

Beyond Elections: Ghana's Democracy from the Perspective of the Citizenry

Lori A. Demeter

Walden University

100 S Washington Ave #900, Minneapolis, MN 55401

USA

Ransford Osafo-Danso

Walden University

100 S Washington Ave #900, Minneapolis, MN 55401

USA

Abstract

Ghana's democracy has been hailed by scholars, practitioners, and the international community in recent years as a shining West African Sub-region example of organizing successive elections with minimal or no violence. However, the evaluation of Ghana's democracy disproportionately captures the views of the political elite; conspicuously missing is the perspective of the ordinary Ghanaian. This presents only a partial and an incomplete picture of Ghana's democracy. A qualitative case study explored the practice of democracy in Ghana from the perspective of its citizenry. The results revealed that ordinary Ghanaians have dichotomous views of democracy in Ghana under the fourth republic. Their experiences and opinions of the electoral system have generally been positive while those related to governance have generally been negative. The study's results may inspire a paradigm shift in the responsiveness of government to citizens and how government engages with citizens on policy formulation and implementation.

Key words: Ghana, Africa, Democracy, Elections

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Problem. There is a problem of incomplete evaluation of democracy in Ghana. Ghana's democracy has been hailed by scholars, practitioners, and the international community in recent years as the shining example in the West African Sub-region, as a result of the country's record of organizing successive elections with minimal or no violence (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009; Gyimah-Boadi & Prempeh, 2012). However, the evaluation of Ghana's democracy has predominantly focused on the nation's elections prowess and disproportionately captures the views of the elite, defined here as those elected or appointed to political positions (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). In the rare instances where scholars have evaluated Ghana's democracy beyond elections, the emphasis has been on political institutions and the electoral commission; conspicuously missing, is the perspective of the ordinary Ghanaian, defined here as Ghanaians who do not hold any political positions, to whose benefit democracy is being practiced. This presented only a partial and an incomplete picture of Ghana's democracy, given the relevance of citizen's participation in democratic societies.

1.2 Purpose. The purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth analysis of Ghana's democracy from the perspective of the citizenry. Historically, Ghana's democracy has been hailed by scholars, practitioners, and the international community as the standard bearer of democratic governance in the West Africa Sub-region; however, these evaluations are mostly based on the opinions of the political elite, and it is predominantly premised on Ghana's ability to organize political elections with little or no violence.

1.3 Background. In March 1957, Ghana became the first black African nation south of the Sahara to gain political independence from British colonization (Oquaye, 2004). Upon achieving this feat, Ghana became the symbol of liberation for many African nations that were still under European colonization (Oquaye, 2004). Since its independence Ghana has alternated between democratic rule and military dictatorships until the dawn of the fourth republic.

Scholars, practitioners, and the international community have hailed the post 1992 era of Ghana's democracy as the shining example of Africa's democratization (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). This international recognition of Ghana's democratic success has focused the attention of the world on the various indicators and ingredients of democracy in Ghana. As a result, a great deal has been written about Ghana's democratic exploits (Debrah, 2011; Fobih, 2011). However, the literature revealed an over reliance on the opinions of the political elite in the evaluation of Ghana's democratic performance (Taylor & Williams, 2008). There was limited literature that actually detailed the perspectives of the ordinary Ghanaian concerning how Ghana has performed democratically under the fourth republic. Thus, the evaluation of Ghana's democracy would have been incomplete if it was devoid of the views and perspectives of the citizenry; the very people to whose benefit democracy is being practiced. The evaluation of democracy in Ghana disproportionately captured the perspectives of those who wield political power at the expense of ordinary Ghanaian citizens.

Again, the practice of democracy has been somewhat equated with the nation's ability to organize and conduct peaceful elections with little or no violence to the detriment of all the other ingredients of democracy (Gyimah-Boadi & Prempeh, 2012). Given the fact that Ghana was being touted as the standard bearer of democracy in a sub-region plagued with political instability, it was important to explore the opinion of Ghanaians on their country's democracy and also unravel the phenomenon of over concentration on elections with respect to evaluating democracy in Ghana.

1.4 Research Questions. Four research questions guided this study. They included:

RQ1: What are the general views of ordinary Ghanaians on Ghana's democracy?

RQ2: How is political apathy among Ghana's citizens a threat to the sustainment of democracy in Ghana?

RQ3: How does deliberation enhance democracy in Ghana?

RQ4: What is the opinion of the ordinary Ghanaian on the role elections play in Ghana's democracy?

1.5 Theoretical Framework. Inside the spheres of democracy, two central theories are advocated. Both seek to expound the landscape of democracy and the objective it seeks to serve or serves. The minimalist theory of democracy and deliberative theory of democracy served as the lens for this study.

The minimalist theorists of democracy postulate that voting is both the means and the ends of democracy. The supporters of this democratic theory affirm that the most important indicator of democracy is the right that citizens have to choose their representatives through free and fair elections (Przeworski, 1999; Schumpeter, 1950). They argue that, the goal of democracy as championed by deliberative theorist are elusive and not attainable (Baird, 2012). Conversely, deliberative theorist of democracy suggests that democracy is a governance concept that provides equal opportunity to all citizens to contribute their view on national issues with the intent of achieving good governance through deliberation amongst the citizenry. Advocates of this theory contend that well-versed decisions are arrived at, when citizens, armed with information, easily participate in national dialogue. This theory iterates that the minimalist interpretation of democracy is narrow and inadequate, and only concentrates on the means, not the ends of democracy (Chambers, 2009). The two theories were employed as lenses through which democracy in Ghana was explored within the context of elections and citizens' participation.

2.0 Research Design

A qualitative case study approach was employed to explore Ghana's democracy from the perspective of the citizenry. The study followed the relativistic and constructivist tradition of research in that the phenomenon under study was explained from the subjective opinions of the participants. This qualitative case study was premised upon exploring and procuring deeper understanding of democratic governance in Ghana by gathering and analyzing the experiences, feelings, opinions, and the perspectives of ordinary Ghanaians who have had a firsthand experience of Ghana's democracy under the fourth republic.

2.1 Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedures. The target population for this study was Ghanaian citizens who have lived in Ghana for a minimum of four years since the inception of the fourth republic. With respect to this study, participants were selected based on their firsthand experience of the phenomenon being studied. Ghanaian citizens who have lived in Ghana for a minimum of four years possess the requisite knowledge and experience that allowed them to paint an accurate picture of Ghana's democracy under the fourth republic from the perspective of the ordinary Ghanaian.

This is in consonance with qualitative case study research as espoused by Creswell (2013). A purposive sampling approach was employed to choose participants who served as vital informants.

In this research, maximum variation and criterion sampling were utilized. Maximum variation sampling ensured that the participants selected were of diverse opinions, experiences, and perspectives. Admittedly, depth was of essence to this study; however, the purpose of this study was better served if the study captured diverse opinions and experiences of participants. Criterion sampling was also employed in this study. Through criterion sampling, criteria was established as to who qualified to participate in the study. Participants had lived in Ghana from the inception of the fourth republic in 1992; were Ghanaian citizens by birth or naturalization; have lived in Ghana for a minimum of four years; and did not hold or held any political position through election or by means of appointment.

2.2 Sample Size. For this study, the researcher used 15 participants even though saturation was attained by the time the 13th participant was interviewed. In a qualitative case study such as this one, the emphasis is usually not on the ability to generalize results, and for that reason large sample sizes are usually not employed (Patton, 2002). The general consensus among experts in qualitative research is that qualitative case study emphasizes depth as opposed to breadth (Creswell, 2013; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008; Patton, 2002; Woodside, 2010).

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis. Data collection for this study took the form of interviews, observational field notes, and documentary sources. Based on the purpose of the study and the research questions the study sought to answer, a qualitative case study methodology was employed. This approach to research was utilized because it provided the researcher the best avenue to explore the phenomenon under study. Qualitative case studies are best suited for research studies that place prominence on depth over breadth. Therefore, given that this study was intended to provide an in-depth analysis of Ghana's democracy under the fourth republic from the perspective of the ordinary Ghanaian citizen, the researcher deemed this approach the most suited to explore the phenomenon in a detailed manner and answer the research questions.

Three data sets were utilized for the study: interviews, documents, and observation notes taken during interviews. A total of 15 ordinary Ghanaian citizens with diverse background and experiences were interviewed for the study. They were purposefully sampled for their experience of Ghana's democracy under the fourth republic. Each participant was interviewed for approximately one hour for their opinions and experiences. Also, documents and reports on Ghana's democracy from United States Agency International Development (USAID), Transparency International (TI), United Nations (UN), Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) were used. Researcher's observational notes during interviews were also analyzed for the study. The researcher used thematic analysis by applying reading and memoing to gain an intimate understanding of the data gathered and then proceeded to codify the data into broad themes, categories, and establish patterns. The data were subjected to constant review for different meanings and perspectives until saturation was attained; that is, the data were reviewed for all probable insight (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). The researcher applied "detailed description" and "categorical aggregation" to the data to paint a comprehensive picture of the study's phenomenon based on multiple perspectives.

3.0 Results

Table 1 provides demographic information about participants who were interviewed for the study. Observational field notes and review of official documents were also utilized for the purpose of triangulation. Table 2 provides the thematic development of coding categories, while Table 3 illustrates the research questions indicative of those codes (insert Tables here).

The interview sessions provided an avenue to observe participant's reactions to the questions. Their body gestures, facial expressions, and the inflections in their voices provided a trough of data for the researcher, and that was useful for triangulation of the data. Some participants exhibited strong emotions on the subject matter; especially those employed by the public sector. The interview protocol consisted of semi-structured and open-ended questions. The researcher began the interview with predetermined questions and followed up with questions that were unique to the individual being interviewed.

3.1 Research Question 1: What are the general views of ordinary Ghanaians on Ghana's democracy? This question was intended to elicit the views and opinions of ordinary Ghanaian citizens on Ghana's democracy in general since the inception of the fourth republic in 1992. Analysis of the data revealed that ordinary Ghanaian citizens have experienced and believed the following:

Ghana has a solid electoral system; the country enjoys stable political environment; government is not responsive to the needs of the citizenry; there were other unrealized dividends of democracy; and lack of accountability permeates Ghana's entire political system.

3.11 solid electoral system and unresponsiveness governance. In democratic societies, periodic free and fair elections are an integral part of the democratic process (Gilley, 2009). Upon returning to multiparty democracy in 1992, the Ghanaian constitution that ushered in the fourth republic made provisions for an independent Electoral Commission that plays a refereeing role in electioneering campaigns to ensure that citizens and political actors participate in a free and fair electoral process. The purpose was to enable genuine alternation of power between political actors premised upon the will of the citizenry. Chapter Seven of the 1992 constitution, Article 42, guarantees every Ghanaian citizen who has attained the minimum voting age of 18 years and is of sound mind the right to vote in public elections (Constitution of Ghana, 1992). Since the 1992 elections, which were marred by boycott by opposition parties in Ghana, Ghana's electoral system has seen tremendous improvements (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). The electoral system has become the image of Ghana's democratic success story. Under the fourth republic, there have been six consecutive elections in Ghana that has led to the transition of political power from one political party to another; the NDC handing over power in 2000 to the NPP and the reverse of power transition between the two political parties in 2008. One participant was of the opinion that the electoral system has gotten better over time, even though it is far from perfect. His admiration for Ghana's electoral system was revealed when he stated the following:

Actually I will say that our electioneering structure or system has to be one of the best in the world. It is very transparent, very down to earth, and it has gone under systematic and progressive changes from 1992. I can tell you that I don't know the story elsewhere or everywhere but it is difficult to find any nation where political parties are allowed to be involved in the printing....actually when the ballot are being printed during elections, political parties are present and actually record the serial numbers of the ballot, and are allowed to escort the ballot to the polling stations and some of them actually sleep with the ballot and election materials on the night before elections.

Three additional participants echoed those thoughts on Ghana's electoral system. Participants across board praised Ghana's electoral system and actually indicated that it was one, if not the only means that allowed the citizenry genuine participation in the democratic process. Participants described the electoral system as transparent, accessible, and fair.

In spite of participants' enthusiasm with the electoral system, they unanimously indicated that successive Ghanaian governments have been unresponsive to their needs as citizens. They indicated that, at all levels of government, citizens have not experienced the kind of responsiveness that one would expect in democratic governance. Participants cited a myriad of reasons for the lack of responsiveness to the citizenry and, chiefly amongst them were tribal and entrenched political affiliations. Participants indicated that political leaders over the years have come to realize that their continuous stay in power is not dependent on their responsiveness to the citizenry but rather their ability to market themselves in a tribal fashion and playing to one's political base. These, in the unanimous opinion of participants have shrunk nonpartisan demand for acceptable levels of responsiveness.

3.12 political stability and lack of accountability. As already demonstrated in the literature review section of this research, Ghana has had a 'roller-coaster' history with respect to multiparty democracy and military dictatorships (Oquaye, 2004). However, upon the inception of the fourth republic in 1992, Ghana has experienced unprecedented political stability in its history (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). Even though it took 11 years to restore democratic governance, the fourth republic, in the opinion of participants has not only survived, it has thrived in terms of stability. One participant, when asked to give his general thoughts on Ghana's democracy said, "We have had six largely peaceful democratic elections since we returned to democratic rule in 1992. And that is something for which we need to pat ourselves on the back". Four additional participants expressed similar views, opinions, and experiences.

However, an analysis of the data also revealed that Ghanaians believe their government has not been accountable to the ordinary citizen. On this theme, participants reiterated that political leaders have been insulated from the effects of not being accountable due to the fact that many Ghanaians vote based on tribal and entrenched political affiliations.

Thirteen of the 15 participants believed that the accountability that voting is designed to bring to the democratic process was not having the required effect because politicians knew that people voted based on preconceived notions that are largely premised on tribal and political affiliations. One participant posited that:

As a citizen of Ghana who lives in Ghana, I have been witness and I continue to be a witness of the perpetuation of a system which doesn't allow or assure that political leaders are truly accountable to the people. We call it democracy alright, but what elected political leaders do in Ghana is another thing altogether.

It is important to note that the participants also unanimously indicated that many dividends that expected in democracy as a system of government have not been realized in Ghana's instance.

3.2 Research Question 2: How is political apathy among Ghana's citizens a threat to the sustainment of democracy in Ghana? Democracy as a system of governance depends largely on the citizens of a practicing nation to succeed. Citizens are the fulcrum around which democracy as a system of governance pivots (Diamond, 2008; Gilley, 2009). Therefore, this research question was intended to shed light on the critical role that ordinary Ghanaian citizens play, if any, and the consequence of apathetic citizenry on the sustainment of Ghana's democracy. Two main themes emerged from the data to answer this question; the idea of civic disengagement due to apathy and public corruption.

3.2.1 civic disengagement and public corruption. The subject area of citizen's participation in democratic governance produced diverse opinions from the participants. All 15 participants gave their views on the role that citizens are supposed to play in democratic governance in general, and then followed up with their personal experiences and opinions on the role that Ghanaian citizens have played in sustaining democracy in Ghana. To most participants, apathetic citizenry in Ghana would lead to civic disengagement and that would have adverse consequences on the sustainment of democracy. In the view of participants, political accountability was not something easily available on the political landscape in Ghana, therefore, an engaged citizenry provided some measure of counter balance to the power wielded by the political elite. A disengaged citizenry in Ghana will further worsen the state of political accountability and erode any sway that the citizenry may have left on their political leaders. Civic disengagement will cause the slow death of democracy in Ghana according to majority of participants interviewed. One participant intimated as follows:

Citizen's participation is the key to matured democracy. But an enlightened citizenry is what is needed to sustain a functioning democracy; not just citizen's participation. Because, if people are not educated and don't appreciate the process, how can they make refined decisions that can affect the common good of society?

Furthermore, participants drew a connection between disengagement and incidents of public corruption in Ghana. All 15 participants acknowledged that public corruption is both a social and economic canker that has permeated most sectors in the Ghanaian economy. Nine of them cited recent allegations of public corruption that has engulfed both the executive and legislative branches of the Government of Ghana. All 15 participants believed that widening economic opportunity between the political elite and the ordinary Ghanaian was one of the greatest threats to democratic governance, and public corruption, if left unchecked, could plunder the country into chaos.

The 2014 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International ranked Ghana 61th on a 174 country roster. However, Ghana's CPI score of 48 fell below 50 which is less than the average mark. The CPI scores countries from 1 to 100 with 1 signifying worse levels of corruption and 100 indicating high levels of transparency (Transparency International, 2014).

3.3 Research Question 3: How does deliberation enhance democracy in Ghana? Upon analyzing the data, it emerged that deliberation in Ghana led to plurality of ideas and information sharing, better decision making, and inclusive governance. Plurality of ideas and information sharing, in the opinion of participants, led to better decision making in democratic governance.

3.3.1 plurality of ideas, information sharing, and better decision making. The general trend on the subject of deliberation in Ghana's democracy elicited positive views and opinions from all participants. The idea of diverse opinions and information sharing featured prominently in the statements of all participants. All the participants believed that deliberation provided an avenue for citizens to engage with each other and government on matters of public interest.

Twelve of the 15 participants indicated that freedom of expression as it existed in Ghana has been a major boost to deliberation. Twelve of the 15 participants expressed that deliberation has occasioned plural ideas and information sharing, and that has augured well for Ghana's political stability. However, the remaining three posited that even though deliberation has led to diverse opinions and information sharing, it has not culminated into shaping policy formulation and implementation.

Participants also overwhelmingly expressed the view that deliberation has led to better decision making and fostered a sense of inclusiveness among the citizenry. Fourteen of the 15 participants cited deliberations between and amongst the various political parties and the Electoral Commission as an example of how deliberation has led to better decision making. For instance, majority of the participants opined that Ghana's electoral system has matured mainly due to the kind of deliberation that has occurred in electoral system. Some of them cited the formation of the IPAC in 1993 to buttress their point. IPAC was formed after opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary elections when they alleged wide spread irregularities in the presidential elections in 1993; the first elections under the fourth republic.

3.4 Research Question 4: What is the opinion of the ordinary Ghanaian on the role elections play in Ghana's democracy? This research question was intended to solicit the opinions and experiences of ordinary Ghanaian citizens on the role that elections play in Ghana's democracy. Available data and interview transcripts were analyzed to answer the question. Themes that emerged as far as the roles of elections in Ghana's democracy were concerned were: elections have aided Ghana's political stability and have served as a means for political equality.

3.41 political stability and political equality. Analysis of all data sources revealed that elections have contributed significantly to Ghana's political stability under the fourth republic. The interview transcripts revealed that 13 of the 15 participants were of the opinion that elections have significantly led to political stability in Ghana. Twelve of the 15 participants believed that elections provide citizens with a legitimate means to change government, if they so desire, and that has lowered the possibility that other illegitimate means such as coup d'état will be resorted to by those seeking change. EM1, believed that but for elections, she could not imagine the state of politics in Ghana. FS1, AS1, and JO1 all expressed similar views. To them, the fact that Ghana is in its 23rd year of democratic governance under the fourth republic is largely due to the faith that all political actors and other stake holders have in the electoral process.

Another theme that emerged from analyzing the data was the fact that elections enhanced democracy in Ghana by serving as an avenue for political equality amongst the citizenry, irrespective of one's social class or economic status. The notion of one person one vote and the fact that each citizen's vote carried equal weight was viewed by majority of the participants as political equality. Eleven of the 15 participants asserted that their understanding of democracy revolves around the notion of political equality. One participant explained that democratic governance is incomplete without political equality premised on the idea of one man one vote. He noted:

Democracy in my opinion is a governance system where the citizenry engage with their leadership to formulate and shape policies towards the delivery of desirable public goods. It involves citizens choosing political leadership through free and fair elections premised on the idea of one man one vote one voice.

4.0 Significance of Study

The findings of the study showed that ordinary Ghanaian citizens have had a dual but contradictory experience under the fourth republic. On the one hand, they described a positive experience with respect to Ghana's electoral system and their right to choose leaders through voting. They also relished the political stability that Ghana enjoys under the fourth republic. However, their experiences with governance in the intervening years have been quite negative. They described high incidence of public corruption, unresponsive governance, lack of accountability, unequal access to economic opportunity, and exclusive domination of public policy decision by the political elite. The results also showed that the application of law is unequal between the elite and the ordinary Ghanaian and political impunity abound under the fourth republic. These were the key findings of the study. The findings are practical lessons from Ghana's democracy from the perspective of the citizenry.

This study revolved around the need for total social, political, and economic accountability to the people of Ghana, as championed by the doctrines of democratic values.

This research, focused on exploring the opinions of Ghanaians on the practice of democracy in Ghana, hoped to shed light on the desires of the ordinary Ghanaian on how he/she is governed and also offer a stage for Ghanaian citizens to contribute to the deliberation on Ghana's democratic performance. The study supported a new pattern of focusing excessively on elections when evaluating democratic performance in Ghana. Over emphasizing on elections as the ultimate determiner of a country's democratic status perpetuates a situation where autocrats are legitimized, as long as they win elections, whether by fair or foul means (Baird, 2008).

It is conventional that a democracy that is molded by vigorous civic engagement, by itself, is a potent tool for driving social change (Kingah, 2006). Including the opinions of Ghanaians in the deliberation on how Ghana is performing democratically is a potent way of providing a platform and voice for ordinary citizens and kindle discourse between those governing and the governed.

4.1 Implications for Social Change. The study's results should inspire a concerted effort on the part of both the Government of Ghana and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to institute reforms that will address the concerns of the ordinary Ghanaian citizen. In view of the importance of citizens' participation in democratic governance, there may one day be a paradigm shift in the responsiveness of government to citizens and how government engages with citizens on policy formulation and implementation. To bolster political accountability, constitutional reform that is geared towards deepening separation of powers amongst all the branches of government should be instituted. As the findings of the study showed, certain provisions in the Ghanaian constitution has encouraged the concentration of power in the hands of the executive branch of government at the expense of both the judiciary and the legislature. The legislature's oversight responsibility over the executive has been inhibited by structural defects in the Ghanaian constitution. For instance, the constitution mandates the executive to appoint majority of ministers from amongst parliamentarians and that has led to a situation where parliamentarians who double as ministers rubber stamp the executive's agenda in parliament partly because they are part of the executive branch they are supposed to hold accountable as lawmakers. This constitutional arrangement inherently weakens political accountability and is an affront to separation of powers in constitutional governance.

The international community, especially the UN and its allied organizations that specialize in democratic governance should take a fresh look at how democracy in developing nations is evaluated. In the case of Ghana, researchers, practitioners, and the international community should shift from the over concentration on elections as the ultimate determiner of Ghana's democratic status.

4.2 Recommendations for Future Research. Based on the results of this study, further research is needed to investigate why deliberation as a democratic tool has thrived and led to progressive changes in Ghana's electoral system while it has failed to materialize in the broader political system (governance) during the intervening years under the fourth republic. Also, the findings of the study indicated that political accountability under the fourth republic in Ghana is virtually nonexistent, especially amongst the various branches of government. Therefore, further research into institutional accountability under the fourth republic of Ghana will provide insight into this phenomenon and possibly suggest strategies to address it.

5.0 Conclusion

This explorative study has provided valuable information on a hitherto relatively unknown phenomenon; the perspective of ordinary Ghanaians on Ghana's current democratic dispensation. The results showed both the thriving and struggling aspects of democracy in Ghana. The results confirmed existing literature on Ghana's solid electoral system. The study provided insight into the experiences and opinions of ordinary Ghanaian citizens with respect to elections in Ghana. Also, the study highlighted the fact that ordinary Ghanaians' expectation of democracy as a system of governance went beyond their constitutional right to vote in a free and fair elections. While admitting that Ghana since 1992 has made tremendous improvements in its electoral processes as widely postulated by researchers and the international community, the study also revealed that Ghana's democracy has not lived up to the expectations of its ordinary citizens in the area of accountable governance. The findings are inconsistent with the blanket labelling of Ghana as the standard bearer of democracy in West Africa. The point of being a democracy is largely premised on the idea of political accountability; where elected officials are responsive to their respective constituents and act in the collective good of the citizenry.

The desirability of democracy as a system of governance has been soaring in many parts of the world, including Africa (Kingah, 2006). It is therefore not surprising to find among the primary goals of the AU the need to promote democracy and good governance (Kingah, 2006).

Consequently, a large majority of Africans indicated their preference for democracy over other forms governance (AfroBarometer, 2014). The need for governments to engage civil society in the political process to ensure accountability, the expectation of the citizenry to live in a safe and tranquil environment, equitable distribution of national resources, justice, and political equality are among the expectations of most citizens in African nations (AfroBarometer, 2014). Even though these are positive indicators that democracy could thrive in Africa, there are significant challenges, especially in West Africa.

Table 1: Demographic of Participants

N =15	Tally	Percentage
Gender		
Female	7	47
Male	8	53
Age category		
25-35	13	87
36-45	2	13
Marital Status		
Married	5	33
Single	10	67
Sector of employment		
Public	10	67
Private	5	33

Note. Data gathered directly from participants

Table 2: Creation of Thematic Categories

2a. Solid electoral system	2h. Political Impunity
2b. Political stability	2i. Loss of hope in future of democracy
2c. Unresponsive governance	2j. Plurality of ideas and information sharing
2d. Lack of accountability	2k. Better decision making
2e. Unrealized dividends of democracy	2l. Inclusive governance
2f. Civic disengagement	2m. An avenue for political accountability
2g. Public corruption	2n. Political equality
	2o. Foundation of vibrant democracy

Note. Generated Categories from all three Data Sources: Interview, Documents, and Observation.

Table 3: Application of Themes to Research Questions

Application of Themes to Research Questions
RQ1: What are the general views of ordinary Ghanaians on Ghana's democracy? Themes: 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e.
RQ2: How is political apathy among Ghana's citizens a threat to the sustainment of democracy in Ghana? Themes: 2g, 2i.
RQ3: How does deliberation enhance democracy in Ghana? Themes: 2j, 2k.
RQ4: What is the opinion of the ordinary Ghanaian on the role elections play in Ghana's democracy? Themes: 2d, 2m, 2n, 2o

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