

TRANSITION TYPES AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: GHANA, GUINEA,
AND THE GAMBIA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

By

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A Thesis submitted in a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in Political Science to the Office of Graduate and Extended studies of East Stroudsburg
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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

Multiple factors including historical heritage, literacy, socio-economic, cultural, and religious reason have been cited by scholars as the main reason why democratic consolidation is finding it hard to find a permanent home in West Africa, and Africa in general. Unlike previous studies on the subject, this study has look to the type of transition as the reason for the poor performance of democracy in West Africa. The study employs a comparative case study approach to evaluate the effectiveness of Bottom up and top down transitions in West Africa focusing on the first two sub-Saharan African independent countries, Ghana, Guinea, and one of West Africa's most cosmopolitan country, the Gambia. The findings show that despite the slow process, and tedious and compromising nature of a top down transition to democracy, it is more effective in the consolidation of democracy. The author argues that the effectiveness of a top down transition is due to the fact that this type of transition is a planned one, and negotiation on the nature and scope of the transition involves both the outgoing regime and the entering government, handover of power is a gradual process not a sweeping move, both parties have total control over their followers, and the outgoing authoritarian regime members are giving amnesty if necessary.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the praise owner of praise, the Lord of the Worlds who taught man by the pen and taught man what he knew not, such is God. I am grateful to my parents for giving me life and raising me to be the person I am today.

My sincere appreciation goes to my Wife, Aisha Jalloh for her love, and support during this journey.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Every society at one point of its history has had to deal with authoritarian leaders who try to be as less accountable to their people as possible, or dictators who attempt to violate the rules on succession or rig the system to accede power in an unlawful manner. Some societies rose up against such leaders successfully others failed to unite due to either manipulation, or the lack of figure heads who could organize and lead such a much-needed revolution. The failure of these societies has led to a perennial sectoral violence, and conflicts, where dictators succeeded in controlling the society through the concept of *diviser pour régner* (divide to rule). Such societies have had to endure life under such leaders for generations, until the first, second and third waves of democratization across the world which initiated the political and economic liberalization in the world.

Until the start of what Samuel P. Huntington has called the "third wave" of democratization within the international system in the late 1980s, many observers of African politics thought that authoritarianism, one-party states, and military rule had come to stay in Africa. They argued that the continent lacked the “structural prerequisites for democratic change associated with democracy elsewhere” Brown & Kaiser (2007, p. 26). Given the lack of such ingredients usually used for measuring democracy in the continent such as strong working class, high literacy level, active civil societies, one would be tempted to agree with the pessimists’ arguments that democratization is not expected to take place in Africa, because the impediments to democratization in the continent is more serious than anywhere else.

However, in the late 1980s, the movement towards a democratic change in Africa described by Samuel E. Quinoo (2008) as a “watershed in African political history” (Quainoo, 2008, p.6) was remarkably terrific. This was a result of the convergence of a number of trends both within and outside Africa. This period marks the end of the cold war, the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, and in the former Soviet Union, which “discredited the existence of single-party political systems ” throughout the world, Schraeder (2020, p.45).

The democratization process in Africa- often referred to as Africa's "springtime" or "second independence” led to the fall of most authoritarian regimes. Those who did not fall, opted for an immediate opening of the political process as was the case in both Ghana, and Guinea in the early 1990s. Military rulers in these countries introduced multiparty elections, and thus, in response to the high demand for democracy, they

switched to a certain form of what Fred Coccozzeli (2013) termed as “competitive authoritarianism” (Coccozzeli, 2013, p.21). In a competitive authoritarian regime, democratic norms are not strictly observed. Regular elections are held, but rigged, and there is a confiscation of state resources in favor of the regime, oppositions are harassed, and human rights are violated.

Despite this dynamic, and more than two decades since the beginning of the democratization wave in Africa, Mauritius is the only African country today that is classified as a full democracy scoring 8.22 on the democracy index (EIU, 2019). While, many if not all east European countries and a handful of Latin American countries which were in the same standing as Africa during this period have democratized. This study focuses mainly on West Africa; thus, our analysis is restricted only on West Africa.

Today multiparty elections are held in all West African countries, but no one West African state is a full democracy. Of the 15 ECOWAS¹ member countries (see chapter three for more on ECOWAS), only Cape Verde, and Ghana are classified as flawed democracy according to the 2019 Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) report, scoring 7.78 and 6.63 respectively. Senegal, Liberia, Benin, Mali, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Nigeria, Côte d’Ivoire, and Burkina Faso; are all classified as Hybrid regime. Hybrid regimes are those regimes that combine democratic traits such as frequent and direct elections with some features of autocratic characters such as political repression, and election rigging. The bottom group is Guinea, Togo, Niger, and Guinea Bissau who

¹ The Economic Community of West African States.

are under authoritarian rule (EIU report, 2019), all of these three authoritarian regimes are headed by a regime that first came to power through a democratic process.

This study seeks to investigate why democratic consolidation is finding it hard to take place in West Africa. Scholars have identified many reasons for this including literacy, socio-economic development, women participations, cultural and religious factors, and historical reasons, but in this study, we are looking at the type of transition as a reason why democracy has or has not been consolidated in this region. Specifically, we are going to analyze two types of transition, Top-down and Bottom up, using Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia as our case studies to see if indeed transition type is a reason for the non-consolidation of democracy in West Africa.

Our case study countries are similar in many ways and are a good representation of West Africa. Although Guinea is a former French colony, it is surrounded with two English speaking countries (Sierra Leone and Liberia), one Portuguese speaking (Guinea Bissau), and three other French speaking (Mali, Senegal, and Cote d'Ivoire) countries. Guinea is also the first French former colony of sub-Saharan Africa to secure its independence in September 1958 when it voted for an immediate independence from France, overwhelmingly rejecting a proposal by France' Prime Minister Charles de Gaulle for a constitution that provides for partnership in a French dominated community. Throughout the French empire, Guinea was the only territory to vote "NO" to the proposal (Schmidt, 2005, p. 34). Further, Guinea is arguably more integrated with its English-speaking neighbors than the French speaking ones and is a member of the Mano River Union (all other members are English speaking) and a significant number of Guineans speak English. These factors make Guinea a good sample for West Africa.

The Gambia is a tiny former colony of Britain located literally within Senegal. The Gambia has no border (except the Atlantic Ocean) with any country except Senegal. Although, English is the official language of the Gambia, it has the same ethnicities as Guinea and Senegal as well as many other West African countries who speak the same local dialects. Further, *Wolof*, the language widely spoken in Senegal is the most spoken language in the Gambia. Ghana on the other hand is a former colony of Britain, but like Guinea, it is surrounded with countries that speak a different language. To the north Burkina Faso, to the West Côte d'Ivoire, and to the east Togo, all of whom are former French colonies. Many ethnic groups in Ghana such as the Ashanti and Hausas are found in other French speaking countries of West Africa, such as Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger.

Furthermore, the three countries share a similar history: They are all Pan Africanists nations that supported the movement that led to the independence of Africa. They all secured their independence peacefully; their first heads of states were all civilians and democratically elected. Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sekou Touré, and Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara were the first presidents of Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia respectively. Nkrumah, and Jawara were ousted by a military coup d'état while Touré died while still in office. All three countries were ruled with an iron hand by military dictators following the end of their first regimes until the introduction of multiparty elections in these countries, in the early 1990s.

This study shall look into the events that led to the independence of these three countries, the types and nature of transition that took place after the first government of each country, the transitions that led to the current system, and the state of democracy in these three countries. To this end, we shall examine the measures of democracy using

data obtained from international institutions including the EIU, freedom house, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) to determine the impact of the type of transition on the consolidation of democracy in these three countries. First, the rest of this chapter shall define and analyze key concepts used in this study including Democracy, Transition, Top-down and bottom up transition, consolidation of democracy. This chapter shall also continue with statement of the problem, research question, purpose and significance of the study, and Research method.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Democracy.

The term “democracy” has attracted the attention of many scholars for generations, and its ambiguity in meaning makes it difficult to have a unified, standard defining, and to effectively implement policy. The political system has not only been used to bring peace, stability, and a sustained economic development internally, but superpowers have used it as a protective measure by promoting it in hostile countries either by imposing it or making it a prerequisite for foreign assistance to undemocratic needy countries using the ideas brought forth by the “democratic Peace Theory. Since the days of Woodrow Wilson, democracy promotion around the world has been the priority of different administrations of the United States governments. During a 2005 commemoration speech commemorating the 75th anniversary of Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, the then secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice described this policy as “the only means of securing peace in a world where tyranny abroad threatens peace at home.” She related the US policy towards Iraq to a wider context of spreading democracy around the world.

Many skeptics question this approach, but all depends on what we mean by “democracy.” Democracy can either allow for the establishment of institutional structure that “foster cohesion” or it could cause instability of society during transition by “dissolving consensus and fueling differences” Hay (2005. p.134). Imposing democracy in a diverse society prior to the maturity of democratic institutions has mostly resulted in total chaos during a bottom up transition, and even if the transition succeeds peacefully, it establishes an “unchecked majority rule undermining minority values”. This has been a major problem with imposing democracy in both Iraq and Libya, and many sub Saharan African countries who decided to go the path of democracy prematurely. Fareed Zakaria (2003) indicates that illiberal democracy which combines features of authoritarianism with regular elections differ greatly from liberal democracy. He asserts that unchecked majority rule often brings authoritarianism and disorder and suggests that excessive deference to popular sentiment can undermine the balance in many societies as reported by Hay (2005, p. 131).

William Anthony Hay suggests that to better define democracy, one needs to identify the essential attributes of democracy and distinguish them from attributes associated with other systems. According to him, liberal democracy means a “representative government under law, sustained by a political culture that accepts open disagreement and demands accountability” (Hay, 2005, p. 135). This definition puts more emphasis on institutions in making it work. This is vital because, in the developing world, specifically Africa, establishing viable institutions have always been the major obstacle to the consolidation of democracy. Africa has long been known for its “strong men” but not institutions. Institutional failures have also been noted in the medieval and early modern

period in Europe. Citizens' view of institutions shapes the political culture of any society. The definition above also mentions "accept open disagreement and demand accountability" this is essentially public opinion. In a society where free speech is tolerated, and there is a peaceful settlement of disputes enforced by institutions could be a good incubating ground for democracy.

Liberal democracy can only be sustained in a society where public opinion matters, which is mobilized by political parties and thus, forcing the ruling class to be more accountable and responsive to the demand of the people even for a political alternance. "It combines institutions with a reinforcing political culture that together guarantee the rule of law while ensuring that policy follows the considered preferences of public sentiment" (Hay, 2005, p. 136). The failure to have all these factors in place, leads to anarchy, or authoritarianism. Other attributes of liberal democracy are: Limit of majority rules and executive power, transparency in both political process and public business. This is the only way citizens can rule themselves which is the simplest definition of liberal democracy.

Democratic Transition.

A transition can be seen as an interval between two regimes. Scholars have identified multiple motives or causes of a transition, but the most obvious one is when the old regime's rules have become untenable and thus lost control of society. The pattern, forms, and outcomes of transitions such as from a totalitarian and authoritarian regime to democratic system, has been of great interest to political scientists in the last half a century. Although, the ideal transition is aimed at moving from a bad to a better system

of governance, if the necessary ingredients are not in place, a bad regime could transition to a worst regime such as from an authoritarian to a totalitarian regime. The bottom line is, the various transitions do not always give birth to a consolidated democracy. The main form of government change in Africa prior to the “third wave” of democratization was “military coups d’état, civil wars or at best political arrangement” (Quainoo, 2008, p. 1).

To better understand the process of transition, one needs to have knowledge of the challenged regime. Traditionally, transitions take place from either a monarch, totalitarian and or authoritarian regime and move towards democratization. Among these three systems, Monarchies are the worst managers of a transition. As a monarch tries to modernize, and the move is resisted from within the royal circle, this could result in the collapse of the system. Similarly, when totalitarian regimes lose its ability to control its society, and “manage their economic system” it would inevitably collapse (Encyclopedia.com). Juan Linz (1996) indicates that authoritarian regimes are “better placed when entering into a transition” because they already have maintained a “limited pluralism.” This limited pluralism makes a smoother transition and is more likely to produce a democracy outcome.

From a personal perspective, I think transition and consolidation of democracy is much easier in a substantially homogenous societies like Japan, and Europe. Highly diverse, fragmented ethnic, communitarian, and religious identities have for long constituted the greatest impediment not only to the transition but for the new regime. This is a familiar face in Africa, and if the elites of these groups are unable to reach consensus, the country is likely to remain in a constant transition.

Transitions have many similarities, but according to Samuel E. Quainoo (2008) they could be distinguished based on “their pace” and “leadership styles.” He indicates that transitions in Africa have “two broad patterns, one planned and controlled “ and the other “forced by events without prior” planning (Quainoo, 2008, p.49). Thus, these two types of transition will be classified into two broad categories: top-down and bottom-up transition which are the main focus of this study.

Top-Down Transition.

A top-down transition originates from when an authoritarian regime is under tremendous pressure due to high demand for reforms. The regime then introduces liberalizing reforms which it believes is necessary for its survival, and this ultimately leads to a transition. Quainoo (2008) describes the process of this type of transition as a “degrees of consensus among elites of the pro-democracy movement and the authoritarian regime.” (Quainoo, 2008, p. 50). In this process, an exit window for the authoritarian regime is negotiated between representatives of the pro-democracy movement and the outgoing authoritarian regime. The smoothness of this process depends on the willingness and ability of both parties to accept compromise, and the level of control they have over their sympathizers. He further states that a top-down transition takes place mostly under corporatist authoritarian regimes where recognized institutions representing different sectors of the social fabric exist. Negotiation is mostly smooth in this process because the outgoing authoritarian regime understands that change is unavoidable, and the pro-democracy groups also recognize the ability of the regime to

hang on to power, either by using state resources to rally support and turn things around. Thus , both sides are willing to compromise.

Top-down transition is less chaotic. However, democratic gains are gradual. It is important to note that although, power will be handed over to a new regime, in some instances part of the compromises involves granting amnesty to the old regime, and members will not be banned from politics in the future provided they follow due process. Ghana is a typical example as we will see when we discuss transition in Ghana in future chapters.

Bottom-Up Transition.

When a society is subjected to a long period of dictatorship coupled with economic hardship, and insecurity, social groups develop grassroots movements for change. These movements spread and developed into mass protests over time across most parts of the society, and ultimately force the regime to relinquish power. A bottom-up transition occurs “when authoritarian regimes lose control and are swept out of office by a spontaneous event or series of them, not expected by the incumbent” (Quainoo, 2008, p.52). Transition in this case is not planned, and negotiation is very limited because at the initial stage, these groups do not have recognized elite representatives.

Lack of leadership, and organized plans makes it hard for the regime to negotiate with these groups. The regime will attempt to resist the movement by suppressing protesters, and embarking on sensibilization using nationalist ideas, and “auxiliary institutions are set up by the regime for inculcating consciousness and pride” (Quainoo, 2008, p. 53).

In a bottom up transition, there is less time for negotiation, and is highly chaotic most especially at its initial stage. While in a top-down transition, democratic gains are slow, but there is less chaos, and is less divisive as both parties accept compromise. Neither types of transition guarantee a democratic consolidation.

Democratic Consolidation.

As we have previously mentioned in this paper, the “third wave’ of democratization transitioned many African countries from authoritarian to a form of democracy. This was not an easy task as the price involved the loss of lives and destruction of property. Sustaining a democracy is as often difficult as transitioning to a democracy. Consolidation is often measured in the endurance ability and longevity of the democracy.

The most prominent definitions of consolidation are concerned with the endurance of the regime. This entails “reducing the probability of its breakdown to the point where they can feel reasonably confident that democracy will persist” (Sebudubudu, 2017). Some have seen it as “when a government elected in a free and fair electoral contest is defeated at a subsequent election and accepts the result (Beethham, 1994, p. 46) This definition emphasizes the peaceful alternation of power. Others believe a 20-year period in which regular elections and a peaceful transition has taken place is a sign of consolidation. Quainoo (2008) indicates that three consecutive free and fair elections accepted by both parties is sufficient for a democracy to be called consolidated. Similarly, Larry Diamond indicates that consolidation is:

the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine. Political competitors must come to regard democracy (and the laws, procedures, and institutions it specifies) as the “only game in town,” the only viable framework for governing the society and advancing their own interests. At the mass level, there must be a broad normative and behavioral consensus—one that cuts across, ethnic, nationality, and other cleavages—on the legitimacy of the constitutional system, however poor or unsatisfying its performance may be at any point in time (Diamond, 1999, p.134).

Furthermore, democratic consolidation traditionally meant extending the life expectancy of a democracy “beyond the short term.” Making it safe from authoritarian repression. However, according to Emmanuel (2014), democratic consolidation has come to include “such divergence as popular legitimacy, the diffusion of democratic values, civilian supremacy over the military, the elimination of authoritarian enclaves, judicial reform, and the alleviation of poverty and economic stabilization” (Emmanuel, 2014, p.56). This perspective is not contented with just a regular holding of election, but it also includes powerful democratic institutions, separation of powers in government, and the immunity of the system from military takeover, and the improvement of the lives of citizens via economic stabilization. In the worlds of Larry Diamond, democratic consolidation involves “behavioral and institutional changes that normalize democratic politics and narrow its uncertainty”. (Emmanuel, 2014, p.37).

Statement of the Problem and Hypothesis

Societies seek democracy because it is proven to be the best system of government. Many scholarly studies have shown that democratic countries have citizens with higher literacy levels, higher socio-economic development and are also the most peaceful countries. Samuel E. Quainoo (2008) could not agree more “all economically developed countries [are] enjoying political systems with high degrees of democracy” (Quainoo, 2008, p.29). By the early 1990s a vast majority of West African states had adopted a certain form of democracy. Multiparty and regular elections are held in almost the entire sub-region.

The goal of a transition is to move from a relatively bad system (authoritarian) to a better system (democracy). However, despite the large number of transitions West African has witnessed the past three decades, only Cape Verde, and Ghana are classified as flawed democracy according to the 2019 EIU report, scoring 7.78 and 6.63 respectively. Flawed democracy is not the ideal place to be in terms of democracy, but it is the closest to a full democracy. The question then is why democracy is finding it hard to penetrate in West Africa? This study hypothesizes that, because both Cape Verde and Ghana went through a top down transition, and are the only two countries with higher level of democracy in the region, and given the fact that majority of countries in the region where democracy is not consolidated went through a bottom up transition, then, the author hypothesizes that a top down democratic transition is more effective than a bottom up in the consolidation of democracy.

Research Questions

What motivates a transition?

Why have top- down transitions resulted in democratic gains in West Africa?

Why bottom-up transitions have failed to result in a democratic consolidation in West Africa.

These questions shall be the focus of investigation in this this study.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of a bottom up and top down democratic transition in West Africa. The study focuses on three countries two of which underwent a bottom up transition, and one went through a top-down transition. The reason for choosing three (1 and 2) instead of four countries (2 and 2) is due to my familiarity of these three countries, and the availability of data. Further, the limited resources at my disposal for embarking on a larger and more intense investigation was also a major constraint for not studying four countries (2 and 2).

The author hypothesizes that a top-down transition is more effective in the consolidation of democracy. Whether this hypothesis is proven or not at the end of the investigation, this study could contribute in this subject in the sense that it can serve as guide for advocates of political alternates and civil societies. It could also serve as a reference for foreign policy players of world powers' such as the United States in their quest to spreading democracy around the world whether through force such as the invasion of Iraq or supports for internal uprisings as was the case during the Arab spring.

The study is significant because it lays-out the impact of each type of transition on democratic consolidation, and these allows democracy advocates to understand the nature of transitions, and thus, predict what type of transition results in what? It gives advocates the ability to prioritize, guide, and lay out an effective framework for a smooth transition. We have seen how the bottom-up movements of the Arab Spring have played out. Of the six Arab nations where the protest took place, Tunisia is the only country for which hope for a successful democratic transition and consolidation is still alive. We have seen what

happened in Egypt, where a bottom up uprising resulted in a short-lived democratic government, and a reversal to a worst military authoritarian regime than the one ousted by the popular movements. Libya is also another lesson still fresh in memories, a stable country with a vibrant economy with a high standard of living has transitioned into a stateless country ruled by two different governments. Given the highlighted importance of this study above, it is safe to say that the significance of this study cannot be overemphasized.

Research Design and Method

This study employs a qualitative multiple case study approach to evaluate and compare the impact of bottom up and top down democratic transition on the consolidation of democracy in West Africa. A case study can be seen as an in-depth study of an individual unit which is approached as an example of some large phenomenon. Yin (2003) indicates that a case study design is best used when the study seeks to answer “how” and “why” questions, the behavior of the cases involved in the study cannot be manipulated, or the researcher is seeking to cover contextual conditions because of their importance to the phenomenon under study. This study uses existing data drawn from international institutions including the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and Freedom House to measure the viability and maturity of democracy in West Africa; following a certain form of transition. We shall focus on our cases: Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia. Measure of democracy involves evaluating the performance of democratic institutions and the fairness of elections. The study shall specifically examine the Electoral process and pluralism, functioning of government, political participation, political culture, civil liberties, and Regime type in these countries.

The study seeks to answer questions such as: what motivates a transition? Why does a top down transition have a higher chance of resulting in a democracy consolidation? Why are bottom up transitions being chaotic and rarely results in a democracy outcome?

A thorough examination and cross analysis of the history and kind of transitions that took place in Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia since their independence shall be carried out to answer the above questions which stem from the research questions.

Research Objectives.

The main objectives of this study is to evaluate the two types of democratic transition: Bottom up and top down transition, to determine whether a top down democratic transition is more effective than a bottom up in the consolidation of democracy in West Africa, and to explain why a top down transition is more effective in democratic consolidation. The study also aims to highlight the organizational structure of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The study hopes to achieve the following:

- a) Establish that a top-down democratic transition is more effective and should be encouraged in West Africa.
- b) The consequence of a bottom up transition in societies that have been subjected to a long period of dictatorship is immense and is much likely to result in an authoritarian rule.
- c) Take a thorough examination of transitions in Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia to determine whether a democratic rule is achieved.

By achieving the above objectives, we would be in a better position to explain why democracy consolidation is been difficult to achieve in the region.

Organization of Work

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic, defines and thoroughly analyses the terms used and certain concepts of democratization from a historical perspective. Chapter two reviews previous literature relating to the subject and provide an in-depth critiques and analysis of these literatures. Chapter three provides an overview of the political, economic, and social landscape of West Africa. It also highlights the historical background of regional organization of West Africa. Chapter four attempts to explain what makes a country a democracy by defining and analyzing the democratic indicators used to determine the level of democracy a country has as defined by Freedom House, Polity IV, Vanhanen, and Przeworski et al. Precisely the chapter looks into the:

- Electoral process and pluralism
- Functioning of government
- Political participation
- Political culture
- Civil liberty and Regime type.

Chapter five shall present the case studies: Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia. The chapter looked into the history of transitions in these countries from independent to date, including electoral participation. This is followed by first presenting the state of democracy around the work and measuring democracy in our case studies using the indicators highlighted above. The final chapter (six) shall present my findings and provides for discussion, acknowledged limitations of the study and provide conclusions based on the findings. The last part of this thesis is the Bibliography.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literatures on democracy and democratic transitions in recent years have focus on subjects such as democratization, and challenges to democratic consolidation. For example, military takeover, social unrest, authoritarianism, prolonged human right violations, poverty, rigged elections, suppressions of political and civil groups, economic development and democracy (see Weilandt, 2018, Patterson, 2015, Emmanuel, 2014, Cocozzeli, 2013, Matti, 2010, Quainoo, 2008; Brown & Kaiser,2007). A handful of scholars agree with the notion that development is a prerequisite to democratic consolidation. Quainoo (2008) for instant argues that data on the relationship between development and democracy shows that” all economically developed countries enjoying political systems with high degrees of democracy” this supports the fact that all G-7 (The seven most industrialized countries) also are some of the countries with the highest degree of democracy, and likewise the less developed countries score less on the democratic index. Most of these countries are found in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Democracy endures only in societies with high functioning democratic institutions, and the credibility of these institutions are boosted when there is a certain level of economic development. Thus, economic development goes hand in hand with democracy. Weilandt (2018) warned that Tunisia's "comparatively favorable institutional evolution" at the expense of prioritizing economic improvement is a dangerous threat to the country's transition to democracy following the Arab spring, and this has also "led to a dangerous complacency in the West (Weilandt 2018, p.134). She indicates that many important reforms have been implemented, but to Ordinary Tunisians, democracy has not lived up to expectation, and this is a real threat to the country's transition. In fact, the North African country has witnessed a number of riots and street protests recently, including during the January anniversary of the toppling of former authoritarian leader, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Most of these protests were triggered by economic hardship. For instance, when the Tunisian government announced in January as part of its austerity measure that it is seeking to obtain a \$2.9 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a riot broke, which caused much disruptions in the country. It is worth reminding that Tunisia is the only Arab spring country for which hope for a successful democratic transition and consolidation is still alive. The lack of economic improvement discredits institutions, and this can only lead to social unrest. Institutions only get favorable opinions when the policies they enforce improves the lives of the ordinary people.

The lack of economic opportunity is a threat to democracy not only in the developing world, but also in the West. Beausolei and Gagnon (2017) indicate that "the year 2016 is considered among the "worst" (Beausolei and Gagnon 2017, P. 26) for

democracy around the world according to report from the Economic Intelligence Unit (since it began reporting on democracy performance in 2006) and surprisingly, this poor performance of democracy is recorded in countries where democracy has been consolidated decades if not centuries ago. Such as the United States, and the United Kingdom (Gagnon and Beausolei, 2017, p. 31). They indicate that the United States' democratic status has been downgraded to "flawed democracy" (Gagnon and Beausolei, 2017, p.32). Dissatisfaction with the democratic status quo has been growing particularly in the last decade. Distrust with politicians, difficulty relating to the dominant political parties, and certain political practices, are some of the reasons for this revolt (Gagnon and Beausolei, 2017). Another important reason for this is a problem of representation. A sizable portion of the population feel being left behind, most of which are "white working class." The election of Donald Trump, and the Brexit vote are products of this discontentment. We have seen the rise of populism not just in the United States but also in Italy, Austria, and France where populist parties have made tremendous gain in parliaments and some have even been able to form a government.

The collapse of communism was greeted with high optimism that democracy and capitalism is the way to go. There was a good reason for this optimism because "five years into the twenty-first century, over 60 % of the world's nations had become democratic" Patterson (2015, p. 34). The democratic wave in East Europe, Africa, and Asia was remarkable indeed, but recent developments with regards to democracy such as the failure of the Arab Spring, the rise of populism, the revival of Russia, shows that the high optimism shown earlier was premature, and this has triggered for many to call the current globalized economic system into question.

Democratic consolidation traditionally meant extending the life expectancy of a democracy “beyond the short term” making it safe from authoritarian repression. However, according to Emmanuel (2014), democratic consolidation has come to include “such divergence as popular legitimacy, the diffusion of democratic values, civilian supremacy over the military, the elimination of authoritarian enclaves, judicial reform, and the alleviation of poverty and economic stabilization” (Emmanuel, 2014, p, 57). This perspective is not contented with just a regular holding of election, but it also includes viable democratic institutions, separation of powers in government, and the immunity of the system from military takeover, and the improvement of the lives of citizens via economic stabilization. In the worlds of Larry Diamond democratic consolidation involves “behavioral and institutional changes that normalize democratic politics and narrow its uncertainty. (Emmanuel, 2014, p. 134).

Scholars on democratic transition in Africa generally categorize it in two broad meanings. One, it includes a fundamental change in the “state of being of the relevant entity” this entails the replacement of the old “prevailing structures and relationship in a society” with a more significantly novel “qualitatively higher ideas and symbols” (Emmanuel, 2014, p. 134 Transition in this sense constitutes a total change and breaking down of barriers resulting in a “definite change of place, nature, and state of being of the subject” that experience it (Emmanuel, 2014, p153). As a social policy therefore, transition involves a continuous attempt at redirecting the social value systems, and the individual behavior within it. This can be conceptualized to mean that it is a process that involves all activities geared towards instituting new values and structures in place of the existing one (Emmanuel, 2014, p.135). The second concept of transition in Africa

involves a change in leadership “with, or without a meaningful” socio-political reconstruction (Emmanuel, 2014, p. 138).

Fred Cocozzeli (2013), argues that it is possible to democratize in a competitive authoritarian regime² because democratization is a process that has no clearly defined starting point nor a definitive end point. He indicates that so long the regime is willing to organize regular elections on a regular basis, and “there is a complete sovereignty of the country. While democratic consolidation is “conceptualized as a distinct process of democratization (Cocozzeli, 2013, p. 27 He states that democratic consolidation may not be the end of the process but “the marginalization of non-democratic political practices (Cocozzeli, 2013). While there may be some truth in his argument, a counter argument could say that democratization is a process, but democratic consolidation is a status which a democracy attains when it matures to a certain level. Cocozzeli used the Kosovo analogy here, indicating that democratization was possible under the non- democratic international administration of Kosovo in the 1999s, but consolidation would not be possible because the government had no popular mandate, because it was not elected by the people.

In his study on authoritarian regimes Matti (2010) argued that “semi-democratic regimes” are the worst threats to democratic consolidation. He termed this form of

² In a competitive authoritarian regime, democratic norms are not strictly observed. Regular elections are held but rigged, and there is a confiscation of state resources in favor of the regime, oppositions are harassed, and human rights are not highly respected.

government as “competitive authoritarians.” These types of regimes are most common in Africa and continental Asia. For the West, the democratic level of these countries is acceptable because they organize regular elections, and sometimes on the surface, they meet international laws, but in reality, they do not. Matti characterizes them as regimes that organize generally regular elections free of massive fraud, but they abuse state resources “deny the opposition adequate media coverage harass political opposition candidates and their supporters” during campaigning, and elections (Matti, 2010, p. 23).

Matti describes the Kabila regime of the Democratic Republic of Congo as a competitive authoritarian regime in which the “presence of competition is evident during intensive campaigning” but final election results are manipulated to give the ruling party an outright majority, preventing a second round, because of the fear that oppositions would unite against the incumbent (Matti, 2010, p.25). This exists not only in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also Countries like Nigeria, Guinea, and Kenya, to mention a few.

Like Matti, Stephan Brown (2010), also evaluated the sloppy and unsuccessful democratic consolidation in Kenya. He indicates that the reason for the failure of democracy in Kenya is the lack of independent institutions. He suggests that for countries seeking to democratize, focusing on building strong and independent institutions should go a long way in the democratization and consolidation process. Particularly the judiciary, and civil societies (Brown, 2010, p. 10). Brown makes a great point here, because in countries where a bottom up transition has taken place like Guinea, democracy still finds it hard to be consolidated, because prior the transition, there were

no independent institutions, and the newly elected government takes advantage of this vacuum, and put in loyal actors in these newly established institutions.

Despite the vast majority of African countries having some elements of democracy (At least holding regular elections), the consolidation of democracy has been a major challenge for the continent. Stephen Brown and Paul Kaiser (2007) identified two explanations for this. One “structural explanation.” According to them, this is the impact of cultural, history, and economic (Brown and Kaiser, 2007). Advocates for modernization argue that the inability of “traditional societies” to adapt to the social economic, and political demand of modernity “hinders democratic consolidation” in Africa ((Brown and Kaiser, 2007). They argue that democracy and development are intertwined, and for these societies to develop and democratize, they would have to abandon “their traditional communal forms of society” and embrace “Western assumption of individualism, and market base proactivity” (Brown and Kaiser, 2007). The second explanation is “voluntarist explanation” . This is the ability for select actors to effect change. This includes rulers “employing strategies designed to maintain the status quo. This leads to grass roots, or military mobilization resulting in the overthrow of the regime, and the cycle repeats itself over and over again (Brown and Kaiser, 2007).

While the arguments above may be convincing, we should be cautious in generalizing it, because countries like Singapore, and South Korea, or China, development precede democratic consolidation³. The “voluntarist explanation” may be true though, because, most African leaders try to hold on to power, and maintain the

³ With the exception of China, democracy is consolidated in the other two countries

status quo, and then end up being overthrown, the subsequent government repeats the same mistake, and end up suffering the same fate. Other scholars have looked to history as the primary cause for the difficulty in democratic consolidation in Africa. The theory approach pioneered by Wallerstein emphasizes the importance of historical legacy in understanding current events. In the case of Africa, the impact of years of colonialism may be a reason for the hindrance. In fact, the resilience of Africa cannot be over emphasized. This is a continent that has faced and continues to face some of the greatest challenges known to man. From imperialism, to authoritarian regimes and bad governance, conflicts caused by internal and external rivalries, brain drain, faming, exploitation, child mortality and disease, Islamist fundamentalism to mention a few.

Further, other scholars have argued that military coups have been one of the most threatening factors to political stability in west Africa and Africa in general. Harkness, K. (2016) argues that “When leaders attempt to build ethnic armies, or dismantle those created by their predecessors, they provoke violent resistance from military officers.” This is a well thought assertion because many West African countries such as Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, and Guinea have suffered repeated military coup. As Harkness indicates, most triggers for these coups are ethnic related. African leaders have for many years attempted to build a coethnic loyal army, that supports the divisive policy of these governments at the expense of minority ethnic groups. This has in some instances brought a short time stability, but it always ends in undermining democratization efforts, igniting insurgencies, and leading to years of devastating military governance. “Choosing

ethnicity as the foundation for military loyalty was, counterintuitively, dangerous for political stability” Harkness, K. (2016, p.56).

Similarly, Conteh-Morgan (2000) indicates that as a result of the privileges acquired during authoritarian rule, the military will less likely allow democratic norms to take hold in societies that have for long been under authoritarian rules. “The inclination of the military to preserve its socio-economic privileges acquired during authoritarian rule” makes democratic consolidation less likely. Conteh-Morgan (2000). This has been the case in Guinea until the country’s first “free elections” in 2010.

The difficulties in democratic consolidation in Africa have forced political scientists to leave no stone unturned in search for the reason why. Some have looked at the culture, history, colonial legacy and many others as we have shown in this literature review. Pre-election opposition coalition is designed to give more weight to the opposition and thus, boost chances of winning against the incumbent. Such arrangements are normal practice in a proportional representation electoral system. However, Resnick, D. (2013) found that “First, aside from a few notable cases, opposition coalitions rarely have defeated incumbent parties in either presidential or parliamentary elections. Secondly, opposition coalitions in a majority of cases have contributed from one-third to two-thirds of total electoral volatility.” (Resnick, 2013, p.23). Resnick argues that these political parties fail to generate loyal voters and they focus more on “office-seeking, rather than policy-seeking.”

Judging by experience, two things explain this failure. One, Africa is very diverse and in most countries political parties are built along ethnic lines, and party coalition

arrangements are forged at the elite level without much grassroots consultations, and at times voters second choice is the candidate that is most closely related to their ethnic group rather than the one their first choice party allies with. Secondly, in a hybrid regime, or in an electoral democracy like most African countries, the incumbent takes advantage of the above factors (highlighted in one) to rig the elections and justify the results of the elections using its influence as an incumbent.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE REGION OF WEST AFRICA

Like nationalism, regionalism is a political ideology that highlights the need for the development of a political, or social system based on one or more regions, and or the national, normative or economic interest of a specific region, group of regions or a subnational entity Juliao (2018). Nieuwkert (2001) sees regionalism as a multidimensional form of integration in both political and economic integrations as well as cultural relations beyond merely the creations of a free trade regimes or security alliance. He further asserts that “Regionalism could equally be conceived in terms of a group of countries that have created a legal framework of cooperation that covers an extensive economic relationship of an indefinite duration” (Nieuwkert 2001, p. 35). A natural geographical region may not necessarily be politically and socio-culturally integrated. Regional integration involves some forms of political wills of members to give up some of the sovereignty of a national governments and share responsibilities between members for the common good of citizens of the region as a whole. Baylis and smith (1997) indicates that regionalism is a “limited number of states linked by

geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence” (Baylis & Smith, 1997, p. 409).

The study of regionalism based on how conflicts can be avoided, and how stability and cooperation can be fostered within a sub-region like West African is paramount important and should be promoted most especially in Africa. Where nation state building in the post-colonial era has been a major challenge due to the artificial borders imposed on Africa by imperial Europe. These boundaries at times cut across ethnic and cultures, dividing ethnic groups between countries making it possible for citizens to give more sympathy to members of their ethnic groups even if they are legally citizens of different countries (due to the imposed borders) than their own fellow citizens of a different ethnic group. It can be argued that regional integration is the only viable solution to this problem as it allows for free movements of people and goods, and thus, over time, eliminating borders.

The People and Geographic Location of West Africa

The westernmost region of Africa is known as West Africa. According to the United Nations, regionally West Africa comprises of the 16 countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, as well as the British Oversea Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

The region of West Africa is located west of north-south axis lying close to 10° east longitudes. The Atlantic Ocean forms the western as well as the southern borders of the West African region. The northern border is the Sahara Desert, with the Ranishanu Bend generally considered the northernmost part of the region. The eastern border lies between the Benue Trough, and a line running from Mount Cameroon to Lake Chad (UN).

West Africa is home to 367 million people or about 5 percent of the world's population (UN, 2015). An annual average population growth rate of 2.75 percent. A fivefold increase in population since 1950, when only 73 million people lived in the region. This makes it the fastest growing region in the world. For contextual purpose, the world population has increased less than three-fold in this period. Almost half of West Africans are 15 years old or younger. The population of the region is projected to exceed one billion by the year 2059 (assuming a medium fertility model), when almost one in every 10 people of the world will be a West African (UN, 2015). The West African region, like most developing regions of the world, has endured years of colonialism, conflicts, disease pandemic, and other natural disasters. Ghana is the first sub-Saharan

African Country to gain its independence in 1957 from Britain, and by the year 1975 when Cape Verde secured its independence from Portugal, all of West Africa had become independent.

West Africa has hundreds of native tribes and languages including cross-border native tongues such as the Ewe, Fulfulde, Hausa, Mandingo, Wolof, Yoruba, Ga, but none is an official language of any country of the region. Colonial boundaries are still reflected in the modern boundaries between contemporary West African states, cutting across ethnic and cultural lines, often dividing single ethnic groups between two or more states, as is the case with all of the major Tribes in the region such as the Fula, who are natives of Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Nigeria, and many other West African Countries, and the Hausas who are natives of both Ghana and Nigeria, as well as Niger. The Mandingos are also found in both Guinea and Mali.

This cross border ethnic nativity has been one of the greatest challenges in the nation state building process for West Africa, and Africa in general in post-colonial era unlike prior colonization when nations were based mainly on a single ethnic group. The phenomenon has also been a source of inter-ethnic conflicts and civil wars in many countries, as was the case in Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

The language of the former colonial master of each country is the official language of that country. Currently the region has three official languages (French, English, and Portuguese). Table 1 shows countries with official language, and date of independence.

Table 1. West African States with Official language and date of Independence.

Country	Official Language	Date of Independence
Benin	French	1960
Burkina Faso	French	1960
Cape Verde	Portuguese	1975
Cote d'Ivoire	French	1960
The Gambia	English	1965
Ghana	English	1957
Guinea	French	1958
Guinea Bissau	Portuguese	1973
Liberia	English (US)	1847
Mali	French	1960
Niger	French	1960
Nigeria	English	1960
Senegal	French	1960
Sierra Leone	English	1961
Togo	French	1960

Despite the magnitude of the challenges the region has endured over the years, West Africa has made some important strides to becoming more stable. In fact, recent studies indicate that West Africa is one of the most stable regions of Africa; it is one of the most resilient to conflicts “the sub region has actually had less casualties from conflicts than any other sub region in Africa” (Marc, 2015, p.56). Through its highly efficient regional organizations, the region is undergoing some impressive changes that calls for high hope for the future. We shall highlight some of these Organizations below. We shall specifically look at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), West African Monetary and Economic Union (also known under the French acronym, UEMOA) and its Central Bank (BCEAO), and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The Origin of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can be traced back to the mid-20th century when the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) called for a summit of West African States and Governments in 1968, in the Liberian capital Monrovia (Ani & Amusan, 2016, p.20). According to Anthony (2006), it was during that summit, the decision to establish a West African Economic Group emerged. However, not all attendees shared the idea, but the Nigerian and Togolese presidents Yakubu Gowon and Nasingbe Eyadema respectively were determined to make it a reality. In April 1972 the two heads of states signed a treaty which laid the foundation to what is now known as the ECOWAS (Anthony, 2006, p. 20). The next step for these two countries was to sell the idea to other members in the region. Thus, a “Joint Nigerian-Togolese delegation visited the capital cities of all the states of the region, from July-August 1973, to present the proposals for the economic community” (Anthony, 2006, p. 20).

Further, a meeting of 15 heads of West African states gathered in Lagos, Nigeria in May 1975 and signed the Treaty of Lagos which established the ECOWAS. The members agreed to establish a customs union, and in 1981 in the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, they concluded a plan for the elimination of trade restrictions. The agreement involved: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape-Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, Bannock and Davis (1999, p.117). It is worth reminding that Mauritania left the

ECOWAS in the year 2000, and Cape Verde joined in 1976. Bannock and Davis state that the aim of the “community” includes a gradual elimination of all trade barriers, the free movements of goods and people between member states, and the improvement of inter-regional transport and telecommunications. Article 2 of the ECOWAS treaty outlined the aims of ECOWAS as follows:

It shall be the aim of The Community to promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity, particularly in the fields of industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions and in social and cultural matters for the purpose of raising the standard of living of its people, of increasing and maintaining economic stability, of fostering closer relations among its members and of contributing to the progress and development of the African continent (ECOWAS, 2012:1).

The 15 member countries are all located in the Western African region. The Countries have natural ties in culture, linguistic and religion, as well as a shared common economic interest (The ECOWAS).

Government Structure of ECOWAS.

The ECOWAS is governed by three arms of governance. The Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary. The Authority of Heads of States and Governments is the supreme institution of the union and is composed of heads of states / governments of the member states. It is headed by a chairperson who is also the head of state or government of his or her country, he or she is appointed by other heads of states/governments of

member states for a period of one year. The Authority is responsible for the general direction and control of the Community and takes all measures to ensure its progressive development and the realization of its objectives. It also determines the general policy and guidelines of the Community and gives directives where needed. Other functions include the appointment of the executive secretary and external auditor.

Similarly, the council of ministers is headed by a chairperson who is also the minister of ECOWAS affairs in the home country of the chairperson of the Authority of Heads of States/ governments. The Council is responsible for the functioning and development of the Community. The functions of the chairperson of the Council of Ministers include making recommendations to the authority and presiding over all ECOWAS statutory meetings for the year.

Another important organ of the community's executives is the Executive Secretariat. This organ is headed by a president who is elected by the Authority for a nonrenewable four-year term. The president is assisted by a vice president and 13 commissioners (International democracy watch).

The legislatures- The parliament of the ECOWAS is located in the Nigerian capital, Abuja. It comprises 115 members distributed between the 15 member states based on population size. However, each member country is guaranteed at least five seats. The other 40 seats left are distributed in accordance with the population size of member States. The legislative arm of the Community is the Community Parliament headed by the Speaker of the Parliament. The administrative functions of the Parliament are directed by the Secretary General of the Parliament. Pending elections by direct

universal suffrage in future. Parliamentarians are seconded by national Parliaments to the Community Parliament for a period of four years (ECOWAS).

The Judiciary- although ECOWAS was established in 1975 by the Treaty of Lagos or ECOWAS treaty, the Court of Justice was only created in 1991 following the adoption of the protocol on the community Court of Justice. The Community Court of Justice is headed by a President. The Court is composed of five independent judges “who are [suppose to be] persons of high moral character” appointed by the Authority of Heads of States for a four-year term (ECOWAS). All judges must be ECOWAS citizens.

The court has jurisdiction over four general types of disputes: One, those relating to the interpretation, application, or legality of ECOWAS regulations. Second, those that arise between ECOWAS and its employees, third, those relating to liability for or against ECOWAS, and fourth, those involving a violation of human rights committed by a member state.

In addition, the Court ensures the interpretation and application of Community laws, protocols and conventions. The administrative functions of the Court are handled by the Court Registrar who is assisted by other professionals. All appointees must be seconded by the Supreme Courts of their respective member states to fill the country positions (ECOWAS).

West African Monetary and Economic Union (WAMU)

The West African Monetary and Economic Union (also known under the French acronym, UEMOA) was established with the Treaty signed in Dakar in January 10, 1994 by the Heads of State and Government of seven West African countries using the Franc CFA as a common currency. It was originally a currency of French Colonies in Africa. This is why most members are French speaking. However, on May 2, 1997, Guinea Bissau, a Portuguese former colony joined the Franc CFA zone, bringing members to eight. The republic of Guinea is the only French speaking country that has not joined the currency. This may be explained by the difficult relations Guinea and France have had in the early days of decolonization. Guinea is the first French speaking Sub-Saharan African country to gain its independence from France in 1958 paving the way for others to follow.

The Franc CFA member states are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The UEMOA is represented by a logo that symbolizes growth, union, solidarity and complementarity between the Coastal and Sahel States (UEMOA. Int). The currency is also used in the Central African sub region French speaking states.

The currency has been criticized for being controlled by the former French currency the French franc, and now the Euro. Opponents accuse the CFA of making it impossible for member countries to make economic planning since its value is pegged to the euro whose monetary policy is set by the European Central Bank. Advocates argue that the currency has helped stabilize the “national currencies” of member countries, and hence facilitates the flow of imports and exports between both France and member countries, and

between members. In 2008 the European Union assessment of the CFA's link to the Euro indicates that "benefits from economic integration within each of the two monetary unions of the CFA franc zone, and even more so between them, remained remarkably low" but that "the peg to the French Franc, and now to the euro as exchange rate anchor, is usually found to have had favorable effects in the region in terms of macroeconomic stability" (Hallet, 2008, p. 5).

On December 22, 2019, the strong France ally and Ivory Coast president, Alassane Ouattara announced that the CFA would be replaced with another common currency known as ECO during a visit by the French president Emmanuel Macron in Abidjan. The move is aimed at cutting "some of the financial links with Paris that have underpinned the region's common currency since its creation" (Reuters, 2019). During the event, Mr. Ouattara stated that "this is a historic day for West Africa" referring to the opportunity of replacing the Franc CFA.

Under the deal, the ECO will remain pegged to the euro but the West African Countries in the zone would not have to keep 50% of their reserves in the French Treasury and there will no longer be a French representative on the currency's union board as is the case with the Franc CFA. The Eco is planned to include all the countries of West Africa including the none Franc CFA users including Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea, but these countries immediately rejected the proposal, arguing that this is a mere change of name not rules and regulations, and it is a plan to ensure Franc's interest is protected in West Africa and critics are silenced.

Given the historic good relationship between Ivory coast and France, specifically between Mr. Ouattara and France, it is hard to imagine Mr. Ouattara advocating against France's interest. It is important to note that France has severely been criticized recently on its role in Africa, including the role it played in the Rwandan Genocide and its France-Afrique⁴ policies. This prompted for the French President, Macron to announce that he will be reviewing the status quo, including the appointment of a commission tasked with reviewing the role France played in the Genocide in Rwanda in the 1990s. Further, following the Ivory Coast presidential elections in 2010, and the refusal of the then president Laurant Bagbo to concede defeat, it was the French military stationed in Abidjan who forced him out of power and brought Mr. Ouattara (the undeclared winner of the election) to office. Given this reality, it is arguable that Mr. Ouattara is not well placed to make such an announcement highlighted above.

The Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO)

The BCEAO headquartered in the Senegalese capital, Dakar, is the common issuing institution of the member states of the West African Monetary Union. The Bank was founded on May 12, 1962 by its eight original members: Côte d'Ivoire, Dahomey (Benin), Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). In addition to centralizing the cash reserves of the Union, the Central Bank are to issue currency, to manage monetary policy, to organize and monitor banking activities and to provide assistance for the member States

⁴ is France's sphere of influence (or *pré carré* in French, meaning *backyard*) over its former colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. Following the decolonization of its West African colonies, beginning in 1959,^[8] France continued to maintain a sphere of influence in Africa, which was critical to then President Charles de Gaulle's vision of France as a global power (or *grandeur* in French).

(BCEAO). With Mauritania opting out of the bloc In 1973 following the creation of its own currency, and the addition of Guinea Bissau to the bloc, members remain eight and are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Mali, Niger and Togo.

The West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)

The end of the cold war, and the corresponding loss of Africa's strategic importance coupled with a growing demand for change, left many countries, and authoritarian regimes previously protected by the cold war system vulnerable. Thus, Africans were left with no option other than to take its destiny into its hands. While peaceful transitions took place in some African countries like Zambia, and Benin, many West African Countries witnessed the eruption of conflicts beyond the capability of local militaries to manage, and the spillover effect on other countries were enormous. An obvious example is Liberia, Sierra Leone, and recently Ivory Coast (Olonisakin, 1997, p. 357).

Following the outbreak of the Liberian Civil War in 1989, ECOWAS members signed a Cooperative Security Agreement in 1990 to intervene in the Liberian civil war. This agreement established the ECOMOG. Earlier on May 29, 1981 ECOWAS members had signed a Protocol on Mutual Defense Assistance in Freetown. The ECOMOG is a formal arrangement for armies from different members to work together modeled from the United Nations Peacekeeping model.

Chibundu (2004) indicates that the establishment of ECOMOG was a clear demonstration of the "unflinching commitment" to regional peace and security. Despite its flaws the ECOMOG is credited with putting an end to the Liberian civil war in 1997, monitoring the process of transition to democratic rule and reinstalling the democratically

elected president of Sierra Leone when the rebels took over Freetown in 1998, as well as brought about the peace agreement signed in Lomé, Togo, in July 1999. The Liberia peace operation received contingents from Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Tanzania (Ani & Amusan, 2016, p.19). ECOMOG forces were also deployed in Guinea Bissau in 1999 to stop the civil war in that country. Most recently in the Gambia, the longtime totalitarian leader Yahya Jammeh refused to hand over power to the winner of the 2016 presidential elections, but it was the ECOWAS who forced him out of office through negotiations and threat of military action.

CHAPTER FOUR

MEASURES OF DEMOCRACY

Measures of democracy are a highly contested topic. Political scientists use democracy indicators to describe the political reality, and the status of a democracy in a society. Giebler et. al (2018) identify four developmental stages of democracy measurement. It's an evolving process where Each phase builds on the previous; conceptualized based on the evolution of society. They indicate that following the end of World War II, democracy measures were mostly concerned with the relationship between democracy and modernization, the second phase was in the late 1970s and early 1980s when research on the field spread and “Many of the most influential measurements of democracy emerged” such as freedom house (Giebler et al, 2018, p. 3). Which began to classify democracies based on the level of freedom in society such as freedom of speech, political participation, and competitive elections. The third and fourth phase of the history of democracy measurement which they chronologically placed in the early 1990s following the collapse of communism, and the early 2000s respectively. The two phases are more concerned with citizens' perception in the democratic process, and the quality of the democracy.

Measure of democracy is surely one of the most controversial topics in political science. The controversy is centered on what really is the right approach in measuring democracy. Is it better to adopt a “minimalist” approach where only few indicators are selected, or is it best to consider a wide range of issues? Should the measures be categorical such as a regular holding of elections, turnout in elections, number of competing political parties, or the frequency of elections. Should these benchmarks be reinforced with “subjective evaluations, exemplified by expert judgments” such as international organizations like the freedom house which evaluates the political rights and civil liberty of countries? These questions and more continue to be at the center of the controversy in democracy measurement.

Pippa Norris (2008) indicates that there are generally two approaches to democracy measurements: Minimalist and maximalist and each has its limitations. The minimalist approach” emphasize the values of reliability and consistency at the expense of potentially omitting vital components of democratic regimes and thus misclassifying the types of regimes in question ” while maximalist approaches “prioritize using richer and more comprehensive multiple indicators, but with the danger of relying upon softer data and less rigorous categories.” However, Freedom House, Polity IV; Vanhanen; and Przeworski et al are the four most widely used measures of democracy today. Before we define the indicators used in this study, we shall first define and analyze the meaning of each of these four approaches to democratic measurements.

Freedom House: Liberal Democracy

The Gastil index of civil liberty, and political right reported by Freedom House is one of the most widely used in comparative literature. It was first launched in 1973 by Raymond Gastil. Gasil developed the survey's methodology assigning ratings on political rights and civil liberties for independent nations, and territories. Then he classified them based on the ratings as Free, partly Free, or Not Free. The measures are not only been used by scholars in their comparative research, but also by foreign donors to determine who to award aids based on their performance on the Gasil index scores. Gasil continued to produce the survey until 1989, "when a larger team of in-house survey analysts was established."(Pippa, 2008). The format remains the same, but the new system is more rigorous, and detail oriented.

Freedom House monitors political rights in terms of electoral process, political pluralism, function of government, and Civil liberties which is defined "by the existence of freedom of speech and association, rule of law, and personal rights."(Pippa, 2008). It gathers information from multiple sources to come up with its classifications based on several questions, including "ten separate items monitoring the existence of political rights, and fifteen questions on civil liberties." The items assess the presence of a system of checks and balances such as the separation of power between the executives and legislatures, independent judiciary, and the "existence" of political rights and civil liberties, minority participation, and the presence of free and fair election laws. The items are given equal weight and are allocated a score from "0 to 4." These initial scores are then converted into a seven-point scale of political rights, and the same method is applied

on civil liberty, they are then “collapsed to categorize” each regime worldwide as either “free, partly free, or not free.” (Pippa, 2008, p.5). The methods and items used in the process are highly scrutinized as indicates Pippa Norris.

The emphasis of this measure on a wide range of civil liberties, rights, and freedoms means that this most closely reflects notions of liberal democracy. The index has the advantage of providing comprehensive coverage of nation-states and independent territories worldwide, as well as establishing a long time-series of observations conducted annually since 1972. The measure is also comprehensive in its conceptualization and it is particularly appropriate for those seeking an indicator of liberal democracy (Pippa, 2008, p.6).

Despite its success and sophistication, the methodology of the index has been criticized on a number of issues. Some scholars have raised concern on the transparency of its procedures as “scholars cannot double-check the reliability and consistency of the coding decisions, nor can the results be replicated” The questions used in each category are too ambiguous. Further, since the index’s measure of democracy always links with human rights protection, economic growth, peace and the provision of welfare-service, it is not clear what aspect of the index drives the relationship (Pippa, 2008, p.6).

Polity IV: Constitutional Democracy.

Like Freedom House, the classification of constitutional democracy brought forth by the Polity Project is widely used in comparative and international literatures. It’s an evolving project initiated in the 1970s by Ted Robert Gurr. The latest version of Polity IV provides “annual time series data in country-year format” covering 161 countries. It

classifies democracy and autocracy based on scores on different characteristics.

“Democracy is conceived of conceptually as reflecting three essential elements: the presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express preferences about alternative policies and leaders; the existence of institutionalized constraints on the power of the executive; and the guarantee of civil liberties to all citizens” (Pippa, 2008, p.8). This classification, unlike the freedom house, puts more emphasis on the presence or absence of institutions in the state. For example, it looks at the method through which the chief executive is selected. Is it through a popular election in which two or more contestants took part? Do all citizens have equal chances of both electing and being elected as chief executive? Excluding “hereditary succession, forceful seizure of power, or military coups.” (Pippa, 2008, p.9). On the other hand, autocracy is seen as those regimes that suppress competitive political participation. In these types of regimes, leaders are selected from the elite, and once they assume power, there are little or no checks and balances. The coding in this project is done as follows.

The dataset constructs a ten-point democracy scale by coding the competitiveness of political participation (1-3), the competitiveness of executive recruitment (1-2), the openness of executive recruitment (1), and the constraints on the chief executive (1-4). Autocracy is measured by negative versions of the same indices. The two scales are combined into a single democracy-autocracy score varying from -10 to +10. Polity has also been used to monitor and identify processes of major regime change and democratic transitions, classified as a positive change in the democracy-autocracy score of more than 3 points (Pippa, 2008, p.8).

The polity IV scores provide a series of results covering a long history, and most countries of the world. However, "The emphasis on constitutional rules restricting the executive may be particularly valuable for distinguishing the initial downfall of autocratic regimes and the transition to multiparty elections." However, the project's emphasis on the existence of a constraint on the chief executives as one of its central measures may be misleading. Constraint on executives can come in different forms. It could be in the form of democratic system of checks and balances such as the power of legislatures, and the judiciary. It could also come from other important actors which are not necessarily a democratic due process such as the military, and business leaders and big corporations. Further, According to Pippa (2008), despite Polity IV's acknowledgement of civil liberty in its conceptualization of democracy, it does not code this dimension, the project's index was initially created to monitor notions of political stability and regime change rather than the assessment of political change which is a limitation as well.

Vanhanen: Participatory Democracy

The Vanhanen: Participatory Democracy index is designed by the Finnish political scientist Tatu Vanhanen who defines democracy as "a political system in which ideologically and socially different groups are legally entitled to compete for political power, and in which the institutional rulers are elected and responsible by the people⁵" Tatu categorized his measure of democracy into two criteria: the degree of electoral competition (measured by the share of the vote won by the largest party in the national legislature), and also the degree of electoral participation (the proportion of the total

⁵ Quoted from: Schmidt: *Theories of democracy*. P. 375.

population who voted in national legislative elections)⁶. It has two basic indicators: Competition and participation. The measure is calculated by multiplying the unweighted degree of participation (P) by the degree of competition (W) and then dividing the product by 100. He developed this scale to classify democracy in 187 countries from the 1800s to 2000 annually. He indicates that electoral turnout is estimated by the total valid votes cast as a proportion of the voting age population of each country. It collects annual data for each country after each election.

The reliability of the Vanhanen index is not an issue, because official elections turnout results can be obtained easily from credible international institutions like the International Institute for Electoral Assistance (IIEA) and others, hence, this provides a reliable empirical indicator for researchers. However, it can be argued that election turnouts alone may not be a healthy indicator of democracy. By using this measure alone, we risk legitimizing authoritarian regimes, who have many other undemocratic ways of mobilizing voters. For example, voters could be mobilized through intimidation, harassment, vote buying, manipulation, vote stuffing, and pressure on the oppositions. It has also been noted in some authoritarian regimes that there are situations when some voters are able to vote more than once, and the enrollment of minors. All these undemocratic factors could result in a higher percentage of voter turnout.

⁶ Pippa Norris.(2008). *Driving Democracy: Do Power-Sharing Institutions Work?* New York, Cambridge University Press, pp. 320.

Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi: Competitive Democracy

The fourth measure considered in this study is Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi: Competitive Democracy. This was originally developed by Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi, and subsequently extended by Cheibub and Gandhi (Pippa, 2008, p.10). This approach defines democratic states as "those regimes where citizens have the power to replace their government through contested elections." It is generally agreed that all democracies at the minimum require a regular multiparty election for the chief executives, and the legislatures, which gives citizens the opportunity to choose their leaders, and hold them accountable. On the other hand, countries are considered autocratic if "they fill national legislative offices and the chief executive office through appointment, patronage, or inheritance, rather than by popular elections." (Pippa,2008, p.10). One-party states in which legislatures are elected, but political parties are banned from mobilizing and contesting the results of elections and challenging the government like many middle eastern countries and Cuba also fall under the category of autocratic states.

From all indications, according to this approach political parties are necessary for a competitive election to take place. Przeworski et al argue that competition and contestations is measured by a regular organization of elections, which gives citizens the opportunity to replace those in power, more than one political party must compete in a regular election for the lower house of the national legislature and for the executive office in a presidential system. The opposition must have a chance of winning some offices as a result of the popular vote. The outcome of the elections must be uncertain, so that the

ruling party may lose, and if the incumbent loses, there should be an assurance that they will hand over power to the winner in a peaceful and smooth manner. Przeworski et al categorized countries into a democracy or autocracy based on institutional rules as follow:

- The lower house of the legislature must be elected;
- The chief executive must be elected (directly in presidential systems and indirectly by members of the elected legislature in parliamentary systems);
- There must be more than one party; and (if states pass all these rules)
- If the incumbent party subsequently held, but never lost an election, such regimes are regarded by default as authoritarian. Regimes which fail any of these rules are classified as autocratic.

These classifications are made every year from the 1950s. One of the main limitations of this approach of democracy measurement is the lack of consideration for mass participation in elections. Przeworski et al. do not consider the universality of adult suffrage in its definition. Using this methodology, one would consider any country that systematically exclude certain categories of its adult population as undemocratic, yet almost all countries today exclude certain categories of its population from voting. In many countries residents who are not citizens are not allowed to vote. Other countries do not allow its citizens living abroad to vote as well. Furthermore, adults who are considered as mentally disable, or citizens who are convicted of certain criminal offences are also excluded from exercising their rights to vote. In addition, relying only on political party participation in measuring democracy may not be enough, because parties cannot freely participate in an election if human rights are not protected, the press are not

free, and elections are not free and fair, and when there is no civil liberty. Without these conditions (which are not recognized in this approach) parties cannot effectively participate in an election, likewise, citizens cannot hold the government accountable, and may not be able to make an informed choice in choosing an alternative candidate for office.

Lastly, Przeworski's strict classification of regimes as either democratic or autocratic based on election competition and contestations and voter turnout, may be problematic, because it takes time and tremendous effort for a regime to transform from autocratic to a democracy. Many scholars have classified those steps into 'semi-democracies', 'competitive authoritarianism' (Levitsky and Way, 1990), 'illiberal democracies' (Zacharia). These are all stages regimes have to go through before they are considered a full democracy. It takes time to clean up an authoritarian culture of corruption, bribery, clientelism, and cronyism for an authoritarian country to transform into a full democracy.

Despite the controversy, there is a general consensus that for a democracy to be measured, one must look into the following:

- Electoral process and pluralism
- Civil liberty and Regime type.
- Political culture
- Functioning of government
- Political participation

Electoral Process and Pluralism-Pluralism in liberal democracy refers to when diversity is recognized and affirmed in the political process. It is when power is dispersed among diverse groups, and not confiscated by a single group of elites, but also shared with some other pressure groups. These pressure groups include “Religious groups, trade unions, professional organizations, and ethnic minority” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). An electoral process in a representative democracy is the method through which citizens choose their leaders to run their government at all levels. Usually elected officials serve for a term, after which they go back to the citizen and ask for a renewal through another free and fair elections which are held in a regular interval.

The Inter Parliamentary Council (IPC) declares that “ In any State the authority of the government can only derive from the will of the people as expressed in genuine, free and fair elections held at regular intervals on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage” (Bishop and Hoeffler, 2016, p.609). An election is “free" when all adult citizens have the right to vote as well as the right to establish, or join political parties, and campaign freely within the society. “Fairness” of an election on the other hand refers to the equal treatment of citizens in the electoral process. In another world, fairness is when citizens are entitled to exercise their rights equally. Bishop and Hoeffler (2016) reports that in the assessment of an electoral process, election observers focus on ” the right to vote; the registration of voters; the freedom to stand as a candidate in the election; and the freedom to campaign freely and have access to the media. After the polls close the votes must be counted accurately and the results from each polling station have to be reported and added up correctly. Complaints have to be handled by an independent agency”(Bishop & Hoeffler, 2016, p.609).This indicates that free and fairness of an

election does not limit itself on the activities on election day, but it is also concerned about voter registration, how political parties are established, and the campaigns and access to the media.

Civil liberty and Regime Type-From kings to authoritarian, and even democratic governments, leaders of every generation have attempted to restrict civil liberties as much as they could. As society evolves, the tactics and terminologies used in these restrictions has also evolved. Terms like “keeping the peace” as a justification, or to maintain “law and order” and now we have often seen governments invoking “national security” reason as a justification for civil liberty restriction. Civil liberty are those things citizens are able to do in order to maintain a free society without government interference. It is the freedom from “arbitrary interference in one’s pursuits” either by the government or other influential individuals. These are rights protected explicitly in constitutions of all democracies. These rights are also protected in the constitutions of authoritarian countries but are often ignored in practice (Encyclopedia Britannica). Civil liberties are the freedom to “criticize, to publish and publicize, to assemble and to organize corporate action, to worship as one chooses or not to worship, to come and go as one chooses (even from one’s country), and to elect representatives to local and national government”(Political Quarterly, 2012).

There is hardly a democracy without respect for civil liberty. A free and fair election can only take place if civil liberties are adhered to. Only when people are free to criticize, to assemble, and publicize, worship or not worship, one can think of a free election. Pluralism is also not possible without respect to civil liberty and human rights.

Therefore, Civil liberty is vital when measuring democracy. Our next point is regime type. This is more of a result of the repetition of a government. No government calls itself “authoritarian” or dictatorship. In fact, the most authoritarian regimes in the world today call themselves “democratic” government. For example, the official name of North Korea is the “Democratic People’s Republic of Korea ” (DPRK); and its neighbor China, calls itself the “People’s Republic of China ” people here refers to democracy. If we look in Africa we could find self-proclaimed democratic countries like “The Democratic Republic of Congo ” a country that has known decades of authoritarian leadership from Joseph-Désiré Mobutu to Joseph Kabila Kabange and those in between, all ruled with an iron hand until either assassinated in office or forced out of office. Therefore, in measuring democracy, it is important to check for the regime type as denoted by internationally applauded observers like IDEA or EIU.

Political Culture-Political culture is a set of shared views, attitudes, beliefs held by a population regarding its political process. Political culture does not mean citizens' attitude towards a particular actor, or group, but rather how citizens view their political system as a whole and their belief in its legitimacy” (Encyclopedia Britannica). It is one of the main factors countries are surveyed on in the democratic index. In addition to other factors, countries must perform extremely well in political culture for it to be considered a full democracy, those who perform fairly well are considered flawed democracy, while those performing below average are authoritarian regimes even if regular elections are held. Pye and Verba (1969) indicate that “The notion of political culture assumes that the attitudes, sentiments, and cognitions that inform and govern political behavior in any society are not just random congeries but represent coherent patterns which fit together

and are mutually reinforcing.” They further assert that in spite of “ the great potentialities for diversity in political orientations in any particular community there is a limited and distinct political culture which gives meaning, predictability, and form to the political process” (Pye W. Lucian and Verba Sidney 1969, p. 7).

Political culture is a reflection of a government, but it is also made up of elements of history and tradition of a society that predates the current government. It shapes the perception and actions of citizens. Arguably, political culture may not be as important a measure of democracy as electoral process, and civil liberty, because political culture generally does not change, it mostly remains the same. For example, Americans have a fear of a too powerful president which stems from its history shaped by experience with the British monarch. Thus, the founding fathers designed a constitution that provides for checks and balances in government, while the British have a long history of monarchy even though the monarch is now more or less a ceremonial head of state.

Political Participation and Functioning of Government-Political participation and the functioning of government are some of the fundamental measures of a healthy democracy. These two factors go hand in hand, because the effectiveness of the government in implementing policies that impact the population could have an effect in the people’s willingness to participate in the political process in a liberal democracy. Citizens participate in elections to approve a government's policies by keeping them in office or voting them out. In an authoritarian or an “electoral democracy” it does not matter whether people vote, or they don't vote, at the end of the day, how they voted and who they voted for does not change the final result. In such societies, apathism, and

absenteeism are the order of the day. We have seen this in many African countries such as Guinea, where opposition parties boycott elections because of enrollment irregularities, and fear of electoral fraud.

Political parties, and other associations may temporarily abstain from participating in a political process as a way of showing dissatisfaction with a government policy, but this should only be temporary, and it should have an impact. Democracy thrives more when citizens are willing and able to participate in public engagements such as debate, electing representatives; as well as joining a political party of their choice.

CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDIES: TRANSITIONS IN GHANA, GUINEA, AND THE GAMBIA

This chapter presents our case studies: Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia, focusing on the history of presidential elections, and the type of transitions that took place in these West African countries. The author lists them in order of population size, rather than the quality of democracy they have, beginning with Ghana, followed by Guinea, and then the Gambia.

Transition in Ghana. 1957 to 2016

Led by its charismatic Pan-Africanist leader, Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana became the first sub-Saharan African country to gain independence, in 1947 from Great Britain. Nkrumah transformed the country into a republic and became its first president. He had a great vision to uniting Africa and building the country's industrial sector. He founded several State-owned companies and launched the construction of a world class dam for the generation of hydroelectricity power.

However, his leadership style became increasingly authoritarian, as he introduced several laws restricting freedom of speech such as “being disrespectful of the president became a criminal offense” and laws that allowed the government to send people to prison for five years without trial (Berry, 1994, p.3). He controlled the media and extended the power of his political party into almost all civil society organizations. In August 1962, Nkrumah survived his first of many assassinations attempts at Kulugungu, this led his “increasing seclusion from public life and to the growth of a personality cult, as well as to a massive buildup of the country’s internal security forces.” In 1964 Ghana was officially declared a one-party state, with Nkrumah as life president of both his ruling party and country (Encyclopedia Britannica, president of Ghana).

Furthermore, as a result of poor management of state-owned industries, and the fall of Cacao (Ghana’s main source of revenue at the time) prices at the international market, the government needed more sources of revenue, hence increased taxes. This led to major public discontentment. On February 24, 1966 he was ousted by a military coup d’état while on a state visit to China. Nkrumah was granted asylum in Guinea by his fellow Pan-Africanist Guinea president Ahmed Sekou Touré. He was appointed as an honorary co-president of Guinea. Nkrumah died in Romania while being treated for cancer in 1972. For the next 25 years, following the overthrow of Nkrumah, Ghana was governed by military rulers, coup after coup, including the second attempted coup by a group of soldiers led by Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings in 1981. Rawlings ruled the country for 20 years. The first part of his leadership was characterized as an iron hand rule as he executed dissidents and controlled the media.

However, gradually Rawlings liberalized the country's economy, and benefited tremendously from western financial support. As a result of internal and external pressure, in 1992 Rawlings government returned the country to the path of democracy through a referendum allowing multiparty politics. The same year elections were organized, he contested and won, and won again in 1996 in an election deemed much freer and fairer than previously held elections. This democratic gain triggered further financial support from western powers.

In 2000, Rawlings was not permitted by the constitution to run again for a third term, and he respected that. The opposition leader John Kufour who had earlier lost to Rawlings in 1996 won the election and power was peacefully transferred. The peaceful transfer of power from the ruling party to the opposition was very important, because it was a sign of democratic maturity. Kufour continued to develop the economy, and he was reelected in 2004 president. In 2008 John Atta Mills (former vice president of Rawlings) became president by winning a landslide victory in that year's presidential election, but in 2012 he died while still in office. His vice president, John Dramani Mahama temporarily replaced him as provides the constitution, and went on to win the subsequent presidential election. In 2016 opposition leader Nana Akufo Addo won the presidency defeating the incumbent president John Dramani Mahama. The defeat of an incumbent president further indicates that democracy is consolidated in Ghana.

Prior 1992 all transitions in Ghana have some characteristics of a bottom up as they all happened due to military coups, but as Rawlings remained in power; and permitted multiparty elections; built democratic institutions; the country become more

stable and a top down transition from a military ruler to democratically elected civilians took place.

In a bottom up transitions, ousted members of a government are either executed or sentenced to prison terms or fled the country, while in a top down transition (as was the case in Ghana) outgoing government members participate in the transition, and remain safe, or accorded amnesty after the transition, and are sometimes active in the political process. In Ghana, John Atta Mills was the former vice president of Jerry Rawlings, but was still able to come back and win elections and became president, while Jerry Rawlings has become a legendary leader, and is highly respected in Ghana. Table two below highlights the presidential elections in Ghana from 1992 to 2016.

⁷**Table 2: Ghana Presidential Elections from 1992-2016.**

Year	Voter Turnout (%)	Total Vote	Registration	VAP Turnout (%)	Voting age population	Population	Invalid Votes (%)	Compulsory Voting
2016	68.62	10,781,917	15,712,499	72.00	14,974,531	26,908,262	1.54	No
2012	80.15	11,246,982	14,031,793	82.20	13,682,083	24,652,402	2.20	No
2008	72.91	9,094,364	12,472,758	69.84	13,021,558	23,434,573	2.40	No
2004	85.12	8,813,908	10,354,970	79.98	11,020,508	20,757,032	2.10	No
2000	61.74	6,605,084	10,698,652	65.13	10,141,400	20,212,000	1.60	No
1996	78.21	7,257,984	9,279,605	82.48	8,799,420	17,958,000	1.50	No
1992	50.16	4,127,876	8,229,902	60.15	6,862,370	15,959,000		No

The table shows competitive presidential elections in Ghana from 1992 to 2016, with a consistency in voter turnout. Seven elections deemed free and fair, and accepted by both parties have been held since 1992, and a peaceful transfer of power occurred. The 1992 and 1996 elections might not have been free of irregularities, but judging by the standard at the time, and the fact that the incumbent was an army officer, they were acceptable to both the regional organization of ECOWAS and to the international community.

⁷ Data obtained from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Transition in Guinea. 1958 to 2015.

In September 1958 Guinea voted for an immediate independence from France, overwhelmingly rejecting a proposal by France' Prime Minister Charles de Gaulle for a constitution that provides for partnership in a French dominated community. Throughout the French empire, Guinea was the only territory to vote "NO" to the proposal. The vote made Guinea the first sub-Saharan francophone, and the second sub-Saharan African country to gain its independence (Schmidt, 2005). Ahmed Sekou Touré who was the then leader of the major political party in the country became Guinea's first president. He had the challenge of starting from scratch to creating institutions. The bloodless accession of independence of Guinea from France brought a tremendous hope, and joy to the people of the country.

Like Nkrumah in Ghana, Touré who was democratically elected turned authoritarian. He silenced all critics in the country, imprisoned and killed dissidents, and forced many to flee the country. He made the country a one-party state, controlled the media, and all institutions in the country, and ruled the country with an iron hand until his death in 1984. He ruled for 26 years. For his survival, he created a politically indoctrinated army which are "constantly involved in Pan African battles (Camara, 2000). Touré's regime was characterized with political cleansing along ethnic line. "Tripping the country most of its intelligentsia" silencing critics and portrayed himself as an irreplaceable leader "in the minds of an ideologically intoxicated" and politically regimented citizenry (Camara, 2000).

After his death in 1984, the country was so divided that the military was the only “segment of the country” united enough to take overpower. In this atmosphere of division and uncertainty about the future, a military group known as “Comite Militaire de Redresse-Merit National (CMRN) or Committee for National Recovery led by Lansana Conte took overpower. Less than a year later, president Conte survived an attempted military coup. Like Touré, Conte also ruled Guinea until his death in 2009, he ruled the country for 24 years.

However, unlike president Touré, Conte is credited with opening the country, liberalizing the economy which had no private sector, freeing the press to some extent, and in 1991 he introduced multiparty politics. He also upheld human rights according to observers. Nonetheless, Conte’s regime was characterized as an autocratic regime, as elections are never free and fair, opposition parliament members had no effect on policy decisions. Unlike Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Lansana Conte did not hand over power to civilian rules until his death. After his death in 2009, a military junta took overpower following a bloodless coup and suspended the constitution, and after a long struggle a transition committee was formed, and this resulted in the organization of the first “free and fair election” since independence.

The front runners of the elections were long time opposition leader Alpha Conde and former Prime Minister Cellou Dalein Diallo. The campaign was marked with violence, and chaos, and a long delay of second round elections. In the end, Alpha Conde was declared winner. Like Conte, Conde also had the challenge of building viable democratic institutions. However, according to analysts his rule has not made any

democratic gain in the country, as it is characterized with impunity, corruption, human right violations, live shooting and killings of unarmed civilian protesters, delay of local elections, and election rigging. The current constitution provides for two five-year terms, but president Conde has proposed a referendum for a new constitution at the end of his second term, which the opposing and analysts accuse him of wanting a new constitution that could allow him to contest for a third term in office. In a recent interview when asked about this accusation, Conde indicated that it is up to his political party to nominate whoever they want as candidate in the fort coming presidential election. This is a confirmation that he would be standing for a third term, if his proposed constitution passes.

The Guinean power struggle history is like a circle, which repeats itself time again. From Touré to Conte and now Conde, the story is the same, and is likely to repeat itself as Conde refuses to renounce his new constitution agenda. All three major transitions in the country are considered Bottom up transition as the previous or outgoing regime is not involved in the transition and are wiped off from mainstream political activities (at least during the transition process) and there are no viable democratic institutions prior the installation of the new government. The new regime came up with a new constitution and established friendly institutions that serves to the pleasure of the chief executives. Table three below gives a snapshot of presidential elections in Guinea from 1993 to 2015.

⁸**Table 3: Guinea Presidential Elections from 1993-2015.**

Year	Voter Turnout (%)	Total Vote	Registration	VAP Turnout (%)	Voting age population	Population	Invalid Votes (%)	Compulsory Voting
2015	68.36	4,131,046	6,042,634	68.03	6,072,571	11,780,162	4.35	No
2010	67.87	2,898,233	4,270,531	54.94	5,275,217	10,324,025	3.09	No
2003	82.76	4,146,027	5,009,780	97.38	4,257,489	9,030,220	1.50	No
1998	69.83	2,650,790	3,796,293	75.38	3,516,574	7,317,331		No
1993	78.46	2,236,406	2,850,403	75.46	2,963,820	6,306,000	6.90	No

The table shows presidential elections in Guinea from 1993 to 2015 with a fairly high turnout. There have been only five presidential elections held between the two periods, and only the 2010 presidential elections were deemed free and fair to the international community, none of the five elections' results were accepted by the losing candidate (s) including the 2010 elections, and violence has always followed the declaration of the winner.

⁸ Data obtained from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Transition in the Gambia, 1994 to 2016.

With a population of just 2.1 million people, the Gambia gained its independence from Britain in February 1965 within the Commonwealth as a constitutional monarchy with Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state and Sir Dawda Jawara as prime minister. On April 24, 1970 the country became a republic, and in 1972 Jawara was elected the country's first president. Jawara survived an attempted Military Coup d'état in 1981, the coup was aborted with the help of neighboring Senegal. In the aftermath of this event, leaders of both countries formed a short-lived confederation called "Senegambia" the union calls for a military and economic integration of the two countries while each remaining independent in other areas. Economic hardship and mismanagement marked the decade of 1980, but Jawara was reelected president in 1987, and again in 1992.

However, in 1994 a junior military junta led by Captain Yahya Jammeh toppled president Jawara citing corruption and economic mismanagement as the reason for their action. The Senegalese military did not intervene this time as it did in 1981. The new military rulers promised to clean up corruption and return power to civilian rule. During the military rule dissents were brutally repressed, and all political activities were banned, until August 1996 when presidential elections were held. Jammeh retired from the military and presented himself as a candidate in that election. He was elected president, and his political party gained majority in the national assembly. A new constitution was proposed and approved in 1996. The country began to stabilize international donors returned after they left following the coup that ousted Jawara.

Jammeh's regime increasingly became authoritative. Ironically, the corruption and mismanagement he promised to combat was evident in his government. Media freedom was "restricted, and an increasing number of human rights abuses were cited by international observers" (encyclopedia Britannica). Jammeh survived three military coup d'états in 2000, 2006, and 2014. All three failed. Critics argued that these alleged coups are a mere propaganda of the regime designed to attract sympathizers and consolidate its rule. Jammeh was reelected president in both 2001, and 2006 both elections were contested, but international observers admitted minor irregularities, but did not undermine the elections.

Nonetheless, Jammeh's reelection in 2011 was highly contested, and like previous elections international observers, including the African Union admitted shortcomings but found the election generally free and fair. The ECOWAS however, refused to recognize the elections and even failed to send observers, indicating that pre-election findings found evident of intimidations, and government control of the media, and concluded that a free and fair election could not take place in such an environment. Human right complaints increased in the years that followed in Jammeh's regime with regards to "treatment of journalists, political opponents, and individuals accused of engaging in homosexual behavior" (encyclopedia Britannica). Jammeh began withdrawing his country from several international organizations including the Commonwealth in 2013, and from the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2016.

However, the 2016 presidential election marked a turning point in the history of the Gambia. Prior to the election, two opposition leaders have died in custody, and many

others arrested and imprisoned. President Jammeh banned post-election protests. This led many observers to question the integrity of the election, and ECOWAS refused to send observers. Surprisingly, all main opposition parties decided to join forces and rallied their support to just one candidate, Adama Barrow, and this overwhelmed the incumbent, and posed the greatest challenge to Jammeh's 22 years reign. The government cut off the internet and blocked international phone calls on the day of the elections. Against all odds, Barrow was declared winner of the elections with 46 percent of the votes, and Jammeh came second with 37 percent of the votes. Even more surprising, Jammeh concedes defeat and vow to hand over power to Barrow. Less than a week however, Jammeh made a U-turn on his earlier decision, and indicated that he will not step down, and called for a new election.

Furthermore, all mediation efforts by the ECOWAS and the African Union failed, and Jammeh insisted on a new election. As the inauguration date approaches both parties began to be on the offensive, Barrow prepared for the inauguration, and ECOWAS sent regional troops along the border of the Gambia and ready to enter incase Jammeh refused to step down come the January inauguration date, which marks the end of Jammeh's term. On January 19 Barrow was sworn in as president in Senegal, and ECOWAS troops were ordered to prepare for action, but a last change mediation effort before the troops entered the country succeeded in convincing Jammeh to step down. He stepped down and left the country to neighboring Guinea, and later to his permanent destination in Equatorial Guinea. Barrow returned back to the country, and the national assembly revoked the state of emergency, and the extension of Jammeh's mandate it imposed earlier.

As highlighted above, the Gambia has never witnessed a peaceful and smooth transfer of power. Be it from an incumbent to an incoming president of the same ruling party, or to an opposition winner. All transitions in that country have some characteristic of a bottom up. The first president, Jawara ruled for over 20 years as president, survived multiple coup d'états, but he did not succeed in organizing a free and fair election as president in which he is not a candidate. He was not able to democratically transfer power, until he was ousted by the military led by Jammeh. Like Jawara, Jammeh also survived many coup d'états, and won all elections he organized, until the 2016 elections which he lost and decided not to hand over power. This is the closest the country had come to a peaceful transfer of power, but Jammeh refused to hand over power, until when he was forced out by the ECOWAS. In the Jammeh situation, there were no casualties in the process as is the case in most situations when a president is forced out, but no transition was negotiated.

The incumbent and his entire government were forced out, and an entirely new group came in. Top down transitions are characterized by the involvement of both parties in the negotiation for an exit window for the outgoing government, and the outgoing government is also giving some form of amnesty, and are allowed to retain some of the powers, and or to participate in politics in the future. Table four shows a highlight of presidential elections in the Gambia from 1996 to 2016.

Table 4: ⁹The Gambia Presidential Election from 1996-2016.

Year	Voter Turnout (%)	Total Vote	Registration	VAP Turnout (%)	Voting age population	Population	Invalid Votes (%)	Compulsory Voting
2016	59.35	526,161	886,578	47.04	1,118,529	2,009,648		No
2011	82.55	657,904	796,929	73.53	894,774	1,797,860	0.02	No
2006	58.58	392,685	670,336	50.66	775,143	1,641,564	0	No
2001	89.71	404,343	-	61.32	659,382	1,367,124		No
1996	80.00	394,537	493,171	72.68	542,850	1,155,000		No

The table above shows the presidential election process in the Gambia from 1996 to 2016. With a total population of a little over 2 million people, the country has had a very high voter turnout in the past. However, given the authoritarian nature of Jammeh’s regime, it could easily be concluded that there is an issue with the data in this table. First, almost 90 percent of the voting population registered to vote, which is very high given the general lack of enthusiasm in election participation among west Africans. Secondly, given the low literacy level of Gambian, and the fact that majority of people live in rural areas and voting is not compulsory, it’s hard to imagine that from 1996 to 2016 there is

⁹ Data obtained from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

been only 0.02 percent in just the 2011 election of invalid votes. This is too good to be truth.

The high turnout may be due to non-democratic measures often exhibited by authoritarian rulers such as vote buying, harassment, vote stuffing etc. In most authoritarian regimes like what we see in the table above, the government make sure that all votes are counted on its favor, that explains the absence of invalid votes during these elections. With the exception of the 2016 election, Jammeh has been declared winner of all of them, but none of these have been accepted by the losing party, as required in a democratic setting.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA AND ANALYSIS

To better contextualized the state of democracy in our case studies (Ghana, Guinea, the Gambia) it is vital for us to look at the status of democracy across the world. The author, therefore, highlights in table five the state of democracy in the world, using the EIU Democracy Index. The Index is based on five categories as noted earlier in this study, electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Depending on how much each country scores on a wide range of indicators within these categories, countries are then placed in one of the four categories of regime types: “full democracies”; “flawed democracies”; “hybrid regimes”; and “authoritarian regimes” (EIU report, 2019). A country is considered a full democracy when civil liberties and fundamental political freedoms “are not only respected but also reinforced by a political culture conducive” to the survival of democracy (EIU report, 2019), while flawed democratic nations are those nations where elections are generally acceptable, and basic civil liberties are mostly honored, but still uses undemocratic means to discourage opposition building, and state mediate biases are noticeable. On the other hand, a Hybrid regime is a regime where democratic institutions

are not really independent, and there is consistency report of electoral fraud. These types of regimes also harass oppositions, corruptions and cronyism are widespread, media are often pressured to report only on favorable news to the regime. The main difference between a flawed democracy and a hybrid regime is that violations of democratic principles are more pronounced in a hybrid regime than in a flawed democracy.

The last and least category of regime types in terms of respect for democratic principle is the authoritarian regime. Authoritarian regimes can either be an absolute monarch, or a dictatorship. These nations may have some conventional democratic institutions, but they are at the service of the head of state. If elections are held, they are rigged, civil liberty and rights are violated on a daily basis, and there are “omnipresent censorship and suppression of governmental criticism” (EIU report, 2019). Table five below provides a snapshot of the status of democracy in the world.

¹⁰Table 5: ¹¹World Democracy Index 2018, by Regime Type.

Regime types	No. of Countries	% of countries	% of world population
Full democracy	20	12	4.5
Flawed democracy	55	32.9	43.2
Hybrid Regimes	39	23.4	16.7
Authoritarian regimes	53	31.7	35.6 ¹²

As shown on the table, the flawed democracy regimes are dominant; amounting to 55 countries, which represent 32 percent of the world countries with 43.2 percent of the world population. Most of these countries are found in South America, and Africa. The flawed democratic countries are closely followed by the authoritarian regimes comprising of 53 countries, representing 31.7 and 35.6 percent of the world countries and population respectively. Most authoritarian regimes are found in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and also in sub-Saharan Africa.

¹⁰ Data Obtained from the Economist Intelligence Unit-2018 report.

¹¹ Note. "World" population refers to the total population of the 167 countries covered by the Index. Since this excludes only microstates, this is nearly equal to the entire estimated world population. Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit.

Despite the advancement of democracy and, globalization, only 20 countries are classified as a full democracy according to the EIU 2019 report. Most of these are Scandinavian countries, and few in western Europe, but alarmingly only one country in each of North America, and Africa is a full democracy, and these are Canada, and Mauritius respectively. The full democratic countries make up only 12 percent of the world countries representing just 4.5 percent of the world population.

Findings in Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia

Data drawn from the Economic Intelligent Unites (EIU), and Freedom House shall be used to evaluate the status of democracy in the three countries. The EIU 2019 report on the performance of democracy based on electoral process and pluralism, function of government, political participation, political culture, civil liberty, and regime type. Table six below shows the ranking of these three countries based on their performance on these factors.

¹³ **Table 6: Democracy performance in Ghana, Guinea and the Gambia. EIU 2019 report.**

Country ranking	Ghana	Guinea	The Gambia
Overall score	6.63	3.14	4.33
Global ranking	57	132	107
Electoral process	8.33	3.50	4.00
Political participation	6.67	4.44	3.33
Political Culture	6.25	4.38	5.63
Civil Liberty	6.18	2.94	4.41
Regime type	Flawed democracy	Authoritarian	Hybrid Regime

The table above shows that Ghana, a county that underwent a top down transition to democracy, has a much more advanced democracy than Guinea and the Gambia. As indicated in precedent paragraphs, both Guinea and the Gambia went through a bottom up transition where the old regime is completely wiped out of the political process, and a brand-new government emerge with the task of reconstructing and building democratic institutions. The data on table six indicates that despite the democratic advancement in Ghana, the country is still classified as a flawed democracy. Ghana is ranked 57th democracy in the world with a scores of 8.33 on electoral process, and 6.18 on civil liberty. Guinea on the other hand, is classified as an authoritarian regime despite holding two successive presidential elections in the last ten years. The table also shows that

¹³ Data obtained from the Economist Intelligence Unit-2019 report.

Guinea is ranked 132 democracy below the Gambia who is ranked 107th. Guinea also scored low on the electoral process at 3.50 while the Gambia 4.00. Surprisingly, the Gambia scored higher than Guinea in both political culture, and civil liberty. Table seven below shows the democratic performance of these countries on the Freedom house report.

¹⁴Table 7: Democracy performance in Ghana, Guinea and the Gambia. Freedom House 2019 report.

Country rank	Ghana	Guinea	The Gambia
Freedom status	Free	Partly free	Partly free
Political rights	35	15	20
Civil liberty	47	25	26
Aggregate score	82	40	46

Since the 1992 elections in Ghana under Jerry Rawlings’s rule, Ghana has held competitive multiparty elections and succeeded in power transfer including from the ruling party to the opposing and, from an incumbent loser to an opposition winner, and the country “has a relatively strong record of upholding civil liberties. The reason for Ghana not been considered as a full democracy may be due to the poor performance on pluralism, such as the persistence of discrimination against women, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) citizens. The country is improving in judicial independence,

¹⁴ Data obtained from the Freedom House 2019 report.

and rule of law, but a lot needs to be done. Political corruption is also another challenge to the performance of the government (Freedom House 2018 report).

Guinea return to civilian rule in 2010 following a violent presidential campaign, and a long delay of a second-round election, reports of corruptions and election riggings. This was preceded by decades of authoritarian rules. Democracy has not made any gain in Guinea despite civilian rule. The government uses “restrictive criminal laws to discourage dissent and encourage ethnic divisions and pervasive corruption often exacerbate political disputes” (Freedom House, 2018). Peaceful protesters are often killed by the state police, this is a reflection of a deeply rooted culture of impunity (Freedom House, 2018). The bottom-up transition that has taken place in Guinea since the death of its first president has not proven effective in democratizing the country, let alone consolidating democracy. The two presidents to ever rule Guinea prior 2010, both died in power. This is likely to repeat itself as the current president 82, is seeking to change the constitutions with a new one that would allow him to run for a third term in office. This is been the major reason for the unrest currently unfolding in the country led by a coalition of political parties and civil societies under the banners of FNDC (Front National pour la Defense de la Constitution) or the national front for the defense of the constitution. President Conde has earlier announced that the referendum on the new constitution will be coupled with the legislative elections which was schedule to take place on March 1, 2020, but the entire elections were postpone less than 24 hours before the due date. This may be due to both local and international pressure, the European parliaments, the Organization of the francophone countries, the African Union, and the ECOWAS has cast

doubt on the fairness, and inclusiveness of the elections and have withdrawn their observers from the process, citing major irregularities.

Yahaya Jammeh came to power following a bloodless coup in 1994 and ruled the Gambia for over two decades. There is been a consistent report of human rights, and civil liberty violations during his entire reign. Surprisingly he lost the 2016 presidential election but refused to hand over power to Adama Barrow who was the declared winner but was later forced out. Basic freedoms including the rights of assembly, association, and freedom of speech have improved since the installment of the new government, but the “rule of law is unconsolidated LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) people face severe discrimination, and violence against women remains a serious problem” (Freedom house 2020 report). The situation in the Gambia reflect one of the major points argued in this study. In countries which have long been ruled by authoritarian regimes, where democratic institutions are absent, a bottom up transition may produce an elected government, but this government will have the challenge of rebuilding everything from scratch, the process may result in a prolonged economic hardship. If care is not taken, the frustration may call for a premature change which could lead to another bottom up transition, and the circle will keep reoccurring until the military takes over on a permanent basis., we have seen this movie played out in Egypt following the Arab Spring.

Limitations and Recommendations

The analysis made in this study is based on existing data obtained from international observers including the International Institute of democracy and Electoral Assistance, the Economist Intelligence Unit and Freedom house. While these are highly respected institutions, and are widely used in comparative literatures, they may not be able to obtain credible and reliable data on most authoritarian countries and many other sub-Saharan African countries such as Ghana, Guinea, and the Gambia as they would in advance democracies. The reason for this is because of the lack of transparency. In most cases, African governments are the only source of such data and they only keep data that favors them. It is hard for independent survey to be conducted in these countries without getting biased responses caused by either regime interference, or favoritism. Future research on this subject should consider obtaining firsthand data by possibly been present on the ground with the aim of fetching firsthand data themselves rather than relying on these institutions or seeking data from government agencies. This allows for independent empirical research to take place, and thus, provides a reliable end product.

Conclusion

Scholars have often wondered why democratic consolidation is finding it hard to take place in West Africa. Many have identified multiple reasons to why this is the case including low literacy rate, socio-economic development, history, cultural and religious reason, but none of the literatures reviewed in this study looked into the impact of transition type on democratic consolidation in Africa. The author has thoroughly looked at the two type of transitions and hypothesized that a Top-down democratic transition is more effective in the consolidation of democracy. Comparing sub-Saharan Africa's first two independent states and one of the most cosmopolitan west African state. The author highlighted multiple literatures on the subject most of which only talks about the definitions, and nature of the two transition types, but none concretely compared countries that have undergone these transitions.

This paper has gathered sufficient data, with thorough analysis to show that a top down democratic transition is more effective in the consolidation of democracy for the reasons discussed here. As stated in this study, prior the 1992 presidential elections in Ghana, all transitions in that country were bottom ups and were not effective, until the authoritarian leader (Jerry Rawlings) moved the country to the path of democracy, by organizing elections, and gradually transition the country to a democracy, which was not the case in Guinea and the Gambia. The Gambia had a chance for a top down transition, but the long-term ruler, Jammeh failed to take it, and was forced out of office which resulted in a bottom up transition. Both Guinea and the Gambia have succeeded in having a democratically elected government, but because of the nature of the transition

that took place in these countries, and the impact of a long history of authoritarian rule, democratic norms have not made much progress.

Despite the limitations, which are beyond the control of the author this paper can be a valuable addition to the existing literature on this subject.

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