used successfully to elicit truthful responses on sensitive social issues like racial attitudes (Kuklinski et al., 1997) and in related studies on vote buying in Nicaragua (Gonzalez-Ocantos et al., 2014), Lebanon (Corstange, 2018), and Kenya (Kramon, 2013), open-ended surveys have also been effectively used in Afrobarometer surveys to capture respondents' real motives and truthful personal behavior related to democracy, governance, and society across 37 countries in Africa since 1999.

The results of Afrobarometer surveys have demonstrated consistently that open-ended questionnaires can adequately address the theoretical concerns with the effects of response bias and retrospective evaluations on candidate choices. In effect, both open-ended questionnaires and list experiments have proven to provide similar outcomes in surveys on personal behavior (Gadjanova, 2017). In the context of this study, open-ended personal interviews and focus group discussions were most effective and efficient. The survey therefore asked questions on voting decisions, important factors influencing decisions, issues with vote secrecy and monitoring, and, in repeated primaries,

whether respondents switched support and, if so, the factors that influenced their decision. The survey also included a ranking-decision matrix.

To provide additional confidence in my interviews and address potential differences between sources of information, I used documentary sources in the form of relevant laws and regulations, local news, statistics, journals, biological profiles of candidates and books to check the validity of all information received (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Online sources and stories constituted an important part of the project. Relevant web pages, including those of the electoral commission of Ghana, the political parties, Ghanaweb.com, and myjoyonline.com, were archived monthly from the beginning of the project. Triangulating these sources with interview data compensated for any weaknesses in the information that was provided during interviews or from other sources (Kramon and Posner, 2012).

Interview Strategy

Data for this research was collected between October 2020 and January 2021. This thesis engaged primarily with four categories of interviewees: candidates and their campaign teams, members of the selectorate, ordinary voters, and political party executives, as well as academics, journalists, and think tank staff. Different questionnaires were administered to each group. However, the same questionnaire was administered in the three constituencies and in both political parties for data standardization, comparison, and cross-referencing.

The sample universe for the research includes all citizens of voting age within the case constituencies and political party selectorates. The research used a clustered, stratified multi-stage probability sample design (Afrobarometer) to give every selectorate or voter within the selected constituencies an equal and known chance of being chosen for inclusion in the sample. The rationale was to produce results that were representative of the constituency and representative across Ghana.

Each constituency was broken into electoral areas and polling stations. Selectorates were randomly selected and sampled with a probability proportional to the number of polling stations in an electoral area and stratified by the social dynamics of the constituency to ensure that all distinctive groups within each constituency were adequately represented in the sample. For logistical efficiency, the constituencies were clustered into three units and further broken down into electoral areas for the interviews. The research was conducted in one constituency at a time, moving from one to the next.

Interviews were started with an introduction on the purpose of the research; my student identification card was presented for assurance and to seek respondents' informed consent. Most of the interviews were conducted in English, with a few in the Twi language, which I speak fluently. Interviews were recorded using a voice recorder when permitted; most responses were written down and, where necessary, translated into English. Demographic information and dates of interviews were also recorded. Field notes were scanned daily and added to the University of Birmingham's secure Research Data Store after the fieldwork was

completed. The data was held in utmost confidentiality due to the sensitive nature of vote buying.

The personal interviews ensured a high response rate and provided the opportunity to clarify and ask follow-up questions specific to each constituency in order to make inferences representative of the larger population.

The parliamentary aspirants (candidates) who contested in the 2020 candidate selection primaries were easily identified; interview requests were made directly to them by phone and followed up with a formal invitation letter by email. For selectorates, I approached the party officials to gain access to the voter albums to randomly select respondents. I then made telephone calls and sent formal invitation letters either by email or in person. For voters, I sought the assistance of community leaders to help identify persons based on agreed-upon parameters for the research. These individuals were contacted by phone to set up interviews. Depending on availability, some voters were interviewed individually, and others were mobilized with the assistance of community leaders for focus group discussions. In addition, I also consulted with a wider array of individuals, including journalists who had reported extensively on vote buying during primary elections in Ghana, academic experts, past candidates, and political party leaders.

Table 2: Breakdown of Respondents

Constituency	Candidates	Selectorates	Voters	Party officials	Total
New Juaben South	3	20	6	4	33
Ketu South	6	20	6	3	35
Adentan	7	20	12	6	45
Others*					8
Total	16	60	24	13	121

*Others included journalists, academics, electoral officers, and think tank staff.

Table 2 shows that the number of respondents in the survey was 121 individuals. The respondents included 16 candidates, 60 selectorates across the three constituencies, 24 voters who were in the focus groups, 13 party officials, and eight others, including three journalists, two academic researchers, two electoral officers, and one think tank worker. These respondents were carefully selected to provide wide-ranging and diverse views.

Candidates and Their Campaign Teams

Of the 21 candidates in both the NPP and NDC who contested the 2020 candidate selection primaries in the case constituencies, 16 were interviewed for this research, as were two individuals from their campaign teams. Also, five former primary contestants (2 successful and 3 unsuccessful) in these constituencies and members of their campaign teams were interviewed for historical context. Once responses had reached a saturation point and further interviews were not providing additional or divergent information from the data that had already been collected, no additional interviews were conducted (Graziano,1976).

For candidates and their teams, I employed direct interviews to understand their views on vote buying and, in particular, what they seek

to buy, whom they attempt to influence, how much it weighs on their campaign budget, what items of inducement are provided, how they monitor the votes they attempt to buy, and the general dynamics that influence the building of patron-client relationships.

In order to improve the significance of the research findings, these questions were asked in relation to the primary process, selectorates' expectations, candidates' expectations, and the central campaign issues.

Selectorates

Selectorates were randomly sampled from the constituency voter albums that were used for primaries. The research employed direct observations of the candidate selection process, informal conversations, and semi-structured interviews in addition to focus group discussions for clarification and to follow up on key points.

Twenty randomly sampled selectorates were interviewed per constituency. The selectorates were purposively distributed based on locations within the electoral areas and based on gender, age, occupation, ethnicity, religion, and other social dynamics for a weighted representation (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight, 2010).

In the stronghold of New Juaben South, the focus was on NPP members, and in the stronghold of Ketu South, the focus was on the NDC. In addition, opposition candidates and selectorates were surveyed in each of those constituencies to provide a comparative analysis on vote-buying attempts and competition among candidates in opposition areas

or 'weakholds'.¹³ In Adentan, which is a swing constituency, both NDC and NPP delegates were equally interviewed.

Due to the sensitive nature of vote buying, selectorates and candidates who were the main respondents were interviewed privately. The interview technique adopted an informal conversational approach to build the trust of the interviewees to ensure honest responses. Focus group discussions, each with eight participating selectorates from both the NDC and NPP, were also employed in each constituency to compare public responses to private ones.

Respondents' identities were protected. Interviews were purely voluntary and mostly private and anonymous due to the sensitive nature of the research. The purpose of the research was made clear, and letters of introduction and information sheets were provided in instances of doubt.

The research questions were asked in relation to the primary process, selectorates' expectations, candidates' expectations, and the issues they were voting for.

Voters

Among constituency voters, three focus groups of eight persons each were sampled from electoral areas in the constituencies. These interviewees were chosen randomly by visiting electoral areas. Purposive sampling was used to reflect the demographics (men, women, young, old, employed, unemployed, etc.) in the area. In each stronghold

¹³ Weakholds are used in this research to mean constituencies where a candidate has almost no chance of winning based on historical data.

constituency, the focus group included two men from the NPP, two men from the NDC, two women from the NPP, and two women from the NDC. In the swing constituency, the focus group included a mix of voters. I facilitated and took notes during the focus group discussions, and I was assisted by an additional note taker.

The research questions were asked in relation to the primary process, voter expectations, and selectorates' electoral decisions.

While I anticipated potential biases with the research, the combination of direct interviews and focus group discussions should adequately address the theoretical concern with the effects of response bias and retrospective evaluations on candidate choices. In a primary where voting buying is institutionalized and expected, it will be difficult to underestimate its impact on outcomes. The combination of direct personal interviews and focus group discussions, however, helped capture respondents' real motives and truthful political behavior in private and in group scenarios. The focus group discussions helped in assessing assumptions, issues where discussants were in general agreement, and whether there were specific points of contestation.

1.4 Ethical Considerations

In undertaking the research, ethical considerations were strictly enforced. I used the University of Birmingham Letter of Introduction as a first step to introduce the study to the participants and further explained my rationale for selecting them. I also made available a printed participant information sheet and consent form for participants to

endorse as part of the interview process. Permission was sought from participants for notes to be taken and recordings to be made, and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality were provided.

Candidate participation was voluntary. As a result, their right to withdraw was explained before interviews, and a ninety-day period during which participants could withdraw from the study was agreed upon. Due to the sensitive nature of the research, only public information such as names of candidates was published, but participant data was anonymized and securely stored on my laptop, which was password protected. Sensitive files were also encrypted. As a precaution, research files were compressed and password enabled before being emailed to a student email account. I also used the University of Birmingham research data storage system (BEAR) to keep interview recordings and transcripts safe. Also, in line with COVID-19 protocols, face masks were worn throughout the face-to-face and focus group interviews, which were conducted outdoors at a time when political meetings were occurring frequently and primary elections were held in a normal manner, social distancing was enforced, and participants engaged in handwashing.

1.5 Theoretical Contributions

This thesis has sought to make key contributions to the existing literature on vote buying. The thesis unlike previous studies focuses mainly on party primaries and not general elections. Consequently, it contributes to the emerging literature on the selectorates who form the

foundation upon which intra-party democracy is built, candidate motivations, the role primary contests play in gender representation, the implications of vote buying on gender representation, voter expectations in relation to what selectorates present, and why certain candidates win, which are not fully explored in the literature.

First, this study shows that primary contests have become all-pay vote-buying auctions contrary to what the existing literature simply describes as vote buying. As demonstrated in subsequent chapters, almost all candidates in the primary contests attempt to buy votes and as such, an all-pay vote-buying auction has emerged with rules that are governed by moral and social economies.

The thesis demonstrates the complexity of vote buying and the reality that vote buying is not simply transactional, or a simple reciprocal arrangement that guarantees candidates the votes they attempt to buy. Because of the all-pay auction, vote buying has become more complicated and imbued in personal relationships and contexts. The candidate that spends the most money is not guaranteed victory unless the spending is regulated within moral and social economies. There exist a few studies on vote buying in this context and as such, this thesis contributes to the literature with enormous ethnographic material.

Second, the dominant literature on vote buying argues on its effectiveness as a campaign strategy and often ignore other consequences. This thesis demonstrates a broader social consequence of vote buying on gender representation which is not fully explored in the literature. This research demonstrates that addressing the broader

sociocultural and political factors that hinder gender representation is not enough but an emerging hurdle for gender representation is winning candidate selection primaries which presents significant financial burdens because of the emerging vote-buying auctions.

Third, this thesis provides an insightful and in-depth study on party primaries which is often neglected in the literature. This thesis shows different variables that determine primary outcomes. The core arguments are that the composition of the selectorates who vote are arranged by political leaders who intend to contest future elections diminishes the seeming power of these selectorates, the size of the electoral colleges makes vote buying attractive, the demographic profile of selectorates foster the mutually beneficial and rewarding arrangements that encourage vote buying and micro details and understanding of how party primaries work in Ghana.

Finally, this thesis contributes to theory development—that candidates provide gifts to selectorates over time to develop expected relationships of mutual reward and benefit. The findings from this research were consistent with the various theoretical predictions on vote buying in the context of general elections. In addition, however, this thesis finds that candidates make vote-buying attempts to build and develop relationships with voters. This was easy during primary elections because of the small numbers in the electoral college but difficult to execute in a general election because of the large number of voters.

1.5 Plan of the Thesis

This thesis is structured thematically. Building on this introduction, chapter 2 provides a more in-depth analysis of the literature on intra-party democracy and vote buying to provide the theoretical frameworks that the empirical data from this research tests.

Chapter 3 then offers an analysis of the history of politics in Ghana, which has often been regarded as an epitome of democratic reforms in Africa. The chapter provides an analysis of the society and economy of Ghana; the distinct historical trends that have made democracy succeed; the institutions, legal, and political traditions that have evolved to deliver success; the political organization; and the socio-cultural dynamics that have ensured three peaceful political transitions after a turbulent post-independence period.

Chapter 4 details the formal and informal frameworks that govern the conduct of elections in Ghana and provides a historical analysis of elections from 1951 to 2020.

Chapter 5 examines political structuring, organization, and internal party democracy in Ghana. It looks at the intra-party electoral process in Ghana beginning from the selection of the first line of electors from Ghana's dominant political parties, who have evolved to use intra-party elections in their leadership and candidate selection primaries.

Chapter 6 looks at the motivations and the practice of parliamentary candidate selection primaries in Ghana. It reviews the parties' constitutional and social frameworks together with candidate

motivation, the types of races being contested, and the attendant costs that are escalating in every election.

Chapter 7 uses the data from the research, accounting for all the significant variables, to test whether elections are won by candidates who spend more on vote-buying attempts on the eve of election day or on election day itself. This is to test the significance and implications of vote buying.

Chapter 8 answers the question: Does vote buying in the parliamentary primaries contribute to the domination of Parliament by men? The chapter details candidate selection primaries in the NPP and NDC in an attempt to provide an empirical assessment of how the rising costs affect women and contribute to their under-representation in Ghana's Parliament.

Chapter 9 explores, using an empirical analysis, the gaps between voter expectations and selectorates' electoral decisions. It analyzes the determinants of selectorate and voter choices and notes their expectations of gifts from candidates.

Chapter 10 concludes the thesis and provides recommendations for reforming candidate selection elections in Ghana to curtail the fast-developing influence of vote buying, with wider implications on elections in other African countries.

Chapter Two

Intra-Party Democracy and Vote Buying: The Literature, Theories, and Arguments

There has been an evolving literature on intra-party democracy, party primaries, and vote buying because political parties in emerging democracies are increasingly adopting intra-party elections in selecting candidates to represent them in general elections. Consequently, vote buying has been widely studied but largely in association with general elections, not primaries. Using the case of candidate selection primaries, the thesis identifies some of the underexplored variables in intra-party democracy that are related to the composition of electoral colleges, the impact of vote buying on gender representation, and whether those who pay more are more likely to win elections, regardless of existing moral and social economies.

This chapter seeks, first, to review the dominant literature on intra-party democracy. It will review the core theories in relation to who wields political power in political parties, candidate selection and internal democracy, party fortunes, and the influence of money in inter-party democracy. Second, the chapter will examine core arguments and debates on why people buy and sell votes, the implication of secrets ballots on vote buying, and the efficacy of vote buying. The objective is to

situate this thesis in the context of existing literature on general elections and candidate selection primaries, which is the focus of this research.

This chapter concludes that vote-buying in the context of candidate selection primaries has become an all-pay vote-buying auction, in contrast to existing literature that perceives vote buying as a direct transaction. This is because these transactions are engaged in by almost all candidates; they are not one-off events but take months to develop and sustain during an election cycle.

2.1 Intra-Party Democracy

Intra-party democracy enables political parties to select their core leadership and viable candidates who contest elections on behalf of constituents (Cheeseman et al., 2016a). Effective processes could promote competition and unity, and prevent elite defections, if they conform to democratic principles in theory and practice (Debrah and Gyimah-Boadi, 2005). Ideally, intra-party democracy is to distribute power from the very top of the political pyramid to the base, where the core of party supporters and activists are found. Party members are usually engaged in party deliberation and decision making, and they serve as members of electoral colleges. Depending on the organizational model for a political party, internal democracy can be assessed based on the level of inclusiveness, centralization, or institutionalization of political power (Scarrow, 2005). Candidate and leadership selection have become the core tests of the internal democratic strength of political parties, and the candidate selection elections determine how intra-party democracy is

being consolidated (Gallagher, 1988; Bille, 2001). There are various forms by which internal democracy is practiced: first, there is the open democracy where all card-holding members are enfranchised to vote; second, there are the electoral colleges, where a few members, mostly in leadership positions, vote; and third, there is the nomination of leaders and candidates by party leadership without recourse to contests.

There is a large body of literature on intra-party democracy—mainly on established democracies where intra-party democracy and candidate selection have been a predominant feature in their elections (Gallagher, 1980; Hazan and Rahat, 2006; Ranney, 1965; Sartori, 1976). However, candidate selection is a developing phenomenon in democracies across sub-Saharan Africa, and, as a result, scholarly attention is growing as political parties in the region are increasingly adopting primary elections to select candidates.

Existing theoretical frameworks suggest that candidate selection elections are practices that can generate nominees with greater relevance, better campaigning skills, and higher popularity within parties, at the potential cost of being more ideologically extreme (Ichino and Nathan, 2010). In this section, I will engage with the dominant literature, arguments, and key conclusions on intra-party democracy in relation to Ghana.

2.1.1 Who Wields Real Political Authority, Political Leaders or Grassroots Supporters?

A large body of work examines the increasing authority of party leaders over supporters made possible by their control of party financing and the

processes by which leaders are selected (Croissant and Chambers, 2010). The selection of party leaders mainly focuses on selectorate composition and accountability measures, which go both ways. Power distribution tends to favor the top hierarchy with little power shared among party grassroots (Tavits, 2011). Intra-party elections have become the crucial process for control, and political leaders position their supporters to contest and win intra-party elections to strategically control the processes and decisions within the party (Schattschneider, 1942; Ranney, 1981).

Existing literature on American and European political parties promotes the political agency model, which holds that inclusive policy-setting procedures in political parties enhance incumbents' re-election chances because of their dominant control of the election process (May, 1973). Arguing in support of May, Duverger (1978) notes that because political leaders tend to be major financiers of political parties, they have absolute control over ordinary members, which therefore gives incumbents the opportunity to control the process to their advantage, as plays out in most African democracies. Against this, other scholars, such as Scarrow (2005) and Thomson (2016), argue contrarily that intra-party democracy promotes the constant election of new party leaders, not only incumbents, and offers avenues to reconcile individual and party interests by ensuring that defeated candidates stay in the party with the hope of contesting and winning the next intra-party election. Studies by Trechsel and Scariani (1998) that tested elite influence on internal democracy in Swiss politics concluded that elite control was powerful,

weakening internal party structures and introducing political volatility that tended to influence party performance in general elections. This finding is rooted in the politics of Western Europe and North America and is also similar to what pertains in the larger African continent, even though African politics is largely based on factors such as ethnicity, religion, and clientelist relations in contrast to the ideological considerations that often dominate in Western Europe and North America.

Scholars such as Clapham (1996), Thomson (2016), and Bratton (1999) have argued that the dominance of patrimonial relationships in postcolonial African politics has ensured that political leaders control the processes, decisions, and outcomes within political parties. This is supported by Lotshwao (2009), whose study on South African politics concluded that because the ANC was characterized by centralized leadership selection, party leaders who dominate internal decision making tend to neglect the ordinary members of the ANC. In Lotshwao's view, the ANC leadership does not tolerate open debate or alternative views, and it leaves the absolute control of the party in the hands of the political leaders.

In the case of Ghana, Osei (2013, p. 558) argues that political parties in Ghana are 'largely instruments of elite control' with all decisions and processes controlled from the top of the political ladder. Osei concludes that political party members have little influence on policy and decision making except for some voting privileges. Writing on intra-party democracy in Ghana, Debrah (2014) discusses a participatory

democracy approach and, in contrast to Osei, concludes that intra-party democracy in Ghana affords citizens the opportunity to nurture their political aspirations and ambitions through their regular involvement in their parties' programs despite the elite dominance of the decision processes. On the other hand, Ichino and Nathan (2017), in their thesis on party primaries in Ghana, argue that party leaders in Ghana and other emerging democracies base their candidate selection decisions on the need to prevent elite defections and to motivate grassroots activists.

These arguments introduced gaps that informed the stated questions in Chapter 1. It was important to understand the relationship between selectorates and voters in candidate selections, how these were affecting gender representation, and the influence of money on intra-party democracy.

2.1.2 Candidate Selection and Internal Democracy

The consensus among academics is that intra-party democracy is instrumental for consolidating democracy—both in theory and practice—in any political system (Debrah, 2014; Scarrow, 2005; Diamond and Gunther, 2001). Candidate selection should improve intra-party democracy, but evidence from the literature shows the contrary. In most cases, these elections, which follow democratic procedures in theory, are, in practice, contrary to existing democratic principles.

Studies of intra-party democracy in Africa have concluded that the larger democratic challenges in African elections result from leadership and candidate selections, as African political parties lack internal

democracy, which affects the quality of democracy on the continent. In most cases, the effects tend to impact parliamentary elections when they lead to elite defections but have little impact on presidential elections, as losing presidential aspirants usually do not run as independent candidates (Seeberg et al., 2018; Lotshwao, 2009). Practices such as electoral machinations to favor certain candidates have often led to intra-party violence, especially in party strongholds.

The literature on internal democracy suggests that the major political parties have weak internal democracy because a handful of parties use elections to select candidates. As Debrah (2014, p. 66) explains, intra-party elections serve a cosmetic purpose to validate elections because party leaders manipulate them through vote buying and other machinations. In Ghana's Fourth Republic, political leaders permit new entrants and provide avenues for grassroots participation at the polling station and branch levels. Some of these grassroots leaders become members of the electoral colleges. However, clientelist politics dominate, and political leaders at the top who finance the parties control the process and organization of these intra-party elections, influencing them to their benefit. This is because political parties in Ghana lack organizational efficacy—they lack membership data, and social dynamics perpetuate patron-client relationships between national party leaders and grassroots leaders, each helping the other remain in power.

That notwithstanding, the official notion according to Ghana's political party leadership is that intra-party elections promote grassroots democracy, empower party foot soldiers, identify committed party

members who can take leadership positions, promote leadership accountability, and ultimately ensure victory in elections. As a result, the NPP and NDC have made numerous attempts to reform intra-party democracy—usually after losing the parliamentary and presidential elections, where, among many reasons for their defeat, challenges with intra-party elections and their attendant elite defections, disunity, and demoralization of grassroots members feature prominently. The leadership of the two main parties in Ghana have argued that internal democracy is instrumental in building the consensus needed to develop and sustain political gains (Debrah, 2014).

2.1.3 Candidate Selection and Party Fortunes

Studies on the general impact of intra-party democracy in established democracies in North America as well as emerging democracies in Eastern Europe and Africa conclude that, among many factors, internal democracy shapes electoral success (Boucek, 2002; Allern and Pederson, 2007; Maiyo, 2008; Debrah, 2014). Where internal democracy is managed openly and effectively, it leads to a unity of purpose within political parties and motivates party activists to campaign effectively (Lotshwao, 2009; Lehrer, 2012). The impact of this tends to be greater in parliamentary elections than in presidential elections (Villodres, 2003).

Exploring the effect of internal democracy on party performance in the United Kingdom (UK), Dunleavy and Kippin (2018) concluded that the internal challenges with UK's political parties contributed significantly to party success or failure. Citing the chaos and consistent

in-fighting within the UK's Independent Party, they concluded that the party's underperformance in elections since 2015 was mainly result of their lack of a consolidated intra-party democracy.

Osei (2013) argues that the performance of parties in general elections depends on how democratic internal processes are sustained. Usually, conflicts arise from leadership imposition of candidates against the tacit support of party members, vote rigging, intimidation and manipulation, vote buying, and interference in candidate selection primaries. In support of Osei, Ichino and Nathan (2013) conclude that local politicians in the constituencies were crucial for party performance. Challenges with candidate selection practices lead to conflicts that are difficult to resolve and to elite defections that have considerable consequences on electoral fortunes.

Debrah and Gyimah-Boadi (2005) argue that internal democratic challenges contributed to the defeat of the NDC in 2000. In support of Debrah and Gyimah-Boadi, Bob-Milliar (2012b) also notes the existence of factionalism during intra-party elections in Ghana that fuels party conflicts and tensions between dueling personalities. This is even more profound when incumbent presidents exhaust their term limits or decline to contest for health or other reasons (Cheeseman, 2010).

Ninsin (2006, p. 15) blames internal party challenges on the conflict between party headquarters and the party constituency, where candidates are imposed on local politicians who usually have their favorites. In support of Ninsin, Debrah and Gyimah-Boadi (2005, p. 64) agree that intra-party democracy in the Fourth Republic is systematically

challenged, especially in candidate and leadership selection contests. This, they opine, is due to the political dynamics within electoral colleges and party leadership influence on the composition of electoral colleges.

A study of parliamentary nominations of the NDC and NPP for the 2004 and 2008 elections by Ichino and Nathan (2010) demonstrated that primaries were keenly contested when the chances of the NPP and NDC winning the general election were evident. The level of internal competition affects the dynamics in the general election, depending on whether viable candidates are selected or losing candidates defect to run as independents. Ichino and Nathan (2013a) conclude that policy consideration is less important than the influence of money in intra-party contests. Ninsin (2006, p. 16) supports that conclusion and argues that money is a determinant of candidate viability.

2.1.4 Candidate Selection and the Influence of Money

The influence of money on emerging democracies in Africa has been widely studied, and the dominant conclusion is that vote buying plays a significant role in elections (Lindberg, 2003; Cammack, 2007; Robinson and Verdier, 2013; Cheeseman, 2015). However, most of the literature is focused on vote buying in general elections; the influence of money in intra-party democracy is understudied. In Ghana especially, there is very little scholarly work on intra-party elections, except for studies by Bob-Milliar (2012), Ichino and Nathan (2013b), and Acheampong (2020), together with a few others. Ichino and Nathan conclude that such elections are more heavily influenced by vote buying than by policy

competition. In support of Ichino and Nathan, Gyampo (2018) notes that, ‘Since 1992, elections in Ghana, particularly internal party elections and national ones, have been saddled with vote-buying in a manner that confers legitimacy on corrupt practices after elections, undermines the sovereign will of the people, and hinders the selection of competent people to lead political parties’.

2.2 Vote Buying

As indicated in chapter 1, accompanying democratic elections is a form of electoral corruption that manifests mostly in ‘vote buying’, a phenomenon that is often debated due to the controversial understanding of what is being bought by candidates and sold by voters.

In its most simplistic depiction, vote buying involves the direct exchange of material rewards and services between political office seekers and voters (Hicken, 2011; Robinson and Verdier, 2013), a relationship that is mutually beneficial and rewarding but undermines the delivery of public goods, encourages elite capture, and questions the integrity of elections. Yet, while it is common to speak of vote buying in both the media and academic literature, a growing body of work has called into question whether votes are really bought and sold in any simplistic sense.

Vote buying is a complex phenomenon with subjective interpretations depending on cultural context and background. Efforts to provide rewards in exchange for electoral support are most effective when those efforts are not simply thought of as ‘vote buying’. As the research

presented in later chapters demonstrates, what is termed simply as vote buying is an all-pay vote-buying auction where almost all candidates attempt to buy votes. These strategies work best when they are used by candidates to build mutually beneficial relations over an election cycle to induce members of the electoral colleges to vote in a particular way. This section looks at the dominant theories and arguments about why people sell and buy votes, the relationship between vote buying and the secret ballot, the efficacy and impact of vote buying, and its relation to democracy.

Vote buying has seemingly become a permanent feature in elections across the globe, and scholars have documented its prevalence in general elections across the world (Brusco et al., 2004; Stokes, 2005; Blaydes, 2006; Bratton, 2008; Vicente and Wantchekon, 2009; Hicken, 2011; Jensen and Justesen, 2014; Gonzales-Ocantos et al., 2014). Vote buying is, however, not restricted to general elections; it is also prevalent in the key political activity of leadership and candidate selection, which is of core importance to this thesis.

2.2.1 Why Do People Buy and Sell Votes?

Increasingly, candidate popularity, campaign promises, and policy ideas have become inadequate to win elections in some democracies. Vote buying has become a dominant campaign strategy for both weak and strong candidates. Money seemingly plays a major role in candidates' chances. Voters conspicuously expect politicians to entice them for votes, even if they ordinarily would vote for the candidate.

Displays of wealth have become a necessary qualification for office, but material generosity by itself does not guarantee victory (Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis, 2019). The giving of gifts is best understood as ‘a combination of economic exchange and social ritual’ (Rigger, 1994, p. 214). As a result, vote-buying attempts have become dominant in emerging democracies with electorates who attempt to sell votes with candidates and political parties who attempt to buy votes, either directly or indirectly. Political demands generally increase in the months leading to elections, as voters’ troop to political players for money, favors, and influence as a condition of their votes. According to Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2019), vote buying epitomizes key features of patrimonial leadership, making claims and promises rooted in reciprocity and the preferential treatment of supporters. It has become important to balance loyalty and patronage.

As a consequence of the above, two perspectives on why candidates buy votes and citizens sell them have been articulated. The first sees vote buying as a consequence of the electoral system and the nature of partisanship that makes vote buying a form of electioneering, especially in emerging democracies (Transparency International, 2004). In this framework, vote buying is seen to be a fairly straightforward transaction whose prevalence is related to how easy it is to do without penalty and how strong the incentives are. Generally, institutional factors, rule enforcement, electoral system, size of electorate, levels of education, civic awareness, cultural perception, and expectations of voters are factors that may encourage or discourage the use of vote buying (Paalo and

Gyampo, 2019). In Ghana, for example, there are explicit rules in the constitution that are reinforced by the electoral guidelines of political parties.¹⁴ However, laxity in the application of the law and the development of vote buying as political strategy mean that candidates must play by the de-facto rules that enjoin them to make vote-buying attempts without which they are not considered as serious candidates.

The second perspective is that politicians attempt to buy votes to signal their proximity to and the availability of patronage resources (Conroy-Krutz, 2017; Schaffer and Schedler, 2005; Chandra, 2004; van de Walle, 2003; Kramon, 2013). This is a rather different approach: candidates are not simply ‘buying’ votes in any simplistic way. Rather, they are using money and acts of generosity to communicate that they conform to local expectations when they get elected. This was demonstrated in this research (chapter 7) by the way incumbent candidates in New Juaben South and Adentan, and in particular those with executive positions, expended more cash in their vote-buying attempts compared to opposition aspirants. The incumbents spent money in their hunger to stay in power and maintain the privileges it brings, not as a way of providing welfare support to poor constituents.

Various theoretical frameworks on vote buying have been espoused. As detailed by Kramon (2013), Stokes (2005) focuses on the role of political machines in enforcing vote-buying contracts, and Finan and Schechter (2012) and Lawson and Greene (2014) focus on the

¹⁴ 1992 Constitution of Ghana, Representation of the People Law (Section 33) criminalizes vote buying and all forms electoral malpractices.

influence of social norms in making vote-buying contracts self-enforcing. Nichter (2008) emphasizes the impact of handouts on mobilizing voter turnout rather than buying voter support. Kramon (2013) develops an informational theory to explain why political candidates use money, often in the form of cash handouts, to win the political support of voters in developing democracies. Vote buying, in essence, may buy credibility and viability; it is a way to get candidates 'in the game'.

Dixit and Londregan (1996) build on formal models of distributive politics that assume that voters and parties have fixed ideological points and that voter affinity for a particular party can be measured by ideological distance; according to Dixit and Londregan, cash handouts do not impact how voters make prospective performance evaluations. Kramon (2013) further suggests that candidates use vote buying to overcome ideological distance from voters (Stokes 2005) or to mobilize those who are ideologically proximate (Nichter 2008).

Stokes et al. (2013), citing examples from Latin America, argue that political parties in many settings target vote-buying strategies on their core voters, who would vote for them in general elections even in the absence of a handout (Kramon 2013). This supports strategies by incumbent parties that are faced with impending voter apathy; Nichter (2008) supports this framework as a strategy of voter mobilization. In such cases, parties try to sustain their votes and focus more on increasing voter turnout among their supporters than swaying swing voters.

Communities experience vote buying differently based on variables such as economic conditions, level of education, and civic awareness (Paalo and Gyampo, 2019). As a result, factors such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and reciprocity are key influencers of candidate strategies and voter perception. People who sell votes are often particularly skeptical about future rewards and believe that political promises are unlikely to materialize (Brusco et al., 2004). According to Stokes (2005, p. 325), vote selling occurs in democracies where parties are ideologically close to one another, and poor voters tend to sell their votes because small payouts outweigh their preference to vote for particular candidates. Gonzalez et al. (2014, p. 199) emphasize that poor and less educated voters are amenable to sell their votes and reward voter buyers. Meanwhile, Simpser (2013, p. 7) argues that people tend to sell their votes in political systems dominated by one-party governments with limited constraints, whether domestic or external, on electoral manipulation. By contrast, Graziano (1976) and Brusco et al. (2004, p. 78) emphasize the principle of reciprocity as the reason people sell their votes.

Social class is the dominant socioeconomic determinant for vote buying, and candidates formulate targeting strategies accordingly (Hicken, 2011). In affluent communities, vote buying is seen as immoral and illegal; the provision of public goods, not private goods, determines how people in those communities vote. In poor communities, on the other hand, many people are unemployed or poor, and they need welfare support that governments only minimally provide. Therefore, the delivery

of direct personal benefits influences political support. As a result, the poor, rather than the wealthy, are mostly targeted with vote-buying strategies (Stokes, 2005). Reinforcing this argument, Desposato (2007, p. 104) argues that, ‘poor voters, on average, should have higher utility for immediate private goods than for delayed public goods’.

Even though candidates in Ghana are expected to be generous, gift-giving occurs within a moral economy (Cheeseman et al., 2019) where reciprocal norms are based on respect and humility (see chapter 7). There are obvious push and pull factors for the persistence of vote buying. Efforts to address the challenge should target both politicians and voters. As Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2019) argue, ‘Voters are not simply the passive recipients of gifts and favors; rather, patrimonial behaviors are co-produced in a way that locks citizens and candidates into a set of expected actions from which neither can easily extricate themselves’.

Given the varied reasons people attempt to buy and sell votes in general elections, this research seeks to understand if and why people buy and sell votes in electoral colleges, such as those involved in the candidate selection primaries in Ghana.

2.2.2 Vote Buying and the Secret Ballot

Recurring questions about vote buying include what candidates think they are paying for and whether voters believe they are receiving a gift or a bribe. This is important, because in the context of a secret ballot, voters who do not feel bound to offer their support to a particular candidate

may simply 'vote their conscience'. According to Schaffer and Schedler (2005), 'Vote buying carries different meanings to different people, and these meanings can vary not only by class, but also by religion, ethnicity, levels of education, or the like'.

The lack of clarity in vote-buying transactions creates limitations on existing explanations of vote buying. For example, while a rational-choice explanation suggests that voters will always vote for the highest bidder to maximize their own utility (Blais, 2000), the explanation has not been sustainable because it has not been able to explain why individuals bother to vote, given the costs that they incur and the negligible likelihood that their vote will determine the outcome.

The challenge of reciprocity has always been a conundrum for candidates. In ancient Rome, Cicero as cited in Yakobson (1995) questioned ballot secrecy laws that 'allow a man to wear a smooth brow while it cloaks the secrets of his heart, and leaves him free to act as he chooses, while he gives any promise he may be asked to give'. A lack of ballot secrecy laws enhances vote buying as an effective and efficient campaign strategy because candidates and their agents could effectively monitor induced voters, whilst ballot secrecy laws enhance vote selling because voters could accept cash and still vote as they wish.

According to Cheeseman and Klaas (2018), 'this highlights a critical challenge for political leaders: if they offer money as a gift, voters may not feel obligated to provide their vote in return. But if they explicitly frame the transfer as a purchase, voters may come to see their campaigns as being morally illegitimate. In turn, this may undermine

their prospects—especially if voters believe that the ballot is secret, such that candidates cannot tell how they voted’.

The efficacy of ballot secrecy laws in curbing vote buying has been debated, with some scholars (Cox and Kousser, 1981; O’Leary, 1962; Stokes et al., 2013) arguing that the introduction of ballot secrecy laws coupled with rising living standards was effective in curbing vote buying in Britain and the United States. In other settings, however, ballot secrecy laws were ineffective and rather enhanced the practice of vote buying. Yakobson (1995) as cited by Kramon (2013) notes that ‘vote buying became prevalent in ancient Rome only after the introduction of laws strengthening the secrecy of the ballot because such laws freed voters from coercive pressure from the aristocratic elite, affording them the autonomy to be “bought” rather than simply forced to vote in a certain way’.

In modern democracies, ballot secrecy laws are enshrined by domestic constitutions and international agreements, but vote buying has persisted in general elections with many voters, as well as in primaries where there are a small number of voters in an electoral college with secret ballots. This has raised the question of how vote-buying contracts are enforced, and numerous studies have delved into political strategies that attempt to ensure that vote-buying contracts are fulfilled. While some scholars believe that vote buying occurs when the buyer has the capacity to monitor votes (Lehoucq, 2003), others argue that vote buying is strong in settings where machine politics are strong (Stokes, 2005) because political party machines are well embedded in

communities and thus can ensure the fulfilment of vote-buying bargains. This is supported by Gans-Morse et al. (2014) and Stokes et al. (2013), who equate clientelist politics with machine politics.

Vote buying has persisted in emerging democracies with and without strong political machines. In Africa, for example, Van de Walle has argued that political parties are loosely organized and lack the requisite capacity and organizational structure to effectively monitor and subsequently punish voters who defect from a clientelist bargain. In line with this, ballot secrecy laws give voters the confidence to receive handouts since they can vote freely without powerful people discovering how they voted (Baldwin, 2013).

Despite this, however, vote buying has become a constant in emerging democracies, and alternative models have attempted to explain the phenomenon. The argument has focused on the moral obligation of voters to reward candidates that give them handouts. Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2019) advance the argument that what is often described as vote buying occurs within a moral economy in which politicians are expected to be accessible and generous. This is supported by Kramon (2013), who argues that vote-buying bargains are self-enforcing because of social norms of reciprocity.

Nichter (2008) provides evidence from the Peronist party in Argentina and emphasizes that parties buy 'turnout' and deliver benefits to core voters. They believe that parties use handouts to get their supporters to the polling stations, with a conviction that their core supporters will always vote for them once they get in the polling booth.

As a result of the difficulty in measuring the efficacy of vote buying, this research seeks to test why, despite the secrecy of ballots and the small numbers in Ghana's electoral colleges, voters confidently receive gifts from all contestants in candidate selection primaries, then vote for their preferred candidates even though results can show how they voted.

2.2.2 Efficacy and Impact of Vote Buying

The efficacy of vote buying has been a subject of debate among political scientists. Vicente (2014) and Mares and Young (2016) have discussed whether vote buying is an effective strategy of political mobilization.

Cheeseman and Klaas (2018) have described how parties can improve the impact of distributing money by better monitoring whether voters keep their promises, whilst Nichter (2008) has explored whether it makes more sense for parties to focus on 'buying' higher turnout among their own supporters or to reach out to 'swing' voters.

Schaffer and Schedler (2005) argue that the commercial aspirations of vote buyers often run into objective as well as intersubjective barriers. This is, first, because of uncertain compliance due to the secrecy of ballots and the illicit and difficult-to-monitor nature of vote buying and, second, the difficulty for buyers and sellers to interpret the vote-buying and cultural contexts. It has, therefore, become important to be mindful of the potential gaps between the idealized, commercial model of vote buying and how it manifests (Schaffer and Schedler, 2005). Generally, vote-buying propositions are intended to target electoral choices or to target electoral participation or abstention

(Schaffer and Schedler, 2005). Candidates or political parties attempt to mobilize support in their strongholds by buying the turnout of their supporters to avoid voter apathy in situations where voters are openly disillusioned by candidate or party performance or by the candidate selection process. On the other hand, candidates or political parties also engage in voter suppression strategies by buying voters' abstention.

Vote buying has been difficult to measure precisely due to its illegality (Rigger, 2002; Wang and Kurzman, 2007). As a result, its efficacy on the outcome of elections has been widely contested. Brusco et al. (2004) assert that vote buying did not have a significant influence on election outcomes. Wang and Kurzman (2007), researching on vote buying in elections in Taiwan, also indicate that the influence of money on voter decisions was somewhat modest. In a study of rural and urban voters in Ghana, Bawumia (1998) concluded that rural voters voted overwhelmingly for the NDC because of the welfare impacts of rural development but not because of vote-buying attempts. In support of Bawumia, Lindberg and Morrison (2008), in a study on Ghana, also concluded that Ghanaian voter decisions in the 2000 elections were influenced more by performance evaluations than clientelism and ethnicity. Similarly, Gibson and Long (2013), using exit polls in a few African countries, argue that performance evaluations were important to vote choices. Bratton et al. (2011), as cited by Kramon (2013), investigated the drivers of vote choice in African democracies and concluded that policy considerations and incumbency were more important than vote buying.

This thesis will test the efficacy of vote buying on candidate selection primaries in Ghana, elections which have a defined number of voters who can be identified and reached with vote-buying attempts. It will assess the impact of vote buying on candidate selection primaries because most candidates attempt to buy votes, and by accounting for all important considerations, it will test whether primary elections are won by candidates who pay more in their vote-buying attempts.

2.2.3 Vote Buying and Democracy

A key ingredient of a functioning democracy is the election of leaders in free and fair contests. As such, people should have the freedom and free will to participate in elections and vote for their own leaders. Justifiably so, 'citizens in a democracy have, or ought to have, political rights and political opportunities in common and in equal proportion' (Stokes 2007, p. 132).

Scholars have expressed concern about the influence of monetized elections on electoral processes and outcomes. Muhumuza (1997, p. 177) argues that the real power of the people is subverted by vote buying, and democracy becomes illusory when the monetization of electoral processes ensures the election of unpopular candidates on the strength of their money. This argument is supported by Bratton (2008, p. 15), who posits that vote buying affects the political playing field and that the growing influence of money during elections 'undermine[s] democratic norms of political liberty and political equality'. As such, democracy becomes a

preserve of those who can afford the increasing costs of buying votes (Kochin and Kochin 1998, p. 648).

Elections are about choosing candidates who can protect and advance the socioeconomic and political interests of the constituents. Important considerations in this regard are a candidate's commitment to the community, their reputation as someone who can be respected and trusted, and their accessibility (Roeloffs, 2019). As such, voters, in the absence of inducements, may vote for the best candidate with the requisite leadership acumen to advance their expected interests. In the absence of policy and leadership alternatives, and in the presence of vote buying, the interests of the voters are lost (Stokes 2007, p. 132), and it becomes difficult to determine whether elected representatives were elected to push a general public agenda or on the strength of their money. In most instances, it is difficult to determine whether voters voted for the candidate they genuinely believe will advance their collective interests or the one that satisfied their immediate personal needs.

Increasingly expensive elections risk creating a situation in which wealthy candidates and not necessarily the best candidates win elections. As Bratton (2008) indicates, vote buying undermines democratic norms of political liberty and equality. The issue of how to win an election freely and fairly has been highly debated in politics and academia. For democracies to be well-developed, the emerging trend of vote buying that undermines the integrity of elections must be countered. The influence of money in elections has been a challenge to advancing democracy in that voters have come to expect money from candidates whether they support

them or not. Nichter (2008, p. 29) argues that vote buying makes ‘a mockery of democratic accountability’, diminishes citizens’ authority to seek accountability from their leaders once elected, and breaks the social contract.

Supporting this argument, Stokes (2005) argues that accountability is an important tenet in democratic systems; it ensures that elected officials are held to their promises and responsibilities to voters. In an election where voters vote with conscience and elected officials are cognizant of the integrity of voters, those who are elected act in the collective interest since voters cannot be induced by cash but by the developments and delivery of campaign promises. On the other hand, however, voters have argued that vote selling is a form of democratic accountability since it allows voters to demand personal and communal goods from politicians who only respond to demands for political support. This is particularly evident in Ghana during the months prior to elections during which community and personal demands are met with urgency. Also during primary contests, selectorates tend to have the leverage to demand some form of accountability from contestants, especially incumbents, based on what they perceive as leadership.

Even though the efficacy of vote buying has been the subject of academic debate, there is consensus on its impact. According to Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis (2019), ‘The buying of votes is also widely condemned as improper, and the commoditization of elections is lamented. Those judgments might similarly appear to be rooted in a civic register—and in many cases they are. Yet they also draw on a

patrimonial register; the claims and denunciations made by voters, like those made by politicians, revolve around an uncertain distinction between virtuous generosity and immoral vote-buying’.

Most clients in the vote-buying enterprise are poor, as the models suggest (Stokes et al., 2013). As a result, politicians take the delivery of public goods to the poor for granted (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007) because they believe they will be judged on buying votes and not delivery of public goods. This is supported by Gonzalez et al. (2014), who argue that buying votes negatively impacts service delivery, as politicians who buy votes have fewer incentives to improve public service delivery or to improve the overall living standards of the poor.

Research by Muhumuza (1997) in Uganda showed that candidates who spend excessively endeavor to recover their costs through corruption. Also, according to Bratton (2008), vote buying reduces critical citizenship, which undermines accountability and hinders the institutionalization of authority. According to Chu and Diamond (1999, p. 822), vote buying is an affront to electoral laws and derails democratic consolidation. Hasen (2000) explains that vote buying contributes to unfair social distribution since political leaders tend to distribute public programs to benefit themselves and their perceived supporters.

However, despite concerns by civil society groups, citizens, and the media, vote buying is seemingly entrenched as a political strategy (Paalo and Gyampo, 2019) and has played a significant role in Ghana’s electoral democracy (Lindberg, 2003; Cheeseman et al., 2016; Gadjanova, 2017; Westminster Foundation, 2018). This, according to Paalo and Gyampo

(2019), is possibly due to the laxity in electoral laws, cultural considerations, and an emergent politics of gift demands and giving that either affirms candidate viability or undermines opponents and breaks reciprocity norms.

Candidate selection primaries are keenly contested in Ghana, as a win in a stronghold constituency almost guarantees a passage to Parliament and a potential appointment to the cabinet because the law enjoins the president to appoint over 50% of ministers from Parliament. A contesting candidate in an opposition area also may gain enough prominence to be appointed into a government position. Besides, winning a primary gives candidates control of resources that come from the central party. With a winning party taking all the spoils of governance, politicians have tended to use parliamentary victories as a way of sharing the spoils. If they win, they get to stay in the legislature with all of its perks. Even though MPs openly complain about the financial difficulties in maintaining patronage networks, their desire and zeal in seeking reelection in diverse ways contributes significantly to vote-buying, despite Ghana's democratic consolidation.

This research seeks to determine why vote buying is becoming more entrenched in Ghana as a dominant feature in candidate selection primaries.

2.4 Conclusion

All these discussions above emerged from studies that focused on main elections and not candidate selection primaries. The studies did not

examine why candidates attempt to give gifts to selectorates, who in Ghana average about 600 people in all per constituency; they are known and can be reached, unlike voters who cannot all be reached or targeted.

Therefore, this thesis will attempt to develop a theory to explain why parliamentary aspirants in Ghana attempt to give gifts to selectorates. The thrust of the argument is that vote buying has become part of campaign strategy and that all candidates make vote-buying attempts and thus the participation of all candidates neutralizes its impact. This development has driven up the cost of running for political office in Ghana, and it is further alienating women and other traditionally marginalized groups from seeking elected office.

The larger evidence shows the dominance of vote buying as a campaign strategy that is engaged in by all aspirants. There is ample evidence that selectorates expect gifts and equal evidence that candidates anticipate giving those gifts. As a result, an all-pay vote-buying auction has emerged and what earlier studies perceived to be one-off vote-buying transactions are seeming auctions where all candidates bid for votes but one candidate succeeds in winning.

Hence, because the existing scholarly literature exploring the impact of vote buying on candidate selection primaries is limited, some key variables are underexplored, and there is little information on how candidates use vote-buying attempts in electoral colleges to build relationships with voters. The existing literature cannot fully answer questions about whether those who paid more won, regardless of the existing moral and social economies; about the impact of vote buying on

gender representation; and about how selectorates and voters commonly agree on candidate choices. This research was therefore designed to fill some of these gaps, and it introduces an additional theory that aspirants in candidate selection primaries use vote buying to develop relationships over time with the selectorates as a political strategy to overcome moral and social economy challenges.

Chapter Three

Politics, Society, and Development in Ghana

The formation of the first protest movements against British colonial rule in the late 1860s heralded the development of organized Ghanaian politics and eventually led to Ghana's independence in 1957 as the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to attain self-government. Ghana has had a checkered history with governance; it has gone through colonial rule, self-government, a one-party state, military coups and dictatorships, and irregular multi-party democracies, under four republics. Multi-party constitutional rule returned in 1992, as was the case in many other African countries in the early 1990s. Ghana from then has successfully maintained a stable and continuous multi-party democracy where constitutional term limits are respected; it has witnessed three political transitions, with no political party able to secure a third term following the mandatory limit of two terms of four years each for presidents.

This chapter offers an analysis of the history of politics in Ghana, which has often been regarded as an epitome of democratic reforms in Africa since 1992 (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009a; Whitfield, 2009). The chapter examines the society and economy of Ghana and looks at the distinct historical trends that have made democracy succeed; the legal and political institutions and traditions that have evolved to deliver success; and the political organization and sociocultural dynamics that have ensured three peaceful political transitions after a turbulent post-

independence period. The chapter makes two arguments. First, the two historical political traditions—the populist and conservative—have grown over time to produce a de facto two-party system, and their dominance has been the holding factor for Ghana’s successful Fourth Republic. The winner-takes-all politics that characterizes Ghanaian politics has tended to reinforce the division between the two parties. The first political transition in 2000, when Jerry Rawlings and the NDC gave up political power against expectations after losing the general elections, provided the initial trust in democracy among the political elites that they could win power again after losing, thus reducing the stakes of elections, and the 2008 transition embedded constitutional term limits for presidents. Second, even though Ghana’s democracy is consolidating, undemocratic patrimonial networks prominently define the politics of the Fourth Republic. As a result, politics in Ghana has always been dominated by political leaders from these two dominant parties who build patronage networks among voters that keep them in continuous power.

3.1 The Society and Economy of Ghana

Ghana is made up of about 75 ethnically diverse groupings (Fage et al., 2021). The Akan (47.5% of the Ghanaian population), the Ewe (13.9%), the Guang (3.7%), and the Ga-Adangme (7.4%) reside in the southern regions of Ghana and are mostly Christian. The Mole-Dagbani (16.6%), the Gurma (5.7%), the Grusi (2.5%), the Kusaasi (1.2%), and the Bikpakpaam (3.5%) reside in the northern parts of Ghana and are a mix of Christians and Muslims. Besides black Africans, 4.3% of the

population are white, and 2.4% of the population is Chinese (Ghana Statistical Service, 2020).

Figure1: Map of Ghana



Ghana's ethnic diversity has not affected politics to the extent seen in other African countries because of the country's strong and long-standing political party tradition, which started during the fight for self-government. This tradition has allowed for the convergence of people largely around political parties rather than ethnicity or religion. There have always been ethnic and regionalist tendencies in Ghanaian politics, as can be seen in the emergence of ethnic and regionalist political parties during the 1950s. However, this was cross-cut by the strong nationwide

organization and nationalist appeal of the CPP, which ultimately led Ghana to independence. Ethnicity continues to play some part in Ghanaian politics, and both main parties today have regional strongholds. Again, however, this is cross-cut by the fact that these parties organize on a nationwide basis, campaigning in all regions. In recent times, the parties have also tended to select a presidential candidate and a running mate from different parts of the country, to reduce the perception that they are overly concerned with one particular ethnicity.

The justice system of Ghana was adapted from that of Britain. In the 1992 constitution, statute law, common law, and custom are all recognized as sources of law. The courts are divided into the superior courts, including the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, and the High Court, and the inferior courts, which consist of the circuit courts, district courts, and other courts. Ghana is rated high in Africa for freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The country has strong broadcast media—with numerous privately owned television and radio stations that support or criticize government.¹⁵ The rule of law and freedom of association is largely respected, with a vibrant media, civil society, and political parties who are free to assemble, contest national elections, and criticize government policy. Ghana is rated 'Free' in the Freedom in the World Reports of Freedom House (Lindberg, 2003; Freedom House, 2019; Acheampong, 2020), and this status has been maintained since 2000.

¹⁵ 'The World Bank in Ghana', World Bank, updated October 11, 2021, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview>.

Traditional authority and the institution of chieftaincy have evolved since the post-independence era, when Nkrumah curtailed their authority. Presently, traditional authorities are recognized by Ghana's 1992 constitution and operate in specific spheres that are delineated by the constitution. Increasingly, however, the role of traditional authorities has been confined to advisory and ceremonial engagements through the National House of Chiefs, whose members adjudicate chieftaincy, traditional conflicts, and in some cases political conflicts, as is the case with the Asantehene (Ashanti King), who is revered and respected. Their role in politics has also diminished because the 1992 constitution debar chiefs from running for elected position or holding public office. However, they seem to engage in open politics through their endorsement of political parties.¹⁶

Ghana's economy is over-reliant on raw exports of gold, cocoa, diamonds, manganese, bauxite, oil, and natural gas. As a result, it is influenced by world commodity prices: price booms present opportunities, and price decreases present challenges for ruling governments, sometimes leading to military overthrows and electoral defeats. The economy, which dominates politics and electoral debates, suffers from frequent currency depreciation, high inflation, low average incomes, huge external debts, and large deficits (Alagidede et al., 2014). As a result, post-independence politics has always dwelt on who can better manage external debts, mobilize domestic revenue, manage

¹⁶ <https://www.modernghana.com/news/888387/chief-endorses-mahama-for-2020.html>

inflation, address budget deficits, and increase agricultural productivity, structurally transforming the economy, providing infrastructural development, and fighting corruption at the same time.

From a stable economy in 1957, Ghana's economy was in economic decay by 1966 due to structural challenges—over-reliance on commodity exports, economic mismanagement, and trade deficits. These economic challenges have been perennial, and successive governments have continuously depended on external borrowing, debt relief, and policy direction from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Ghana's GDP of \$72 billion (July 2022) makes it the second largest economy in West Africa, after Nigeria. It is driven by both the public and private sectors. The government is the biggest spender with the provision of essential services such as water, electricity, railways, roads, and postal services (Aryeetey and Baah-Boateng, 2016). Telecommunications, banking, mining, and commerce are controlled by the private sector with foreign interests dominating private enterprise. In agriculture, smallholder farmers dominate. The services sector contributes 45% of GDP, the agricultural sector contributes 19%, and industry contributes 30%.¹⁷

Government, agriculture, forestry, and fishing together employ more than half of the population (Baah-Boateng, 2015). Trade and labor unions are composed of formal sector workers and have always played a significant role in politics. In Ghana's struggle for independence, for

¹⁷ Based on 2020 World Bank data.

instance, the trade union movement was a major ally. After independence, the government merged all trade unions under the umbrella of the Trades Union Congress (TUC). In Ghana's Fourth Republic, trade unions have influenced policy and serve as a pressure group that engages government on labor and general governance.

It is estimated that 57% of Ghana's population are urban dwellers, as migration from rural areas into urban centers is predominant.¹⁸ This is even more profound because of the disparity in development between the northern and southern parts of Ghana. Whilst the southern part is more prosperous, the northern regions are poor and underdeveloped, and there is a long history of labor migration from the north to the south. Migrant communities have created enclaves in both rural and urban areas, and these can play significant roles in politics and election outcomes.

The belief in God or a supreme being is high in Ghana; 71% of the population are Christian, 18% Muslim, and 11% adherents of traditional indigenous religions and others (Fage et al., 2021). Religion plays an important role in politics, and there have been conscious efforts to mobilize politics around Christianity and Islam.

Largely, issues within the society and economy of Ghana have tended to influence political outcomes. Political debates are centered on economic management and infrastructural development. Religion and regional considerations dominate presidential tickets as Christians are

¹⁸ 2020 Ghana population and housing census.

paired with Muslims or southerners are paired with northerners for ethnic and religious balance. Also, urbanization has created enclaves within the larger cities that determine political support.

3.2 The Evolution of Ghanaian Politics

The origins and formation of the Fante Confederation of 1868¹⁹ and the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) in 1897 to protest the ‘the Crown Lands Bill’ of 1896 and ‘the Lands Bill’ of 1897 heralded organized politics in Ghana.

After the Second World War, agitations for political independence led to the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) (Dartey-Baah, 2015). The UGCC was the first nationalist movement with the aim of self-government and was founded in 1947 by Ghanaian educated elites and local merchants.

In 1949 the Convention People’s Party (CPP) was formed as a breakaway from the UGCC. Ghanaian politics has since evolved around the two historical party traditions of the CPP and UGCC, a political duopoly that began with the politics of independence (Cheeseman et al., 2019). The split divided Ghanaian politics between the rhetorically socialist radicals of the CPP led by Kwame Nkrumah and the alternately conservative UGCC under the leadership of J. B. Danquah (Austin, 1964). These parties were different in their approach to independence: the CPP was more radical and wanted ‘self-government now’ while the

¹⁹ The confederacy was formed in 1868 by Fantes and the Denkyira, Wassa, Twifu, and Assin in Mankessim to pledge their loyalty to the British protectorate and demanded the right to self-government..

UGCC wanted independence within the ‘shortest possible time’ (Austin 1964, p. 52). These traditions have determined party formation and political competition in Ghana from the early 1950s (Brierley (2012).

Table 3: History of civilian and military administrations in Ghana

1951	Convention People’s Party first election victory under colonial rule
1957	Ghana became independent in 1957 under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah as prime minister
1960	The creation of the First Republic by the 1960 constitution under Kwame Nkrumah
1964	Declaration of one-party state by Kwame Nkrumah as president
1966	February 24, 1966, Ghana’s first military coup by the National Liberation Council, first under Lt. General Joseph Ankrah and later Lt. General Akwasi Afrifa
1969	Transition from military rule to the Progress Party civilian government led by K. A. Busia as prime minister, having won the 1969 elections under the Second Republican Constitution
1972	Second military coup led by the Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong and the National Redemption Council / Supreme Military Council
1978	Palace coup led by General Fred W. K. Akuffo under the SMC II
1979	Third successful coup in Ghana, led by Jerry John Rawlings under the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
1979	Transition to civilian rule with the election of Dr. Hilla Limann as president and the People’s National Party in a Third Republic
1981	Fourth successful coup in Ghana, and second by J. J. Rawlings, this time forming the Provisional National Defense Council
1992	Transition from military to civilian democracy under which the PNDC morphed into a political party, the NDC, with Rawlings as its presidential candidate who won elections as a civilian leader. The NDC won the parliamentary elections
1996	Rawlings and the NDC win a second term
2000	Ghana’s first successful uninterrupted political transition with the election of J. A. Kufuor and the New Patriotic Party after the constitutional term limits barred Rawlings from contesting
2004	John Kufuor and the NPP win a second term
2008	Second political transition with the election of John Atta-Mills and the NDC after the constitutional term limit barred Kufuor from contesting
2012	NDC win a second term under John Mahama after the demise of John Atta-Mills whilst in office in 2012
2016	Ghana’s third transition with the election of Nana Akufo-Addo and the NPP and the first defeat of an incumbent president
2020	Nana Akufo-Addo retains power for a second term

In 1951, Kwame Nkrumah was elected as the leader of government business. and seven other CPP members were also elected to work together with three Europeans in the Executive Council, which later became the cabinet.

In the aftermath of the 1954 elections, a new political organization, the National Liberation Movement (NLM), was formed as a regional party in Kumasi to fight for the interest of Ashantis, traditional chiefs, and cocoa farmers, who demanded a federal system of government for an independent Ghana (Allman, 1993). As a result, Ghana's independence was delayed, and new elections were organized in 1956 to address the important issue of whether Ghana should be a unitary or federal state.

In the end, it was agreed Ghana would become a unitary state, and processes began toward granting independence to Ghana in 1957. However, pockets of resistance persisted from the sectional parties, and that resulted in the passage of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act (ADA), which sought to eliminate 'tribalism' and to secure the conditions of unity to pursue national reconstruction and development. Consequently, all regional, ethnic, and religious interest political parties were banned, and all opposition parties merged to form the United Party (UP).

In 1962, by a backbencher motion, Nkrumah became president for life. Also, by a referendum in 1964, Ghana become a one-party state with the abolishing of all opposition parties and activities (Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah, 2008). That notwithstanding, the CPP led Parliament in a determination to promote gender equality by passing a law that increased

parliamentary membership from 104 to 114, thus allowing the appointment of 10 women to become MPs as special representatives to promote party policies among women (Austin, 1964).

By 1966, however, a cocktail of economic malaise due to failed economic and industrial policies and reduction in world cocoa prices, political oppression through dictatorship, and international geopolitics led to Kwame Nkrumah's overthrow.

3.2.1 Post-Nkrumah Politics and the First Military Coup

On February 24, 1966, Ghana's first coup d'état was staged by the National Liberation Council (NLC), ushering in a turbulent wave of elections and coup d'états between 1969 and 1992. Within those years, there were five successful military coups and two multi-party elections.²⁰

The NLC was initially headed by Lt. General Joseph Ankrah and later by Lt. General Akwasi Afrifa, who believed in the liberation function of the military and therefore sought to restore the civilian rule with the 1969 constitution, which was a departure from the 1960 constitution. The new constitution introduced an alternative political system different from what Nkrumah had established post-independence.

3.2.2 The Emergence of Ethnic Support of Political Parties

The emergence of the Progress Party (PP) and the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL), led by Kofi A. Busia and Komla A. Gbedemah respectively, echoed the political traditions in the Nkrumah period and increased the

²⁰ There were coups in 1966, 1972, 1978, and 1981 with elections in 1969 and 1979.

role of ethnicity, though political competition was rarely expressed in explicit ethnic terms.

The overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah in 1966 highlighted the breakdown of party politics along ethnic lines, as the Ashanti, Ewe and the northern ethnic groups had opposed the CPP. The 1969 election status quo emerged when the two best organized socio-political communities in the Asante and Ewe areas had the opportunity to grow and adopted political ideologies with the formation of political parties to fit the purpose (Fridy,2018). These ideological distinctions have sustained political organization ever since and have served as useful tools in political mobilization. As such, elections in Ghana since 1969 have reflected both ideological differences and regional voting patterns—in 1969 between the Asante dominated party, PFP and the Ewe dominated NAL, in 1979 between the Northerners and other aligned ethnic groups in the PNP against a fragmented Asante dominated UNC and since 1992 between the Ewe dominated NDC and Asante dominated NPP.

The Progress Party won the majority of seats in the 1969 elections with its leader, K. A. Busia, becoming the prime minister and forming the government.

3.2.3 The Second Military Adventure

The 1972 coup that disrupted Ghana's Second Republican democracy was undertaken by the National Redemption Council (NRC), later renamed the Supreme Military Council (SMC), led by Lt. General Kutu Acheampong and Lt. General Fred Akuffo, respectively. After seizing

power, they deviated from the earlier precedent of 1966 where the military government returned the country to civilian rule. Instead, they attempted to introduce a new system of government, the Union Government (UNIGOV), under which the military and the police were to join the civilian population in kicking political parties out forever. The concept as espoused by the supporters was to address ‘the need for a constitutional third way for a representative democracy based neither on Westminster style party system nor military rule, but on traditional values and practices of Ghanaians’.²¹

The military rulers planned a referendum, and during its campaign, a fierce battle for and against UNIGOV ensued between the military and their supporters, who backed their campaign with state resources and power, and the Popular Movement for Freedom and Justice (PMFJ), which organized an anti-UNIGOV campaign supported by university students and the intelligentsia, who opposed the UNIGOV concept and demanded a return to constitutional multi-party democracy. When the referendum was held in March 1979, the official results—which declared 60.11% of Ghanaians voting yes and 30.89% voting no—were widely rejected by the populace. In an attempt to calm the agitation, a palace coup was staged, and General Acheampong was overthrown by Lt. Gen. Fred Akuffo, then vice-chairman of the SMC and chief of defense staff, to form the SMC II. To continue their stay in power, a Transitional Interim National Government (TINAGOV) was formed to manage the

²¹ ‘Remembering Kutu Acheampong and his UNIGOV’, *Modern Ghana*, March 30, 2012, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/386431/remembering-kutu-acheampong-and-his-unigov.html>

shortfalls of the SMC I and the failures of the UNIGOV concept. TINAGOV, however, failed to placate the citizens, and the popular agitation forced the military rulers to announce a timetable for the return to constitutional rule in September 1979.

3.2.4 A Mix of Constitutional Return and the First Rawlings Coup

When party-political activity began again in February 1979 after seven years of military rule, six political parties, representing the existing political traditions, contested.

During the transitional process, a rebellion of junior military officers and other military personnel led by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings succeeded in the first military overthrow of a military government and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC attempted to clean up the rot in Ghanaian society that had led to spiraling inflation.²²

Remarkably, even though the coup was hailed and celebrated by the general citizenry, the AFRC stayed only briefly and continued the parliamentary and presidential elections as planned on June 18, 1979. The handing over of power, however, was postponed for three months to October 1, 1979, to allow the AFRC to 'complete its task of house cleaning' (Chazan, 1983).

Dr. Hilla Limann and the PNP took over government in 1979, with a slim majority in parliament, 71 members against 69 opposition

²² The social breakdown introduced a kalabule system in which goods were hoarded and sold at exorbitant prices. The PNDC outlawed hoarding of goods, and rock-bottom price controls were strictly enforced with military brutality in all the major markets in the country.

members, Limann's administration entered a short-lived alliance with the UNC to become a comfortable majority, thus enabling it implement government policies.

3.2.5 The Second Coming of Rawlings as a Military Leader

Twenty-seven months subsequent to President Limann's victory, Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings—chairman of the erstwhile AFRC's second successful coup—brought in the military government of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) for Ghana's fifth successful coup, suspending the constitution and ruling from 1981 to 1992.

The PNDC during its administration attempted a dual transition of economic and political development. The administration struggled with ideological indecision and pursued radical economic redistribution policies by courting the support of low-income classes before developing a four-year Economic Recovery Program (ERP) in 1983 (Shillington, 1992). The program allowed it to proceed with an official structural adjustment program (SAP) as was proposed by the IMF. According to Adedeji (2001), the PNDC used political tools such as the establishment of national and local defense committees, emphasized economic revival, exposed corrupt practices, enforced price controls and curbed smuggling, entrenched the ERP in Ghana, and eventually encouraged a distinctive form of participatory democracy and an increased level of political awareness in Ghana.

The PNDC attempted to redefine democracy in the Ghanaian context and rejected liberal democracy as neo-colonialist (Ocquaye, 2004,

p. 21). It sought to introduce a new democratic order that would ensure popular participation, economic development, and social justice. As a consequence, the administration, which sought to stay in power longer, created an arrangement similar to Kwame Nkrumah's one-party rule, on the one hand, and the SMC's UNIGOV, on the other hand, that combined civilians and military men. It advocated a non-party system of government that promised 'power to the people', participatory democracy, and grassroots democracy in a decentralized system.

As a result, the PNDC integrated networks of the working class, urban poor, informal sector workers, market women, and rural communities to form grassroots groups such as the People's Defense Committees (PDCs) and Workers' Defense Committees (WDCs), which were to ensure geographical and workplace participation (Ninsin and Drah, 1987), encourage citizen participation in politics, and hold politicians accountable for their actions. They also established the district assemblies as the highest political authority in the districts by local government reforms in 1988 in a shift from participatory and grassroots democracy to representative democracy via elections. Assembly members were elected in nonpartisan elections to represent their localities with a focus on development.

Having built these various political organizations, however, the PNDC banned the existence of political parties for fear of dissent, just as Nkrumah's one-party state had, and established quasi-political organs such as Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) to promote

the ideals of the revolution and denied others the right to form organizations (Chazan, 1983; Ocquaye, 2004).

After 11 years of the PNDC military rule, there emerged domestic agitations for multi-party democracy. Led by civil society groups such as the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), which was an intended broad-based political grouping encompassing the conservative (Danquah-Busia) traditions, the populist (Nkrumahist) traditions together with other groups opposing the PNDC (Ninsin, 2006a). They were supported by professional associations such as the Ghana Bar Association (GBA), the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), the Trades Union Congress, Catholic Bishops' Conference, and the Christian Council of Ghana, as well as by external forces such as the World bank and the IMF who encouraged the restoration of multi-party democracy. After much resistance, the PNDC later succumbed and formed the Annan Committee to establish the veracity of the agitations among the Ghanaian populace on 'the future of Ghana's political system'. Based on the Annan committee's recommendations—which confirmed that a majority of Ghanaians wanted multi-party democracy—a program for the political transition from military rule to multi-party elections was drawn up, and a 258-member Consultative Assembly was convened and tasked to draft a new constitution for Ghana's Fourth Republic.

At the same time, political activities were escalated, and many political clubs, such as the Danquah-Busia Memorial Club, the Heritage Club, the Kwame Nkrumah Welfare Society, and the National Coordinating Committee of Nkrumahist, representing the existing

political traditions since the 1951 elections, were spurred into action and provided platforms for the formation of political parties. These parties contested the 1992 elections after the ban on party political activities was lifted (Ocquaye, 2004, p. 490). The NDC was formed as a vehicle for Rawlings to contest the 1992 presidential elections as a civilian candidate. He was suitably acclaimed without a primary as the NDC presidential candidate and won the 1992 and 1996 presidential elections. The NPP, on the other hand, was formed by the old politicians who opposed the PNDC regime and were bonded by the conservative political traditions of Danquah-Busia to form the NPP. Unlike in 1979 when they were disunited and lost the elections, in 1992 they converged under one party and selected a presidential candidate through primaries, unlike the NDC.

Subsequently, the Interim National Electoral Commission was established to supervise a national referendum to adopt the 1992 constitution and also supervised the 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections (see chapter 4).

3.2.6 After the ‘Third Wave’ of Democratization Politics

Beginning in 1992, Ghana adopted the Fourth Republican constitution, which has run for an unprecedented 30 years with eight democratic elections and three political transitions between two dominant political parties.²³ The 1992 constitution of Ghana makes provision for a multi-

²³ All of Ghana’s three republics were truncated by military coups: Kwame Nkrumah in the first republic by the National Liberation Council in 1966, K. A. Busia and the second republic by the Supreme Military Council in 1972, and Hilla Limann by the Provisional National Defense Council in 1981.

party democracy with free and fair elections to elect a president and a vice president in an election won by a majority of 50% plus one. A run-off election is held if no candidate wins a majority of the votes.²⁴ The president serves a term of four years and can be reelected once, for a maximum of two terms total.

The politics of the Fourth Republic has taken a winner-takes-all dynamic and strong executive presidents, with implications for elective and appointive office (see chapter 6). The politics has been dominated by the NDC and NPP, who have between them won all elections since 1992. The NPP and NDC have grown to have support across all regions in Ghana and to win seats and significant votes in opposition areas. As a result, candidate selection primaries have become competitive in all constituencies, whether in party strongholds or opposition areas. This is because of their implications for the control of party resources sent from headquarters to constituencies, potential rewards in government positions among local politicians, and implications for presidential elections. These features of Ghana's democracy will be fully discussed later in chapter 6.

In 2000, Jerry Rawlings had exhausted his constitutionally mandated tenure and, in a gesture that surprised his critics and supporters, he upheld the tenets of the constitution by not attempting to run for a third term, as leaders had in other African countries. Instead, he acclaimed his then vice president, John Atta-Mills, as his successor.

²⁴ When there emerges no majority winner in the presidential elections, run-offs are organized for the top two candidates, as was the case in 2000 and 2008.

In Ghana's first transitional election, John Agyekum Kufuor as the opposition leader was elected as president.

In 2008, President Kufuor had exhausted his constitutionally mandated two four-term limit and, following from the precedent of Rawlings in 2000, stepped down for the election of a new president. In the NPP, a fierce battle ensued when 17 aspirants contested an acrimonious primary that selected Nana Akufo-Addo, then foreign minister in the NPP administration. In the NDC, John Atta-Mills, the former vice president who contested against John Kufuor in the 2000 and 2004 elections, won the primary to become candidate for a third consecutive election.

3.2.7 The Return of the Populist Tradition under Atta-Mills and Mahama

Under Atta-Mills, Ghana started commercial oil production, having discovered oil in 2007 under John Kufuor. With oil revenues Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) improved, and single-digit inflation could now be sustained.

In December 2011, Atta-Mills contested the NDC's presidential primaries against Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, the former first lady when Atta-Mills was vice president. After an acrimonious contest, Atta-Mills was re-elected as the NDC candidate but died while in office—the first ever Ghanaian president to do so, six months prior to the 2012 general elections. In a seamless constitutional handover, John Mahama, the then vice president, was sworn in as president to continue the last six months of the Mills administration. John Mahama went on to contest

and win the 2012 presidential elections against Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP. In 2016, however, John Mahama as an incumbent president lost to Nana Akufo-Addo— to usher in Ghana’s third successful political transition.

3.3 Parliamentary Politics in the Fourth Republic

The 1992 constitution provided for a unicameral Parliament where members are elected in first-past-the-post elections to represent 275 single-member constituencies with no constitutional term limits. Ghana’s Fourth Republican Parliament is controlled by the NDC and NPP; they control 208 safe seats between them and contest over 67 swing seats.²⁵

The executive wields considerable powers, and Parliament is relatively weak with no significant influence on policy formulation and executive oversight (Ayee, 2001). The executive uses party discipline and the power of appointing MPs as ministers of state²⁶ and on boards of public sector agencies to exert influence on the legislature. MPs tend to vote along party lines because of the enormous powers of the executive, and bills offered by the executive branch are bound to be passed (Lindberg, 2010).

There are distinct geographical and religious patterns in terms of representation in Ghana’s Parliament, mainly along political lines. The NDC MPs mostly represent their strongholds in the Volta and the

²⁵ There are presently 275 seats in Ghana’s Parliament, an increase from the initial 200 in 1992. However, only 67 of the 275 have switched parties or been won a smaller party or an independent. In all, there are 208 safe seats that have been won exclusively by either the NDC or NPP since 1996,

²⁶ The constitution of Ghana demands that 50% of ministers be appointed from among the members of Parliament.

Northern Regions, as well as the Muslim enclaves²⁷ across the country. NPP MPs, on the other hand, represent the Ashanti and Eastern Regions where most seats are considered safe, as well as Akan enclaves in Greater Accra.²⁸ Other parts of the country, mainly the capital region of Greater Accra and the Western, Central, and Bono Regions, have tended to be swing regions that determine which party dominates Parliament. There is a high turnover rate amongst MPs in Ghana; close to 45% of MPs are new, with few able to successfully complete three terms. This has at times affected the capacity and performance of Parliament and their committee work (AfriMAP et al., 2007; Tsekpo and Hudson, 2009).

In the aftermath of the 1992 presidential elections organized in November 1992, the opposition parties protested the numerous electoral malpractices that engulfed the conduct of the elections. This led to the boycott of the scheduled December 1992 parliamentary elections. As a result, the elections were contested and won by the NDC and its allied parties in a one-sided Parliament dominated by the NDC. With no opposition, the Fourth Republican first Parliament had little incentive or capacity to exercise effective oversight of government policy or contribute significantly to legislation. The 1993 Parliament completed its constitutional four-year term to become Ghana's first Parliament to complete an uninterrupted term. In the subsequent 1996 parliamentary

²⁷ These enclaves are found in most towns and cities and are inhabited by Muslims and people from the northern parts of Ghana. They have tended to support the NDC. Even in the NPP-dominant Ashanti region, they control three seats in the enclaves they dominate.

²⁸ NPP dominates in Akan-dominated enclaves in Accra (Dome-Kwabenya, Anyaa Sowutuom, and Okaikei south).

elections, both presidential and parliamentary elections were held on the same day as part of electoral reforms.

In 1997 the opposition NPP established a strong parliamentary presence when it won 30% of the seats and brought in well-educated parliamentarians. A real opposition was introduced to balance the NDC's dominance, and a level of competitive politics ensued (Tsekpo and Hudson, 2009). This 1997 Parliament was quite effective in scrutinizing government policies and contributed significantly to the legislation process that currently defines Ghana's Parliament.

The 2001 third Parliament, with the NPP as the majority party, demonstrated the emergence of a proficient parliamentary democracy. By 2001, there had been tenured MPs and experienced executives who had become MPs; both groups brought their considerable experience with the rules of engagement to Parliament's oversight and legislative roles. With a strong, substantial, and experienced opposition, parliamentary committees were also strengthened to provide effective oversight of executive action.

The NPP continued the majority in Parliament in 2005 with a reduced margin, but the NDC won the majority after the 2008 elections. These fourth and fifth Parliaments made progress with the consolidation of parliamentary democracy and strengthening committee functions.

Parliament in the Fourth Republic has always been dominated by the party that controls the presidency as well. The parties have always wielded a majority that allows them to have their way, even against the will of the opposition party. According to the Institute for Democratic

Governance (IDEG, 2007), 'The executive has aggressively employed its constitutional powers as well as its majority in Parliament to drive the legislative process. It sought to achieve its policy goals regardless of contrary views within and outside Parliament, and in spite of its implications for the democratic order'. This has often resulted in the passage of controversial loan agreements or social policies that the opposition have vehemently opposed.

As a result, parliamentary walkouts have been employed as a protest tool among opposition parties. For instance, in 2012, the NDC dominated parliament with 148 seats against 122 for the NPP, 1 for the CPP, 1 for the PNC, and 3 independents. In 2016, the NPP, after winning the presidential elections, dominated with 169 seats against 106 by the NDC. In 2020, however, the NPP and NDC have 137 members each along with a former NPP MP who defected after an acrimonious candidate selection process and won as an independent. With a hung Parliament, there has been a keen interest in how to build consensus.

3.4 Conclusion

Politics in Ghana has always been dominated by political leaders, whether civilians or the military, who build patronage networks among voters that keep them in continuous power, as can be seen during the SMC era's attempt at UNIGOV or the PNDC's use of CDRs to patronize the larger population with the ideals of the revolution. Also, in multi-party elections, political parties have attempted to distribute material resources and development projects for electoral advantage. These

patronage politics have been enabled by poverty, economic inequalities, and the lack of many formal welfare systems.

A winner-takes-all politics has been instituted among the political leaders since independence when the CPP won and eliminated opposition elements completely from government. It continued through the military administrations and the 1969 and 1979 democratic governments. It is also true in the current dispensation, where a winning president has the power to hire presidential staffers; to appoint ministers, CEOs, and board members of government agencies and parastatals; and to award lucrative government contracts.²⁹ However, economic and infrastructural development policies have been somewhat evenly distributed across the country without major discrimination between strongholds and opposition areas. Significantly, due to a strong political party culture and a consolidating democracy, these political leaders have tended to accept election results with the belief that the losing party can reorganize to capture government power, so they have not taken the path of violence that has engulfed other African countries.

The two dominant traditions that dominate Ghanaian politics have consistently been a rallying point for political activity. Ghanaian politics has converged around the populist and conservative political traditions that have always survived military regimes that suspended party politics to stage comebacks and mobilize for electoral victories.

²⁹ In 2001 John Kufuor attempted to work with some opposition figures in Ghana, but there is generally no avenue for opposition in government.

Chapter Four

The Conduct of Elections in Ghana, from 1951 to 2020

Elections have been a central part of Ghanaian politics and have served as the constitutional tool for political legitimacy. As indicated in chapter 3, elections in Ghana have since 1951 been mostly contested between the conservative and populist political traditions (Brierley, 2012). The conservative tradition evolved from the UGCC in 1951, to the Ghana Congress Party (GCP) in 1954, the National Liberation Movement (NLM) in 1956, the United Party (UP) in 1960, the Progress Party (PP) in 1969, the Popular Front Party (PFP) and United National Convention (UNC) in 1979, and the NPP in the current democratic dispensation that began in 1992.

The populist tradition, on the other hand, has evolved from the CPP in 1951, to the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) in 1969, and the People's National Party (PNP) in 1979. In 1992, this tradition was represented by four of the five contesting political parties, including the NDC and the other parties formed around Jerry Rawlings—the Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE) and the National Convention Party (NCP), which merged and were represented by Rawlings together with a disunited bunch of other parties that represented the CPP tradition. These parties included the People's National Convention (PNC), the Independence Party (IP), and the People's Heritage Party (PHP). The

tradition has been dominated by the NDC in the current dispensation. The NPP and NDC have become even more dominant over the past few years, such that the smaller parties and independent candidates have little chance of winning seats in Ghana's parliament. Therefore, candidate selection primaries in the NPP or NDC are keenly contested whether in their party strongholds and opposition areas where it is almost impossible to win a seat.

The NDC and NPP are among the most institutionalized parties in Africa (Riedl, 2014). While the NDC professes to practice a populist 'social democratic' ideology, the NPP on the other hand proclaims a conservative and pro-business 'property owning democracy'. However, these proclaimed ideologies do not manifest in how these parties have governed. They are similar in political organization, governance, and development agenda and tend to implement similar policies, even if in principle they opposed their formulation while in opposition. They both enjoy ethnically-based support, the NPP mostly from the Ashanti and Akyem people in the Ashanti and Eastern Regions of Ghana, and the NDC from the six northern regions and from the Ewe of the Volta Region. There are strong partisan identities, from the grassroots through local political leaders up to the national level (Brierley, 2012). As a result, Ghanaian politics is highly polarized along political party lines with ethnic undertones.

The sociocultural dynamics that enable patronage politics despite Ghana's democratic consolidation are a key concern of this thesis. Candidates vying to contest the primary elections must comply with the

de facto sociocultural frameworks since candidates must cultivate a seat by being an active member of the party and engaging in party activities. These usually will entail declaring a desire to contest the next primaries, becoming a patron of the constituency, and mobilizing a delegate base by encouraging and supporting polling station members in their efforts to become delegates. Persons aiming to contest for the presidency need to cultivate constituencies across the country in a way similar to what parliamentary aspirants do in their single constituencies (see chapter 6).

The chapter provides a historical analysis of elections from 1951 to 2020 and the recurring issues that dominate Ghanaian elections. The chapter argues that the two-party dominance in Ghana's democracy results from remnants of the populist and conservative traditions that provide easy platforms to mobilize election machineries. I conclude that the two-party dominance has played a significant role in the peaceful political transitions by allowing losing political parties the opportunity to mobilize and recapture government power. Also, I conclude that even though significant evidence shows a consolidation of Ghana's democracy, the escalation of vote buying and its attendant consequences is something existing theories suggest will be problematic for democratization.

4.1 The History of Elections in Ghana

Between 1951 and 2020, the country has gone through five election cycles during which it witnessed five referendums, 12 parliamentary elections, 10 presidential elections, and three presidential run-offs.

During this period, at times the military has disrupted constitutional rule.

4.1.1 The Restrictive First and Second Wave of Elections

When the colonial authorities moved to promote elected local government across the colonies in a shift from the indirect rule that employed ‘native authorities’—that is, traditional chiefs and elders—to govern, Ghana held its first wave of elections. Local elections were held under British rule in Cape Coast, Accra, and Sekondi-Takoradi to elect Ghanaians into Local Native Councils (LNCs) as *ex officio* members (Wright, 1945). These elections were indirect, mostly contested by chiefs and the educated elites, and restrictive. Qualification to vote was based on ownership of landed property and, later, tenancy of a landed property (Wright, 1945).

The 1925 Guggisberg Constitution set forth the election of people’s representatives into the legislative councils which hitherto had no elected Africans. It provided for the direct election of three Africans to represent the municipalities of Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi-Takoradi.

The 1925 constitution was progressive, and for the first time in the history of the Gold Coast, there were direct elections even though there were serious limitations on the franchise, including property ownership. The 1946 Burns Constitution improved on the number of directly elected representatives to the Legislative Council. There were five directly elected Africans and 13 who were indirectly elected through electoral colleges formed by the provincial councils.

4.1.2 The Universal Suffrage Pre-Independence Elections

Unlike the first wave of restricted elections, the second wave was held under universal suffrage and introduced mass politics in Ghana. These elections were held in 1951, 1954, and 1956 as the constitutional tool to transition into self-government and independence (Austin, 1964). The Legislative Council became the Legislative Assembly with membership increasing from 30 to 84 representatives with a presiding speaker.

The seats were contested mainly by CPP candidates who were young salaried workers and UGCC candidates who were either traditional chiefs or educated elites supported by the traditional councils (Frempong, 2017, p. 15). As well, smaller parties who were mostly ethnic and regional parties running just one candidate-emerged to contest the 1951 elections. With superior organization, leadership, and support from the youth and many ordinary Ghanaians, the CPP won 34 of the 38 seats by defeating lots of prominent chiefs and their candidates. The UGCC won two seats from the UGCC stronghold of Akim Abuakwa, and two independents won in Trans-Volta Togoland.

Table 4: Elections in Ghana between 1951 and 1966

Election	Number of constituencies/seats	Number of parties contesting and outcome
1951	38	Convention Peoples Party- 34 , United Gold Coast Convention- 2 , 2 Independents in Trans-Volta Togoland-
1954	104	Convention Peoples Party- 74 , Northern Peoples Party- 12 , Ghana Congress Party- 1 , Togoland Congress- 1 , Anlo Youth Organization- 2 , Muslim Association Party- 1 , Ghana Action Party- 1 , Ghana National Party- 0 , Independents- 16
1956	104	Convention Peoples Party- 71 , Northern Peoples Party- 15 , National Liberation Movement- 12 , Muslim Association Party- 1 , Togoland Congress- 1 , Federated Youth Organization- 1 , Independents- 2
1960		Kwame Nkrumah-1,016,067 J. B. Danquah, United Party*-124,623
1965 Parliamentary	198	CPP- 198 **

* The opposition parties in Parliament merged to form the United Party in response to the passage of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act that banned all regional, religious, and ethnic based parties, with K. A. Busia as leader and S. D. Dombo as deputy.

** As the sole party, the central committee of the CPP nominated and announced winners on the radio a week before the election date (Fordwor, 2010, p. 99).

4.1.3 The Emergence of Elite Defections and Sectarian Parties

The 1954 constitution made a dramatic provision for the direct election of all members of the Legislative Assembly as a harbinger to internal self-government. Unlike the 1951 elections, which employed a mix of direct and indirect elections, in 1954 all 104 members were elected directly through universal adult suffrage (Frempong, 2017). The elections besides the formal political parties were also contested by a record number of

independent candidates as 160 of the 323 contestants were independents—mostly CPP defectors who could not make the party list of 102 candidates (Austin 1964, p. 240). The CPP had built a strong campaigning machine that was attractive to aspirants; their candidate selection process became a source of controversy as individuals who were not selected became disgruntled and contested instead as independent candidates. This phenomenon has continued in Ghanaian politics up to the present, as candidates who lose candidate selections either by nomination or primary election have defected as independents, causing electoral problems for their political parties.

In the 1956 elections, six political parties and 45 independents contested. Like the 1954 elections, many parties were formed to protect sectional interests. As a result, the outcomes were not significantly different from those of the 1954 elections.

4.1.4 The One-Party Third Wave of Elections and the Appointment of Women to Parliament

The third wave of elections began when Kwame Nkrumah organized a referendum and elections in 1960 to, first, change the status of Ghana to a republic and, second, to elect the first president of the Republic of Ghana (Frempong, 2017). This referendum heralded a repressive regime that made Ghana a one-party state in 1964 with the CPP as the only party.

The 1960 presidential elections were contested by the CPP, represented by Kwame Nkrumah, and the United Party (UP), represented by J. B. Danquah. The UP was the result of a merger of all opposition

parties in the legislature. Nkrumah won the election with 1,016,067 votes against J. B. Danquah's 124,623 to become president of Ghana's First Republic (Fordwor, 2010, p. 91).

Table 5: The first presidential election and one-party parliamentary elections

Election	Number of constituencies/seats	Number of parties contesting and outcome
1960		Kwame Nkrumah, 1,016,067 J. B. Danquah-United Party, 124,623
1965 parliamentary elections	198	CPP- 198*

** As the sole party, the Central Committee of the CPP nominated and announced winners on radio a week before the set election date.*

In 1965, a restrictive one-party parliamentary election was organized to elect members of the second Parliament.³⁰ The number of seats had been increased from 114 to 198, and the Central Committee of the CPP, as the sole party, selected candidates who were then announced unopposed as members of the National Assembly on the radio a week before the planned elections. The outcome was an all-CPP National Assembly with 19 women, an increase from the previous 10 women representatives who were appointed in 1965 through an affirmative action bill (Fordwor, 2010, p. 99; Frempong, 2017, p. 70). This was significant and has not

³⁰ The national assembly of 1960 was converted into the first Parliament after the referendum without elections.

been replicated throughout the years, leading to inadequate female representation in Ghana's Parliament (see chapter 8). The 1965 election was a contest within the CPP, as opposition was banned, and it served more as a referendum on MPs than on Kwame Nkrumah. It served to bring some legitimacy to Nkrumah's administration and increased his command over Ghanaian politics, as he controlled the process of candidate selection through the Central Committee of the CPP to get rid of some parliamentarians and reward new entrants who had become loyal to him.

4.2 The Return of Pre-independence Political Traditions and the Fourth Wave of Elections

The first election in the fourth wave was held in 1969, following two and a half years of the military rule that overthrew Kwame Nkrumah. The election was the beginning of the transition into Ghana's Second Republic. Following the Westminster model of the United Kingdom, K. A. Busia, who was leader of the majority Progress Party, became the prime minister and formed the government. The number of seats being contested was reduced from 198 to 140, and five political parties contested the election: the Progress Party (PP), the United Nationalist Party (UNP), the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL), the All Peoples Republican Party (ALRP), and the People's Action Party (PAP).³¹ These parties were new in name but were either remnants of parties that had existed before the 1969 coup or the result of mergers of existing parties, so they followed the existing political traditions before and after

³¹ The CPP as a party and its former legislators were outlawed from contesting.

independence (Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah, 2008, p. 132).³² The two viable parties were the PP and the NAL. The PP was largely a rebirth of the UP, with several CPP opponents coming together. The NAL was composed of former members of the CPP led by K. A. Gbedemah, who was a once a prominent CPP member but later went into exile after challenges with Nkrumah (Manu, 1993, p. 122). In addition, 20 independent candidates and nine women contested the elections.

The Progress Party demonstrated a national character, like the CPP in earlier elections, and won 105 of the 140 seats across all regions of the country and gained support among almost all ethnic groups. The outcome of the elections introduced a glaring ethnic division between the Akan and Ewe ethnic groups hitherto not witnessed in the previous elections (Chazan, 1983, p. 222).

The PP was strongly supported by the larger Akan ethnic group, and the NAL by the Ewe ethnic group and the Ewe leaders, who had in previous elections been divided between the TC, the AYO, and the CPP. The election results largely confirmed the divisions: of the 85 seats in the Akan areas in the Ashanti, Eastern, Central, and Western Regions, the PP won 78, losing in the non-Akan Krobo and other settler constituencies in parts of the Eastern Region.

The NAL also won 14 of the seats in the Ewe region, losing two to the PP in the two non-Ewe enclave seats of Krachi and Nkwanta

³² The UNP was a merger of the former Nationalist Party and the Ghana Democratic Party, and the APRP was a merger of APC and the RP.

(Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah, 2008; Frempong, 2017, p. 92). However, all the seats in the northern regions were closely contested by the parties.

Table 6. Elections in Ghana's military-civilian era between 1969 and 1992

Election	Number of constituencies /seats	Number of parties contesting and outcome
1969 parliament	140	Progress Party- 105 , National Alliance of Liberals- 29 , United Nationalist Party- 2 , People's Action Party- 2 , All Peoples Republican Party- 1 , Independent- 1
1970 presidential*		Edward Akufo-Addo- 123 ** I.B Asafu-Adjaye- 35
1979 presidential		Hilla Limann, Peoples National Party- 35.3% , Victor Owusu, Popular Front Party- 29.9% , W. Ofori Atta, United National Convention- 17.4% , Frank Bernasko, Action Congress Party- 9.5% , Ibrahim Mahama, Social Democratic Front- 3.7% , John Bilson, Third Force Party- 2.8% , R.P Baffuor, Independent- 0.5% , Kwame Nyanteh, Independent- 0.3% , Diamond Nii Addy, Independent- 0.3% , Imoro Ayarna, Independent- 0.3%
1979 presidential run-off***		Hilla Limann- 62% Victor Owusu- 38%
1979 parliamentary	140	Peoples National Party- 71 , Popular Front Party- 42 , United National Convention- 13 , Action Congress Party- 10 , Social Democratic Front- 3 , Third Force Party- 0 , Independent- 1

* The 1969 constitution separated the position of head of state from head of government. As a result, a presidential election was needed.

** The elected Parliament of 1969 composed an electoral college for the election.

*** The first two candidates, Hilla Limann and Victor Owusu, qualified according to the constitution by which a candidate needed 50% plus one additional vote to win.

The 1969 constitution also provided for the election of a president, who was to be elected indirectly by an electoral college composed of all members of the National Assembly, three representatives from each of the regional houses of chiefs, and 15 members elected from the district councils across the country. The presidential elections were contested by

Edward Akufo-Addo, supported by the Progress Party, and I. B. Asafo-Adjaye, supported by the NAL. Akufo-Addo was elected with 123 votes to Asafo-Adjaye's 35.

Ghana's 1979 constitution, unlike the 1969 constitution, was modeled on the American political system (Essuman-Johnson, 1991). Unlike the 1969 elections, it provided for a presidential election won by a majority vote and a run-off election if no candidate gained a majority of the votes. Parliamentary elections were to be contested in single-member seats using a first-past-the-post rule.³³ The elections were contested by six political parties that included the Popular Front Party (PFP), the United National Convention (UNC), Peoples National Party (PNP), the Action Congress Party (ACP), the Third Force Party (TFP), and the Social Democratic Forum (SDF). For the first time in Ghana's electoral history, four independent presidential candidates—Nii Diamond Addy, Imoro Ayarna, Kwame Nyanteh, and R. P. Baffour—competed (Chazan, 1983). The constitution called for each presidential candidate to name a running mate, and parties used this opportunity to balance regional, ethnic, gender, and religious differences (Frempong, 2017, p. 111). This attempt to balance differences has prominently featured in every subsequent election in Ghana.³⁴

³³ Article 50(3), 1979 constitution.

³⁴ To achieve regional balance, Limann (PNP) from the Upper Region chose J. de Graft Johnson from the Central Region; Victor Owusu (PFP) from the Ashanti Region chose Yakubu Tali, a Limann from the Northern Region; William Ofori Atta (UNC) from the Eastern Region chose Iddrisu Mahama, a Limann from the Upper Region; Ibrahim Mahama (SDF) from the Northern Region chose Mawusi Dake, a Christian from the Volta Region in southern Ghana as his running mate; and R. P. Baffour (IND) picked Christine Debrah to introduce a gender balance and Ghana's first female running mate.

Following tradition, the parties represented liberal and populist politics, as had the UP and CPP. The PNP was a united assembly of surviving CPP stalwarts representing the CPP's populist traditions (Awoonor, 1990).

The elections were close: in the parliamentary elections, the PNP won 71 seats against 69 seats by the contesting parties. In the presidential elections, a run-off became necessary after no candidate won a majority of the votes because of the relative strengths of all the candidates.³⁵ Similarly to previous elections, regional and ethnic strengths of presidential candidates affected the outcome: Ibrahim Mahama's SDF won all of its three seats in the Northern Region, and the ACP won only in the Central and Western Regions dominated by the Fante ethnic group, to which its candidate Frank Barnasco belonged. Also, the number of female parliamentary winners increased from one in 1969 to five (Manu, 1993).

In Ghana's first ever presidential run-off, Dr. Hilla Limann and the PNC won with 1,118,305 votes against the 533,9292 of the PFP's Victor Owusu.

4.3 The Third Wave of Democratization and Ghana's Fifth Wave of Elections

As indicated earlier, Ghana, like the rest of the developing world, embraced the 'the third wave of democracy' in the early 1990s due to a convergence of domestic and international pressure. In the case of

³⁵ Limann-35.3%, Victor Owusu-29.9%, William Ofori Atta-17.4%, Frank Barnasco-9.5%, Ibrahim Mahama-3.7%, John Bilson-2.8%, and the four independent candidates-1.4%.

Ghana, this was a fourth attempt at democracy in a Fourth Republic and culminated in a fifth wave of elections. Ghana's Fourth Republican democracy has been largely successful with eight elections and three transitions from one administration to the next. There has been considerable interparty and international acceptance of the elections (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009a), with the exception of the 1992 parliamentary elections that were boycotted by the opposition (Ocuquaye, 2004).

The fifth wave began with the 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections. The presidential elections were contested by five political parties: the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the People's National Convention (PNC), the Independence Party (IP), and the People's Heritage Party (PHP). The presidential candidates were Jerry John Rawlings,³⁶ Albert Adu Boahen, Hilla Limann, Kwabena Darko, and Emmanuel Erskine. The parties the candidates represented were formed according to the existing political traditions: the NPP was formed in the liberal conservative tradition that traces its roots to the UGCC and the six others the NDC formed on social democratic principles. This tradition later attracted many of the elements of the Nkrumahist tradition, who were also socialist oriented, and the three parties formed around Rawlings. The NDC, Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE), and the National Convention Party (NCP), together with the People's National Convention, the Independence Party, and the People's Heritage Party, on the other hand, represented the populist

³⁶ Rawlings also represented the National Convention Party (NCP) and Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE).

tradition tracing their roots to the CPP (Jonah, 1998; Ninsin, 2006).

Following the 1979 precedent, the candidates chose running mates and again emphasized a regional, ethnic, gender, and religious balance.³⁷

Rawlings and the NDC benefitted from an incumbency advantage and won across nine of the ten regions with 58% of total votes; they lost only in the Ashanti Region, which had become a stronghold of the NPP. The opposition parties—citing ballot stuffing, rigging, and intimidation—disputed the presidential election results, demanded electoral reforms, and subsequently boycotted the parliamentary elections that had been slated for December 1992 (Ocquaye, 2004). As a result, the 1992 parliamentary elections were contested by only the NDC and its allied parties, the EGLE and NCP, together with independent candidates. The results of the elections, in which 16 female candidates won, had the NDC winning 189 seats of the 200, the NCP 8, and the EGLE 1, along with two independent candidates, making the first Parliament of the Fourth Republic a rubber stamp for the president.

Given the boycott of the parliamentary elections by the main opposition parties and their call for electoral reforms, the interim national electoral commission was replaced with a permanent electoral commission (EC). Subsequently, the Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) was formed as an advisory body to collaborate with the EC and the

³⁷ The NPP chose Roland Alhassan, a northern Muslim, as running mate, a tradition they have maintained in subsequent elections. Limann, a northerner, chose a southerner, Isaac Chinebuah, as running mate. NIP and Kwabena Darko chose a female, Naa Afarley Sackeyfio, and PHP's General Erskine, a southern Christian, chose Ibrahim Mahama, a northern Muslim, as running mate. Rawlings, a non-Akan, chose K. N. Arkaah, a Fanti (Akan), as running mate.

political parties in implementing agreed-upon reforms. As a result, several reforms were introduced to enhance Ghana's emerging democracy, including the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections on the same day and date, the use of transparent ballot boxes, the compilation of a new voters register and the pilot introduction of photo voter ID cards, and the use of party agents during the electoral process. These reforms and the collaboration of IPAC ensured largely incident-free elections in 1996 and began the process of building a credible electoral system (Frempong, 2017).

The 1996 elections were contested by three presidential candidates who represented six political parties due to developments at the time.³⁸ Unlike the 1992 elections, the regional, ethnic, and religious balance was less profound because of the emerging alliances that were formed.³⁹ In the outcome of the elections, Jerry Rawlings, counting on his incumbency and popularity, again won nine of the regions with the exception of the Ashanti Region, with 57.4% of the total vote; John Kufuor gained 39.6%, and Edward Mahama received 3%.

The 1996 parliamentary elections were more competitive than the 1992 elections because the opposition parties contested fully. The NDC was compelled to replace most of their parliamentary candidates because of the caliber of candidates fielded by the opposition (Bob-Milliar,

³⁸ The earlier alliance between the NDC and NCP fell apart, and most of the opposition parties formed an alliance but without the PNC, which contested on its own. In the opposition alliance, K. N. Arkaah, who was the sitting vice president, became the running mate to J. A. Kufuor, who was the opposition leader.

³⁹ The NDC formed the Progressive Alliance and maintained the earlier non-Akan/Akan (Ewe/Fante) ticket; the NPP became an all-Akan ticket (Ashanti/Fanti), but the PNC introduced a gender-balanced ticket.

2012).⁴⁰ These candidates were carefully selected by their political party without candidate selection primaries, and, as a result, aspirants lobbied the national party to be handpicked. The NPP, on the other hand, held loose primaries in their strongholds due to the interest that was shown by numerous aspirants.

Table 7. Election results in Ghana's Fourth Republic

Election	Seats	Number of parties contesting and outcome
1992 presidential		NDC-Jerry Rawlings / National Convention Party/ Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere- 58% , New Patriotic Party-Albert Adu Boahen- 30.4% , Peoples National Convention-Hilla Limann- 6.7% , National Independent Party-Kwabena Darko- 2.8% , Peoples Heritage Party-Emmanuel Erskine- 1.8%
1992 parliamentary	200	NDC- 189 , National Congress Party- 8 , Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere- 1 , IND- 2
1996 presidential		Progressive Alliance-NDC/EGLE/Democratic People's Party-Jerry Rawlings- 57.4% , Great Alliance-NPP/Peoples Convention Party-John Kufuor- 39.6% , PNC-Edward Mahama- 3.0%
1996 parliament	200	NDC- 133 , NPP- 61 , PCP- 5 , PNC- 1 NCP, EGLE, DPP, GCPP, and IND all got no seat
2000 presidential		NPP-John Kufuor- 48.2% , NDC-John Atta-Mills- 44.5% , PNC-Edward Mahama- 2.9% , CPP/ former PCP-George Hagan- 1.2% , National Reform Party-Goosie Tanoh- 1.2% , Great Consolidated Peoples Party-Daniel Lartey- 0.3% , Ghana Movement-Charles Wireku-Brobby- 0.3%
2000 presidential run-off		NPP-John Kufuor- 56.9% NDC-Evans Atta Mills- 43.1%
2000 parliamentary	200	NPP- 100 , NDC- 92 , PNC- 3 , CPP- 1 , IND- 4 EGLE, NRP, GCPP, and UGM did not win any seats
2004 presidential		NPP-John Kufuor- 52.5% , NDC-Evans Atta Mills- 44.6% , PNC-Edward Mahama- 1.9% , CPP-George Aggudey- 1.0%
2004 parliamentary	230	NPP- 128 , NDC- 94 , PNC- 4 , CPP- 3 . The GCPP, NRP, Democratic People's Party, and independents did not win any seats

⁴⁰ As many as 90 former MPs were dropped.

2008 presidential		NPP-Nana Akufo-Addo- 49.1% , NDC-Evan Atta Mills- 47.1% , CPP-Papa Kwesi Nduom- 1.3% , PNC-Edward Mahama- 0.9% , Democratic Freedom Party-Emmanuel Ansah Antwi- 0.3% , DPP-Thomas Ward-Brew- 0.1% , Reform Patriotic Democrats- 0.1% , Independent-Kwasi Amofo-Yeboah- 0.2%
2008 presidential run-off		NDC-Evans Atta Mills- 50.2% NPP-Nana Akufo-Addo- 49.8%
2008 parliamentary	230	NDC- 116 , NPP- 107 , PNC- 2 , CPP- 1 GCPP, DPP, DFP, National Vision Party, and Reformed Patriotic Democrats did not win any seats Independent- 4
2012 presidential		NDC-John Mahama- 50.7% , NPP-Nana Akufo-Addo- 47.7% , Progressive Peoples Party-Papa Kwesi Nduom- 0.6% , GCPP-Henry Lartey- 0.4% , PNC-Hassan Ayariga- 0.2% , CPP-Micheal Sakara Forster- 0.2% , United Freedom Party-Akwasi Addai- 0.1% , Independent-Jacob Osei Yeboah- 0.1%
2012 parliamentary		NDC- 148 , NPP- 123 , PNC- 1 CPP, GCPP, DPP, PPP, National Democratic Party, Ghana Freedom Party, United Freedom Party, Yes Peoples Party, Independent Peoples Party, United Renaissance Party, and independents did not win any seats
2016 presidential		NPP-Nana Akufo-Addo- 53.9% , NDC-John Mahama- 44.4% , PPP- Papa Kwesi Nduom- 1.0% , CPP-Ivor Greenstreet- 0.24% , PNC- Edward Mahama- 0.21% , NDP-Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings- 0.16% , Independent-Joseph Osei Yeboah- 0.15%
2016 parliamentary	275	NPP- 169 , NDC- 106 PNC, CPP, GCPP, PPP, NDP, All Peoples Congress, and independents did not win any seats
2020 presidential		NPP-Nana Akufo-Addo- 51.3% , NDC-John Mahama- 47.1% Other 10 parties- 1.6%
2020 parliamentary	275	NPP- 137 , NDC 137 , Independent 1

Jerry Rawlings represented the NDC, National Convention Party, and Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere as their presidential candidate.

* The 1992 parliamentary elections were contested by the parties in the winning alliance with the NDC because of the boycott by the major parties that contested the presidential elections.

4.3.1 The First Democratic Transition in Ghana

The 2000 elections were significant in many ways; it was, for example, the first time that a democratically elected president in Ghana was

completing his term without a military intervention.⁴¹ Jerry Rawlings had exhausted his second term and did not attempt to amend the constitution to extend his mandate as other presidents across Africa had. Instead, he followed the NDC tradition that handpicked him as the presidential candidate without primaries for the 1992 and 1996 elections by handpicking his then vice president, John Atta Mills, as his successor without a candidate selection primary,⁴² much to the dismay of other potential candidates who had hoped for a candidate selection contest.

The opposition NPP, on the other hand, maintained its candidate selection tradition and elected John Kufuor in a keenly contested candidate selection primary two years before the elections. As usual, the presidential tickets ensured a regional, ethnic, and religious balance, but no attempt was made to achieve a gender balance as was previously undertaken by some parties.

The outcome of the first round of voting was inconclusive with no candidate winning the majority of the votes to be declared president. John Kufuor of the NPP won in six regions and led with 48.2% of declared votes, followed by NDC's John Mills, who obtained 44.5% of the votes, Edward Mahama (PNC) 2.9%, George Hagan (CPP) 1.2%, Goosie Tanoh (NRP) 1.2%, Dan Lartey (GCPP) 1.0%, and Charles Wereko-Brobby (UGM) 0.3%. In the ensuing run-off, John Kufuor defeated John

⁴¹ Previous elected governments—Nkrumah and the CPP, Busia and the PFP, and Limann and the PNP—were truncated by military coups.

⁴² This in particular created problems within the NDC and brought lots of disunity and breakaways. The National Reform Party was formed as a result to contest the presidential and parliamentary elections, which in part accounted for the party's defeat.

Mills by 59.9% to 43.1% to ensure Ghana's first ever democratic transition from a civilian government.

The parliamentary elections also witnessed a change in majority, as the NPP for the first time won the majority in Parliament. In an election contested by eight parties—NDC, NPP, PNC, CPP, EGLE, NRP, GCPP, and UGM—and 63 independent candidates,⁴³ the NPP won 100 seats, the NDC 92, PNC 3, and CPP 1. Four independents who were elite defectors⁴⁴ from the NDC after acrimonious candidate selection primaries also won, together with 18 women.

The 2004 elections were essentially a repeat of the 2000 elections. Together with the NDC and NPP, the PNC maintained its presidential candidate, but the CPP chose a new one. Like previously, the ethnic, religious, and regional balances were maintained on the presidential tickets, though there was no gender balance. John Kufuor was reelected with 52.5% of the votes; J. E. A. Mills gained 44.6 %, Edward Mahama 1.9%, and George Aguddey 1.0%.

The parliamentary elections, for the first time, began with the NPP and NDC both holding wholesale candidate selection primaries. The NDC, having lost the 2000 parliamentary elections, reformed to select all parliamentary candidates through candidate selection primaries. As a result, the majority of the candidates that contested had been selected in

⁴³ The NDC imposed several candidates on the constituencies, and as a result of the acrimonious candidate selection process, several candidates contested as independents. Whilst the NDC had protest candidates running as independents in the Akan, Anlo, Garu-Tempne, and Salaga Constituencies, the NPP had independent defectors in Abetifi, Akropong, Bantama, and Kumawu.

⁴⁴ Boniface Saddique, Rashid Bawa, Joseph Akudibillah, and James Victor-Gbeho won in Salaga, Akan, Garu, and Anlo, respectively.

candidate selection primaries. The elections were contested in 230 constituencies; reforms had increased the number from the previous 200. The incumbent NPP dominated with 128 seats, winning seats for the first time across all ten regions, the NDC won 94, PNC 4, and the CPP 3, with one independent winning.⁴⁵ Among the winners were 25 women.

4.3.2 The Second Successful Democratic Transition

The 2008 elections were remarkable for numerous reasons. First, it was a transition election where the incumbent, John Kufuor, had exhausted his constitutional two-term limit. He did not attempt to subvert the constitution to run for a third term. As previously, the NPP's presidential candidate selection was very competitive with a record 17 candidates contesting.⁴⁶ The elections were contested by seven parties—the NPP, NDC, PNC, CPP, DPP, DFP, and RPD—together with the first independent presidential candidate in Ghana's Fourth Republican elections, Kwesi Amofo-Yeboah. These presidential tickets again emphasized regional, ethnic, religious, and gender balance.⁴⁷ The outcome of the elections was inconclusive; the NPP candidate, Nana Akufo-Addo, led with 49.1% against J. E. A. Mills with 47.9%. As a result, a run-off was organized,

⁴⁵ Joseph Labik was a two-term winner in 1992 and 1996 but lost the primaries in 2000 and contested as an independent. He lost the general election only to win again as an independent in 2004.

⁴⁶ The aspirants included Yaw Osafo-Mafo, Kwabena Agyapong, Prof. Mike Oquaye, Kwame Hackman Owusu-Agyemang, Daniel Kweku Botwe, Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey, Alan John Kyeremanten, Dr. Kofi Konadu Apraku, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, Papa Owusu Ankomah, Boakye Kyeremanteng Agyarko, Kobina Arthur Kennedy, Prof. Kwabena Frimpong Boateng, Alhaji Aliu Mahama, Dr. Kwame Addo Kufuor, Dr. Barffuor Adjei-Barwuah, and Felix Kwesi Owusu Adjapong.

⁴⁷ The NPP had a Christian Akan and northern Muslim, the NDC a Christian Fante and northern Christian, the PNC a northern man and a southern woman, and so forth.

and Mills won in the narrowest of victories with 50.2% against Akufo-Addo's 49.8%.

The parliamentary elections were contested in 230 constituencies by nine parties and 96 independents. The NDC won 116 seats, the NPP 107, the PNC 2, and CPP 1, together with four independents who had defected from the NPP as a result of acrimonious candidate selection primaries.⁴⁸ Among the winners were 20 women, a reduction from the previous 25.

4.3.3 The Introduction of Biometric Voter Registration and Further Party Reforms for the 2012 Elections

There were major electoral reforms preceding the 2012 general elections; biometric voter registration was introduced, and the number of constituencies was increased from 230 to 275. The major political parties initiated further candidate selection reforms as well. In the early years of Ghana's Fourth Republic, competition to represent political parties in Ghana's legislature was hardly competitive. Candidate selection has, however, evolved significantly from that time, when some pioneer members of Parliament had to be cajoled by their local communities and other power brokers to run for Parliament (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012). In the 1992 elections, for example, the NDC with its revolutionary background nominated candidates who were popular in their communities without assessing their capacity to undertake parliamentary work.

⁴⁸ Nana Ofori-Kuragu, the NPP incumbent, lost the primary; Joseph Osei-Owusu lost a primary; Seth Adjei-Baah lost a primary; and Saani Iddi lost a primary.

Loose primaries begun to be organized beginning from the 1996 elections, with candidate selection efforts that dwelt more on professional and educational ability to engage in parliamentary work and financial credibility than on social capital (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012). The NDC primaries from 1992 until 2004, as indicated earlier, were irregular, and candidates were imposed on constituencies in a top-down approach.

The NPP, on the other hand, started organizing loose primaries to select parliamentary candidates beginning in 1992 because of the political dynamics at the time. In the main cities and towns where the opposition was strong, they held primaries to select candidates, as there was popular interest in representing those areas. However, in their opposition areas in the Volta and parts of the northern regions, candidates were cajoled and induced to stand on their tickets. In those areas there was hostility toward opposition candidates, yet the party needed to have representation across the country to fulfil the constitutional requirement for being a national party. After the change in government in 2000 when NPP came into power, primary elections became keenly contested and expensive because of the relative strengths and attractiveness of both dominant parties (Lindberg, 2010). As a result, both the NDC and NPP went into elections from 2004 to 2020 having conducted parliamentary primaries based on similar formal procedures for candidate selection (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012).

There have been significant reforms from both parties, mainly after losing a transitional election. The NDC reformed in 2004 and again in 2015 whilst the NPP expanded the electoral college significantly to

include all polling station executives beginning with the 2012 elections. In 2010, the NPP, after its defeat in the 2008 presidential and parliamentary elections, expanded the electoral college to include all polling station executives, raising delegate numbers from one per polling station to five in the NPP, for example, thus increasing the average from 100 to 600 per constituency based on the number of polling stations. Despite these reforms, however, electoral fraud persisted, and the cost of vote buying increased further because of the increased members in the electoral colleges (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012).

On the other hand, in 2004, the NDC, after its defeat in the 2000 elections, reformed its delegate process by adopting a restrictive approach similar to that of the NPP with constituency executives forming the electoral colleges for the 2004, 2008, and 2012 elections. For the 2016 elections, the NDC choose to expand the primary to include all party members in good standing. For the 2020 elections, however, the NDC reverted to a restricted electoral college that is similar to that of the NPP but with nine executives per polling station compared to the five who vote in the NPP.⁴⁹

The NDC have evolved their presidential candidate selection process from the one-man acclamation of John Evans Atta-Mills as the presidential candidate in 2000, which caused divisions and led to their defeat, to formal presidential primaries, which they have carried out

⁴⁹ The NDC has nine voters including the polling station chairman, secretary, women organizer, youth organizer, organizer, communications officer, treasurer, and two executive members of the party voting while the NPP has five voters that include the chairman, organizer, women organizer, youth organizer, and treasurer.

since 2004 (Walraven, 2002). The NDC presidential candidate selection process has evolved from having fewer than 1,400 members of an electoral college participate to having more than 1.3 million voters in 2016 when the party expanded the pool of selectorates to include all card-bearing members across the country. The numbers have, however, now been reduced to 330,000 electorates in an electoral college that includes key constituency and national executives and functionaries of the party. Interestingly, unlike the NPP, where a candidate is acclaimed when no other candidate files to contest, the NDC system allows selectorates to vote in a yes or no contest to select a flag bearer in cases when a sole candidate emerges.⁵⁰

The NPP also reformed its presidential candidate selection process to include all polling station executives as voters, thus increasing the number of voters from 2,285 to more than 130,000 (Frempong, 2017, p. 263). The party also limited the number of people who can contest to no more than five. These reforms were necessitated by the acrimonious 2008 presidential primaries that were contested by 17 aspirants and created significant divisions that contributed to the party's electoral defeat (see Whitfield, 2009; Gyimah-Boadi, 2009b). The NPP thus chose to expand the presidential selectorates pool in 2009 to address issues of vote buying that dominated the 2008 primaries, and the party also introduced a two-step process to reduce the number of aspirants. Where more than five people filed to contest an NPP presidential primary, the Special

⁵⁰ In November 2015 John Mahama secured 1,199,118 'yes' votes of a total 1,286,728 votes, representing 95.10% of the party members to be endorsed to lead the NDC in the 2016 general elections.

Electoral College of 828 members,⁵¹ composed of the national council, national executive committee, regional executive committees, national council of elders, sitting members of Parliament, three representatives from party special organs, past national officers, three members from every external branch, founding members of the party, and ministers of state when the party is in power, vote to select the top five candidates for the larger electoral college of over 130,000 selectorates to vote on (Constitution of the New Patriotic Party, 1998, p. 55).⁵²

4.3.4 The Contested 2012 Election Results and the Supreme Court Decision

The 2012 elections saw several political parties emerging to contest the elections. The presidential tickets again had regional, ethnic, religious, and gender balances. Incumbent John Mahama won the contested election by 50.7% to Akufo-Addo's 47.7%, which led to a long, drawn-out electoral dispute in the Supreme Court of Ghana, which finally declared the results in John Mahama's favor (Gyimah-Boadi, 2013).⁵³

A record number of fourteen political parties contested the parliamentary elections across 275 constituencies. The outcome showed the dominant NDC and NPP winning 148 and 123 seats, respectively, and the smaller parties performing abysmally, with the PNC winning one

⁵¹ When the SEC system was first used on August 31, 2014, some 828 delegates comprising the 123 opposition members of Parliament in 2014, 160 regional executives, and 275 constituency chairpersons, among others, voted to select five candidates out of the seven who had picked up forms to contest for the 2016 elections.

⁵² This was used in 2015 when nine aspirants picked up forms to contest the NPP presidential primaries.

⁵³ The outcome of the 2012 presidential election was contested in the Supreme Court of Ghana by the opposition NPP, who alleged evidence of several anomalies despite the position of most observer groups that the elections were free and fair.

seat, along with three independents, all NDC defectors after acrimonious candidate selection contests. Among the winners were 30 women.

4.3.5 The Third Successful Democratic Transition

Ghana in 2016 had witnessed six democratic elections. In each case, the party in power was voted out after two terms. In 2016, however, the NDC had been in power for eight years, but their candidate and incumbent president was contesting for a second term.⁵⁴ The opposition was repeating a presidential candidate and running mate for a record third time. Also, the long-time head of the electoral commission had retired, and a new chairperson had been appointed to steer the elections. The 2016 presidential elections witnessed a record 23 aspirants picking up nomination forms to contest the election, 16 of whom represented political parties and 7 of whom were running as independents (Frempong, 2017, p. 291). The presidential ticket in 2016, besides the usual ethnic, religious, and regional balance, also had five candidates who had attempted the presidency multiple times, a disabled person, and Ghana's first female presidential candidate.⁵⁵ The outcome of the election made Mahama Ghana's first one-term president and further confirmed a de facto two-party democracy in Ghana.⁵⁶ The opposition NPP with Akufo-Addo won 53.9%, the NDC and John Mahama won 44.4%, and the five other aspirants gained 1.7% of the votes. This presented Ghana with

⁵⁴ This was because President Mills had died in 2012.

⁵⁵ Nana Konadu Rawlings, former first lady, having failed to win an NDC primary, formed her own party, the National Democratic Party, and contested the 2016 elections.

⁵⁶ John Mills was also one-term president, but he died whilst serving as president.

a third alternation of power to cement the country's growing democratic credentials.

The parliamentary elections were contested by candidates representing eight political parties and independent candidates. Just like the presidential elections, it was a straight fight between the NPP, who won a majority of 169 seats, against the NDC, who won 106, with no other party or independent winning.

The 2020 elections were unique in their own way. It was the first time in Ghana's Fourth Republic democracy that a sitting president was being contested by a Fourth Republic former president.⁵⁷ Having won the NDC's candidate selection primaries in 2019, John Mahama, the immediate past president, was eligible by the constitution to contest because he only exhausted one term of his possible two-term limit. In the NPP, President Akufo-Addo was acclaimed by the NPP as candidate since no other person contested the primary in 2020. In the third electoral contest between Akufo-Addo and John Mahama, Akufo-Addo won with 51.3% of the votes against John Mahama, who gained 47.1%. The results were contested by John Mahama and the NDC in the Supreme Court of Ghana, but the apex court affirmed Akufo-Addo's victory.

The 2020 parliamentary elections were contested by eleven parties and independents with interesting results. A hung Parliament became inevitable when the NPP and NDC gained 137 seats apiece with an

⁵⁷ Hilla Limann contested the 1992 elections as a former president from the Third Republic who was ousted in a coup.

independent defector from the NPP winning to complete the 275-member legislature.

4.4 Recurring and Emerging Issues in Ghana's Elections

Ghana's experiment with democracy in the Fourth Republic has been largely successful and effectively passed Huntington's 'two turnover test' with three successful turnovers and 30 years of continuous democracy (Huntington, 1991). Increasingly, there has been a measurable improvement in key government institutions such as the electoral commission, the judiciary, the security agencies, the media, and a strong civil society that has guarded the democratic process.

That notwithstanding, there are emerging issues that threaten Ghana's democracy. First, the institution of the electoral commission that has been the bedrock of seven successful elections has been weakened after the retirement of the long-tenured commissioner. Since his retirement, two commissioners have been appointed in the space of two election cycles, and the tenure of the new commissioner is uncertain in the event of a new government.

Second, there is an emerging de facto two-party democracy with the dominance of the NPP and NDC, who together have dominated Ghana's politics. These two parties have alternated the parliamentary majority in the years in which they have won the elections. In the 2017 Parliament, they absolutely controlled parliament with no other party or independent MPs. This two-party dominance has contributed to the stability Ghana enjoys because it provides an avenue for political actors

to accept election outcomes with the belief that they can mobilize to recapture political power. However, the lack of a strong third force has limited democratic choices between the NPP and NDC, who have tended to win presidential elections in eight-year cycles. This has led to a polarization of Ghanaian politics that's visible in the media and Parliament, and it has created barriers to the creation of a successful third party, as other parties are unable to reproduce the institutional networks and loyalties of the NDC and NPP (Whitfield, 2009).

Third, the voters' register has become a recurring conundrum in Ghana's democracy. Credible electoral registers are integral to the conduct of credible elections. Voter registration is complex and expensive and can affect the quality and outcomes of an election and subsequent stability of democratic institutions in a country (Evrensel, 2010). It has been difficult to determine eligibility from age, residency, and nationality even though Ghana has held eight successful elections. The registrations are still contentious because of the difficulty in determining citizenship and ethnicity. Borders are fluid, and the lack of proper birth registry and national identity systems results in a lack of proper citizenship identity and age.

The voters' register in Ghana has evolved over the years from paper slips to photo IDs to the biometric voter registration that is currently in use. However, the process of voter registration has always been dogged by the ethnicity questions that continuously confront the African continent and led to civil unrest in Côte d'Ivoire in the late 2000s. This is caused by the porous borders resulting from the colonial legacies. In

Ghana, there has been contention, especially in the constituencies near the borders between Ghana and Togo, Burkina Faso, and Côte d'Ivoire. This has usually led to accusations and violence.

Fourth, with the convergence of Ghana's democracy, candidate selection primary elections have become an important feature in the electoral process. Given the dominance of two parties, contesting their primaries provides a pathway to Parliament. Parliamentary aspirants therefore identify with the NPP or NDC, on whose tickets they can successfully contest. The political parties also make use of these processes to select candidates for both presidential and parliamentary elections. In every election cycle, an increasing number of aspirants pick nomination forms to contest.⁵⁸ By casting their lot with the dominant political parties, they have the potential to gain a political appointment, whether to a post as minister if they win or as a municipal chief executive or district chief executive if they lose (see chapter 6). As a consequence, most MP aspirants tend to be office-seekers rather than policy-seekers (Ichino and Nathan, 2017).

Fifth, vote buying is prevalent, and the cost of elections has increased exponentially with use of money and other inducements to influence voting. Aspirants who attempt to buy votes are guaranteed to be in the race, and those who do not attempt are assured to lose. Vote buying has become the rule of the game, and aspirants share anything

⁵⁸ On average, four persons contest a constituency primary in Ghana. In the first set of 2019 primaries of the NDC, for example, 573 candidates contested in 182 constituencies with only 48 candidates standing unopposed.

from money, cloth, and mobile phones to vehicles.⁵⁹ Gradually, those with deep pockets are dominating politics because of the importance of cash in winning elections. Between 2012 and 2016, the cost of running for political office increased 59%, and on average candidates needed to raise GH¢389,803 to secure a party's primary nomination and compete in the parliamentary election (Westminster Foundation, 2018). Primaries also come with expensive campaigns, often leaving nominees with depleted resources to contest the general election (Ichino and Nathan, 2010).

Sixth, whilst candidate selection primaries have tended to be dominated by vote-buying attempts, campaigns during general elections are gradually moving from slogans, symbols, and vague promises of infrastructure, petrol, and utility price reductions to tangible policy promises and debates.

Beginning from the election of 2008, when the NPP manifesto focused on a flagship free senior secondary school education policy and the NDC focused on a one-time premium payment for health insurance, elections have generated serious policy debates. In the subsequent elections, political campaigns have debated policies and promises that have piqued the interest of the general citizenry. The consolidation and maturity of Ghana's democracy after 30 years have provided the political

⁵⁹ In September 2019, a parliamentary candidate hopeful in the NPP parliamentary primaries in the Ajumako Enyan Essiam constituency, Mr. Elisha Debrah Odoom, brought 11 saloon cars to the party on the day of the primaries. 'NPP polls: Aspirant shares cars on election day at Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam', GhanaWeb, September 28, 2019, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/NPP-polls-Aspirant-shares-cars-on-election-day-at-Ajumako-Enyan-Essiam-784431>.

parties with the structures to offer policy promises, and voters are scrutinizing party manifestoes and demanding more accountability. They are successful in these efforts because the slim margins in elections give voters the power to alter election outcomes. As observed during this study, this is partly due to the emergence of technologies such as mobile phones and new media that have provided citizens with the tools and access to consume political information and contribute to debates.

4.5 Conclusion

In all, elections throughout Ghana's history have sought to legitimize political systems. Today, multi-party elections have accordingly become an important agent in facilitating the transfer of power that provides needed internal and external political legitimacy.

Democracy is consolidating, and beginning in 1992, political space has increased to accommodate divergent views and political associations with 17 different political parties being formed to contest elections since that time. Elections have been largely free and fair, and results have been mostly accepted by winning and losing parties, except in 1992, 2012 and 2020 when the presidential elections were challenged by the opposition. Despite the emerging challenges articulated above, Ghana is widely regarded as an epitome of political reforms in Africa and as a stable democracy.

As indicated in this chapter, democratic stabilization has enabled the dominant political parties to reform and improve their internal democracy with the institutionalization of intra-party leadership elections

from the polling stations to the national level and candidate selection primaries for both parliamentary and presidential aspirants. These important elections are designed to be democratic, open, and fair. However, the growing influence of money and seeming institutionalization of vote buying in the all-important candidate selection primaries is intriguing and poses significant threats to accountable and representative government. Existing theories expected that undemocratic practices would have diminished in a stable democracy, but in the case of Ghana, empirical evidence suggests the escalation of vote buying.

Following from this chapter, chapter 5 looks at how political structuring and party organization encourages vote buying in intraparty elections and their implications for Ghana's democratic progress.

Chapter Five

‘No monkey dey work baboon dey chop situation’:

Political Structuring and Internal Party Democracy in Ghana

The polling station chairman of the New Patriotic Party sat in his bicycle repair shop where we had scheduled the interview with two young apprentices who happened to be his sons. Chairman—as he is popularly called—is a 52-year-old man with two wives and 13 children who are all supported by his bicycle repair business, which fetches him barely enough to feed the family on most days. While his income depends on the number of bicycles he repairs, he rarely makes the equivalent of US\$100 in total each month. However, he is a powerful political operative during intra-party elections, as his position as polling station chairman, a position at the bottom of Ghana’s political system, means he is a member of the electoral college. In the absence of sufficient government welfare programs, Chairman has often fallen on the benevolence of political party candidates, either incumbents or aspirants, to support his family by demanding help from them with school fees, hospital bills, groceries, and any other issues that he needs help with—in exchange for his potential support during an intra-party election.

Growing up in Aflao in the Ketu South constituency,⁶⁰ Chairman’s ethnic group had always supported Jerry John Rawlings, who as

⁶⁰ Ketu South is located in the Volta Region of Ghana, and it is an epicenter of NDC support. Presidential candidates have consistently obtained over 90% of votes cast there since 1992.

indicated in chapter 3 took power in a military coup in 1981, then ruled until 1992 when the NDC was formed. Supporting the NDC was a forgone conclusion for most people in the larger Volta Region, though in elections prior to 1992, they had not acted as an ethnic block. Rawlings had consolidated power among his ethnic group, and he also had a wider appeal across Ghana even though support for the NDC was expected to be low in some parts of Ghana where opposition to his military rule was evident. As part of political mobilization, the other political parties needed to reach out broadly to the general citizenry for votes and to satisfy the law that stipulated that all political parties demonstrate a national character by having offices and branches across the country.

In the Ketu South constituency, Chairman's uncle was tasked with forming the NPP's branches in the constituency. His uncle induced, cajoled, and convinced one of his friends to be the polling station chairman, and the friend, in turn, brought his wife as the women organizer—the only position reserved for a woman. Chairman's brother-in-law acted as secretary. As a 22-year-old, Chairman was made the youth organizer, and his cousin was made the organizer in a hostile constituency where almost everyone else supported the NDC. According to Chairman, 'It was a cardinal sin then to support the NPP in the beginning. People thought we had sold out, we had betrayed our people to the enemies of Rawlings. It was impossible to wear the NPP paraphernalia and the posters we hanged at night were torn down by morning.'

The dynamics of Ghanaian politics have changed over the years. It is now attractive in the constituency to be an NPP member and, even more so, a polling station executive. The earlier function of executives as grassroots mobilizers has been augmented by lucrative roles as selectorates/delegates⁶¹ in candidate and party leadership elections, which provides the leverage to extract gifts from candidates. As a result, the polling station positions, which were hitherto uncontested, have become highly competitive, and in every election period beginning from 2004, attempts have been made through elections or machinations by others to unseat Chairman and his allies.

However, having been a polling station political party leader for 30 years, he has a good grip on the polling station and controls the process of electing executives with the support of political leaders above him. Interest in polling station positions has escalated because of the benefits of demanding gifts, controlling party resources that come to each polling station, and gaining the strategic interest of political leaders who anticipate to contest constituency, regional, and national leadership positions and parliamentary or presidential aspirants who anticipate contesting candidate selection primaries. According to Chairman, 'given the few number of NPP supporters in this polling station and Ketu South being an NDC stronghold, the NPP brings a lot of support for us to engage in voter mobilization during general elections and being a member of the campaign team provide the avenue to get a new motorbike and

⁶¹ Selectorates are referred to as delegates in Ghanaian politics. In this chapter, delegates and selectorates will be used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

some money in every election cycle.’ As a result, he attempts to bring in only people he trusts will be loyal to him and, by extension, his political benefactors.

By contrast, the interview with Nana, the NPP parliamentary aspirant challenging for a seat in another constituency, was held in a plush government office where he was the chief executive officer. In 2016, he attempted to contest the parliamentary primaries against the incumbent MP but lost narrowly in a tight race by 60 votes out of 520 selectorates. When he diagnosed why he lost, he realized that the main reason was that he did not have good control of the polling station executives who composed the electoral college in the 2016 primaries. He gave gifts as the incumbent did, and supported the demands of the selectorates, but he had not built sustainable relationships (see chapter 7). With a government appointment came the opportunity to amass the resources needed to actively engage in constituency politics and increase his name recognition to augment his parliamentary ambition. According to him, ‘My first strategy was to have a keen interest in the polling station elections and get as many supporters to contest and win as possible. The second was to find reasonable ways of accommodating their incessant demands to keep them loyal until the primaries.’

With the tacit support of constituency executives, he identified and supported 420 candidates to contest for every position in all polling stations in the constituency to build the base for his candidature. When the polling station elections were done and most of his people won, he knew 20% of the work was done, but the 80% was the difficult and

expensive enterprise of developing and nurturing the relationships with his delegates to keep their loyalty (see chapter 7).

These two scenarios provide a lens for understanding the structuring of intra-party democracy and the dynamics of intra-party elections in Ghana. These elections are undertaken by electoral colleges and are built up from the grassroots at the polling stations or branches through to national leadership elections.⁶² The two main political parties have attempted to continuously reform the processes in a bid to use intra-party elections to promote democracy from the bottom of the political pyramid to the top. However, this chapter demonstrates that the stated intention of promoting democracy in this way remains under the control of political leaders who regulate the process.

The constitutions of the major parties in Ghana, the NPP and the NDC, set out the processes by which elections should be held to choose party officers from the polling stations through electoral area, constituency, regional, and national offices, as well as the parliamentary and presidential candidates. Similar to the registered-membership model of political parties in longer-established democracies, these parties, which often lack robust membership registers, have adopted a mix of party member votes and electoral college systems to select their leaders and candidates for elections. At the polling or branch levels, registered party members in good standing are required to vote and select party leaders, but the lack of membership data has restricted these elections to

⁶² The NPP calls the first unit of political organization a polling station whilst the NDC call theirs a party branch, but they mean the same thing and have similar election processes and functions.

a few known faces, so in practice they often operate like electoral colleges. However, subsequent elections to elect constituency, regional, and national leaders, together with presidential and parliamentary primaries, are conducted based on electoral colleges, both in theory and in practice. Except for the polling station elections, which are supervised only by political party officials, the elections that involve electoral colleges are supervised by officials of the Electoral Commission of Ghana with support from party officials to ensure credibility and fairness.

This chapter examines political structuring, organization, and intra-party democracy that begins from the selection of local party leaders to national leaders, whilst chapter 6 will go into more depth about parliamentary candidate selection primaries prior to the general elections. The chapter looks at the case of Ghana in relation to the existing literature on intra-party democracy and issues such as party leadership control of the processes and vote buying.

Based on in-depth interviews in three selected constituencies and ethnographic observations, I argue that Ghana's apparent internal party democracy is built on grassroots structures that are systematically influenced by political leaders at every step in a pyramidal structure—to benefit them in elections that are held at the top of the political pyramid. So, whilst those at the bottom of the pyramid in the polling stations seemingly have the power to determine who gets elected in parliamentary and presidential primaries, those who aspire to these positions take keen interest in polling station politics to ensure that selectorates are loyalists. As a result, even though parties gesture towards internal democracy with

the use of intra-party elections, there is actually a big gap between what party constitutions and election guidelines prescribe and what actually take place during elections.

This chapter also begins to build the argument that political arrangements at the grassroots together with documented sociocultural and economic factors have sustained party politics in Ghana as a male-dominated domain. The political arrangements have tended to alienate women throughout the political spectrum because, by default, women are consigned to the position of women organizer.

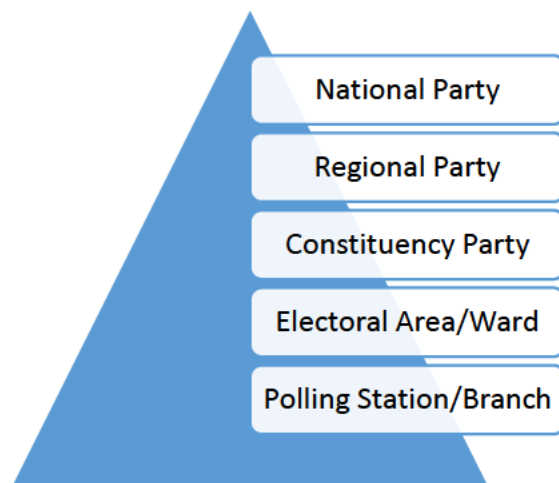
The chapter concludes that the existing political arrangements have made intra-party elections very expensive because of the demands of selectorates, thus enabling party leaders to control the process. Even though attempts have consistently been made at reforms, these have never materialized because the selectorates and the party leaders are comfortable with current arrangements that offer financial benefits to the selectorates and electoral benefits to political leaders. Despite Ghana's ostensibly consolidated democracy compared to other African countries, these conclusions are consistent with existing literature on intra-party democracy in Africa where Salih (2003) concluded that African political parties, because of a lack of institutional capacity, focus more on developing systems that make the parties viable vehicles for contesting and winning elections as opposed to consolidating intra-party democracy. Arguing in support of Salih, Maiyo (2008) concluded that African political parties desire intra-party democracy to be useful in improving the overall effectiveness of political parties against their opposition. These studies,

though over ten years old, have valid insights on intra-party democracy that are still valid.

5.1 Political Party Organization in Ghana

The Political Parties Act 1992, Act 574 directs all political parties to have a national character by having branches across all regions and districts. Even though political parties in Ghana seemingly profess different ideologies, their organization and internal arrangements are similar.

Figure 2. Political party organization in Ghana



The political parties are organized in a pyramidal form beginning at the polling station or branch, which acts as the basic unit of organization. The polling station and branch level are effectively the same—different labels given by the two parties for the same thing. Each polling station has an average of 400 voters in general elections. The polling stations are managed by a mix of elected and appointed executives comprising a chairman, secretary, organizer, youth organizer, women organizer, and, in the case of the NDC, a communications officer and treasurer. These party leaders engage in party work that includes voter mobilization and

inducement, organizing voters for political rallies, campaign messaging, monitoring elections at over 38,000 polling stations across the country, and acting as party agents during electoral registration, voting, and getting-out-the-vote efforts on Election Day. Even more significantly, the polling station or branch executives compose an electoral college to elect constituency executives and to select parliamentary and presidential candidates.

The second level of organization is the electoral area or ward, which is a collective of an average of 10 branches or polling stations; electoral areas vary based on the size and population of a constituency. The polling station or branch chairmen, secretaries, and organizers compose an electoral college to elect a coordinator within their membership. The electoral or ward coordinators are mainly tasked with coordinating political activities of the branches within their electoral areas or wards.

An average of 18 electoral areas form a constituency. The NDC in each constituency has in total 28 constituency executives, while the NPP has 17 constituency executives. In the NDC, 23 executives are elected and 5 appointed. In the NPP, 10 are elected and 7 appointed, including the constituency financial secretary, the deputy constituency organizer, the deputy constituency women organizer, the deputy constituency youth organizer, the electoral/research officer, the Nasara coordinator,⁶³ and the constituency communications officer. These structures are replicated

⁶³ This position is to coordinate Muslims in the party. This was created as a result of NPP's general lack of support among Muslim voters.

through the regional to national levels and together with external branches⁶⁴ collectively become the national party.

These positions are not officially paid positions but come with lots of informal benefits, as indicated earlier. The leaders of the polling stations become the link between the parties and the electorates and help to sustain the party's clientelistic relationships with individual voters by seeking support for expenses on their behalf from political leaders (Nathan, 2016). The constituency executive committees in both parties are the highest organizational unit and consist of all elected and appointed officers of the party. They appoint members of the constituency disciplinary committee and finance committees and supervise the effective running of the constituencies.

5.1.1 Internal Decision Making

For internal party decision making, there are constituency, regional, and national committees together with national councils and a council of elders who serve as an advisory organ. However, the day-to-day running of political parties is undertaken by the elected officials at the constituency, regional, and national levels. Constituency conferences are called every four years to make decisions on running the party at the constituency level, and national conferences are called to do same at the national level. The national party conference is the highest decision-making body and determines the organization of the party by approving

⁶⁴ External branches are special party units of mobilization, including the student wings of the party (mainly at the universities and other tertiary institutions), external branches abroad, and religious wings.

changes to the party constitution, conduct of elections, and other important decisions that are binding on the party.

5.1.2 Party Membership

Political parties in Ghana are organized as machines to win the next elections. They attempt to mobilize as mass parties with a mixture of formal card-bearing members and informal others who support the parties based on their ethnic, geographic, or religious orientations. The political parties' law, Act 574 of the 1992 Constitution, specifies that the internal organization of a political party must be in consonance with democratic principles. However, the democratic structures and procedures exist in theory but nominally in practice (Ninsin, 2006a).

The dominant political parties have at various times attempted to build formal membership by providing membership cards and demanding membership fees. However, party membership remains largely informal even though individuals openly align with political parties. This is mainly because most grassroots supporters believe the parties should take care of them, and therefore registering and paying membership dues to a political party is uncommon. Formal party membership is mostly the preserve of political office seekers who aspire for leadership positions, as being members of good standing is a prerequisite. More people become members of political parties, whether formal or informal, during election periods, when membership in a political party is beneficial. Members experience the euphoria of attending party rallies and activities, gain attention for engaging in party work, and receive gifts for supporting the

party. There are no definitive membership records of the political parties, but known faces who identify with a party are considered members.

Political parties therefore attempt to solicit the support of uncommitted members through messaging, gift-giving, and building ties to particular ethnic and religious groups (Debrah, 2014).

5.1.3 Political Structuring

Political structures in Ghana have tended to have a gender imbalance. There is an inadequate representation of women along the pyramidal structure, which epitomizes traditional gender roles and power distribution. The arrangements at the polling station conventionally⁶⁵ reserve the specific role of ‘women organizer’ for women, and this tendency to limit women to specific positions is replicated through the ranks up to the national level. Other roles, by convention, have been dominated by men, which has resulted in the situation where out of the five or seven executives, usually only one is a woman. In my interviews throughout the three constituencies, all the women interviewed were women organizers except one who was a polling station secretary in the Adentan constituency. According to her, ‘I was nominated to replace my brother who had travelled out of the country, and the executives trusted that I would tow the line since my brother was one of them.’

⁶⁵ In 2018, a young man attempted to contest for the NPP women organizer position in the Zebilla constituency and made national news. Because the position is a preserve of women, people thought his posters were a mistake until he confirmed his serious desire to contest the position. In 2010, a woman won the Upper East regional chairmanship position in the NPP. In 2011, another woman won the national chairmanship position in the smaller Convention Peoples Party (CPP).

There are significant and well-documented barriers to women's political participation; these include differential access to, control over, and preferred uses of economic resources, and social norms that make politics and leadership the domain of men (see chapter 8). My research in these three constituencies demonstrated that the gender gap was further entrenched as a result of how politics was organized at the grassroots. Women's opportunities and roles were limited at the level of the polling station or branch, and this spiraled upwards on the political pyramid. As a result, women tended to focus on contesting for the position of women organizer, as most other positions have seemingly not been welcoming to women.

Even without explicit restrictions on holding other positions, women have focused on being a women organizer, never a chairperson. In the case of youth organizers, all polling station executives interviewed were young men. All polling station chairpersons in both parties that I interviewed were men. The gender gap at the grassroots level was mirrored at the top level, where political leadership positions are by default reserved for men, with the creation of gender-stereotyped roles for women to mobilize women and also to provide welfare and hospitality support whenever necessary for party activities.

These gender gaps played out in all types of constituencies, both urban and rural. Many of the women who had engaged in political leadership did so because they had a spouse or close family association with a political leader. This gender gap can be explained by the idea of a 'gendered psyche' in which women internalize the belief that politics is for

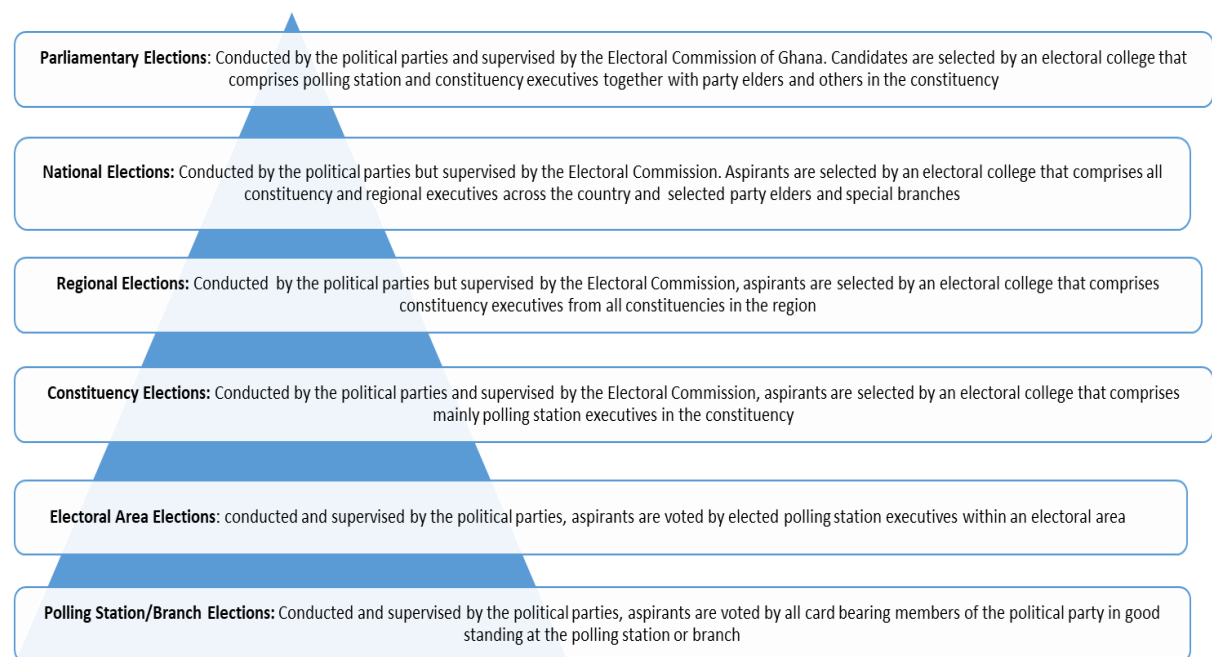
men, an idea exacerbated by the lack of adequate female political role models (Ichino and Nathan, 2017). Consistent with Afrobarometer estimates and my own research, a study by Ichino and Nathan (2017) on political party organization and women's empowerment in Ghana found that typically the only female member of the polling or branch executives was the women organizer. They concluded that increasing women's economic and educational empowerment and targeting attitudes against women's participation had the potential to close the grassroots gender gap in Ghana's democracy. We will return to these arguments in chapter 8.

5.2 The Processes of Intra-party Elections

The constitutions of the NPP and NDC use a mix of direct and indirect elections in selecting party leaders and candidates for elections. In selecting the first line of electors, polling station or branch executives, the NPP and NDC through their constitutions and directives mandate elections to be voted on by card-bearing members in good standing in each polling station. In subsequent elections from the constituency to presidential candidate selection, indirect elections are used, mostly through electoral colleges. The two main political parties have similar processes, procedures, and organizations with a few variations in the number of people in the electoral colleges. For instance, the NPP has five executives from the polling station who vote in parliamentary candidate selection primaries, whereas in the NDC, seven executives from the polling station vote. A fundamental difference between the two parties

however is that, in the NDC all executive positions are elective whereas NPP uses a mix of electing substantive executives and appointing their deputies. This has significant implications for Selectorate composition in the NPP because party leaders tend to appoint their loyalists whose votes will be guaranteed for them in future elections.

Figure 3: The pyramidal nature of intra-party democracy in Ghana



5.2.1 The Polling Station or Branch Elections

Intra-party elections among the dominant parties begin, in theory, at the polling stations or branches. These elections, which are to be held at the grassroots, are usually controlled by political leaders. In practice, however, these elections are not widespread because of machinations that either maintain existing executives or attempt to remove them. In instances when these polling station elections are held, constituency executives and parliamentary and presidential aspirants sponsor candidates or influence the polling station elections so that their favorites

win, as those who are elected at the polling station level form the core team that vote to reelect or vote against them. As a political strategy, many political aspirants have sought to control the polling station elections because they determine their political future. These competitions are fought with the tacit support of constituency leaders, who also have an interest in the outcomes because those nominated or elected become voters in later constituency leadership elections. In these instances, all potential candidates attempt to sponsor candidates for the polling station elections, but usually those who have the support of the party leadership win because the party leaders control the election machinery.

In most cases, positions are uncontested and polling stations executives are nominated or selected by party leaders at the polling stations with the support of constituency leaders. As a result, some polling stations are controlled by a group of friends or family members with the connivance of party leaders at the top—with a father/husband as chairman, wife/mother as women organizer, son as youth organizer, and brother as organizer. This was quite widespread in each of the 60 polling stations visited for this study. According to a women organizer interviewed in the Adentan constituency, 'I became a selectorate because my cousin aspired to become an MP in 2012 and as a result, he orchestrated for me and a couple of relatives and friends to become delegates so we could vote for him in the primaries. So, in our polling station, his friend became the chairman and the chairman's son was the

secretary. I was nominated as the women organizer, and my son also joined as the youth organizer.’

These arrangements are usually done by the constituency party leaders who supervise the elections. They ensure that selectorates who they believe are loyal to them stay in their positions, and they attempt to displace those who actively oppose them and install new loyalists in their stead. This ensures that the party leaders can retain their positions and that aspirants supported by the leaders win in the parliamentary primaries. According to a candidate in the New Juaben South constituency, ‘My relationship with my constituency party leaders was sour from the beginning because the candidates I supported in the constituency elections lost and those who won had the support of my challenger. As a result, they manipulated the polling station elections to favor themselves and my challenger by declining forms to my perceived supporters, intimidating them during elections, and allowing only party members who supported them to vote and declining others from voting.’ Therefore, even though polling station executives are seemingly powerful, their authority and control emanate from the tacit support of leaders in the constituency party who supervise these elections and will orchestrate the removal of local leaders below the pyramid with whom they disagree. This is not isolated to the grassroots but spirals up the political ladder where, for example, the constituency chairman also needs the continuous support of the regional chairman to stay in power and the regional chairman needs the national chairman’s support and the national chairman needs the presidential candidate’s support or even the

support of a sitting president. Nonetheless, these arrangements are mostly sustained by clientelist relationships that ensure continued loyalty. As will be discussed in chapter 7, selecting and supporting individuals to become selectorates is not a one-off transaction but requires a continuous process of relationship building to secure their votes.

The polling station executives I interviewed were generally unemployed or not in secure employment that paid a minimum wage, were repeat candidates, were rarely educated beyond secondary level, and represented their personal interests by demanding and expecting gifts. They were mostly middle-aged because of the tenured nature of the positions and usually were married with children. A typical polling station executive was a small shop owner with basic education, married with children, and expected gifts from political leaders who need his or her vote to stay in position.

Polling station executives are elected, first, to occupy party positions and, second, to become selectorates in subsequent elections. Because of the patronage system, elected party executives whose core function is grassroots mobilization have been relegated to the background, and most polling station leaders are focused on the next candidate selection primaries. In some cases, these selectorates who have moved to other areas come to the polling stations to get themselves elected, after which they disappear until the election season, which they perceive as their 'harvest season' to demand and obtain gifts.

In stronghold constituencies such as New Juaben South where parliamentary primaries are keenly contested and the benefits of being a selectorate are weighty, polling station elections are competitive. But even so, it is a closed cult with a few people controlling the process. Potential candidates for polling station elections are required to attend polling area meetings to qualify them to contest, but these meetings are rarely called, and the election calendar is not openly disclosed. Interested candidates for polling station leadership elections are entreated to submit forms to run for office, go through a vetting process, and campaign. All card-bearing and paid-up members in good standing in the polling station then vote unless the candidate runs unopposed. In most cases, the forms of interested candidates who are not part of the 'system'⁶⁶ are declined, or the elections are called and held when the candidate is not available.

In the polling stations, card-bearing members of the party in good standing are qualified to vote; however, the absence of party membership data limits the election to a few known people, usually not more than 40 per polling station, often fueling controversy. Candidates are mostly acclaimed or nominated, but in the very few polling stations where the positions are contested, the candidates attempt to provide one-off gifts to voters, mostly with the support of the political leaders who are backing them. This vote buying runs through every subsequent intra-party election. Usually, gifts given at the polling stations are small because of the general knowledge that polling station executives themselves do not

⁶⁶ This system will be members of the closed cult.

have much to give. Selectorates might provide drinks and cooked meals, and pay for transportation, with campaign budgets that generally cost around GHC500 (\$90 in December 2020).

There is a general interest in people seeking polling station leadership positions in recent times. According to an NPP selectorate interviewed in the New Juaben South constituency, 'In the beginning people were not interested because being a polling station executive meant a lot of work. We were tasked to paste posters, engage in door-to-door grassroots canvassing without much reward. But now, because of what people know they can get out of being a selectorate, they are constantly trying to contest we who suffered from the beginning.' This is explained by the fact that, first, individuals have become aware of the benefits of being a selectorate and the importance candidates and aspirants pay to them. Therefore, people contest to be selectorates and not necessarily grassroots leaders. Second, aspirants themselves see this as a political strategy and encourage loyalists to become polling station leaders and subsequently selectorates who will vote for them. In the constituencies studied, polling station elections have evolved significantly from the days when candidates were nominated by a constituency chairman to create an album of individuals who owed allegiance to him. Polling station and constituency elections for party positions are becoming competitive in both parties.

Polling station or branch elections have become contentious in recent times because of their importance in subsequent elections. There are instances where constituencies have two different polling station

selectorate registers because of the confusion with the polling station elections. According to a candidate interviewed in New Juaben South, ‘A few days to the elections, I realized that an official voter album provided for the elections had been manipulated with replacements of people who had died or travelled abroad in contravention of the party rules. This I protested vehemently at the regional party with no luck, so it had to be settled at the national party.’

The polling station elections are called every four years as stipulated in the political party constitutions, and candidates for leadership positions are usually incumbents who seek reelection. Positions open up for new candidates mostly when a party leader dies or moves out of the constituency. Once candidates are nominated or elected into the position, they consider the position to be for life and treat the polling area as their domain. They do everything to keep the position because of the rewards it brings, especially in recent primaries.

According to a polling station executive interviewed in Adentan, ‘I have been an executive since 2004 when it was really not attractive. Now with all the media reports on delegates receiving gifts, more people are attempting to get into leadership positions, but we try to control the process and allow people who have worked for the party in. *We don’t want no monkey dey work baboon dey chop situation.*’⁶⁷

In the New Juaben South constituency, polling station elections in the NPP are very competitive, and positions are contested by multiple

⁶⁷ This is in broken/pidgin English, which is widely spoken in West Africa. It simply means that they try to prevent a situation where some do the work and others who never work enjoy the rewards.

candidates, especially where party leaders want to get rid of particular selectorates. However, in areas where the party leaders support the existing selectorate, other potential candidates are deprived of the opportunity to even pick up the forms needed to contest, or the elections are conducted when the potential candidates are not available. According to a selectorate interviewed at a polling station in New Juaben South, ‘getting access to the nomination was the hardest part of the election process because the executives did not anticipate me contesting and thus tried all they could to prevent a contest by denying me the forms.’

When elections are actually conducted, which mainly happens when two strong candidates declare an interest in the parliamentary primaries—as was the case in New Juaben South—card-bearing party members in good standing who vote expect, and receive, small gifts to vote for candidates, as these elections are keenly sponsored and monitored by potential parliamentary aspirants. As indicated earlier, during the NPP 2018 polling station elections in the New Juaben South constituency, most candidates perceived to support the incumbent MP lost the election to candidates perceived to support his challenger, who enjoyed the support of the constituency party leaders that supervised the elections. The results were reflected in the parliamentary primary election when the challenger beat the incumbent, 320 votes to 200.

In the same way, party leadership at the grassroots was keenly contested in the Ketu South constituency. Most positions were contested by two or more candidates because the incumbent MP did not seek re-election, and the aspirants attempted to get their loyalists elected into

polling station positions. According to a selectorate interviewed in the Ketu South constituency, 'I had to provide drinks and transport to the voters that I mobilized to vote for me, otherwise they were not interested.'

In the Adentan constituency, however, party leadership positions were not as competitive. Even though the constituency was an urban constituency with a mix of low-income, middle-class, and upper middle-class voters, competition for party leadership positions was dominated by low-income⁶⁸ inhabitants who have a grip on the processes and alienate others who are not considered part of the 'system' or are not perceived to have engaged in party work. Also, unless they aspired to contest a party position, the middle- to upper middle-income voters tended not to be motivated about grassroots politics, even if they supported the parties. This is, first, because they were too busy with work and, second, because the process of getting into the polling station positions was opaque. According to a parliamentary aspirant I interviewed, 'Ideally, we have tried to encourage some of the professionals to contest or be nominated for these positions to ease the burden of demand on us, but they have mostly declined due to time constraints [or] the general profile of delegates which they believe they will not fit in. In a constituency like Adentan, which has a mix of lower- and middle-class inhabitants, we were hoping for that to reflect in the delegate composition.' On the other hand, another aspirant in Adentan contended that 'even though middle- to upper-class constituents were not motivated to contest, it was good

⁶⁸ The Adentan constituency encompasses parts of the most affluent parts of Accra with house values of \$500,000 and upwards, government flats that house government workers, and a huge urban squatter population who live in makeshift shelters.

because controlling and influencing them during a primary will be very difficult, so I personally prefer the status quo.’

These numerous challenges with the polling station elections have created the situation where Ghana’s intra-party elections, beginning at the polling station level, are seemingly democratic on paper. However, across the three constituencies studied and across the country more generally, they are built on an undemocratic base due to the flagrant disregard of the constitutional provisions and the agendas that determine the election outcomes. The polling station elections are opaque and undemocratic, but those elected form the electoral college to elect constituency leaders in elections that are somewhat democratic and transparent, despite being subject to political machinations and vote-buying attempts. This moves on to regional and national leadership elections, and even presidential and parliamentary primaries. The core voters in those primaries are these selectorates who got selected through the least democratic means. It was observed that though the challenges were well-known to party leaders, there have been deliberate attempts by those who control the process to maintain the status quo because it favors their ambitions, and only to call for reforms when the system turns against them and they lose an election.

5.2.2 Electing the Second Line of Selectorates

Once the polling station elections are out of the way, the elected executives form the core of an electoral college for constituency elections within the parties. The size of these electoral colleges varies according to

the number of polling stations in a constituency, and these elections are also controlled by regional political leaders who organize constituency-level elections under the supervision of the Electoral Commission of Ghana. These elections are a bit more open because of the availability of information on their scheduling and because of the type of people who contest them. They are mostly contested by viable candidates who are gainfully employed or own businesses. They usually have a secondary education and the resources to buy votes. Moreover, they have engaged in political party work and are supported by party leaders above them. They should also have gained control of the polling station executives who form the core of the electoral college to guarantee a win. Because of the importance of controlling constituency elections, there are instances where some who are not supported by the national party but are viable in the constituency are convinced, coerced, or prevented from contesting candidates who are supported by the national party. This is quite prevalent when a party is in power where the favorites of the executive are protected by offering executive positions to potential aspirants who attempt to contest candidates favored by the central party—as a means of getting them out of the race.

Constituency elections for party-level officials have become keenly contested because of the economic benefits, political control, and prestige they bring. Constituency executives have become powerful because they control resources and logistics from the central party and provide avenues for personal enrichment, especially when particular political parties are in power. Candidates who would like to contest for

constituency elections must be party members in good standing and must pass a vetting process as stipulated in the party constitution. After going through the vetting process, candidates engage in vote-buying attempts by offering gifts to the members of the electoral college during the campaign and, more importantly, on the day of voting.

Elected constituency leaders move on to control the regional elections, as they form the core of the electoral college that elects regional leaders. Consequently, regional party leaders attempt to influence the two elections discussed above, as those determine their future. The regional leadership elections are very competitive; most of those contesting are very well-resourced and resourceful individuals with national leadership support. These elections are organized by the national leadership but supervised by the Electoral Commission. Even though these elections are open, the national party, which controls the process, ensures that candidates favored by them mostly win. In some instances, new candidates with the potential to win are convinced, coerced, intimidated, or prevented from contesting against the incumbent.

In the dominant NPP and NDC, the election of regional party leaders involves significant attempts to buy votes, as the position brings prestige and influence. In most of these elections, the quantum of gifts—mostly cash, television sets, mobile phones, motorbikes, and the like—is larger than that for lower-level elections due to the interest that future presidential and national party leadership pay to the regional positions. At regional party elections, selectorates are offered items of greater value

than at the constituency level. This is so because the position is more important on the political pyramid. Because candidates contesting regional elections are well-resourced and higher on the political ladder, they offer more. So, whilst in a constituency election selectorates may be given bicycles, in a regional election candidates may increase the stakes to give motorbikes.

The next elections on the pyramid are the national party elections, which are organized by the national party. As with the regional elections, these are competitive with well-resourced and resourceful individuals who are also supported by political elites above them. In contests involving incumbents, there is friction because the incumbents attempt to set up systems that favor themselves. Party factions play out, and candidates tend to identify with future presidential candidates. Alliances are formed, and some candidates are convinced or manipulated to step down for favored candidates. In some instances, some candidates are fielded in support of a particular candidate by disrupting votes of other aspirants so that candidate can win or potential winners made to withdraw to prevent them from negatively influencing voting outcomes. The national leadership elections, like the others, exude patronage politics with significant gifts being offered to members of the selectorate. Party leaders from each of the 275 constituencies and their regional leaders form the core of the selectorates and tend to support the chain of candidates who nominated or supported them.

National party executives and presidential aspirants strategically focus on ensuring that the favorites are elected from the polling station

through to the national leadership elections because those elected form the core group of selectorates in the electoral college for the presidential candidate selection process. Parliamentary candidates, however, focus on polling station elections in their constituencies, mainly because those executives become their electors in the primaries.

5.3 Democratic Challenges in Intra-party Elections in Ghana

Despite attempts by the two dominant parties in developing intra-party democracy, there still exist significant challenges to the quality of internal democracy. While the party constitutions and directives lay out the processes of intra-party elections, machinations by grassroots members and political leaders circumvent the intended democratic process.

5.3.1 The Influence of Party Leaders above Each Pyramidal Structure

By the institutional arrangements, political leaders who conduct elections below them on the pyramid were voted into their positions by the contestants they will supervise in the next election cycle. Due to the tenured nature of the politics with a high number of repeat candidates, attempts are made to get those who opposed them during their elections out of their positions by not informing them of meeting dates and times they must attend to contest. When that strategy fails to get the targeted party executive out by disqualification, they tend to promote and support candidates to contest and attempt rigging the process to get their supporters in position. According to a respondent in New Juaben South, 'I was denied the forms to file to contest because the chairman I

supported in the last constituency elections lost. As a result, these current executives denied me the filling forms, and I had to petition the party's regional secretary to get the forms.' Also, the party leaders who control the voter albums attempt to manipulate them to their advantage.

Despite the institutionalized and constitutional channels for intra-party democracy, the social and political frameworks that guide the political process have entrenched patron-client relationships that ensure control by political leaders with tools such as vote buying, election manipulation, exclusion, violence, and intimidation. The pyramidal nature of Ghanaian politics makes patrimonial practices dominate to ensure that decisions at the bottom favorably influence the outcome of elections at the apex of the pyramid. Thus, social arrangements are built from the bottom to ensure support at the top. These developments have somehow overshadowed Ghana's democratic development. Nugent (1995) argues that 'big men and small boys' politics and intra-party conflicts could obstruct Ghana's democratic progress, so political parties should reform their internal democratic processes to enhance democratic consolidation (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009a).

The desire for power, wealth, and influence encourages the desire for party positions because they have the tendency to make people rich within a short time. At the polling stations, candidates who are elected get to control party resources and get to demand and receive gifts from potential candidates, especially during election periods. Existing officials thus want to control the processes to stay continuously in their positions and prevent new entrants. This desire can be explained by the fact that

most party leaders at the polling station level are either unemployed or not in gainful employment and therefore depend on their roles as party leaders to make a living in the absence of adequate government welfare support programs.

At the constituency, regional, and national party leadership levels, candidates are driven by the ability to obtain government contracts, the potential to become wealthy or wealthier, and the possibility of controlling party resources. These leaders tend to be well-resourced and resourceful individuals who get to their positions by attempting to buy votes. The elections for these party leadership positions are competitive in years when a party is in government and tend to be dominated by viable candidates who give gifts to members of the electoral colleges that select them.

5.3.2 The Dominant Role of Gift-Giving

As has been indicated above, the influence of money and other material benefits is becoming a decisive factor in competitive elections in Ghana beginning at the polling station. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, elections to select polling station executives barely happen because of the machinations of incumbents and party leaders who seek to control them for their future interest. When polling station elections have been contested, candidates have had to provide gifts to identified voters to influence the elections. Given the background of these selectorates and their limited resources, they in turn seek the support of party leaders in whose interest they contest the elections.

These are one-off transactions, and constituents do not make ongoing demands on them because the candidates invariably do not have the economic power to sustain clientelist relationships. In contrast, the polling station executives tend to expect and demand recurring gifts from candidates who seek their votes, especially in presidential and parliamentary primaries. According to selectorates who contested and won in their polling stations, the absence of voter lists and membership data restricted voters to a few people who were known and contributed to party work. This gave control to party executives to exclude perceived opponents who did not have party membership cards. In most of these elections, an average of 40 known party persons participated, and thus the quantum of gifts was not too expensive.

This gift-giving enterprise escalates to subsequent elections where the stakes increase. In constituency elections, candidates usually offer gifts of significant value in attempts to buy votes. The same is true for the elections for regional and national leadership positions, where candidates give individual and collective gifts. For instance, in constituency leadership and parliamentary elections, individual and collective gifts are given in particular polling areas. In regional elections, they are again given to individuals and to constituencies. In elections for national party leadership and presidential elections, gifts are given on a regional and constituency basis as well as to individuals. This phenomenon has increased the cost of elections; candidates in leadership elections, on average, now spend more than 60% of their campaign budgets on gift-giving, without which their campaigns would not be taken seriously.

This has led to patronage politics in every election from the polling stations up to presidential primaries. The quantum of gifts and level of patronage spirals upwards in every subsequent election, depending on the number of selectorates and the competitiveness and importance of the race.

Patronage politics have tended to obstruct internal democracy within the parties and usually leads to conflict, unfair competition, and elite defections. The emergence of patronage and money ensures that only well-resourced and resourceful individuals are elected into party leadership or become candidates for parliamentary and presidential elections; viable but less resourceful candidates are confined to the lower levels of the political pyramid. This situation has led to numerous reforms by the political parties, usually after losing political power. These reforms, though mostly unsuccessful, attempt to ensure democracy within the parties in order to further consolidate Ghana's democracy.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that despite what parties officially say about internal democracy, patron-client relationships appear to be very important from the level of the polling station right to the top of the national party. Whilst the party constitutions and election directives provide democratic guidelines for the conduct of intra-party elections, the role of money and the actions and inactions of political operatives do not promote internal democracy, fair competition, or women's participation in politics.

The pyramidal structure of Ghana's political parties has created avenues for the politics of patronage through a giant redistribution machine that makes Ghana's intra-party democracy undemocratic with exclusions and individual control of the processes. Based on these arrangements, individuals on the pyramid receive support mostly from those above them, building their own patronage networks to continuously stay in power and thus to receive a piece of the political pie. The polling station chairman receives support from the constituency chairman to distribute patronage to party members who vote to elect him. The constituency chairman also receives support from the regional chairman to distribute to polling station chairmen to keep himself in position. The regional chairman, in turn, gets support from the national party leaders who support him to stay in power so he can then reciprocate by delivering the electoral votes in the region when they contest. The national chairman, in turn, seeks support from potential presidential candidates who need him to stay in power and deliver victory in the presidential primaries. This support is needed because in all intra-party elections from the bottom to the top, candidates attempt to buy votes, a practice that is undemocratic but has become a constant feature in Ghana's democracy. This has significantly increased the cost of running for political office and has alienated marginalized groups, especially women, as chapter 8 will demonstrate.

The parties, therefore, need holistic reforms that would improve vertical accountability and diminish the politics of patronage, which result mainly because of the existing political arrangements.

Chapter Six

An Honorable Slice of the Political Pie:

The Practice of Parliamentary Candidate Selection Primaries in Ghana

Following from chapter 5, which looked at political structuring and organization, chapter 6 focuses on the practice of parliamentary candidate selection primaries that select candidates prior to the general elections. As indicated in chapter 5, whilst the NPP and NDC must comply with the legal requirements for internal democracy, in practice, intra-party elections tend to be undemocratic. After every election cycle, the known challenges and allegations from losing aspirants persist with little power on the side of the law to address them.

The two parties serve as gatekeepers to Ghana's Parliament by their selection of parliamentary candidates. These candidate selection primaries affect parliamentary effectiveness, which, in turn, has repercussions on the formation of emerging governments, as existing constitutional provisions require that the majority of ministers be appointed from among the MPs (Norris, 2004).⁶⁹ Generally, competition during primaries affects the dynamics of the general election, depending on whether viable candidates are selected or losing candidates defect to run as independents.

⁶⁹ Article 78 of the 1992 constitution mandates the president to appoint the majority of ministers from Parliament; thus, the selection of good candidates tends to affect the quality of government.

Contests for seats in Parliament are often competitive both during primaries and during the general election (Salihu, 2018). Primaries during a re-election campaign are usually stiff for the ruling party (Ichino and Nathan, 2017) because members of the ruling party gain positions that enable them to accrue personal wealth or to raise campaign funds. Also, primaries are keenly contested in change years when the ruling government has to change the presidential candidate because of the constitutional term limit.⁷⁰ In these elections, ruling government appointees choose Parliament as insurance in case their party loses government power, whereas opposition figures choose Parliament as an opportunity to go with the wind of change and to seek a possible ministerial appointment or an appointment as a metropolitan, municipal, or district chief executive or as a chief executive of a government agency (see also Ichino and Nathan, 2010; Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012).

This chapter reviews the parties' constitutional and social frameworks together with candidate motivation, types of races, and attendant costs. On the basis of in-depth interviews in three selected constituencies, historical analysis, and available documents, this chapter concludes, first, that because of the excessive powers of the executive arm of government and the winner-takes-all nature of Ghanaian politics, many but not all individuals seeking the high office of member of Parliament do so to advance their personal ambitions and not to influence policy; and, second, that the increasing cost of primaries

⁷⁰ The 1992 Constitution of Ghana allows presidents to run for up to two terms if they win.

alienates many vulnerable groups, especially women, from contesting candidate selection primaries. This chapter will begin to build the argument on the effects of the escalating costs of candidate selection on women that is fully discussed in chapter 8.

6.1 Who Is Contesting Candidate Selection Primaries?

Due to the enormous executive powers granted by the constitution of Ghana's Fourth Republic, the legislature is weak with limited powers to influence policy. It serves mostly to rubber stamp policies that emanate from the executive (Lindberg, 2003). Therefore, the work of Parliament is largely undertaken by a few MPs, with the majority ensuring that critical parliamentary votes are guaranteed for their party whenever needed.

Cognizant of this, the two major parties have sought to populate Parliament with a majority, balancing MPs with the requisite capacity for parliamentary work and MPs who make up a majority in voting decisions. In strongholds, political parties have attempted to encourage strong candidates with the clout to engage in appropriate parliamentary work; in swing constituencies and opposition areas, they have usually encouraged popular candidates who can win the elections and can engage in parliamentary work.

Similarly, when considering the presidential election, the two dominant parties have tended to support parliamentary candidates who can harvest more votes for themselves and the presidential candidate, as the party that has won the majority in Parliament has also consistently won the presidential elections—even in the 2000 and 2008 elections

where there were run-offs and in the 2020 elections where there was a tie in Parliament (the one independent candidate who won was an elite NPP defector and joined the NPP side).

Existing theoretical frameworks identify primary elections as institutions that generate nominees that have higher valence, better campaigning skills, and popularity within parties at the potential cost of being more ideologically extreme (Ichino and Nathan, 2010). This, however, applies to longer-established democracies but does not apply to emerging democracies, such as Ghana, where, as I argued in chapter 3, ideological differences are not profound but ethnic, religious, and clientelist considerations dominate. Ichino and Nathan (2010) in their thesis on party primaries in Ghana concluded that party leaders in Ghana and other emerging democracies base their candidate selection decisions on the need to prevent elite defections and to motivate grassroots activists. This is true to some extent, but as Ghana's democracy has grown and consolidated since 2010, elite defections have become costly for candidates, as the two dominant parties impose stringent penalties.⁷¹ Second, the reasons for selecting candidates now include ensuring that the party wins a majority in Parliament, electing formidable candidates who can increase the number of presidential votes, and choosing good candidates to become ministers after being elected.

In the NPP and NDC, an elite defector is automatically suspended from the party from two years up to an indefinite period. These

⁷¹ In both the NDC and NPP, elite defection attracts suspensions from two years up to an indefinite period. In most cases, defectors miss two election cycles because of each party's constitutional requirement of a two-year membership.

suspensions and the difficulty of winning as an independent curtail elite defections. This is buttressed by the fact that independents and smaller parties are being wiped out of Ghana's Parliament. In the 2016 general election, for the first time in Ghana's political history,⁷² only the NPP and NDC won seats in Parliament; no contesting independent or third-party candidates won seats. Ghana's political parties have made cosmetic attempts that failed at reforming the electoral college process to appear democratic and prevent the rampant extraction of rents from aspirants by selectorates. Due to issues of vote buying and the dominance of patron-client relationships, both the NDC and NPP have sought to ensure that constituency party primaries do not generate acrimony and despondence among party grassroots whose favoured candidates lose primaries, as that reduces the unity of purpose needed to win general elections.

In 2020, the NPP had a total of 649 aspirants of diverse backgrounds contesting the candidate selection primaries in 275 constituencies;⁷³ in the NDC, 625 candidates contested. In the three study constituencies, a total of 20 aspirants contested. There were 17 men and 3 women, one of whom won the primaries and subsequent general elections in the Ketu South constituency.

Increasingly, viable candidates with academic qualifications and sufficient financial resources are contesting candidate selection primaries

⁷² No independent candidate contested in 1996 parliamentary elections.

⁷³ In the NPP there were 84 seats for which candidates were unopposed, and in the NDC 63 seats were unopposed

to get elected into Ghana's Parliament. Most are middle-aged men, with a few women and younger candidates.

The backgrounds of primary aspirants are becoming more diverse with people from varying professions competing to become MPs. Increasingly, ruling government functionaries such as ministers; metropolitan, municipal, and district chief executives (MMDCEs); and presidential staffers are using their positions as a springboard to contest primaries. This has been a source of friction during primaries that can harm the parties in general elections. Thus, the parties have attempted to diminish the conflict. For instance, it was common for MMDCEs in their attempt to contest their own parliamentary candidates to undermine the work and popularity of MPs in their constituencies. As a result, the NPP in 2018 banned MMDCEs from contesting seats where the party had a sitting MP.

Ghana's 2021 Parliament, like the previous ones, is male dominated with only 14.5% females, and most are married. Members of Parliament are usually university educated or are pursuing further degrees or professional qualifications, mostly in law. A profile of current members of Ghana's eighth Parliament shows many possessing master's degrees, most acquired right before running for office or whilst in Parliament. A very few have earned PhDs, and others have various professional degrees and qualifications. They come from diverse professional backgrounds that include law, public service, administration, business, and teaching. Ninety-four MPs are in their first term; the rest are multiple-term MPs with tenures ranging up to seven

terms. In the eighth Parliament, the youngest MP is 28-year-old Francisca Oteng, a second-term MP who represents the majority side, and the oldest is 76-year-old Cletus Avoka, who has been in and out of Parliament since 1993.⁷⁴ The average age in the 275-member parliament is 48 years, lower than the 1992 average of 55.

6.2 Constitutional, Political, and Social Frameworks

The road to Ghana's Parliament begins with a personal ambition to represent a constituency. To seek a nomination in either the NPP or NDC, aspirants go through a process of picking up nomination forms, being certified by party members in good standing, undergoing vetting, campaigning, and participating in the election under a first-past-the-post voting process. The rule guiding the selection of parliamentary candidates is straightforward: aspirants are elected by a constituency-level electoral college. Beyond the personal ambitions of individual candidates, however, there are constitutional, political, and social dynamics that determine how candidates get elected.

6.2.1 Constitutional

A key component of a properly functioning democracy is an independent and functioning legislature. In recognition of this, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides the framework for selecting members of Ghana's Parliament.

⁷⁴ Cletus Avoka has been in Ghana's Parliament since 1992. He has lost and returned twice after losing in 2004 and 2016.

As indicated in chapter 3, article 94 clearly defines the criteria for membership of Parliament. Primarily, a person must be a citizen of Ghana and must have ‘attained the age of 21 years and be a registered voter’ to be eligible. Secondary requirements are that ‘a Member of Parliament must hold current residence in the area he or she represents or has lived in the area for at least 5 of the 10 years preceding his or her election and paid all his taxes or made arrangements satisfactory to the appropriate authority for the payment of his taxes’. Also, the constitutional framework considers other factors such as allegiance to other countries, criminal cases, bankruptcy, and other judicial issues that do not allow people to hold the high office of MP. There are also specific provisions of the constitution that specify persons ineligible for Parliament, mostly those serving as civil and public servants.⁷⁵

For candidates contesting on the ticket of a political party, it is a two-way process: candidates must first win an internal process either through a top-down nomination by party hierarchy or bottom-up selection by party grassroots to move from an aspirant to a candidate. To be elected, a parliamentary candidate requires only a plurality of the valid votes cast (1992 Constitution of Ghana, article 111). Candidates that wish to stand on a political party’s ticket will in addition need to satisfy the party’s constitutional requirements.

Article 42 of NDC’s party constitution (2002) sets out the rules that govern the conduct of parliamentary primaries. Primarily, an aspirant

⁷⁵ Services listed in article 94 of the 1992 Constitution (Police Service, the Prisons Service, the Armed Forces, the Judicial Service, the Legal Service, the Civil Service, the Audit Service) are not eligible to become members of Parliament.

must qualify under the constitution of Ghana, must be an active member of the NDC at the constituency level for the two years before the date of filing nomination, and must go through the formal process of picking nomination forms, being certified and vetted, and winning by a simple majority of votes in the constituency primaries.

Article 11 of the NPP's constitution (New Patriotic Party, 2009, pp. 52–54) outlines its criteria for selecting candidates. Like the NDC, the candidate must qualify under article 94 of the Ghanaian constitution, be an active member of the party for at least two years, and register an interest by submitting application forms to contest. The candidate must be a registered party member and a voter in the constituency, be of good character, be otherwise of good standing in the constituency party, have paid the prescribed fees for a parliamentary candidate by the deadline set by the National Executive Committee, and qualify under the electoral laws to be a parliamentary candidate for the constituency.

6.2.2 Political and Social Frameworks

These constitutional frameworks set the de jure process. However, candidates vying to contest the primary elections must fulfil the de facto political and social frameworks as well. Qualifying by law is not enough: candidates must cultivate a seat by being an active member of the party and engaging in party activities. These usually will entail an earlier declaration to contest the next primaries, becoming a patron of the constituency, and as indicated in chapter 5, mobilizing a delegate base

by encouraging and supporting polling station members to contest voting positions to become delegates.

The social framework enjoins potential aspirants to become 'generous'. Selectorates within a party look for candidates who have 'nurtured' a constituency by engaging in constituency work, developing patron-client networks by providing personal goods (such as cash, school fees, and hospital expenses), engaging in party work, and attending social events such as funerals, outdooring (child-naming ceremonies), religious programs, and local festivals to ensure visibility. Voters, on the other hand, look for candidates that appeal on ethnic, religious, and sociopolitical grounds, as well as those who have provided local public goods and have well-developed patron-client networks within the constituency. These frameworks make candidates viable. Although the dynamics play seriously in strongholds, they nonetheless play out even in opposition areas.

It has become important for aspirants to build the necessary patron-client relationships over several years; just appearing during a primary with wads of cash is not enough to win. The case of Vicky Bright illustrates this point. As a deputy minister at the Office of the President in 2008, she attempted to contest the Okaikoi-South constituency seat against an incumbent MP. However, she was disqualified by the constituency party leaders because she was not actively known as a member of the constituency.⁷⁶ This simply means that she failed to fulfil

⁷⁶ Isaac Essel, 'Ghana: Akomea and Vicky Tango Over NPP Okai Koi South', *All Africa*, May 16, 2008, <https://allafrica.com/stories/200805160497.html>.

the political and social requirements to become an MP, despite having fulfilled the constitutional obligations. It has become clear that potential aspirants need a positive reputation for constituency service to improve delegates' evaluation, and must be 'one of the people' and not too far removed from voters by how they relate in terms of social encounters or how ethnic dynamics play in their favour (Ichino and Nathan, 2013a).

6.2.3 The Type of Races Being Run

The candidates' attempts to cultivate their seats,⁷⁷ their proximity to power, and their resources and resourcefulness influence their success in all types of electoral races being run in Ghana. Depending on the dynamics of a constituency, candidate selection can be highly competitive. In strongholds, where the primary basically determines the main election outcome, primaries are competitive and main elections less so. For example, the research found that primary elections in the New Juaben South and Ketu South constituencies were highly competitive beginning at the polling station or branch level because primary victories in these strongholds guaranteed a passage to Ghana's Parliament. The two stronghold constituencies tended to have well-educated, well-resourced, politically backed candidates with high name recognition. In opposition areas—Ketu South for the NPP and New Juaben South for the NDC, for example—candidate selection primaries have also become competitive, but the motivation for contesting differs. Whereas in a stronghold, candidates try to win primaries because they effectively

⁷⁷ Showing interest and nurturing patron-client relationships.

determine the general election results, in opposition areas, aspirants seek control of party resources and the potential to be appointed to a government position even if they lose the general election (see also Bob-Milliar, 2012 b; Lamptey and Salihu, 2012). Also, primaries in these constituencies were competitive because they always attracted two or more political heavyweights with substantial regional and national support from political leaders. As a result, the elections were spotlighted, reducing the high incidence of election fraud or ensuring that cases of fraud would be investigated and resolved by the national party.

In swing constituencies, both the primaries and general elections are competitive, and victory depends on the candidate presented to voters, the general performance of the party they represent if in government, and whether the opposition is effective in campaigning for general change. In these constituencies, floating/nonpartisan voters determine electoral outcomes, and therefore it is important for selectorates to choose candidates that appeal to voters. In the Adentan constituency studied, primaries were keenly contested in both major parties because candidates had the potential to win the general election, the ability to garner party resources, and the name recognition needed for a government position.

In incumbent-contested primaries—as in New Juaben South and Adentan—a strong record of patron-client relationships with selectorates and strong constituency development tend to ward off potential competitors, so such incumbents often go unopposed. However, incumbents that failed to deliver tended to face stiff competition in

primaries, both in strongholds and swing constituencies. In the New Juaben South constituency, the incumbent lost the candidate selection primaries because, according to a selectorate I interviewed, ‘Honorable after winning the second term stopped relating to us well. He stopped picking our phone calls and we were not seeing him in the constituency. . . . Also, he did not bring in much development as we anticipated. Our roads for example are still very bad.’

In the Adentan constituency, however, the incumbent MP won the candidate selection primaries against stiff competition but lost the election to the opposition candidate because the constituents thought he failed to bring developments to the constituency. According to a voter interviewed: ‘Our MP after the election did not bring much to the constituency. Most of the challenges he inherited still remain unsolved. He was not visible in the constituency after he won, and our problems with water and bad roads have remained after his four years in Parliament.’

Where incumbents are unpopular with citizens but supported by party leaders who help prevent potential competitors from getting the party ticket, those competitors often run as independents.⁷⁸ When this happens in strongholds, the incumbent may receive fewer votes, as happened in Ketu South, or may be defeated by an independent from the same party in extreme cases—a reason why fewer aspirants are defecting to contest on the ticket of the NPP or NDC (see chapter 9). In swing

⁷⁸ This has mostly been the case in the Ketu South constituency, as detailed in chapter 8.

constituencies like Adentan, the incumbent may lose to another party's candidate.

Parliamentary races have assumed greater importance to the dominant political parties and have become the avenues for keen contests—at times with violent consequences (Salihu, 2018). Various forms of electoral fraud have come to dominate parliamentary primaries, and political leaders continue to influence the process and provide electoral advantages to candidates they support (Nathan and Ichino, 2013a). In some instances, it becomes difficult to even pick up the nomination forms to contest. In the 2020 NPP primaries, former member of Parliament and 2016 presidential primary contestant Francis Addai-Nimoh appealed to the regional hierarchy of the party after he was denied access to the nomination forms he needed to contest the parliamentary primary in the Mampong constituency, where he was a three-term MP. This strategy has been used by several local politicians to prevent others from contesting their preferred candidates. When this happens, the regional party is petitioned for resolution, and when that fails, usually the national party intervenes so court actions are not instituted by the aggrieved parties.

Similarly, aspirants in keenly contested constituencies may face violence, insults, and intimidation, especially in strongholds where the primaries are intense (Salihu, 2016). In 2015, the NDC primary between E. T. Mensah and Samuel George in the Ningo-Prampram constituency, a stronghold of the NDC, witnessed extreme violence and intimidation. Usually, contention centers on the voters' register and the candidate's

eligibility. As indicated in chapter 5, the voters' register controversy arises from the polling station elections, which by the party's constitution are to be held every four years but are seldom held, and party leaders attempt to maintain their favorites or change those who openly oppose them. This sometimes results in different albums in areas where the constituency executives and the incumbent MP are at loggerheads.

6.2.4 Why Individuals Seek Seats in Parliament

Candidate selection has evolved throughout Ghana's democratic history. In the elections prior to the 1992 Fourth Republic, candidates were usually selected by consensus through consultations with local opinion leaders. There were no formal party primaries; rather, an educated person was usually selected based on their social credibility and capital. These candidates were mostly businessmen, teachers, secretaries to the traditional authorities, and local bourgeoisie (Austin, 1964) who had some capacity to communicate in formal English. In Ghana's Fourth Republic, nomination of individuals to represent parties in the legislature between 1992 until 2000 were not competitive. Many pioneer members of Parliament (MPs), especially in opposition areas, were mostly selected by party leaders to contest parliamentary elections (Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012).

To a great extent, Ghana is becoming a winner-takes-all democracy (Gyampo, 2015). In any election, the winning political party takes over the reins of government, and the president, with the enormous power of the executive branch, appoints over 5,000 persons into positions that

include cabinet ministers and deputies; CEOs of government agencies; presidential staffers; members of various boards; metropolitan, municipal, and district chief executives; and ambassadors. In making these appointments, which provide power, prestige, and economic benefits, presidents have tapped members of their political party, friends, and family together with others who align with the president or the political party to the exclusion of the opposition.

Because of this, Parliament has become the only avenue through which opposition members get a piece of the political pie if their political party loses a presidential election. Therefore, a seat in Ghana's Parliament—despite all its challenges with the increasing cost of political campaigns (see section b), executive control, pressure from constituents, and MPs' complaints of inadequate remuneration—provides 'insurance' to Ghana's political leaders who want to stay politically relevant. First, it gives a security of tenure for four years without the executive power to remove or reshuffle; second, it presents opportunities to be elected as a minister of government or member of prestigious boards or committees of influence, such as the finance committee of Parliament; and, third, it gives the prestige of being an 'honorable', as they are addressed. This situation has increased interest in contesting for parliamentary office. Results from this research showed several types of persons who attempt to contest party primaries, among them the following: (1) the loyal party member who has worked for the party and believes in the ideals of the party, (2) the opportunistic candidate who wants to get into an elected office but comes from a constituency that is a stronghold of the other

party, (3) a person looking for visibility for future victory, control of party resources, or political appointment, (4) a political appointee such as DCE or MCE⁷⁹ looking to consolidate political advancement, or (5) a spoiler paid to disrupt another candidate's chances.

The findings showed that in stronghold constituencies—such as New Juaben South and Ketu South—candidates contested because a win at the primaries guaranteed a smooth passage into Ghana's Parliament, thus offering them a stake in the political pie. It guaranteed incumbent MPs the sustenance of their positions in Parliament and in government, if they were ministers. For challengers who had government positions such as CEO or DCE, it provided an opportunity to climb up the political ladder to become an MP and possibly a government minister. According to a candidate interviewed in the New Juaben South constituency, 'being a government appointee is not too secured, therefore going to Parliament was the logical strategy to be appointed as a government minister.' In Ketu South, even though the incumbent NDC MP did not contest, the new contestants sought a seat in Parliament or a government appointment if the NDC won, because of the importance of the constituency to the NDC and the number of votes it always brought to the party.

Candidates interviewed from the NPP in Ketu South and NDC in New Juaben South recognized the uphill task of winning the election but saw the potential of getting a government appointment by contesting the

⁷⁹ By the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, a DCE or MCE can be appointed for a maximum of two terms. As a result, most DCEs and MCEs see contesting for Parliament as the only logical political progression.

election. According to an NDC aspirant interviewed in New Juaben South, 'I knew it was almost impossible to win, given that this was an NPP stronghold, but I was hoping to do well so I will be noticed by the party and [in] case of a win in the general elections, they will reward me a good political appointment.' Another aspirant contested on the ticket of the NPP in Ketu South because it was the logical progression from the position of a DCE, as DCEs are not guaranteed a reappointment from the president and the constitution bars a president from appointing a DCE for more than two four-year terms. According to a member of this candidate's campaign team: 'Honorable was contesting because it was the only logical political decision for him. After serving as the DCE, he wanted to reward the president by closing the wide gap in presidential and parliamentary votes to help the president win his second term and was hoping to be rewarded with another appointment by doing well in the elections.'

In the Adentan constituency—which is a swing constituency—the motivations of parliamentary aspirants were similar to those in stronghold constituencies: to get a piece of the political pie by getting elected to become an MP or visibility from political elites to be appointed into a government position, among other motivations. However, the double challenge of winning a difficult intra-party election and equally competitive inter-party election made candidates wary of contesting because of the huge costs. Unlike stronghold constituencies, where a win guaranteed a smooth passage into Ghana's Parliament, there were uncertainties with Adentan where the seat has swung between the two

major political parties. Whereas in stronghold constituencies of New Juaben South and Ketu South, parliamentary aspirants spent a huge chunk of their campaign budget at the primaries, aspirants in the swing constituency of Adentan spent much of their campaign budgets to win the primaries and then had to spend even more money providing public goods and infrastructure to win the inter-party elections.

However, the research showed that aspirants were motivated by the possibility of winning an election, unlike in an opposition area where they had little or no possibility of winning. According to an NPP aspirant, 'I was contesting to start my political career. I am young and needed that visibility for the constituents to know me for future elections and for the political leaders to pay attention to me for future appointments.' In the same constituency, an aspirant who won the primaries complained about the difficulty in contesting in a swing constituency. According to him, 'the primaries really drained me financially and I could not launch my election campaign for some time because all my money was gone. . . . I had to mostly hide from the constituents because I simply did not have the means to start my constituency campaign after the primaries.'

In essence, most but not all individuals seeking parliamentary office are motivated to seek office for a piece of the political pie and not to influence policy, given that Ghana's legislative process is dominated by the executive branch and given the winner-takes-all model that characterises Ghanaian democracy.

6.3 The Increasing Cost of Candidate Selection Primaries

As indicated above, the adoption of candidate selection primaries in Ghana has somewhat helped to further improve Ghana's democracy. Despite the undemocratic challenges in party structuring detailed in chapter 5, candidates are increasingly being elected by party grassroots and not nominated by national party leaders. However, contesting these elections has become very expensive.

Generally, political parties do not support aspirants but rather demand filing fees from those contesting candidate selection primaries. Aspirants get support of the central party only after contesting and winning the primaries on their own. As a result, political activities have largely been funded by personal sources—borrowing, savings, friends, and family among many others (Asante and Oduro, 2016). Research by Asante and Oduro in 2016 indeed showed that almost half (45%) of candidates' election campaign funds come from personal income (savings and salary). The remainder comes from friends (25%), family (just 5%), business or firms (15%), and loans (10%).

For most candidates, fundraising is challenging, and it is especially difficult for challengers who are not ministers of state, members of Parliament, or holders of executive office. Aspirants tend to depend on savings, and in many instances, incumbent MPs attempt to raise loans with their private property or their end-of-service lump pension that serves as the collateral for bank loans (Asante and Oduro, 2016).⁸⁰

⁸⁰ MPs after every four-year term are paid a lump sum as pension.

Increasingly, those with deep pockets, regardless of gender, are dominating politics because of the importance of cash for winning a primary election. Campaign expenses are escalating, based on the evidence of expenses incurred by the candidates in the study constituencies. In the New Juaben South constituency primaries, for example, the two contestants on the eve of voting each gave \$1000 and 4000 Cedis cash, respectively, to at least 400 selected members of the electoral college. This was in addition to the gifts that were given alongside the cash and the other expenses incurred as part of campaign operations or to fulfil demands from selectorates for personal needs or local public goods. Primaries have thus come with expensive campaigns, often leaving nominees with few resources to contest the actual elections (Ichino and Nathan, 2010).

As indicated in table 8 below, the biggest cost in an aspirant's budget is money to engage in patronage for votes. Spending starts when an aspirant declares an intention to contest and begins to engage in personal and community patronage. As indicated in chapter 5, in the months leading up to primary voting, demands from delegates escalate, and 'something small for transport' is demanded by delegates after every campaign meeting. On the night before and on Election Day, envelopes of cash and various items like mobile phones, TV sets, and refrigerators are given to delegates to induce them to vote.

Most delegates see the election period as their time to eat and not as a time for decision making, and so they set up deliberate schemes and

machinations to obtain money from aspirants. To them, the more the aspirants and the keener the competition, the more money they can extort.

Table 8: Actual budget showing cost of items for a 2020 contestant in one of the study constituencies. Though the amount may differ depending on the resources available to a candidate, this is indicative of the kinds of expenses expected of aspirants.

	Item	Unit	Quantity	Cost in Ghana Cedis	Expense Category	% of Campaign Spending
1	Monthly welfare to delegates/constituents	5,000	12	60,000	Relationship	2%
2	Community development	10,000	12	120,000	Relationship	5%
3	Stipends for staff and volunteers	500	48	24,000	Campaign	1%
4	Festivity donations at Christmas, Eid, and local festivals	50,000	4	200,000	Relationship	8%
5	Gifts to influential leaders	50,000		50,000	Relationship	2%
6	Mobilization: transport and fuel	2,000	12	24,000	Campaign	1%
7	Funerals, church, and outdooring donations	20,000		20,000	Relationship	1%
8	Two pick-ups	45,000	2	90,000	Campaign	4%
9	Bicycles	3,000	20	60,000	Campaign	2%
10	Motorbikes	3,500	4	14,000	Campaign	1%
11	T-shirts	12	1500	18,000	Both	1%
12	Posters	1	4000	4,000	Campaign	0%
13	Nomination and filing	21,000			Party	0%
14	Delegate mobilization	50	742	74,200	Both	3%
15	Media engagements	10,000		10,000	Campaign	0%
16	Delegate mobilization	50	742	74,200	Both	3%
17	Transport to voting center	50	742	37,100	Relationship	2%
18	D-day gifts	600	600	360,000	Relationship	15%
19	D-day cash(night before and day of voting)	2,000	600	1,200,000	Relationship	49%
				2,439,500 (\$407K as of June 2020)		100%

This research found that, as a result, delegates in some instances identify and encourage financially viable candidates, mostly those who come from the constituency and gain lucrative appointive offices to contest in order to increase their potential gains from the primaries.

Given that aspirants' personal wealth is the key source of campaign funds, the lack of support from the larger party has usually left candidates with personal debts that have to be paid after the election.

6.3.1 Drivers of the Increasing Cost of Primaries

The cost of candidate selection primaries is escalating, mainly because of the nature of politics that have come to dominate and the accompanying social arrangements. Generally, the type of constituency and primary drive the costs. In strongholds like Ketu South and New Juaben South, primaries are quite expensive because they are effectively the general elections, and the usual competitiveness increases the stakes of vote-buying attempts. In opposition areas, the costs are heavy because of the benefits of running, as indicated earlier. In swing constituencies like Adentan, the overall costs are even greater, as candidates must spend heavily during the primaries and during the main campaign. Given that average salaries in Ghana tend to be low, about GHC1,500–3,000 (US\$500) per month (Asante and Oduro, 2016), the high cost of elections has the potential to further alienate already marginalized groups, especially women.

In the three study constituencies, the research found broadly that the cost drivers were similar across stronghold, opposition area, and

swing constituencies even though the quantum differed based on the type of race. Basically, primary contests have become all-pay vote-buying auctions since every aspirant engages in similar activities that drive up the costs. In constituencies where two financially endowed candidates were contesting, the stakes were quite high, and where candidates were not heavily resourced, the costs nevertheless were significant, as all candidates made patronage attempts. Broadly, the research identified the main cost drivers in the candidate selection primaries as described below.

6.3.1.1 Constituency Cultivation

Once a candidate develops an ambition to contest in a primary, the individual receives personal demands from the selectorates and requests for public goods from the constituents they hope to represent. According to a candidate interviewed in Adentan, ‘Once word goes round that you have shown an interest in contesting the seat, you become an automated teller machine (ATM) and a mobile money vender.⁸¹ All of a sudden, every delegate’s personal problem becomes your problem. You need to court these selectorates, and providing for their personal needs is part of the process. In addition, you become a community developer with the provision of local public goods. They will demand boreholes, roads, toilets and streetlights, etc. At the end of the day, you need to deliver to show viability.’ This cultivation stage costs large amounts of money without which candidates fail to be seriously considered.

⁸¹ Mobile money is a means of sending money through mobile networks.

6.3.1.2 Nomination Forms and Filing Fees

Aspirants are mandated to buy nomination forms and pay filing fees collected by the political parties to organize the primaries. These fees have escalated in the last three elections and keep rising. For example, in the NPP candidate selection primaries in 2019, candidates were required to pay 20,000 Ghana Cedis (US\$3700). Even though women and other marginalized groups had a 50% rebate, the filing fees were quite expensive. The two dominant parties have attempted to explain these hefty filing fees as a screen to ward off or discourage non-serious candidates from contesting. Usually, the parties who are in power impose heavy filing fees because the candidates tend to be government officials who have money. Also, incumbent MPs have always attempted to propose heavy filing fees as a tool to discourage aspirants from contesting them. On the other hand, parties in opposition tend to have lower filing fees as a way of encouraging potential candidates to contest.

6.3.1.3 Campaign Meetings

Campaigns for candidate selection primaries engage voters directly. This engagement is done by meeting selectorates in groups or individually. After the meetings, aspirants are expected to provide transportation and refreshments for those attending. This has become a norm, and once a candidate reneges on this implied obligation, selectorates mostly stop attending their campaign events. According to a candidate interviewed in Adentan, ‘to the selectorates, your message is what you are giving at the end of the campaign talk and not what you say during the meeting. Once

they know you will provide transport they will come to listen, otherwise nobody will show up. Even when you visit them in their homes, they expect something small after your engagement with them.’

6.3.1.4 Campaign Logistics and Operations

Campaign logistics and payment for volunteers requires a substantial outlay of funds. Aspirants usually need vehicles, motorbikes, bicycles, and fuel to canvass. These supporters also require stipends for their work. Besides, there is the need for campaign billboards, T-shirts, posters, and media engagements that all cost money.

6.3.1.5 Election Day Vote Buying

All aspirants believe that giving money to voters has become an institutionalized feature of the political and electoral processes (Asante and Oduro, 2016). The larger portion of campaign funds, about 50% as indicated in the table above, are reserved for vote buying on the night or morning of the elections. It has become a ritual and part of political strategy for envelopes to be distributed by aspirants to selectorates, as indicated throughout the thesis. For most candidates, these envelopes consume over 50% (see sample budget in table 8) of the campaign budget. The day of the parliamentary primary is the critical moment, and failure to provide something can turn an election. Even favored candidates need to provide something small to secure their votes. In cases of acclamation, candidates are still expected to provide envelopes for selectorates to come and acclaim them. These vote-buying attempts have increased from the provision of mere transport for delegates to

tangible cash. In the New Juaben South primaries, for example, some selectorates made as much as GHC10,000 (US\$1700) altogether on the day of voting from the two aspirants.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that increasingly many parliamentary candidates in Ghana are mostly motivated by their personal desire to hold political office as opposed to mostly using the office to influence policy. These desires have influenced a reciprocity between the selectorates who want their needs addressed and candidates who want selectorates' votes.

This is against the background of escalating costs of running for office influenced by the emergent vote market, where vote-buying attempts consume over 80% of campaign spending during primaries. Attempts by the political parties to reform the processes have been cosmetic and yielded little results; they have only exacerbated the situation by increasing the number of selectorates—as a result, candidates spend more to buy the votes of many more people.

The increasing costs have implications for Ghana's consolidating democracy, as the effects have skewed the characteristics of candidates who contest and thus MPs in favor of those who are wealthy and are ready to meet selectorates' demands. Hence, although the selectorates seem powerful at the grassroots—given the bottom-up political structuring—a particular kind of relationship has emerged where selectorates are carefully placed at the polling stations and sustained

through gift-giving by aspiring candidates to support them at the primaries. Consequently, marginalized groups, especially women, who are not well resourced, compete with men who traditionally have more resources and thus are underrepresented in Ghana's parliament.

Following from chapter 5, on the political structuring that alienates women, and this chapter, on the increasing costs that present enormous challenges to women, Chapter 7 will present findings on what determines candidates' success, given that almost all candidates make vote-buying attempts. Chapter 8 looks at the implications of this political structuring and these increasing costs for gender representation, and chapter 9 analyses the connection between primaries and outcomes in general elections.

Chapter Seven

An All-Pay Vote-Buying Auction within a Moral and Social Economy:

The Importance of Building Good Relations

As indicated in chapter 5, when Nana contested the 2016 NPP candidate selection primaries, he lost, but learnt valuable political lessons. As was explained in an interview, ‘It was not about just showing up with a bag of cash close to the election period.’ According to him, he began his next campaign the day after he lost. He continued courting and building lasting relationships with the people who had the power to elect him in the next primaries—which were three years away. During the 2016 campaigns, even though he had not been selected as the candidate, he supported the party by providing campaign logistics such as pick-ups, T-shirts, party posters, and cash for party supporters. At the same time, members of the electoral college kept their constant demands for support, and he had to respond to these requests as much as he could. According to him, ‘These requests were about everything from school fees, rents, business support, funeral donations, police station bails, school admissions, jobs, apprenticeships, and every help conceivable. In fact, you become part of their everyday lives and whatever challenge that comes their way, they throw them to you. . . . I have had to endure these for three years.’

According to Nana, he spent close to 1.2 million Ghana Cedis over the period of three years to build sustainable relationships with the

various selectorates whose support he wanted.⁸² This was money that was directly spent by him, in addition to various favors and kind gestures like bailing people from the police station, seeking jobs for people, and linking them to government programs for support.

During his relationship building, he developed a relationship with Kwame, a selectorate and longtime supporter of the incumbent MP, whom he had voted for in two elections, including in the 2016 primaries when he voted against Nana. In 2018, Kwame approached the incumbent MP to help secure a government job for his son, but with no luck, despite the incumbent previously responding to his demands. Subsequently, he approached Nana and successfully secured the job for his son. This development soured the long relationship Kwame had with the incumbent MP and drew him closer to Nana.

Despite the relationships Nana had built by spending the 1.2 million Cedis, however, he still needed to spend over 1.6 million Cedis on the eve of voting to secure votes.⁸³ He was expected to deliver ‘envelopes containing cash’ to subsidize the transport for some selected 450 selectorates whom he expected to vote for him. These envelopes contained 4,000 Ghana Cedis each—an amount reached because the incumbent MP had started distributing \$1,000 (6,000 Cedis) to an equal number of selectorates.

The incumbent made attempts to repair the broken relationship with Kwame by engaging intermediaries who thought they had convinced

⁸² \$230,000 US dollars (2019).

⁸³ \$296 US dollars (2019).

him to switch support back to the incumbent. According to Kwame, he received 4,000 Cedis from Nana and \$1,000 from the incumbent on the morning of the elections, but, based on the polling station results, he evidently voted for Nana.

Because of Kwame and many others, Nana defeated the incumbent candidate by over 100 votes even though he provided less cash on the day of voting. According to a member of Nana's campaign team, 'money was very important in the victory but it was not about showing up with a bag of cash close to the elections. . . . At the end of the day, the other candidate paid more but relatively, we had spent so much more on giving over the three years . . . the good relations we developed we believe was the deciding factor.' One selectorate who was interviewed was of the view that, 'even though we had decided to vote for Nana, we were expecting something to seal the deal. . . . It's important to talk but it's equally important to drop something. . . . After all, plenty talk does not fill the basket.'

The happenings described above demonstrate an obvious all-pay vote-buying auction that enabled Kwame and many other selectorates to receive gifts from all contesting candidates yet vote for their preferred candidate because of ballot secrecy.⁸⁴ This all-pay vote-buying auction tended to level the playing field so selectorates could consider other factors when making voting decisions. This supports earlier theoretical

⁸⁴ The term 'all-pay vote-buying auction' is used here to demonstrate the fact that most candidates attempt to buy the votes of selectorates in a process that equates to auctions. But, in this case, they bid for the same votes at different prices, yet the winner is not always the highest bidder.

predictions (Vincente, 2014), since 77% of respondents interpret gift-giving as an attempt to buy votes or influence voting decisions.

According to a respondent in New Juaben South, 'You cannot reject gifts from candidates you don't support because it makes candidates feel you have something against them and don't plan to vote for them which undermines ballot secrecy.' According to another in Adentan, 'It is generally difficult for candidates to know who you vote for because of the secrecy of the ballots. It is therefore easy to collect gifts from all candidates and vote for the one you like.' Also, a selectorate in Ketu South responded that, 'I accepted gifts from all candidates because I wanted to keep my vote a secret.'

Usually, the level of competition among the aspirants escalates the amount of gift giving in a primary, with some selectorates getting enough gifts to start a business. According to a selectorate interviewed in New Juaben South, 'I made enough money to restart my chop bar [local restaurant] business. Because I tried to stay neutral during the campaign, one candidate offered me \$1000 and another 4000 Cedis [US\$700] on the morning of the voting to influence my final voting decision.' This is not an isolated case, as most selectorates receive gifts in the form of cash from nearly all candidates.

Most selectorates are able to receive gifts from all contestants by hiding their candidate preferences. According to a respondent in Adentan, 'It is always better to stay a bit far from the campaigns and show a level of independence. When you show independence and

neutrality, you get placed on all the candidates list as a potential voter whom gifts can convince.’

Selectorates expecting to get maximum value from the process try to hide their candidate preferences, possibly because of the expectation that they may receive gifts from more candidates as a result. Selectorates who openly campaign or support a candidate tend not to receive gifts from other contestants because they are removed from the lists of potential voters to persuade. Due to this, almost all aspirants in Ghana’s candidate selection primaries attempt to bid for selectorate votes but end up losing both their bid (money) and the item they seek (vote).

This development has led to the popular term in the Ghanaian political lexicon: ‘Fear delegates’. Even though vote buying is seemingly common, it may not circumvent the secrecy of ballots because of the difficulty in monitoring voter choices. Candidates, however, have sometimes attempted to monitor votes by devising strategies such as targeting selectorates they believe will vote for them, asking selectorates to provide photo evidence of their ballots, asking selectorates to swear by deities, and other forms of intimidation.

The evidence from the study constituencies are confirmed by secondary literature and the broader research conducted for this thesis. In the constituencies studied, 92% of selectorates interviewed confirmed receiving gifts during the campaign process. The 8% who did not receive any gifts were selectorates who worked with particular candidates as part of their campaign teams and thus either did not avail themselves to other

candidates or were simply not targeted with gifts due to their open affiliation. In other words, gift giving is nearly universal.

This naturally leads to an assumption that losing candidates lose because they paid less in their vote-buying attempts. But the evidence from this study suggests something more subtle: it is not just who gives the most money, but how it is given, at what stages of the electoral cycle, and the kinds of relationships that it builds. This point is not always appreciated in the literature, which can depict vote buying as one-off transactions (Paalo and Gyampo, 2019; Kramon, 2013; Lindberg, 2010). Importantly, the reason most selectorates, but not all, take gifts from all participating candidates and still vote for a preferred candidate has been a point of contention.

This chapter asks whether candidate selection primaries are won by candidates who give more gifts on the eve or day of voting. Using empirical data from this research, the chapter argues that money is important, and vote-buying attempts are made by almost all candidates who contest candidate selection primaries in the NPP and NDC. It has become part of campaign strategy to use patronage goods and services to develop relationships of benefit. The chapter, however, also demonstrates that primaries are not one-off transactions; rather, the outcome is shaped by reciprocal gestures of mutual respect because of the moral and social economies that govern these all-pay vote-buying auctions.⁸⁵ As

⁸⁵ The moral economy is based on respect and humility, and the social economy is based on reciprocal norms of being accessible; showing presence at social events such as weddings, funerals, and child naming ceremonies; and making donations. Both the social and moral economies are paramount in relationship building with selectorates.

a result, the primaries are won by candidates who use the delivery of patronage goods and services to establish, develop, and sustain clientelist relationships over time within a moral and social economy as part of political strategy—one in which relationships are expected to translate into votes. The chapter will look at the moral and social economies that determine how some candidates win against other candidates who use similar strategies.

7.1 The Moral and Social Economies that Guide Vote Buying

The narrative told by Kwame demonstrates that vote-buying attempts during candidate selection primaries happen within a broader moral economy (Cheeseman et al., 2019) and within a social economy that reinforces long-term reciprocal relationships. Throughout the research, both candidates and selectorates reinforced the importance of gift giving but indicated that it alone is not sufficient to guarantee victory. It was important to satisfy the moral and social economies in a continuous process that cost money (see chapter 6). It was not enough to be respectful, humble, and show up at events without giving gifts. The two were equally consequential to secure votes.

Fully 97% of respondents in this research did not think that selectorates would vote for a candidate who did not provide any gifts. According to a selectorate interviewed in Ketu South, 'If candidates don't give any money on the eve or day of elections, their loss will be guaranteed.' According to another participant in New Juaben South, 'I'm looking forward to that day. It does not matter the loyalty, you have to

just provide cash to seal the deal, even if only one candidate is contesting unopposed and we have to come and acclaim, you have to give envelopes for transport.’ A participant in Adentan said, ‘They will think you are not serious because gift giving shows a candidate is a distributor of resources. . . . In politics you get your reward on earth during the primaries, unlike religion where your reward is in heaven.’

The findings confirm that gift giving has probably become a constant in the campaigns and helps build viability. Responses show that it may be impossible to campaign without giving any sort of gifts. Without doing so, selectorates will not even come and listen to you speak and advertise your party and policy, which is consistent with Kramon’s research (2013), which argues that candidates give gifts to relay information and signal their generosity. At the same time, 87% of respondents thought vote buying was *not* sufficient to guarantee support. According to a respondent in New Juaben South, ‘Relationships and records of delivery of whether communal and personal benefits matter. Vote buying, however, helps to keep momentum.’

Interviews also reveal that selectorates look at candidates’ ability to respond to selectorate demands and to honour their promises over time. Among the selectorates I interviewed, 90% tended to look for candidates who were financially well resourced, accessible, generous, and helpful to the political party and the needs of selectorates as well as having a good personal character and strong human relations. Incumbents were expected to bring major infrastructural development such as roads, schools, clinics, and electricity to their constituencies and also to help

with selectorate needs throughout their period in office. Challengers were assessed on their ability to fulfil personal promises and to deliver small community projects such as boreholes and toilets to constituents.

According to a respondent in Adentan, 'Spending overtime to build the necessary relationship is better than showing [up] on the election day with a bag of cash. We should know you and what you can do for some time.' These responses tend to confirm the existence of moral and social economies that govern candidate selection primaries. Money is 'made moral' through the relationship the recipient has with the giver, and if suitable relationships are not built, vote buying alone is unlikely to win an election.

7.1.1 The Moral Economy

This raises the question of what good leadership and appropriate relationships look like in the Ghanaian context. Interviews with both selectorates and candidates confirmed the need for respect and humility in building the relationships that translated into votes. It was not enough to give gifts, as the manner in which these gifts were distributed contributed greatly in getting candidates ahead of the game. Selectorates expected aspirants to pick up their phone calls, welcome them when they visit their homes or offices, and relate well in all encounters. According to respondents in the Adentan constituency, Adamu Ramadan won the NDC primaries against a challenger who distributed more gifts on the day of voting because, having contested the primaries and won in 2016, he remained available to the selectorates even though he lost the 2016

parliamentary elections. According to a selectorate I interviewed, 'Ramadan never left us. . . . He was very respectful, humble, and receptive to us between 2016 and 2020. . . . Whenever we called on him with a personal or party issue he did the best he could to support. So for me, I voted for him regardless of how much he gave compared to his opponent.' The primaries in Adentan confirmed that these vote-buying attempts are not one-off transactions but have to be developed over time. According to another selectorate, 'Madam Oye was not really known to be an Adentan constituent. . . . She showed up close to the primaries with resources to contest, but Adamu had been with us for a long time and even though he had to give something to secure our votes, the amount was inconsequential because he gave less compared to Madam and still won.'

In the New Juaben South NPP primaries, the moral economy of what constitutes good leadership played a significant role in the primary outcomes. According to selectorates interviewed, the incumbent MP had become arrogant and disrespectful to them and, as a result, broke the existing relationship he had with most of those who had supported him in two election cycles. According to one selectorate, 'Honorable after winning a second term began taking us for granted. . . . He was too busy to pick up our phone calls to him. . . . He stopped helping with our needs and stopped relating to us well.' Due to this, his challenger won with a good margin even though on the day of voting the challenger gave less money than the incumbent.

In the Ketu South NDC primaries, the outcomes were consistent with the two other study constituencies, even though it was not an incumbent-contested primary. The winner combined a respectful and humble personality with sufficient financial resources to beat her challengers. According to one selectorate, ‘Madam was supportive of us since she was a minister, and her role as a Queen Mother in the constituency made her interact well with us. . . . At the end of the day, she was equally competitive when they gave the envelopes even though she was not the highest giver.’

These outcomes from the three study constituencies are representative of primary outcomes in Ghana (Corruption Watch Ghana, 2020). Even though candidates are expected to provide gifts, how these are given plays a significant role because almost all candidates give gifts in attempts to secure votes.

The majority of selectorates probably expect candidates to have the resources to respond to their demands and to relate to them respectfully. When asked if they would prefer candidates who would just relate and respect, but not provide gifts, most responded that the two were not mutually exclusive: candidates needed resources and need to have respect for selectorates. According to a selectorate interviewed in Adentan, ‘Candidates must be resourceful enough to help the party and individuals.’⁸⁶ It is not enough to show up with money and not respect or

⁸⁶ In Ghana, people use the term ‘resourceful’ to mean that the person has resources and is therefore in a position to distribute them in acts of assistance and generosity.

relate well with me. . . . On the other hand, you cannot show only respect and not provide gifts.’ The findings suggest that candidates seeking office may attempt build strong relationships with selectorates over time by providing for their needs with respect and humility.

7.1.2 The Social Economy

The social economy entreats aspirants to attend social events such as funerals, weddings, and baby-naming ceremonies and make generous donations. Also, during festivals such as Christmas and Eid, aspirants are expected to make donations. In instances of sickness or disasters such as flooding and fire, donations are again expected from aspirants. These events are important in building relationships of benefit since selectorates tend to appreciate candidates who support them in these times (see Roeloffs, 2019).

In the Adentan constituency, Adamu Ramadan was seen by the selectorates as someone who endeavored to attend their social events, and, as a result, the selectorates believed they had a relationship with him. According to a respondent, ‘Adamu travelled with me to the Volta region to attend my mother’s funeral and through that we developed a relationship money could not buy.’

In New Juaben South, the winner similarly developed strong relationships with the delegates by attending their social events. According a member of his campaign team, ‘The social events for us was very difficult but necessary. . . . We had to sometimes attend a naming

ceremony in the morning, two weddings and two funerals on the same day at different locations, sometimes even in different towns.’

In Ketu South, the winner also attended the social events of selectorates. She was always visible at social events and made donations. According to a selectorate interviewed, ‘Madam attended my baby naming ceremony and I was surprised to see her. . . . By that, she truly demonstrated that she cared for the people.’

In all, 68% of the selectorates interviewed said they voted for candidates with whom they had developed a relationship. By contrast, 18% said they voted based on gifts, 7% on the candidate’s potential to win, 3.5% on the campaign message, and 3.5% on a candidate’s influence on national politics. For the 68% who voted based on existing relationships, candidates had attended funerals, helped them with school fees, attended their weddings, and showed up for them in diverse ways over time. According a selectorate interviewed in Ketu South, ‘It is better to eat small everyday than eat the head of a cow for just a day . . . so I prefer someone who helps me throughout the year no matter how little than someone who shows up for one day with a big gift.’

With this in mind, selectorates have tended to prefer candidates who have helped over time, even they do not present the biggest gift on the eve or day of voting. The 18% who ranked gifts as the reason they voted for a candidate had not built personal relationships with any of the candidates and therefore had the gifts to consider in making their vote choices. According to a selectorate interviewed in Ketu South, ‘All the candidates were new and I personally did not have a relationship with

them. Therefore, whoever gave the most gifts showed they were the most serious.’ The evidence shows that selectorates most likely vote for candidates based on relationships over time given that all candidates are expected to give gifts during the campaign process. However, where no prior relationships exist, the amount of the gift given seems to influence vote choices.

Among the candidates I interviewed, 88% built their viability through constant giving and relationship building. However, 12% believed they built their viability through providing development projects. Among the 88%, the relationship building started when they nurtured an ambition to contest the impending primary and thus started cultivating the selectorates in the constituency. According to a candidate interviewed in Ketu South, ‘The cultivation process begins with the selectorate elections and acclamations when the polling station executives pick forms to contest the polling station elections. It’s important to identify and support viable candidates to win, and then subsequently, you must constantly respond to their demands and attend their social programs such as funerals and outdooring so as to maintain their support for the primaries.’ According to another in Adentan, ‘You can show up with bag of money and do well, but without existing relationships, it’s difficult to win because every candidate gives.’

Most of the candidates who attempt to build viability with development projects are incumbents who face the challenge of balancing constituent needs for major development projects such as schools and roads with persistent selectorate needs (see chapter 8). They are judged

on two scores: what development they brought to the community and what personal demands they met. As such, they attempt to avoid being unpopular with constituency voters and thus to avoid triggering a revolt by selectorates based on voter sentiments. According to an incumbent candidate, 'As an incumbent, you carry the burden of a constituency with the demands of all constituents and not just delegates on your shoulder, unlike a challenger who can focus on the few delegates who constitute the electoral college. It therefore becomes very difficult when you do not get a ministerial position that affords you the opportunity to be resourceful because the parliamentary salary cannot just do it.'

Contesting a primary involves relationship building that in itself costs lots of money over time. Candidates must continuously respond to selectorate demands until the elections to be sure of their support (Nugent, 1995; Nugent, 2001a; Lindberg, 2010). For incumbents, it's even more difficult because they have to satisfy selectorates and voter needs whereas aspirants can focus on the few selectorates to get ahead in the primaries. Even so, when they do not gain meaningful government appointments, they often lack the capacity to deliver development projects or the resources to sustain relationships. As indicated earlier, this is often the case for deputy ministers, whose posts, while appointed, do not generate sufficient resources to enable patronage politics.

It is vital for candidates to declare their intention to contest before the selectorate election or selection process. Candidates support and encourage potential party members to contest or get nominated as selectorates, and then they continue building relationships and building

momentum by responding to their needs. According to a candidate interviewed in Adentan, 'Not being active with the delegate selection process and leaving it too late did not help my campaign even though I gave more gifts than my opponent.' According to another candidate in New Juaben South, 'The relationship between myself and many of the delegates broke down beyond repair. As a result, my gifts did not have influence on their votes.' These findings show that building relationships of benefit over time may help campaigns stay competitive in candidate selection primaries. This influences vertical accountability, as politicians are held accountable on how many of their promises to selectorates—and by extension their constituents—are fulfilled (Schedler, 1999; Mainwaring and Zoco, 2007). Also, the study suggests that gift giving during primaries does not necessarily undermine democratic accountability in elections (Lindberg, 2010).

7.2 Conclusions

This chapter tested the theoretical predictions about vote buying in the scholarly literature. It found that despite the seemingly overwhelming evidence of vote-buying attempts during candidate selection primaries, there are significant variables within the existing moral and social economy that determine election outcomes. Evidently, vote-buying attempts are made by most but not all candidates as part of campaign strategy. The chapter argues that in primaries, unlike in general elections where campaign promises influence voters, the selectorates who form the electoral colleges demand immediate benefits from candidates and are

not influenced by promises. As a result, there is an all-pay vote-buying auction where all candidates bid for votes, therefore diminishing the impact of vote buying alone without accounting for other significant variables. This contrasts with findings in the scholarly literature, which suggests that clientelism dominates elections in newer democracies and thus undermines democracy (Lindberg, 2010). Therefore, candidates who spend relatively more to establish, develop, and sustain the delivery of patronage goods and services over time and still provide gifts on the day of voting tend to win the elections—even if they pay relatively less than their opponents. This contrasts with the claims by losing candidates that they lose elections because their opponents gave more in gifts on the day of voting. Conversely, because these transactions are not one-off events, money and time are required to sustain these relationships. As I argued in chapter 6, this is driving up the cost of running for parliamentary office in Ghana and has implications for gender representation in Ghana's Parliament, which chapter 8 explores.

Chapter Eight

‘Massa, Na aye sika sem’⁸⁷ (It came down to money):

Women and Equitable Political Participation in the Primaries

Freda Sarpong was a popular health worker in Adentan, seemingly well-liked by the constituents because of her long service to the community. She was encouraged by some NPP members to represent them in the 2020 parliamentary elections. The other contenders in the NPP primaries were four men: Yaw Buaben Asamoah (an incumbent first-term MP seeking reelection), Emmanuel Mantey, Rahman Zak, and Alfred Kumi.

After weeks of campaigning, it came down to the critical hours when the final vote-buying attempts are made by almost all candidates. As part of an expected campaign strategy detailed in chapter 7, Madam Sarpong went round and made her final vote-winning attempts, as was expected in the all-pay vote-buying auction. The primary results showed that incumbent Yaw Buaben Asamoah won with 422 votes against Emmanuel Mantey with 217, Rahman Zak with 83, Alfred Kumi with 10, and Freda Sarpong with 7.

According to Madam Sarpong, ‘I had worked hard to be very competitive on the various spheres of the political contest until it came down to money. . . . The selectorates liked me and promised to vote for me, but the gifts they received from the other candidates made me uncompetitive. . . . As a public worker and a woman for that matter, it

⁸⁷ This is in the Twi language of the Akans, which is widely spoken in Ghana.

was difficult and challenging to solicit for funds and therefore I could not compete on money even though I tried to punch beyond my weight.’

According to a selectorate interviewed who had earlier supported Freda, ‘I supported Freda because she was always supportive to community members when they had health issues but *Massa, na aye sika sem* [it come down to money]. Even though I received gifts from all the aspirants, what I received in total over the years from the candidate I voted for was difficult to ignore against what the others offered.’

The case of Nana Oye Lithur, a former gender minister who contested the NDC candidate selection primaries in Adentan in 2020, was different. As a former gender minister, she had the networks to seek support from the business and political elites in Ghana. In a contest with the NDC’s losing candidate in the 2016 inter-party elections, she was very viable and competitive. However, according to most selectorates interviewed, she lost because she showed up with gifts close to the primaries without having built long-term relationships (see chapter 7). Adamu Ramadan won the primary election against her, 730 votes to 559.

Candidate selection primaries have become an important hurdle for aspiring MPs to cross because the NPP and NDC have a strong control of who gets to Parliament. Generally, men and women are subjected to the same rules and regulations, and in some cases these rules are bent to encourage women’s political participation in line with the various regional, continental, and international treaties signed by Ghana to promote women’s rights and political inclusion (Darkwah, 2012). As a result, women’s participation in parliamentary politics has improved from

10% in 1992 to 14.5% in 2021. In terms of women's representation in Parliament, Ghana in 2022 ranks 141st in the world, with only 40 women of the 275 members. Compared to the number of women appointed to executive positions (19.35%), representation of women in Parliament is low, but it is still much better than at the local government level, where women's representation is at 7%—showing that women are doing badly in contesting for elected offices where there is fierce competition with men (Gletsu, 2012).

Overall, gender representation in Ghanaian politics remains comparatively low, behind more than 24 African countries with 20% women or more, and well below the UN-mandated threshold of 30%, the global average of 23%, and the African average of 24%.⁸⁸ Ghana fares even worse against comparator countries such as Rwanda, South Africa, and Ethiopia that have representations of 51.9%, 48.6%, and 47.6%, respectively (Musau, 2019). Seemingly, there is a higher percentage of Ghanaian women in appointed office such as the cabinet and the courts than in elected office (Allah-Mensah, 2005; Bauer and Darkwah, 2019).

As a consequence, there have been calls for change by gender advocacy groups through the 'Women's Manifesto',⁸⁹ issued by civil society organizations (CSOs) in 2004 and updated in 2016, and the push for the passage of the affirmative action bills seeking at least 30%

⁸⁸ Based on women's representation in unicameral parliaments or the lower house of parliaments.

⁸⁹ The Manifesto calls for equal female participation in the government of Ghana, demanding that the legislature become 30% female by 2008 and 50% female by 2012. It also stipulates equal female participation in leadership of political parties.

women's representation in political leadership.⁹⁰ As indicated in chapter 3, the dominant political parties in Ghana have also at various times attempted to address the gender imbalance by internal arrangements that promote women's participation through filing fee waivers for parliamentary aspirants and reserved positions such as women organizer. Other such proposals, however, have mostly been rejected by party members. The attempts that have been put in place have seemingly not been successful in encouraging more women to seek elected office, as women, in addition to overcoming the various factors arrayed against them, still have to overcome the political challenges that their male counterparts face.

Current research on women's representation in elected office across Africa broadly argues that addressing sociocultural and political factors, and creating quotas within proportional representation systems, will ensure significant and rapid increases in women's parliamentary representation, and this has been demonstrated in countries with proportional representation. However, it is difficult to apply such lessons to Ghana's single-member first-past-the-post system without changing the constitution to introduce quotas and proportional representation. In the case of Ghana in particular, where two main parties are dominant,

⁹⁰ The Affirmative Action Bill 'seeks equal representation and participation of both women and men in governance, public positions of power, and all decision-making spaces of the country. It also requires all sectors to reserve a percentage of their employment for women. Political parties are also to be encouraged to adopt voluntary party quotas to promote women's participation in party politics. The bill mandates that all public institutions adopt gender policies, including recruitment policies, aimed at achieving a balanced structuring of those institutions in terms of gender.' 'Increase women's participation in governance,' *Business Ghana*, December 2, 2019, <https://www.businessghana.com/site/news/general/201613/Increase-women-s-participation-in-governance> (Accessed February 2022).

the major hurdle for women is being selected as a party's candidate in a winnable constituency, mainly because of the fundamental role of financial and material resources in candidate selection primaries (Jonah, 1998; Bauer and Darkwah, 2019).

Ghana's 1992 constitution (article 35/6) mandates that 'the State shall take appropriate measures to achieve reasonable gender balance in the recruitment and appointment to public offices'. Also, article 17 emphasizes that 'no citizen shall be discriminated against on the basis of gender, race or religion'. However, women's parliamentary representation has been small even though women make up 52% of Ghana's population. The number of women in Parliament has remained stagnant even as the total number of seats increased from 200 to 275 between 1992 and 2020.

This chapter advances further arguments on factors inhibiting women's participation in electoral politics with a focus on parliamentary elections in Ghana. It looks at how the political structures and the increasing cost of primaries further alienate women from seeking parliamentary office by answering the following question: Does vote buying in the parliamentary primaries contribute to the domination of Parliament by men?

The chapter reviews the existing literature and arguments on women's exclusion from politics and, using the three case constituencies, provides an empirical assessment. Based on in-depth interviews in three selected constituencies together with electoral and anecdotal data from across the country, this chapter builds the argument that the political structures within the dominant political parties in Ghana tend to inhibit

women's participation in intra-party elections at all levels. This is evident in parliamentary primaries where only a few selectorates are women, and they are poorly positioned to support female parliamentary candidates, even if they wanted to. The chapter also argues that the increasing cost of primaries as a result of the emergent patronage politics further inhibits women from winning candidate selection primaries, especially in the dominant NPP and NDC. This is because women in Ghana tend to be less well-resourced than men and thus less competitive in their vote-buying efforts.

Based on evidence from the three study constituencies, which is in turn supported by national data, the chapter concludes that party primaries have become very significant and unless women win these primaries, they can't access mainstream politics because of the gate-keeping role primaries play in ensuring political representation. The influence of money and the attendant increasing costs of parliamentary primaries have largely opened-up the candidate selection primaries. Financially well-resourced candidates, regardless of gender, who play to these dynamics have the best chances of winning. At the same time, because women tend to be financially less well-resourced, the increasing costs affect women more than men. Women must compete with men throughout the election campaign, including buying votes, where research has shown that men largely outspend women (Westminster Foundation, 2018). This is evident in the few contests where female candidates have demonstrated equal or superior financial viability against men—after accounting for all the significant political variables,

they have won the primaries and subsequent general elections without difficulty. This is even more profound in stronghold constituencies, where primaries are competitive but effectively guarantee an entry to Parliament since voters vote heavily along party lines.

Increasingly, the biggest hindrance to women's representation in Ghana's Parliament is the way that candidates are selected in the dominant political parties. The dynamics of the primaries prevent ordinary women from winning, and thus from progressing to inter-party elections to become MPs (see Bauer and Darkwah, 2019). The strong two-party system has ensured that the two parties play a strong role in parliamentary gatekeeping. Presently, the two parties control Ghana's Parliament, and 74% of constituencies are safe seats for one or the other of the two parties.⁹¹ Therefore, the most realistic possibility of improving women's representation is if the parties reform their candidate selection primaries to field more female candidates.

The arguments in this chapter confirm and support key findings and interpretations developed by gender scholars on the challenges of achieving gender equity in electoral office across Africa. However, my conclusion that the influence of money has opened-up and deemphasized gender in candidate selection primaries in Ghana deviates from much of the dominant literature, and suggests some new implications and avenues for further research and for intra-party reforms.

⁹¹ The NDC and NPP together control 203 of the 275 seats as safe seats, with 72 seats swinging between them and in some cases independents and the smaller parties.

8.1 Explaining Women's Low Representation in Elective Politics

The broad challenges of party politics equally affect men and women. In addition, however, there are well-documented overt sociocultural and masked political barriers to women's participation in politics. There exists a large body of literature on women, elective politics, and political equality with the general agreement that women are underrepresented in elective politics because of blatant discrimination and bias, even if this discrimination has decreased over the years (Allah-Mensah, 2005).

Scholars on gender and politics have largely explained the challenges as political, socioeconomic, cultural, institutional, and psychological (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Fox and Lawless, 2004; Allah-Mensah, 2005; Shvedova, 2005).

There are sociocultural and economic factors, as well as institutional political factors, that inhibit women's participation in politics in Ghana. The sociocultural and economic factors are consistent with happenings across Africa, but some of the institutional political factors are specific to the dominance of two political parties in Ghana, as explained in chapter 3. In Ghana's case, the strong gatekeeping role of the NPP and NDC determines parliamentary representation. The conduct of their candidate selection primaries, which has become dominated by the influence of money to buy votes has significant implications for gender representation. These factors are summarized in table 9 and then probed in more detail below.

Table 9: Factors inhibiting women's participation in politics

Factor	Issues
Sociocultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotypical discrimination • Impact of gender-based inequalities • Resistance from traditional and religious leaders
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The financial cost of running for candidate selection and parliamentary contests • The commoditization of political participation • The lack of access to and control of economic resources • The difficulty of fundraising
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media depiction and voter perceptions of 'a woman's place' in society as supporters of their husbands rather than as leaders • The loss of privacy • Demonstrating viability as candidates • The masculinity of politics • Political violence, insults, and aspersions
Political party/party systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The failure of governments to abide by international commitments • The dominant political parties' reluctance to ensure the effective participation of women • The first-past-the-post electoral system • The lack of gender quotas like in other African countries • The opaque nomination processes and the rising cost of primaries in the two major political parties • The abrasiveness of Ghanaian electoral politics and the generally acrimonious political environment in the country • The absence of more women in the political structures to support and influence decision

8.1.1 Sociocultural and Psychological Factors

Various scholars (Allah-Mensah, 2007; Tsikata, 2009; Bauer and Darkwah, 2019) have offered different explanations for the very low percentage of women in Ghana's Parliament. Dominant reasons cited include the traditional role of women as followers and not leaders, overt and covert gender-based discrimination, resistance from traditional and religious leaders, the masculinity of politics, the failure of governments to abide by international gender protocols, and the violence, insults, and associated negativity in Ghanaian electoral politics.

These reasons have emanated from the traditional role of women in the Ghanaian society with defined rights, behaviors, and duties within the family and larger community. Women traditionally have been viewed as bearers of children, smallholder farmers, and market traders who have limited leadership roles. Women have traditionally been socialized to be subordinate to men, with persistent traditional values that alienated women from acquiring wealth or owning property even in marriage (Oppong and Abu, 1987). Though existing traditional arrangements created leadership positions for women as queen mothers, in that role they mobilized women and superintended over issues specific to women, reinforcing beliefs that women should not lead men.

8.1.2 Political and Electoral Systems

Some scholars argue that the electoral system plays a significant role in influencing women's entry into elective office. Proponents of this theory contend that proportional representation, gender quotas, and other political mechanisms are critical for inclusive politics. Norris (2004), together with Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2013), argues that electoral systems by their design enable easy access to underrepresented groups and especially women by giving them access based on the strength of votes received or affirmative actions that ensure their entry. This is supported by existing research on electoral systems and political representation, which reveals that political jurisdictions with proportional representation tend to have significantly more women representatives in comparison to single-member political systems or first-past-the-post

systems because affirmative actions are more easily implemented in systems with proportional representation (Johnson-Myers, 2016). In such systems, elections are conducted based on political strength, which could significantly reduce the financial costs to individual candidates, especially women (Gletsu, 2012).

Ghana's adoption of the single-member district and first-past-the-post model for electing members of Parliament supports that argument and partly accounts for the small number of women in Ghana's Parliament. Had Ghana implemented a system of proportional representation, the huge numbers of women who do creditably well in elections could have gained access to Parliament. The lack of a quota system, as practiced in other parts of Africa where women's participation is high, also partly accounts for the small number of women in Ghana's Parliament. Gender quotas would have ensured that a specific number of women would consistently have seats in Parliament.

8.1.3 The Role of Political Party Structures

The dominant parties in Ghana do not overtly discourage women's participation in politics but rather have promoted structural arrangements to encourage women's participation, such as the creation of women's wings, women organizer positions, and reduced nomination fees for women. In the constituencies studied and all across Ghana, however, the competitive nature of intra-party elections has confined women to the specially created women organizer positions and to the women's wings of the party, which have only marginal political influence.

These wings are active during election periods when they provide refreshments at party programs, rally women voters, and engage in vote-buying attempts (Allah-Mensah, 2007). Party structures continue to be dominated by men, with men occupying the majority of seats among national executives, standing committees, and regional chairpersons. Politics in Ghana is organized along a 'masculine model' according to male norms and values (Shvedova, 2005); this may deter women who recognize how heavily the odds are tipped against them when contesting against men. Most women perceive politics as a dirty game (Eyinade, 2010), which deters their participation in all the structures from the bottom to the top of the political pyramid, as indicated in chapter 4.

In the three study constituencies, there was not a single constituency leadership position except the women organizer position occupied by women. At the polling station level, an insignificant number of women held executive positions beyond women organizer, even though elections were open for all to contest without explicit prohibitions. Women were underrepresented in executive positions in the three constituencies as well. In the NPP, of the 17 executive positions (10 elected and 7 appointed) in each constituency, there were two women in Ketu South, one in New Juaben South, and one in Adentan. In the NDC, out of the 28 executives (23 elected and five nominated) in each constituency, there were eight women in Ketu South, four in New Juaben South, and four in Adentan, reinforcing findings by Allah-Mensah (2007) that the number of women in electoral politics in Ghana is much smaller than their numerical strength in the whole population; the numbers in

the three study constituencies are consistent with representation of women across all 275 constituencies.

Women in the study constituencies indicated during interviews that they were comfortable contesting against fellow women for positions within the parties because the challenges facing the candidates were similar and they had an equal chance of winning. According to a participant interviewed in New Juaben South, ‘When they open nominations, we the women tend to automatically think of contesting for the women organizer position because those involving men are very expensive and tend to have serious political machinations that we find hard to compete on. For me, the women organizer seemed [more] possible than the others.’

8.1.4 Economic Costs of Candidate Selection Primaries

Political parties with the power to recruit candidates act as gatekeepers to Parliament. As a result, the biggest challenge posed to women in their bid to Parliament is winning at the primaries, which is the entry level to competing (Jonah, 1998). In Ghana, as indicated earlier, the easiest way for most candidates to win a seat in Parliament is to win on the ticket of one of two major parties.

Increasingly, party electoral structures are dominated by persons with money. This has somehow diminished the gender-specific factors preventing women’s participation to favor whoever has resources, regardless of gender. However, campaigns and the attendant patronage demands impose heavy economic costs of running for candidate selection

and Parliament, which deters most women from contesting (Lindberg, 2010) even though the political dynamics keep changing with political reforms.

Primaries have become highly competitive, and candidates need financial resources to be viable. Primaries begin with huge filing costs and associated costs as explained earlier in chapter 6. Although the political parties have attempted to reduce the financial cost associated with primaries for women, the costs are still significantly high. In the 2020 elections, the NPP filing fees were pegged at GHC20,000 (\$4,000) for aspirants; with a 50% rebate for women, female aspirants were still supposed to pay GHC10,000 (\$2,000).

This is expensive for ordinary female candidates and serves as a first impediment for women who are not wealthy, given the difficulty of fundraising and the increasing cost of primaries dominated by attempts at vote buying (Bauer and Darkwah, 2019). The lack of access to financial resources that are needed to campaign and contest successfully is obviously a barrier to women, as their wealth-creation opportunities are generally more constrained than those of men (Shvedova, 2005; Eyinade, 2010). Therefore, general improvement in the economic status of women in the country has the potential to enhance gender equity if women decide to seek political office (Tremblay, 2007).

8.1.5 Lack of Explicit Political Party ‘Affirmative Action’

The gatekeeping role of the NDC and NPP has emerged strongly as the biggest hinderance to equal representation in Ghana’s parliament. As

indicated earlier, the constitutional solution with the proposed 'affirmative action bill' has been unable to pass through Ghana's parliament into law. This is possibly because of the lack of a significant number of women to push the bill through and the lack of support from the male dominated parliament.

In the absence of the bill, a more pragmatic short to medium term solution will be a political solution from the political parties that will address gender representation. For the parties, it will be important to introduce a quota system to make parliament more accessible to underrepresent members of the society, especially women who continue to face political barriers.

This research demonstrates that women who get to parliament have had some financial weight not common to most women. It has increasingly been difficult for most women to contest the primaries of the major parties against highly resourceful men and as demonstrated earlier, women tend to feel comfortable contesting against fellow women as has been with the position of women organizer in the political leadership. Gender quotas have proven to be an effective tool in improving political representation by political parties. The Labour Party in the UK has since 1997 effectively implemented a gender specific quota system that has significantly improved gender representation. This presents a blueprint that can be replicated by the NPP and NDC in the absence of a constitutional provision to improve gender representation

given that their primaries tend to hinder the progression of women into Ghana's parliament.

8.2 Women in Ghanaian Politics—an Overview

Ghanaian women have had an important role throughout Ghana's history, both before and after independence. Women were active participants in the struggle for political independence with significant roles as financiers, organizers, and participants in protests and boycotts (Adamafio, 1982). The role of women in Ghanaian politics diminished in the post-Nkrumah era, as military takeovers largely relegated women to the background of politics and governance (Tsikata, 2009). Beginning in 1992, however, the role of Ghanaian women has been elevated with the appointment of women into positions hitherto reserved for men. Women have been appointed as chief justice, speaker of Parliament, and chairperson of the Electoral Commission, as well as to many top ministerial positions.⁹² Also, the Fourth Republic has seen an increasing number of women members of Parliament, and many women have contested as presidential candidates and running mates.

8.2.1 A Brief History of Women in Ghana's Parliament

In 1954, Mabel Dove won a legislative assembly election to become the first woman legislator in Ghana. However, the 1960 affirmative action quota that earmarked 10 seats for women introduced more females into

⁹² Former Chief Justice Georgina Wood, former Speaker of Parliament Joyce Bamford Addo, former Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, and current Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Ghana Jean Mensah are some of the top former and current appointed executives in Ghana.

Ghana's Parliament, as 10 women were elected unopposed into the 114-member First Republican parliament (Allah-Mensah, 2005). In the Parliament of Ghana's Second Republic in 1969, one woman won in a competitive election for a seat in the 140-member parliament; this was, however, increased to two through a by-election in 1970. In the 1979 Parliament of the Third Republic, there were five women among the 140 elected representatives (Tsikata, 2009). In the Fourth Republic, there have been some small improvements in the number of women representatives. In 1992, there were 16 women in the 200-member Parliament; this improved to 18 of the 200 members in 1996, but remained consistent at 18 of 200 in 2000. In 2004 there was an increase in parliamentary membership overall, with 25 women of 230 seats. In the 2008 elections, 20 females won seats, out of 230 total seats, a drop of five female MPs. In 2012, parliamentary membership was increased again to 275, and 31 women won seats. The numbers improved in 2016 when 37 (38)⁹³ women won, and further improved to 40 of 275 in 2020.

Table 10: History of female representation in Ghana's Parliament

Year	1954	1960	1965	1969	1979	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020
Number of females	1	10	18	2	5	16	18	19	25	20	30	38	40
Number of members	104	114	198	140	140	200	200	200	230	230	275	275	275
Percentage of women	0.9	8.7	9.1	1.4	3.5	8	9	9.5	10.8	8.6	10.9	13.8	14.5

⁹³ Thirty-eight after Lydia Alhassan won the Ayawaso by-election for the NPP.

The institutionalization of candidate selection primaries in the dominant parties opened-up political space for competition, in contrast to the previous practice of nomination. With this development, it was envisioned that more women and underrepresented social groups would be encouraged to seek parliamentary office. The gender dynamics have changed, with slow progress every four years except for 2008, when the representation of women retrogressed (see table 10 above). The number of women contesting in candidate selection primaries has been consistent in the two dominant parties, where candidate selection primaries are competitive and expensive. Few women are contesting the primaries on the ticket of the dominant parties, though the results show that women candidates who are selected in the primaries go on to win the general election at a better rate compared to men.

8.2.2 Women in Candidate Selection Primaries

The gender composition of Ghana's 2016 and 2020 parliamentary contestants shows that women are as ambitious as their male counterparts; existing data shows that many women contest as independents and on the tickets of smaller parties—where they seldom go through candidate selection primaries but have no realistic chances of winning seats. For the NPP and NDC, the primary elections are the critical part of ambition, and they have proven difficult for women, largely due to the rising cost of running, as fundraising is much more challenging for ordinary women than for men.

In the 2020 NPP candidate selection primaries, for example, only 79 (11.6%) of contestants were women out of a total of 617 aspirants across 275 constituencies. Of the women contesting the primaries, 33 (41%) won, 12 of whom were uncontested. In the NDC, 36 women won in the primaries, for a total of 13% of the total candidates. This supports the assertion that ‘women’s success in competitive political elections in Ghana is inextricably linked to political parties and as such, it is imperative to address the structural barriers in partisan politics that militates against women’s effective participation’ (Darkwah, 2012). This is also consistent with Allah-Mensah’s (2005) argument that women’s political affiliations influenced their chances of winning general elections. Her research concluded that women candidates in ruling parties had better chances than women who run with no political affiliation. With Ghana’s democratic consolidation around two parties, however, the chances of women who contest on the tickets of smaller parties have grown slimmer; elections have become straight contests between the NDC and NPP, as has been evident especially in the elections of 2016 and 2020.

In the New Juaben South constituency, Madam Beatrice Boateng had attempted the candidate selection primaries thrice. She lost in 2004 as an education administrator against Yaw Barimah, who was a cabinet minister for Manpower Development and Employment. In 2008, she contested again and won as a presiding member of the municipal assembly against Yaw Barimah, who was the minister for the Eastern Region, and she went on to win the parliamentary elections. In 2012,

however, she lost the candidate selection primaries as the incumbent when she was challenged by three male contenders.

In Ketu South, women have made four attempts at representing the constituency. In 2008 and 2012, Elizabeth Kuenyefu contested; she lost at both attempts. In 2020, Madam Dzifa Gomashie, a former deputy tourism minister, combined strong relationships with resources in a tight contest against three men and one other woman. At the end of the candidate selection primaries, Madam Dzifa Gomashie won by 30 votes after polling 585 votes to beat Foga Nukunu who polled 555 votes, Nicholas Worklatsi 302 votes, Joseph Nyavi 294 votes, and Carolyn Kudah-Pakar 109 votes. Dzifa Gomashie was a popular figure as an actress, a local queen mother in the traditional area, and former government minister who had the resources to contest a tight race.

In the Adentan constituency, four unsuccessful attempts had been made by women to represent the constituency. In 2012, Kakra VanLare and Frances Assiam contested the NDC and NPP primaries, respectively. While Kakra lost at the primaries, Frances won the NPP primaries but lost the parliamentary elections to the NDC male candidate. As indicated earlier, Freda Sarpong and Nana Oye Lithur contested and lost the primaries in 2020.

Candidate selection analysis from the study constituencies demonstrates that selectorates in the NPP and NDC do not discriminate based on gender when voting. In the study constituencies, three women had won the candidate selection primaries since 1992, and two were successful in the parliamentary elections in the two stronghold

constituencies. The outcomes also show that in stronghold constituencies, voters do not discriminate based on the gender of a candidate and equally support female candidates to win. In swing constituencies such as Adentan, the relative strength of the parties and other dynamics beyond gender determine outcomes.

However, it seems that the real challenge for equitable gender representation is at the candidate selection primaries, where fewer women contest because they need lots of money to neutralize the existing political, socioeconomic, and cultural factors. This is as a result of the seeming institutionalization of patronage politics and its expectation of transactional relationships. This especially handicaps marginalized groups who, because of factors described earlier, enter races from a position of weakness. According a selectorate interviewed in Ketu South: ‘When female candidates show interest in contesting for the seat, they must demonstrate viability by matching the men “boot-for-boot” in terms of responding to delegate and community demands for people to pay attention. Otherwise, they are dismissed on the grounds that they don’t have what it takes. While a man can talk around to show seriousness, women have to really demonstrate seriousness.’

In a similar vein, a selectorate interviewed asserted: ‘when a woman shows an interest to contest a seat and they have “an address”,⁹⁴ people tend to take them serious because we know where their resources will come from. If the aspirant is a government appointee, we immediately

⁹⁴ An address simply means women must have backing in terms of an executive position, known business, family wealth, known family name, or known spouse to demonstrate immediate recognition and viability.

take them serious because we know they will have some resources to compete.’

Because of the existing belief that women generally do not have as much money as men, women who attempt to contest primaries are measured on whether they can bring the necessary resources to bear. This is supported by a candidate who contested the NPP primaries in the Adentan constituency. According to her: ‘When I started going on my campaign rounds, the first initial comments that I encountered were largely on how I would finance my campaign. To prove that, I had to match what the men were giving on their rounds to show seriousness. After some time, when my little resources were dwindling and I wanted to keep my momentum, I decided against meeting delegates in groups at electoral areas as is practiced, but concentrate on individual visits at homes. To my surprise, they were still expecting me to drop something even though there were no cost to them. It was like I was expected to pay appearance fees.’

This shows that the expectations on women do not differ from those on male candidates, but women had the additional challenge of spending to demonstrate viability. According a campaign manager in Ketu South, ‘The expectations on Madam was the same or even more than the men. We were expecting that the delegates will be guarded in the requests and expectations, but the request for personal issues with hospital bills, marriage, outdoring, and school fees were heavy together with the community demands for boreholes and street lights among others.’

8.2.3 Women in Inter-party Parliamentary Elections

Existing data from parliamentary elections largely supports this assertion from the study constituencies. Election results from 1992 to the present in table 11 below indicate that female candidates have consistently had better success than men in parliamentary elections in the Fourth Republic, except for 2008. Where women have triumphed in the NPP or NDC primaries, they have had a better chance of getting elected than men. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, for example, of the 1,158 total contestants, there were 136 women candidates, 69 of whom came from the dominant NPP (29) and NDC (40), and 67 representing the smaller parties and independent candidates. In the outcome, 37 and later 38⁹⁵ candidates of the 136 women won (a 27% success rate) against 238 of 1,022 men who won (20.5% success rate). The success rate of women who represented the two major parties was even higher at 54%, as 38 (25 NPP, 13 NDC) of the 69 candidates in the general election won.

In the 2020 parliamentary elections, 914 parliamentary candidates contested for the 275 parliamentary seats, out of which 126 were females, fewer than the 136 in 2016. Of these, 69 were from the major parties (33 NPP, 36 NDC). In the outcome, 40 women won seats to represent their constituencies, a success rate of 32.7% (40 of 126) against 25.7% by men; among the NPP and NDC candidates, the success rate of women was 57.9% (20 NPP, 20 NDC).

⁹⁵ As a result of the Ayawaso by-election where a woman won the NPP primaries and defeated an NDC male candidate.

Table 11: Percentage of female candidates winning elections

Year	Number of candidates				Number of winners			Winning percentage		
	Female		Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	
1992	23	(5.2%)	418	(94.8%)	441	16	184	200	69%	41.7%
1996	59	(7.6%)	721	(92.4%)	780	18	182	200	31%	23.3%
2000	102	(9.3%)	986	(90.7%)	1088	19	181	200	20%	16.6%
2004	104	(10.9%)	849	(89.1%)	953	25	205	230	24%	21.5%
2008	103	(10.7%)	856	(89.3%)	969	20	210	230	19.8%	21.6%
2012	133	(10%)	1198	(90%)	1331	30	245	275	22.5%	18.4%
2016	136	(11.8%)	1022	(88.2%)	1158	38	237	275	27.9%	20.4%
2020	126	(13.8%)	788	(86.2%)	914	40	235	275	31.7%	25.7%

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana and author composition

Results from a survey of 9,541 Ghanaian citizens, 18 years and older, from all 275 constituencies, conducted in September 2020 by the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), with a respondent composition of 50.5% men and 49.5% women, showed that 76% of Ghanaians would vote for a woman parliamentary candidate, and 24% said they would not. Among the respondents who were willing to vote for a woman parliamentary candidate, 33% said they would vote for whoever had good policies regardless of gender, 13% thought women MPs showed more empathy towards constituents, 16% thought women did better as parliamentarians, 8% thought women delivered on their promises, were trustworthy, and less corrupt, and 7% would vote for gender equality. On the other hand, among those unwilling to vote for women, 20% thought

women were incompetent, 18% thought women were not firm in making decisions, 14% thought women abuse power, and 7% said women could not lobby for development projects for their constituents.

Whilst election data support the research outcomes with women winning parliamentary elections against men when they win party candidate selection primaries in both stronghold and swing constituencies, women who have stood as presidential candidates have contested on the tickets of smaller parties with no realistic chances of winning. The closest a woman came was being selected as a running mate for the NDC presidential candidate in the 2020 elections, when the party lost. Women are yet to win the flag bearer race in the NPP or NDC; the NDC had a female contestant⁹⁶ who lost in the 2011 primaries, and the NPP has yet to see a woman aspirant. Therefore, until a woman is selected to represent either the NDC or NPP as a flag bearer, whether Ghanaians will actually vote for a woman contender remains to be tested empirically.⁹⁷

This goes to show that especially in the dominant parties, the primary contest is the major challenge for women candidates, since most Ghanaian voters observably do not discriminate against women seeking seats in Parliament on the tickets of the dominant parties. It will therefore be important for the parties to encourage and support women

⁹⁶ 'Ghana's Nana Rawlings fails in NDC bid for presidency', *BBC News*, July 11, 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14106937>.

⁹⁷ In Ghana's Fourth Republic, three female candidates, Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, Akua Donkor, and Brigitte Dzogbenuku, contested the 2020 elections on the tickets of the National Democratic Party (NDP), Ghana Freedom Party (GFP), and the Progressive Peoples Party, respectively.

at the primary level if gender parity is to be realized (Jonah, 1998; Darkwa, 2012).

8.3 Women Getting into Parliament: A Background of Financial Viability

A look at the backgrounds of the 40 current female MPs in Ghana's eighth Parliament for this study showed that those who competed and won were largely: (1) former or current government appointees who won reelection or transitioned into Parliament, (2) politically connected by family history or by political activities, or (3) had financial resources because they came from a family of wealthy parents, were themselves successful in business, or had wealthy spouses to support their campaigns.

The current composition of female MPs shows that women who pursue and are successful at primaries are those with resources. Of the current female members, 21 were former government appointees who served as ministers or deputy ministers, municipal chief executives (MCEs), district chief executives (DCEs), or chief executive officers (CEOs) or deputies of government agencies; eight were from political families, including a daughter of a former president, daughters of former MPs or ministers, and spouses of former MPs; four are from known wealthy families; and seven others had a career in political party administration. These backgrounds show women who have the networks and leverage to be resourceful and to raise critical funds.

Table 12: Background of the 40 women in Ghana’s eighth Parliament

Background	Number
Government appointee (former or current)	21
Political family	8
Family wealth	4
Other (political party executives, etc.)	7
Total	40

The women who have attempted to contest in the three study constituencies have also fallen in these categories. In 2020, for example, the two women who were competitive in the primaries, Dzifa Gomashie in Ketu South and Nana Oye Lithur in Adentan, had been government ministers. Freda Sarpong, who was not competitive, did not have one of the backgrounds stated above. Thus, with the potential of women candidates intrinsically linked to their prominent roles in government, their limited number in executive positions—currently 19%—will continue to limit their potential to gain seats in Parliament.

The data shows an emerging two-way linkage between appointive and elective office because of constitutional provisions that mandate the president to appoint 50% of the ministers from Parliament. Therefore, while some but not all aspirants, regardless of gender, will seek parliamentary office as a step into executive office, other executive office holders seek parliamentary office to maintain their positions. For women,

this helps solve the resource problem since the benefits of elected or appointed office present opportunities to raise campaign financing and thus to be competitive in the candidate selection primaries.

8.4 Impact of Rising Costs on Women's Representation

Francisca Oteng-Mensah did not fit into the profile of a quintessential Ghanaian parliamentary aspirant or, even more so, a successful female aspirant. She was an unmarried 22-year-old student of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) pursuing a degree in law. In 2015, during the NPP candidate selection primaries, she picked up forms to contest in the Kwabre East primaries in the NPP stronghold of the Ashanti Region against three middle-aged men, including a three-term incumbent. With the constituency being a stronghold, the primary was effectively the general election. For a female who had never worked, with no track record of management or leadership, it would have been thought she was joking or testing the waters for a future contest. To be viable, she needed to engage in constituency cultivation by delivering patronage and clientelist goods and services. Luckily for Francisca, she was not an ordinary 22-year-old female student, but the daughter of a rich businessman and therefore could depend on daddy's wealth to be viable and daddy's name recognition for a known 'address'.

The election period was tense, and competition was fierce. It was a grueling campaign against three formidable and viable male candidates. With access to 'daddy's bank', money was not a problem for Francisca,

and she could perform all the political rituals as well as and, in some cases, better than the men. On the day of voting, all candidates gave their last speeches at the venue in confidence of winning, but in the outcome of the primaries, Francisca received an overwhelming endorsement from the delegates when she garnered 331 votes against Osei Poku's 202, incumbent Kofi Frempong's 189, and Kofi Adjei-Sefa's 33. Subsequently, Francisca won the parliamentary elections with 71,577 votes (83.08%) against an NDC male candidate, Adams Iddisah, who obtained 13,673 votes. Her results were better than the 62,048 (75.32%) obtained by her predecessor Kofi Frempong in 2012. Francisca went on to run in the 2020 elections as one of 12 unopposed female candidates and again defeated the NDC male challenger, Mohammed Umar, by 77,635 votes (69%) against the NDC candidate's 22,695 (30.42%).

Francisca's political journey has been significant in many ways. She tended to overcome most of the dominant sociocultural, economic, psychological, and political factors against women in politics. It also tends to demonstrate that women are able to win when they are competitive in the primaries by offering sufficient financial inducements within the moral and social economies explained in chapter 7.

Francisca's story is typical of the many other women who have won primaries in the dominant parties. This is further demonstrated in the cases of Mavis Nkansah Boadu and Jocelyn Tetteh. Mavis Nkansah Boadu was a 26-year-old unmarried woman who contested and won the 2016 NPP primaries in the Afigya Sekyere East District in the Ashanti

Region and the subsequent parliamentary elections with the backing of her wealthy father. Joycelyn Tetteh was a 27-year-old student and single woman who contested the North Dayi primaries in the NDC and won with the backing of her wealthy family.

These examples emphasize the earlier assertions that patronage and vote-buying attempts have become part of political strategy and that candidates, regardless of gender, that do well on delivering patronage rewards are the most viable and likely to win.

Increasingly, the rising influence of money has tended to override the traditional factors inhibiting female participation in Ghanaian politics. Politics is now not an adventure for an ordinary Ghanaian but for those who, whether men or women, have the resources to contest or can raise the funds to do so. Also, political machinations go both ways: women with the resources have demonstrated their ability to control the constituency political machinery to ward off potential male challengers by preventing them from contesting or defeating them at the primaries. In the 2020 NPP candidate selection primaries in the 169 constituencies where the party held seats, there were 12 women who contested unopposed by having the resources and attendant influence to ward off or even disqualify all potential aspirants and 10 women who won fierce contests. Notably, in the Atiwa East constituency, all four male contestants—Ernest Owiredu, Kudjoe Kafui, Eric Agyarko, and Frank Benny—who aspired to contest against a deputy minister of finance, Abena Osei-Asare, were disqualified by the regional vetting committee to

make her the sole candidate.⁹⁸ On the other hand, in the Dome Kwabenya constituency, a fierce contest between two political heavyweights, the procurement minister and deputy majority leader Adwoa Safo and Ghana's ambassador to India Mike Ocquaye Jr. saw Adwoa Safo winning by 8 votes with 496 votes against the 488 received by her male challenger.⁹⁹

These are not isolated happenings but instead reinforce the emerging politics where the financial imperatives have become increasingly pressing for all candidates whether men or women, to the point where women who best meet the financial imperatives can defeat men. Indeed, in the parliamentary politics of Ghana's Fourth Republic, no woman has won a primary contest in a stronghold and then lost the general election because constituents did not want a woman to represent them. As detailed in chapter 5, Ghanaian voters tend to vote strongly on party lines. The evidence of actual elections, then, is that voters would vote for whoever represents the dominant party in their stronghold (despite survey data in which 24% of voters express reluctance to vote for women as parliamentary candidates).

Despite the politics, however, more women candidates are disadvantaged because the emerging patronage politics can only favor a few women with the power of financial resources while disadvantaging

⁹⁸ 'NPP Primaries: 4 contesting Atiwa East MP, Abena Osei-Asare disqualified', *Kasapa FM Online*, March 7, 2020, <https://kasapafmonline.com/2020/03/npp-primaries-4-contesting-atiwa-east-mp-abena-osei-asare-disqualified>.

⁹⁹ Marian Ansah, '#NPPDecides: Adwoa Safo beats Oquaye in Dome-Kwabenya primary by 8 votes', *Citi Newsroom*, June 20, 2020, <https://citinewsroom.com/2020/06/nppdecides-adwoa-safo-beats-oquaye-in-dome-kwabenya-primary-by-8-votes>.

the many others who lack such resources. Therefore, more women still face an uphill task contesting against men even though women represent 52% of Ghana's population. This might explain why few women are contesting candidate selection primaries in the dominant parties even though they tend to have a higher ratio of winning than men, instead tending to contest as independents or on the tickets of the smaller parties with no candidate selection contests.

Given that women often (although not always or inevitably) come into political competitions from a position of weakness, the increasing cost of candidate selection primaries adds an additional burden and further tends to alienate their participation in the political process. Compounding this situation is the difficulty of fund raising by women, who face perceptions of immorality and real demands of sexual favors from potential male donors in return for donations (Bauer and Darkwah, 2020). According to a female aspirant interviewed, 'It's tricky raising funds to contest elections when you don't have a powerful position that brings the network of influential and wealthy friends and associates. This is because most people cannot make substantial donations to impact your campaign, you need a few wealthy backers to be good. Besides, being a woman and soliciting funds means availing yourself to all sorts of propositions.' This is against the backdrop of the male-dominated Ghanaian economy with few women who have the economic resources or positions to support female candidates. Even though vote-buying strategies are equally open to men and women, men are open to fundraise without the enormous challenges women face. However, for

women in executive positions, the opportunities to raise campaign resources presents themselves in the same way as they do to men.

8.5 Conclusion

Evidence from this chapter shows that the challenge of women's participation in the dominant political parties in Ghana is at the candidate selection primaries where financial considerations somewhat deemphasize existing traditional gender stereotypes. This is possibly because of Ghana's consolidating democracy and the emergence of two strong parties who have absolute control of who gets into Ghana's parliament. As a result, patronage and vote-buying attempts have become part of political strategy, and candidates, regardless of gender, that do well on delivering patronage rewards within the existing moral and social economies are the most viable and likely to win. The influence of money, however, has become prominent, and money often determines the outcome of candidate selection elections that determine parliamentary outcomes. This has implications for Ghana's consolidating democracy, if politics remains the preserve of the wealthy.

The emerging commutative linkage between appointive and elective office also has implications for Ghanaian politics more broadly. As indicated, many of the 40 current female members of Parliament occupied or occupy executive positions (50%), and others have backgrounds that provided them leverage to raise funds to be viable candidates. It will therefore be important for gender advocacy groups in the short term to intensify their campaigns to achieve improved gender

representation into appointed executive offices, and to encourage those appointed to contest elected offices. As this research shows, holding executive office provides them the leverage to raise campaign financing and the visibility to contest competitive candidate selection primaries in the dominant parties, thus offering them a possible pathway into Parliament. In the same vein, gender advocacy groups should focus more on raising the necessary campaign financing to support women who show ambition and promise to stay competitive in primary elections if gender parity is to be improved (Madsen, 2021).

In addition, the dominant political parties can play a significant role in improving gender representation in Ghana's Parliament. Over the years, the political parties, through their dominance and intra-party selection primaries, have become the gatekeepers for people aspiring to Parliament. In the past, political parties have attempted and failed in their quest to protect women candidates from rejection by party members including other women. It will therefore be important for parties, through their internal arrangements, to find acceptable ways of instituting quotas for female candidates that do not disrupt political dynamics if gender parity is to be achieved in the short term. The parties' control of Parliament coupled with the fact that Ghanaians vote strongly along party lines means that the parties hold the key: moving toward gender parity requires reserving quotas for women and fielding them as candidates in strongholds (Allah-Mensah, 2007; Jonah, 1998; Bauer and Darkwah, 2019).

As has been demonstrated by the success of these parties regarding ethnic, religious, and regional considerations during elections, the introduction of gender-focused considerations beyond the reduction of filing fees—which are still heavy for many women—can systematically improve gender representation in Parliament (Tsikata, 2009). As demonstrated in countries like Uganda and Rwanda who rank high on gender representation in Parliament and as supported by the broad literature on gender representation (Dahlerup, 2008; Matland, 1998; Allah-Mensah, 2005), a quota system—such as the All Women Shortlist (AWS)—is the least difficult affirmative action for political parties to implement because it will not require the selectorates who oppose candidate impositions to forego all the inducements candidates offer during primaries; rather, only female aspirants can offer such inducements.¹⁰⁰ For Ghana, the use of gender quotas in candidate selection primaries is the most potent means of increasing the number of women in Ghana’s Parliament—and can quickly improve gender balance in a single election cycle better than incremental reforms aimed at overcoming sociocultural, economic, and political challenges (Freidenvall, 2003). This could be fashioned along the lines of a ‘women only contest’ in the first election in stronghold constituencies when incumbents bow out of Parliament. By this, only women candidates will be qualified to contest so that the spirit of democracy is maintained.

¹⁰⁰ This is an affirmative action strategy that allows only women to contest in selected constituencies. This is practiced by the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats in the UK, and by political parties in Latin America, South Korea, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iraq.

Also, the first-past-the-post political system as practiced in Ghana is not gender friendly. Even though two-party politics largely determines who wins parliamentary seats regardless of the type of constituency, the larger number of women candidates who contest as independents and on the tickets of smaller parties could have found their way into Parliament in a proportional representation system. Therefore, long-term reforms, including proportional representation, will be important to increasing women's participation. This will, however, require constitutional reforms and amendments that have generally been slow to pass or implement, as the case of the Affirmative Action Bill, which has been pushed by women groups for the past twelve years and counting, without success, shows.

Chapter Nine

Crossing That Bridge When You Get There:

Selectorate and Voter Expectations in Primary Contests

The venue for the NDC candidate selection primary was packed with the 267 branch, ward, and constituency party executives and party elders who made up the electoral college, aspiring parliamentary candidates and their campaign teams, officials of the Electoral Commission of Ghana who were supervising the elections, traditional authorities, and accredited media houses. Outside the venue, posters of aspirants and party paraphernalia were ubiquitous; party supporters and general constituents were out in numbers to affirm support for their preferred candidates. Supporters of the various aspirants wore T-shirts embossed with their faces in confidence, and a cacophony of music augmented the exciting atmosphere. Five candidates were seeking to represent the NDC in the 2004 parliamentary election: Albert Zigah, Nypson Agbagedey, Francis Dzineku, Desky Ahedor, and Cyril Necku had picked up nomination forms, gone through successful vetting, campaigned, and were now hoping to win.

Amongst the five contestants, Nypson Agbagedey, a secondary school tutor, was considered the people's favorite, as was demonstrated by the number of people who followed his procession to the venue and the number of constituents who had converged as his supporters. Inside the venue, however, the 267 members of the electoral college were

subdued—after all, their votes are supposedly secret. After hours of protocols and final campaign messages from the aspirants, the elections were conducted in an orderly manner via a secret ballot; all members of the electoral college voted freely and fairly. Outside the venue, the drumming and dancing among the NDC supporters and constituents was loud, and the excitement escalated in anticipation of a favorable outcome for the candidate they wanted to represent them in parliament.

After the declaration of results by the Electoral Commission officials, however, the excitement amongst many of the constituents turned to gloom and anger when Albert Zigah, a wealthy transport owner and chairman of the Aflao branch of the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU),¹⁰¹ was declared the winner with 95 votes against the 86 received by Nypson Agbagedey. The election of Albert Zigah sparked a series of demonstrations by some of the defeated aspirants and some NDC supporters who accused the selectorates of selling their votes. They alleged that the winner was ‘a wrong selection’ by the selectorates and that Albert Zigah could not be effective in Parliament because of his level of education.¹⁰² According to an NDC voter who was at the venue in 2004, ‘We had warned the delegates not to vote against the wishes of us the constituents and we made our preference open and the reasons known. We believed that Nypson was the best person to represent us in

¹⁰¹ GPRTU is a powerful umbrella group of private transport owners and drivers in Ghana. Founded in 1967, it is organized across the country and is part of the Trades Union Congress of Ghana.

¹⁰² ‘Ketu South defeated NDC parliamentary aspirant goes independent’, *Modern Ghana*, September 27, 2004, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/63732/ketu-south-defeated-ndc-parliamentary-aspirant-goes-independ.html>.

Parliament but the delegates chose to represent themselves and not us by voting for their candidate. . . . [W]e felt much betrayed and we demonstrated that right after the declaration of the results.’

The selectorates were accused amidst anger and shouting from some youth that the selectorates had been induced by money to vote against the best candidate. However, according to a selectorate in that election who was interviewed, ‘Nypson failed to win because he jumped the gun by courting general voters instead of members of the electoral college who mattered in the primaries. He forgot that he needed to crawl before walking. . . . [T]he primaries are about we the delegates and not the voters.’

When asked whether he thought the outcome of their votes in the primary could affect the party’s fortunes, he asserted, ‘We know we can always cross that bridge when we get there. . . . Ketu South is an NDC stronghold, and whoever we choose will win the election regardless. We knew we could work to bring the aspirants and their supporters back in line before the election to deliver massive victory as always.’

Albert Zigah and his campaign team saw the candidate selection primary as a delegates’ election and therefore focused their resources and strategy targeting the members of the electoral college who were voting to elect a parliamentary candidate, not a member of Parliament. According to a member of Albert Zigah’s 2004 campaign team, ‘We reached out to all the members of the electoral college with our message and addressed their needs and concerns. As a result, we were confident of victory even though we knew it was a tough race. We saw it as a race to elect a

parliamentary candidate and not a member of Parliament, and thus our strategy was delegate-focused.’

The outcome of that election was equally important to Thomas Seshie, the NPP parliamentary candidate who had won the NPP primaries earlier. He and his few NPP supporters were openly jubilant after the outcome of the NDC primaries, which showed anger, threats, and protest among the NDC supporters directed at the NDC selectorates. Having contested and lost two parliamentary elections in 1996 and 2000, he hoped that the confusion within the NDC was favorable to his electoral fortunes. According to a member of the 2004 NPP campaign, ‘Our hope was to present the best alternative and quality leadership the constituents were craving for. . . . We were hoping for a “skirt and blouse” (split ticket) voting, that they will at least vote for us in the parliamentary and the NDC in the presidential since it’s their stronghold.’

The 2004 candidate selection primaries had remarkable repercussions in the parliamentary elections in Ketu South. Nypson Agbagedey subsequently contested as an independent candidate, as some NDC members had encouraged. He said at the time that his decision was in response to calls by the silent majority who ‘need a multi-talented man of vision and high sense of responsibility to redeem not only the NDC but also the area as a whole by leading them independently in the 2004 polls’.¹⁰³ As an NDC defector, however, he encouraged his supporters to

¹⁰³ ‘Ketu South defeated NDC parliamentary aspirant goes independent’. *Modern Ghana*, September 27, 2004, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/63732/ketu-south-defeated-ndc-parliamentary-aspirant-goes-independ.html>.

vote for him as their parliamentary candidate and for John Atta-Mills, the NDC's presidential candidate.

The results of the 2004 general elections in the Ketu South constituency showed that the differences in preferences between the electoral college and some of the voters were real, not only perceived. The NDC presidential candidate, John Atta-Mills, won with 65,082 votes, 92% of the total. This was an improvement over the 91.49% received by the NDC in the 2000 presidential election and consistent with historical trends, in which the NDC has always won more than 90% of votes. The parliamentary candidate, Albert Zigah, won, but with a reduced margin of 48,279 votes (68%). The elite defector, Nypson Agbagedey, gained 16,241 votes (23%), countering the historical trend in which the NDC has always received over 80% of parliamentary votes.

The picture painted earlier depicts the usual tension between selectorates and voters in the key political activity of candidate selection that is critical to winning elections. From the election results of the NDC depicted in the 2000 parliamentary elections above, the NDC could have lost the elections in a competitive constituency, but because the winning margins are so huge for the NDC in Ketu South, they could lose 23% of support and still win comfortably. The question of whether vote buying encourages selectorates to choose candidates that better represent their own interests and thus harms party prospects in the general election dominates public debates, especially in constituencies with acrimonious primaries.

This chapter establishes a comparison between what motivates selectorates to make their choices and what drives voter choices in elections in Ghana. It compares how voters choose between candidates that are presented to them by selectorates, and it attempts to answer the recurring question among political scientists of whether selectorates in a closed primary represent themselves or the interest of the constituents. The chapter reviews gaps that exist between voter expectations and what selectorates offer. After detailing a case study from Ghana to provide an empirical assessment, it concludes with opportunities for further research in understanding voter and selectorate preferences.

On the basis of in-depth interviews in three selected constituencies, historical analysis, and available qualitative data, this chapter argues that there is a fundamental difference in what selectorates and voters look for in candidates. Even though both selectorates and voters demand patronage, selectorates look for personal benefits, and voters tend to look for communal benefits or local public goods. This is due to the small number of voters in the electoral colleges, which allows them to be targeted with meaningful vote-buying appeals. In contrast, candidates face the difficulty of reaching every voter and are unable to produce the quantum of gifts needed for a general election because of the large number of voters. In addition, members in Ghana's electoral colleges do not base their electoral preferences on who voters prefer but vote for candidates that appeal to them on grounds that they see as reasonable and beneficial. This is due to the strength of patron-client relations in Ghanaian politics, which has created an expectant

culture that allows selectorates to expect or demand gifts and leads candidates to respond equally to those expectations as part of political strategy. As a result, selectorates do not always pay attention to the consequences of their choices on the general elections.

Based on these two points, this chapter concludes that the divergence between selectorates and electorates generates conflict within the parties after primaries and results in elite defections that affect party fortunes in both strongholds and swing constituencies. When selectorates present a candidate other than that whom voters expected to win, the result depends on the constituency. In a stronghold, the dominant party usually wins the general election, but the candidate voters expected to win may defect and run as an independent with a better potential of winning than the opposition party. In swing constituencies or tight races, however, the selectorates' decision may result in the opposition party or an independent candidate winning the general election.

The chapter attempts to fill gaps in existing literature on candidate motivation and the determinants of selectorate and voter choices.

9.1 Theorising Selectorate and Voter Choices

Existing literature on what voters want in relation to what selectorates in candidate selection primaries provide has generally focused on American politics because of their long experience with primaries. The overarching consensus is that primaries produce weaker candidates than other generally practiced methods of voter selection (Carey and Polga-

Hecimovich, 2006), as the effect of primaries might be to select candidates who are unappealing to voters or to damage candidates financially and socially in acrimonious and long-fought primary campaigns.

Political scientists provide varying reasons for the gap between the choices made by selectorates and what voters want in a candidate. A common reason is that selectorates are short sighted and vote for people who appeal to the extremes of the political spectrum and not necessarily candidates who appeal to general voters in the middle, especially independent and swing voters (Hirano and Snyder, 2014). Key (1947), for instance, argued that because selectorates are committed partisans, 'their selections misrepresent the center of gravity in [the] general electorate'. Also, studies by Polsby (1983), and Ranney (1968) supported the proposition that primary electorates are more extremist than the general election median and tend to offer unappealing candidates. Alternatively, Abramowitz (1989) holds the contrary view that U.S. primary voters take general election viability into consideration when choosing among candidates, even if those choices do not fully align with the interests of general voters.

These discussions of candidate selection rests heavily on the dynamics of American politics, which is based mostly on strong ideological considerations. In sub-Saharan African politics, however, voter choices are more likely to be based on ethnic or religious ties, political party affiliation, and patron-client relationships. That notwithstanding, results from primaries and general elections in Africa

tend to support these varying arguments in one way or another. In party strongholds, voters have a limited choice of candidates presented by selectorates; this is because voters vote on strong party or ethnic loyalties and will support any candidate presented by selectorates unless a favored rebel independent contests the election. In most of these cases, they are either prevented from contesting outright or they use vote-buying, rigging, and intimidation to eliminate them. Among the twelve independents that have won in Ghanaian parliamentary elections beginning in 1996, there has never been an 'independent' independent. All independent winners have been rebels from NDC or NPP strongholds who were either not allowed to contest or were not favored at the candidate selection primaries.¹⁰⁴ In swing constituencies, however, primary outcomes that converge with voter expectations introduce a 'primary bonus' (Hirano and Snyder, 2014) that ensures that the selected candidate wins the inter-party election.

For example, any candidate selected to represent the NPP in the New Juaben South constituency is, in theory, bound to win because voters will vote along party lines even if other opposing candidates share the same Akan ethnic lineage. This also plays out in the NDC stronghold of Ketu South,¹⁰⁵ for example, where the party will win regardless of who is presented to voters. The only penalty the party pays when voters do not like the candidate is a reduction in total votes through voter

¹⁰⁴ A rebel independent means a potential candidate who is favoured by the larger party but loses a primary because of machinations by party elites and vote buying.

¹⁰⁵ Ketu South is in the NDC stronghold of the Volta Region where they usually win by an average of 88% of the votes.

apathy,¹⁰⁶ which in most cases is not sufficient to cause an electoral defeat, though in extreme cases may lead the party's candidate to lose to an independent candidate that defects from the dominant party. In the Adentan constituency—a swing seat—candidate selection, party strength, and election dynamics tend to determine voter choices. For example, in years when the government is changing (2008, 2016), voters in Adentan have voted for the party coming into government, which is consistent with the desires of the general populace.

Despite the limited choices for voters in the general election, however, stronghold primary contests are keenly contested and expensive (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007) because the primary is more consequential than the main election. The primaries tend to present a pool of strong candidates, as the reward of victory is the potential to stay in Parliament for many years. A higher proportion of stronghold candidates than candidates in swing constituencies tend to have strong political recognition,¹⁰⁷ as a candidate that wins the primary election may be favored to win the general election as well.¹⁰⁸ In principle, what selectorates want in strongholds may not differ significantly from what voters want, except in acrimonious primaries that present defectors who

¹⁰⁶ This mostly results in what is known as 'skirt and blouse' voting where the presidential candidate gets many more votes than the parliamentary candidate or vice versa.

¹⁰⁷ Potential candidates try to cultivate stronghold seats by claiming a lineage or residency as stipulated by the constitution.

¹⁰⁸ In swing constituencies, because of the importance of appealing to voters, political parties tend to encourage popular candidates and not necessarily candidates most capable of performing parliamentary work. Also, because these seats switch easily, candidates do not have the luxury of tenure to gain parliamentary leadership.

have gone on to win as independents.¹⁰⁹ This may be because voters tend to have more limited choices in strongholds, because of strong party considerations, than in swing states where independent voters have the power and numbers to effect a ‘primary penalty’ (Hirano and Snyder, 2014).

9.2 Determinants of Selectorate and Voter Decisions in Ghana

Increasingly, voting decisions in candidate selection primaries and general elections are determined by patronage demands and loyalties in the absence of policy and program appeals from aspirants. As a result, candidates in constituencies that are safe for the NPP or NDC focus their campaign strategy mainly on selectorates, as winning the candidate selection primaries guarantees a passage to Parliament.

This research found that selectorates vote on loyalty and patron-client relationships that are mostly personal, but voters demanded development and patron-client relationships that are mostly communal. Even though vote buying persists in general elections, gifts cannot be provided to all voters. Moreover, monitoring clientelistic bargains is difficult because of the secrecy of ballots and the fact that all parties attempt to buy votes. As a result, the personal record of candidates or of the party the candidate represents tends to be a more credible signal for victory, especially in general elections (see Gadjanova, 2017).

¹⁰⁹ There have been twelve instances where rebels from the dominant party have gone on to win as independents (see the case study on Ghana below).

9.2.1 What Selectorates Look for Candidates

This research showed that what voters and selectorates want in an MP differed depending on the dynamics of the constituency and on issues dominating the election period. In the absence of strong ideological considerations, candidate selections, whether through a top-down nomination by party leaders or via a bottom-up primary by selected party members, are based foremost on party loyalty and secondarily by the other issues that will determine election outcomes, such as ethnicity, religion, clientelistic relationships, and subdivisions within a constituency.¹¹⁰

Table 13: Factors that determine selectorate and voter expectations based on interviews in three study constituencies

Type of Constituency	What Selectorates Want	What Voters Want
Stronghold (New Juaben South, Ketu South)	Strong patron-client relationship for consideration and support	Past record not too important for victory, but patron-client relationships important
Swing (Adentan)	Strong patron-client relationship for support and consideration	Past record is critical, as is a strong patron-client relationship for consideration and support
Incumbent contesting	Delivery on promises and how well selectorates were taken care of	Competence and past record are important, together with how well patron-client relationships were sustained
Incumbent not contesting (Ketu South)	Level of nurturing and building strong patron-client relationships for support	Viable candidacy that checks all the important boxes, and alliances
Urban (Adentan, New Juaben South)	Patron-client relationships and delivery	Past personal and party record on delivery
Rural-Urban (Ketu South)	Patron-client relationships and homogeneity of voters with constituency dynamics	Patron-client dynamics and constituency dynamics

¹¹⁰ Though most political parties profess to be either social democratic or conservative, these ideologies are not profound, and the differences between the parties are blurred because of the similarities in organization and policies.

For instance, in Ghana's pre-independence 1951 election, the CPP nominated candidates who stood by the party during the 1949 riots and during the positive action (Austin, 1964, p. 362). This approach continues in Ghana's Fourth Republic, in which the dominant parties are inclined to reward party members who demonstrate support for the party. Thus, constituency executives and government appointees—with the requisite resources to support the constituency party as part of political strategy—tend to participate in and win primary contests.

When selectorates interviewed for this research were asked what qualities they looked for in parliamentary candidates, 63% said they look for candidates able to deliver on clientelist relationships and who are accessible, generous, helpful to the political party, and interested in meeting the needs of selectorates. In contrast, 27% looked for candidates who had a good personal character and strong human relations, and 10% of selectorates preferred candidates with a strong commitment to the constituency party and personal needs (see chapter 7).

Also, depending on the dynamics in a constituency, selectorates want candidates that represent the constituency by ethnicity, religion, social status, or in some other way. For instance, in homogeneous constituencies, selectorates tend to vote for people from the primary ethnic group, as they are best placed to win the general election.

Urban migrations have introduced enclave constituencies across the country, which tends to influence candidate selection. In the NPP stronghold of the Ashanti region, for example, the Asawaase constituency in the center of the regional capital of Kumasi has always been won by a

non-Ashanti Muslim NDC candidate. This is because the constituency is dominated by Muslims and non-Ashantis, and primary candidates from both parties are usually Muslim.¹¹¹ However, because the constituency is a stronghold of the NDC, the NPP has not been able to win the seat, even when they presented a non-Ashanti Muslim candidate. Voters vote along strong party lines, and those who move from the northern parts of Ghana—where the NDC dominates—were likely NDC supporters before settling in the constituency.

In Greater Accra—which is, on the whole, a swing region—there are various NDC and NPP strongholds because of its cosmopolitan nature. There are seats that a Ga¹¹² cannot win, and seats that only a Ga can win. The Ododiodio constituency in central Accra is most likely to be won by a candidate of Ga ethnicity because that part of Accra is dominated by the Ga ethnic group; the Ayawaso North seat is more likely to be won by a Muslim because it is located in an area dominated by Muslim migrants; and the Ablekuma North seat is more likely to be won by an Akan because its dominated by Akan migrants from the Ashanti region, which is a stronghold of the NPP.

In the study constituencies, the Ketu South constituency is dominated by the Anlo Ewes, and all candidates from both parties have been from the Ewe ethnicity. In the New Juaben South constituency, only Akans have contested primaries. In the Adentan constituency, MPs have varied in ethnicity and religion, including both Christians and Muslims.

¹¹¹ The Asantes are the dominant ethnic group in Kumasi, a stronghold of the NPP.

¹¹² The Gas are the original ethnic group in Accra, but presently they are not in the majority there.

This is explained by the urban nature of the constituency where no ethnic group dominates enough to determine electoral outcomes.

Candidate selection has mostly been a difficult assignment. Among selectorates, there are usually sources of conflict due to myopic interests. As a result, primaries sometimes result in misunderstandings that lead party members to defect from their party and to instead run as independents. This sometimes happens because the party is unable to agree on the best candidate to win or because machinations by candidates and their supporters propagated discontent. These issues have been the source of conflict between the national party and local party. First, because all politics is local, the local party sometimes resists the candidates supported by the national party because those candidates did not develop local relationships. In those cases, the local selectorates may disqualify or reject them.¹¹³ Second, relationships between aspirants and local party executives, who have some power over the election process, are focused on the personalized goods those aspirants can provide.

As indicated chapter 4 earlier, the NPP and NDC have attempted to reform their candidate selection processes, usually after an electoral defeat, to ensure that the selection processes are democratic and effective in selecting viable candidates. When a party loses an election, the selection of candidates is typically cited as a key reason. This is because

¹¹³ In the 2020 NPP primaries, Philip Addison, the NPP 2012 Supreme Court lawyer, was disqualified as an aspirant in the Akropong constituency. Even though he had backing from the national party, the local party disqualified him because he had not 'nurtured' the seat.

in Ghana's Fourth Republic, a party that wins the parliamentary majority tends to win the presidential vote.¹¹⁴ The assumption is that a robust and democratic primary process that selects viable candidates correlates with both presidential and parliamentary victory. Conversely, party performance affects parliamentary outcomes, especially in swing constituencies where national policies and delivery determine support: in change years, the incumbent party sustains heavy losses in both presidential and parliamentary support in such constituencies.¹¹⁵ This presents a chicken-and-egg situation for parties to contend with.

The research also indicated that selectorates did not consult voters when they decided which aspirants to vote for. Members in the electoral colleges did not base their electoral preferences on voter preferences. Instead, they supported candidates that appealed to them, usually based on how the candidates could benefit the selectorates, without attention to the consequences of their choices on the general elections.

Selectorates represent members of the polling station, but the research demonstrated that constituents were never consulted when considering who to vote for. Even where voters made their preferences known, selectorates made their own choices. Among selectorates interviewed in the three study constituencies, 95% voted based on personal reasons without consulting polling station members; the remaining 5%, however, did consult polling area members. According to a

¹¹⁴ In 2020, there was a tie of 137 each between the NPP and NDC, with one independent who joined the NPP to give it the majority.

¹¹⁵ The NDC lost its parliamentary majority and presidency in 2000 and 2017, whilst the NPP lost its parliamentary majority and presidency in 2008.

respondent in Ketu South, 'Once they appoint you, it becomes a personal decision to vote for a candidate that appeals to you because voters tend not to know much about the candidates until they are selected.'

In general, selectorates based their choices on their personal relationships with the aspirants without recourse to the expectations of voters. This was true regardless of whether the area was a party stronghold, opposition area, or swing constituency. However, whereas the ethnic background of candidates was significant in the Ketu South and New Juaben South constituencies because of the dominance of particular ethnicities, it was insignificant in Adentan because of its cosmopolitan nature and the amalgamation of different ethnic groups there. The findings tend to support the general assumption that selectorates represent themselves and not the voters. This situation has oftentimes led to elite defections, especially in stronghold constituencies when acrimonious primary contests occur, as evidenced in the Ketu South constituency, for instance.

9.2.2 What Voters Look for in Candidates

After a primary victory, candidates align their strategies to appeal to voters across the constituency and draw in swing voters. To understand what voters want, we first need to understand the dynamics under which elections are being organized and the candidates who attempt to contest. As indicated in chapter 6, elections have moved from contests by traditional rulers and a small number of teachers who were the local

intelligentsia to sophisticated candidates with the financial resources to satisfy the patron-client demands.

As democracy consolidates, the issues that emerge during an election period tend to determine voter intentions. For instance, the 1992 elections in Ghana were dominated by strong ethnic undercurrents where the NDC was supported overwhelmingly by the ethnic Ewe group and other ethnic groups in the Northern Region of Ghana, while the NPP was supported mainly by the Akan-speaking groups of Ashanti and Akyem in the Eastern and Ashanti Regions. However, as we saw in chapter 3, the importance of ethnicity—though still prevalent—has waned, and the two dominant parties enjoy increasing support across all regions. Elections in Ghana are largely being fought on policy issues and promises of rebuilding the Ghanaian economy, fighting corruption, and improving social and developmental conditions.

Voters generally consider the quality of the candidate, including the candidate's connection to power, ability to secure constituent interest, ability to deliver personalized goods, and familiarity with common problems. Whether a candidate's demographic profile matches that of the constituency can play a role in their appeal.¹¹⁶ Voters also judge candidates by their personal characteristics such as experience, honesty, morality, compassion, competence, and leadership (Miller and Shanks, 1996). Research by Lindberg (2010) demonstrated that even though Ghanaian voters expected patronage, they also engaged in

¹¹⁶ Native, ethnic, dominant settler, religion, liked by key opinion leaders, and so on.

economic voting by evaluating the state of Ghana's economy and general government policies. The sixth round of Afrobarometer surveys on Ghana further demonstrated that the vast majority of Ghanaian voters interviewed in 2016 voted on the candidate's ability to generate jobs, build a reliable supply of electricity, and fight corruption.

Among the voters interviewed for this research, 46% indicated that they preferred candidates who were development-oriented, 37% wanted candidates who were approachable and relate well with constituents, and 17% preferred candidates who were visible in the community. General voters indicated that candidates should be connected enough to bring general development to the constituency. According to a respondent in the Adentan constituency, 'A good candidate should be able bring roads, health facilities and the needed infrastructure to the constituency.' A respondent in Ketu South said, 'I am always looking for a candidate that I can relate to. He should be ready to come back to the community and solve some problems if I approach him.'

The findings show that whilst selectorates may not consider a candidate's ability to deliver on public goods, voters often demand that candidates be able to bring development. This situation explains the conflict in acrimonious primaries when elite defectors go on to win or garner a significant number of votes. This is more significant in Ketu South, where elite defectors have gone on to reduce significantly the parliamentary votes of the dominant party. Personal qualities and the perceived ability of candidates also determine voter support. Honesty and trustworthiness in delivering on promises have been paramount because

of the role of patron-client relationships in Ghanaian politics. Voters also favor candidates whom they see as concerned and caring. Also, cultural dynamics play out in voting choices; as a result, some unmarried female candidates have been coerced by cultural perceptions to marry before running for office. In some constituencies, female candidates, married or not, are rarely elected.¹¹⁷

My research showed that 87.5% of voters refer to past candidates that brought development as examples of good candidates, whereas 12.5% thought good candidates were those that had national appeal. According to a respondent in Ketu South, 'Our former candidate went to Parliament and was appointed as cabinet minister and that brought lots of pride and some development to our community.' A respondent in Adentan indicated, 'Our MP went to Parliament and did not speak on the floor or lobby significant developments to the community. As such we want someone who can deliver if we send him to Parliament.' The findings from the research show that what selectorates want in a candidate may differ from what voters look for. Selectorates probably look for candidates who develop relationships with them and offer gifts. In contrast, voters would like candidates to deliver development projects. This presents candidates with the dilemma of first appealing to selectorates to win a primary and then appealing to voters, who judge them on a different dimension.

¹¹⁷ Mostly unmarried women attempt to marry after a primary victory to be competitive. In other constituencies, chauvinist male dominance has prevented women from contesting primaries. This is very prevalent in the Northern Region of Ghana, and the Yendi constituency is a classic case.

This is consistent with a 2017 study of two constituencies in the Upper East Region of Ghana by Elena Gadjanova. Voters in that study revealed that poor performance, complacency, lack of sympathy for the community, and lack of presence in the community were the main reasons for voting MPs out of office. Among the respondents, 24% voted on policy, 19% on competence, and 34% on poor performance and broken promises. In most of these instances, incumbents, after winning, gained executive positions in the national capital that often conflicted with their parliamentary duties. Ministers who double as MPs are mostly not able to engage easily in constituency work, especially in constituencies far from the capital. In contrast, opponents devote time to being present in the community and to building strong patron-client relationships; incumbents often are unable to overcome this obstacle.

Increasingly, ruling party performance affects the outcome of parliamentary elections. In Ghana's Fourth Republic, a change in government has also meant a change in parliamentary majority. Unpopular policies and poor delivery of a ruling government affects parliamentary outcomes as was seen in 2000, 2008, and 2016. Indeed, as indicated earlier, Ghana's general elections are gradually becoming policy-dominated despite the increasing phenomenon of vote buying. The 2016 election, for instance, was weighted heavily on the failure of the incumbent NDC's energy policies and the Free Senior High School policy that was being promised by the opposition NPP. In the 2018 research by Elena Gadjanova, 24% of respondents said they voted for a party because they preferred their policies, among other reasons.

This is in contrast to existing perceptions that African elections are ethnic censuses and economic referenda (Bratton et al., 2011). Though these perceptions exist, the growth and consolidation of Ghana's democracy has evolved a more sophisticated voter. Increasingly, voters—even with limited choices in strongholds—are asking serious questions: are the candidates like me, can they adequately represent me, do they share my values and understand my problems, do I respect them enough to vote for them, and can they deliver? Even though clientelist demands and offers are pervasive in all elections, they tend to be neutralized by the fact that all individuals and political parties make vote-buying attempts.

In all the constituencies, the research showed that first, voters want an MP who can bring development to the larger community and affect who gets what, when, and how (Barkan, 1979). Successful MPs are those that lobby for more roads, schools, electricity, and hospitals for their constituencies, which is consistent with 2013 research by Weghorst and Lindberg on Ghana that indicated voters mainly wanted their MPs to provide localized or collective goods and services, such as schools and health clinics.

Candidates' connection to political power and their ability to deliver development determines votes and explains why political appointees tend to contest and win elections. Voters demand development from their MPs and vote for or against incumbents according to whether they have fulfilled promises of bringing development and whether they have delivered personalized rewards via patron-client relationships.

This study revealed that the 2020 NPP candidate selection primary in New Juaben South was a battle between two political heavyweights. The incumbent MP was the powerful chairman of the finance committee of Ghana's Parliament. He was very competent and busy with his primary parliamentary duty of representing his constituents with dignity and the admiration of all Ghanaians. His challenger was connected to political power in his role as chief executive officer of a government agency. With a strong focus on parliamentary work, the incumbent MP's focus on the constituency diminished whilst his opponent, with his position and proximity to power, lobbied for community projects and engaged more fully with the selectorates and voters. According to a voter interviewed, 'I supported Baafi because he lobbied for development projects for the constituency and was quite visible even though he was not the sitting MP.' According to another voter, 'Asibey was a very good parliamentarian I must admit. He represented us well and dignified the constituents, but he was too focused on Parliament and forgot that we took him there. He became absent in the constituency, and we only saw him on TV.'

This development shows that especially in swing constituencies, constituents do not vote only along ethnic or religious lines but instead hold MPs accountable on delivering their promises. Even in strongholds, where constituents vote along party lines, an MP's failure to deliver leads to a drop in total votes or a loss to an independent candidate from the same socio-cultural background and party. For instance, voters in some constituencies will vote for an incumbent who wins the primary regardless of who contests from the opposing party, but those same

voters would be inclined to vote for an independent rebel from the dominant party, as will be detailed later.

In an incumbent-contested seat, the contest is centered on the incumbent's record of providing for larger community needs. An MP's record of delivery determines the success or failure of re-election attempts. A challenger's credibility in delivering patronage goods prior to the election determines whether the candidate's promises can be trusted. This situation tends to disadvantage government appointees—especially deputy ministers, who seemingly are close to power yet lack influence to lobby effectively for community development in their constituencies. Deputy ministers tend to lose their re-election bids because their constituents blame them for their lack of development, unlike opposition MPs or MPs without government appointments, who can explain the lack of development by their lack of influence in government. In the 2020 parliamentary elections, among the 28 NPP MPs who lost seats, 14 were deputy ministers, 4 were ministers of state, and 10 were just MPs.

Second, some level of ethnic voting occurs within political strongholds and in multi-ethnic constituencies where the dominant ethnic group or the best ethnically aligned candidate wins. Even in homogenous constituencies, the association of an MP with an ethnic subdivision, traditional area, or towns play an important role. In the Ketu South constituency, for instance, there are three traditional areas—Aflao, Some, and Klikor. However, MPs have tended to come from the Aflao traditional area because, first, the area has a larger population and thus more selectorates, and, second, they usually present viable candidates.

Most voters will vote for viable candidates who share similar socio-cultural characteristics with them and presumably understand their problems.

This plays out in rural constituencies where the winners of the primaries in both parties come from same ethnic background. In such cases, voters use other significant variables to determine winners. Because of urbanization, as many people in Ghana move from rural areas to cities, there has been a significant shift in ethnic composition. As a result, there has been a convergence of ethnic groups in communities previously dominated by single ethnic groups, affecting political dynamics: in some constituencies, dominant settler communities now win elections over the original indigenes.

Third, Ghanaian voters tend to display strong party identification even without strong formal party membership (Debrah, 2014; Bratton, 1999; Bhavnani and Miodownik, 2009, Frempong, 2017). Voters have converged on strong political traditions, some of which were inherited from the post-independence era, due to the lack of strong ideological differences. Generally, Ghanaian political parties profess a conservative or social democratic ideology on paper, but in reality, electoral politics is about which party can better manage the Ghanaian economy, provide jobs, develop infrastructure, and fight corruption.

In the Ketu South constituency, the acrimony of the candidate selection primaries had not been enough to toss the seat to an elite defector or the NPP, even though all the candidates the two parties presented emerged from the same ethnic group. The constituency is in

the heartland of NDC support and has consistently voted for the NDC as a party and not the individuals who contest on their ticket. One voter explained: 'When I enter the polling booth, I go to vote for the umbrella and not the person on the ballot. I grew up in this constituency and the NDC has been a party that all my family support'. The story is not that different in the New Juaben South constituency, even though they have not had elite defectors contesting as independents. Voters in the constituency vote for the NPP and the candidate they present because they stand on the party's ticket. Nevertheless, candidates with strong likeability traits tend to get more votes and higher turnouts, which impacts presidential votes. According to a voter interviewed in New Juaben South: 'I vote NPP because it's our party. It is the party my grandfather and father supported, so for me, I will always vote NPP even if the NDC gives me money.'

This tendency also took place at the regional and polling station levels. In every constituency, whether stronghold or swing, strong party support prevails at the polling stations. In New Juaben South, for example, even though the NDC loses in the constituency, there are polling stations where the NDC tend to win because of urban migration. In the 'Zongo'¹¹⁸ communities, for instance, the NDC always win by huge

¹¹⁸ Zongo settlements are parts of towns or cities that are dominated by people from other parts of West Africa and the northern parts of Ghana. The common language spoken is Hausa, and most are Muslim. These Zongos have tended to support the NDC because of their history with the Progress Party, which is a forebear of the NPP. In 1969, the government of Ghana enforced the Aliens Compliance Order by which all people without valid permits were ordered to leave Ghana within fourteen days. This very much affected people in the Zongos, and, as a result, there has always been a mistrust for the NPP because of its roots with the Progress Party. In fact, in the run-up to the 1992 elections, that history was used by the NDC to build support in those communities.

margins because the dynamics of those polling stations favor the NDC. In the swing constituency of Adentan, strong party identification prevailed at the various polling stations, with some stations won by the NDC and others won by the NPP, based on the dynamics of the community. The constituency is a cocktail of very wealthy, middle income, and poor.¹¹⁹ Polling stations in the wealthy parts are won by the NPP, and polling stations in the poorer areas dominated by squatter populations of people mostly from the Volta and Northern Regions are usually won by the NDC. The middle-income areas swing between the two parties. Support for particular political parties has also manifested at the regional level. Whilst the Ashanti and Eastern Regions have since 1992 supported the NPP, the Volta, Northern, Upper East, and Upper West have voted for the NDC. The rest of the regions have acted as swing regions that serve to alternate political power.

This is in contrast to other African countries. In Kenya, political parties are not strongly developed, and, as a result, voters align with ethnic elites. The Kikuyus align with Uhuru Kenyatta and his political alliances whilst the Luos align with Raila Odinga and his political alliances. Indeed, Raila has since the early 1990s changed political parties five times, and each time he successfully carried along the Luo community. Mwai Kibaki succeeded in creating his own democratic party

¹¹⁹ The Adentan constituency houses the most expensive estate in Ghana, the Trasacco Valley Estates, where houses cost \$2 million or more. The East Legon community, which is also part of the constituency, is an affluent part of Accra with expensive real estate. Adentan also houses government housing units, the Adenta flats, and houses that are occupied by salaried government workers. On the other hand, Adentan has a huge squatter population that is estimated at over 40,000 people.

and changed parties five times as well, with a quantifiable following among his dominant Kikuyu ethnic group (Maiyo, 2008). In Nigeria, the Hausa and others from the northern states align with Muhammadu Buhari's All Progressive Congress (APC) and his alliances whilst the southern states converge around the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and their political groupings.

The significance of political party considerations in voter choices cannot be discounted even in countries with weak political traditions. In Ghana, which has dominant political parties, the strongholds are clearly defined with the primary election basically determining who gets to Parliament. A win in a primary gives an 80% chance of representing a constituency except in acrimonious primaries that cause an elite defector to win the general election as an independent. In countries like Nigeria and Kenya, where political parties are fluid and dynamic, voters shift to support the dominant party or alliances to represent an ethnic region or geographic area.

Fourth, votes are determined on communal patron-client relationships even though offers are made to influence individual voter decisions with vote- buying attempts. The patron-client relationships are usually determined by the provision of local public goods such as boreholes, public toilets, markets, and sports developments. In the case of incumbents, the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF)¹²⁰ helps with providing these goods; challengers must use personal sources. Some

¹²⁰ DACF is a pooled fund created under section 252 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. It mandates that at least 5% of annual national revenues be set aside and shared among all districts in Ghana for decentralized development.

voters vote for candidates who provided personal support by paying for school fees, hospital bills, and so forth before the elections or by providing T-shirts, food items, and other items of benefit.

Candidates, especially incumbents, must demonstrate how well they delivered on personal and public needs and how effectively they can solve problems. According to a voter interviewed in New Juaben South, 'A good MP is one that solves community problems. The MP besides bringing development should do something personally like getting me a job so that when he seeks re-election, I am happy to campaign and vote for him.' Others need a direct material benefit before voting. According to a voter interviewed in the Adentan constituency, 'I only vote for candidates who offer me something during the campaign period; otherwise, I don't vote.'

This is against the background of research by Elena Gadjanova (2017) showing the diminished effectiveness of clientelism in three constituencies in the Upper East Region of Ghana. There material inducements were insufficient to guarantee electoral wins because candidates were unable to reach all voters with personal material inducements; all parties engage in vote buying, thus leveling the playing field; and opposition candidates engage in political strategies to encourage voters to receive gifts but vote otherwise. As a result, parties are developing new strategies to target constituencies with development and policy proposals. Gadjanova (2017) found that political parties in Ghana, for instance, targeted farmers and youth groups with specific policy proposals that were effective in winning votes.

These findings were consistent with my research in the Adentan constituency. In this swing seat, independent voters did not vote along the party lines and thus had the power to influence election outcomes. These voters tended to vote on how well the incumbent candidate had delivered public goods and how well the incumbent political party had managed the economy, created jobs, developed infrastructure, and fought corruption.

9.3 Demonstrating Selectorate and Voter Disagreements in Ghana's Fourth Republic

To show how the differences play out, I use outcomes from the democratic experiment of Ghana's Fourth Republic. I use trend analysis of independents that have gone on to win in party strongholds to demonstrate that delegates and voters do not always agree on candidate choices. The analysis begins in 2000 because that was when competitive parliamentary elections with strong independents began.¹²¹ The thesis here rests on the assumption that, even though voters in strongholds tend to vote for the candidates selectorates present, sometimes when they disagree, the candidates they selected have experienced electoral defeats by defectors. In Ghana, thirteen independent candidates from the dominant party strongholds have won since the 2000 parliamentary elections. Independent candidates have also thrown elections to a third-party candidate by splitting votes, and in some cases independent candidates have led to split-ticket voting. I use quantitative and

¹²¹ First, no independent candidate won in the 1996 parliamentary elections, and, second, the 1992 parliamentary election was boycotted by the opposition parties.

qualitative data to demonstrate the implications when voters wanted a candidate significantly different from the candidate selectorates presented.

In the 2000 general elections in Ghana, there were 63 independent candidates, four of whom won. These four were well-publicized rebels from the NDC who decided to run as independents as a result of acrimony during the candidate selection process that either prevented them from contesting a primary or provided an unfair selection process to protect an unpopular incumbent. In the Salaga North constituency, Boniface Abubakar Saddique was acrimoniously disqualified from the NDC primaries against a huge outcry by the rank and file of the party; he went on to defeat the incumbent by winning 9,620 votes against 7,799 for Hamid Braimah of the NDC. In the Akan constituency, Rashid Bawa polled 12,306 votes to beat the incumbent NDC candidate, John Gyapong, who polled 9,386 votes. In Anlo, Victor Gbeho polled 19,083 to beat the NDC candidate, Clement Sowu, who polled 4,223 votes. In Garu-Tempene, Joseph Akuobilla polled 14,282 votes to beat incumbent Dominic Azumah, who gained 12,224 votes. Also, four independents contributed to 'primary punishments' of the NDC in six swing constituencies, Asuitifi North, Techiman South, Abetifi, Akropong, Awatia, and Ashaiman.

In 2004 there were 126 independent candidates contesting, one of whom won. Joseph Labik, who won the Bunkrugu-Yunyoo seat, was a two-time MP of the NDC. He lost the party selection in an acrimonious

circumstance and beat the NDC candidate with 8,436 votes against 6,791 votes received by Namburr Berrick.

In 2008, there were 96 independent candidates across the country with four winners, all of whom were independent protestors from the NPP. In the Bosome-Freho constituency, incumbent Nana Ofori- Kuragu went independent after losing a controversial primary, later defeating the selected candidate, Kwadjo Frimpong, by 9,140 to 8,064 votes. In the Bekwai constituency, Joseph Osei Owusu won 34,700 votes to defeat the incumbent Poku Edusei, who obtained 8,560 votes after an acrimonious selection process. In Nkawkaw, Seth Baah went independent after being denied a primary victory and defeated the fourth-term-seeking incumbent, Okeyere Kwabena, with 21,507 to 15,686 votes. In Wulensi, Saani Iddi went independent after failing to secure the nomination but beat the selected candidate, Thomas Ogajah, by 10,174 votes to 8,538.

In 2012 there were 120 independent candidates with three winners who were defectors from the NDC. In Tamale North, Alhassan Dahamani went independent after he was bullied out of the NDC primaries against the long-term incumbent Abukari Sumani. He beat him 11,579 votes to 10,885. Paul Derigabaa went independent in the Jirapa constituency to beat the incumbent NDC candidate Francis Dakura 12,902 votes to 11,172. In the Akan constituency, Joseph Ofori went independent to beat John Gyapong of the NDC 9,139 votes to 8,396 after a contested primary. In 2016, no independent candidate won a seat, but independent candidates caused seats to be tossed. In the Lawra constituency, for example, an acrimonious primary contest in the NDC between Bede

Ziedeng and Abu Samsom led to Samsom contesting as an independent candidate. In the parliamentary elections, Bede Ziedeng gained 7,476 votes (34%) and Abu Samsom 5,651 (26%), tossing the seat for the first time to the NPP when Anthony Karbo won with 8,707 votes (40%). In 2020, there were 21 independent parliamentary candidates and one winner, Andrew Asiamah Amoako, who was a sitting NPP MP for the Fomena constituency but decided not to contest the NPP primaries due to treatment he deemed unfair in the run-up to the primaries. He decided to run as an independent candidate and subsequently won the Fomena parliamentary elections in December 2020 with 12,805 votes, defeating the NPP candidate, Philip Ofori-Asante, who secured 10,798 votes.

The analysis above demonstrates that selectorates in Ghana and voters sometimes disagree about candidate choices. This is more prevalent when the political party in question is in government and their candidates who disagree with the process are better able to mobilize funds to contest.

9.3.1 The Case of the Ketu South Constituency

Trend analysis from the Ketu South constituency shows that when selectorates present candidates against the expectation of voters, there is a drop in votes as independent candidates harvest a good margin of them. The constituency is a stronghold of the NDC; since 1992 the party has won almost 90% of votes in every presidential election, but competitive primaries have often led to independent candidates who

reduce the number of parliamentary votes received by the NDC, though not enough for the independent candidate to win or toss the seat.

In 1992, 1996, and 2000—when there were no primaries or independent candidates—the NDC won both the presidential and parliamentary votes by equal margins of above 90%. In 2004, however, primaries were formally organized, and after a competitive and acrimonious primary contest, Albert Zigah edged the people’s favorite Nypson Agbagedy. Nypson Agbagedy subsequently ran as an independent in the main elections and polled 23% (16,241) against Albert Zigah’s 68% (48,279). In the 2016 primaries, Fifi Kwetey polled 14,610¹²² total votes to beat Sylvanus Amedorme and Famous Kuadagah, who polled 1,375 and 637 votes respectively. In the general elections, Fifi Kwetey won with 48,723 votes (65%), lower than the usual 90% threshold because two defectors—Jim Morti, who was disqualified from the primaries, and Albert Zigah (the former MP)—together polled 28% (21,803 votes). In the 2020 elections, there was a smooth primary process, and the candidate, Madam Dzifa Gomashie, won the parliamentary election with 84,666 votes (84%).

9.3.2 The Case of New Juaben South Constituency

The NPP has always had competitive primaries in the New Juaben South constituency. However, unlike the case of Ketu South, acrimonious primaries have not led to independent candidates contesting the general elections. After every candidate selection process, the losing candidates

¹²² The number of selectorates is high because the NDC introduced the partially open primary system where every card-bearing member of the NDC could vote.

have tended to support the party in anticipation of potentially winning the next contest. This was the case in 2004 when Madam Beatrice Boateng lost to Yaw Barimah but came back to defeat him in the 2008 primaries. The same was the case for Michael Okyere-Baafi, who lost the 2016 primaries against Mark Asibey-Yeboah but came back to win the 2020 primaries. In addition, the party instituted suspensions for elite defectors, which may also influence the losing candidates to stay with the party and refine their strategies for the next primaries based on the lessons they learn from losing.

9.3.3 The Case of Adentan Constituency

Both the NDC and MPP have a history of competitive primaries in the Adentan constituency since 2004. The constituency has swung between the two parties over the years, and there have not been elite defections. In the NDC, incumbent candidates have been defeated in the primaries; in the NPP, incumbents have tended to win the primaries only to lose in the general elections.

9.4 Conclusion

These historical outcomes support my research findings that what selectorates want can differ from what voters want but that this difference will only show clearly in strongholds with acrimonious primaries in which an independent competitor from the dominant party wins as an independent candidate. Differences between selectorates and voters in swing constituencies, however, have different consequences: where the margin of victory is small, an independent candidate can swing

the seat to the opposition.¹²³ This is due to strong party considerations that influence voters to vote for independent candidates who rebel from within their party rather than to vote for the opposition, even if the candidate shares similar socio-cultural characteristics. Where voters are not presented with an independent candidate, vote margins are significantly reduced for the dominant party candidate, but that does not lead to opposition victory because of the strong party considerations.

Even though there exist vote-buying attempts, ethnic identity, religion, and political party considerations that shape voter choices in Ghana, this chapter shows that the centrality of money is important in appeasing both selectorates and general voters. Whereas in primaries selectorates vote on individual loyalty and personal patron-client relationships, voters demand community development and communal patron-client relationships.

In addition, the effects of clientelism differ across varying contexts. The selectorates are the first point of screening candidates, and they usually employ their own measures to select attractive candidates. In strongholds, the party primaries are keenly contested, and the impact of voters is marginal because whoever wins the primary wins the general election, except in extremely acrimonious circumstances when a strong independent emerges. In swing constituencies, selectorates and voters need to agree on candidate choices to ensure victory. The elections in these constituencies are keenly contested, and who wins is usually

¹²³ The NDC lost its safe Lawra constituency in 2016 because an acrimonious primary introduced an independent who split their votes and tossed the seat to the NPP candidate.

determined by how successfully selectorates picked their candidate. Here, the quality and acceptability of a candidate determines the outcome. As a result, candidate and party achievements are key determinants of victory. In the case of incumbents, their record of delivering on communal goods helps in their victory or defeat. The provision of electoral rewards is equally strong in the primaries of both strongholds and swing constituencies. In swing constituencies, political competition is intense in both the primaries and the general election (Lindberg and Morrison, 2008). As a result, clientelist rewards are used to convince selectorates and to mobilize support among independent voters.

Based on the evidence in the three study constituencies, selectorates do not consult with the voters they supposedly represent when making decisions in primaries and therefore tend to represent themselves and their interests, regardless of the level of competition and type of constituency. This situation often leads to conflict within the parties after primaries and results in elite defections that affect party fortunes. In the stronghold of Ketu South, for example, elite defections have not led to a loss, but such conflict has led to losses in other stronghold constituencies. In swing constituencies, however, elite defections are more likely to lead to party losses.

The Ghana example shows that selectorates and voters do not always agree on what they want in an MP; this disagreement, when not properly managed, leads to electoral defeats or low margins of victory. This disparity in judgment has consistently led to the general conclusion

that selectorates represent themselves and not the interest of voters whose wishes they are expected to express when electing candidates for general elections.

Conclusions

Ghana, unlike most of its compatriot countries who embraced the ‘third wave’ of democratic reforms, has relatively been consistent with its democratic advancement. It has passed the Huntington test (Huntington, 1991) and has been acclaimed widely as a consolidating democracy. Existing theories predict that democratic consolidation is accompanied by the development of democratic principles that govern quality elections (Cheeseman et al., 2016b). In the case of Ghana, however, the consolidation of democracy has been accompanied by the escalation of activities such as vote buying; this contrasts with long-established democracies such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom that saw an improvement in democratic norms, values, and principles. A plausible explanation is that, unlike in advanced democracies where democratic advancement occurred alongside economic development and its attendant reduction in poverty,¹²⁴ democracy in Ghana has not been accompanied by concomitant economic development and poverty reduction. Due to this, clientelist politics dominate, and vote markets have developed.

Vote buying has been widely studied. However, because most of these studies have been focused on general elections, little research has studied vote buying and its impacts on candidate selection elections. This thesis has been motivated by critique that emerges after every primary

¹²⁴ Ghana has relatively reduced poverty rates from 52.6% in 1991 when the Fourth Republican democracy began to 25.5% in 2020, according to World Bank figures.

that the candidates who won were victorious because they bought the elections. This thesis explored vote buying in candidate selection primaries in the Adentan, Ketu South, and New Juaben South constituencies in Ghana. It examined the impact and implications of vote buying on voters, gender parity among candidates, and the increasing costs of elections. In particular, it tested the popular belief that candidates who win primaries are those who pay more to buy votes. The thesis used the mixed methods research approach with direct personal interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data that was collected.

The study finds that, what is termed as vote buying is not a one-off transaction as perceived in the dominant literature. Almost all candidates in the study constituencies make vote-buying attempts as part of their political strategy and, as such, what is perceived as vote buying is indeed an all-pay vote-buying auction. This finding is representative of happenings across the country, as has at various instances been confirmed openly by numerous candidates.¹²⁵ This thesis, however, concludes that money is significant in contesting and winning primaries, but so are perceptions of who, when and how that money is given. Candidates cannot always win primaries by giving money, but at the same time, a candidate may not be able to win an election without giving money: in other words, spending money allows politicians entry into the

¹²⁵ '2020 NPP Primaries: I Paid GHC 5k to 600 Delegates But I Lost - Owusu Aduomi Discloses', *Peace FM Online*, <https://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/politics/politics/202201/459079.php> (accessed: January 19, 2022).

electoral game, but it does not determine its outcome. Vote buying in candidate selection primaries is only fully effective through a relationship-building strategy that requires continuous engagement over many years to build relationships of mutual reward and benefit between aspirants and selectorates. Because vote-buying impacts are diminished by the existing all-pay vote-buying auction, candidates who win tend to be those who provide gifts on the day of voting but also engage in the delivery of patronage goods and services over time within a moral and social economy, even if they pay relatively less than their opponents. These observations from the three study constituencies were consistent with election outcomes across the 275 constituencies in Ghana, thus reinforcing the relationship theory developed in this thesis— that candidates provide gifts to selectorates over time to develop expected relationships of mutual reward and benefit.

This research has also developed further arguments and conclusions that reinforce but also nuance the literature on Ghanaian politics and elections in general and vote buying in particular (Austin, 1964; Chazan, 1983; Nugent, 1995; Lindberg, 2003; Ninsin, 2006b; Ichino and Nathan, 2010; Brierley, 2012; Daddieh and Bob-Milliar, 2012). Chapter 3 argued that, first, politics in Ghana has always been dominated by political leaders in the two dominant parties who build patronage networks among voters that keep them in continuous power. Second, the two historical political traditions—the populist and conservative—have grown over time to produce a de facto two-party system in Ghana, and the dominance of the two parties has been the

holding factor for Ghana's successful Fourth Republic. The chapter concluded that the first political transition in 2000, when Jerry Rawlings and the NDC gave up political power against expectations after losing the general elections, provided the political leaders with the trust that they can regain political power after losing an election—thus reducing the stakes of elections as politicians resort to the law courts and not violence to seek redress. In addition, the 2008 transition, when the incumbent administration (NPP) handed over to the then opposition (NDC) in a close election, entrenched constitutional term limits. The winner-takes-all approach that characterizes Ghanaian politics has tended to divide Ghana along strict political lines, but those political lines are not significantly based on ethnic affiliation.

Chapter 4 argued that the recurring two-party dominance in Ghana's elections results from remnants of prior traditions that have provided easy platforms to mobilize election machineries. It concluded that even though significant evidence shows a consolidation of Ghana's democracy, the escalation of vote buying and its attendant consequences are contrary to existing theories on democratic consolidation.

Ghana's dominant political parties have evolved to use intra-party elections in their leadership and candidate selection primaries. Chapter 5 argued that even though the structuring and processes that govern these elections are seemingly democratic, the electoral machinations and vote-buying attempts that dominate them are contrary to democratic principles. The chapter concluded that the existing political arrangements have made intra-party elections very expensive because of

the excessive demands of selectorates, thus enabling political leadership control to perpetuate vote buying. This is exacerbated by the economic needs of selectorates, who often have limited financial resources.

Chapter 6 revealed that many but not all candidates contest parliamentary elections to advance their personal ambitions and not to influence policy. The excessive power of the executive arm of government and the winner-takes-all nature of Ghanaian politics mean that legislators have limited ability to engage in policymaking. The chapter concluded that, as a result of candidate motivations, the cost of primaries is increasing, alienating many vulnerable groups, especially women, from contesting candidate selection primaries in the dominant parties.

Chapter 7 asks whether candidate selection primaries are won by candidates who give more gifts on the eve or day of voting. The chapter concludes that primaries are not one-off transactions, but rather the outcome is shaped by reciprocal gestures of mutual respect because of the moral and social economies that govern these all-pay vote-buying auctions. As a result, the primaries are won by candidates who use the delivery of patronage goods and services to establish, develop, and sustain clientelist relationships over time within a moral and social economy as part of political strategy—one in which relationships are expected to translate into votes.

Continuing from chapters 6 and 7, chapter 8 advanced further arguments about factors inhibiting women's participation in electoral politics with a focus on parliamentary elections in Ghana. The chapter

argued that the political structures within the dominant political parties in Ghana tend to inhibit women's participation in intra-party elections, including parliamentary primaries. Only a few selectorates are women, and they are poorly positioned to support female candidates, even if they wanted to. The increasing cost of primaries as a result of patronage politics further inhibits women from winning candidate selection primaries, especially in the dominant NPP and NDC.

Chapter 8 concluded that the influence of money and its attendant increasing costs in parliamentary primaries have largely opened-up candidate selection primaries in Ghana. Financially well-resourced candidates, regardless of gender, have the best chances of winning. The chapter further concluded that the biggest hindrance to women's representation in Ghana's Parliament is that the dynamics of the primaries prevent ordinary women from winning those elections, and thus from progressing to inter-party elections to become MPs.

Chapter 9 argued that there is a fundamental difference in what selectorates and voters look for in candidates. Members in Ghana's electoral colleges do not base their electoral preferences on who voters prefer. Instead, they vote for candidates that appeal to them on grounds that they see as reasonable and beneficial, and do not always pay attention to the consequences of their choices on the general elections. Based on these two arguments, the chapter concluded that the divergence between selectorates and electorates generates conflict within the parties after primaries and results in elite defections that affect party fortunes, both in strongholds and in swing constituencies.

This thesis makes some key theoretical contributions to the existing literature on vote buying. The thesis unlike previous studies focuses mainly on party primaries and not general elections and as such contributes to the emerging literature on the selectorates who form the foundation upon which intra-party democracy is built, candidate motivations, the role primary contests play in gender representation, the implications of vote buying on gender representation, voter expectations in relation to what selectorates present, and why certain candidates win, which are not fully explored in the literature.

First, this study shows that primary contests have become all-pay vote-buying auctions contrary to what the existing literature terms simply as vote buying. As demonstrated in the later chapters, almost all candidates in the primary contests attempt to buy votes and as such, an all-pay auction has emerged with rules that are governed by moral and social economies.

The thesis demonstrates the complexity of vote buying and the reality that vote buying is not simply transactional, or a simple reciprocal arrangement that guarantees candidates the votes they attempt to buy. Because of the all-pay auction, vote buying has become more complicated and imbued in personal relationships and contexts. The candidate that spends the most money is not guaranteed victory unless the spending is regulated by moral and social economies. There exist a few studies on vote buying in this context and as such, this thesis contributes to the literature with enormous ethnographic material.

Second, the dominant literature on vote buying argues on its effectiveness as a campaign strategy and often ignore other consequences. This thesis demonstrates a broader social consequence of vote buying on gender representation which is not fully explored in the literature. This research demonstrates that addressing the broader sociocultural and political factors that hinder gender representation is not enough but an emerging hurdle for gender representation is winning candidate selection primaries which presents significant financial burdens because of the emerging vote buying auctions.

Third, this thesis provides an insightful and in-depth study on party primaries which is often neglected in the literature. This thesis shows different variables that determine primary outcomes. The core arguments are that the composition of the selectorates who vote are arranged by political leaders who intend to contest future elections, the size of the electoral colleges makes vote buying attractive, the demographic profile of selectorates foster the mutually beneficial and rewarding arrangements that encourage vote buying and micro details and understanding of how party primaries work in Ghana.

Finally, this thesis contributes to theory development—that candidates provide gifts to selectorates over time to develop expected relationships of mutual reward and benefit. The findings from this research were consistent with the various theoretical predictions on vote buying in the context of general elections. In addition, however, this thesis finds that candidates make vote-buying attempts to build and develop relationships with voters. This was easy during primary elections

because of the small numbers in the electoral college but difficult to execute in a general election because of the large number of voters. This has implications that the next section addresses.

Implications

The consequences of vote buying are well-reviewed in academic literature. In general, vote buying undermines the integrity, legitimacy, credibility, and sustainability of elections and discourages less well-resourced or more conscientious candidates from participating in electoral politics, which in turn impacts citizens' trust in state institutions (IDEG, 2020).

Research by Muhumuza (1997) showed that candidates who spend excessively endeavor to recover their costs through corruption. Also, according to Bratton (2008), vote buying reduces critical citizenship. It is further indicated by Gonzalez et al. (2014) that politicians who buy votes have fewer incentives to improve public service delivery or to improve the overall living standards of the poor.

Vote buying as a practice is against democracy theory and has become the Achilles' heel of democratic advancement in Ghana. It has consistently increased in scale and quantum with impudence in recent years. For Ghana's democracy to be established, vote buying must be curtailed so that selectorates vote for candidates who have the viability to engage in parliamentary work, not just those who have deep pockets. With the growing influence of vote buying in primaries, Ghana's

democracy seems to have staggered because the foundations upon which the democracy is being built are themselves undemocratic.

The research demonstrated that the cost of primaries is increasing due to the strategic influence of money in vote-buying attempts. Contrary to existing literature (Westminster Foundation, 2018), the cost of competitive primaries has risen to over \$500,000, with over 80% of that total expended on building relationships and giving gifts to secure votes on the eve or day of voting (see chapter 6). As a result, candidates with deep pockets are dominating primaries with implications for candidate selection outcomes. For example, in the New Juaben South 2020 primaries, I found that the two contesting candidates expended \$450,000 dollars and GHC 1,800,000 (US\$360,000 at the time), respectively, on the morning of voting to secure selectorates' votes. This was exclusive of money expended to build relationships over time and money spent on gifts such as blenders and microwaves that were distributed as well.

As demonstrated in chapter 8, the rising cost of primaries has opened-up primaries in the NPP and NDC and aspirants can contest, mostly without restrictions. However, these costs have also tended to automatically exclude women and other marginalized groups who have ambition but lack the requisite financial strength to contest primaries (Ballington, 2003). Only a few women who have the financial capacity have attempted to contest. As a result, 'Ghana's politics is saddled with the representational problem where women in particular are sidelined from effectively contributing to political and public processes' (IDEG, 2020). This has introduced significant disparities in parliamentary

composition with only 40 women of the 275 in Ghana's eighth Parliament (see chapter 8).

Vote buying has implications for governance, as the constitution of Ghana enjoins the president to appoint over 50% of ministers from Parliament. As a result, the quality of parliamentary candidates has a significant influence on future governments. The dominance of wealthy MPs impacts parliamentary work and government engagements, as candidates with the capacity to engage in parliamentary work are unlikely to win unless they have the necessary funds to play within the moral and social economies. The major parliamentary duties—including holding the government accountable—are derailed if incompetent individuals get to Parliament by buying votes. IDEG (2007) estimates that only about 5% of Ghana's MPs engage in actual parliamentary work.

Vote buying escalates corruption because office seekers endeavor to recoup their investments once they get into power (Ojo, 2008). This is a key explanation for why Ghana remains underdeveloped. Given that aspirants' personal wealth is a key source of campaign funds, the lack of support from the larger party has usually left candidates with personal debts that have to be paid after the election. In 2008, for example, the NDC candidate for the Evalue Gwira constituency, Peter Addy Kojo, confirmed borrowing 10,000 Ghana Cedis (US\$10,000 at the time) to contest the 2008 elections. Unfortunately, he lost and petitioned the party to help him defray the debt or risk a jail term.¹²⁶ According to CDD

¹²⁶ 'Failed NDC MP candidate cries for help to repay campaign loan or face jail', *Modern Ghana*, May 12, 2010, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/275411/failed-ndc-mp-candidate-cries-for-help-to-repay.html>.

Ghana, ‘when money becomes so intrinsically linked with politics, corruption becomes a norm rather than an aberration. Together with the financial demands on MPs, whether incurred as part of the election campaign or as part of constituency services, this creates perverse incentives for MPs to focus on individual interests over public ones.’ In 2009, Hon. P. C. Appiah Ofori, a member of Parliament, accused members on the majority side and the communications subcommittee of refusing him his share of a \$5,000 bribe that was paid to each member during debates on Vodafone’s acquisition of Ghana Telecom.¹²⁷ Also, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (2018) has concluded that, ‘If the cost of politics rises to unaffordable levels, the danger is that politics becomes the domain of the elite and wealthy, and that the motivation and incentives of MPs move from serving the public to recovering their own investment.’

Vote buying in primaries decreases voter choices because only candidates with financial resources tend to compete and win. Given the dominance of the two parties and their control of almost all seats in Ghana, primaries in their strongholds, where voters vote along party lines, have effectively determined who gets to Parliament. Regardless of their ability to represent the constituents, candidates who buy their way through the primaries win.

Because they lack membership data to expand and engage in open primaries, the dominant political parties use closed electoral colleges that

¹²⁷ ‘I was refused my \$5,000 share of the Vodafone bribe - PC Appiah Ofori’, *GhanaWeb*, January 31, 2018, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/I-was-refused-my-5-000-share-of-the-Vodafone-bribe-PC-Appiah-Ofori-622263>.

have perpetuated vote buying (chapter 6). Therefore, the parties should first engage in constituency membership drives and build databases that will serve as voter rolls for candidate selection primaries. These voter rolls should be closed at least a year prior to elections so that candidates do not attempt to compromise them by sponsoring members to register close to the elections. These rolls should be tied to membership dues so that only serious members will choose to stay on. Even though the NDC's attempt at an open primary in 2015 failed, it can provide lessons for reforms. Previous attempts by the political parties at reform and at increasing the number of selectorates delivered little success because vote-buying attempts are even made during general elections. However, expanding the selectorate base will limit the impact of vote buying significantly because not all voters can be possibly targeted, unlike in closed primaries where voters are known and can be individually reached with gifts. Besides, the quantum of gifts will be reduced and its significance on voter choices diminished.

The lack of enforcement of electoral rules by the Electoral Commission and the prosecuting agencies enables vote buying. As it is now, vote buying is an open secret, and candidates brazenly engage in it in the full glare of the law. Prosecutions would signal a fight against vote buying. Currently, the legal framework, as stipulated in article 55 of the 1992 Constitution, the Political Party Act 574 (2000), and political party directives on vote buying, have never been enforced or tested. It will be imperative for civil society groups to advocate for the application of existing to prosecute vote buyers and sellers.

The arguments and conclusions in this thesis apply in democracies where laws on vote buying do not exist or do not result in the prosecution of vote buyers and sellers. Where electoral laws are strictly enforced and culprits punished, vote buying will not prevail. In addition, for vote buying to persist, there must be economic inequalities and a lack of distinct ideological differences between political parties. Such preexisting conditions enable patronage politics with selectorates expecting gifts and candidates being willing to distribute cash and material gifts.

However, these conclusions will apply to any election, whether under an open democracy or an authoritarian single-party regime, where there is an institutionalized dominant party or parties that acts as gatekeepers to political power. These political parties should practice internal democracy with candidate selection primaries using electoral colleges that are controlled by a small number of voters. Even though there are numerous political parties in Ghana, the NDC and NPP have the best potential to win against many other parties that contest parliamentary elections. The other parties rarely engage in candidate selection primaries, and, where they do, they are never competitive enough to warrant vote buying because of their inability to win seats. In well-organized and highly centralized and structured parties like the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which has ruled Tanzania since 1977 and serves a gatekeeping role, the theories in this thesis would apply.

The arguments would not thrive, however, under proportional electoral systems as in South Africa. This is because smaller parties have potential pathways to parliament based on their strength in votes.

Therefore, the stakes in candidate selection primaries are not as extreme as in the case of the FPTP system in Ghana, which has resulted in the elimination of smaller parties from Parliament. Moreover, the arguments would not apply in democracies where political parties are fluid, without cohesion, and without the level of political stability in Ghana. Even though vote-buying attempts may exist in candidate selection primaries in those countries, political personalities tend to have more influence in who represents the party in general elections.

The conclusion from this research demonstrates an all-pay vote-buying auction that has become a political strategy, which is expensive and creates significant barriers into politics for less wealthy Ghanaians, especially women. This is not unique to Ghana but evident across politics in Africa—presenting threats to these developing democracies. However, in the absence of ideological politics, what are the possible alternatives to vote buying that can determine winners in candidate selection primaries and general elections?

Besides vote buying, there are other threats to democracy such as vote-rigging, electoral violence and intimidation, and many others that are perpetuated during elections. The obvious aim of any politician is to win the elections they are contesting and therefore key questions remain: 1. Is vote buying the reason why Ghanaian elections are less violent compared to others in the sub-region? 2. Will electoral violence, fraud, and intimidation increase if the laws are enforced on vote buying as a dominant political strategy during primaries? 3. Will addressing vote buying reduce political corruption? 4. Will addressing vote buying reduce

the interest that grassroots members have in politics and so reduce political participation and voter turnout?

These questions were not answered in this research. However, what this thesis has done is to advance an understanding that what is perceived as vote buying is in fact an all-pay vote-buying auction in which a range of factors – including the popularity and credibility of the candidates play a role—with implications for Ghana’s consolidating democracy. Therefore, there is need for further studies of inter-party democracy and party primaries, which are understudied in the literature. This will be necessary to answer some of the above stated questions and provide further understanding of the existing literature.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Research Questions

A. For Candidates:

1. What did you do to build your case as a viable candidate?
2. Did you know members of the selectorate prior to your campaign?
3. Is it common that gifts are given in campaigns? If yes, what kind of gifts?
4. Why do you think candidates give gifts?
5. Did you give gifts of any sort? If yes, to whom and what type of gift? Did you try to match up with other candidates
6. Do you think it is possible to contest in the primaries without giving gifts?
7. What do you think will happen if a candidate does not give gifts?
8. What will people think of a candidate that does not give gifts?
9. How effective was your gift giving?
10. What percentage of your campaign budget was spent on gift giving?
11. How did you execute the process? How did you select who you gave gifts to? How did you monitor the effectiveness of the strategy
12. Was vote buying/gift giving a campaign strategy or it was expected?
13. Did you attempt to match up with what other competitors were providing?
14. How important is vote buying/gift giving in the primary process?
15. What factors do you think ensured your victory or defeat? How would you rank those factors?

B. For Selectorates:

1. What qualities do you look for in a parliamentary candidate?
2. Are you open to telling me the candidate you voted for in the last primaries?
3. Did you know the candidate you voted for before they contested the primary?
4. Did all candidates provide any gifts or incentives during the campaign process?
5. What were these gifts?
6. Why are they important?
7. What is your interpretation of the gift?
8. Did the campaigns attempt to provide larger gifts, equivalent gifts, or smaller gifts compared to the gifts given by opponents?
9. Did you consult your polling station members on which candidate to vote for?
10. Was the provision of gifts at election times common and was ballot secrecy circumvented?
11. Was vote buying sufficient to guarantee support, particularly in light of candidates' performance records?
12. Was there evidence of policy competition and debate on the provision of non-particularistic goods and were those important for selectorates?
13. Did you expect a gift of any form from candidates?
14. Do you think people will vote for a candidate who does not provide a gift? Why?
15. How much do you estimate you made from the selection process?
16. If you were to rank why you voted for a candidate, what factors were most important determinants?

C. For voters/ Focus groups

1. What are the qualities of a good parliamentary candidate?
2. Please provide examples of good candidates in the past.
3. Who gets to vote in the primaries and how do they get to vote?
4. Do you think selectorates represent you or themselves when voting in the primaries?
5. Do you think selectorates do a good job identifying good candidates? Can you provide examples?
6. Do you think good candidates still have to provide gifts to be able to contest for a seat?
7. Is it possible for a bad candidate to succeed in getting nominated by giving gifts to the selectorates?
8. Can a bad candidate still go on to win in the seat after getting the party nomination?
9. Should parties organize primaries in a different way from how they are run presently?
10. How important has vote buying become in primary elections?
11. Do you think selectorates present candidates you expected to win the main election?
12. How can political parties control the growing influence of vote buying in primaries?
13. How would you rank factors that determine a candidate's victory or defeat?

Appendix 2

Invitation to participate for parliamentary aspirants

You are invited to participate in the study explained above. You have been selected to participate based on your status as a parliamentary aspirant in the 2020 candidate selection process of the NDC/NPP. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point of this study if you feel the need to.

The study requires an hour of your esteemed time based on your availability and convenience for a confidential personal interview on your experience with vote buying during the 2020 candidate selection process. For the purposes of transcription, the interview will be recorded with your permission and explicit consent.

Reward/reimbursement/expenses

The researcher will reach out to you to ensure that you do not incur any financial expenses during the interview process.

Confidentiality/anonymity and data security

Due to the sensitive nature of the research study, your participation and information will be treated in utmost confidentiality. Data for the research will be solely used for the pedagogical purpose of this study and will be securely stored in the cloud by the University of Birmingham.

Results of the study

The results of the study will culminate in a PhD thesis that will be published and two-page executive summary provided directly to interested participants.

Who is funding the study?

This academic study will be funded by the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation Scholarship.

Contact details

Ouborr Kutando (PhD Candidate)

University of Birmingham, Birmingham UK

Email: 

Phone: 

Appendix 3

Invitation to participate for selectorates

You are invited to participate in the study explained above. You have been selected to participate based on your status as a selectorate (Delegate) of the NPP/NDC. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point of this study if you feel the need to.

The study requires an hour of your esteemed time based on your availability and convenience for a confidential personal interview on your experience with vote buying during the 2020 candidate selection process. For the purposes of transcription, the interview will be recorded with your permission and explicit consent.

Reward/reimbursement/expenses

The researcher will reach out to you to ensure that you do not incur any financial expenses during the interview process.

Confidentiality/anonymity and data security

Due to the sensitive nature of the research study, your participation and information will be treated in utmost confidentiality. Data for the research will be solely used for the pedagogical purpose of this study and will be securely stored in the cloud by the University of Birmingham.

Results of the study

The results of the study will culminate in a PhD thesis that will be published and two-page executive summary provided directly to interested participants.

Who is funding the study?

This academic study will be funded by the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation Scholarship.

Contact details

Ouborr Kutando

PhD Candidate

University of Birmingham, Birmingham UK

Email 

Phone: 

Appendix 4

Invitation to participate for general voters

You are invited to participate in the study explained above. You have been selected to participate based on your status as a voter in the constituency. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any point of this study if you feel the need to.

The study requires an hour of your esteemed time based on your availability and convenience for a confidential personal interview on your experience with vote buying during the 2020 candidate selection process. For the purposes of transcription, the interview will be recorded with your permission and explicit consent.

Reward/reimbursement/expenses

The researcher will reach out to you to ensure that you do not incur any financial expenses during the interview process.

Confidentiality/anonymity and data security

Due to the sensitive nature of the research study, your participation and information will be treated in utmost confidentiality. Data for the research will be solely used for the pedagogical purpose of this study and will be securely stored in the cloud by the University of Birmingham.

Results of the study

The results of the study will culminate in a PhD thesis that will be published and two-page executive summary provided directly to interested participants.

Who is funding the study?

This academic study will be funded by the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation Scholarship.

Contact details

Ouborr Kutando

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Email:

Appendix 5

CONSENT FORM

Proposed Study

The Political-Economy of Politics in Ghana: The cost and impact of vote buying on parliamentary candidate selection primaries

Fair Processing Statement

This information is being collected as part of a research project concerned with a PhD study at the International Development Department, School of Government in the University of Birmingham.

The information which you supply and that which may be collected as part of the research project will be entered into a filing system or database and will only be accessed by authorized personnel involved in the project. The information will be retained by the University of Birmingham and will only be used for the purpose of research, and statistical and audit purposes. By supplying this information you are consenting to the University storing your information for the purposes stated above. The information will be processed by the University of Birmingham in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. No identifiable personal data will be published.

Statements of understanding/consent

- I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information leaflet for this study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions if necessary and have had these answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. If I withdraw my data will be removed from the study and will be destroyed.
- I understand that my personal data will be processed for the purposes detailed above, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Based upon the above, I agree to take part in this study.

Name, signature and date

Name of
participant.....Date.....
Signature.....

Name of researcher/ individual obtaining consent.....
Date..... Signature.....

Appendix 6

Description of the proposed study

The Political-Economy of Politics in Ghana: The cost and impact of vote buying on parliamentary candidate selection primaries

Vote buying is a feature of many elections across the world, and has been shown to be particularly prevalent in Africa.

There has been significant research looking at the various aspects of vote buying, but much less research has been done on its economic cost and impacts among selectorates in the primary elections that many parties hold to identify their preferred candidate. We therefore have very little work that has sought to test whether the highest bidder always wins in the absence of other significant factors that influence vote outcomes. This PhD thesis will attempt to fill this gap by conducting research during the 2020 parliamentary candidate selection primaries in Ghana, a country often touted as a democratic success story in Africa with twenty-seven years of uninterrupted democracy.

The research design will be an extensive case study—including a within-case comparison—that will develop a qualitative and quantitative exploratory research process to conduct in-depth interviews in Ghana, and analyse documentary sources during the 2020 parliamentary primaries across three selected constituencies as the data collection point for analysis. The research will sample candidate and voter behavior in stronghold constituencies where the primaries effectively determine main election outcomes and in swing constituencies where the main elections are competitive.

The aim is to investigate the efficacy of vote buying in closed primary settings and, holding all other significant variables constant, test whether parliamentary candidate selection primaries are won by candidates who spend more on buying votes.

Invitation to participate

You are invited to participate in the study explained above. You have been selected to participate based on your status as a parliamentary aspirant in the 2020 candidate selection process of the NDC/NPP. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw your participation at any point of this study if you feel the need to.

The study requires an hour of your esteemed time based on your availability and convenience for a confidential personal interview on your experience with vote buying during the 2020 candidate selection process. For the purposes of transcription, the interview will be recorded with your permission and explicit consent.

Reward/reimbursement/expenses

The researcher will reach out to you to ensure that you do not incur any financial expenses during the interview process.

Confidentiality/anonymity and data security

Due to the sensitive nature of the research study, your participation and information will be treated as anonymous and in utmost confidentiality. Data for the research will be solely used for the pedagogical purpose of this study and will be securely stored in cloud by the University of Birmingham.

Results of the study

The results of the study will culminate in a PhD thesis that will be published and shared directly with participants.

Who is funding the study?

This academic study will be funded by the principal researcher who is undertaking a PhD study.

Contact details

Ouborr Kutando

PhD Candidate

University of Birmingham, Birmingham UK

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Appendix 7

Focus Group Topic Guide

Focus Group Topic Guide

I. Warm Up

I will begin the focus group discussions by introducing myself and the participants also introducing themselves. We will then establish the ground rules of respecting others' views, switching phones off, and recording the interview process.

We will then establish the group dynamics and generally begin with an interesting current issue for discussion to ease up the participants before framing the main discussion on vote buying.

II. Top of Mind Associations with primaries, elections and vote buying

I will ask the participants about their broad perception and understanding of vote buying by trying to understand their mental association with candidate selection primaries, elections, and vote buying. I will make short notes on who said what and use that to follow up the discussions on elections and vote buying to link back their perceptions in the subsequent discussions.

III. In-depth look at vote buying

Based on the range of opinions on vote buying, we will engage in an in-depth discussion on the phenomenon based on what they mentioned and the prepared interview questions. Key questions will include:

1. What are the qualities of a good parliamentary candidate?
2. Please provide examples of good candidates in the past.
3. Who gets to vote in the primaries and how do they get to vote?
4. Do you think selectorates represent you or themselves when voting in the primaries?
5. Do you think selectorates do a good job identifying good candidates? Can you provide examples?
6. Do you think good candidates still have to provide gifts to be able to contest for a seat?
7. Is it possible for a bad candidate to succeed in getting nominated by giving gifts to the selectorates?
8. Can a bad candidate still go on to win in the seat after getting the party nomination?
9. Should parties organize primaries in a different way from how they are run presently?
10. How important has vote buying become in primary elections?

11. Do you think selectorates present candidates you expected to win the main election?
12. How can political parties control the growing influence of vote buying in primaries?
13. How would you rank factors that determine a candidate's victory or defeat?

The discussions will seek to understand participants' concerns about vote buying, their level of involvement, and possible solutions they will propose.

V. Conclusion

We will conclude by reiterating the points made and summarizing the key discussions to wrap up and give them the chance to clarify any misunderstandings and misconceptions during the discussions.